

Frequently Asked Questions for Prospective Veterinary Technology Majors

1. How long is the program?

The Veterinary Technology program at UMass Amherst is a four-year Bachelor of Science degree. The first two years begin on the main UMass Amherst campus in Amherst, Massachusetts and the final two years are completed on the UMass Amherst at Mount Ida Campus in Newton, Massachusetts.

2. Can I take the VTNE - Veterinary Technician's National Exam upon graduation?

Yes, upon graduation, you may register to take the VTNE. <https://www.aavsb.org/vtne-overview/the-online-application>

3. Can I live on the UMass Mt. Ida campus?

Yes, room and board are the same price on both UMass Amherst campuses. <https://www.umass.edu/living/your-housing/housing-costs>

4. Can I start my education directly on the UMass Mount Ida campus or do I need to go to UMass Amherst first?

The program begins with the first two years at UMass Amherst on the Amherst, Massachusetts campus. Students transfer in their Junior year to UMass Mt. Ida campus in Newton, Massachusetts. Here is a copy of the current course curriculum: <https://www.umass.edu/veterinary-animal-sciences/undergraduate/veterinary-technology-major>

5. Can I double major in Pre-vet and Vet Tech?

Although you can be a double major in pre-veterinary science and veterinary technology, because the Vet Tech program requires transfer to Mt. Ida campus in the Junior year and the courses diverge, it would take extra time to complete both degrees. Students who want to pursue application to veterinary medical college should enter the Pre-Veterinary Science major, which requires a minimum 2.700 weighted GPA in ten indicator courses for entry. The Animal Science and Veterinary Technology majors are open majors, which means that any UMass Amherst student can choose them.

6. What if I want to transfer into the Vet Tech major from the Animal Science or Pre-Veterinary Science major?

Transfer from Animal Science and Pre-Veterinary Science degree paths is very easily accomplished as the curriculum for the first two years is very similar. Students who decide they want to pursue a veterinary technology degree can transfer in their sophomore year and stay on track if they take summer courses.

7. What summer courses do you offer in Veterinary Technology?

ANIMLSCI 105 and 105L- Intro to Veterinary Technology Lecture and Lab

ANIMLSCI 115 and 115L- Large Animal Clinical Nursing Lecture and Lab

These are 6 week accelerated courses and are open to Veterinary Technology Majors only.

8. Can I take Vet Tech courses if I'm not a Vet Tech major?

At this time, only Veterinary Technology majors can enroll in the Vet Tech courses. There are several companion animal courses offered by the Vet Tech faculty that are open to all Animal Science majors including:

ANIMLSCI 235 Shelter Animal Medicine
ANIMLSCI 315 Clinical Animal Behavior
ANIMLSCI 325 Sea Turtle Preservation in Costa Rica
ANIMLSCI 335 Conservation and Veterinary Medicine in Belize
ANIMLSCI 345 Exotic Animal Medicine

9. I have an associate's degree from a community college in Massachusetts and want to complete my Bachelor's of Science degree. How long will this take?

Your courses from the Massachusetts Community colleges will transfer to UMass Amherst. The time to complete your degree will depend on which degree you currently hold. We accept previous coursework from the Massachusetts Community College Vet Tech programs including: Holyoke Community College, Massasoit Community College, Mount Wachusett Community College and North Shore Community College. In order to determine a timeline to complete your Bachelor of Science degree, please contact Dr. Rubin (ajrubin@umass.edu) with your current transcripts.

10. I have graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree and want to complete the Vet Tech degree, do I need to start over?

You can apply as a second bachelor degree student and your previous coursework will apply toward the Veterinary Technology Bachelor of Science degree. Time to completion will depend on your previous coursework. <https://www.umass.edu/admissions/post-graduate-second-bachelor%E2%80%99s-degree>

11. What is the difference between a degree in Veterinary Technology and a degree in Pre-Veterinary Science?

You can earn an associate's degree (2 year undergraduate level) or bachelor's degree (4 year undergraduate level) in Veterinary Technology, after which you are qualified to be a veterinary technician or technologist, which is akin to being a veterinary nurse. UMass Amherst offers a bachelor's degree (4 year undergraduate level) in Veterinary Technology.

If you want to be a veterinarian/doctor of veterinary medicine, akin to an MD, but for many more species, you need to earn the graduate DVM (doctor of veterinary medicine) degree after 4 years of study in a veterinary medical school. You do not have to major in pre-veterinary science for your bachelor's degree to be admitted to veterinary medical school, but a curriculum like the BS-Pre-Veterinary Science major at UMass Amherst both meets your interests and prepares you for success in the demanding curriculum in veterinary medical school. The BS-Pre-Veterinary major also prepares you for success in other graduate programs in the life sciences.

12. How many internships are completed as part of the Vet Tech program?

Students complete 4 internships during their senior year. The Veterinary Technology program has a wide array of clinical and research internships available. Students complete internships in veterinary clinics, referral hospitals, biomedical research centers, wildlife and zoological centers and more.

13. Will UMass help me find a job when I am ready to graduate?

The Veterinary Technology program has a very strong job placement rate. Most students are hired by one of their senior internship sites by the time they graduate from the program. In addition to the career services program offered through the College of Natural Sciences, students receive career coaching and resume assistance during their senior seminar courses.

14. How can I get a tour of the University of Massachusetts Veterinary and Animal Sciences department?

Dates and times for virtual information sessions for the Veterinary Technology program will be posted on the Veterinary and Animal Sciences Department website, <https://www.umass.edu/veterinary-animal-sciences> Please email vasci@umass.edu to register.

15. Do you provide tours and information sessions on weekends and holidays?

Although university tours are available on weekends and holidays, the Veterinary & Animal Sciences faculty and staff are not available to provide weekend and holiday tours.

16. How many students apply to the Veterinary and Animal Sciences Department at UMass? How many students are accepted?

Veterinary Technology is an open major, which means that if you are accepted to UMass Amherst, you can declare the Vet Tech major. The Vet Tech major currently has 20 freshmen, 15 sophomores and 25 juniors and 20 seniors in in the Fall of 2023. VASCI also accepts transfer students from other majors and other schools.

17. How many students are accepted to UMass each year?

In 2022, there were 45,399 applicants for a class of 5,571. The Fall 2022 incoming undergraduate class included 5,571 freshmen. Total undergraduate enrollment is estimated at 21,680 and there are approximately 4,320 graduate students at UMass. Thirty-seven percent of the 2022 class represents ALANA students (African-American, Latino, Asian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Native American). Admission to UMass Amherst continues to be selective, 64 percent of students who applied were admitted for the fall of 2022.

18. How large are the classes here at UMass? How large are the animal science classes?

The UMass Veterinary Technology program meets AVMA standards for instructor to student ratios. Program personnel to student ratios shall not exceed 1:12 for laboratory courses without animals present and 1:8 for laboratory courses with animals present. UMass class sizes vary depending on the class. Freshmen, Sophomore and General Education classes are usually large lectures with 24 - 500 students. Upper level courses tend to be much smaller with 10 - 80 students. Overall, the VASCI student/faculty ratio is 15:1.

19. How challenging is the course load of a Veterinary Technology student?

This will depend on how well prepared you are, especially how well you have developed good study skills and habits. It is important that students entering the Vet Tech program understand that we offer a **science-based program** along with a rigorous clinical program that includes extensive hands-on training for all species. Students are required to obtain a passing grade of “C” or better in every Vet Tech course. Additionally, the program requires a full year of Biology, Chemistry and a semester of Cellular and Molecular Biology.

The Learning Resource Center (www.umass.edu/lrc/or/545-5334) offers peer advising in a comfortable environment to assist with academic challenges. The University Writing Center has tutors who provide free assistance to develop better writing skills.

The Commonwealth Honors College (www.honors.umass.edu/curriculum-overview) offers a tightly knit community for students seeking more academic rigor in their field of study. All VASCI students who meet the eligibility requirements can join Commonwealth Honors College, which offers a rewarding opportunity to meet students who share the same intellectual enthusiasm, work more closely with professors, and pursue independent research as part of a Capstone Experience.

20. How does UMass help students with disabilities?

UMass has a very comprehensive program for assisting students, faculty, and staff with disabilities, so that everyone may successfully learn and work at UMass. Disability Services promotes the empowerment of people with disabilities and their full integration into campus life and the community. Please access <http://www.umass.edu/disability/>

21. The UMass Amherst campus seems so large and intimidating; will I be okay at UMass?

Current students and alumni say that once you are here you will find that the campus does not seem large and intimidating at all. Animal Science students/ Vet Tech majors get to know each other well and enjoy the camaraderie of the major. Accepted students are required to come for an orientation session in June or July. During Summer New Students Orientation (NSO) students get to know the campus, meet other students, and make housing requests. While you meet faculty and staff during orientation, you spend most of your time with NSO student counselors. These students are part of a very select group of peers who dedicate their summer to welcoming the newest class to UMass Amherst. They are your mentors and leaders during orientation. They introduce you to the basic academic requirements and tell you about life at UMass Amherst: housing options; clubs and organizations; intramurals; jobs; where to get the best pizza; and everything else about life on campus and around Amherst.

The Vet Tech program encompasses both UMass Amherst campuses. Students enjoy two years on the UMass Amherst campus prior to moving to the UMass Amherst at Mount Ida Campus which is a small quintessential New England campus in a suburban setting, located just 8 miles from Boston.

22. How much time will I have between classes to get to the next class?

Don't worry; you will always have sufficient time to get from one class to the next. The amount of time you have will vary depending on your individual schedule each semester. When planning your schedule and registering for classes, you can check the location for each class and plan accordingly.

23. Will I always get the classes that I need, when I need them?

While we cannot guarantee that you will always get the classes you need when you would like them, the majority of Animal Science majors have no trouble arranging their schedules each semester. As you progress through the semesters, you will get priority for registering for classes. In your senior year, you should have no problem getting the classes you need. All Animal Science majors are required to meet with their academic advisor prior to registering for classes. Academic advisors assist students in making the best choices and will assist students with special requests/needs for specific classes.

24. Is there an Animal Science Faculty Mentoring/Advising Program?

Yes, before students enter our program they meet with faculty advisors who introduce the students to the program and assist the students with registration for their first semester's courses. All Veterinary & Animal Sciences students are assigned an academic advisor and the Department requires students to meet with their advisor during each of the fall and spring pre-registration periods. Faculty advisors remove the students' academic advising hold at that time which permits students to register for courses. Our department encourages students to meet with their faculty advisor and seek advice in selecting a career option as well as meeting the Veterinary and Animal Sciences and University requirements.

25. Will I be required to take placement tests?

UMass Amherst offers placement tests in Math, Writing, and Foreign Language. To learn more about the tests and how to take them, visit www.umass.edu/newstudent/academics/placementtests. Placement tests should be completed online before you come to your New Student Orientation session. Our academic advisors will use your scores to assist you in registering for the appropriate courses.

26. What about my AP high school classes?

The Department of Veterinary and Animal Sciences requires that all Biology 151, 152 and 153 be taken here at UMass. If you were successful in AP Biology you will receive credit towards graduation and you should find that you are very well prepared for Biology 151, 152 and 153 here at UMass. Most departments will award Advanced Placement (AP) and graduation credits to students who obtain scores of 4 or 5 on the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) Advanced Placement Tests; scores of 3 are given credit on a more limited basis. Candidates seeking advanced placement and graduation credit in foreign languages may also take the SAT II language tests.

AP and other college credits may apply to graduation requirements, but they do not count toward your residence requirements (up to 75 transfer credits can apply to graduation requirements; 45 residence credits must be earned through UMass Amherst; 54 credits if graduating with honors).

IB (International Baccalaureate) credit will be awarded to those students who score a 4-7 on the higher level IB exams. AP and IB official scores should be sent to the Admissions Office and the Registrar's Office.

27. How do I apply for financial aid?

You must fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The UMass code for the FAFSA is 002221. See Financial Aid Services (<http://www.umass.edu/umfa/>) for more detailed information.

28. How can I get a part-time job while I am a student?

The Student Employment Office (<http://www.umass.edu/umfa/seo/>) posts job listings for both on- and off-campus employment, including work-study opportunities.

29. Are there scholarships for Veterinary Technology majors?

Veterinary Technology students can apply for scholarships offered to all College of Natural Sciences students at <https://umass.academicworks.com/>

30. Is it possible to take courses at the other colleges in the area?

Any student who is in good academic standing, is at least a second-semester freshman, and is taking at least one 3-credit course at UMass may take up to three courses, but no more than two at any one institution, without additional cost, beyond normal laboratory or instructional fees, at Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, or Smith College. A free bus system is available for this purpose.

Course catalogs, literature, procedural information, advice and information on the Five College Program, and Five College Student Interchange forms are available from the Five College Interchange Office at http://ualc.umass.edu/five_college_interchange/

31. How available and convenient is public transportation?

Public transportation is easily available, and very convenient and affordable. There are regular busses that transport students to various campus locations, to local communities, to train stations, to Boston and New York. The following websites provide additional information about transportation.

UMass Transit System - www.umass.edu/transit

Pioneer Valley Regional Transportation System - www.pvta.com

all regional transportation systems - www.matransit.com

bus - www.peterpanbus.com - service from campus

www.megabus.com - service from Hampshire Mall - PVRTA service to Hampshire Mall (3.3 miles)

train - www.amtrak.com

airports - www.bradleyairport.com - Windsor Locks, CT - 47.5 miles

www.massport.com/logan - Boston, MA - 97 miles

www.flymanchester.com - Manchester, NH - 106 miles

www.pvdairport.com - Providence/Warwick, Rhode Island - 98 miles

www.albanyairport.com - Albany, New York - miles - 108 miles (via Rt. 90)

Transportation to and from Boston from the UMass Amherst Mount Ida campus:

Transportation to the MBTA from Mount Ida campus is readily accessible and allows students to enjoy both the beauty of a small New England campus and the close proximity of Boston.

<https://www.umass.edu/mic/operations#transportation>

32. What is there to do in the Newton/Boston area? There is so much to do and see when living on Mount Ida Campus during the Junior and Senior Years: Boston as the Best college town:

<https://www.elitedaily.com/life/5-reasons-youll-never-want-move-back-home-go-school-boston/1723667>

33. What is there to do in the Amherst area?

In a story featured on MSN.com in 2009, Katherine L. Cohen, founder and CEO of two college counseling firms, ranked Amherst the number one college town! (<http://www.umass.edu/umhome/feature-story/article/36.html>) In 2016, the website Livability.com said Amherst is the 6th-best small town in the country. There are many opportunities for: cultural events, the area has 10 museums as well as art, craft, and food fairs, great entertainment, part-time employment, organizations to be involved with, a great variety of restaurants and outdoor exploration opportunities (hiking trails, bike path, state parks).

The following websites provide additional information about the area.

<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/central.htm> - provides information on the 10 state parks within 15 miles

<http://www.amherstma.gov/>

<http://www.cinemark.com>

<http://amherstarea.com/>

<http://www.mountainfarmshadley.com>

amhersteinema.org/

www.northamptonma.gov/

<http://www.hadleyma.org>

www.visitnorthampton.net/

<http://hadleyma.com>

www.noho.com/

<http://www.hampshiremall.com>

www.explorenorthampton.com/

For more information about the Bachelor of Science degree in Veterinary Technology, please contact:

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