

VETERINARY MEDICINE (DVM)

College of Veterinary Medicine

Program Website (<https://www.vet.cornell.edu/education/doctor-veterinary-medicine/>)

CIP: 01.8001 | HEGIS: 1218.00 | NYSED: 13661

Program Description

The D.V.M. program is made up of two types of courses: Foundation and Distribution. All students take Foundation courses at the same time, in a prescribed sequence. The entire program takes four years to complete (174.5 credits of in-person study).

Foundation courses account for approximately 70% for the credits required for graduation, reflecting the College's commitment to a broad, generalize veterinary education.

Distribution courses make up the remaining 30% of the credits required for graduation and offer students an opportunity to pursue their individual interests through a system of structured choices.

Program Information

- Instruction Mode: In Person
- Location: Ithaca, NY
- Minimum Credits for Degree: 174.5

Program Requirements

The D.V.M. program is made up of two types of courses: Foundation and Distribution. All students take Foundation courses at the same time, in a prescribed sequence. The entire program takes four years to complete (174.5 credits of in-person study).

Foundation courses account for approximately 70% for the credits required for graduation, reflecting the College's commitment to a broad, generalize veterinary education.

Distribution courses make up the remaining 30% of the credits required for graduation and offer students an opportunity to pursue their individual interests through a system of structured choices.

Program Requirements - Class of 2026, 2027 and 2028

Foundation Course Requirements

Foundation/Core Course Requirements (Excluding Clinical Year Rotations)

| Code | Title | Hours |
|------------|--|-------|
| VTMED 5100 | The Animal Body (Foundation Course I) | 12 |
| VTMED 5701 | Veterinary Practice I | 1.5 |
| VTMED 5200 | Cell Biology and Genetics (Foundation Course II) | 6 |
| VTMED 5210 | (VTMED 5210 Course no longer offered.) | 2 |
| VTMED 5220 | Neuroanatomy | 2 |
| VTMED 5702 | Veterinary Practice: Ethics and Animal Care (Foundation Course VIIb) | 1.5 |
| VTMED 5300 | Function and Dysfunction: Part I (Foundation Course IIIa) | 9 |

| | | |
|------------|---|-----|
| VTMED 5310 | Function and Dysfunction: Part II (Foundation Course IIIb) | 7 |
| VTMED 5703 | Veterinary Practice II | 1 |
| VTMED 5400 | Host, Agent, and Defense (Foundation Course IV) | 12 |
| VTMED 5410 | Veterinary Parasitology | 2.5 |
| VTMED 5704 | Veterinary Practice III | 1 |
| VTMED 5500 | Animal Health and Disease: Part I (Foundation Course V) | 14 |
| VTMED 5510 | Animal Health and Disease: Part II | 20 |
| VTMED 5520 | Diagnostic Imaging | 2 |
| VTMED 5705 | Veterinary Practice: Public Health (Foundation Course VIIe) | 1.5 |
| VTMED 5706 | Veterinary Practice IV | 1.5 |
| VTMED 5612 | Fourth-Year Seminar | 1 |

Total Foundation/Core Course Credits Required (excluding clinical year rotations): 97.5

Elective Course Requirements (Excluding Clinical Year)

May choose any elective courses outside clinical rotation to meet requirements, requirement/limitations noted below.

| Code | Title | Hours |
|---|---|-------|
| Anatomy Elective | | |
| Select one of the following (required minimum 3 credits): | | 3 |
| VTMED 6100 | Anatomy of the Carnivore | |
| VTMED 6101 | Anatomy of the Horse | |
| VTMED 6102 | Anatomy of the Ruminant | |
| VTMED 6103 | Comparative Anatomy: Pattern and Function | |

Teaching, Special and Research Projects

| | | |
|------------|--|-------|
| VTMED 6897 | Teaching Projects in Veterinary Medicine | 0.5-3 |
| VTMED 6898 | Special Projects in Veterinary Medicine | 0.5-4 |
| VTMED 6899 | Research Projects in Veterinary Medicine | 0.5-4 |

Limit of 10 credits total, see semester and class year limits on application information.

Total Elective Course Credits Required (excluding clinical Year): 31

Foundation (Core) Clinical Rotations (2 Credits Each)

| Code | Title | Hours |
|------------|--|-------|
| VTMED 5600 | Ambulatory and Production Medicine | 2 |
| VTMED 5601 | Small Animal Community Practice | 2 |
| VTMED 5602 | Small Animal Medicine | 2 |
| VTMED 5603 | Small Animal Soft Tissue Surgery Service | 2 |
| VTMED 5604 | Large Animal Medicine Service | 2 |
| VTMED 5605 | Large Animal Surgery | 2 |
| VTMED 5606 | Anesthesiology Service | 2 |
| VTMED 5607 | Dermatology Service | 2 |
| VTMED 5608 | Ophthalmology Service | 2 |
| VTMED 5609 | Pathology Service | 2 |
| VTMED 5610 | Radiology Service | 2 |
| VTMED 5611 | Small Animal Clinical Emergency and Critical Care Medicine | 2 |
| VTMED 5613 | Small Animal Surgery Orthopedic Surgery Service | 2 |

Total Foundation/Core Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 26**Clinical Year Pathway Rotation Requirements (7 Blocks)**

Pathways are listed below. The makeup of the rotations for each is determined during the 2nd year.

¹ Once the pathway rotations are determined a student may revise up to three rotations if approved through the revision process.

- Small Animal
- Equine
- Mixed
- Exotic Pets/Small Animal
- Zoo/Wildlife
- Production

Total Pathway Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 14**Clinical Year Elective Rotation Requirements (3 Blocks)**

May be satisfied by repeating a core rotation or any elective rotations (maximum repeat 3 blocks)

Total Elective Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 6**Total Credits Required for Completion of Degree Requirements**

- Total Foundation/Core Course Credits Required (excluding clinical year rotations): 97.5
- Total Elective Course Credits Required (excluding clinical Year): 31
- Total Foundation/Core Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 26
- Total Pathway Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 14
- Total Elective Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 6

Total Credits: 174.5

Required Curriculum Milestones (4 Total)

The DVM program includes four Curriculum Milestones that each student must successfully complete before advancing to the next phase of the program and/or graduating. The three OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) Milestone exams are clinical skills assessments held at key points following relevant instruction. They ensure that students are competent in fundamental skills before they progress in the curriculum. The Fourth Year Milestone ensures that students meet performance expectations during their clinical rotation year and undertake any necessary remediation prior to graduation.

As degree requirements, the Milestones are not affiliated with a particular course. Rather, when successfully completed, the results are recorded on the student's transcript. To help students track their progress, audits of their degree requirements include the Milestones.

Milestone I

To satisfy this milestone students must effectively and efficiently demonstrate technical skills and professional reasoning abilities.

Milestone II

To complete this milestone students must effectively and efficiently demonstrate surgical skills.

Milestone III

To complete this milestone students must effectively and efficiently demonstrate technical skills and professional reasoning abilities.

Fourth Year Milestone

A student earns this milestone by successfully completing their clinical year requirements, including any required remediations assigned by the Clinical Assessment and Teaching Support Committee. Students who do not earn this milestone by the end of the clinical year will have up to 7 clinical rotation blocks to successfully complete their required remediation and earn the milestone. Students who do not earn this milestone within this time frame will be administratively withdrawn from the college with no opportunity to reapply or otherwise continue in the DVM program.

Program Requirements - Class of 2029**Foundation Course Requirements**

Foundation/Core Course Requirements (Excluding Clinical Year Rotations)

| Code | Title | Hours |
|------------|--|-------|
| VTMED 5100 | The Animal Body (Foundation Course I) | 13 |
| VTMED 5701 | Veterinary Practice I | 1.5 |
| VTMED 5200 | Cell Biology and Genetics (Foundation Course II) | 7 |
| VTMED 5220 | Neuroanatomy | 2 |
| VTMED 5702 | Veterinary Practice: Ethics and Animal Care (Foundation Course VIIb) | 1.5 |
| VTMED 5300 | Function and Dysfunction: Part I (Foundation Course IIIa) | 9 |
| VTMED 5310 | Function and Dysfunction: Part II (Foundation Course IIIb) | 7 |
| VTMED 5703 | Veterinary Practice II | 1 |
| VTMED 5400 | Host, Agent, and Defense (Foundation Course IV) | 12 |
| VTMED 5410 | Veterinary Parasitology | 2.5 |
| VTMED 5704 | Veterinary Practice III | 1 |
| VTMED 5500 | Animal Health and Disease: Part I (Foundation Course V) | 14 |
| VTMED 5510 | Animal Health and Disease: Part II | 20 |
| VTMED 5520 | Diagnostic Imaging | 2 |
| VTMED 5705 | Veterinary Practice: Public Health (Foundation Course VIe) | 1.5 |
| VTMED 5706 | Veterinary Practice IV | 1.5 |
| VTMED 5612 | Fourth-Year Seminar | 1 |

Total Foundation/Core Course Credits Required (excluding clinical year rotations): 97.5

Elective Course Requirements (Excluding Clinical Year)

May choose any elective courses outside clinical rotation to meet requirements, requirement/limitations noted below.

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Teaching, Special and Research Projects

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|------------|--|-------|
| VTMED 6897 | Teaching Projects in Veterinary Medicine | 0.5-3 |
| VTMED 6898 | Special Projects in Veterinary Medicine | 0.5-4 |
| VTMED 6899 | Research Projects in Veterinary Medicine | 0.5-4 |

Limit of 10 credits total, see semester and class year limits on application information.

Total Elective Course Credits Required (excluding clinical Year): 31

Foundation (Core) Clinical Rotations (2 Credits Each)

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| VTMED 5610 | Radiology Service | 2 |
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| VTMED 5613 | Small Animal Surgery Orthopedic Surgery Service | 2 |

Total Foundation/Core Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 26

Clinical Year Pathway Rotation Requirements (7 Blocks)

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Total Pathway Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 14

Clinical Year Elective Rotation Requirements (3 Blocks)

May be satisfied by repeating a core rotation or any elective rotations (maximum repeat 3 blocks)

Total Elective Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 6

Total Credits Required for Completion of Degree Requirements

- Total Foundation/Core Course Credits Required (excluding clinical year rotations): 97.5
- Total Elective Course Credits Required (excluding clinical Year): 31
- Total Foundation/Core Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 26
- Total Pathway Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 14
- Total Elective Clinical Year Rotation Requirements: 6

Total Credits: 174.5

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Administrative Requirements

- Payment of any outstanding amounts due the College of Veterinary Medicine or other units of Cornell University
- Completion of Exit Interview required of all financial aid recipients

Other Requirements

- To receive the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.) degree, candidates must successfully complete curricular requirements, pay all fees, and be recommended for graduation by the faculty of the college.
- Residency and Full Time Student Status (8 semesters/terms)

- Eight semesters (fall and spring) of full-time study is required. External transfer students are credited with one semester in residence for each full-time semester (or equivalent) earned at another institution. To satisfy a semester in residence a student must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credit hours. Carrying fewer than 12 credits will have financial aid implications, potential impacts for international student status and subject to academic review.
The DVM program is not eligible for pro-rated tuition or In Absentia status
- All graduation requirements for the DVM degree must be completed within six years of a student's initial registration in the DVM program. This requirement applies to all veterinary students except those participating in the DVM/PhD degree pathway (two years DVM, up to four years PhD, two years DVM total up to eight years of a student's initial registration in the DVM program).
- Maximum enrollment of 23.5 credits per semester.
- May not graduate with any outstanding incomplete or NGR grades.
- Final GPA of 2.0 or higher.

Reminders

- It is your responsibility to know the requirements for graduation and to complete them on time. You may check your progress towards degree completion using the "Academic Requirements" tab in student center. Be aware that courses with "R", "Incomplete" or "NGR" grades do not count.
- Complete any course(s) for which you receive a grade of "Incomplete" or "NGR" within the time specified by the course instructor and notify the CVM Registrar's Office, in writing, immediately upon completion. Then, check your grade record on Student Center a week or two later to confirm that the grade has been recorded. This is important since faculty members are entitled to sabbatical leave, retirement, and other absences from the college, and may not be around to help clean up your record the last minute before graduation.

University Graduation Requirements Requirements for All Students

In order to receive a Cornell degree, a student must satisfy academic and non-academic requirements.

Academic Requirements

A student's college determines degree requirements such as residency, number of credits, distribution of credits, and grade averages. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the specific major, degree, distribution, college, and graduation requirements for completing their chosen program of study. See the individual requirements listed by each college or school or contact the college registrar's office (<https://registrar.cornell.edu/service-resources/college-registrar-directory/>) for more information.

Non-academic Requirements

Conduct Matters. Students must satisfy any outstanding sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed or agreed to under the Student Code of Conduct (Code) or Policy 6.4. Where a formal complaint under the Code or Policy 6.4 is pending, the University will withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until the adjudication process set forth in those procedures is complete, including the satisfaction of any sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed.

Financial Obligations. Outstanding financial obligations will not impact the awarding of a degree otherwise earned or a student's ability to access their official transcript. However, the University may withhold issuing a diploma until any outstanding financial obligations owing to the University are satisfied.

Learning Outcomes

The Cornell D.V.M. graduate will demonstrate:

- An understanding of the scientific principles underlying veterinary medicine
- The basic clinical skills and attitudes necessary to care for the common domestic animals and other species entrusted to our stewardship
- Critical thinking as evidenced by successful problem solving
- Sound clinical judgment and medical decision-making skills
- An understanding of the interactions among animals, people, and the environment
- A commitment to professionalism, including a commitment to animal welfare and to following the best practices in relation to ethical, cultural, global, business management, and legal issues.
- Self-education and lifelong learning skills to promote professional growth
- An understanding of the limits of one's knowledge and skills and the ability to address those limits through effective use of sources of information and expertise

Program Calendar

Class of 2026

Fall 2025

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| August 25, 2025 | First Day of Term |
| August 25, 2025 | First Day of Instruction |
| December 14, 2025 | Last Day of Instruction |
| December 14, 2025 | Last Day of Term |

Winter 2026

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| December 15, 2025 | First Day of Term |
| December 15, 2025 | First Day of Instruction |
| January 18, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| January 18, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Spring 2026

| Date | Event |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| January 19, 2026 | First Day of Term |
| January 19, 2026 | First Day of Instruction |
| May 17, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| May 17, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Class of 2027

Fall 2025

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| August 18, 2025 | First Day of Term |
| August 18, 2025 | First Day of Instruction |
| September 1, 2025 | Labor Day - No Classes |

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| October 10-12, 2025 | Fall Break |
| November 22-30, 2025 | Thanksgiving Break |
| December 17, 2025 | Last Day of Instruction |
| December 17, 2025 | Last Day of Term |

Winter 2026 (Not Required)

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| December 18, 2025 | First Day of Term |
| December 18, 2025 | First Day of Instruction |
| January 16, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| January 16, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Spring 2026

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| January 20, 2026 | First Day of Term |
| January 20, 2026 | First Day of Instruction |
| March 14-22, 2026 | Spring Break |
| May 15, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| May 15, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Summer 2026

| Date | Event |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| May 18, 2026 | First Day of Term |
| May 18, 2026 | First Day of Instruction |
| August 23, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| August 23, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Class of 2028**Fall 2025**

| Date | Event |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| August 18, 2025 | First Day of Term |
| August 18, 2025 | First Day of Instruction |
| September 1, 2025 | Labor Day - No Classes |
| September 25-28, 2025 | Fall Break |
| November 22-30, 2025 | Thanksgiving Break |
| December 17, 2025 | Last Day of Instruction |
| December 17, 2025 | Last Day of Term |

Winter 2026 (Not Required)

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| December 18, 2025 | First Day of Term |
| December 18, 2025 | First Day of Instruction |
| January 16, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| January 16, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Spring 2026

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| January 20, 2026 | First Day of Term |
| January 20, 2026 | First Day of Instruction |
| March 14-22, 2026 | Spring Break |
| May 15, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| May 15, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Summer 2026 (Not Required)

| Date | Event |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| May 18, 2026 | First Day of Term |
| May 18, 2026 | First Day of Instruction |
| August 14, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| August 14, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Class of 2029**Fall 2025**

| Date | Event |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| August 18, 2025 | First Day of Term |
| August 18, 2025 | First Day of Instruction |
| September 1, 2025 | Labor Day - No Classes |
| October 10-12, 2025 | Fall Break |
| November 22-30, 2025 | Thanksgiving Break |
| December 17, 2025 | Last Day of Instruction |
| December 17, 2025 | Last Day of Term |

Winter 2026 (Not Required)

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| December 18, 2025 | First Day of Term |
| December 18, 2025 | First Day of Instruction |
| January 13, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| January 13, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Spring 2026

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| January 14, 2026 | First Day of Term |
| January 14, 2026 | First Day of Instruction |
| March 14-22, 2026 | Spring Break |
| May 15, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| May 15, 2026 | Last Day of Term |

Summer 2026

| Date | Event |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| May 18, 2026 | First Day of Term |
| May 18, 2026 | First Day of Instruction |
| August 14, 2026 | Last Day of Instruction |
| August 14, 2026 | Last Day of Term |