LSU Vet Med Graduate Applicant Guide

Biomedical and Veterinary Medical Sciences MS & PhD Programs

Before You Apply

LSU Vet Med offers MS and PhD training through the **Biomedical and Veterinary Medical Sciences (BVMS)** graduate program. Graduate research is conducted across three academic departments:

- Comparative Biomedical Sciences (CBS)
- Pathobiological Sciences (PBS)
- Veterinary Clinical Sciences (VCS)

For students applying to the graduate program in **CBS or PBS**, you may begin by identifying a research area or faculty member that aligns with your interests rather than selecting a department first. Your research interests and prospective faculty mentor can help determine which department is the best fit for your application. **Applicants to CBS and PBS apply to the department and are not required to have a faculty mentor identified or approved before submitting their application.** Students applying to the graduate program in **VCS**, independent of a clinical residency, must identify a mentor in advance and receive a letter of support from that mentor. The mentor accepts responsibility for funding the student's graduate assistantship.

Admitted students may be funded through the School of Veterinary Medicine, their department, and/or their major professor once chosen. General information regarding preparing your application is available on the LSU Graduate School website. Below is additional information specific to the LSU Vet Med BVMS graduate program.

1. Explore Research Areas and Faculty

Before beginning your application, review LSU Vet Med research areas and faculty whose work aligns with your interests.

The BVMS program includes research in areas such as:

- Cancer Biology/Oncology
- Cardiovascular Science
- Cell and Molecular Biology
- Clinical Sciences

- Environmental Health
- Immunology
- Infectious Disease and Pathogenesis
- Neuroscience
- Pharmacology
- Physiology
- Toxicology
- Zoological and Wildlife Medicine

Students may pursue MS or PhD research across the faculty research areas represented within the program.

2. Do I Need to Identify a Faculty Mentor Before Applying?

CBS and PBS: No. A good match between the students' research interests and faculty mentorship is an important part of admission, so applicants should identify research interests and potential faculty mentors prior to applying. However, applicants may be admitted and complete laboratory rotations before selecting a major professor.

VCS: Yes. Applicants who are not clinical residents must identify and contact a VCS faculty mentor before applying. VCS students are admitted directly into a specific faculty laboratory, and the identified faculty mentor must provide a letter of support for the application. This letter may serve as one of the required letters of recommendation or may be submitted as an additional letter of support.

3. Review the Basic Admission Requirements

Applicants must meet LSU Graduate School admission requirements. The BVMS Graduate Program Handbook establishes a minimum **3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale** and applicable English-language proficiency requirements for applicants who are required to demonstrate English proficiency. Applicants with an appropriate four-year undergraduate degree may apply directly to the PhD program; a prior master's degree is not required.

The BVMS program also requires:

- Three letters of recommendation from individuals who can speak to your academic preparation, research experience, professional abilities, or potential for graduate study.

- **A personal statement** describing:
    - How your background has prepared you for graduate study;
    - Your research interests; and
    - Your career goals
- **An interview** with Graduate Faculty in the relevant department. For applicants located far from Louisiana, the interview may be conducted online.

4. GRE and English-Language Requirements

GRE: The GRE is not required for admission to the LSU Vet Med Biomedical and Veterinary Medical Sciences (BVMS) graduate program.

English-language proficiency: Applicants who are required to demonstrate English-language proficiency must meet the LSU Graduate School's current minimum score requirements. The Graduate School accepts several methods of demonstrating English proficiency, and requirements may change over time. Applicants should review the LSU Graduate School website for the current accepted tests, alternative proofs of proficiency, exemptions, and minimum score requirements.

For LSU Vet Med BVMS applicants, the accepted English-language proficiency tests are:

- **TOEFL**
- **IELTS**

Applicants should review the current minimum score requirements for these tests available on the LSU Graduate School website. Other English-language proficiency tests listed by the Graduate School are not accepted for the LSU Vet Med BVMS graduate program.

5. Application Deadlines

October 15

Applicants seeking consideration for **LSU Graduate School fellowships** should submit their application by this date.

December 15

Priority deadline for fall applicants seeking **college- or department-sponsored assistantship/fellowship consideration**.

June 1

Application deadline associated with **spring matriculation**.

Most department-funded admissions occur for the fall semester. Spring admission may be available when faculty funding and mentorship opportunities are available. Applications are evaluated only once all required materials have been received. They are accepted at any time, although available funding is limited outside of the fall priority applicant period. The Biomedical and Veterinary Medical Sciences Graduate Program Handbook recommends beginning the process at least **six months before your anticipated enrollment date**.

6. Understanding Graduate Funding

Admission to the graduate program **does not guarantee stipend support**. However, LSU Vet Med and the student's major professor will make every effort to provide continued support throughout the program for all students who are initially offered a fellowship position.

Graduate funding may come from:

- An individual faculty mentor or research grant;
- A department;
- LSU Vet Med fellowship;
- LSU Graduate School fellowship;
- Teaching assistantships in certain areas; or
- External fellowships.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss potential funding arrangements with prospective faculty mentors and the Graduate Advisor for their department of interest.

7. Prepare Your Application Materials

Before starting the LSU Graduate School application, applicants should have:

- Unofficial transcripts from all previous institutions;
- CV or résumé;
- Personal statement;
- Contact information for three recommenders;
- Intended degree (MS or PhD);
- Intended LSU Vet Med department (CBS, PBS, or VCS);

- Intended enrollment term;
- Information about research interests and prospective faculty mentors.

For VCS applicants: Identify and contact a VCS faculty mentor before applying and obtain a letter of support from that faculty member. The letter may serve as one of the required letters of recommendation or may be submitted as an additional letter of support.

Writing sample: The BVMS program does not currently list a separate writing sample as a standard program-wide requirement. Applicants should contact the departmental Graduate Advisor to confirm and follow any additional instructions provided.

8. Select the Correct Program in the LSU Application

When completing the LSU Graduate School application, select the following pathway:

On-Campus → Master's or Doctoral → School of Veterinary Medicine → Biomedical and Veterinary Medical Sciences → CBS/PBS/VCS → Intended Semester

9. Applicants Pursuing a Residency + Graduate Degree

Applicants who hold a DVM or equivalent degree may pursue graduate study alongside a clinical residency. Admission to the residency/house officer program and admission to the BVMS graduate program are separate processes, and applicants must be accepted to each independently.

Residency-specific application requirements are handled through the applicable residency or house officer process and are not part of the standard BVMS graduate application. Requirements vary by residency program. Applicants should contact the applicable residency/house officer program directly for current information regarding concurrent graduate enrollment.

10. Before You Submit

Before certifying your application, confirm:

- MS or PhD selection
- Biomedical and Veterinary Medical Sciences program
- Correct department: CBS, PBS, or VCS
- Intended enrollment term

- Academic history
- Transcript uploads
- CV/résumé
- Personal statement
- Recommender information
- All required application responses

11. What Happens After You Apply?

Once all required application materials have been received, the application is reviewed by the LSU Office of Graduate Admissions. Applications meeting the minimum requirements are then forwarded to appropriate departmental Graduate Faculty for review. Applicants may be invited to interview prior to a final decision. All applicants will be notified of the decision following completion of the review process.

Ready? Apply Now.