MASTER OF VETERINARY SCIENCE

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Preface

Graduate students at the University of Illinois are admitted in the Graduate College which has oversight of academic and administrative policies for all master's degree programs, including the Master of Veterinary Science (MVS). This handbook is intended as a reference for MVS students, faculty, and staff regarding policies reflected in the Graduate College Handbook and Student Code. Any discrepancies between this handbook and the Graduate College Handbook or Student Code should be deferred to the Graduate College and Student Code policies.

The Master of Veterinary Science (MVS) degree is a college-level degree program administered by the College of Veterinary Medicine administrative staff led by the Associate Dean for Online Programs and Extension. Courses and course content are overseen by the academic department hosting the course.

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Master of Veterinary Science Program Overview

The degree program was designed at the intersection of animal health, data analytics, and business management to create the next generation of leaders.

Program Objectives

Students should expect the following outcomes upon completion of the program:

- Critically analyze processes by applying a systems-based approach
- Develop thoughtful and methodical approaches to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of information
- Design and share robust solutions to address specific problems
- Build a professional, global network of peers in related industries

Program Format

The MVS degree is a 32-credit-hour program. The program is offered in both an online and residential format. The online program is part-time and 100% online. The residential program is full-time and a hybrid of online and in-person coursework.

Courses are based on clinical and business cases. Most courses in the program are three credit hours. Students should anticipate spending 10 hours/week outside of class time for each 3- 3-credit hour course. The program culminates in a capstone project in which students are asked to apply their coursework and knowledge to design, implement, and evaluate an innovative solution to improve an identified problem.

Students will also receive mentoring and academic coaching from faculty and staff in the program.

Admissions & Orientation

Application Requirements

The MVS program only admits students for the Fall semester. The application deadline for fall admittance is in late spring (See website for exact dates).

Students must have a bachelor's degree (in any field) and an overall GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale to be considered for the MVS degree. GPAs below 3.0 will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The application must include three professional references, all college transcripts, a resume, a personal statement, a TOEFL score if required (Graduate College English Proficiency Requirements), and an application fee assessed and received by the Graduate College. International students should also refer to this page for more information on additional requirements needed to complete the application.

Getting Started

Upon admission to the MVS program, newly admitted students will need to accept their offer and complete several tasks to prepare for the start of their first semester:

- Complete all relevant steps on the Graduate Student Quick Guide
- Review new student online onboarding training and program handbook
- Attend a new student orientation session
- Complete registration for the first semester of courses

Students will receive information via email from MVS program staff on how to complete the onboarding, orientation, and registration steps above. Students should contact ilearning@vetmed.illinois.edu if they have any questions while completing the tasks above.

Technology Requirements

Students completing our MVS program should be mindful of accessibility to online resources. To take full advantage of our program, each student should acquire the following technical resources prior to beginning our program:

- Reliable internet access
- Audio system for listening to lectures
- Webcam and microphone
- Microsoft Office 365 Suite applications (free download available to students)

- Adobe Acrobat reader (free download available)

Find a full list of computer/technical requirements here. Technical support is provided to all students. You can reach them via email (consult@illinois.edu) or by visiting Technology Services.

MVS Program Requirements

Degree Requirements

Students are required to complete at minimum 32 credit hours of coursework with a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA to graduate. The MVS degree has three curricular requirements:

- [VCM 565: Biostatistics, Information Management, and Data Analytics for Livestock Production Systems](#) (4 credit hours)
- [VCM 595: Integrative Learning Experience](#) - Capstone project (8 credit hours)
Approved electives (20 credit hours total, 12 credit hours must be at the 500-level)

The MVS degree allows for 20 credit hours of electives aligning the degree with each student's educational background. The recommended paths are defined by two categories.

1. People who hold a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree (DVM or equivalent) from an institution accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). A list of these colleges is located on the [AVMA website.](#)
2. People who do not hold a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM or equivalent) degree from an institution accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

Recommended Courses for students who do not hold a DVM degree

Core Elective Courses: 15 credit hours*
VCM 505: Introduction to Veterinary Science (3 hours)
VCM 507: Veterinary Form and Function (3 hours)
VCM 509: Biology of Veterinary Pathogens (3 hours)
VCM 513: Science of Health Homeostasis (3 hours)
VCM 514: Science of Health Evaluation (3 hours)
Required Courses: 12 credit hours *
VCM 565: Biostatistics, Information Management, and Data Analytics (4 hours)
VCM 595: Integrative Learning Experience Section I (4 hours)
VCM 595: Integrative Learning Experience Section II (4 hours)
Elective Courses: choose 8 credit hours
See a complete listing of elective course options on our [website](#) or schedule a call with your advisor.

Recommended Courses for students who hold a DVM degree

Required Courses: 12 credit hours *
VCM 565: Biostatistics, Information Management, and Data Analytics (4 hours)
VCM 595: Integrative Learning Experience Section I (4 hours)
VCM 595: Integrative Learning Experience Section II (4 hours)
Core Elective Courses: choose 20 credit hours   See a complete listing of elective course options on our [website](#) or schedule a call with your advisor.

EVP Alumni Credits

MVS students who attended the Executive Veterinary Program before the start of January 2024 can receive credit in several PATH courses from completion of the EVP content. While in the MVS program, EVP alumni can register for the following courses (11 credits) to count toward their VCM electives requirement:

- PATH 575 - Vet Info Tech/Computer App
- PATH 576 - Communication Vet Consultation
- PATH 577 - Vet Leadership Organ Behavior
- PATH 578 - Veterinary Business Management
- PATH 579 - Adv Concepts in Swine Health Med 1

Capstone Overview and Requirements

The Master of Veterinary Science (MVS) Integrative Learning Experience provides students with an opportunity to synthesize, integrate, and apply knowledge and skills acquired in MVS coursework. Each student will work on a capstone project that integrates theory, practical experience, and draws upon the student's originality and creativity to solve a problem in their field of interest. The project must have the appropriate scope for the length of time available for research, and apply their skills in critical thinking, research, analytics, writing, and communicating. To complete the capstone project, students will register for VCM 595 I (4 credit hours) and VCM 595 II (4 credit hours). Students must complete 15 credit hours before registering for VCM 595 I and successfully completion of VCM 595 I must register for VCM 595 II. Registration for both VCM 595 I and II require departmental approval.

Advising and Registration

Advising

Students will have an academic advisor during their time in the program.

The academic advisor assists students with questions about orientation, course registration, academic progress, degree completion timeline, campus policies, and serves as a liaison to faculty. Advisors will conduct academic progress reviews at least once a year The MVS course guide will be used by both the advisor and students to review academic progress

Time Tickets

The course registration cycle starts before the beginning of each semester. All students are assigned a time ticket, which is the earliest time to register for courses. Students may register or modify their course schedule without penalty at any time after their time ticket, up through the day before the first day of classes. Students are encouraged to register as soon as possible in case limited seats are offered for a specific course.

Course Registration

Course registration is processed through the Student Self-Service website. The Office of the Registrar is the steward of official student academic records and is responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and security of those records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Upon registering, you are responsible for tuition payment unless you initiate changes to your registration status. If you wish to cancel your registration and thus avoid payment of tuition and fee charges, you must do so by 11:59 pm (US Central Time) on the last business day prior to the first day of instruction. To cancel registration, visit the Graduate College website or contact your advisor for instructions.

Registration Holds

Academic offices may place holds on your record, cancel your registration, or withdraw you from classes for academic reasons, funds owed to the University, or judicial reasons. Some holds may also prevent you from receiving transcripts, grades, or processing your graduation requirements, in addition to preventing any registration activity. If you have a hold on your record, resolve it with the appropriate campus office as soon as possible.

Student Expectations

Student Code

Students are a member of the University community and thus are held to the student rights and responsibilities of the University of Illinois Student Code. The Student Code contains rules, policies, and procedures regarding student conduct.

Professionalism and Respect

As a professional degree program, students should conduct themselves professionally and respectfully via email, in forums, live sessions, and any group-related activity. Interacting with peers and instructors is critical to a rich and engaging experience. Students who take advantage of forums to connect with peers understand that developing professional, working relationships with your instructors, teaching assistants, and cohort is integral to success in the MVS program.

Personal Responsibility

Students should take personal responsibility for their learning. Students are expected to be punctual, be prepared, participate, attend required program activities, and utilize office hours as needed. The student must always contact instructors in advance to seek approval for any accommodation they may need (i.e., class absence, due date extension).

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity and to actively participate in creating this type of learning environment.

Consistent with University policy, cheating is considered a serious offense. Cheating is using material from other students or other sources and claiming it as your own. Plagiarism is also considered a serious offense. Plagiarism is the use of othersideas and/or words without acknowledging the source of that information. Resources must always be cited appropriately. Regardless of the student's intent or awareness of an infraction, penalties for plagiarism are enforced. Penalties for cheating and plagiarism may include failure of the course or dismissal from the University.

For more information about academic integrity, see Article 1 – Student Rights and Responsibilities or visit the Students' Quick Reference Guide to Academic Integrity.

Academic Progress Policies

Approval process for courses not listed in our program

MVS students are required to complete 20 hours of graduate-level electives (12 must be at the 500+ level) to earn their degree. While the VCM department offers many courses to fulfill this requirement, we understand that students may want to take a related course outside of our program. We recommend that students reach out to their academic advisor to inquire if a course in another department may count toward their 20 hours of electives before enrolling.

Approval process for credit hours taken as non-degree student

Graduate students may request a transfer of credit within the University to be counted toward a graduate degree. The credits cannot transfer if they were applied toward another degree.

To request a transfer of credit, a student must submit a petition. There is no limit on the number of hours that a student may request to be transferred. It is at the department's discretion to determine if credits are approved. The full policy can be found on page 27 of the Graduate College Student Handbook.

Approval process to transfer external credit hours

Graduate students may request to transfer credit earned from another institution to be counted toward a graduate degree. Credit that can be transferred must be:

- Graduate level credit
- Has not previously been applied toward a degree or other transcript credential
- From an accredited institution
- the student has achieved a grade of B or better
- Deemed relative to degree program objectives by the director of the program.

A student must submit a petition along with the list of materials found here to the Graduate College. Students must also provide a syllabus (course objective, learning objectives, module topics) from the institution. Students may only transfer a maximum of 12 hours. It is at the department's discretion to determine if external credits may transfer. The full policy can be found on page 26-27 of the Graduate College Student Handbook.

Auditing a course

Students must obtain approval to audit a course. Auditing a course allows a student to access the course material but not participate in any of the course activities (i.e., assignments, exams, discussion posts). The course will not count for any credit, and the student cannot take it in the future for a grade.

Students must complete the Auditor's Permit form and obtain the instructor's signature prior to submitting the form to the Graduate College. When the form is approved, the course will show on a student's academic record as 'AU' in place of a grade.

A fee of $15 will be applied to the student's account to audit the course.

For more information about audit policy, see the student code here.

Course or semester withdrawal

We understand that extenuating circumstances may require a student to leave our program. Our department follows the University's standard schedule for deadlines to drop courses. If a student drops or withdrawals from coursework during a semester, they may still owe tuition for any/all courses. This also impacts what, if any, refund a student may receive. For more information on the University's refund schedule, see the Office of the Registrar.

If students would like to drop one or more of their courses prior to the first day of the class in which they enrolled, students can use Student Self-Service. To drop all courses, students must cancel their registration prior to the first day of the semester in which they are enrolled. Students can complete the cancellation by selecting "Cancel Registration' in Self-Service.

A late drop of a course means dropping a class after the set University academic deadlines. These deadlines vary based on the duration of the course (i.e., 1st 8 week, 2nd 8 week, full semester). Students cannot use Self-Service to drop the course. They must complete the Late Registration & Late Course Change form and submit it to the Graduate College which will then remove them from the class. Based on the duration, students should refer to the academic calendar to determine if the course they drop will be removed from their transcript or show with a grade of "W" indicating a late withdrawal of the course.

A semester withdrawal means dropping all courses for the term after the first day of instruction. If students want to withdraw from an entire semester after the first day of classes, they must fill out the Withdrawal/Cancellation Form and email it to ilearningvetmed@illinois.edu.

Incomplete course process

Students also can request an incomplete grade for a course at the end of the semester. An incomplete grade allows an extension of time for the student to satisfy the course requirements after the semester ends. It is at the instructor's discretion to decide if an incomplete grade is allowed and what amount of time is allowed for the student to complete the course for a letter grade. See page 23 of the Graduate Student Handbook for university-wide deadlines for " I" grades. If a student needs an additional time extension beyond the instructor and university-wide deadlines, they must complete a petition.

Making Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students have a maximum of 5 years from the semester they start the program to complete the degree. Progress toward the degree is contingent on each students making satisfactory academic progress, which includes:

- Maintaining a minimum cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0
- Maintaining a semester GPA of 2.25 each semester
- Satisfactory performance in non-letter graded coursework
- Meeting program standards of honesty, integrity, and professionalism

Failure to make satisfactory academic progress may result in a student being placed on academic warning or being dropped from the University.

Academic Warning

A student whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 after any semester will be placed on academic warning for the program. To maintain good standing in the graduate program a student must have a cumulative grade point average in their MS graduate coursework of at least 3.0 (A = 4.0). Students have until the end of the following semester to raise their GPA to a 3.0 or higher.

New students who are admitted to the program on probation (enter the program with a GPA less than a 3.0) and who do not raise their GPA to at or above a 3.0 are subject to being dropped from the University.

To graduate, students must have a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Academic or voluntary leave

If a student would like to take a temporary leave of absence from the program, they must notify their academic advisor or email: ilearningvet@illinois.edu. If students do not want the semester they leave the program to count against the 5-year time limit, they will need to complete the Request for Academic Leave of Absence Form before the first day of classes for the term of non-enrollment. Graduate students are eligible for a total of two terms of approved academic leave. If the student did not complete the request for academic leave, they may be prevented from reenrolling or subject to new degree requirements.

If a student has not been enrolled within the last calendar year, they will need to receive re-entry approval from the MVS program office. When attempting to return to the program, students should email ilearningvet@illinois.edu to see if they need to complete a petition or new application. You can find more information about leave and re-entry policies here.

Dropped from program

If a student is dropped from the MVS program, they can petition for reinstatement through the Graduate College [petition](#) process. Students who are terminated from the program must take an unofficial leave of absence from the program for the following semester (Fall or Spring) prior to attempting to re-enroll in the program.

Procedure for Review of Alleged Capricious Grading

Students with grievances regarding capricious grading should begin by discussing their concern with their instructor. If the instructor is unavailable or the issue is not resolved, the student should contact the Academic Dean of the program. All grievances received by staff are forwarded to the program's academic dean. The academic dean reviews the grievance with the student to determine if the claim meets the University's formal review of alleged capricious grading criteria. If the grievance meets University criteria and the student chooses to pursue formal processes, the academic dean forwards the grievance to the program's grievance committee.

Capricious grading constitutes any of the following:

- The assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than performance in the course
- The assignment of a grade to a particular student by more exacting or demanding standards than were applied to other students registered for the same credit in that course
- The assignment of a grade representing a substantial departure from the instructor's previously announced standards.

For more information on the University's grievance policies, please see the [The Student Code](#)

Grievances

In the event a graduate student believes a decision or behavior is inappropriate and adversely affects the student's status, we will follow the Graduate College's formal grievance procedure. Examples include:

- Failure to follow a departmental or Graduate College policy in a manner that results in significant prejudice against the student.
- Failure to follow departmental or Graduate College procedures for assessing degree milestones such as examinations.
- Improper termination from a program
- Requiring personal services unrelated to academic duties
- Retaliation for exercising grievance rights.

For information on filing a grievance, please see the Graduate College Handbook policy 9 Grievance Policy and Procedures

Important Resources and Links

College Resources

College of Veterinary Medicine: https://vetmed.illinois.edu

Master of Veterinary Sciences (MVS) Homepage: https://online.vetmed.illinois.edu

College of Veterinary Medicine Library: https://www.library.illinois.edu/vex/

UIUC Canvas page: https://canvas.illinois.edu

Campus Resources

Graduate College Handbook: https://grad.illinois.edu/handbooks-policies

Academic Calendar: https://senate.illinois.edu/a_calendar.asp

Campus Technology Services: https://techservices.illinois.edu

Career Center: http://www.careercenter.illinois.edu

Center for Teaching Excellence (CITL): http://citl.illinois.edu

Code of Student Conduct: http://studentcode.illinois.edu

Counseling Center: https://counselingcenter.illinois.edu

Disability Resource and Educational Services (DRES): http://www.disability.illinois.edu

Grievance Policies: https://grad.illinois.edu/grievepolicies/principles

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS): https://isss.illinois.edu/

Office of Admissions and Records: http://registrar.illinois.edu

Office of Equal Opportunity and Access: http://diversity.illinois.edu

Office of Minority Student Affairs: http://www.omsa.illinois.edu

Office of Student Financial Aid: http://osfa.illinois.edu

Office of the Registrar: http://www.registrar.illinois.edu

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation: http://research.illinois.edu

Student Self-Service: https://apps.uillinois.edu/selfservice

The Office of Student Conflict Resolution: http://www.osja.illinois.edu

University of Illinois Convocation: http://commencement.illinois.edu