

## INTRODUCTION TO THE VETERINARY SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS

Applying to veterinary school is a very manageable process, so long as you are well organized. You will need to plan ahead, and keep track of the procedures you have to follow and deadlines you have to meet.

We are here to guide you. However, you must realize that there is no magic involved in applying to vet school. You must assume primary responsibility and see that you follow the appropriate steps.

Veterinary schools allow—**but do not require**—applicants to have a letter from their undergraduate institution’s pre-health committee. At Penn, this committee is called the **Health Professions Advisory Board (HPAB)**, and is composed of administrators and faculty from across the university, together with your pre-health advisors at Career Services. The committee letter at Penn (better known as the **HPAB letter**) is essentially a cover letter. It will be sent to the veterinary schools attached to one of the individual letters of recommendation that you will obtain (so that you can still include the required three individual letters of recommendation). Because our HPAB letter is detailed enough to be longer than one page, it does have to be mailed to VMCAS, rather than submitted electronically.

As a cover letter, the HPAB letter serves several purposes: it introduces you to the vet school admissions committees, reviews all of your strengths and accomplishments, and advocates for your candidacy.

Different schools of veterinary medicine have different attitudes and policies toward “committee letters,” which is what the HPAB letter is considered. It is a good idea to check the policies of the schools you have in mind.

We, your pre-health advisors, are the ones who actually compose the HPAB letter, and we pride ourselves on being able to offer all Penn students and alumni a thorough, detailed, and individualized recommendation. Because of the large number of students who apply to health professions schools every year, we have developed a system of procedures that enable us to accommodate everyone who needs an HPAB letter, and meets our deadlines.

Here, in brief, are the steps you will need to take to obtain an HPAB letter:

1. Attend the **mandatory** Applicants’ Workshop and open a Credentials File in the Career Services Office.
2. Schedule a one-hour “Advisor Interview” with a pre-health advisor following your Applicants’ Workshop (make sure to specify that you are scheduling an hour-long Advisor Interview, not a regular appointment).
3. Meet with your Health Professions Advisory Board member for an “HPAB interview” following your Advisor Interview.
4. Have **3** appropriate letters of recommendation, with VMCAS forms, in your Career Services Credentials File by **June 1**.
5. Provide us with a **draft** copy of your VMCAS application (see page 7) for Fall 2010 admission by **June 1**. This is just for our records; you will have to submit your completed application to VMCAS after June 1.
6. Submit to our office your **List of Recommenders form** (listing your 3 recommenders), by **June 4**.

## **OPENING A CREDENTIALS FILE**

The Credentials Service, housed in Career Services, serves as a permanent repository for your letters of recommendation. Following your Applicant Workshop, simply come to the reception desk at the front of Career Services, and ask to open a Credentials File. Alumni not on campus can print out the registration form from the Credentials Service web site and fax or mail it in. See also our section on page 7 on letters of recommendation.

You must have letters on file if you want us to write an HPAB letter for you. If you are not going through the HPAB process, there is no need for your recommenders to put letters on file in Credentials—they can submit them directly, electronically. See the Letters of Recommendation section on page 5 of this manual.

## THE ADVISOR INTERVIEW

To accommodate everyone, we require each student to contact our office (215-898-1789) within 48 hours of the Applicant Workshop, to schedule an Advisor Interview. Please schedule the interview for the earliest feasible date, and certainly before the end of April. If necessary we can meet in May with alumni only. The meeting enables your advisor to get to know you and gather information that will help in writing the HPAB letter.

### You must bring 6 items to your Advisor Interview:

- 1) **TRANSCRIPT:** Unofficial copies of your Penn transcript are available for free through Penn-in-Touch. We also need unofficial copies of transcripts from any other schools where you completed college-level courses.
- 2) **EXPANDED RÉSUMÉ:** Please bring a typed copy of your expanded résumé. A sample can be found on page 22 of this manual. Note that typically an expanded résumé should fill at least 2 pages. It is essential that you write a thorough résumé that outlines all your post-secondary activities and accomplishments in detail so that we have the information we need to write a comprehensive letter. When listing jobs and activities, be sure to indicate the duration (e.g., academic years 2006-08; summers 2007, 2008; or Fall 2007) and intensity (e.g. Camera Club: average commitment – 3 hours per week; Dr. X's Laboratory: Summer 2008 – 40 hours per week, Academic Year 2007-8 – 10 hours per week).  
  
This expanded résumé will also be helpful to you as you complete your veterinary school applications.
- 3) **PHOTO:** A snapshot or candid photo is fine. We don't need an expensive portrait photo. This is just to help us remember you as well as possible.
- 4) **PERSONAL STATEMENT:** Please bring a printed-out draft of your personal statement. For more on the personal statement, see our section on page 7.
- 5) **QUESTIONNAIRE:** The Questionnaire is designed to help you begin thinking about your application, and prepare for your advisor and HPAB interviews. We like to see thoughtful answers to these questions to learn more about you, and to help you organize your thoughts about yourself. **Please print out your responses on a separate sheet.**
- 6) **BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, PHYSICS, MATH (BCPM) GPA FOR PENN COURSES:** While veterinary schools do not make a separate BCPM GPA calculation, they will probably pay particular attention to your science and math (including statistics) grades when evaluating your application. For your own reference, you can figure out your BCPM GPA by using the GPA calculator on Penn-in-Touch. And please use the worksheet in the supplemental Health Professions Applicants' Forms Handout to **list the courses** that you have included in your BCPM GPA, as well as the BCPM GPA itself.

## **THE HPAB INTERVIEW**

You will be assigned an HPAB interviewer by e-mail about a week after your Advisor Interview. Realize that we try to ensure that we do not assign you to someone whom you know. Within one week after receiving the HPAB assignment by e-mail, you must contact your HPAB member directly to schedule an appointment for the interview. It is **your responsibility** to contact your HPAB member to schedule a mutually convenient time. You must have completed your HPAB interview by May 1.

Please bring a copy of your résumé to your HPAB interview, and dress as though you were going to a vet school interview. You will meet with your HPAB member only once.

One last note: please remember to thank your HPAB interviewer for generously volunteering his/her time.

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

By June 1, you must have **at least** 3 appropriate letters of recommendation in your Credentials File. Letters of Recommendation forms are available at the Career Services reception desk. After designating whether or not to waive your rights, give the form to the individual and have him/her return it directly to the Credentials Service in our office.

Generally, two of these letters of recommendation should be from your teachers; certainly, at least one of these two academic recommendations must be from a member of the University of Pennsylvania standing faculty (i.e., Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor). You must also give your recommender a VMCAS recommendation form to complete, in addition to the Career Services form.

Generally, the remaining letter of recommendation should be from someone who has supervised your veterinary experience—or, in the case of Penn, for example, must actually be from a veterinarian.

You can find a link to the Letter of Recommendation form here: <http://www.aavmc.org/vmcas/evaluations.htm> (find the link labeled “evaluation form”).

That site also provides valuable advice on sending letters through VMCAS—including advice about “committee letters” (which refers to our HPAB letter for these purposes). Our committee letters must still be mailed, not sent electronically. This is because our letters are usually detailed enough to be more than one page long, and so can’t be accepted under the limitations of the VMCAS eLOR (electronic letters of recommendation) system.

The above procedures apply only if you are getting an HPAB letter—if not, you can have your recommenders submit their letters electronically to VMCAS, and there will be no need for a VMCAS recommendation form. Veterinary schools differ in their requirements about recommendations—some might require more than one from a vet, and some require only one academic letter; it’s a good idea to check the policies for the schools in which you know you are interested.

If you are applying to schools that do not participate in VMCAS, you should collect those schools' recommendation forms. Ask those who supervised your veterinary experience to complete those school-specific recommendation forms and send them with a narrative recommendation on their letterhead to your Career Services Credentials File. Please provide them with stamped envelopes, addressed to the Credentials Office. When we duplicate your academic letters of reference, we can attach the appropriate veterinary reference forms for each of the schools, producing packets that are designed for each of the schools to which you are applying.

Please remember that, if we are writing an HPAB letter for you, you are responsible to see that your letters of recommendation are in your file. You can find out which references have been scanned by checking your online data through the Credentials section of the Career Services web site: [www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/credentials](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/credentials)

It is possible, if you are not applying through Penn’s HPAB process, simply to register your recommenders through the VMCAS web site and have them submit their recommendations directly.

## **THE GRE**

For many veterinary schools, you are required to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). The GRE is a computer-based exam, and can be taken throughout the academic year at Thomson Prometric testing centers. For details, and to register, see the GRE web site at [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org).

As you may likely know, many students take review/test prep courses, although they are very costly. Others make use of software or study guides and study on their own time and schedule. Some of these resources are available in the Career Services library.

Most vet schools will also accept the MCAT, if you happen to have taken that. Some vet schools may require GRE subject test(s) in addition to the GRE general test. You should check carefully well in advance so that, if necessary, you can schedule such tests in good time depending on each school's requirement.

You must have scores released to each of the schools to which you are applying. You can either designate schools at the time you register for the test and/or ask for score reports to be sent to schools after you have taken the test.

## THE CENTRAL APPLICATION: VMCAS

The Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) uses VMCAS (Veterinary Medical College Application Service), a web-based central application. However, three U.S. veterinary schools do not participate in VMCAS: Texas A&M, Tufts, and Tuskegee. There are also two Canadian veterinary schools (Université de Montreal and University of Saskatchewan) that do not participate in VMCAS. Students wishing to apply to any of these schools must contact them directly for their application.

The majority of the schools require applicants to use the VMCAS. Some of the 22 participating VMCAS schools, however, require in-state students to use an institutional application; they will only accept VMCAS applications from out-of-state applicants. These schools are Oklahoma State University, and the University of Missouri. Washington State allows out-of-state applicants to use VMCAS, on an optional basis. In Canada, the University of Guelph gives U.S. citizens the option of using VMCAS; at the University of Prince Edward Island, U.S. citizens must use the VMCAS. U.S. (and Canadian) citizens must also use the VMCAS to apply to the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow. **You should verify this information, however, by checking the schools' admissions web sites for the most updated information.** See also [http://www.aavmc.org/vmcas/college\\_requirement.htm](http://www.aavmc.org/vmcas/college_requirement.htm) for a list of schools' course requirements, and their admissions procedures. You can begin filling out the application at [www.vmcas.org](http://www.vmcas.org) when the Fall 2010 version is available, which will be by early June.

### Conversion of Course Units (1 Course Unit = 3 Semester Hours)

Although you must have your transcript submitted directly to the vet schools to which you are applying, to complete most applications, you must convert the course units (c.u.) on your transcript to credit hours. The following guidelines follow the Registrar's recommendations. In general, a one semester course earning one course unit is converted to 3 semester hours. However, science courses which incorporate a lab are converted to 4 semester hours. Listed below are the proper conversions for the pre-health requirements. Follow the general principle outlined above to convert other courses.

Also note that the number of days per week that the course meets is irrelevant. For independent study courses worth 1 c.u., use your judgment and convert to 3, 4, or 5 semester hours.

Chemistry 101 and 102 – 3 hours each; Chemistry 53 and 54 – 1.5 hours each  
Physics 101 and 102 (1.5 c.u.) – 4.5 hours each; Physics 150 and 151 (1.5 c.u.) – 4.5 hours each  
Biology 101 and 102 (1.5 c.u.) – 4.5 hours each  
Chemistry 241 and 242 (lectures) – 3 hours each; Chemistry 245 (laboratory) – 4 hours

### The Personal Statement

You have a maximum of 5000 characters including spaces—usually a little more than one page, single-spaced. In the past the prompt has been:

“Discuss briefly the development of your interest in veterinary medicine. Discuss those activities and unique experiences that have contributed to your preparation for a professional program. Discuss your understanding of the veterinary medical profession, and discuss your career goals and objectives.”

You may submit a draft of your personal statement to your pre-health advisor for review—but no more than twice. It is important to get started on the personal statement during the spring semester, for we will not be able to critique any drafts after May 15. After that date, we must turn our attention to writing the HPAB letters, in order to have them all completed on time. To submit your personal statement for review, you can bring it to your Advisor

Interview and let us know you want us to review it, or, later, e-mail it to your pre-med advisor or drop off a hard copy at Career Services.

## **DEVELOPING A LIST OF SCHOOLS**

You can find links to all of the veterinary schools' websites here:

[http://www.aavmc.org/students\\_admissions/vet\\_schools.htm](http://www.aavmc.org/students_admissions/vet_schools.htm)

You can also get summaries of their schools' admissions procedures and course requirements here:

[http://www.aavmc.org/vmcas/college\\_requirement.htm](http://www.aavmc.org/vmcas/college_requirement.htm)

Identify the schools that interest you and those in which you believe you will be a viable candidate. Remember that many veterinary schools restrict admission to residents of their state, or of states without veterinary schools which contract with their school to educate their state's future veterinarians. Whether or not you ask for an HPAB letter, you can meet with a pre-health advisor to discuss your choice of schools.

Remember:

- Consider each school's in-state/out-of-state policies. Most schools have limited out-of-state seats.
- Most veterinary school applicants only apply to a handful (4-5) of schools; however, it is certainly advisable to apply to more than one.

## **INTERVIEWING FOR VETERINARY SCHOOL**

The interview is an extremely important factor in the veterinary school application process. The invitation to interview generally means that you are academically qualified to be admitted; however schools cannot admit all those who are qualified. The school wants to take a closer look at you and determine if you have the personal qualities they consider important. Qualities such as enthusiasm, integrity, leadership ability, decision-making skills, honesty, and concern are important in a health professional.

The methods by which schools interview vary. Generally, though, the interview provides the school with a chance to evaluate you; it also provides you with a chance to learn about the school. In such cases, your interview should be a conversation in which you both answer and ask questions, as opposed to a firing line where you wait for the interviewer's next question. Some guidelines to follow:

**Appearance:** Since you are seeking admission to a profession, you should appear comfortable in that role. You should dress and act professionally. For men, that means a suit or a sports coat and dress pants; for women, a suit, dress or skirt with blazer. Being clean and well-groomed is of great importance. Remember that body language is a powerful form of non-verbal communication. Gestures and movements can give as much information, if not more, than words. Be conscious of slouching back in a chair (boredom?), playing with a pen or paper clip (nervousness?), and crossing your arms (hostility?). Try to look relaxed and poised as possible.

**Preparation:** You should prepare to discuss: yourself, the school, and general issues about health care.

1. Think about your goals and your background. What had led you to apply to this program? How have you prepared yourself, academically and otherwise? What strengths do you bring to your application? Reread your application. If you find any inconsistencies or problems, how would you explain them?
2. Consult the school's web site before your interview so that you are aware of its curriculum, affiliated hospitals, etc. Catalogues from some schools are also available in the Career Services Library, but their web sites may be more updated.
3. Be aware of the major issues in the health care system. There are issues – such as access to quality health care – which is of concern to all future health professionals. Future veterinarians might have a special interest in certain issues, such as whether an owner has the right to euthanize his animal if he/she lacks the funds for the animal's health care. Your stand on a particular issue is not as important as your ability to discuss it intelligently and articulately.

The key to success in an interview is to relax and be yourself. Try to answer questions honestly and do not try to second-guess the interviewer. Maintain a positive attitude and use the provided opportunities to point out your accomplishments and strengths. Try to make eye contact with your interviewer and establish a rapport. Assume that your interviewer is on your side and try to avoid defensiveness when answering his/her questions.

**Some of the questions you may be asked in an interview are:**

- Tell me about yourself?
- Why did you choose to go to Penn?
- Where do you see yourself in ten years?
- Why have you chosen veterinary medicine as a career?
- What has been the most rewarding (or challenging) experience of your life?
- What have you read recently?
- Why do you want to go to this particular veterinary school?

- Why do you think you are a good candidate for veterinary school?
- What do you consider your greatest weakness?
- What other careers interest you, if not veterinary medicine?
- Tell me about your research experiences?
- What was your most enjoyable course in college? In your major? Outside of your major?
- What extracurricular activity have you found most rewarding?
- Why didn't you take more science courses? Why didn't you take more liberal arts courses?
- The interviewer might provide a hypothetical situation and ask you how you would respond if, as a veterinarian, you were in that situation.

Please keep in mind that this is certainly not an exhaustive list of questions, but it may give you some idea of what to expect.

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Even after you have submitted your applications, we continue to serve as your pre-health advisors and are available to answer your questions or concerns at any point in the process. Please call 215-898-1789 if you would like to set up an appointment. You can also find our email addresses on the Career Services web site.

On behalf of the Pre-Health Advising Staff, the Health Professions Advisory Board, and the Career Services Office, we wish you much success in this process. Good luck!

## USEFUL LINKS

- AAVMC (Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges) web site: [www.aavmc.org](http://www.aavmc.org)
- VMCAS (Veterinary Medical College Application) web site: [www.aavmc.org/vmcas.htm](http://www.aavmc.org/vmcas.htm)
- GRE web site: [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)

For additional details of veterinary schools' requirements and admissions procedures, please visit:  
[www.aavmc.org/vmcas/college\\_requirement.htm](http://www.aavmc.org/vmcas/college_requirement.htm)

In addition, the Career Services website – [www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/gradprof/healthprof/vet.html](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/gradprof/healthprof/vet.html) – includes links to essential information for pre-veterinary students.

## DEADLINES

### Important Deadlines, 2009

April 30	Deadline to have completed Advisor Interview and HPAB interview.
May 15	Target date for submission of letters of recommendation to your Credentials File.
June 1	Final deadline for at least 3 appropriate recommendations to be in your Credentials file.
June 1	Deadline to submit a draft copy of your VMCAS application to Career Services.
June 4	Deadline to submit your List of Recommenders form to Career Services.

If you fulfill all these requirements, we will have your HPAB packet ready for you to request on August 1.

If you fail to meet these deadlines, but have everything in by July 1, you will be in the “late batch”—we will have your packet ready for you to request by September 15.

## CHECKLIST

### Spring:

- Attend an Applicant Workshop and open a Credentials File.
- Meet with your pre-health advisor for an Advisor Interview; bring a transcript, expanded resume, personal statement draft, applicant questionnaire, your BCPM GPA calculation, and a photo.
- Meet with your HPAB Interviewer; bring a (non-expanded) resume.
- Distribute Letter of Recommendation forms to at least 3 appropriate recommenders and ask that the letters of recommendation be submitted to your Credentials File by June 1.
- Take the GRE.

### Summer:

- Determine the list of schools to which you will apply; you can discuss your list with your pre-health advisor.
- Begin working on the VMCAS application. If you are applying to schools that do NOT participate in VMCAS, you need to get those applications directly from those schools.
- If you are applying to schools that do NOT participate in VMCAS, distribute the veterinary schools' special veterinary reference forms (where appropriate) to those recommenders who supervised your veterinary experience. Ask that they be sent to your Credentials File.

### Fall:

- Finish completing your VMCAS or individual veterinary school applications (if you have not already done so over the summer).
- Send out your letters of recommendation. If requesting an HPAB letter, you must ask that your letters be sent from the Credentials Service by sending in the request form, mailing labels addressed appropriately, and the processing fee (\$6 per destination). October 1, 2009 is the deadline for submission of recommendations to VMCAS. If you're not requesting an HPAB letter, you can have your recommenders submit recommendations online through VMCAS.
- Keep in touch with your pre-health advisor throughout the process. We are available to help you in any way we can.
- Call vet school admissions offices only as appropriate. For example, you might need to inquire to (a) ensure the completeness of your file or (b) arrange an interview during a window of time that you will already be visiting that part of the country.
- Search for sources of financial aid. There are some books on the subject in the Career Services Library, and you might also consult the Van Pelt Library Reference Department.

## SAMPLE EXPANDED RÉSUMÉ

### JANE APPLICANT

E-mail: jane.applicant@seas.upenn.edu

#### Campus Address

3600 Locust Walk  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
215-898-0000

#### Permanent Address

225 Columbus Avenue  
New York, NY 10023  
212-888-8888

#### EDUCATION

**University of Pennsylvania**, School of Engineering and Applied Science  
Bachelor of Science of Engineering, May 2006, Cumulative GPA: 3.55  
**Major:** Bioengineering; **Minor:** Chemistry

Philadelphia, PA

#### HONORS AND AWARDS

**Al Giandomenico Award**, Department of Bioengineering, University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2006  
I was nominated by faculty and selected among 10 finalists by Committee for this award for distinguished undergraduate research in the field of Bioengineering.

**Dean's List**, Academic Year 2005-2006.

**Professional Citation** in Rex, E., Molitor, S.C., et al. (2005) Tyramine receptor (SER-2) isoforms are involved in the regulation of pharyngeal pumping and foraging behavior in *Caenorhabditis elegans*.  
*Journal of Neurochemistry*. 91: 1104–1115.

#### CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

**Pre-Health Volunteer**, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania  
October 2006-Present (Unpaid, 5-6 hours/week during semesters)

Philadelphia, PA

I am responsible for keeping patients in a comfortable environment and supporting the nursing staff, transporting and discharging patients on a regular basis. I chose the pre-med volunteer program at HUP because it gives students first-hand experience with how a hospital floor functions, as well as providing one-on-one interaction with patients. I worked on a fast-paced recovery floor, the energy of which I enjoyed, but it was the exposure to the inner-workings of a hospital and the basics of patient care that was most exciting.

**Volunteer**, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center  
June-August 2006 (Unpaid, 20 hours/week)

New York, NY

Volunteering at Memorial Sloan Kettering offered a hands-on experience dealing with cancer patients in the thoracic, head and neck, and colon cancer units. I worked closely with the staff and learned about their diseases, treatments and side effects, and the emotional impact upon the patients and their families. As the summer progressed, I became increasingly aware of individual patient's needs, interests, complaints, feelings and fears, which ultimately allowed me to form more personal relationships with them which I believe proved, at times, to be beneficial to their feelings of comfort and well-being.

#### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**Research Assistant** to Kevin Hogarty, MD, Department of Oncology, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
May 2005-Present (Paid, 10-15 hours/ week during semesters; 40 hours/week during summers)

I collaborate with an attending physician in an ongoing study of a chemotherapeutic that induces mitochondrial apoptosis via synthetic BH3 domain peptides for neuroblastoma cells lines. I perform cell culture experiments, determining if Bak and Bax genes have anti-apoptotic isoforms in neuroblastoma cell lines. My responsibilities also include assisting in translational research, ranging from therapeutics to the biology of neuroblastoma (PCR, gel electrophoresis, cell culture, DNA/RNA extractions). I have learned a lot about the research process and the dedication it requires to accurately develop effective treatments. More than anything though, this research experience has uncovered a passion for applied research and a great interest in oncology; it even inspired me to audit a Cancer Cell Biology class last semester. I feel particularly gratified that I am helping to develop possible treatments that may one day help sick children.

**Research Assistant** to Scott O'Brien, Department of Bioengineering, University of Connecticut (Storrs Campus)  
May-August 2006 (paid, 40 hours/week)

As part of a comprehensive research study, I identified and recorded the correlation of electrophysiological responses when nematode cells were perfused with a variety of pharmacological agents/solutions. I also gained my first exposure to a bench research setting and assisted in laboratory preparation activities as well.

### EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

**Workshop Leader and Tutor**, University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, PA  
September 2006-Present (5 hours/week)

I teach a ninety-minute Calculus Workshop, twice a week, to a class of between 10 and 35 students. The Workshop provides students with a brief overview of new information from their most recent class, as well as shortcuts or different approaches to problem-solving. After assigning students approximately fifteen problems, I assist them in tackling the challenging questions by leading a guided discussion towards the correct solution to the problem. This experience has not only strengthened my calculus knowledge base, but it has dramatically improved my communication and presentation skills as well. I suspect that the ability to simplify complex material to a group of students will prove useful in my future, especially as I try to communicate difficult medical information to patients with little to no medical background.

**Member and Tour Guide**, Hexagon Senior Engineering Society Philadelphia, PA  
September 2006-May 2007 (1 hour/week)

My primary responsibility was to lead tours of the School of Engineering and Applied Science to prospective Penn students and their families. It was very rewarding to represent the School and serve as a resource in this capacity, particularly because I have enjoyed my experience as a student here so much.

**Volunteer**, Ronald McDonald House Philadelphia, PA  
January 2006-Present (2 hours/week)

My responsibilities involve playing with the resident children, as well as general maintenance tasks for the House. From Legos and playing "dress-up" to watching videos and talking to the children about what was on their minds, this was always a rewarding activity. Not only could I help take their minds off of their condition for a few hours, but I was also able to give their parents and caregivers a chance to rest and relax.

**Member**, Biomedical Engineering Society, University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, PA  
September 2005-Present (2 hours/month)

I attend biweekly meetings of this student-run, professional development-oriented organization to discuss current events and ideas related to biomedical engineering.

## APPLICANT QUESTIONNAIRE

This is an opportunity for you to reflect on your background and to describe your most significant experiences for us. Write a minimum of one paragraph on each question (except perhaps 6 & 7). Print out your answers on a separate sheet.

1. Describe the academic program that you have selected at Penn. What have you gained from your studies?
2. Describe your most valuable intellectual experience and explain why you appreciated it. (This could be a class, a research project, or another significant experience.)
3. Identify your most significant vet-related experience. How has this influenced your decision to pursue a veterinary career?
4. Discuss your most rewarding extra-curricular or community activity not directly related to veterinary medicine.
5. What strengths and characteristics do you believe set you apart as a candidate for vet school?
6. Do your grades and/or GRE scores accurately reflect your preparation for medical school? If not, please explain the circumstances. (You must answer this question if your BCPM GPA falls below 3.2)
7. The following question appears on the medical school application (and is relevant to veterinary medicine too):  
"Were you ever the recipient of any action (e.g., dismissal, disqualification, suspension, etc.) by any college or medical school for unacceptable academic performance or conduct violations?"

If you must answer "yes" to this question, please explain the particulars of the situation and discuss the matter fully with your Pre-Health Advisor.

## HPAB APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES - STUDENT COPY

### Responsibilities for Penn Students and Alumni Requesting HPAB Letter for Fall 2010 Health Professions School Admission:

- 1) Attend the mandatory **HPAB Applicants' Workshop**.
- 2) Meet with your **Career Services Advisor**. (Schedule this appointment immediately after your Applicants' Workshop.) Bring to the appointment:
  - Unofficial transcript (from Penn and other colleges)
  - Expanded Resume
  - Personal Statement draft
  - Applicant Questionnaire
  - Photo
  - Penn BCPM GPA Calculation
- 3) Meet with your **Health Professions Advisory Board interviewer**. (Schedule this appointment after receiving your HPAB assignment by e-mail.)
- 4) Ask for letters of recommendation and make sure that a **minimum** of 3 appropriate recommendations reach your Career Services Credentials File by the **target date of May 15 and no later than June 1**.

It is **your** responsibility to make sure that the recommendations reach your Career Services Credentials File. You should start the process by asking for additional recommendations to ensure that you meet the minimum requirement by June 1. If your file does not contain these recommendations by June 1, the HPAB cannot prepare your HPAB letter.
- 5) Sign the Health Professions Advisory Board Notice and Waiver.
- 6) Submit to your Credentials File a draft copy of your primary application by **June 1**.
- 7) Submit to your Credentials File your **List of Recommenders form** (designate 3 letters of recommendation you have on file) by **June 4**.
- 8) Ask the Credentials Service to mail your HPAB packets to the vet schools by completing and submitting the Credentials Mailing Request Form and payment.

In signing below, I certify that I have read and understand the statement of responsibilities for registrants applying to medical schools. I agree to abide by the policies set forth in this manual and in the Applicant Workshops and understand and accept my obligations with regard to the Veterinary medical school application process.

## HPAB APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES - CREDENTIALS FILE COPY

### Responsibilities for Penn Students and Alumni Requesting HPAB Letter for Fall 2010 Veterinary School Admission:

- 1) Attend the mandatory **Pre-Vet Application Workshop**.
- 2) Meet with your **Career Services Pre-Health Advisor**. (Schedule this appointment immediately after your Applicant Workshop.)  
Bring to the appointment:
  - Unofficial transcript (from Penn and any other colleges)
  - Expanded Resume
  - Personal Statement draft
  - Applicant Questionnaire
  - Photo
  - Penn BCPM GPA Calculation
- 3) Meet with your **Health Professions Advisory Board interviewer**. (Schedule this appointment after receiving your HPAB assignment by e-mail.)
- 4) Ask for recommendation letters and make sure that a **minimum** of 3 appropriate recommendations reach your Career Services Credentials file by the **target date of May 15 and no later than June 1**.  
  
It is **your** responsibility to make sure that the recommendations reach your Career Services credentials file. You should start the process by asking for additional recommendations to ensure that you meet the minimum requirement by June 1. If your file does not contain these recommendations by June 1, the HPAB cannot prepare your HPAB letter.
- 5) Sign the Health Professions Advisory Board Notice and Waiver.
- 6) Submit to your Credentials File a draft copy of your AMCAS application for Fall 2010 by **June 1**.
- 7) Submit to your Credentials File by **June 4** your **List of Recommenders** (designate 3 letters of recommendation you have on file).
- 8) Ask the Credentials Office to mail your HPAB packets to vet schools by completing and submitting the Credentials Mailing Request Form for Medical/Dental/Veterinary Schools, and payment.

In signing below, I certify that I have read and understand the statement of responsibilities for registrants applying to medical schools. I agree to abide by the policies set forth in this manual and in the Applicant Workshops and understand and accept my obligations with regard to the veterinary school application process.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## HEALTH PROFESSIONS ADVISORY BOARD NOTICE AND WAIVER

The Health Professions Advisory Board (the "Board") agrees to release its letter of evaluation only to those schools or scholarship programs designated in writing on the mailing request form. Included with the Board's letter will be all evaluations or recommendations that you have listed and that are part of your file.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, gives you the right to inspect certain records, including letters of recommendation placed in your file after January 1, 1975. However, you may waive this right in writing. Letters of recommendation written in confidence may be given more credence by the recipient. Therefore, although you are not required to do so, we invite you to waive your right to access your Health Professions Advisory Board evaluation. You should be aware that if you have already waived access to a specific letter of recommendation, you will not be able to inspect it by declining to waive access to the Board's letter of evaluation. You must choose one of the options below:

I waive any rights I may have to have access to the Board's letter of evaluation under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

I do not waive the rights to have access to the Board's letter of evaluation under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

By signing below, you are requesting the Board to send a letter of evaluation to the school or scholarship programs designated on your mailing request form. If you request a letter of evaluation, the Board is permitted to review student records relevant for the preparation of its letter of evaluation and is permitted to disclose information from such records to schools or programs which you have designated. After you have requested a letter of evaluation, your written consent is not required for the Board's review of records and disclosure of information. This applies to all of your student records at the University, including but not limited to, any records created prior to your graduation from the University, and all records of the University Student Judicial System and Judicial Inquiry Office.

For further information on the review and disclosure of your records, please consult the University's Policy on the Confidentiality of Student Records; if you have questions, consult a pre-health counselor in the Career Services office.

I have read and understand the above information and hereby request and authorize the Health Professions Advisory Board to send letter of evaluation to the schools or scholarship programs I have designated.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET**

*PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Last 4 digits of SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ Penn ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Intended program:     Medical     Dental     Veterinary

Seeking Admission for Fall 20\_\_\_\_\_

Standardized test date (MCAT, DAT, GRE, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Please list at least three individuals from whom you are considering requesting a recommendation, including their name and relationship to you:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

6) \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

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Int. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

HPAB interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_