

VETERINARY STUDENT EXTERNSHIP UNIVERSITY of ILLINOIS at CHICAGO

How to Apply for an Externship

To apply for an externship, students must submit a curriculum vitae, cover letter, current grade report (it does not need to be an official transcript), and names and contact information for three references. Letters of recommendation are not necessary. Students must be enrolled in a veterinary college accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association to apply.

The externships are volunteer positions, so there is no stipend. There is housing available for a fee in graduate housing on the UIC campus, about 2 blocks from the animal facility. Information on campus housing and parking is available at <http://www.housing.uic.edu/halls/ssr/> and <http://www.uic.edu/depts/avcad/parking/>.

The length and timing of the externships can be for 2-4 week at times other than the summer. We do not schedule externs between May 15 and August 15 due to our summer veterinary student fellowship program sponsored by ASLAP.

To work in the nonhuman primate colony, externs are required to provide proof of negative tuberculosis status and protective measles titer within the past year. Externs cover the cost for these tests and must provide results at least two weeks before the schedule externship start date.

Application materials should be sent to Dr. Lisa Halliday at lhall@uic.edu.

Student Participation in the Veterinary Care Program and Skills List

During externships, students participate in the scheduled veterinary, technical, and research activities in three service areas: small animal colony, large animal colony/experimental surgery/radiology, and the nonhuman primate colony. Students work closely with the veterinary and husbandry staff during these rotations. Students may participate in any combination of the following activities as scheduled during their externship.

- Observe and perform technical procedures
 - Medical treatments
 - Blood collection
 - Intravenous and intra-arterial catheter placement
 - Fecal collection
 - Urine collection, including catheterization and cystocentesis
 - Gastric gavage
 - Endotracheal intubation
 - Identification (tattoo, microchip, ear tag, ear punch)
 - Nail trims and ear cleaning

- Radiographs (thoracic for recently acquired nonhuman primates)
- Tuberculin skin testing (nonhuman primates)
- Assist in preventive medicine programs
 - Annual or semiannual physical exams
 - Interpretation of diagnostic tests (CBC, serum chemistry analysis, and fecal examination)
 - Immunization as needed
- Assist with management of clinical cases
 - Initial assessment
 - Develop plan for diagnosis and treatment
 - Monitoring until case resolution
- Surgical training
 - Observe and assist with surgical cases
 - Master suturing, including interrupted, continuous, and subcuticular closures
 - Postoperative monitoring
- Dental training
 - Examination of dentition, gingiva, and oral cavity
 - Routine dental prophylaxis
 - Advanced dental techniques (canine disarming, tooth extraction, root canal)
- Gain understanding of psychological well-being and environmental enrichment
 - Observe normal behavior
 - Identification of abnormal behavior, including stereotypies
 - Cage, food, and social enrichment strategies
 - Training methods (sling in dogs and pigs, pole and collar and conscious restraint of nonhuman primates)
- Mouse breeding colony management
 - Identification of vaginal plugs
 - Breeding schemes
 - Cross-fostering as a method of rederivation
- Understand species-specific zoonotic diseases
 - For nonhuman primates, focus on herpes B virus, tuberculosis, retroviruses, and bacterial and protozoal intestinal pathogens

Didactic Components of Program

There are three components to the didactic portion of the program for veterinary student externs. First, students are assigned chapters from the ACLAM Laboratory Animal Medicine series. A veterinarian discusses the chapters with the students to determine if they have any questions on the material. If a postdoctoral fellow is rotating through the service area, the student externs may also be assigned the same reading assignments as the fellow for discussion as a group. The small animal and nonhuman primate veterinarians may supplement the reading assignments by reviewing glass slides or images of classic diseases and pathology of relevant species.

Second, students participate in GC 473 (Seminar in Comparative Medicine). They are expected to attend the biweekly sessions. This course is required curriculum in the laboratory animal training program and focuses on biology, diseases, management, and models of the common research species as well as regulations pertinent to the field of laboratory animal medicine. Students may also participate in GC 470 (Essentials for Animal Research) and GC 471 (Experimental Animal Techniques) if they are in session during the externship.

Third, students participate in the weekly review of ACLAM board examination material organized by the postdoctoral fellows in the training program. They are encouraged to read the assigned materials and prepare discussion questions to familiarize themselves with the core material that must be mastered to achieve ACLAM certification.