FALL
Academic and Advising
- Take Foundations of Biology I and General Chemistry I.
- Get to know St. Kate’s pre-vet advisor (Dr. Cindy Norton cgnorton@stkate.edu). Schedule a meeting to create a plan that fits with your interests.
- Start thinking about majors that interest you. You don’t have to major in biology or chemistry to go to vet school, but it’s important to have a strong foundation in science and math.

Career Development
- Meet with a counselor in the Career Development office and ask about options for taking a career interest inventory. Work with your career counselor to see how your interests fit with a career in veterinary medicine.
- Research career options. Are you interested in a particular type of veterinary medicine? Are you deciding between veterinary school and other possible careers working with animals? Career Development resources can help you with this.

Community Connections
- Attend the Activities Fair in September. Consider joining the Biology Club (email bioclub@stkate.edu for more information) or another student organization that fits with your interests.

WINTER/SPRING
Academic and Advising Connections
- Take Foundations of Biology II, General Chemistry II, and Statistics or Calculus.
- Challenge yourself academically by exploring opportunities in the Antonian Scholars Honors Program. Keep in mind that successful veterinary medical school applicants need to achieve a high GPA, particularly in pre-requisite courses. Students in the class of 2021 at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine had an average pre-requisite GPA of 3.60 (mid 50% range 3.44–3.78).

Career Development
- Make an appointment to visit the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine. They hold monthly information seminars and tours. Call 612-624-4747 or visit z.umn.edu/dvminfosession to reserve a place in an upcoming seminar. There is also a pre-vet student visit day in early April.
- Consider conducting an informational interview with an alumna who works in the veterinary medical field to get an idea of what vet school and the veterinary profession are like. Schedule an appointment with a counselor in Career Development to identify alumnae.

Community Connections
- Consider volunteering at a veterinary clinic, animal shelter, wildlife center or local park to gain experience with a variety of animals.
FALL
Academic and Advising Connections
❑ Check in with the pre-vet advisor to make sure your coursework and grades are on track.
❑ Take *Foundations of Biology III* and *Organic Chemistry I*.
❑ Develop excellent study skills. Not only do you need to keep your grades high, but you must hone the study skills you’ll need to persevere during a rigorous veterinary school education.

Career Development
❑ Consider taking the course, *Career Development for Women*. Test your assumptions about how your interests, skills and values fit with your plans for a career in veterinary medicine. J-term is a perfect time to fit this in.
❑ Continue to build relationships with alumnae and other contacts who are veterinarians or work with animals. Consult with Career Development to identify alumnae for informational interviews and build relationships with alumnae who can serve as mentors for you.
❑ If you major in biology, talk to Chris Palahniuk about job opportunities in the department — you might consider a lab support assistant, animal care or other student work opportunity.

Community Connections
❑ Be active in Bioclub or another student organization and attend club events. Watch for opportunities to attend events that feature alumnae who work with animals.

WINTER/SPRING
Academic and Advising Connections
❑ Take *Organic Chemistry II*. Depending on your choice of major, you will also need to determine which major and core courses to enroll in and courses to take to fulfill the entrance requirements for veterinary school. If you choose a biology major, you will need to register for *Sophomore Seminar*.
❑ Consider a Global Studies option; attend the Study Abroad Fair. Think about taking a J-term study-abroad class (this requires planning almost a year ahead).
❑ Talk to faculty in your major department about opportunities to gain research experience. Although research experience is not required for admission, it can set you apart from other candidates.

Career Development
❑ Meet with a counselor in Career Development to plan a search for a veterinary-related summer internship. St. Catherine students have had fantastic internship experiences at the Como, Minnesota and Duluth Zoos, Wildlife Science Center, Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, Underwater World at the Mall of America and at local veterinary clinics.
❑ Veterinary school is highly competitive so think about a “Plan B.” A summer internship can introduce you to many other career possibilities or might motivate you to work even harder to be competitive for vet school admission.

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AMVA), veterinarians are “the only doctors educated to protect the health of both animals and people … they also play critical roles in environmental protection, research, food safety, and public health. The AMVA identifies the following personal attributes that contribute to a successful career as a veterinarian: a scientific mind, good communication skills, and leadership experience. Check out their website: avma.org
Getting to know your faculty.

Get to know your faculty. Your science faculty in particular will be helpful in directing you to research and/or internship experiences. Ask faculty about their research programs and inquire about opportunities to participate.

Suggestions for implementing your plans.

**FALL**

**Academic and Advising Connections**
- Take *Genetics* (offered only in alternate years, so you may have to wait until the following fall) and *Physics I*.
- Meet with your academic adviser to make sure you are fulfilling all of your major and core curriculum requirements in addition to the pre-vet requirements.
- If you have not yet engaged in research, consider talking with a faculty member about the Collaborative Undergraduate Research Summer Scholars program. If you have engaged in research on-campus, consider an undergraduate research experience at a Research-1 institution (such as the University of Minnesota).

**Career Development**
- Begin exploring additional veterinary medical schools that might be a fit for you. You might also research other graduate programs or careers that involve work with animals (see box).
- Identify faculty, employers or volunteer supervisors who can write a strong letter of reference for your application. Discuss your post-graduation plans with them. It is strongly recommended that at least one of your recommendation letters comes from a veterinarian, so this is another reason to volunteer or work at a vet clinic. Because letters will be due in September along with the VMCAS (Veterinary Medical College Application Service) application, give your recommenders plenty of warning, and reminders.

**Community Connections**
- Continue your volunteer work throughout this academic year.
- If you have not yet attended a pre-vet information session or open house at the University of Minnesota, now is the time to do so. See above for information.

**WINTER/SPRING**

**Academic and Advising Connections**
- Take *Microbiology* (offered only in alternate years so you may have to wait until the following spring) and *Physics II*.
- Take *Biochemistry*.
- Take an English Literature class, if you haven’t already done so.
- Make sure that you have a plan for completing your major and core requirements as you think about registering for next fall.

**Career Development**
- Begin studying for the GRE and plan to take the exam during the upcoming summer.
- Register for the GRE.
- Make an appointment to meet with a Career Development counselor to schedule a mock interview — this can provide critical practice for an eventual interview and can also help you develop your personal statement.
- Begin your VMCAS (Veterinary Medical College Application Service) application. The application is typically due in mid-September a year before your anticipated start date; this is a firm deadline with no late submissions accepted.
- Begin working on a draft of your personal statement.
- Plan to attend a summer DVM Application Preparation Seminar at the University of Minnesota.

Love animals, but not sure veterinary school is the right path for you?

Consider other graduate programs and professional opportunities:
- Master’s Degree in Animal Science or Public Health
- Master’s Degree or Ph.D. in Conservation Biology, Animal Behavior, Behavioral Ecology
- Master’s Degree or Ph.D. in Marine Biology
- Naturalist Educator
- Sustainability/Organic Farming
- Zoo Keeper, Enrichment Specialist
Suggestions for making connections to your profession and to your life after graduation.

FALL

Academic and Advising Connections
- Take courses to complete your major and all other requirements.
- Meet with the pre-vet advisor to review your application materials.
- Finalize the list of schools where you will apply. Take into consideration your GRE score, your GPA and specialization areas of interest to you.
- Start working on your FAFSA. The filing deadline will be around February 1.
- Plan for travel to interviews at schools that invite you. Talk to your faculty early if you find that you will need to miss class for a veterinary school interview.

Career Development
- Continue your volunteer work throughout this academic year.
- Continue to revise and rework your personal statement. Get feedback from counselors in Career Development, your academic advisor and the pre-vet advisor.
- Finish and submit your VMCAS application! The application is usually due September 15, but consider submitting a day or two early since no late submissions are accepted.
- Submit any supplemental applications that are requested from schools you're considering.
- Visit schools you are seriously considering to see if they are a fit for you.

WINTER/SPRING

Career Development
- Finalize your veterinary school decision! Submit enrollment fees.

Finances for Veterinary School
Plan a budget for applying to veterinary school — the process can be expensive! For 2019, the VMCAS processing fee is $210, which includes one school designation. Additional school designations are approximately $110 each. The fee for the GRE exam is $205. Many schools require an interview so you’ll also need to plan for travel expenses. Even if they do not, you should consider visiting schools you’re considering.

The cost of vet school is substantial — resident tuition at the U of MN is now $32,000 per year. The average starting salary for veterinarians in the U.S. is about $60,000. On average, students graduated with debt ($135,000 or more) so financial planning is crucial! For help laying out your budget, contact St. Kate’s Certified Financial Counselor at 1-888-577-2227 for a free appointment. Indicate you are a St. Kate’s student.

Gap Year
Some students wish to enroll in veterinary medical school the fall immediately after graduating from St. Kate’s. This option requires that you adhere to the strict and aggressive timeline outlined here. Another option is to plan for a year (or more) gap following graduation before you apply and enroll. This option allows for a more flexible timeline. If this is your plan, the deadlines for the application process will apply during your gap year. Think carefully about how to spend your time to enhance your chances of admission.

Some possible gap year options:
- work in an animal research lab,
- work or intern as a veterinary assistant or park naturalist,
- work at a local zoo or animal rehabilitation center (Raptor Center, Wildlife Science Center, Wolfridge Environmental Center and Wildlife Rehabilitation Center).

Although becoming a veterinary technician is not a recommended pathway to veterinary school, there are several programs available through the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system that may provide an alternate career path.