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UF College of Veterinary Medicine Office of Research and Graduate Studies

UF CVM Graduate Student Handbook | 2025-2026 MS Comparative Biomedical Sciences



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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. WELCOME TO THE COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

We welcome each new graduate student to the **College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM)**. As a student in the **Master of Science (MS) in Comparative Biomedical Sciences (CBS)** program, we believe that you will find outstanding educational opportunities available to you at the University of Florida. We sincerely hope that your graduate program here is a rich and rewarding experience. The purpose of this Handbook is to help provide the information you will need to plan, conduct and complete your graduate program successfully.

B. ORGANIZATION

The Graduate School of the University of Florida is responsible for the enforcement of minimum general standards of graduate work in the University and the overall coordination of all graduate programs in the University. This degree is accredited as an in-residence (on campus) graduate program. As an umbrella organization, the Graduate School cuts across academic disciplines (such as colleges and departments) and consists of the dean, an associate dean, the Graduate Council, and the graduate faculty (from all academic disciplines).

The CVM is administered by:

Dr. Dana Zimmel, Dean

Dr. Amanda House, Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs

TBA, Associate Dean of Clinical Services for Small Animal Hospitals

Dr. Chris Sanchez, Associate Dean of Clinical Services for Large Animal Operations

Dr. Darcy Adin, Assistant Dean for Small Animal Hospitals

Dr. Michael Bowie, Assistant Dean for Community Building and Engagement

Dr. Janet Robishaw, Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies | robishawj@ufl.edu
Dr. Rowan Milner, Director for Clinical & Translational Research | milnerr@ufl.edu
Dr. Jorge Hernandez, Director for Graduate Education | hermandezja@ufl.edu
Mr. Jimmy Pastrano, Academic Program Specialist | jpastrano@ufl.edu
Ms. Audrey Natwick, Academic Program Specialist | a.dickinson@ufl.edu

There are five academic departments within the CVM:

Comparative, Diagnostic and Population Medicine (CDPM)

Dr. Subhashinie Kariyawasam, Department Chair
Dr. Heather Walden, Department Graduate Coordinator | hstockdale@ufl.edu
Trey Tomlinson | Graduate Student Peer Mentor | tomlinsontrey@ufl.edu

Infectious Diseases and Immunology (IDI)

Dr. Clayton Mathews, Department Chair
Dr. Mary Brown, Department Graduate Coordinator | mbbrown@ufl.edu
Jason Thornton, Graduate Student Peer Mentor | jason.thornton@ufl.edu

Physiological Sciences (PS)

Dr. Jada Lewis, Department Chair
Dr. John Bowden, Department Graduate Coordinator | john.bowden@ufl.edu
Qaim Mehdi, Graduate Student Peer Mentor | mehdiqaim@ufl.edu

Large Animal Clinical Sciences (LACS)

Dr. Dianne McFarlane, Department Chair
Dr. Iske Larkin, Department Graduate Coordinator | ivlarkin@ufl.edu
Maria Ugarte Marin, Graduate Student Peer Mentor | mugarte.marin@ufl.edu

Small Animal Clinical Sciences (SACS)

Dr. Charles Vite, Department Chair
Dr. Domenico Santoro, Department Graduate Coordinator | dsantoro@ufl.edu
Marcela De Oliveira Platenik, Graduate Student Peer Mentor | marceladeoliveir@ufl.edu

C. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Whereas the Graduate School sets minimum requirements and provides overall coordination, the responsibilities for setting detailed requirements and managing detailed operations of graduate programs are vested within the CVM. This is quite important to the student because it means there are two sets of requirements that the student must meet to graduate. You must satisfy both the Graduate School and CVM requirements in order to obtain your graduate degree.

Each graduate program's required forms can be found at <https://research.vetmed.ufl.edu/students/>

Mentor-Mentee Agreement (MMA)

In CVM, all graduate students are required to complete a **MMA** with their advisors upon entering the program. The MMA agreement is due on **October 1**.

Individual Development Plan (IDP)

All UF PhD students are required to create and update an **IDP** every year, in consultation with their advisors. The IDP is intended to be a working document, to guide new and continuing students in identifying, pursuing, and meeting their professional and personal goals. Compliance with this requirement is tracked and reported by the Graduate School. The first IDP is due on December 1 and annual updates are due 12 months later on **December 1**.

For more information, please reach out to your advisor, Department Graduate Coordinator, or CVM ORGS (hernandezja@ufl.edu or robishawj@ufl.edu).

A minimum of 30 semester credit hours is required for the MS degree in Comparative Biomedical Sciences. **Starting Fall 2025, all new MS CBS students must fulfill the following minimum requirements for successful completion of their degree:**

Required (Core) Courses: 9 credits

VME 5101 Comparative Biomedical Sciences and One Health (3 credits, letter grade)

PHC 6050 Statistical Methods for Health Science—or equivalent*(3 credits)

VME 6767 Issues in Responsible Conduct of Research (1 credit, S/U)

VME 6937L Graduate Seminar Series (2 credits, letter grade)

*Equivalent courses must be approved by the student supervisory committee, the Department Graduate Coordinator, and the Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies. Please see section IX below (Pg 18-20) on Academic Rigor for more information.

For other courses, please review UF CVM ORGS www page

<https://research.vetmed.ufl.edu/graduate-education/graduate-programs/cbs-ms/> and UF Graduate Catalog <https://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/graduate/courses-az/veterinarymedicine/>

D. DELIVERY PLATFORM

The thesis-based MS degree in CBS is accredited by SACSCOC as an in-residence (on campus) graduate program. The program requires 76%-100% delivery of education and

training activities on campus (face-to-face instruction). That is, at least 23 credits must be completed on campus (face-to-face instruction, including VME 6937L VMS Graduate Seminar Series and VME 6767 Responsible Conduct Research); seven or more credits can be completed online and/or remote with written request, justification, and approval by faculty mentor and CVM Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

E. SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

There are many sources of academic and logistical information available to you. Academically, you should work closely with your Major Professor and the other members of your Supervisory Committee. Your Supervisory Committee must be formed early in your graduate program (end of first semester), for it is the function of this Committee to guide all facets of your graduate program.

In addition to your Supervisory Committee, you can reach out to your Department Graduate Student Peer Mentor, Department Graduate Coordinator, Department Chair, or CVM ORGS Academic Program Specialists for guidance and assistance.

F. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

While there are many sources of assistance and information available to you, **the final responsibility for ensuring that you meet all degree requirements in a timely manner rests with you.** As mentioned above, degree requirements fall into two broad categories: those specified by the Graduate School and those specified by the CVM. It is your responsibility to make sure that both sets of requirements are met.

Degree requirements are intentionally flexible to allow you and your Supervisory Committee to design a program that best meets your needs. However, in some instances, deviation from stated policy on degree requirements may be warranted. **All deviations from stated degree requirements must be approved by the Supervisory Committee, the Department Graduate Coordinator, the Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies, and possibly the Graduate School.**

In addition to meeting stated degree requirements, **it is imperative that all graduate students conduct themselves with integrity.** Any hint of potential fraud, plagiarism, cheating, abuses of confidentiality or conflicts of interest is to be avoided and will not be tolerated.

Our goal is to provide you with a quality graduate education that will meet both your short-term academic objectives and will also help provide you with the foundation to understand and address the variety of issues and opportunities that you will face as a professional in a changing, evolving society and world.

G. GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

In addition to the formal Graduate Assistants United on campus, there is another graduate student association called the UF Graduate Student Council. More information can be found at the website (<https://sg.ufl.edu/resources/gsc/>). In addition, the College of Veterinary Medicine is proud of our own graduate student organization, the Veterinary Graduate Student Association (VGSA). Information on this group may be found online (<https://research.vetmed.ufl.edu/studies/vgsa/>).

H. INTERRUPTION OF GRADUATE STUDY AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

If a student plans to not register for one semester, the student should ask permission (in writing) from his or her Major Professor and the Associate Dean, then contact the Registrar so as to be assigned an appointment for registration for the next term. A student who does not register for more than three consecutive semesters will have to reapply for admission in order to be reactivated. Given the in-residence status of this degree, any request for off-campus coursework must be submitted to ORGS in writing for approval by the Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies.

II. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND FINANCIAL AID

A. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MS PROGRAM IN THE CVM

All of the following requirements must be met in order to qualify for admission into the MS program in the CVM:

1. An earned Bachelor's degree or equivalent
2. An upper division undergraduate GPA of 3.2 or the equivalent
3. Three appropriate letters of recommendation
4. A GRE score is *NOT* required
5. Availability of space, resources and faculty expertise

For International graduate applicants, there are three exemptions for the IELTS/TOEFL requirement:

[a] Citizenship in one of the Anglophone countries listed under the “Countries Exempt from English Proficiency” drop-down tab on this Office of Admissions webpage: <https://admissions.ufl.edu/apply/graduate/international>.

[b] Official transcripts showing at least one year of full-time enrollment in academic courses — not English as a Second Language (ESL) courses — at a US higher education institution.

[c] A UF ELI exit certificate earned by completing the UF English Language Institute program.

Outside of those exceptions, non-US applicants are expected to submit IELTS or TOEFL scores that meet the required minimum (65 IELTS, 80 Internet TOEFL, and 550 Paper TOEFL).

The result of the test will determine whether it is necessary for the student to enroll in the Scholarly Writing Course. Scholarly Writing (formerly EAP 5845 and EAP 5846). The course is offered as a non-credit course lasting six weeks. This course is not eligible for a tuition waiver; This course does not count towards a graduate degree.

There are two types of admission to the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine. The first type of admission is called **direct admission**. A student may be granted direct admission when he/she satisfies both the graduate school and college admission standards and who has demonstrated in his/her/their previous coursework, a sufficient background and ability to successfully pursue graduate study.

Students who are not eligible for direct admission may be granted **conditional admission upon petition and approval by the UF Graduate School**. Conditional admission may be used for those students who do not satisfy the minimum GPA or test score requirement or for those students whose GPA or TOEFL scores are on the borderline of acceptability, or because specific prerequisite courses are required. In these cases, the prospective Major Professor submits a written petition to the CVM Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies through the Departmental Graduate Coordinator for consideration by the UF Graduate College. Students admitted conditionally are automatically "on probation" with certain conditions that must be met for the given time period. Students granted conditional admission will be notified of the conditions under which they have been admitted. If the conditions under which a student has been admitted are not satisfied in the time frame given, that student will not be eligible to register further.

B. ASSISTANTSHIPS AND OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT

1. Assistantships

- a. Availability - A limited number of teaching and research assistantships are available for graduate study. Normally, applications are due in December for consideration for appointment beginning the following academic year (August), but assistantships may become available at other times. Selection is based on CVM program needs, student qualifications (e.g., GPA, letters of recommendation), available space, and faculty qualifications as mentors. Assistantships are funded from 1) state and federal money provided to the CVM to support the teaching and research programs of the college, and 2) grants and contracts administered by CVM faculty members. More information on assistantships is available from the Office for Research & Graduate Studies.

- b. Tuition Payments - The College of Veterinary Medicine receives a limited number of tuition payments for Florida and non-Florida residents. These tuition payments are a benefit offered to those graduate students who will be employed as Graduate Assistants and who meet certain criteria. These include: 1) the student must be currently admitted to a Graduate Program; 2) the student must have a GPA of 3.0 or above; 3) the student must be employed as a Graduate Assistant for a minimum of 0.5 FTE; 4) the student must be employed from the first day of classes through the last day of final exams for any individual semester; and 5) the student must be registered for the correct number of hours required for the appointment as determined by the FTE. University of Florida graduate assistants are represented by Graduate Assistants United, the union representing all graduate students on all campuses in the State of Florida.

Tuition payments are processed throughout the semester. It is the responsibility of the student to verify that their Letter of Appointment has been entered by their employing department prior to fee payment deadline. Tuition payments only apply to the minimum hours required for the appointment. Please be sure that the appointment dates on the Letter of Appointment cover the whole semester. Also, be sure that you are registered correctly for your appointment and have no flags on your record. If the Letter of Appointment is not entered by fee payment deadline the student will be assessed a \$100 late payment fee.

- c. Responsibilities - Each credit hour is comprised of two parts: a matriculation fee and various service fees. The tuition payment pays the matriculation portion of each credit hour of the appointment up to minimum as determined by the FTE. **The service fees for each credit hour are never paid by the tuition payment and must be paid by the student. Please note that if a student's fees are not paid in full by the deferred payment deadline that he/she will be assessed a \$100.00 late payment fee by the University Bursar's Office.** The student may also be assessed a late payment fee if the initial tuition payment is processed after the regular tuition payment processing period. **Any hours that the student registers for over the minimum required for the appointment must be paid for in full (matriculation and service fees) by the student.**

Students holding graduate assistantships do not accrue vacation time. Graduate assistants are considered UF employees and follow the work/vacation schedule of other UF employees. Arrangements must be made with the Major Professor and approved by the Course Coordinator and Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies before leaving campus for an extended period of time. Each graduate assistant may take up to 5 days of sick leave each semester. Graduate Assistants may become members of Graduate Assistants United.

Obligations of both the student and the faculty supervisor are described in the Collective Bargaining Agreement Booklet. A copy may be found online: <https://www.ufgau.org/cba.html> or at the Office of the Graduate Assistants United website (<https://www.ufgau.org/>).

Registration for graduate courses at the CVM can be found at <https://one.uf.edu/> during regularly scheduled periods of advance registration and regular registration. Registration may also be completed at the Office of Research & Graduate Studies. Please note it is a CVM rule that you must bring your completed Form 1 signed by both your Major Professor and your Department Graduate Coordinator to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies regardless of which system with which you register. **Please note that if a student has not registered for anything by the end of regular registration, he/she may be assessed a \$100.00 late registration charge by the Bursar's Office.** Drop/Add procedures are also online for any regular drop/add periods. Students will be held fee liable for any courses that are dropped or added after the deadline even if the drop/add is for the same number of credits.

- d. **Travel** –Travel for business (e.g., seminars, conferences) must conform with federal IRS policies to qualify for reimbursement. Prior to initiating travel plans, **Graduate Assistants with Teaching Assistant obligations must request approval to be excused from their employment contracts.** In addition, Graduate Assistants who plan to travel abroad must review and comply with UF travel policies and directives (<https://internationalcenter.ufl.edu/travel>).

2. Fellowships
Several fellowships are available to graduate students. A listing of multiple funding opportunities for graduate students may be found at: http://www.research.ufl.edu/research-program-development/research_program_development_docs/Funding_Opportunities_for_Graduate_Students.pdf

3. Other Financial Aid
The CVM offers additional funding other than assistantships. At the annual CVM Phi Zeta and Research Celebration Event, the CVM recognizes several graduate students upon recommendations of an ad hoc committee of graduate faculty. These include the Charles F. Simpson Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000), the CVM Excellence in Doctoral Studies Award (\$750), the CVM Excellence in Masters Studies Award (\$750), the CVM Excellence in Clinical Science Research Award (\$750), and the CVM Excellence in Basic Science Research Award (\$750). Graduate Students may also be recognized for their research presentations for the

“Best in Show” competition awarding cash prizes for the best research presentations.

III. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

General Information

In order to obtain a MS degree, you must complete several types of requirements: 1) coursework requirements, 2) examinations, and 3) completion of a MS thesis. These requirements are detailed below, and the MS is awarded only after satisfactory completion of all of these requirements.

A. COURSEWORK

1. Minimum Degree Credit Hours - A minimum of 30 semester credit hours is required for the MS degree. At least half the required credits, excluding Master's Research VME 6971, must be in the field of study designated major. **Twelve credits in the major are required.** These include all courses with the VME prefix and the additional courses as noted in the Graduate Catalog for Veterinary Medical Sciences that may be accepted for graduate credit as part of a candidate's major. A student will not be allowed to graduate taking only pass-fail courses. Students are required to enroll in courses in the major that are letter-graded. Information on registration may be found at: <https://handbook.ufl.edu/students/registering/> Registration may be accomplished at: <https://one.ufl.edu/>

A maximum of 6 credits of Masters' Thesis (VME 6971) may be counted towards the minimum of 30 Degree Credits. Three hours out of the six must be taken during a student's final term of enrollment.

2. Transfer of Credit - Only graduate-level (5000-7999) work with a grade of B or better, is eligible for transfer of credit. Credits transferred from other universities are applied toward the degree requirements, but grades earned are not computed in the student's grade point average. Official transcripts from all relevant universities must be submitted for this request. Students can request transfer of credits (1-9 credits) from a professional degree if selected courses are aligned with the student's research. **The request for transfer of credits must be approved by the student's major professor and submitted by the student to the CVM ORGS for an initial assessment within the first four weeks after admission into the MS CBS program.** After, CVM ORGS will submit a request/petition to UF Graduate School for review and possible approval (a process that may take 1-3 months for completion). The transfer of credits cannot substitute for required, core course credits. For additional guidance and assistance, please reach out to the CVM's

ORGS.

3. Unsatisfactory Performance in Coursework - Students who do not maintain a 3.0 average in all work will be subject to exclusion from further registration as a graduate student. For students on assistantships, the Graduate School automatically disallows assistantship appointment, and thus, tuition payments in the following semester when the cumulative GPA drops below 3.0. If you think that your cumulative GPA has fallen below 3.0, do not wait until registration for the next semester. You should consult with your Major Professor and the Graduate Coordinator. If you receive an Incomplete or an "I" grade you are allowed one term to make it up without penalty. After one term, an "I" grade counts as an "E" grade and will be counted in the calculation of your cumulative GPA.

B. EXAMINATIONS - A final oral examination is required. This exam is administered by the Supervisory Committee and evaluates the student's proficiency and general knowledge in the major field of study and evaluates the thesis and the student's comprehension thereof. This examination and defense date must be fewer than three semesters, including the term in which the defense is completed, before degree award. The results of the exam are reported to the Graduate School via the GIMS system.

C. ATTENDANCE OF FINAL EXAMINATION - The supervisory committee chair must inform the CVM Office of Research and Graduate Studies at least 10 business days in advance, when the qualifying examination or a final defense of interest is scheduled to be held and the selected option of attendance.

The following three options are approved as per the UF Graduate Student Handbook and UF CVM policy:

[a] In-person attendance of the student and the supervisory committee;

[b] In-person attendance of the student and the supervisory committee chair (or co-chair), with other committee members participating simultaneously, remotely at the same time via electronic media.

[c] Under extenuating circumstances the exam may be taken via Zoom, Microsoft TEAMS, or other electronic media, as long as the student and the entire supervisory committee are present simultaneously, either electronically or physically, so that all have access to the presentation, all questions, and all answers in real time.

Options A and B are the norm for on-campus graduate degree programs, including those offered in CVM. For CVM only, option C is an alternative mechanism that may be

requested by the chair of the supervisory committee, when given extenuating circumstances in preparation for a qualifying examination or a final defense justify such an attendance option. The request may be presented and approved by the Associated Dean for Graduate Studies, who may request input from the Graduate Studies Committee if needed.

- D. THESIS** - An approved MS thesis is a requirement of the degree and is comprised of the results of the research. Contact the Graduate School Editorial Office <https://it.ufl.edu/helpdesk/graduate-resources/graduate-editorial-office/> for details. The Supervisory Committee must approve the final version of the MS thesis in order for the MS degree to be awarded. For this reason, the student should make sure that the Supervisory Committee is kept abreast of research direction, progress and results, and that the members have a chance to review and make suggestions on early versions of the thesis. The Committee should complete the Graduate Student Progress Report Form at each meeting. The completed form should be submitted to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. When the thesis is ready to be put into final form, the student should refer to the Graduate School's web site for information on preparing a Thesis. Computer software to assist in preparation of the thesis according to Graduate School standard format is available from <https://www.citt.ufl.edu/> **Please note that it is the student's responsibility to meet all submission deadlines as published each term on the Graduate School's web site: <http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/>**

The first and final submission of a student's thesis must be submitted electronically to the GIMS (Graduate Information Management System) web site.

The members of the Supervisory Committee must have an opportunity to review the thesis in advance of the exam so that they may advise the student of any necessary revision before the final exam. A final copy should be made available to the members of the Supervisory Committee at least 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the final exam. The results of the final exam are reported via the Final Exam form which is entered into the Student Information System online system by the deadline for the term. After a successful final exam, revisions which may be suggested by the Supervisory Committee are made and signatures obtained on the signature page of the revised thesis called the ETD (Electronic Thesis or Dissertation) Signature Page. The ETD Signature Page must be input into the GIMS system before the final submission deadline for the term. This final version must be submitted to the Graduate School for an editorial review.

- E. APPLICATION FOR DEGREE** - Students must apply for their degree online on <https://student.ufl.edu/> (Under My Online Services, My Record, Certificate/degree Application) in the semester that they expect to graduate. Deadline dates for degree application may be found in that year's graduate catalog.

- F. REGISTRATION DURING THE FINAL SEMESTER** - Students must be registered for the minimum number of credits during the semester of the final examination and graduation unless all requirements for graduation have been met before the beginning of the semester. In general, this means registering for 3 credit hours of VME 6971 if Fall or Spring in the last semester or 2 credits of VME 6971 if Summer is the last semester. If a student has a Graduate Assistant appointment, they are required to fulfill the minimum registration requirement (9 credits Spring/Fall and 6 credits in Summer C) to maintain the terms of appointment.
- G. TIME LIMITATIONS** - All work and transferred credit must have been completed within the seven years immediately preceding the date on which the degree is awarded.
- H. STUDENT CONDUCT** - Students must conduct their graduate program in a manner of high ethical standards and integrity.
- I. SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION** - If at any time during your graduate program, you feel that you have been sexually harassed or discriminated against in any way, you should immediately contact your Graduate Advisor, Department Chair, Graduate Coordinator, or the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

IV. SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

To be appointed as soon as possible and in general no later than the end of the first semester of equivalent full-time study.

To inform the student of all regulations governing the degree sought. This does not absolve the student from becoming informed of these regulations.

To meet immediately after appointment to review the background preparation and current progress of the student and to discuss and approve a program of study.

To meet and discuss a thesis topic and to approve this topic and written plans for carrying out the research.

Per CVM policy, the supervisory committee will meet with the student at least twice a year and when the work on the thesis is at least one-half completed to review procedures, progress, expected results, and to make suggestions for the completion of the study. Please note it is required to complete **Form 2** (semi-annual student academic progress report) to assess student progress and to justify selected, actionable recommendations for improvement as appropriate.

Supervisory Committee for Master's Degree Committee must have at least three members:

- A chair - who must have graduate faculty status in the student's degree program's home unit.

- A co-chair or member - who must have graduate faculty status in the student's degree program's home unit.
- A member - who must have graduate faculty status in any UF unit.

Each graduate student has a Major Professor who has a graduate faculty appointment in the College of Veterinary Medicine who is the chairperson of The Supervisory Committee for the Master's degree shall consist of no fewer than three members of the graduate faculty including the chair. The student should work closely with all members of the Supervisory Committee through all aspects of the program. The Supervisory Committee is recommended by the Major Professor, in consultation with the student, and is approved by the Department Chair or Departmental Graduate Coordinator, the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Graduate School. The student must notify the Office of Research and Graduate Studies of the Supervisory Committee once its members are decided so that the Committee may be entered into the GIMS (Graduate Information Management) system. **IT IS REQUIRED THAT A SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE MUST BE ENTERED INTO THE GIMS SYSTEM NO LATER THAN THE END OF THE FIRST TERM OF REGISTRATION.** Supervisory Committees may be updated up until the halfway point of the final term of registration.

Important

The MS:Resident must enroll in courses for **Summer A** only, not Summer C (otherwise tuition costs may apply).

The flight plan must be approved by CVM ORGS before the Fall semester starts.

VI. ADHERENCE TO APPROVED PLAN OF STUDY/SCHEDULE OF COURSES/FLIGHT PLAN (FORM 1)

Once Form 1 is approved, the student is expected to follow the plan of study as outlined. Any modifications to the approved plan must be submitted using an amended Form 1 and receive approval from all required parties prior to course registration. Unauthorized changes may affect academic progress, tuition waivers, or other financial support arrangements.

VII. FINAL EXAMINATION

A final comprehensive examination is required for all graduate students and is administered by the Supervisory Committee. All committee members should be present. This oral examination includes but is not limited to the defense of the thesis. Just prior to the examination, the student presents a public seminar on the results of the thesis research.

Time Schedules:

Notice of the time and place of the final examination must be submitted to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, the Department Graduate Coordinator, and all CVM Graduate Faculty, 10 working days prior to the examination.

Notification of Results:

The results of the final examination should be made on the form "Report on Thesis or Dissertation and/or Final Examination" and the "Publishing Agreement" form. All members of the official supervisory committee are required to sign the Final Examination Report and the thesis (ETD) signature page. Submissions of both forms are completed online through the GIMS system by the staff member in the Office of Research & Graduate Studies by the deadline.

VIII. TRANSFER OF MASTER'S STUDENTS FROM THE VETERINARY MEDICAL SCIENCES PROGRAM OR THE PREVENTIVE VETERINARY MEDICINE PROGRAM TO THE CBS PROGRAM

Eligibility Criteria

Inclusion: VMS or MPVM students in their first or second semester of education and training.

Must complete all core courses (9 credits) listed below within three semesters after admission into the CBS program (or within six semesters after initial admission into the VMS program or the MPVM program).

VME 5101 Comparative Biomedical Sciences and One Health (3 credits)

VME 6767 Responsible Conduct of Research (1 credit)

PHC 6050 Stats Methods Health Sci (3 credit)

VME 6937L Graduate Seminar Series (2 credits)

Exclusion: VMS or MPVM students in their third or later semester of education and training.

CONTACT US

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IX. ACADEMIC RIGOR AND CURRICULAR EXPECTATIONS

The master's in comparative biomedical sciences program is designed to uphold a high standard of academic rigor consistent with the expectations of a leading research-intensive institution. The curriculum provides a comprehensive and scientifically robust educational experience that integrates advanced theoretical instruction with structured experiential learning to prepare students for professional, research, and academic pathways within the comparative biomedical sciences.

The program's academic rigor is grounded in graduate-level coursework that emphasizes foundational and emerging concepts in biomedical sciences—with emphasis in molecular and cellular biology, physiology, immunology, pathology, epidemiology, or infectious diseases, as well as translational biomedical research and One Health. These courses are designed to develop students' depth of knowledge, analytical reasoning, and scientific literacy. To ensure appropriate breadth and depth, students are required to complete 30 credits.

Nine of the 30 credits should include the following core courses: VME 5101 Comparative Biomedical Sciences and One Health (3 credits), PCH 6050 Statistical Methods for Health Science or equivalent* (3 credits), VME 6767 Issues in Responsible Conduct of Research (1 credit), and VME 6937L Graduate Seminar Series (2 credits), establishing a strong conceptual understanding aligned with disciplinary standards and program learning outcomes.

*Equivalent courses must have comparable student learning outcomes, instruction, and evaluation methods. To meet both UF and SACSCOC expectations, an equivalent course must demonstrate comparable student learning outcomes, instructional rigor, contact hours, and evaluation methods. In other words, the course must not only cover similar content but must also achieve similar learning objectives. Moreover, equivalency decisions must be justified, documented, and approved by the student's Supervisory Committee, the Department Graduate Coordinator, and CVM's Office of Research and Graduate Studies (ORGS) to ensure that faculty with disciplinary expertise are the ones evaluating comparability and that the process is consistent with accreditation expectations.

In addition, the coursework should include 9-15 credits in elective courses (letter-grade) offered at UF CVM (or other UF academic units). Independent studies (e.g., VME 6905 Problems in Veterinary Medical Sciences) should be kept to a maximum of two credits. VME 6905 courses require a course syllabus prepared by selected course coordinators. The course syllabus must utilize the Simple Syllabus platform and include appropriate student learning outcomes, instruction, and evaluation methods. The course syllabus must be sent to CVM ORGS for review/approval.

Complementing the conceptual component, the program should also incorporate 6–12 credits of supervised research (VME 6910 Supervised Research), scholarly activity (VME 6971 Master's

Thesis), or structured teaching experience (VME 6940 Supervised Teaching), providing students with opportunities to apply scientific principles in practical, inquiry-driven contexts. Research credits allow students to engage directly in laboratory investigations, data analysis, and methodological development under faculty mentorship. Teaching or instructional support experiences further reinforce mastery of subject matter while cultivating professional competencies in communication and teaching. For additional guidance and assistance on maximum number of credits in selected courses per semester and those that can count towards the degree, please review your student handbook and Form 1 (flight plan). You can also reach out to your Department Graduate Coordinator or CVM ORGS for further guidance and assistance.

Transfer of credits

Students can request transfer of credits (1-9 credits) from a professional degree if selected courses are aligned with the student's research. The request for transfer of credits must be approved by the student's major professor and submitted by the student to the CVM ORGS for an initial assessment within the first four weeks after admission into the MS VMS program. After, CVM ORGS will submit a request/petition to UF Graduate School for review and possible approval (a process that may take 1-3 months for completion. **The transfer of credits cannot substitute for required, core course credits.** For additional guidance and assistance, please reach out to the CVM's ORGS.

Eligible courses

In UF CVM, graduate courses numbered 5000-7999 are eligible for the MS VMS degree; courses numbered below 5000 are not eligible.

Grading

In the MS VMS program, passing grades are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and S.

GPA

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (truncated) or better at the University of Florida or submit a petition for consideration by their adviser, college, and the UF Graduate School's Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

The intentional balance between coursework and applied learning ensures that students acquire both the conceptual knowledge and the technical skills necessary for success in biomedical research, veterinary practice, industry roles, and advanced doctoral or professional study. The integration of foundational and experiential components is regularly reviewed by faculty committees to ensure alignment with institutional standards, accreditation expectations, and evolving disciplinary needs.

Through this balanced and rigorous curriculum, the UF College of Veterinary Medicine ensures that graduates of the Comparative Biomedical Sciences program are scientifically prepared,

practice-ready, and capable of contributing meaningfully to the advancement of animal, human, and environmental health.

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