

VETERINARY ASSISTANT

Program: VETA

Credential: Ontario College Certificate

Delivery: Full-time

Length: 2 Semesters

Duration: 1 Year

Effective: Winter 2026

Location: Orillia

Description

The Veterinary Assistant certificate program prepares you to assist vet professionals in the practice of veterinary medicine in animal care settings. Throughout the program, you gain the knowledge and skills required to support veterinary professionals including safe handling and restraint techniques, general care of companion animals and administrative and reception duties. Using the knowledge learned in your lecture classes, you develop basic diagnostic laboratory techniques, radiography, surgical support procedures, and client service skills in the labs and also in the on-site veterinary hospital.

Career Opportunities

Graduates may find a range of occupations as a member of veterinary health care team, including employment in veterinary clinics, zoos, wild-life centers, pet stores, animal shelters, and grooming facilities.

Program Learning Outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

1. provide clients with current information regarding the general health and nutritional requirements of their pets as recommended by veterinary professionals;
2. provide humane and ethical nursing care to dogs and cats within the scope of regulations and laws that govern the veterinary profession;
3. assist with veterinary diagnostic imaging procedures including patient positioning and processing of images that produce diagnostic quality radiographs;
4. collect and process samples for diagnostic tests from the veterinary patient;
5. prepare and maintain asepsis of equipment and workspaces for surgical procedures;
6. assist with the handling and preparation of veterinary pharmaceuticals within the scope of practice for a veterinary assistant;
7. perform administrative and reception duties in a professional and ethical manner;
8. maintain an orderly and sanitary environment in the animal care workplace, using appropriate disinfecting agents and following recognized biohazard disposal protocols;
9. apply basic entrepreneurial strategies to identify and respond to new opportunities;
10. identify and interpret animal behaviours and body language in order to safely restrain and care for companion animals in a clinical setting.

External Recognition

Georgian College is accredited by the Canadian Council on Animal Care as a "Good Animal Practice" facility and is licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. The Veterinary Teaching facility is accredited by the College of Veterinarians of Ontario as a companion animal hospital.

Program Progression

The following reflects the planned progression for full-time offerings of the program.

Winter Intake

- **Sem 1:** Winter 2026
- **Sem 2:** Summer 2026

Admission Requirements

OSSD or equivalent with

- Grade 12 English (C or U)
- Grade 11 or 12 Biology (C or U)

First-year enrolment is limited, satisfying minimum entrance requirements does not guarantee admission.

Mature students, non-secondary school applicants (19 years or older), and home school applicants may also be considered for admission. Eligibility may be met by applicants who have taken equivalent courses, upgrading, completed their GED, and equivalency testing. For complete details refer to: www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/academic-regulations/ (<https://www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/academic-regulations/>)

Applicants who have taken courses from a recognized and accredited post-secondary institution and/or have relevant life/learning experience may also be considered for admission; refer to the Credit for Prior Learning website for details: www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/credit-transfer/ (<https://www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/credit-transfer/>)

Additional Information

Within the first 7 weeks of the program, all students must provide proof of current rabies vaccinations (administered within 1 year prior to the program start). Alternatively, students can provide results of an adequate titre* taken within 30 days prior to the program start. *Adequate titre is greater than 0.5 IU/ml: Health Canada.

Graduation Requirements

11 Program Courses
1 Communications Course
1 General Education Course

Graduation Eligibility

To graduate from this program, the passing weighted average for promotion through each semester, and to graduate is 60%. Additionally, a student must attain a minimum of 50% or a letter grade of P (Pass) or S (Satisfactory) in each course in each semester unless otherwise stated on the course outline.

Program Tracking

The following reflects the planned course sequence for full-time offerings of the Winter intake of the program. Where more than one intake is offered contact the program co-ordinator for the program tracking.

Semester 1		Hours
Program Courses		
VETA 1002	Front Office and Reception 1	28
VETA 1003	Clinical Procedures 1	56
VETA 1004	Laboratory Procedures and Radiography	56
VETA 1010	Success in Veterinary Assistant	28
VETA 1011	Veterinary Anatomy, Physiology and Diseases	28
VETA 1012	Veterinary Medical Terminology	28
Communications Courses		
Select 1 course from the communications list during registration.		42
Hours		266
Semester 2		
Program Courses		
VETA 1005	Pharmacology for Veterinary Assistants	28
VETA 1006	Front Office and Reception 2	42
VETA 1007	Clinical Procedures 2	56
VETA 1008	Surgical Assisting	56
VETA 1009	Kennel and Hospital Duty	28
General Education Courses		
Select 1 course from the general education list during registration.		42
Hours		252
Total Hours		518

Graduation Window

Students unable to adhere to the program duration of one year (as stated above) may take a maximum of two years to complete their credential. After this time, students must be re-admitted into the program, and follow the curriculum in place at the time of re-admission.

Disclaimer: *The information in this document is correct at the time of publication. Academic content of programs and courses is revised on an ongoing basis to ensure relevance to changing educational objectives and employment market needs.*

Program outlines may be subject to change in response to emerging situations, in order to facilitate student achievement of the learning outcomes required for graduation. Components such as courses, progression, coop work terms, placements, internships and other requirements may be delivered differently than published.