

# UNDERGRADUATE POLICIES

## Academic Eligibility

Continued enrollment at Virginia Tech is a privilege granted so long as the student is making satisfactory progress toward attaining a degree, maintaining the required minimum Grade Point Average (GPA), and complying with all policies outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*.

Students who maintain the required minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00 are considered to be in good academic standing with the university and are eligible for continued enrollment at Virginia Tech. Students on academic probation and warning are eligible for continued enrollment (absent any violations of policies outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*).

**Academic Warning:** Students earning less than a 2.00 term GPA, but with a cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or higher, will be placed on academic warning without notation on the academic transcript. Students on academic warning will be required to consult with the appropriate undergraduate assistant or associate dean of their college and to sign an academic contract. Failure to complete an action plan (academic contract) may result in prohibition from future enrollment(s).

**Academic probation** is imposed when a student's cumulative GPA is less than 2.00 and a notation will be placed on the academic transcript. Academic probation is lifted when their cumulative GPA is at least 2.00. Academic performance will be reviewed at the end of each regular semester (fall and spring).

A student on **probation:**

1. may take no more than 15 credits per major semester (fall or spring), 12 credits during summer, or 3 credits during winter;
2. may be required (at the discretion of individual colleges) to consult with an academic advisor regularly and to sign an academic contract acknowledging their performance is not meeting university standards and stating what actions they are committed to taking to improve academic performance.

**First suspension** will be imposed when a student on academic probation has a cumulative GPA less than 2.00 for two consecutive semesters (Fall and Spring) of enrollment. A student must earn a minimum of a 2.50 term GPA for each (Fall and Spring) semester or raise their cumulative GPA to a 2.00 to avoid being placed on academic suspension.

**First Suspension:** A student who is placed on first academic suspension at the end of a fall or spring semester will be suspended from continued enrollment through the end of the subsequent fall or spring semester. **Note:** Students placed on first academic suspension at the end of fall semester are eligible to return the subsequent first summer, second summer, or fall semester.

A student must earn a minimum 2.00 semester GPA the first semester back and raise their cumulative GPA to at least 2.00 by the end of the second semester back or earn a minimum 2.50 semester GPA for every subsequent semester following the suspension until their cumulative GPA is 2.00 or greater. A student will be placed on **second academic suspension** for failure to meet these minimum performance requirements upon their return.

**Second Suspension (Fall):** A student who is placed on second academic suspension at the end of a fall semester will be suspended from

continued enrollment through the end of the following fall semester.

**Note:** Students placed on second academic suspension at the end of fall semester may **not** enroll in the immediately following summer sessions.

**Second Suspension (Spring):** A student who is placed on second academic suspension at the end of a spring semester will be suspended from continued enrollment through the end of the following spring semester. **Note:** Students placed on second academic suspension at the end of spring semester may **not** enroll in the immediately following winter session. The same minimum returning performance requirements apply for second suspension as for first suspension.

**Final Suspension:** A student will be permanently dismissed for failure to meet the minimum returning performance requirements after a second academic suspension.

## Academic Eligibility Appeals

Students who are suspended due to academic eligibility may appeal their suspension their academic dean. This appeal will then go before the Academic Appeals Committee. The University Appeals Committee is comprised of the associate deans of undergraduate studies of the academic colleges and one faculty member appointed by the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs. A representative of the Dean of Students Office participates as a non-voting member of the committee to provide any information and background available through their advocacy services. The University Appeals Committee is an advisory committee to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs.

Any appeal for exceptions to the academic eligibility requirements must be based on clear extenuating circumstances beyond a student's control that negatively impacted academic performance. If an appeal is based on physical, psychiatric, or disability/learning disability reasons, the appeal must be reviewed by the Health Evaluating Committee. A recommendation letter from the appropriate office is required to complete an appeal petition.

Students must complete an academic appeals petition and submit all required documentation to the associate dean of their major college by the published college deadline. Failure to meet the published deadline results in the loss of opportunity to appeal for the term. Students have a right to appear in person at the appeals meeting. Students may not bring an outside advocate to an appeals meeting.

Full instructions and forms for academic appeals are available on each academic college website along with the dates of the academic appeals meetings. The associate dean of the student's major college may require a preliminary meeting to discuss the appeal. The associate dean also may establish an independent submission deadline prior to each University Appeals committee meeting.

If the University Appeals Committee denies an appeal, the student may request further consideration of the academic appeal by the provost's representative. The decision of the provost's representative is final and there is no further recourse.

## Applying for Your Degree

All students must apply for a degree by the first semester of their junior year. The application for degree can be found on Hokie SPA under the Degree Menu. Once students have completed the application, they should generate a Degree Audit Report (DARS). The DARS report will help students to be fully aware of all degree requirements, which remain to be completed. This report can also be generated through Hokie SPA.

**Double Major(s):** Undergraduate students who fulfill the requirements for two majors concurrently will receive recognition of the second major (double major) by including the additional major on their application for degree on Hokie Spa. Only the primary major will appear on the diploma. Students will receive double major certificates in recognition of the second major. The additional major will be included on students' official transcripts.

**Second Undergraduate Degree:** Students may earn a second bachelor's degree (and diploma) by earning a minimum of 30 additional credit hours in **residence** with a minimum 2.00 GPA on all work attempted. All specific requirements must be met for each degree program, including attainment of the 2.00 GPA for all courses in the major. Note: The threshold for the total number of pass/fail hours allowed may not exceed the maximum for the first degree.

In addition to the traditional Commencement, other "Degree Conferral Dates" have been established for each May to May year. The degree conferral dates for fall, winter, and summer, and appear on the diplomas of qualified graduates. The degree conferral dates fall on the last day of final examinations (last day of term) for summer, fall semester, and winter term. Names of Graduates of Summer and Fall terms will appear in the Fall Commencement Ceremony Program only.

No commencement ceremonies are conducted at the end of the summer term, but graduates may attend the fall ceremony after completion of degree requirements. They may also request permission from the department to "walk through" the spring commencement ceremony based on established departmental or college guidelines. Diplomas are not distributed.

**Completion of degree requirements** is determined after the final grade reports are available. Degrees are regarded as having been conferred on the appropriate conferral date upon determination by the University Registrar that degree requirements have been met. All course enrollments and attendance obligations must have been completed on or before the degree conferral date. University actions, such as Honor System or Conduct System sanctions, may delay the awarding of a degree, the effective term of the degree and release of the diploma. Students with university actions will have their final degree conferral date moved in accordance with the completion of sanctions. Students who are unable to complete degree requirements based on their original application for degree term are responsible for moving their date of completion.

With the exception of spring and fall semesters, students may resolve degree completion problems up to thirty (30) days after the degree term to retain the conferral date on the diploma. Spring and fall degree candidates must resolve any graduation issues by the end of the next month following the degree conferral dates for these terms. Any resolutions of degree completion problems, subsequent to these resolution windows will be conferred on the next degree conferral date. Unresolved degree problems include failure to submit appropriate paperwork to the university.

## Assessment of Student Learning Experiences

A critical element in the continuous improvement of programs and services at Virginia Tech is the evaluation of student learning experiences, perceptions, and academic achievement. Each student may be asked to participate in assessment activities, including but not limited to course assignments, surveys, focus groups, end of course evaluations, tests, and personal interviews. Student involvement in these assessment

activities will assist Virginia Tech in providing current and future students with high-quality learning experiences in keeping with the mission of the University.

## Class Level

A student must have received credit for at least 30 hours to be classified as a sophomore, at least 60 hours to be classified as a junior, and at least 90 hours to be classified as a senior.

## Combination Degrees

The bachelor's degree will be awarded to a student who has satisfactorily completed three years of undergraduate work in an appropriate curriculum and the first year of work in an accredited medical, dental, veterinary, or law school, or medical technology program (biology majors only), or physical therapy program (biology majors only), provided the student fulfills the requirements for the three-year program as follows:

- At least two of the three years of pre-professional work, including the third year in residence, must be at the university.
- A minimum of 90 semester hours undergraduate work, i.e. pre-professional school credit, must be earned.
- Pathways to General Education requirements must be met, plus at least 18 of the 30 hours required in the major during the three-year, pre-professional work program. A department may require more than 18 hours of course work in the major.

## Course Prerequisites (University Policy)

Many course offering departments enforce prerequisite checking at registration. The automated system checks the student's academic history and/or current enrollment for verification of compliance. Students without the required prerequisite will be prohibited from enrolling. On occasion, students are permitted to take courses without having the specified prerequisites only upon obtaining the consent of the instructor. Students who enroll in a course for which they clearly have not satisfied the prerequisites or equivalent or obtained the appropriate permission may be dropped from the course. Deliberately false statements testifying to the satisfaction of prerequisites constitute a violation of the honor code. Students have the right to appeal a decision about prerequisites to the head of the department offering a course. Students should recognize that 3000 and 4000 level courses assume a certain level of academic maturity and general background regardless of the stated prerequisites. The course instructor can be consulted regarding the implications of this expectation for a specific course.

## Degree Programs

Virginia Tech offers four-year degree programs leading to a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, or Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Also offered are five-year Bachelor of Architecture and Bachelor of Landscape Architecture programs. Virginia Tech also offers graduate work in 76 fields of study leading to masters degrees and in 62 fields leading to doctoral degrees. A professional degree is offered through the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine, located at Virginia Tech, and a medical degree from the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine.

## Directed and Independent Enrollment

Virginia Tech offers several types of courses that can be tailored to the needs of individual students or special groups. By allowing students to pursue topics in which formal courses are not available, these directed

and independent courses provide greater flexibility in course offerings. They also provide students an opportunity to assume a greater share of the responsibility for their own education outside the traditional classroom situation.

In order to enroll in a directed or independent course, students must develop a plan of work to reach particular objectives, obtain approval of both the department and the faculty member who will supervise the work, and work with them to arrange hours and credits.

Students must submit an official approval form prior to registration. In most cases, the student's first contact for an independent study, field study, or undergraduate research course is the department offering the course. Registration is through the student's dean's office. Special study courses are set up by the department, and the student registers through Hokie Spa. Some colleges and departments have restrictions on eligibility to register for these courses, and limit the number of hours that can be used toward graduation.

A student may take 12 credit hours of independent study and/or undergraduate research to be counted toward their undergraduate degree, exclusive of independent study and/or undergraduate research courses required by a specific degree as indicated by the respective degree requirements.

Each time the student enrolls in independent study or undergraduate research, the instructor is required to identify a tangible output produced by the student at the end of the course that will be used to determine the student's grade

The time that the student devotes to satisfying course requirements shall be reflected in the number of credit hours awarded based on the Carnegie Foundation definition.

**Field Study (X964)** courses are work experiences approved by some departments and are selected to augment traditional classroom activities. The student is evaluated on the knowledge and skills acquired as a result of the experience. Emphasis is placed on the academic and practical value of the work.

**Independent Study (X974)** courses generally involve extensive reading and tutorial sessions with the faculty supervisor and also may involve written papers and other assessments. The subject of Independent Study usually is a continuation in greater depth of a topic covered in a regular course, allowing students to study topics of particular individual interest.

**Special Study (X984)** courses are designed for a group of students, rather than for a single individual. This type of course may be used to study a timely topic, one in which there is current, but not necessarily lasting, interest. It also may be used to launch an experimental course before incorporating it into the regular curriculum.

**Undergraduate Research (X994)** courses are individual research projects carried out by students under faculty supervision. The student defines the research topic, proposes a methodology, carries out the research, and writes a report.

## Enrollment (Semester Hour)

Full-time enrollment for undergraduate and associate degree students is classified as 12 or more hours per semester during Fall, Spring, and Summer terms in regular A-F option or P/F option. For each winter session, the minimum is 5 hours. Audit hours are not used in establishing minimum full-time enrollments.

**Full-time enrollment for graduate students is classified as 9 hours or more per semester in Fall, Spring, and Summer in regular A-F option, P/F option, or equivalent credit.** Neither the payment of full fees nor compliance with maximums established as a condition of employment or appointment is a basis for deviation from the definition above.

## Global Education

Virginia Tech students have the opportunity to study abroad through various programs spanning the globe.

Study abroad programs touch on almost every academic discipline and provide the opportunity to develop or strengthen global skills and intercultural competencies. Students can experience an academic discipline at work in an international setting, improve language skills, cultivate new intellectual interests, challenge assumptions about their own and other cultures, and build intercultural networks, understanding, and communication skills of value to future employers.

The **Steger Center for International Scholarship**, located in the picturesque town of Riva San Vitale, Switzerland, is Virginia Tech's study center in Europe. Housed in a 250-year-old villa, the Steger Center provides classrooms, a library, an architecture studio, study and lounge areas, a cafeteria, and a garden in an unforgettable setting. The central location allows for excursions to other European sites that complement classroom instruction. Steger Center programs offer courses in architecture, geosciences, engineering, the humanities, University Honors, and Italian that may count toward Pathways General Education, major, or minor requirements. Students may participate in semester-long programs in the fall and spring or short-term programs in the summer.

Virginia Tech has an increasing number of **study abroad opportunities in Africa**. Growing more rapidly than any other part of the world and representing the next great frontier for innovations in business, science, and technology, Africa is a critical region for the world's future. The opportunity to live and study shoulder-to-shoulder with Africa's youth as they rise to meet the extraordinary challenges of their future offers VT students a unique pathway to academic, personal, social, and professional growth.

**Faculty-led programs** on every continent provide another option for international experience. Participants in faculty-led programs can focus on a specific course or discipline while navigating the culture along with a faculty member and fellow Hokies. Virginia Tech faculty design and lead more than 70 short-term and semester courses abroad throughout the year. Virginia Tech faculty-led and custom semester abroad opportunities include a semester in Paris focused on displacement studies and social justice and a general education sophomore semester in Spain designed to meet the academic needs of STEM, Finance, and Political Science/International Studies students.

**Exchange Programs.** Through Virginia Tech's international partnerships and membership in the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) consortium, students can study on exchange for a semester or year at one of over 200 universities worldwide, where they are immersed in the local classroom, culture, and community. Students who participate in **bilateral and ISEP student exchange programs** pay their regular home campus tuition and fees for the term of study, and tuition at the host university is waived. Semester exchanges serve all majors and are available across the world: in Latin America (Central and South), Europe (including Iceland and Scandinavia), Africa (North and Sub-Saharan), the Middle East, Asia (East and Southeast), and Oceania.

Additional semester/academic year programs are also available through other study abroad third-party or non-Virginia Tech providers.

Students should meet with an academic advisor early in the study abroad **planning process** to determine how classes taken abroad will fit into a degree program and how credit is awarded. Students must obtain pre-approval for all credits to be transferred to Virginia Tech for use toward degree completion and must register their study abroad program with the Global Education Office. All non-VT credits taken abroad return as transfer credit: the grade does not appear on the VT transcript and is not factored into the GPA. For course credit to transfer, an equivalent grade of "C" or better is required and courses must be reported on an official transcript either from an institution recognized by the Ministry of Education and authorized to grant degrees in its home country or from a US-accredited college or university. A minimum of 25% of the credits for the degree must be earned at Virginia Tech.

Apart from credits, students and parents considering study abroad programs typically have questions regarding costs. Program costs can vary widely depending on various factors including location, length, and program type. Most forms of financial aid may be applied to study abroad, and there are several scholarships and grants available. Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid as soon as they consider studying abroad.

For all questions regarding study abroad, students are encouraged to visit the Global Education Office website, contact us at [vtabroad@vt.edu](mailto:vtabroad@vt.edu) or (540) 231-5888, or visit the office to speak with an advisor. The office is located at 526 Prices Fork Road, room 131.

The Global Education Office strives to strengthen the university's mission of global engagement, discovery, and service by connecting faculty and students to peers abroad; inspiring and contributing to the faculty's creation and promotion of cross-cultural learning experiences; and supporting the development of Virginia Tech students into globally competent citizens.

## Graduation Requirements and Degree Conferral

In meeting the requirements for an undergraduate degree, a student is expected to complete the degree requirements as outlined in the catalog in effect at the time they first enroll at Virginia Tech. A student will not be granted a degree based upon completion of the requirements set forth in a catalog more than seven (7) years old. Any student who has not graduated in seven (7) years will be moved to the subsequent years catalog.

A student may not follow requirements for graduation listed in a catalog in effect prior to the student's enrollment.

In order to take advantage of curricular innovation, a student may elect to meet the requirements in any subsequent catalog published between their first enrollment and graduation. Before changing catalogs, the student must consult their academic advisor and be approved by the degree program's associate dean. Students are strongly encouraged to maintain continuous enrollment. Any break in enrollment for more than 12 months will result in a change of the student's academic catalog to the catalog in effect at the time of the student's re-enrollment.

Students who declare an additional major and/or minor will follow the requirements in their academic catalog. An exception will be given if the additional major and/or minor was not offered until after the student's current academic catalog, and the student does not elect to change

to the subsequent catalog in which that major/minor is available. In these cases, the earliest available catalog will be used for the graduation requirements specific to that additional major and/or minor.

A student must complete all courses with at least a minimum 2.00 GPA for all hours attempted. In addition, a student must present an equally satisfactory record in courses attempted in the major and/or any minor. The number of credit hours required varies from one major to another. Virginia Tech reserves the right to modify requirements in the student's program if necessary. The approved graduation requirements appear at the University Registrar's website: <https://registrar.vt.edu/graduation-multi-brief/index1.html>.

All students must earn 25% of credits required for their respective degree from Virginia Tech. No more than 50% of credit hours earned from a two-year institution may be used to satisfy graduation requirements. Students who must enroll in foreign language courses to complete admission requirements may not use the credits toward completion of the degree.

Undergraduate students are permitted to complete a maximum of 18 of their last 45 hours *in absentia* and to transfer to complete their graduation requirements, so long as the request to transfer these credits meets all the current requirements in effect (transfer transcript is required and approval of the student's Academic Dean). Also, the credits to be transferred may consist of required as well as elective credits, as long as, prior approval has been obtained from the student's Academic Dean to transfer any required credits. Undergraduate students studying away from campus during their last 45 hours may apply for an individual waiver of the requirement that a maximum of 18 of their last 45 hours may be earned *in absentia*. Approval of the request will be at the discretion of their academic dean. This does not preclude the requirement that at least 25% of all credits be earned in residence at Virginia Tech.

Graduation with Distinction (<https://catalog.vt.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/enrollment/>) (Academic Policies Governing Enrollment Section)

## Graduation with Distinction

Graduating with distinction is an honor bestowed on those who earn a 3.4 or higher and who complete no less than 60 hours at Virginia Tech. Distinction is denoted on the diploma and on the transcript. Levels of distinction are:

- Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.8 or greater are graduated ***Summa Cum Laude***.
- Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.6-3.7999 are graduated ***Magna Cum Laude***.
- Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.4-3.5999 are graduated ***Cum Laude***.

Grade Point Averages are not rounded in qualifying a student for distinction. In computing eligibility for graduation with distinction, only undergraduate level work attempted at Virginia Tech will be used. Students may not use hours earned at Virginia Tech as an associate, professional, or graduate level as part of the 60 semester hours required to earn distinction. The notation of distinction on the diploma and on the transcript is independent of the notation of a degree in honors, if applicable. (See section on "The Honors Program (<https://catalog.vt.edu/undergraduate/honors-college/>)" for information about graduating *in honors*.)



## Language Study Requirement

Students must meet a language study requirement either through middle and high school enrollment or prior to receipt of the undergraduate degree. The minimum requirement may be met in middle or high school by completing two units of a single foreign or classical language or American Sign Language. Some majors in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences may require three (3) units of a single foreign or classical language or American Sign Language. Students completing the requirement at Virginia Tech may not count the hours toward degree completion. The requirement also may be met after admission by the following:

- Earning six (6) semester hours of college-level foreign or classical language credit or American Sign Language. Such credits are in addition to that number normally required for graduation in a student's program of study.

## Limits on Acceptable Credits for Degrees

Not more than 6 credit hours earned from extension courses, radio courses, television courses, and intensive courses (e.g. taken while in active military service, etc.) will be accepted for undergraduate degree credit. Thirty-eight hours of advanced placement credit and/or international baccalaureate and/or Cambridge International Examination credit may be accepted towards the undergraduate degree.

## Honor Code and Honor System

The Virginia Tech Honor Code is the university policy that defines the expected standards of conduct in academic affairs. The Virginia Tech honor pledge is as follows: *"As a Hokie, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do."* Further, students are prohibited from giving and/or receiving unauthorized assistance on their course work.

Each student who enrolls at Virginia Tech is responsible for abiding by the Honor Code. A student who has doubts about how the Honor Code applies to any graded assignment is responsible for obtaining specific guidance from the instructor before submitting the assignment for evaluation. Students should assume that all projects and homework assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise specified by the instructor.

Commission of any of the following acts shall constitute academic misconduct. This listing is not, however, exclusive of other acts that may reasonably be said to constitute academic misconduct.

- **Cheating** - The intentional use of unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices or materials in any academic exercise, or attempts thereof.
- **Plagiarism** - The copying of the language, structure, programming, computer code, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and passing off the same as one's own original work, or attempts thereof.
- **Falsification** - The statement of any untruth, either verbally or in writing, with respect to any element of one's academic work, or attempts thereof.
- **Fabrication** - Making up data and results, and recording or reporting them, or submitting fabricated documents, or attempts thereof.
- **Multiple Submission** - The submission for credit without authorization of the instructor receiving the work of substantial portions of any work (including oral reports) previously submitted for credit at any academic institution, or attempts thereof.

- **Complicity** - Intentionally helping another to engage in an act of academic misconduct, or attempts thereof.
- **Violation of University, College, Departmental, Program, Course, or Faculty Rules** - The violation of any University, College, Departmental, Program, Course or Faculty Rules relating to academic matters that may lead to an unfair academic advantage by the student violating the rule(s).

Instances of academic misconduct represent behavior that is of an especially serious nature. The University's normal sanction for academic misconduct is an F\* as the student's final course grade. The F\* sanction is intended to identify a student who has failed to uphold the values of academic integrity at Virginia Tech. A student who is assessed a sanction of F\* as their final course grade shall have it documented on their transcript with the notation **"By Committee Action"**. More severe or lesser penalties may be imposed if the circumstances warrant.

The Honor Code fosters an environment that promotes fairness, personal responsibility, and integrity. More information about the Honor Code is available at [www.honorsystem.vt.edu](http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu) (<http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu>).

## Pre-Professional Preparation Health Professions Advising (HPA)

The university maintains an office for health professions advising which is located in the Smith Career Center. The services provided by HPA are available to all undergraduate students and alumni considering a career in a health care profession.

Health Professions Advising coordinates all health professions advising for students with an interest in but not limited to medicine (allopathic, osteopathic, and naturopathic), physician assistant, dentistry, nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, optometry, pharmacy, public health, veterinary medicine, genetic counseling and any others graduate level program. Although the majority of health professions students may choose to major in a science program, any major is acceptable to health professional schools so long as certain specific admission requirements are satisfied. Thus HPA provides advice and assists students in preparing for admission to a graduate health professional school. Students interested in a health career are encouraged to pursue a broad undergraduate study in the humanities, and social sciences, as well as biology and the natural sciences. Admissions requirements for qualified students include a competitive grade point average (which varies by health profession), national standardized admissions tests for each health profession, significant participation in volunteer and clinical health care activities, letters of recommendation/evaluation, and an interview at the professional school. Successful candidates exhibit high levels of scholastic achievement and intellectual potential as well as motivation and concern for one's fellow human beings.

The office provides individual advising about careers in health professions, preparation for competitive application to professional schools, and the admission process. This office advises students regarding ways to obtain clinical experience to assist them in gaining practical experience in the health care arena through volunteering and/or working at local or regional hospitals and clinics. The Health Professions Evaluation Committee (HPEC) which is made up of faculty advisors and health professionals from the community, provides on-campus interviews and upon request, furnishes committee letters of evaluation.

Core course requirements vary among the accredited health professional schools but most require two semesters each of Mathematics, English, Biology (with labs), General Chemistry (with lab), Organic Chemistry

(with lab), and General Physics (with lab). Other courses which may be required or recommended by schools include Cell and Molecular Biology, Biochemistry, Communication, Ethics, Economics, Microbiology, and Human Anatomy and Physiology. Students are strongly encouraged to pursue learning far beyond their major and prerequisite requirements. Resources are available in the Smith Career Center for investigating the specific entrance requirements for each school, and students are strongly encouraged to make use of these services.

## Pre-Law Advising

Law students and lawyers come from many undergraduate backgrounds, and the skills necessary to succeed in law school and as an attorney can be developed in a variety of courses across a range of disciplines. Law schools do not treat any specific course or major as a prerequisite for admission, nor do they look with special favor on applicants who have graduated from a formal "pre-law" program. Accordingly, Virginia Tech does not offer a formal pre-law major. The university does offer a top-quality education in a large number of fields, as well as counseling about law as a career, preparing for and applying to law schools, and the law school admission process. Students are encouraged to maintain contact with academic and career advisors at Virginia Tech and others on campus with information about legal careers.

For further information on pre-law studies at Virginia Tech, including how to contact a pre-law advisor, see the following website: <http://www.prelaw.psci.vt.edu>.

## Readmission Through University Registrar or Academic Dean

Formerly enrolled students who have greater than the 2.0 GPA overall may seek readmission via web course request form if they are eligible to return. Students returning from academic suspension should consult their academic dean's office for readmission procedures. (These procedures vary from college to college within the university.)

Formerly enrolled students, not in good academic standing who stop enrollment or resign for personal reasons, and later complete course work at another college or university are required to submit their transfer transcripts to certify good standing at all institutions.

Academic standing and student conduct at other institutions are considered in the deliberation for approval for readmission.

Formerly enrolled students in good academic standing who resign for personal reasons, do not continue enrollment at Virginia Tech, and later complete course work at another college or university are required to submit their transfer transcripts to their academic dean prior to or during their first term of re-enrollment.

## Registration Requirements

**Demographic Information:** Virginia Tech policy requires annually the collection of specific demographic data for each student: emergency contact entry or emergency contact confirmation, and VT alerts Opt In or Opt Out action.

**Local Mailing Address:** Virginia Tech policy requires the updating of a student's local mailing address to reflect the local residential address while enrolled in school.

**Conduct Policy:** Students must annually acknowledge the Virginia Tech's Student Conduct policy on Arrests and Convictions. The University enacted policy requiring all students, regardless of academic level or

campus, to report any arrests, convictions, and/or protective orders to the university.

**VT Alerts:** Students must opt in or opt out of the Virginia Tech alert system annually.

Students will be prohibited from registration until the above information is provided.

**Missing Person Contact:** Student(s) may denote a specific third party as emergency contact as primary in cases of missing person(s). Visit Hokie SPA, choose the Hokie Plus menu, add 'new emergency contact'. In the pull down selection for relationships, choose « Missing Persons Contact ». In the case of such an emergency, the university will first contact the missing person designee before any alternate emergency contact(s).

## Resignations

A student may resign without academic penalty by completing an official Virginia Tech resignation form on or before the published resignation deadline for each term. The student can request this resignation form from either the University Registrar's Office, the University Registrar's website, or the academic Dean's Office. The student's grade report and permanent record will show that he/she was enrolled for the term and that he/she resigned on the specific effective date.

A student who resigns after the stated deadline without written authorization for resignation-without-penalty by the respective academic dean will receive automatic "F" grades in all courses in which the student is enrolled. The transcript will carry the notation, "Suspended by committee action for unauthorized resignation," and the hours for which "F" grades were received will be included in the cumulative GPA for both academic eligibility and graduation requirements.

In the case of authorized resignations after the deadline, grades will not be assigned, and the academic dean will determine the student's academic status (whether or not he/she is eligible to return) based on the student's previous record.

## Restricted Majors and Programs

Students should be aware that there are some academic majors and programs within the university that have strict entrance requirements or are in such high demand that they cannot accommodate all who wish to enter them. Administrators of these restricted programs must be selective in allowing students to transfer in from other majors within the university and in permitting second majors or minors. Students seeking entrance into such restricted programs should consult the appropriate department.

Restricted programs for internal transfers can be found here: <https://www.registrar.vt.edu/contact/undergraduate-majors-brief/restricted-majors.html>

## Selecting/Changing a Major, Double Major, or Minor

Undergraduate students must be enrolled in the major(s) in which their degree is to be awarded before their senior year, or with a minimum of 30 semester hours to complete before their graduation. Students seeking a double major must be accepted into the second major by the academic department before the university can award the second major.

Changes from one degree program to another (i.e., changes in major) or the addition of a second major or minor may sometimes imply extra

course work, which can delay graduation, but changes or additions in most instances require no particular qualifications on part of the student. They usually can be accomplished prior to the senior year, simply by working with one's academic advisor and informing the head(s) of the department(s) and the dean(s) of the college(s) in question.

A major (or second major) cannot be selected after the beginning of the senior year. (See section above on Selecting a Major.) Some departments establish specific deadlines for requesting change of major. Check the University Registrar's website ([https://www.registrar.vt.edu/dates-deadlines/Change\\_of\\_Major\\_Dates.html](https://www.registrar.vt.edu/dates-deadlines/Change_of_Major_Dates.html)) for specific deadlines and the Change of Major module in Hokie Spa to submit the application.

Minors are offered by many academic departments and earned simultaneously with the degree. Minors are not declared nor earned after degree completion. Refer to the section on Graduation Requirements and Degrees and to the appropriate academic department in the college chapters of this catalog to review the requirements for a minor.

Twenty-five percent of the credit hours required for a student's degree must be taken at Virginia Tech.

## Procedures to Follow When Changing or Adding a Major or Minor

Students can request a new primary major through Hokie Spa during a change of major window each semester. There are three common change of major times every year, fall, spring and summer. Each respective college facilitates their own process to determine if it will accept the student into the major and will then notify them.

Requests for adding second majors or adding a minor are processed based on your college's established processes. Consult your Academic Dean's office for your college's process for declaring a second major or minor.

## Selection of Studies

The regular academic year at Virginia Tech is divided into two semesters, fall and spring. Virginia Tech also offers both summer and winter sessions. Most courses of study require eight (8) terms (i.e., semesters and/or summer sessions) for completion of the bachelor's degree requirements. Completion of the degree requirements for those students who enroll in the Cooperative Education Program, Bachelor of Architecture Program, or Bachelor of Landscape Architecture Program requires five years.

Elective courses are chosen through consultation with the student's advisor. The dean of the college in which a student is registered has authority in such matters as substitution of courses, dropping and adding courses after deadlines, or permission to take an overload.

Students have the assistance of faculty guidance, introductory courses, and special counseling to help them choose wisely which course of study they should take. Every effort is made to assure that all courses listed under the various department of instruction will be offered. Virginia Tech reserves the right, however, to withdraw any course for which an inadequate number of students enroll.

The requirements in a major consist of:

1. specifically designated courses (all of which must be completed)
2. restricted (structured) electives from which a minimum number of courses and/or patterns must be completed

3. electives that are to be chosen from courses in the department not used for specific requirements or restricted electives and not prohibited for majors in the department

## Student Responsibilities on Official Student Records

Students are responsible for keeping and being familiar with their own records and for the accuracy of these records.

A student's failure to keep their address updated does not absolve the student of responsibility for matters that require notification by the university. Changes to a student's local address, permanent address, or parent/guardian address should be promptly updated by accessing Hokie SPA. Correct residence hall addresses are established through the Housing and Residence Life Office in 144 New Hall West. If a student is not sure what addresses are on file, they may check Hokie SPA for verification. Virginia Tech requires updating of local address, designation of emergency contact, opt in/out of VT Alerts, and understanding of the Student Code of Conduct prior to registration.

It is the student's responsibility to check their current schedule of classes by accessing Hokie SPA. Errors must be corrected by the established deadline stated in the Timetable of Classes. Course registration will result in a responsibility for payment of tuition and fees. If a student requests or enrolls in courses, the student is responsible for the tuition and fees assessed unless formally resigning by the established university deadlines. It is the student's responsibility to complete and return the Withdrawal/Resignation form by established term deadlines if choosing to disenroll for a given term.

Students are responsible for seeing their advisors prior to registration to assure appropriate curricula planning.

## Satisfactory Progress Towards Degree

It is the student's responsibility to satisfy all course requirements as established by the faculty teaching the courses in which they are enrolled. It is also the student's responsibility to be aware of all major, degree, college, and graduation requirements necessary to complete their degree. Additionally, students are responsible for satisfying all university, college, and departmental requirements for progress towards degree. University policy requires that all students meet the following minimum criteria to be certified as making satisfactory progress toward a degree.

- Have an overall grade point average at or above that specified in the academic eligibility schedule (determined at the end of the Spring semester).
- Upon having attempted 36 semester credits (including transfer, advanced placement, advanced standing, credit by examination, and freshman rule hours), students must have passed at least 12 semester credits of Pathways for General Education requirements.
- Upon having attempted 72 semester credits (including transfer, advanced placement, advanced standing, credit by examination, freshman rule hours), students must:
  - have passed at least 24 semester credits of Pathways for General Education requirements
  - be enrolled in a degree-granting program and
  - be certified at the close of the academic year by their department as making satisfactory progress toward a degree, based upon pre-established minimum criteria from departmental checksheets.

- Upon having attempted 96 semester credits (including transfer, advanced placement, advanced standing, credit by examination, and freshman rule hours), students must have an in-major grade point average of 2.0 or above.

Colleges and departments may impose additional requirements. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the requirements of his or her college.

## Student Success Center

[www.studentsuccess.vt.edu](http://www.studentsuccess.vt.edu) (<http://www.studentsuccess.vt.edu>)  
(540) 231-5499

The Student Success Center is committed to providing holistic support services and programs that develop self-directed and lifelong learners within a diverse and inclusive environment. The department offers programs and services that enrich the educational experiences of undergraduate students such as tutoring, academic coaching, mentoring, academic strategies courses, and more. All of our services offered are free to Virginia Tech students. The main office is located in Newman Library, Suite 419.

## Teacher/Educator Preparation

[www.soe.vt.edu](http://www.soe.vt.edu) (<http://www.soe.vt.edu>)  
[peap@vt.edu](mailto:peap@vt.edu)

Virginia Tech's School of Education offers programs leading to teacher licensure in 16 fields of study including school counseling. Educator preparation programs exist at the graduate and undergraduate level depending on endorsement area.

Notable features of the educator preparation program at Virginia Tech are:

- graduates with a commitment to learning and advocacy for all students
- a faculty devoted to improving education through research, teaching, and outreach
- curricula designed to promote culturally competent and trauma informed teaching
- STEM integration in a comprehensive School of Education
- graduates with expertise in content fields and related pedagogical knowledge and skills
- committed clinical supervisors in schools
- field experiences and internships in diverse school settings
- the latest instructional technologies
- a strong demand for our graduates

Students who anticipate entering an educator preparation program can find information at <https://sites.google.com/vt.edu/peap/home> (<https://sites.google.com/vt.edu/peap/home/>) and should consult the Pre-Education Advisor at [peap@vt.edu](mailto:peap@vt.edu) in addition to any primary academic advisor in their undergraduate major. Decisions about educator licensure should be made early in the undergraduate years so that an appropriate major can be selected and required courses can be taken prior to applying for the educator preparation program. For certain programs seniors with a GPA of 3.0 or better may apply to be admitted to the Dual Student Status for their last semester to take graduate-level education courses and juniors with a GPA of 3.3 or better may apply for admission in the Accelerated Undergraduate/Graduate Degree Program to take graduate courses during the senior year. Information about these options

is available on the Graduate School website ([www.graduateschool.vt.edu](http://www.graduateschool.vt.edu)) (<http://www.graduateschool.vt.edu>)

Passing scores on relevant Praxis Subject Assessments, the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment, and the Reading for Virginia Educators exam (for elementary education teachers) are required prior to receiving a teaching license and prior to admission for some programs. A criminal record check is required by school divisions in Virginia prior to employment, and for most divisions for student teaching.

The School of Education is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), and all programs are approved by the Virginia Board of Education. Graduates may qualify for an educator license or endorsement in other states.

More information can be found on the School of Education, Office of Academic Programs website (<https://liberalarts.vt.edu/departments-and-schools/school-of-education/support-offices/office-of-academic-programs.html>).

## Transfer Work while on Suspension

A student may receive credit for course work taken at another college or university during any period in which the student has been placed on academic suspension by Virginia Tech. A student may NOT receive credit for course work taken at another college or university during any period in which the student has been placed on suspension for disciplinary (Student Conduct) reasons.

## Undergraduate Taking Graduate Courses

Undergraduate students may enroll in graduate-level course work in the senior year, provided they have an overall GPA of 3.0 or above and the written approval of the department head and the Graduate School. To enroll in graduate-level course work, the undergraduate student must apply to the Graduate School as a dual registrant. Each term that a student is dually enrolled, he or she must fill out a form in the University Registrar's Office to indicate which courses are being counted for undergraduate credit and which for graduate credit. If graduate courses are used to satisfy undergraduate degree requirements, they cannot be used to satisfy any advanced degree requirements at Virginia Tech. Students may not concurrently have dual status while enrolled in an Undergraduate Dual status.

Graduate courses may not be taken without prior written approval from the Graduate School.

## Accelerated Undergraduate/Graduate Degree Status

High achieving and talented seniors may apply for Accelerated status. The minimum admission requirements are:

- An advisor for the proposed accelerated program
- Listing of courses for use on the plan of study
- Minimum grade point average of 3.3
- Some programs may include additional requirements

The Accelerated Undergraduate/Graduate Degree status allows students with specific qualifications to allow certain courses to count toward both the undergraduate and graduate degree:

- No more than twelve (12) credit hours may be used.
- All courses must be at the 4000 level or higher.
- No more than six (6) credit hours may be used at the 4000 level.



- A grade of B or higher must be earned in each course. No courses may be taken pass/fail.

## University Enrollment and Academic Progress

### Registration Procedures

1. Registration for continuing students occurs in the middle of each semester during which currently enrolled students may request classes for the next semester. Students register for summer school (if they plan to attend) beginning in December. Students register for fall semester during spring semester.
  - a. Students should consult their completed Pathways Planner and review it with their departmental advisor. Both should be aware of such considerations as the student's current GPA, the course load in hours and in effort required, pre- and co-requisites for courses so limited, the student's relationship to the eligibility schedule, and fulfillment of Pathways General Education requirements and those for major, minor, or cognate. If the student fails to meet with their advisor, a **hold** may be placed on their registration.
  - b. When a schedule is designed, the student utilizes the course request module in Hokie SPA to enter the course requests.
  - c. Prerequisite checking is enforced by some departments. The registration system will review the student's academic history to determine compliance with any prerequisites.
  - d. **Overloads** (more than 19 hours per semester, seven each summer session, or six for winter session) require permission of the student's academic dean. The student will be scheduled for the first available 19 hours (seven in summer and six in winter) requested.
  - e. Every student must annually provide an up-to-date local address, an emergency contact, opt in/opt out of the VT Alerts system and all students must acknowledge the continuing duty to report arrests and convictions to the University. Students are prohibited from registration until the requirements are updated in the student record system.
  - f. The student's **current class schedule** may be printed by accessing Hokie SPA; the student is then responsible for verifying that they are in fact enrolled in the courses and sections they have been attending.
2. Approximately three weeks after the close of registration, course request results are available and may be accessed through Hokie SPA. The web class ticket will include detailed information regarding sections which are full, conflicting, withdrawn, or restricted which explains why these sections were not added to the student's schedule. See item number six (6) below for details about why a student's course selections are sometimes ignored, or why a student's schedule might be purged or held from registration.
3. Students may adjust their schedules on a space available basis during the drop/add period. Students should consult with their advisors before making any changes except those for convenience (usually time). 1000-level Mathematics and English courses, because of the high demand, currently have restrictions on section changes. As a rule, any student who drops a 1000-level English or Math course via Hokie SPA or department will not be allowed to force-add another 1000-level English or Math course that term. A student should be aware that dropping below full-time status (12 semester hours) may jeopardize financial aid, campus housing, and degree completion. Some courses may drop students for failing to attend the first class.
 

Refer to the comments section of the course in the *Timetable of Classes*.
4. A **Force-Add** form permits admission to a class **over** the desired enrollment threshold, but not over room capacity. This request is submitted via a "force-add" form **available in the department offering the course**, and requires the instructor's (or, in some departments, departmental) permission. **Requests for force-adds are processed by the department offering the course. Caution: The force-add transaction permits enrollment in courses with conflicting times.**
5. Responsibility for **Payment of Tuition and Fees**: all students who initiate enrollment are responsible for the payment of assessed tuition and fees. Only the submission of an official withdrawal prior to the first day of class may remove the student from any applicable fee responsibility. Failure to attend class(es) or to submit appropriate university paperwork is not a justifiable reason for removal of assessed fees retroactively.
6. **Late Adds and Drops Adjustments** to a student's schedule after the last date to carry out a specific transaction (see Academic Calendar for deadline dates) require permission of their own academic dean. Thus, a Business major wishing to late-drop an English course requires approval from the College of Business, not that of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. A late-drop request based on mental or physical illness requires a recommendation from Schiffert Health Center and/or Cook Counseling Center. Faculty cannot add or drop students from their rosters.
7. **Administrative Disenrollment and Held Registrations** Failure to pay tuition bills by a posted deadline (usually by the end of the second week of classes) may result in the student being **administratively disenrolled** (removed from the system). A schedule may be **held** (made inaccessible to department staff, as well as to students using drop/add, thereby precluding transactions of any type) for nonpayment of fees other than tuition (e.g., parking tickets), for Honor Code or Student Conduct violations, for academic ineligibility (due to department and/or academic suspension), or for failure to make progress toward a degree. This last hold is imposed by the student's dean, while all other holds are imposed by other respective offices. The student should check with the office imposing the hold, as only that office is authorized to remove the hold. **The Office of the University Bursar processes all billing for tuition and fees; contact the Office of the Bursar if you have questions about your bill or do not receive a bill.**

## 125 Percent Rule for In-State Tuition

The Code of Virginia establishes rules for eligibility for in-state tuition for all students enrolled at public institutions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Section 23.1-506 of the Code of Virginia further requires undergraduate students to maintain progress toward the degree to comply with continued eligibility for in-state tuition. Students with entry dates Fall 2006 and after may not exceed attempted hours that total 125% of the minimum credit hours needed for a specific degree program and retain in-state tuition eligibility. Students exceeding 125% will be assessed a surcharge for each semester of continued enrollment after exceeding the credit hour threshold. For the purpose of this state law, all credits attempted (Virginia Tech and Transfer) are used in the calculation of the percentage. The requirement does allow the subtraction of credits awarded for Advanced Placement, Advanced Standing, International Baccalaureate, and Credit by Exam from the attempted totals. Important resources to assist you so as to avoid the credit hour surcharge are:

- Undergraduate Degree Hours and 125% Tuition Credit Hour Threshold Table ([http://www.registrar.vt.edu/academic\\_records/in-state/125-percent-table.html](http://www.registrar.vt.edu/academic_records/in-state/125-percent-table.html))
- Credit Hour Surcharge Costs, Virginia Tech Bursar (<http://www.bursar.vt.edu/tuition>) (<http://www.bursar.vt.edu/tuition/>)  
Click on "surcharge" link. Please note that the Excess Credit Hour Tuition surcharge is per credit hour. To calculate the total surcharge for a term, multiply the surcharge amount per credit hour by the number of credit hours enrolled (up to 12 credit hours per semester; 5 credit hours per summer term).
- State Code of Virginia, Section 23.1-506 (<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title23.1/chapter5/section23.1-506/>)
- State Code of Virginia, 125% Surcharge, Section 23.1-509 (<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title23.1/chapter5/section23.1-509/>)

Students with declared second majors and minors: the total credits additional required for earning of the second degree and/or minor will be added to the total prior to computing the 125 percentage. For example, as student's first degree requires 120 hours. The second degree requires 30 additional hours. The 125% will be computed based on 150 hours.

## Academic Relief

Undergraduate students facing extenuating circumstances that compromise their ability to fulfill academic responsibilities, such as attending classes or completing coursework, for an extended period within a semester, may seek academic relief. Broadly, a student may be eligible for academic relief with a recommendation from an appropriate campus student support entity, such as the Dean of Students Office, Cook Counseling Center, Schiffert Health Center, Services for Students with Disabilities, and the Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education, to support the student's need for relief.

Academic relief typically entails a complete withdrawal from all courses in a semester, with these courses being indicated on the transcript as "WP" (Withdrawal, exception).

The review procedure for academic relief consists of several steps. Initially, the student's academic college and, where relevant, University Scholarships and Financial Aid, and the Cranwell International Center, offer comments and review. Subsequently, the request undergoes assessment by the appropriate campus student support entity. The Academic Relief Committee evaluates the request, considering the campus entity's recommendations, and arrives at a decision.

Students who believe they may qualify for academic relief can access the online portal (<https://apps.powerapps.com/play/e/default-60956884-10ad-40fa-863d-4f32c1e3a37a/a/c313eab0-70e7-49cf-830e-2bd762a2887d/?tenantId=60956884-10ad-40fa-863d-4f32c1e3a37a&sourcetime=2023-08-2>) to initiate the process.

## AP, IB, Cambridge Exam

Virginia Tech awards AP, IB, Cambridge Exam equivalencies after faculty review of content and applicable Virginia Tech credit. In accordance with state policy, Virginia Tech accepts credit from Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge Exam based on annual faculty and university program review.

## Auditing Courses

A student may enroll as an auditor in any class other than laboratory classes and studio courses, with the permission of both their academic

advisor and the class instructor. The lecture portion of laboratory-linked courses and courses with computation periods may be designated as eligible for audit at the request of the academic department head (of the course in question) and on the approval of the student's academic dean. Auditors may not add or drop an audit option after the last day to enter classes. Students will not be allowed to register for credit in any course previously audited. Audit is a mechanism for a student to reserve a seat in a course, with no performance evaluation of the student. Students may not unofficially attend class(es). If the student or faculty expect evaluation of coursework, then the student must enroll either as a P/ F option or for a letter grade. If a faculty member wishes to restrict the participation of auditing students in selected activities, then that should be stated in the syllabus.

## College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

CLEP is a national program that offers students credit by computer-based examination. This allows students to have the opportunity to obtain recognition for achievement in specific college courses. Students should request their official CLEP exam results directly from the College Board at: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) (<https://www.collegeboard.com>) (<https://www.undergradcatalog.registrar.vt.edu/2122/www.collegeboard.com>). Virginia Tech's CLEP school code is 5859. Once awarded CLEP credit can be viewed on Hokie SPA under the grades menu. A maximum of 12 credit hours may be awarded.

Refer to the Office of the University Registrar's website at <https://registrar.vt.edu/Advanced-Standing-Transferable-Credit.html> for information and to view the CLEP Credit Table. Questions about CLEP credit should be directed to the Office of the University Registrar at [transfercredit@vt.edu](mailto:transfercredit@vt.edu).

## Credit by Examination

Credit may be allowed by special examination where command of a subject can be demonstrated in place of formal course work. Credit by Exam is not available to a student who has previously audited or enrolled in the course or has previously attempted credit by examination for the course. Only currently enrolled undergraduate students are eligible for special examinations. If credit by examination is approved, the offering department shall have full responsibility for determining the type of examination to be given and what constitutes a passing grade. A maximum of 12 hours may be awarded. Approval must be obtained from the head of the department offering the course.

Credit established by examination may not be used to satisfy the in-residence requirements for graduation. No grades or quality credits will be assigned. Credit by exam is graded on a Pass/Fail basis only.

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There is a \$10.00 per credit hour fee for the examination. Fees are subject to change at the beginning of an academic year.

## Credit for ROTC Courses

In some majors, not all ROTC courses may be applied toward a bachelor's degree. Students should consult their approved major checksheet for specific information on which courses will count toward their degree.

## Credit Hour System

Virginia Tech uses the credit-hour as its unit of credit in the semester calendar system. Course descriptions under the departments of

instruction (in the chapters on the various colleges) indicate the number of credits received per term.

## Dean's List

Undergraduate students who attempt at least 12 credit hours with all credits graded on the A-F option and who earn a 3.4 GPA for either spring or fall semester will be included on the Dean's List for that term. The Deans' Lists are not compiled for summer sessions. Any notifications or certificates indicating inclusion on the Dean's List for a particular term are issued by the student's academic dean.

## Examinations and Re-Examinations

The final examination enables a student to demonstrate their command of the subject and provides the faculty member an opportunity to review student performance and the character and quality of the course. Final examinations are held at the close of each term according to a schedule established by the university. An instructor may not change the date or time of a final exam without the approval of the dean of the college. Students may request permission from their college dean to reschedule a final exam if they have conflicting exams or if they have three final exams in 24 hours. Otherwise, permission to reschedule a final exam is granted by the dean only in very unusual circumstances. Students who are unable to take an examination due to illness or circumstances beyond their control may reschedule the examination. Deferred final exams must be authorized only by the student's academic dean or by Schiffert Health Center.

Students are entitled to review their graded examination papers. Failure to take an examination yields a zero grade for the examination, weighted as specified in the course statement on grading criteria. The faculty member administers and grades the examinations.

Re-examination of one final exam is available only for students who are candidates for degree in the same term as the final exam.

After a term is over, a re-examination in one course in which the final grade earned is C- or below may be authorized if the student was enrolled in the course during the final term of his or her senior year and if a satisfactory re-examination in the course will qualify the student for graduation. The student must make the re-examination request to the dean and must complete the exam as soon as possible after the first examination.

For the student to be granted a re-examination, approval is required by the instructor, the student's department head, and the student's academic dean. In determining the validity of the student's request, consideration is given to class performance and completion of assigned work. The University Registrar provides verification of compliance with the requirements of this policy.

## Grade Appeal Procedure

As Per University policy, the assignment of a grade is the sole prerogative of the instructor of the class. It is incumbent on the instructor to establish the criteria for grading in the syllabus that is distributed at the beginning of the term. All grades are to be based on established grading criteria and not on personal conduct or opinions unrelated to academic standards. An individual student may not do extra work to raise his/her grade. If a student feels that a grade has been calculated incorrectly or has been assigned in a prejudiced or capricious manner, the student should discuss the matter with the instructor. If discussion between the instructor and the student cannot resolve the issue, the student

should appeal to the department/division head/director. In the unusual circumstance that resolution does not occur at the departmental/divisional level, the student may appeal to the college dean of the course who will attempt to reconcile the matter by whatever mechanism seems most appropriate for that college and for that case. A grade appeal must be made by the student, and as soon as possible but no later than the end of the student's subsequent term of enrollment after the grade in question has been assigned.

## Grades and Grade Points

Grade Point Average (GPA) is computed by dividing the total number of quality credits earned by the total number of hours attempted at Virginia Tech, except courses passed on a Pass/Fail basis and courses with an "X" (Continuing Course). "NG" grades are computed as "F" grades in determining GPA. The GPA is unaffected by the "I" grade, unless or until the "I" is converted to an "F" for failure to complete the course requirements within the allotted time. All courses repeated count in the calculation of the grade point average unless changed to Pass/Fail per policy.

The academic achievement of a student in a specific course is rated as follows:

Letter Grade	Grade Points for each hour	Notes
A (Excellent)	4.0	
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	
B (Good)	3.0	
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	
C (Fair)	2.0	
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	
D	1.0	
D- (Barely Passing)	0.7	
F (Failure)	0.0	

**I (Incomplete)**

A grade of "I" (incomplete) may be given when the requirements of a course other than the final examination have not been completed due to illness or extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control. The "I" grade is the prerogative of the instructor. To remove an "I" grade, lecture course requirements must be satisfied during the student's first subsequent term of enrollment, and laboratory course requirements must be satisfied prior to the end of the first term during which the course is offered and the student is enrolled. Incomplete and "X" grades are automatically converted to "F" if requirements are not fully satisfied during the period of time allowed.

**NG (No Grade)**

The "NG" is intended to be a grade distinguishable from those submitted based on a student's performance. This grade is utilized in the event that a grade cannot be calculated due to lack of attendance/participation. This grade will calculate as an "F" in GPA calculations.

**NR (Not Reported)**

An "NR" grade is assigned automatically by the system in the event that a faculty member does not submit a grade by the grade entry deadline. An "NR" grade will not be calculated as an "F" in the student's GPA and will not be converted to an "F" at a later time.

**P (Passing)****RP (Repeated Course)**

**Repeated Courses:**  
A student may not repeat courses in order to improve his or her grade average where a grade of "C" or higher has been earned. An assigned grade of "A-D" for the second occurrence will be changed to a grade of "RP" whenever a graduation analysis (DARS report) detects a repeated course with a "C" or better grade. Repeating a course where the course is "C-" or below, both instances of the graded course will be computed in the grade point average.

**S (Satisfactory/credits only)****W (Course Withdrawn)**

**"W" Grade:** Courses from which a student withdraws under the terms of the policy, will appear on their transcript with a "W" grade, but will not count in the GPA hours nor in any GPA calculations. The "W" signifies that this policy was invoked and does not reflect the rationale for its use. The reasons for use remain the student's purview.

**X (Continuing Course)**

## Grades (Midterm)

Midterm grades are produced for freshmen and transfer students whose first term of enrollment is fall semester. Beginning Fall 1996, students



whose first term of enrollment is summer will also receive a midterm grade report during fall semester. "Satisfactory" is given for work earning a grade of C or better and "unsatisfactory" is given for work earning a grade of C- or below. The midterm grade is not part of the student's permanent academic record and is only intended to be an early indication of the student's progress.

## Graduation Requirements (Grade Hours Passed or Completed)

The "total credits" figure on the displayed grade report is not necessarily the same as the total hours (often referenced as hours passed) required for completion of the degree (not all credit hours are effective toward graduation requirements). Students are responsible for verifying required hours for completion by reviewing their degree analysis (DARS) with their advisor.

Listed below are a few examples of typical situations yielding "pass" hours which must be subtracted to determine the total credits useful toward graduation requirements:

- Transfer and/or advanced placement credits that have been subsequently duplicated by courses at Virginia Tech.
- Credits earned at Virginia Tech that have been duplicated by repeating courses or taking courses ruled to have duplicating credit.
- Transfer credits allowed from a two-year college that are in excess of one-half of the total credit hour requirement for the curriculum.
- Credits for **Physical Education Service Activities** courses (now listed under HNFE), which exceed a total of two, the maximum allowed toward a bachelor's degree.
- Credits for military science that exceed the total specified by the college for the student's curriculum.
- Credits on the pass/fail grading system that exceed 12 credit hours allowable exclusive of pass/fail only courses.
- Credits for courses that do not count towards the degree, (e.g. UNIV 1004 College Success Strategies College Success Strategies).

## Obsolete Academic Records

Students previously enrolled at Virginia Tech that have not completed their degree may wish to return to complete their degree with an expanded knowledge not reflected in their earlier records. If a student returns to the university after an absence of at least five years they may request in writing to have their academic records evaluated by the appropriate academic dean. Such transcripts will be evaluated in the same manner that transfer student transcripts are considered; credits will be allowed only for those courses appropriate for the degree. The grades for these allowable courses will not be factored into the student's GPA, but all courses will remain part of the student's permanent record. The permanent record will be posted with appropriate comment regarding the revaluing of the obsolete records.

## Pass/Fail Grading System

A limited pass/fail (P/F) grading system is available to encourage students to enrich their academic programs and explore more challenging courses outside their majors, without the pressures and demands of the regular grading system. The P/F grading option is available to all undergraduates who have completed a minimum of 30 credit hours at Virginia Tech and have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above. These restrictions do not apply to courses that are only offered P/F. **No**

**required course or course used for the Pathways General Education may be taken on a "P/F" basis (unless only offered on a P/F basis).**

Under the pass/fail system students are allowed to attempt twelve (12) credit hours in their degree program on a pass/fail basis exclusive of courses only offered pass/fail. Students enrolled in five-year designated programs (College of Architecture and Urban Studies) may attempt twelve (12) credit hours or ten percent of the total hours required for the degree whichever is greater. Courses offered pass/fail only are not included in the twelve total hours allowable under the pass/fail system. Additional degree programs may not be used to increase the number of pass/fail credits that a student is permitted to use toward any degree. No more than two courses per term may be taken P/F, excluding physical education activity courses and required courses offered on a P/F basis only.

Under the P/F grading system, a "P" is granted for earning a "D" or better in the course; otherwise, an "F" is given. A "D-" is a failing grade under the P/F option. The "P" or "F" is recorded on the student's transcript and credit is given if the course is passed. If the course is failed, the "F" is considered equivalent to an "F" received under the "A-F" grading system and is included in calculation of the grade point average (GPA). Once credit is received for a course taken under the P/F system, the course cannot be repeated under the "A-F" grading system.

**Any course to be taken under the P/F option should be designated as such upon request for the course.** The student may change grading options to P/F until the drop deadline and to A-F until the deadline for resigning without penalty.

## Repeat Course Policy

Beginning Fall 2016 students may only attempt a course three times. An "attempt" is when a student is enrolled in a course on the last day to add courses during each semester. Courses designated as repeatable credit (to the limit allowed) are excluded from this policy (e.g. independent studies, internships, etc.).

All course repeats should be done in consultation with a student's academic advisor. Any student who enrolls for a fourth attempt will be dropped from the course. If a student's extenuating circumstances prevent successful completion of the course on a third attempt, the student may appeal (petition) to repeat the course again. For more information regarding the appeals process, please refer to your academic dean's office.

Repeating a course subsequent times may affect financial aid and eligibility for certain programs. Students receiving financial aid should check with University Scholarships and Financial Aid to determine what, if any, financial aid implications there are for repeating courses. Veterans, athletes and international students may have additional rules associated with course repeats. Check with the appropriate department for additional information.

## Study Week

Study week refers to the last three calendar days of classes for each semester. All written work, with the exceptions noted below, should be assigned so that it can be graded and returned during a regularly scheduled class meeting of the term. In-class hour-long examinations or other major in-class written assignments or tests shall not be given during study week. The exceptions for undergraduate courses are:

- Dates for turning in term papers and project reports may be set at the discretion of the instructor, provided that the student is not to be held responsible on the final examination for the subject matter therein.
- In laboratory courses or other courses that do not warrant a final examination during the examination period, an examination, if required by the department and/or instructor, may be given during the last regularly scheduled laboratory or class period.
- Regularly scheduled final examinations, when special permission has been granted by the dean of the appropriate college.

Graduate courses also have specific exceptions which may differ from those for undergraduate courses. Contact the Graduate School for details.

## Transfer Credits

Enrolled students at Virginia Tech must receive pre-approval from their academic dean's office to transfer credit to Virginia Tech. Spring 2025 and prior, courses taken elsewhere while a student is on suspension will not transfer to Virginia Tech. Effective summer 2025, courses taken elsewhere while a student is on *conduct suspension* will not transfer to Virginia Tech. Pre-approval from the academic dean does not guarantee transfer of the course if the student has duplicate credit in the approved course. Students must review their degree requirements by reviewing their degree audits in HokieSpa to ensure credits will apply to their degrees. Students who have been placed on academic or judicial suspension by the University are not eligible to transfer credit for terms of enrollment that coincide with their suspension term(s).

The rules below govern the transfer of credit on a university level. Some colleges at Virginia Tech have additional policies and procedures regarding transfer credit. Students are responsible for consulting with the academic dean's office in the appropriate college to discuss their plans to transfer credit, and to request information on the college's specific policies and procedures regarding transfer.

- Courses for transfer must be taken at a regionally accredited college or university.
- Courses must be college level, not courses only leading to a vocational program.
- Only courses with a "C" grade or better will transfer. Note: A "C-" will **not** transfer.
- Credits will **not** transfer for students who are classified as non-degree-seeking students.
- Course equivalencies will be determined by the Office of the University Registrar in partnership with Virginia Tech faculty.
- Credit hours transfer; grades do not transfer.
- No more than 50% of VT bachelor degree requirements may transfer from any community college including the Virginia Community College System (VCCS).
- Of the last 45 semester hours before graduation, a maximum of 18 semester hours may be transfer hours.
- Many colleges and universities will require a letter of good standing from Virginia Tech before they will enroll a student from another university who wishes to transfer credits back. Virginia Tech students can request this letter certifying their good standing by completing a "Request for Certification" form in the Office of the University Registrar.
- Upon completion of the course(s) and posting of grades, students are responsible for requesting that an official transcript be sent directly to the Office of the University Registrar at Virginia Tech as

soon as possible, but not later than two semesters after the work is completed.

## "W" Grade Policy

The policy is intended to assist undergraduate students who find themselves enrolled in undergraduate level courses for which they are insufficiently prepared, or for those who initially enroll in majors that they subsequently change. This policy allows currently enrolled students to designate a grading option of "CW" to a course. Courses with this option are not gradable but remain on the academic transcript with the letter grade of "W". A maximum of three (3) courses (regardless of credit) may be dropped beyond the normal six-week drop deadline date during a student's undergraduate academic career at Virginia Tech subject to the following stipulations:

- Students must formally request to apply the W Grade option to a course by the last day of classes of each term. The deadline appears in the Academic Calendar, previously the Timetable Calendar.
- Courses with the new grade mode of "W" will appear on the transcript with a "W" grade and will continue to count toward hours enrolled for purposes of financial aid and tuition assessment, but will not count in the GPA hours nor in any GPA calculations. The "W" signifies that this policy was invoked and does not reflect the rationale for its use. The reasons for use remains the student's purview.
- There are no refunds of tuition and fees as a result of application of the policy. However, utilization of this grade option policy may affect Reasonable Academic Policy requirements for continued receipt of federal financial aid. Students are urged to consult with their financial aid advisor.
- A student decision to invoke this policy is irrevocable and unappealable.
- Application of the W grade option may not be employed to reduce or obviate any penalty otherwise accruing to students under the University Honor System. Previously processed W grade options will be voided if the course is penalized per an Honor System action.
- Students may request a W grade option change for any course, irrespective of the evaluation earned in it up to the point of their request for withdrawal. However, if a registration hold exists at the time of application of this policy, the student must take action to remove the hold within five (5) working days of the application or the request will be voided. Students are responsible for resolving their registration holds with the appropriate university office.
- Students already enrolled when this policy takes effect who have exercised their option to use the previously existing Freshman Rule shall not be eligible to use this policy.

To exercise this option, interested students should see their academic advisor to obtain a course withdrawal form and submit it to their designated departmental representative and academic dean for approval.

## Pathways Fulfillment Revision

A modification impacting concept 5 fulfillment has been put in place. Program requirements/Checksheets outline concept 5 as being fulfilled when a student completes:

*Two courses for Concept 5 – Quantitative and Computational Thinking, Foundational and*  
*One course for Concept 5 – Quantitative and Computational Thinking, Advanced/Applied*

A student may now satisfy this requirement by completing:

*Credit Hours: 9 credits*

*6 Foundational + 3 Advanced/Applied or 3 Foundational + 6 Advanced/Applied*

## What Is Pathways

Approved by University Council on April 2015, the Pathways General Education Curriculum includes core and integrative concepts and student learning outcomes to meet the needs of all students. The curriculum is comprised of courses reflecting best practices in pedagogy and evidence of efficacy.

The Pathways curriculum also offers opportunities for students to complete minors or experiential learning activities, providing a coherent and meaningful general education for undergraduates.

## Pathways General Education Concepts

The Pathways curriculum includes seven core learning concepts and two integrative learning concepts. The concepts reflect broad knowledge areas for study and are supported by student learning outcomes.

These outcomes describe the observable behaviors that students will demonstrate as they pursue breadth and/or depth related to particular outcomes.

### Core Concepts

#### 1 - Discourse

Exchange of ideas in writing or speaking, adapted to specific contexts and developed through discovery, analysis, creation, presentation, and evaluation. A student who is competent in discourse demonstrates the ability to reason, write, and speak effectively for academic, professional, and public purposes. Students will demonstrate increasing proficiency over the years. All student learning outcomes would be met in all courses, but expectations for proficiency would be heightened for advanced/applied courses.

#### 2 - Critical Thinking in the Humanities

Involves interpretation and analysis of texts and other created artifacts to understand ideas, values, and identities in various spatial, cultural, and temporal contexts.

#### 3 - Reasoning in the Social Sciences

Utilization of quantitative and qualitative methods to explain the behavior and actions of individuals, groups, and institutions with larger social, economic, political, and geographic contexts.

#### 4 - Reasoning in the Natural Sciences

Involves the acquisition of the detailed knowledge of one or more of the natural sciences, hands-on experience with how science is conducted, what science can and cannot tell us about the universe, and the relationship between sciences and society.

#### 5 - Quantitative and Computational Thinking

Creative engagement with the world by the manipulation of precisely defined symbolic representations. Quantitative thinking is the formulation of questions that can be addressed using mathematical principles, leading to answers that include reliable and usable measures of accuracy. Computational thinking is the ability to conceive meaningful, information-based representations of the world that can be effectively manipulated using a computer. Courses or course sequences addressing this concept must meet a majority of the student learning outcomes.

Only the combination and integration of quantitative and computational courses will serve to meet this learning concept.

#### 6 - Critique and Practice in Design and the Arts

Involves a hands-on, minds-on approach by which students acquire the intellectual tools for a richer understanding and knowledge of the process, meaning and value of the fine, applied, performing arts and creative design.

#### 7 - Critical Analysis of Identity and Equity in the United States

Explores the ways social identities related to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, class, disability status, sexual orientation, religion, veteran status, economic status, age, and other socially salient categories and statuses, influence the human condition and experience, with focus on the United States in particular or in comparative perspective.

It recognizes that people in society have had different experiences and opportunities related to social categories, and challenges students to consider their ethical responsibilities to others in that context and in the context of U.S. history, to enhance their capacities to be engaged citizens and visionary leaders in an increasingly diverse society. Students will gain self-awareness of how they are situated relative to those around them based on social identities and foundational knowledge of the interactive dynamics of social identities, power and inequity.

### Integrative Concepts

The need for students to have knowledge and skills in Ethical Reasoning and Intercultural and Global Awareness is crucial to all aspects of their lives. Students will develop the capacity to recognize these concepts as they apply to any discipline, thus helping them to consider and connect various perspectives. Every Pathways course must address at least one of the Integrative Concepts.

#### Ethical Reasoning

In today's complex and diverse world, ethical behavior requires more than just the desire to do the right thing. Foundational learning of ethical theories, issues, and applications provides tools that enable students to deliberate and assess for themselves claims about ethical issues. It will be met in conjunction with Core Concepts. No extra hours will be necessary.

#### Intercultural and Global Awareness

Supports effective and appropriate interaction with a variety of people and different cultural contexts. An important application of this learning is the critical analysis of global systems and legacies and their implications for people's lives and the earth's sustainability. It will be met in conjunction with Core Concepts. No extra hours will be necessary.