ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

ADMISSIONS

Virginia State University is committed to admit students who possess a diverse range of talents and abilities. Students who are applying for admission as freshmen are expected to have completed a college-preparatory program in high school and have satisfactory scores on the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or American College Test (ACT) examination. Two letters of recommendation attesting to the students’ character and scholastic potential, one of which must be from a high school teacher or guidance counselor and a respectably GPA and/or class rank are required. Students who were not graduated from a secondary school may be admitted on the basis of their GED test scores.

Admission Requirements

The admission requirements are as follows:

- Minimum 2.2 GPA on 4.00 scale
- Three (3) units of mathematics (Of these three, one must be Algebra I, and the second must be either Geometry or Algebra II)
- Four (4) units of English
- Two (2) units of Science (one of which must be a laboratory science)
- Two (2) units of Social Studies (History, Government, Civics, Geography)
- Two (2) units of Foreign Language are recommended.
- Two (2) letters of recommendation, one of which must be from a guidance counselor, or high school teacher
- SAT or ACT score
- Personal statement

Under exceptional circumstances, a student who does not meet a component of the entrance requirement (e.g., a student’s GPA is between 2.0 - 2.19), may be admitted on a “conditional” basis.

Special Admissions Requirements:

In addition to regular freshman and transfer admission requirements, students who desire to major in music must also complete an on-campus audition.

International Students. Prospective students from abroad should apply for admission at least twelve months prior to the term in which they wish to enroll. Applicants must submit certified copies of official academic records, showing subjects studied, grades received, examinations taken, and degrees earned from secondary schools, colleges, and universities attended. The documents must be submitted in original form as well as official translation. Applicants without previous college or university credit must submit SAT scores of the College Entrance Examination Board, Box 592, Princeton, NJ 08540, USA.

An applicant from a country where English is not the native language is required to demonstrate a proficiency in English by submitting scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Official test scores must be sent directly from the Educational Testing Service. Registration forms and information concerning the time and place of the TOEFL may be obtained by writing to TOEFL, Educational Testing Service, CN 6151, Princeton, NJ 08546-151, USA. An international student must provide documentation verifying resources to meet financial needs for the designated period of study at Virginia State University.
The International Baccalaureate. Students must designate the Virginia State University Registrar as a recipient of the scores, and scores must be sent directly from the testing agency. Credit is awarded consistent with state and University policies and the sourcing agencies’ guidelines. VSU offers possible credit for scores of 4, 5, 6, or 7 on most higher-level IB examinations and on select standard-level examinations in accordance with the pre-approved equivalencies for qualifying IB examination scores. After matriculation, students should direct questions about their IB credit to the College Dean’s office in which their major field of study is organized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IB Course</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
<th>VSU Equivalent</th>
<th>Credit Hours Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Anthropology</td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>SOC 102</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 (SL)</td>
<td>SOC 102</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>5 (HL) in a studio area</td>
<td>Portfolio reviewed &amp; credit assigned on an individual basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>7 (SL)</td>
<td>BIOL 120 &amp; 121</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>BIOL 120 &amp; 121</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>GEOG 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>6 (SL)</td>
<td>CHEM 151 &amp; 152</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>CHEM 151 &amp; 152</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>5 (SL)</td>
<td>PHYS 105 &amp; 106</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PHYS 105 &amp; 106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>CSCI 100</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>6 or 7 (SL)</td>
<td>MATH 120 &amp; 121</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>MATH 120 &amp; 121</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>7 (SL)</td>
<td>ECON 100 &amp; 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 (HL)</td>
<td>ECON 100 &amp; 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>6 (SL)</td>
<td>PHIL 180</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>PHIL 180</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World History</td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>HIST 114 &amp; 115</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>4 (SL)</td>
<td>MUSI 101, 102, 121 &amp; 122</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 (HL)</td>
<td>MUSI 101, 102, 121 &amp; 122</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>6 (SL)</td>
<td>PSYC 101</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>PSYC 101</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre Arts</td>
<td>4 (HL)</td>
<td>DRAM 113, 215</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>5 (HL)</td>
<td>ENGL 110</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>6 or 7 (SL)</td>
<td>FREN 110 &amp; 111</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 or 5 (HL)</td>
<td>FREN 110</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>6 or 7 (SL)</td>
<td>GERM 110 &amp; 111</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 or 5 (HL)</td>
<td>GERM 110</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>6 or 7 (SL)</td>
<td>SPAN 110 &amp; 111</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 or 5 (HL)</td>
<td>SPAN 110</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advanced Placement Credit. VSU awards advanced standing credit (course exemption and academic credit hours) to entering students who have qualifying scores on the AP tests. Students may receive credit in any academic discipline in which an AP test is offered so long as they take the test before the end of their senior year of high school. After matriculation, students should direct questions about their AP credit to the College Dean’s office under which their major field of study is organized.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP Course</th>
<th>VSU Class Equivalent</th>
<th>General Education Credit Hours Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art 4 or 5</td>
<td>ARTS 199</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry 3, 4 or 5</td>
<td>CHEM 151</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science 3, 4 or 5</td>
<td>COBU 155</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics 4 or 5</td>
<td>ECON 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Science 3,4, or 5</td>
<td>AGRI 150</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 4 or greater</td>
<td>ENGL 110</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French 3, 4 or 5</td>
<td>FREN 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German 3, 4 or 5</td>
<td>GERM 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government 4 or 5</td>
<td>POLI 150</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U S History 4 or 5</td>
<td>HIST 122</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics 4 or 5</td>
<td>PHYS 112</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology 3, 4 or 5</td>
<td>PSYC 212</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish 3, 4 or 5</td>
<td>SPAN 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics 3</td>
<td>STAT 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World History 4 or 5</td>
<td>HIST 123</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cambridge International Examinations Credit.** The University may grant credit for Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) levels Advanced (A) and Advanced Subsidiary (AS) offered through the University of Cambridge in England. These courses and examinations are administered through registered CIE Centers in public high schools throughout the United States. A-level syllabuses and exams cover approximately two years of college-level curriculum in a subject and the AS level syllabus and exam covers the first year of the two-year A-level curriculum. Cambridge tests passed with final grades of A, B or C will be considered for advanced standing and credit for the corresponding courses at VSU. The applicability of such credit toward the student’s degree program is interpreted by the department or college in which the student seeks a degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAMBRIDGE EXAM</th>
<th>A-LEVEL VSU EQUIVALENT</th>
<th>AS-LEVEL VSU EQUIVALENT</th>
<th>ACADEMIC CREDIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>BIOL 120</td>
<td>BIOL 120</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>CHEM 151</td>
<td>CHEM 151</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>ENGL 110</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English literature</td>
<td>ENGL 210</td>
<td>ENGL 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>MATH 120</td>
<td>MATH 120</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>PHYS 105</td>
<td>PHYS 105</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>PSYC 212</td>
<td>PSYC 212</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>MUSI 199</td>
<td>MUSI 199</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing</td>
<td>COBU 155</td>
<td>COBU 155</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>ECON 210</td>
<td>ECON 210</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art and design</td>
<td>ARTS 199</td>
<td>ARTS 199</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-Traditional Studies.** Adult students may be admitted to non-traditional programs in the College of Graduate Studies, Research and Outreach which include the Bachelor of Individualized Studies (BIS) degree. Program requirements for earning college credit can be met by the following means: by examination, work and life experiences, a variety of courses through instructional television and other media, and international educational experiences.
**Readmission.** Students who interrupt their enrollment for two or more semesters (one or more years) must apply through the Office of Admissions for readmission to the University. Readmission is to the department in which the student was enrolled at the time of separation. A change of major request must be made after readmission.

**Senior Citizens.** There is no limit to the number of semesters in which senior citizens may enroll who are not enrolled for academic credit. However, individuals are limited to three non-credit courses each semester. Eligible senior citizens enrolled for credit may enroll as full-time students, limited only by their academic performance as to the number of credits pursued or enrolled semesters. Senior citizens are defined as persons who, before enrollment, (1) have reached sixty years of age and (2) have had their legal domicile in Virginia for one year. Further details of the program are available from the College of Graduate Studies, Research and Outreach, 20716 Fourth Avenue, Virginia State University.

**Advisement.** Upon admission to the University, students will be assigned an academic advisor from the Department in which the student is enrolled. Students who have not declared a major will be advised in the Department in which the student was enrolled at the time of separation. A change of major request must be made after readmission.

**Academic Honors**

**Honors List.** Undergraduate students earning twelve or more semester hours with a grade-point average of at least 3.0 shall be named to the Honors List.

**Honors with Distinction List.** Undergraduate students earning twelve or more semester hours with a grade-point average of 4.0 shall be named to the Honor’s List with Distinction.

**Graduating Honors.** Candidates for a baccalaureate degree who have completed at least 51 percent of the credits required for their degree program at Virginia State University will qualify for honors at graduation based upon their final cumulative grade point average as listed below:

- Summa Cum Laude 3.80-4.00
- Magna Cum Laude 3.50-3.79
- Cum Laude 3.00-3.49

Candidates for baccalaureate degrees who have earned forty or more hours but less than 51 percent of the credits required for their degree program at Virginia State University are recognized for academic achievement against the following standard:

- With Distinction 3.20 or higher

**Top Ranking Graduates.** Recognition will be given to the two students with the highest cumulative grade point average in each of the following categories:

1. the student who entered Virginia State University as a first-time freshman, and who has completed at least 95 percent of his/her overall credits at Virginia State University, or
2. the student who entered Virginia State University as a transfer student, and who has completed at least 51 percent of the credits required in his/her degree programs at Virginia State University
**Academic Sanctions**

1. A new student (freshmen or transfer student without an Associate Degree) must earn a minimum grade point average of 1.5 each semester during the first two regular semesters in residence. Thereafter, the student must earn at least 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension). Transfer students with the Associate Degree must maintain a 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension) to remain in good academic standing.

2. *Academic warning* will occur when a student’s semester average falls below the required minimum.

3. *Probation* occurs when a student’s semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for two semesters.

4. *Suspension* for poor scholarship will occur when a student’s semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for three semesters. Students will not be readmitted to the university except under the following circumstances:

   A. Students who return to the university having earned an Associate Degree (college-prep track) will be readmitted under the same terms and conditions as a transfer student.

   B. Under exceptional circumstances (such as serious and documented health or financial difficulties), a student may appeal his/her suspension to the department chair and college dean who may then, in turn, recommend readmission to the Academic Credits Committee. Such an appeal can only be made after the student has been out for the period of one year. The student must present a letter from at least one faculty member in support of his/her appeal. If the appeal is successful, the student will be readmitted on “warning.”

5. If a student voluntarily withdraws from the university for a semester (for any reason), that student will return on the same status with which he/she left. (That is, if the student left on “warning,” he/she will return on “warning;” if he/she left on “probation,” he/she will return on “probation.”)

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**STUDENT MUST MAINTAIN EITHER THE SEMESTER OR CUMULATIVE GPA, AS SPECIFIED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed Semesters</th>
<th>Semester GPA</th>
<th>Cumulative GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance. (See Classroom Attendance)**

**Academic Honesty.** Intellectual and scholastic freedoms are safeguarded through application of principles of academic honesty. Violations of academic honesty represent a serious breach of the Virginia State University honor code and may be considered grounds for disciplinary action.

Academic dishonesty is defined to include (a) plagiarism—presentation of the written words of others as if they were one’s own; (b) cheating—giving, aiding, or seeking assistance during the process of taking a test or examination.
Penalties for academic dishonesty may be loss of credit for the work in question, loss of credit for the course, suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Advanced Scholars Program.** This program is designed for academically qualified high school seniors, within the University service area who would like to earn college credits while still in high school. To be admitted into the program, a student must have completed the junior year of high school and have a cumulative average of at least a “B” (3.0) and have submitted an admissions application, high school transcript, and a letter of recommendation from a high school counselor. A student may enroll in courses at Virginia State during the summer between the junior and senior years and/or during the senior year. A maximum of six semester hours may be pursued each session.

**Baccalaureate Degree.** To receive a Bachelor’s degree from Virginia State University, a student must do the following:

1. Have a minimum of 120 semester hours of credit with 25% being earned at Virginia State University.
2. Have a cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or better.
3. Complete the General Education (Core) requirements.
4. Meet all of the major requirements of the curriculum leading to the degree for which he/she is a candidate.
5. Have spent his/her last year (last 27 semester hours) in resident study for the degree at Virginia State University.

A student who already possesses a baccalaureate degree and seeks to earn a second baccalaureate degree must submit an application for admission to the desired program. The student’s transcript will be evaluated by the chairperson to determine advanced standing. The student must complete all courses prescribed by the second degree program. General education courses already taken need not be repeated. All academic regulations shall be in full force including residency.

**Cancellation of Enrollment.** See Withdrawal from the University

**Certificate Program.** A prescribed set or sequence of courses that results in a student receiving a certificate issued by the University when the identified courses and experiences are completed satisfactorily and when all other conditions have been met in accordance with the definitions and policies of the specific program.

**Change of Major.** Forms for change of major, available in the Registrar’s Office and on the VSU website, must be completed and returned to the Registrar’s Office after approval of the chairperson of the new major.

**Classification of Students.** Full-time and part-time students are classified by credit hours earned as follows:

- Freshman: 1-29 credit hours
- Sophomore: 30-59 credit hours
- Junior: 60-89 credit hours
- Senior: 90 or more credit hours

A full-time student is one pursuing a minimum of 12 semester hours during a semester. A part-time student is one pursuing fewer than 12 hours during a semester.

**Classroom Attendance.**

Classroom attendance is expected of all students. The instructor may reduce grades for students who exceed four hours of absences for a four-semester-hour course, three hours of absences for a three semester-hour course, two hours of absences for a two-hour course, and/or one hour for a one-hour course. Faculty members must include on the course syllabus any attendance policy that will affect grades, including tardiness and early departures.
Commencement. (See Graduation Procedures)

Concentration- A prescribed set of courses associated with a major that is designed to focus a student’s course of study according to interest and/or career goals. A concentration is not a required component of all majors and/or minors. The student must formally declare the concentration for it to appear on the transcript of record. The concentration will be noted on the transcript only after the student graduates.

Concurrent Enrollment- A matriculating student at Virginia State University who desires to take courses at another institution for transfer credit must obtain the prior approval of the department chairperson and college dean. Concurrent Registration forms may be obtained from the Registrar’s Office or on the VSU website. Credits generated from courses in which the student earns a grade of C or better must be submitted, by official transcript only, to the University Registrar.

Continuing Education Student- A continuing education student is one allowed to enroll in classes under the auspices of Continuing Education and is not pursuing a degree. Upon earning thirty hours, the Continuing Education student must declare the intention to continue in that status indefinitely or make formal application to a degree program. Such a student is subject to lose some or all of his thirty or more hours as applicable units toward a degree at the discretion of the Department Chairperson if not admitted to a degree program at this point. [A Continuing Education student may not enroll for more than 11 semester hours per semester.

Course Load

During a regular semester of the academic year, a full-time course load for undergraduates is generally 15 semester hours. However, the maximum course load is 18 semester hours which includes all academic credits. Exceptions (overloads) must be approved by the Department Chairperson, and the Dean.

During a summer session of four and a half weeks, the maximum course load is six semester hours.

Course Numbering System. All course numbers consist of three digits (XXX). The first digit relates to the course level as follows: (a) 1xx--freshman, (b) 2xx--sophomore, (c) 3xx--junior, (d) 4xx--senior.

Course Waivers and Substitutions. The decision to waive a course shall be made by the chairperson of the Department and approved by the Dean of the College in which the student is enrolled.

The decision to substitute a course shall be made by the chairperson of the department in which the student is enrolled, and approved by the dean of that college and the deans of the college(s) in which the courses in question are offered.

Waivers and substitutions policy will not be applicable to courses in which the student has received a failing grade. If the student is dissatisfied with a decision, he may appeal to the Academic Credits Committee.

Credit by Examination- (Also see Proficiency Examinations) Credit by CLEP (College Level Examination Program) must be submitted upon admission to Virginia State University. Letter grades will not be recorded for credit received by CLEP. The number of credit hours a student may receive by CLEP examination will not exceed twelve semester hours. The same requirements established by the American Council on Education (ACE) will be used for awarding credit.

Credit by examination may be available in areas not covered by CLEP and is coordinated by the individual department. In those instances, no more than twelve hours may be awarded. The request should be initiated within the department during the first eight weeks of the semester. The student may not petition credit by examination for courses in which he or she has been enrolled. Students will receive credit for grades of A, B, and C, earned on the examination. The grade will be recorded on the student’s permanent record. The cost for the departmentally-administered examination will be one-half of the regular fee per semester hour.
Degree- (Also see Associate and Baccalaureate Degrees) Symbols and classifications of undergraduate
degrees conferred by VSU are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Associate of Science Degree in Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>Bachelor of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFA</td>
<td>Bachelor of Fine Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM</td>
<td>Bachelor of Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIS</td>
<td>Bachelor of Individualized Studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrollment/Withdrawal (See Registration)

Examinations- Mid-term examinations are optional but recommended to ensure an informed midterm
report on student progress. Final examinations are required and should be taken as scheduled. Students
enrolled in teacher education programs are required to take Praxis I and II and other relevant professional
exams at the appropriate time.

Financial Aid- Information about financial aid is available from the Office of Financial Aid (see
Directory).

Foreign Language Requirement- In programs where a foreign language is required, modifications are
made based on high school foreign language credits. For placement purposes, a year of high school credit
is equivalent to one semester of university credit in the same language. For specific requirements see the
curriculum sheet for the appropriate department.

Grades- The approved grade symbols and grade symbol definitions are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following grades are also used and have no quality point value, thereby being neutral in grade point
average determination.

I Incomplete grade—a student, otherwise passing, has for good reason failed to complete
course requirements; must be removed within one year or be turned to an F
(undergraduate only)

P Satisfactory completion—at graduate level, successful completion of Research and Thesis

S Satisfactory completion of certain experiences at the undergraduate level. At the
graduate level, it indicates satisfactory progress in Research and Thesis.

U Unsatisfactory performance—student has not earned credit hours for which she/he has
enrolled

W Withdrawn

R No credit given—administrative indication; awarded to Special Services students

AU/Z Course Audit

N Non-attendance

O Omitted Grade—administrative indication
Grade-point Average (GPA). The GPA is determined by dividing total quality points (QPTS) earned by total quality hours (QHRS) attempted for grades of A, B, CD and F. The highest grade in courses which have been repeated is used.

Grade Review Procedure. Requests to make any change in the grade assigned originally shall be made only in unusual circumstances. Such changes threaten the integrity of the academic process. The instructor is expected, therefore, to review course requirements and calculations carefully before submitting final grades. The appeal procedure for a student with a complaint about grading requires contact with the instructor involved, and further contact with the instructor’s department chairperson if the matter is not resolved between the instructor and student.

If the matter is not resolved at the departmental level, contact should be made with the dean of the college in which the instructor teaches. If the situation is not resolved at the dean’s level, the student should submit a written request, containing the signatures of the chairperson and dean, to the Academic Credits Committee.

Grade Reports. Midterm and final grade reports are viewed by the student via the Web for Student Module, which is accessed on the Virginia State University website.

Graduation Procedures. For graduation, a student should:

1. File an Application for Graduation by the deadline published in the official Academic Year Calendar.
2. Pay the appropriate Graduation Fee at the same time the application is filed.
3. Complete degree requirements, which include the removal of I grades; the earning of an overall grade point average of 2.0, and the appropriate grade point average in major course-work. Degree requirements must be completed by such time to be certified by the University before the anticipated degree is approved for conferral.
4. Satisfy all outstanding financial obligations to the University by the specified date.
5. Attend the ceremony. The Registrar should be notified if one is unable to attend, and the degree will be mailed to the recipient.

General Education Requirements. (See General Education Program)

Honors. (See Academic Honors)

Honors Program. (See Special Academic Programs)

Immunizations. Virginia State University requires physical examinations for all first-time enrollees (freshmen, transfer and graduate students) to provide a health history and immunization record to the Student Health Service prior to registration for classes. Any student who cannot produce an up-to-date immunization record must be re-immunized at his/her expense. Registration cannot be completed until an up-to-date immunization record is provided.

Laboratory Enrollment. Concurrent enrollment in lecture and laboratory science courses is required for first-time enrollees.

Last 27 Credits. A candidate for the bachelor’s degree must spend the last year in resident study for the degree at Virginia State University. A year’s residence is interpreted to mean the accumulation of a minimum of twenty-seven hours of upper-level courses in (1) two regular semesters, or (2) three regular summer sessions, or (3) one academic semester and one summer of nine weeks. Subject to the discretion of the chairman of department, the student may be required to take in residence a maximum of fifty percent of the credit hours required in his major sequence. This may in no case be less than twenty-five percent.
Transfer students must spend a year in residence before graduation. A transfer student from a junior or community college must complete a minimum of 60 semester hours at Virginia State University to qualify for candidacy for a degree.

**Major.** A coherent set of required and elective courses approved by the Board of Visitors and meeting state criteria that, when completed by a student, signifies a degree of preparation in a field or fields of study. The credit hour requirements for the major are set by the respective colleges and academic units and may not consist of less than 30 hours. A student must formally declare a major.

**Minor.** A cohesive set of required and elective courses that, when completed by a student, connotes knowledge and skills in a discipline, region or topic area, but not at the depth of a major. The minor is designed for students who are not majoring in the same area and requires minimum credit hours as set by the respective academic department or college. A student must formally declare the minor for it to appear on the transcript of record. A minor is not required for graduation. A minor must have at least 15 semester hours as set by the department. Minor request forms are available in the Registrar’s Office. Approved minor areas and minimum hours of study required are: Accounting (18), Africana Studies (18), Art and Commercial Art and Design (18), Art History (18), Computer Information Systems (18), Computer Science (18), Dance (18), English (18), Finance (18), French (18), German (18), Hospitality Management (19), Mechanical Engineering Technology (18), Management (18), Marketing (18), Mass Communications (18), Mathematics (18), Military Science (15), Music (18), Philosophy (18), Political Science (18), Spanish (18), Studio Art (18), and Writing (18). See academic programs for requirements of Elementary Education, Special Education, and Secondary Education.

**Off-Campus Courses.** (See Special Academic Programs)

**Probation.** (See Academic Sanctions)

**Registration.** Registration and schedule adjustment are conducted in accordance with the schedule and procedure set forth in the Registration and Scheduling Bulletin issued each semester. Students are required to follow these procedures and guidelines to be assured of proper registration. Students are to register for sequence and number of credit hours required within the curriculum for each semester. The number of semester hours for students on academic sanction will be fifteen (15) hours and for students with honor roll status the number of semester hours may be increased by three (3) hours.

**A. Early Registration.** Currently enrolled students are required to register for the upcoming semester. B. Registration and Validation Period. During this time, new students and those who completed early registration make course adjustments, if necessary, pay fees, and become validated. A student who is validated has made all payments owed to the university or has made arrangements for payment. Suspension. (See Academic Sanctions) Transcripts. Upon written request, a transcript of a student’s record will be issued within five business days.

**Transfer Credits.** Credit hours accepted and displayed on the student’s transcript will be for those courses in which the student has earned the grade A, B, C, P, or S; except for students with associate degrees (college prep track), where credit hours will be accepted and displayed for all grades (A, B, C, D, P, and S). However, certain courses in some major programs may require a grade of C or better. When a student who pursues one of these majors transfers D grade course credit that is equated to a Virginia State course requiring a grade of C or better, the student will have to repeat the course to satisfy the major program requirements. See University Transfer Guide for more information on transfer credit.

**Tuition and Fees.** (See Student Guide for tuition, fees, and other financial information.)
POLICY EXCEPTIONS AND APPEALS

The following are the policies and procedures for addressing/requesting exceptions to, or appeals of, academic policies and/or sanctions. The policies and procedures are administered by the University’s Academic Credits Committee.

I. Purpose and Duties

Purpose

The purpose of the Academic Credits Committee (ACC) is to deliberate requests for exceptions to academic policies in the areas of readmission to the University after suspension for poor academic performance, residency requirements and proficiency examinations, and other areas not assigned to the colleges. This committee serves as the final arbiter for these issues.

Duties

ACC is charged with the following duties and responsibilities providing adjudication and disposition on student appeals of academic sanctions and other academic matters, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Administrative withdrawal
- Residency requirements and proficiency examinations
- Readmission after academic sanctions
- Monitoring and making recommendations to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) relative to academic policy and procedure;

II. COMPOSITION

ACC is a group organized under the auspices of Office of the Provost/VPAA. The committee is convened and facilitated by the Provost or his/her designee(s). The following positions comprise the committee membership:

- Provost (or designee), who will serve as chair
- Recorder (non-voting member designated by the Provost)
- Registrar (or designee)
- Vice President for Student Affairs (or designee)
- Deans of the Colleges (or their designees)
- Four Faculty Representatives (Chair of the Faculty Senate [or designee], Chair of the Admission and Retention Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate and two faculty members at large designated by the Faculty Senate)

III. MEETINGS

ACC meetings are held at least twice during each fall and spring semester. All meetings are scheduled by the Provost/VPAA (or his/her designee), who communicates with the Deans of the Colleges to establish due dates for written appeals from students. A calendar of meeting dates shall be published. In addition, the ACC shall meet at least once each academic year to address policy matters and concerns relevant to the committee’s work. Minutes of all meetings shall be housed in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
IV. DISPOSITIONS

ACC renders dispositions based upon students’ appeals for exceptions to established University policy. Each appeal is considered on the basis of its individual merit, and exceptions are granted only if documentation clearly demonstrates at least one the following:

1. Sanctions or other negative decisions based on incorrect or missing information;
2. Extraordinary circumstances beyond the student’s control; or
3. Situations where there is malfeasance on the part of the University.

The dispositions of ACC are the final recourse for students, i.e., students may not appeal to any other authority at the University. However, ACC decisions may be reviewed by the Provost who has the authority to reconvene ACC if additional information relative to a particular case becomes available after a disposition is rendered. ACC decisions are communicated to students via letter from the Office of the Provost with copies to the student’s dean and department chairperson as well as the Office of the Registrar.

Minutes of the proceedings of the ACC are completed by the committee’s recorder; hard copies are maintained in the Office of the Provost in accordance with the University’s record retention policy. A summary of dispositions of the ACC shall be submitted annually to the Faculty Senate.

V. ACTION ITEMS

Administrative Withdrawal: Administrative withdrawal (grade of “W” for all courses in a semester) is warranted based upon irrefutable documentation relative to attendance or other extreme circumstances (e.g., military deployment, medical emergencies, etc.).

Residency Requirements: The following is the University policy on residency:

A candidate for the bachelor’s degree must spend the last year in resident study for the degree at Virginia State University. A year’s residence is interpreted to mean the accumulation of a minimum of 27 hours of upper-level courses in (1) two regular semesters, or (2) three regular summer sessions, or (3) one academic semester and one summer of nine weeks. Subject to the discretion of the chair of the department, the student may be required to take in residence a maximum of fifty percent of the credit hours required in his or her major sequence. This may in no case be less than twenty-five percent.

Transfer students must spend a year in residence before graduation. A transfer student from a junior or community college must complete a minimum of 60 semester hours at Virginia State University to qualify for candidacy for a degree.

Students may apply for exceptions to this policy in cases of extreme circumstances over which they have no control. ACC will consider each request on the basis of individual merit and documentation.

Proficiency Examinations: At the end of each semester, each academic dean shall submit to the ACC a summary report on proficiency examinations administered by each department. Only if circumstances warrant further deliberation will appeal matters regarding requests for a proficiency examination be referred to the ACC. (Proficiency Examination Procedures.) Proficiency examinations must be requested by the end of the eighth week of the semester. No requests for proficiency examinations will be accepted during the semester in which the student will graduate.

Readmission after Academic Sanctions: Students who are suspended may apply for readmission to the University per the provisions of the Academic Sanctions policy. However, readmission to the University following academic suspension will be granted ONLY ONCE.
Students may be subject to academic sanctions, which result in suspension in accordance with the following established University policy:

**Academic Sanctions**

1. A new student (freshmen or transfer student without an Associate Degree) must earn a minimum grade point average of 1.5 each semester during the first two regular semesters in residence. Thereafter, the student must earn at least 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension).

2. Transfer students with the Associate Degree must maintain a 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension) to remain in good academic standing.

3. Academic warning will occur when a student’s semester average falls below the required minimum.

4. Probation occurs when a student’s semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for two semesters.

5. Suspension for poor scholarship will occur when a student’s semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for three semesters. Students will not be readmitted to the University except under the following circumstances:

6. Students who return to the University having earned an Associate Degree (college-prep track) will be readmitted under the same terms and conditions as

7. Under exceptional circumstances (such as serious and documented health or financial difficulties), a student may appeal his/her suspension to the department chair and college dean who may then, in turn, recommend readmission to the Academic Credits Committee. Such an appeal can only be considered by the ACC after the student has been out for the period of one academic year. The student must present a letter from at least one faculty member in support of his/her appeal. If the appeal is successful, the student will be readmitted on “warning.”

8. If a student voluntarily withdraws from the university for a semester (for any reason), that student will retain their academic status when he/she left. (That is, if the student left on “warning,” he/she will return on “warning;” if he/she left on “probation,” he or she will return on “probation.”)

Each application for readmission is evaluated by ACC. Each applicant must demonstrate that he/she is prepared to succeed academically via written recommendation and documentation of academic pursuits/activities (e.g., college course work successfully completed at other accredited institutions, college-equivalency experiences, relevant internships, military service, etc., as applicable).

- If the application for readmission is approved, ACC may make stipulations with regard to maximum number of credit-hours in which the applicant may enroll, change of major, required cumulative or term grade point average, among others as deemed appropriate to the student’s academic progress during previous enrollment and work completed during the period of suspension.

- If the application for readmission is denied, ACC will inform the applicant in writing as to what the student can do to reapply in the future, or the application may be denied and permanent expulsion imposed.
Other areas

ACC monitors grade appeals that are assigned to the colleges and may recommend re-evaluation of specific dispositions as needed. (Grade Appeal Procedure.)

Academic Glossary

**Administrative Error**: A term used that identifies a mistake made by faculty, or an administrator.

**Academic Grades**: Symbols that are used to describe academic performance.

**Academic Sanctions**: A process that describes the steps leading to academic suspension of a student.

**Academic Suspension**: Will occur when a student’s semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for three semesters. A new student (freshman or transfer student without an Associate Degree) must earn a minimum grade point average of 1.5 each semester during the first two regular semesters in residence. Thereafter, the student must earn at least 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension). Transfer students with the Associate Degree must maintain a 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension) to remain in good academic standing.

**Academic Warning**: Will occur when a student’s semester average falls below the required minimum.

**Administrative Withdrawal**: Administrative withdrawal (grade of “W” for all courses in a semester) is warranted based upon irrefutable documentation relative to attendance or other extreme circumstances (e.g., military deployment, medical emergencies, etc.).

**Dispositions**: Final decisions made by the ACC involving requests for exceptions to academic policies in the areas of readmission to the University after suspension for poor academic performance, residency requirements and proficiency examinations, and other areas not assigned to the colleges.

**Grade Appeal**: A series of steps that students must follow to get a grade changed.

**Probation**: Occurs when a student’s semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for two semesters.

**Proficiency Examination**: An examination designed to allow students to receive academic credit by examination in those subjects in which competence can be demonstrated by examination in lieu of formal course work.

**Readmission after Academic Sanctions**: Students who are suspended for poor academic performance may apply for readmission to the University per the provisions of the Academic Sanctions policy. However, readmission to the University following academic suspension will be granted ONLY ONCE.

**Residency Requirement**: A candidate for the bachelor’s degree must spend the last year in resident study for the degree at Virginia State University. A year’s residence is interpreted to mean the accumulation of a minimum of 27 hours of upper-level courses in (1) two regular semesters, or (2) three regular summer sessions, or (3) one academic semester and one summer of nine weeks. Subject to the discretion of the chair of the department, the student may be required to take in residence a maximum of fifty percent of the credit hours required in his or her major sequence. This may in no case be less than twenty-five percent.
Withdrawal: If a student voluntarily withdraws from the university for a semester, for any reason, that student will return on the same status with which he/she left. That is, if the student left on “warning,” he/she will return on “warning;” if he/she left on “probation,” he/she will return on “probation.”

Grade Appeal Procedure

College Grade Appeal Committees consisting of at least three (3) faculty members from various departments shall deliberate requests for grade appeals and recommend an action to the college dean. The dean shall review the recommendation and make a decision on the outcome of the appeal. The dean shall serve as the final arbiter on the matter. At the end of each semester, the dean shall submit to the Academic Credits Committee a summary report of the dispositions of grade appeals handled at the college level. Only if circumstances warrant further deliberation should a grade appeal be referred to the ACC.

The appeal procedure for a student with a complaint about grading requires initial contact with the instructor involved and further contact with the instructor’s department chairperson if the matter is not resolved between the instructor and student. If the matter is not resolved at the departmental level, a grade appeal should be submitted to the dean of the college in which the instructor teaches. The dean shall then forward the request to the grade appeal committee for deliberation.

Normally, students may appeal final grades based upon documented evidence that a grade was incorrectly awarded. Typically, grade changes are warranted based upon the following:

- The Professor did not have information or documentation at the time the grade was awarded;
- The Professor made an error of calculation or other error or entry of a grade;
- A grade of “I” (incomplete) was entered and the student completed the necessary work for the course.

The student will follow the steps below:

1. Make his/her case (with documentation) to the faculty member who awarded the grade. If the faculty member is no longer employed by the University, the student may approach the Department Chairperson for the unit through which the course was offered.

2. If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of the faculty member, he/she may repeat this process with the Department Chairperson.

3. If the student remains dissatisfied, he/she may appeal to the college grade appeal committee via a letter which states the student’s case with supporting documentation appended.

4. After deliberation, the college grade appeal committee makes a positive or negative recommendation to the dean.

5. The dean will consider the appeal, entering one of two dispositions:
   - The appeal has no merit and the faculty member’s grade stands as entered;
   - The appeal has merit and is remanded to the department chairperson and faculty member for reconsideration. In these cases, the disposition of the faculty member is reported to the dean and is final.

Guidelines for Writing the Appeal Letter

Communication regarding appeals should be routed as follows: academic advisor, department chair, and college dean. The student’s request for action should then be forwarded to the Academic Credits Committee.
Academic advisors, department chairs, and academic deans are encouraged to review the University’s academic policies with the student to determine that the student is eligible to file an appeal. An appeal for readmission can only be made after the student has been out for a period of one year. Students seeking readmission should remember that they can be reinstated only ONCE. The Academic Credits Committee does not consider financial aid appeals or judicial affairs appeals.

Students should complete the “Appeal Action Request” form and attach it to the appeal letter following the guidelines below. All letters must first be reviewed by the department chair and academic dean BEFORE they are received by the Academic Credits Committee.

The appeal letter should be typed, grammatically correct, and signed by the student requesting consideration by the Academic Credits Committee. It is imperative that the letter contain the student’s PERMANENT address, not campus address, to avoid delay. Documentation in support of the appeal must be submitted with the letter. This should be the same documentation that is presented to the academic advisor, department chair, and academic dean unless the additional documents were not available for review. If the appeal seeks readmission, it MUST be accompanied by a letter of support from at least one faculty member.

Suggested Format for the Appeal Letter

(RETURN ADDRESS or LETTERHEAD)
Student’s Permanent Mailing Address
City, State ZIP

DATE

(ADDRESSEE)
ATTN: Academic Credits Committee
Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
P.O. Box 9404
Virginia State University, Virginia 23806

(SALUTATION)
Dear Academic Credits Committee:

(BODY OF LETTER)
FIRST PARAGRAPH
In three or four sentences, state the PROBLEM that you would like the Academic Credits Committee to address. Be clear in stating the nature of your appeal, including the academic policy in question and the exception you are requesting from the Committee. (Ex. seeking readmission after being academically dismissed.)

* Privacy concerns may limit reviewers’ access to sensitive and personal documents submitted by the student.

SECOND PARAGRAPH
Explain the reasons and history behind your appeal. Make sure you state your case in a clear and concise manner, furnishing pertinent details and extenuating circumstances. Present your case in chronological order so that the Academic Credits Committee can follow the sequence of events and follow your reasoning. Attach supporting documents that are RELEVANT to this case.
THIRD PARAGRAPH
State clearly what action you wish the Academic Credits Committee to take on your behalf. Describe also any actions that you have taken to convince the Committee to rule in your favor or actions you may have to take if the appeal is granted or denied. (For example, describe steps you are taking or have taken to resolve the difficulties that you are experiencing in your academic/personal life—attending community college, seeking counseling or medical treatment, etc.)

(CLOSING)
Sincerely,

Student's Signature

   Student’s Typed Name
   Student’s V#

Enclosure(s): List of Documents Attached
Completing the Proficiency Examination

Students requesting the awarding of academic credit through the completion of a proficiency examination should follow the procedure described below.

1. The student contacts the academic advisor to request a proficiency examination.

2. The student completes the appropriate section of the Request for Proficiency Examination form and submits the form to the academic advisor.

3. The academic advisor completes the appropriate section of the form and submits it to his or her department chair.

4. Upon approval, the department chair forwards the form to the chair of the department housing the course for which the proficiency examination is requested.

5. Upon approval, the chair of the department housing the course forwards the form to the dean of the school housing the course for which the proficiency examination is requested.

6. If the dean approves the student’s request, the dean then (1) notifies the student to go the Cashier’s Office to pay the fee, (2) forwards the form to the Office of the Bursar, and (3) forwards a copy of the signed form to both department chairs.

7. The student pays for the proficiency fee and brings the receipt to the department housing the course.

8. The department housing the course schedules and administers the proficiency examination.

9. The chair of the department housing the course completes the “Report of Proficiency Examination” form, indicating the grade earned by the student.

10. The chair of the department housing the course submits the report to the Office of the Registrar for processing.

NOTE: AT NO TIME should a student handle the proficiency form after the initial request is made with the academic advisor.