Academic rules and definitions

Eligibility to enroll

Undergraduates
All students enrolled for credit as degree-seeking or special (nondegree-seeking) students must demonstrate their eligibility. Students dismissed from other institutions for academic deficiency may not enroll in classes at VCU. This policy may be waived for students who have not been in attendance at the dismissing institution for at least one year. A student may enroll in undergraduate classes if he/she:
- is currently enrolled or admitted to a degree program and is eligible to continue at VCU,
- is a high school graduate or GED holder who has been out of school for at least one year,
- is a transfer student who is eligible to return to the former institution or has been out of school for at least one year,
- is a former VCU student who is eligible to return,
- is a degree holder taking undergraduate courses, or
- is an eligible transient student.
A student who has not been in high school a full calendar year must meet the undergraduate degree admission standards to study as a special (nondegree-seeking) student.

Graduate students
Degree-seeking graduate students: For information about admission to graduate programs, students should consult the VCU Graduate Bulletin or contact School of Graduate Studies, 901 W. Franklin St., Room 101A, (804) 828-6916, or 1101 E. Marshall St., Room 1-024, (804) 828-0732. Written inquiries should be addressed to P.O. Box 980568, Richmond, VA 23298-0568.
New students not admitted to a VCU graduate program, but who hold baccalaureate degrees, may enroll as nondegree-seeking students but must complete Residency and Certification of Eligibility forms. Students should be prepared to document that they meet the course requirements (according to the VCU Graduate Bulletin) and should understand that they may be removed from the courses if they do not qualify.

Terms of Continuance

Satisfactory progress
In order to be making satisfactory progress, a student must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 (“C” average) on all work attempted at this university. Any student making satisfactory progress is eligible to return to the university the following semester and to enroll for a normal class load of course work. Eligibility for financial aid may be impacted by academic progress.

Academic warning
A student is placed on academic warning when the cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0 (or “C”) at the conclusion of any semester of attendance (fall, spring, summer). Such notification will appear on the student’s grade report. A student on academic probation is not eligible to return to the university for two successive semesters of attendance. Such notification will appear on the student’s grade report. A student remains on academic warning for one semester (fall, spring, summer) of attendance at the end of which time the student either obtains a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 or is placed on academic probation.

Academic probation
A student is placed on academic probation when the cumulative grade point average is below 2.0 (or “C”) for two successive semesters of attendance. Such notification will appear on the student’s grade report. A student on academic probation may not enroll for more than 12 credits per semester of attendance. Students on academic probation are expected to improve their cumulative grade point average by achieving a semester grade point average of 2.0 or better during each semester of attendance (fall, spring, summer). Failure to do so results in academic suspension. A student will be removed from academic probation when a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 is obtained.

Academic suspension
A student is placed on academic suspension when the cumulative grade point average is below 2.0 (or “C”) for two successive semesters of attendance and the following semester grade point average is below 2.0 for any semester, including the summer session. Notification of suspension will appear on the student’s grade report; the student also receives a certified letter from Records and Registration stating the conditions of the suspension, and a notation of suspension is placed on the student’s permanent record. Academic suspension indicates that the student has a record of continued unsatisfactory progress.

A student on academic suspension may not enroll at the university for two consecutive semesters, including summer session (fall and spring, spring and summer, or summer and fall). Course work taken at another institution while the student is under academic suspension from VCU will be considered as part of the criteria for readmission, but the course work may not be used to increase the VCU grade point average. If the student is readmitted, the course work will be evaluated according to regular procedures.
A student may apply for readmission to VCU for the semester following completion of the suspension period. A student readmitted after suspension enrolls under the status of academic probation and is subject to the provisions of that status.

Repealed courses
An undergraduate student on the Academic Campus who repeats a course in which a “D” or “F” grade has been received on the first attempt may request that only the better grade be counted in computing the cumulative grade point average. A student may request this option at any time, but it is required that the cumulative grade point average be adjusted on the next grade report, the request must be made before the last week of classes.

Repeated courses
If more than one “D” or “F” grade is received in the same course, only one of these grades will be removed from computation. The grades for all attempts will continue to be recorded on the student’s permanent record. Students may not repeat courses for which they have previously received transfer credit. A repeated course may be counted only once as credits earned for graduation.

Use of the repeated course option will place the student under current graduation requirements. If the student expects to graduate under the requirements of a university bulletin in effect prior to 1984, the student should consult with his or her adviser or assistant dean before requesting the repeated course option.

Re-admission policy
Undergraduate degree-seeking students on the Academic Campus may sit out for three semesters (including summer) and enroll in the fourth semester without having to apply for re-admission to the university provided they have not attended another college or university since last attending VCU, and provided they have not been suspended from VCU and are eligible to return.
An undergraduate degree-seeking student who does not attend VCU for one or more semesters (including summer) must submit an application for re-admission to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. A re-admission applicant must meet the university’s admission guidelines as well as any specific requirement for the major to which he/she is applying.
A student wishing to return to VCU after attending another institution will be considered as a transfer applicant and will be reviewed based on transfer admissions guidelines.

Student progress
Students are encouraged to discuss progress in courses with their instructors at the appropriate time. Instructors will endeavor to provide some form of evaluation of students’ academic achievement throughout the duration of the course.
Degree-seeking students are encouraged to work closely with their advisers as they progress through an academic program. If you are a degree-seeking student and do not know who your adviser is, call your department or school. See the directory of deans, directors and department chairs on pages 84-85.

Change of Major
Students who wish to change their majors must file a Change of Major form. These forms are available from the Student Services Center in Founders Hall, Room 104. The change of major becomes official after the Office of Records and Registration has received the form signed by the dean or chair of the appropriate school or department. Students are encouraged to have changes to the Office of Records and Registration prior to the first week of classes in order for the school/department to return approved changes by the end of the add/drop period. A change of major will not occur for the current semester after the add/drop period.

Before initiating a change of major, students should carefully review the requirements and prerequisites of the program they wish to enter. In certain programs — including those in the schools of the Arts, Business, Education, Mass Communications and nontraditional studies — a candidate must fulfill additional requirements before being accepted as a degree-seeking student.

Students currently enrolled in an MCV Campus program who wish to change to a curriculum on the Academic Campus must file a Change of Major form. Such students are subject to the continuance policy of the Academic Campus after the major has been changed. Students currently enrolled in an MCV Campus program who wish to change to another MCV Campus curriculum must go through the admission process outlined in the Undergraduate and Professional Programs Bulletin.

Financial aid academic requirements
For students who are receiving financial aid, please be aware that all students are required to make Reasonable Academic Progress (RAP) toward their degree. These RAP standards are based on regulatory requirements that must be met in order to continue receiving federal or state financial aid funds. At a minimum, all undergraduate students must earn at least a 1.00 GPA by the end of their first academic year and must maintain at least a 2.00 GPA by the end of their second academic year. Graduate students are expected to earn and maintain at least a 3.00 GPA. All students must complete and earn at least 67 percent of the course work attempted (remember attempted credits also include "W" withdrawals, "I" incompletes, repeated courses, "CO" continuing grades and all "F" grades), and students must complete their degree before attempting more than 150 percent of the credits necessary for their degree. For details on these financial aid requirements or procedures on how to appeal a financial aid suspension, please visit our Web site.

- - - www.vcu.edu/enroll/finaid

Counselors also are available to answer your questions at the Office of Financial Aid, 901 W. Franklin St. (Shafer Court entrance) or you may call (804) 828-6669.