

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 for a first suspension or five years for a second suspension.

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 for a first suspension or five years for a second suspension,
- 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 out of 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 and Professional Programs Bulletin or contact School of Graduate Studies, 1001 Grove Ave., (804) 828-6916.

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 and Professional Programs Bulletin) and should understand that they may be removed from the courses if they do not qualify.

Before enrolling in the graduate courses, students should be advised properly by the offering academic department. In the School of Business, credit for courses will not apply to a VCU graduate degree in business unless the student has been admitted previously to a degree program.

Questions concerning graduate school standards should be addressed to:

Sherry Sandkam, Associate Dean
School of Graduate Studies
1001 Grove Ave.
P.O. Box 843051
Richmond, VA 23284-3051
(804) 828-6916

Senior Citizen Tuition Waiver

The Senior Citizen Higher Education Act of 1974 provides that any legal resident of the state who before the beginning of any semester or semesters in which he or she claims benefits of the act, and who has had legal domicile in the state for one year may, without paying tuition, register for and enroll in courses under the conditions outlined in the act as amended in 1982 and 1986.

The tuition-free policy shall apply except that the senior citizen shall be subject to fees established for the purpose of paying for course materials, such as laboratory fees, individualized music instructions, etc.

Senior citizens not enrolled for academic credit may not register for more than three courses in any one semester but may register each semester. The Senior Citizen Act benefits shall be available to persons 60 years of age or older with the following legally mandated provisions:

1. The senior citizen shall be subject to admission requirements of the institution.
2. The institution shall determine whether or not it has the ability to offer the course or courses.
3. If the senior citizen has a federal taxable income of not more than \$10,000 during the preceding year, the individual may take a course for academic credit at no charge. If the person's taxable income exceeded \$10,000, the individual may only audit the course at no charge. A senior citizen, regardless of income level, may take a noncredit course at no charge.
4. The senior citizen shall be admitted to a course after all tuition-paying students have been accommodated. Senior citizens wishing to avail themselves of the opportunity to study at VCU should call (804) 828-1222 or the Office of Community Programs, (804) 828-1831.
5. A Senior Citizen Tuition Waiver form must be submitted to the Student Accounting Department for each applicable semester. Forms are available at the student services centers on both campuses and on the Web: <http://www.vcu.edu/enroll/forms>.

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 may 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 GPA falls below 2.0 (grade "C") at the conclusion of any semester of attendance — fall, spring or summer. Notification of warning appears on the student's grade report and permanent academic record. A student remains on academic warning for one semester of attendance, at the end of which time the student must obtain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0. Failure to achieve this GPA results in academic probation.

Academic probation

A student is placed on academic probation when the student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.0 for two successive semesters of attendance. Notification of probation will appear on the student's grade report and permanent academic record.

A degree-seeking student on academic probation may not enroll in more than 12 credits per semester of attendance. Students on academic probation are expected to improve their cumulative GPA by achieving a semester GPA of 2.0 or better during each semester of attendance. A student who achieves a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 is removed from academic probation.

Academic suspension

A student is placed on academic suspension when the student's cumulative GPA is below 2.0 for two successive semesters and the following semester of attendance GPA falls below 2.0.

Notification of suspension appears on the student's grade report and permanent record. The student also receives a certified letter from the Office of Records and Registration stating the conditions of the suspension. Academic suspension indicates 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 the summer session. Course work taken at another institution while the student is under academic suspension from VCU is considered part of the criteria for readmission, but the course work is not used to increase the VCU cumulative GPA. 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 academic probation status and is subject to the provisions of that status. If a student readmitted after suspension fails to obtain a semester GPA of 2.0 in any semester before achieving a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0, the student receives a second, and final, suspension. The student may be considered for readmission after a minimum five-year separation from VCU.

Repeated courses

Because some health science programs do not allow students to repeat courses, any student planning to do so must first consult with his or her adviser, program director or department chair.

The semester credits attempted and the grade points earned for all attempts are included in computing the cumulative GPA. No matter how often a course is repeated, it may be counted only once as credits presented toward graduation.

Courses attempted on the Academic Campus can be repeated. All credits attempted and grade points earned are included in the computation of the cumulative GPA with one exception, which applies only to students enrolled in programs on the Academic Campus.

If a student repeats a course in which a "D" or "F" was earned on the first attempt, the student may request at the time of registration that only the better grade be counted in computing the cumulative GPA. The grade is not excluded until the request is made. If, however, more than one "D" or "F" grade is received in the same course, only one of these grades will be removed from the computation of the cumulative GPA.

A student can file the Historical Repeat Course Option Form at any time during a semester prior to the awarding of the undergraduate degree. This form must be filed before the last week of classes in any semester so the cumulative GPA can be adjusted at the end of that semester. This form is available on the Web: <http://www.vcu.edu/enroll/forms>. It must be filled out completely, signed and returned to the Student Services Center in Founders Hall, Room 104 for processing.

Grades for all attempted courses remain on the student's permanent record. Students may not repeat courses for which they have previously received transfer credit without losing the transfer credit. A repeated course may be counted only once toward credits necessary for graduation. Before repeating a course, the student should consult with the adviser or department chair.

Students who choose to repeat a course must do so before the awarding of their undergraduate degrees from any school or college at VCU or from any other college or university. The student's GPA at graduation will not be affected by repeating a course at any time after graduation.

Readmission guidelines

Readmission is subject to individual degree program requirements. Contact the program department or consult the appropriate program portion of the bulletin for specific information.

Students who withdraw from all courses after the first week of the semester are considered to have been enrolled

for that semester. A student who does not attend VCU for three or more successive fall and spring semesters excluding summer sessions must submit an application for readmission to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. **Students who have attended another institution or who have been suspended since their last enrollment at VCU also must apply for readmission.** This application must be done before the application submission date for the semester in which the student plans to return.

Advising program

Students are responsible for knowing and fulfilling all general and specific degree requirements as described in the bulletin.

Individual student advising is an integral part of the VCU student's academic program. Each degree-seeking student is assigned a faculty adviser who is available for academic and career advising. Special nondegree-seeking students should contact the College of Humanities and Sciences' Special Student Advising Office at 1014 W. Franklin St.

Additional assistance for all students is available from the Counseling Center and the University Career Center.

Change of major

Students who wish to change their majors must file a Change of Major form. These forms are available at the Student Services Center in Founders Hall. The change of major becomes official after the OnTrack@VCU Office has received the form signed by the dean or chairperson of the

appropriate school or department. A change of major should not occur for current semesters after the "add-drop" period. Majors may be changed for the current semester only through the first week of classes. Changes processed after the first week are effective for the following fall or spring semester. Changes processed during the summer sessions are effective for the following fall semester. Students who request or change a double major, a concentration within a major or a minor after the add/drop period and do not enroll or drop all courses will need to re-request those changes.

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 in interdisciplinary 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 appropriate university bulletin.

Credits previously earned at VCU or at another university may or may not be applicable to the new major.

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 1.0 GPA by the end of their first academic year and must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA by the end of their second academic year. Graduate students are expected to earn and maintain at least a 3.0 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 undergraduate 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: <http://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.

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University Student Commons & Activities

www.students.vcu.edu/commons

Phase 3
Opening
Spring 2004