THE SEARCH

Virginia Tech, the leading research university in the Commonwealth of Virginia, welcomes applications and nominations for the next Dean of the College of Science. This is an exceptional opportunity to guide a college with the potential to expand boundaries of research, education, and service in the modern comprehensive university. The dean will have the opportunity to build on new degree programs launched this year that cut across disciplines and further develop an innovative curricular structure that creates an educational continuum for students interested in solving complex real-world problems. Born out of the College of Arts and Sciences in 2003 to promote and unite the sciences at Virginia Tech, the College of Science is home to world-class faculty across eight departments that sit at the nexus of interdisciplinary relationships at Virginia’s most comprehensive university. In addition to research partnerships and curricular innovations, the college fulfills a service and teaching mission that is critical to the success of other colleges and the university as a whole.

The dean will join Virginia Tech at an exciting time of transition. The university’s 16th president, Timothy D. Sands, who began his tenure in 2014, is leading the university community in a visioning process to ensure Virginia Tech’s position as a global land-grant university leader. He is joined by several new members of the senior leadership team, including Executive Vice President and Provost Thanassis Rikakis, who began his term this fall. This new leadership will build on the momentum generated by a string of successes at Virginia Tech over the past several years, including the establishment of a school of medicine, research growth that places it among the top-40 research universities in the nation, the successful completion of a $1.1 billion capital campaign, and strategic initiatives to further develop health sciences and the arts at Virginia Tech.

For its College of Science, Virginia Tech seeks an energetic leader, strategic thinker, relationship builder, and strong communicator who will broaden the role of the college throughout the university without diluting the fundamental strengths that have been so integral to its past success. The dean will identify strategic growth areas and advocate for the college and the important role it plays in the university’s research, outreach, and education mission. The right candidate will have a strong record of relevant research and scholarship success and the ability to lead complex organizations. The dean will also be adept at championing the college externally to donors and alumni, as well as state, national, and international leaders.
A representative search committee has been convened to conduct the search and to recommend finalists to the provost. The university is assisted in the recruitment by the executive search firm Isaacson, Miller. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence as noted at the end of this document.

**College of Science**

In fall 2003, the College of Science was formed as part of a university-wide restructuring, with a primary goal to reform science education and research to effectively meet the STEM-H challenge of the 21st century. As part of its mission statement, the college lists as a primary function the enhancement and development of the university, the local community, the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world through the many academic and public service contributions of its faculty, staff, and students. Outstanding faculty members teach courses and conduct research in biological sciences, chemistry, economics, geosciences, mathematics, physics, psychology, and statistics. The college offers innovative programs in cutting-edge areas including, among others, those in energy and the environment, developmental science across the lifespan, infectious diseases, computational science, nanoscience, and neuroscience. The college is dedicated to fostering a research-intensive environment that promotes scientific inquiry and outreach. It recognizes science’s place within a social context and positions the college’s students and scholars to take advantage of a future marked by rapid advances in technology and globalization. The college has also been greatly aided by the Science Roundtable, the college's alumni advisory board. Made up of successful alumni in industry, the Roundtable is highly engaged and valued. It provides essential support at all levels and the college leadership relies on it for counsel based upon their vast experience in many diverse fields.

The college’s broad conceptualization of science and desire to conduct research and education across boundaries is evident in the myriad research relationships and programs faculty have with colleagues in other colleges – from the development of a “Scienceering” minor with the College of Engineering and a “Bringing Science to Market Program” with the Pamplin College of Business, to a joint Ph.D. program with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences – to name just a few. The college’s new Academy of Integrated Science is evidence of the college’s continued efforts at reimagining science education. The Academy is home to the innovative Integrated Science Curriculum and new interdisciplinary programs in computational modeling and data analytics, nanoscience, neuroscience, and systems biology – which do not fit neatly within the parameters of a single academic department.

The college also has close relationships with Virginia Tech’s seven research institutes that work with some 500 faculty throughout the university. Spanning all of the colleges at Virginia Tech, the institutes allow the university to address large-scale research opportunities by integrating across traditional disciplinary lines. They were responsible for more than $63 million in research in FY 2014. The executive director of the newest institute, The Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute, is a faculty member in the College of Science. The six other institutes all have missions that align well with departments in the college, providing unlimited opportunities for partnerships. The seven university institutes are:

- Fralin Life Science Institute
In many ways the College of Science is at the forefront of an interdisciplinary research environment that is unique among top-tier research universities, with the potential to position Virginia Tech as one of the premier universities in the country recognized for its research and scholarship. The College of Science conducted $37.1 million in research in the 2013-14 fiscal year. It has an annual budget of approximately $56 million and an endowment of $15 million. The college raised $64 million in gifts during the university’s last capital campaign and, with a new Vice President for Advancement having recently joined the university, the college will set its sights even higher to support new faculty positions, undergraduate and graduate students, and new physical space.

Faculty

The College of Science consists of 385 faculty – 209 tenured and tenure-track, 159 non tenure track instructional and research faculty, and 17 administrative and professional faculty*. Professors include world-renowned leaders in their disciplines and rising stars who have received National Science Foundation Career awards and equivalent early career awards from the Department of Energy and Department of Defense. Faculty members have also received prestigious fellowships in recent years including the Humboldt. The college is home to 11 endowed chairs, six of Virginia Tech’s 15 University Distinguished Professors, and two of the university’s nine current Alumni Distinguished Professors. Faculty clearly excel in the classroom, teaching more credit hours than faculty in any other college at Virginia Tech. Professors conduct research on all seven continents – including Antarctica – and serve as advisors to Congress and the U.S. Department of State.

Students

The College of Science enrollment includes approximately 4,000 undergraduate majors, 600 graduate students, and 37 graduate students who are in shared degree programs with other colleges. Undergraduate students win Goldwater Scholarships, Fulbright Fellowships, and go on to earn Ph.D.s at the top universities in the world.

* Note: All faculty, staff, and student numbers in this document are pulled from the fall 2014 university census. Fall 2015 census data is not available until November, 2015
DEPARTMENTS

The College of Science includes eight departments. More detailed information each department can be found at: [http://www.science.vt.edu/about/departments/index.html](http://www.science.vt.edu/about/departments/index.html)

**Biological Sciences**

The Department of Biological Sciences is a major hub for life sciences research and teaching at Virginia Tech, with interdisciplinary connections that span the university. The department is home to 55 faculty, 25 postdocs/research scientists, and 90 graduate students on the Blacksburg and Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute campuses, in addition to over 700 undergraduate majors. As major players in both basic and applied research at Virginia Tech, biological sciences faculty secured over $12 million in new grants this past year to tackle the most challenging problems facing our world today, from global change to human disease.

**Chemistry**

The Virginia Tech Department of Chemistry has a long history, a strong reputation and a bright future. With 42 instructional faculty and 14 research faculty, the department’s research and scholarship generates and disseminates chemistry knowledge to the Commonwealth, the nation and the world. The department’s outreach programs offer opportunities to share this knowledge with others, including practicing professionals, as well as primary and secondary school children. Courses provide the chemical foundation for all Virginia Tech science and engineering students and broaden their understanding about the structure and properties of matter. The department currently has over 300 undergraduate majors and 131 graduate students working in programs preparing them to be society’s future chemists and scientists.

**Economics**

The Department of Economics at Virginia Tech focuses on teaching, research, and outreach in regard to economic issues at the state, national, and international levels. Home to 17 instructional faculty, the department currently has 231 undergraduate majors and 30 Ph.D. students concentrating their education in economics. In addition, it offers general education courses that provide undergraduates from across the university with a background in the business, policy, and international aspects of economics they need to support their programs of study.

**Geosciences**

Virginia Tech's Department of Geosciences focuses on research, education, and outreach dealing with the nature of the earth. Students and faculty investigate earth processes at scales that range from atomic to planetary. With 27 instructional faculty and 14 research faculty, the department currently has 118 students pursuing undergraduate degrees, and an additional 60 students participating in M.S. and Ph.D. programs. The undergraduate program offers B.S. degrees with geology, geochemistry, geophysics, and earth sciences education options, and the graduate
program offers M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in several research areas. The outreach program also operates the Museum of Geosciences, located on campus in Blacksburg and open to the public year-round.

Mathematics

The Department of Mathematics at Virginia Tech offers a range of degree programs intended to educate qualified students in the burgeoning world of advanced mathematics, and to prepare them for careers in its use and development. New mathematically related career paths continue to emerge as the technology-based economy evolves, while some traditional ones seem to be shifting. The department currently has 75 instructional faculty members serving 519 undergraduate majors and 51 graduate students, in addition to meeting the mathematics education needs of the broader university student population. The Department of Mathematics offers the B.S. degree at the undergraduate level and the M.S. and Ph.D. at the graduate level. The department is particularly strong in computational and applied mathematics.

Physics

Physics has been taught at Virginia Tech since it opened its doors in 1872. The department, with 33 instructional faculty and 16 research faculty, currently offers the B.A. and B.S. degree at the undergraduate level and has 354 undergraduate majors. At the graduate level, it offers both M.S. and Ph.D. degrees, with 83 graduate students enrolled. The study of physics at Virginia Tech provides students the opportunity to engage in a broad range of cutting-edge research projects, from particle physics, astrophysics, and string theory to nanoscience and biological physics, using state-of-the-art facilities. The department is strongly dedicated to the mentoring and career preparation of students.

Psychology

The Department of Psychology is home to 30 faculty, 75 graduate students, and over 700 undergraduate majors. Psychology offers doctoral areas of concentration in clinical science, developmental science, industrial/organizational psychology, and neuroscience and biological psychology. Faculty and students are actively engaged in basic and applied research that is advancing knowledge in a variety of areas of psychology and health related behavior. As evidence of the department’s scientific rigor and reputation, the Clinical Science program was accredited earlier this year by the Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System, making it one of only 28 programs in the country to earn this distinction.

Statistics

The Department of Statistics offers both undergraduate and graduate training for students who wish to concentrate in theoretical or applied statistics and has programs for students interested in data analytics, computational statistics, industrial statistics, and biostatistics. With 26 faculty members, the department is home to 109 undergraduate majors and 67 graduate students. The Laboratory for Interdisciplinary Statistical Analysis (LISA) program provides opportunities for
students to collaborate on research projects from all across campus, and the LISA 2020 program provides significant worldwide outreach. Graduates from the department have rewarding jobs in industry, academia, and government.

ADDITIONAL COLLEGE PROGRAMS, CENTERS, and INSTITUTES

Biochemistry

In partnership with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the biochemistry program is currently home to 16 tenured or tenure track faculty, approximately 16 other Ph.D. research scientists, a dozen research technicians, nine support staff, nearly 30 graduate students, and more than 700 undergraduate biochemistry majors – making it one of the largest B.S. granting programs in the nation. Over the past four years, the members of the program have brought in an average of $3.9 million in grants and contracts from federal and private funding agencies and published an average of 44 research papers in refereed journals, along with numerous reviews, chapters, and a textbook.

Academy of Integrated Science

The Academy of Integrated Science is Virginia Tech’s home for cross-disciplinary scientific education. With the scientific climate placing ever-increasing emphasis on team efforts involving researchers from traditionally distinct disciplines, College of Science Dean Lay Nam Chang chartered the Academy on July 1, 2013 with these directives:

- To develop and house interdisciplinary, science-based degree programs, curricula, and minors.
- To provide a multidisciplinary home for faculty whose teaching and research interests are associated with these programs.
- To foster and enhance research opportunities in alignment with its degree programs.
- To strengthen interdepartmental collaboration in discovery, learning, and engagement.

Four new, cross-departmental bachelor’s degree programs reside in the Academy. These are in: Computational Modeling and Data Analytics (CMDA), Nanoscience, Neuroscience, and Systems Biology. Each of the programs draws significantly from two or more departments in the College of Science, bringing together multiple areas of expertise to explore powerful new approaches to the complex scientific problems to be faced in the decades to come. The CMDA and Nanoscience programs opened for enrollment in spring 2015, the Neuroscience program begins enrollment in fall 2015, and students may enroll in the Systems Biology program beginning in spring 2016. New courses in all of these degree programs are now being offered.
The Academy is also the home for the innovative Integrated Science Curriculum (ISC). The ISC embodies Academy principles in offering a two-year educational experience (freshman and sophomore years) on the fundamentals of modern science. Built on a synthesis of knowledge from biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics, and statistics, the ISC is centered on student teams working in labs and lectures formulated from a deeply interdisciplinary perspective. Although there will be multiple routes for entering the new degree programs described above, students completing the ISC will be especially well-prepared.

The Academy is also the home for the Science, Technology, and the Law (STL) minor. One of the exciting prospects with interdisciplinary research is that of discovering patentable processes or products. It is at such new discoveries that the intersection of science, technology, and law is found, and it is at this intersection that knowledge of intellectual property law becomes an invaluable tool in the scientific toolkit. The STL minor addresses this need for scientists, engineers, and others who are, or will be, involved in projects seeking marketable outcomes. As it enters its fourth year in fall 2015, classes are routinely over-subscribed.

Macromolecules and Interfaces Institute

Macromolecules and Interfaces Institute (MII) is an interdisciplinary group committed to continuing the growth and advancing the stature of the existing highly-ranked macromolecular science and engineering program at Virginia Tech. The institute is committed to fostering a dynamic environment that enthusiastically promotes the recruitment and education of high-quality students; actively initiates and conducts timely research at both the basic and applied levels; and vigorously pursues continuing education and economic growth through outreach activities with industry and government agencies. The MII has 60 affiliated faculty, representing five colleges, the Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Sciences, and the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute.

Interdisciplinary Center for Applied Mathematics

The Interdisciplinary Center for Applied Mathematics (ICAM) was formed in 1987 to promote and facilitate interdisciplinary research and education in applied and computational mathematics. Recognizing that applied mathematics plays a central role in all of modern science and advanced technology, the fundamental mission of ICAM is to enhance and expand the historical links among mathematics, engineering, and the sciences. With 45 faculty members, ICAM has representation from ten departments in two colleges, as well as the Virginia Bioinformatics Institute and Advanced Research Computing. The center provides opportunities for traditional academic disciplines to meet the evolving needs in scientific, engineering, and technological fields through active engagement with national research laboratories, industry research and development centers, and federal research funding agencies.
Arlington Innovation Center: Health Research

Virginia Tech’s Arlington Innovation Center: Health Research (AIC:HR) is a vanguard of integrated applied research that seeks to harness the power of informatics and systems science in order to meet the challenges of healthcare in the 21st century. Founded in 2010 under the College of Science, AIC:HR aims to establish a highly competitive combination of biomedical research, education, and outreach programs in the National Capital Region. AIC:HR is focused on the multidisciplinary application of advanced technology to address complex problems in neuroscience, human performance, therapeutics, and healthcare delivery.

College of Science Institute for Advanced Study

The Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) is an innovative interdisciplinary research community bringing together faculty, scientists, and students into teams that identify emerging opportunities at the frontier of science. The Institute seeks to teach future scientists to consider the long-range environmental, economic, and public policy impacts of consequential research by building teams of thought leaders and research scientists in a program designed for shared knowledge and experience, rational decision making, and science-based solutions for real societal issues.

Virginia Tech Center for Autism Research

The VT Center for Autism Research (VTCAR) promotes collaborative research on Autism Spectrum Disorders and related conditions from multiple disciplinary perspectives. VTCAR builds upon basic and clinical resources already available at VT and works closely with the VT Autism Clinic and other autism service providers to provide outreach on research findings, conduct research, and recruit participants. Currently, VTCAR consists of over 30 faculty affiliates across the university, from departments as diverse as biological sciences, psychology, engineering, computer science, education, human development, and more. The aim is to assist these researchers through establishing a central and ongoing research database of potential research participants that are well-characterized with behavioral assessments. The goal is also to facilitate interactions among scientists who wish to apply their work to ASD, through an annual conference, outreach, and assistance with grant development. Finally, the Center hopes to involve graduate and undergraduate students interested in conducting research in this field and welcomes participation and input from the community.

Virginia Tech Center for Drug Discovery

The Virginia Tech Center for Drug Discovery (VTCDD) is an interdisciplinary group committed to continuing the growth and advancing the stature of the existing drug discovery and development programs at Virginia Tech. The Center is committed to fostering a dynamic environment that enthusiastically promotes the recruitment and education of high quality students, actively initiates and conducts timely research at both the basic and applied levels, and
vigorously pursues continuing education and economic growth through outreach activities with industry and government agencies.

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEAN**

As the head of the college, the dean sets the academic tenor, promotes a culture of outstanding innovation and scholarship, and represents its faculty, students, and staff to the university and beyond. The college’s department chairs, associate deans, and center directors report to the dean. The dean has financial and administrative management responsibility for the college, guides and oversees its annual operating budget, advocates to the central administration for investment in new initiatives, and leads its fundraising efforts. The dean’s charge also includes providing effective leadership for the college’s faculty and administrative staff.

To ensure the College of Science’s continued growth and distinction, the next dean will be expected to place high on her/his agenda several key opportunities and specific challenges:

**Develop a compelling future vision and strategic direction to clearly differentiate the college as a national leader**

The next Dean of the College of Science will play a critical role in guiding the direction and setting the tone for the college over the next 5-10 years. The College of Science, with its current composition of departments and programs, is still a relatively young college. The next dean will have an important opportunity to work with faculty to determine the most appropriate aspirations for the college and to not only create, but also execute, a vision for its future that is consistent with the vision of the university. Working with the faculty and the provost, the dean will develop a vision that will enable faculty to identify opportunities to strengthen and seed a number of areas, including those that further encourage interdisciplinary connections and cross-campus collaborations. Developing and leveraging strengths of the college in integrated science will likely play a major role in determining the focus of the future, but will not rule out opportunities for growth or expansion into new areas.

**Provide enlightened and collaborative academic and administrative leadership for the college**

The next dean will be expected to engage the entire College of Science community by leading with transparency in decision-making, listening carefully, and thoughtfully knitting together all areas and interests of the college, including those of faculty, staff, students, and alumni. In leading the college, the dean must demonstrate a willingness to listen to the college’s diverse constituents, make critical data-driven decisions, articulate the reasoning behind such decisions, and allocate resources accordingly. The dean will also be expected to cultivate a community that thrives through the active communication and engagement of all participants across and among the departments and programs of the college. Leading with integrity, the dean will be expected to cultivate an environment that excels in growing the positive climate that will attract a diverse faculty, staff, and student body working with strong cooperation to further the goals of the college.
Inspire faculty and ensure they are recognized and supported for their far-reaching impact on the missions of the university

The impact of the College of Science at Virginia Tech links directly to the extent its faculty engages in excellent scholarship in research, education, and outreach activities across the university and beyond. Put another way, the college will be “ubiquitous” in its role in the success not only of individual students but also of a large number of academic programs across campus. To achieve this goal, the dean will need to implement strategic initiatives that will highlight, for both the college’s faculty and the university community, how faculty teaching, research, and outreach capabilities are constitutive of and foundational to institutional excellence, especially in STEM-H and related fields.

Such initiatives will recognize the unique role that the faculty of the College of Science play in achieving the mission of the university. In addition to having research expectations consistent with being faculty at a research intensive university, the college’s faculty members are responsible for delivering a significant number of courses to fulfill the requirements of the fundamental sciences for all students as well as important prerequisites for students in most STEM disciplines. With a focus on the growing needs and opportunities related to undergraduate education, the dean must work to ensure that faculty in the college are valued, rewarded, and supported for their critical contributions to science, the very heart of a research university.

Strengthen and grow collaborative partnerships with other units across the university

The new dean must be an individual with broad intellectual interests, a strong research background, and the interpersonal skills to champion collaboration, enhance and leverage links to other departments and colleges, and build upon the existing culture of joint academic appointments and programs. The College of Science already enjoys collegial and collaborative relationships with a number of other colleges on campus and particularly active partnerships with the research institutes that facilitate cutting-edge research on campus. Currently, a significant number of faculty in the College of Science have active affiliations with the institutes, which provide them financial and other forms of support for their research agenda. The new dean must be a collaborative leader who works effectively with other deans, vice presidents, and institute directors, removes barriers to fruitful collaboration, aligns the college’s goals with the university’s growing interdisciplinary culture, and advances opportunities for faculty research.

Increase the visibility of the college by articulating and clearly communicating its strengths and its contributions to student education, as well as to the welfare of Virginia and beyond

The College of Science will expect its next dean to enhance its presence and prominence within the university, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world. To accomplish this, the new dean must be an outstanding communicator, skilled at illustrating the many achievements and tremendous potential of the College of Science and its programs to an array of audiences, including potential students and faculty, donors, industry partners, central administration, and political leaders, as well as other deans within Virginia Tech and other science colleges across the nation. The dean must also be adept at articulating the value that science education adds to degrees in diverse higher education fields. The dean will lead the college in this effort by
bringing a record of outstanding scholarship, appreciating and understanding the broad contributions that science makes in creating an educated citizenry and in finding solutions to some of society’s most urgent problems.

**Provide leadership in managing budgetary resources and strengthen fundraising for the college**

In order to secure the future success of the College of Science, the dean will need to provide leadership in obtaining sufficient financial resources to fund new and improved facilities, support faculty needs and research growth, expand academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and form strategic partnerships to advance the mission of the college. The dean will need to be thoughtful and tactical about securing and using financial resources, knowledgeable about budgetary processes and the management of funds, and willing to develop entrepreneurial initiatives and vigorously explore new revenue streams. The successful candidate will be asked to champion the college’s potential to central administration in the university’s annual budget development process by explaining how investments in the college will help the university further its mission and achieve its goals.

To achieve the college’s ambitious and critical need for financial resources, the dean must also be a skilled fundraiser willing to work in close coordination with University Advancement to achieve maximum results. The dean plays an important role in fundraising efforts by reaching out to a wide array of donors to make a strong, compelling case for investment in the institution; and by supporting department chairs to spearhead fundraising within their respective units. The college will need to raise substantial funds from alumni, friends, corporations, foundations, and government research grants to support current needs, seed money for new initiatives, and to develop significant endowments for professorships, scholarships, and facilities. The dean will work directly with leaders from advancement to develop and advance a cohesive, integrated fundraising effort, while also leading the effort to reach out to the college’s highly supportive alumni and donor networks.

**THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE**

The College of Science seeks an inspiring, intellectual, and entrepreneurial leader to set it on a dynamic course for the future. The new dean will bring high academic standards, an outstanding record of scholarship, and strong leadership and management skills. The new dean will bring a successful record of leadership experience in an academic setting, and must possess a doctoral degree and the qualifications for an appointment as a tenured professor in a College of Science department. The successful candidate will also possess a demonstrated track record in advancing inclusion and diversity. While no one person will embody all of them, the successful candidate will bring many of the following qualifications and attributes:

- An intellectual leader; a distinguished teacher, scholar, and academic leader who brings a passion for students, research, and service.
• An experienced academic administrator with a track record of success in a large, complex college or similar academic unit; an astute understanding of finances and the relationship between academic priorities and the budget.

• A person of absolute integrity who engenders trust.

• A team player who will work collaboratively with other deans, academic leaders, and central administration to set a strategic vision of the college in the broader context of the university and help the university and colleges achieve shared goals.

• An open and consultative leader; an excellent collaborator who can partner with and motivate faculty, staff, and students to take the college to a heightened level of success.

• A dedication to the mission and vision of Virginia Tech and the college; a tireless advocate for access, interdisciplinary research and teaching, and engagement.

• A technologically adept communicator who can inspire, cultivate key external constituencies, attract partners, raise funds, generate enthusiasm among alumni, and obtain commitments to support the college.

• A demonstrated commitment to inclusion, diversity, and equity; an understanding of its importance to the mission and richness of the College of Science and its ongoing success.

• A person of high energy, optimism, and perseverance to bring initiatives to fruition.

TO APPLY

Nominations and applications are welcome. All applications will be considered until the position is filled.

Nominations and inquiries should be sent to:
Philip Jaeger, Vice President
John Roberts, Vice President
Greg Esposito, Managing Associate
Isaacson, Miller
263 Summer Street, 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
www.imsearch.com/5474

Electronic applications strongly encouraged.

Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law.
APPENDIX: UNIVERSITY BACKGROUND

VIRGINIA TECH

Dedicated to its motto, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), Virginia Tech takes a hands-on, engaging approach to education, preparing scholars to be leaders in their fields and communities. Founded as a land-grant institution in 1872, Virginia Tech is Virginia’s most comprehensive university and its leading research institution as well as one of only six senior military colleges in the nation. With more than 1,400 instructional faculty, Virginia Tech offers 240 undergraduate and graduate degree programs to more than 31,000 students, and manages an annual research portfolio of about $496 million. Its operating budget for 2014-15 is $1.35 billion. Its endowment was approximately $796.4 million as of June 30, 2014.

The university offers about 80 bachelor’s degree programs through its seven undergraduate academic colleges: Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture and Urban Studies, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Natural Resources and Environment, Pamplin College of Business, and Science. It offers approximately 160 master’s and doctoral degree programs through the graduate school and a professional degree from the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine. In addition, the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Research Institute in Roanoke will welcome its sixth class this fall.


Location and Campus

Virginia Tech’s 2,600-acre main campus is located in Blacksburg. The town has approximately 43,000 residents and is one of three central communities that make up the New River Valley, one of the fastest-growing areas in the state. Situated on a plateau between the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains, Blacksburg offers a high quality of life and low cost of living with nearby outdoor attractions such as the New River and the Appalachian Trail. In 2011, Blacksburg was named the “Best Place in the U.S. to Raise Kids,” by *Bloomberg Businessweek* and “The Best College Town in the South” by *Southern Living*. Nearby metropolitan areas include Roanoke (45 minutes to the north), Charlotte, North Carolina (less than three hours to the south), and Washington, D.C. (four hours to the northeast).

Virginia Tech’s campus reaches well beyond Blacksburg through the Virginia Cooperative Extension and from campuses and research facilities throughout Virginia. These include: The Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Research Institute in Roanoke; the Marion DuPont Scott Equine Medical Center in Leesburg; several locations in Northern Virginia including the recently opened Virginia Tech Research Center; regional centers in Richmond, Roanoke, and Abingdon; and the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research in Danville. Virginia Tech’s international facilities include the Center for European Studies and Architecture
in Riva San Vitale, Switzerland and the Caribbean Center for Education and Research in the Dominican Republic.

Leadership

In June 2014, Timothy Sands succeeded President Steger to become the 16th president of Virginia Tech after spending 11 years at Purdue University, where he served as provost and holds an endowed chair in engineering. Sands served as interim president at Purdue in the fall semester of 2012. As an administrator, he led the development of Purdue’s first comprehensive academic program assessment and launched the university’s online teaching and learning platform, known as Purdue NExT. He holds bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees from the University of California, Berkeley.

Thanassis Rikakis succeeded Mark McNamee as provost in August 2015. Formerly the vice provost for design, arts, and technology at Carnegie Mellon University, Rikakis was a full professor in the School of Design and the School of Music at Carnegie Mellon and held a courtesy appointment in the Biomedical Engineering Department. His research work and publications are in the areas of experiential media, mixed reality rehabilitation, interdisciplinary graduate education, pitch perception, and media arts systems for education. Prior to Carnegie Mellon, he served as the founding director of the School of Arts, Media, and Engineering at Arizona State University. He was associate director of the Computer Music Center at Columbia University, where he held a faculty appointment from 1995 to 2001. He holds a bachelor’s degree in music composition from Ithaca College and master’s and doctoral degrees in music composition from Columbia University.

For more information about Virginia Tech, please visit www.vt.edu.