

4.0 Instruction-Related Programs and Policies

4.1 Assignment of Academic Responsibilities

Assignment of teaching load and academic advising are the responsibility of the department head or chair and may vary from one term to the next depending on the departmental requirements. Assignments should involve consultation with the faculty member, and in cases involving non-routine assignments—such as those requiring extensive travel—consultation is required. Ultimately the department head or chair has the authority to make the final assignment. Although the normal load for those engaged only in teaching is 12 didactic hours, the loads vary widely and are usually adjusted to permit time for other scholarly activities, for outreach which is related to the missions of the university and the faculty member's disciplinary expertise, and for faculty development related to the quality of instruction. A didactic hour is defined here as one contact hour in a lecture course or 0.60 hour for each contact hour in a course designated as a laboratory course.

4.1.1 Summer Sessions

Teaching loads during the summer terms are more tightly controlled. Summer teaching appointments are the responsibility of the department head or chair. (See sections 2.6.3 and 4.12.2.2.)

4.1.2 Independent Study and Undergraduate Research

The courses designated as Undergraduate Independent Study and Undergraduate Research are generally unique educational experiences between an instructor and a student. Such studies require prior approval by the instructor's department head or chair and by the dean. Courses designated as Graduate Independent Study/Special Study require approval of the instructor's department head or chair only. Approval forms are available in the colleges. These courses do not count normally in the teaching load of a faculty member.

4.1.3 Graduate Program Standards and Policies

Each graduate degree-granting program in the university has responsibility for the conduct of the program and designates a faculty member to serve as liaison with the appropriate college dean(s) and

the vice president and dean for graduate education. Further, each graduate degree-granting program formulates and retains a current policy statement that spells out criteria governing its program. Copies are filed with the appropriate college dean(s) and the vice president and dean for graduate education. Policy statements address faculty participation on graduate student advisory committees (thesis and dissertation advisors; advisory committee membership); admissions procedures and requirements; and management of graduate students (orientation/advising; manuals, guides, handbooks; assistantships—selection procedures, obligations; evaluation of satisfactory progress towards the degree).

4.2 Scheduling of Classes

The Office of University Registrar has a primary function in coordinating the preparation of the timetable of classes and the dissemination of this information. The university registrar makes assignments of classrooms. The department head or chair or a designated scheduler prepares proposed schedules in response to a call from the university registrar. The material is reconciled by the university registrar with the approved catalog of university courses, with established scheduling patterns and allocations, and with the requests of other departments. Individual professors are expected to work through the department head or chair or the designated scheduler. The timetable of classes is available via *Hokie Spa* and *Faculty Access*. Moving the location of courses may be made with approval of the department scheduler and the university registrar. Enrollments may not exceed the posted room capacity. Students may not be seated in the aisles and/or floor due to Commonwealth of Virginia fire code specifications.

4.3 Registration Procedures

The registration period for each term occurs during the regular preceding term. New and transfer students register for the fall semester during summer orientation. Students who enter the university for the first time in the spring semester or a summer term may register in the normal manner.

The university registrar works with each department to amend course offerings by: increasing the capacity of the section within limits for the assigned classroom; creating new sections with times subject to availability of suitable classrooms; and abolishing sections for which the demand appears too small to justify retention.

Undergraduate classes with fewer than 15 students and graduate classes with fewer than six will be reviewed by the department head or chair and the academic dean and canceled unless there are compelling reasons for retention. In the summer terms, undergraduate classes with an enrollment of fewer than 18 and graduate classes with fewer than eight will be reviewed by the department head or chair and the director of summer sessions. Unless there are compelling reasons to offer the course, it will be canceled.

Students register via *Hokie Spa* during the published pre-registration period. After departments have made adjustments based on course requests, students may view their completed schedules via *Hokie Spa*. Students may adjust their schedules before the end of the preceding term and in the first five days of the term of the registration.

4.3.1 Drop/Add Period

At the beginning of the term, students may add courses through the end of the fifth day of classes and drop courses through the 30th day of classes. During the summer, students may add courses through the end of the third day of classes and drop courses through the end of the fifth. Students who need to drop/add courses typically have received incomplete schedules, changed curricula, failed a course the previous term, or failed to pay their fees on time which removes them from all classes. Students may drop/add courses by accessing "drop/add." A student who obtains changes during the drop/add period may be required to show a printed copy of the class schedule from *Hokie Spa* before being admitted by a professor to the class. Students who have properly added the course will immediately appear on the instructor's class listing available via *Faculty Access*.

4.3.2 Force-Add Requests

Force-add transactions are intended as final solutions for critical scheduling problems in required courses. The course instructor or the designated departmental representative must approve the force-add request. (Students should check with the department for departmental policy.) If a force-add request is approved, the student must retain his or her copy of the approval to verify enrollment to the instructor. An add processed through the force-add process will override all other courses on a student's schedule and may create schedule conflicts. Force-adds may not be processed above the physical capacity of the scheduled room. Processing force-adds beyond the physical capacity of the room does not guarantee relocation of the course. Enrollments may not exceed the posted room

capacity. Students may not be seated in the aisles and/or floor due to Commonwealth of Virginia fire code specifications.

4.3.3 Class Rolls

Faculty should check with their departments to determine whether printed class rolls are provided. Up-to-date class rolls are available to instructors via *Faculty Access*. Faculty must be the instructor of record in the student record system to have view access to the class rolls and to have listserv capability. Faculty are expected to notify those students who do not appear on the displayed class roll that they should contact their academic dean for assistance. Graded work should not be returned to students whose names do not appear on the roll sheet until they have been officially added to the class. The student's dean must approve any action that could correct these inconsistencies.

4.4 Textbooks and Other Instructional Materials

The University Bookstore (www.bookstore.vt.edu) has been officially designated and assigned the responsibility of providing textbooks and related teaching supplies for the university community. Each department has a person designated as the departmental bookstore representative. This person serves as the main contact between the bookstore and the instructor; the needs for all textbooks and other instructional materials that are to be sold by the bookstore should be routed through this representative.

Selection of textbooks and other materials for any fall semester class must be made available to the University Bookstore no later than April 15. The deadline for spring semester is October 15 of the year immediately preceding the spring semester.

The faculty member must confirm that he or she intends to use all items ordered—particularly each individual item sold as a part of a bundled package. In the event that the faculty member does not intend to use each item in the bundled package, he or she must notify the bookstore.

Faculty members are encouraged to limit their use of new edition textbooks when previous editions do not differ in a substantive way.

Before adoption of a particular textbook, the respective department must determine that a copy of the textbook is on reserve in the University Library during any period that the textbook is to be used.

Faculty members should not engage in direct sale of instructional materials to students. Departmental materials produced locally may be placed in the University Bookstore for sale to students. Contact the manager of the University Bookstore for details on the procedures. Funds generated from such sales may be recovered into departmental operating budgets.

The Code of Virginia §23-4.3:1 states that, "No employee at a Virginia public college or university shall demand or receive any payment, load, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services or anything, present or promised, as an inducement for requiring students to purchase a specific textbook required for course work or instruction; with the exception that the employee may receive (i) sample copies, instructor's copies, or instructional material, not to be sold; and (ii) royalties or other compensation from sales of textbooks that include such instructor's own writing or work."

4.4.1 Faculty-Authored Course Materials

A faculty member teaching a course may not receive a royalty and/or other fees beyond direct cost of production and sales for any material used as part of class activity, except for material that has received an independent external review, that has been copyrighted, and a portion of the copyright is owned by a publisher other than the author. Faculty accused of abusing the distribution of classroom material for personal financial gain will be subject to review by the Committee on Faculty Ethics.

4.5 Grading Systems

"A" to "F" system (undergraduate students): The majority of course enrollments by undergraduate students at the university are graded on the traditional A-F basis, with a 12-point plus/minus grading scale (see the *Virginia Tech Undergraduate Catalog* for quality credit system). The grades "A" through "D-" represent passing grades and "F" is a failing grade. The grade of "A" should be assigned to students who meet the learning objectives outlined for the course at a level of comprehension and performance deemed excellent. The grade of "F" should be used for those students who have not demonstrated acceptable achievement with regard to the learning objectives of the course of study. An instructor may choose not to use the plus/minus system in the assignment of grades.

"A" to "F" system (graduate students): The grading system for graduate students is similar to the A-F system except that "D" is the lowest passing grade.

Pass/Fail system (undergraduate students): A pass/fail grading system is available to encourage students to enrich their academic programs and explore more challenging courses outside their major without the pressures and demands of the regular grading system. The pass/fail grading option is available to all undergraduates who have completed a minimum of 30 credit hours at Virginia Tech and have a cumulative Virginia Tech grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or above.

The following restrictions apply: (1) the number of pass/fail hours applied toward a baccalaureate degree shall be limited to 10 percent of the graduation requirements completed at Virginia Tech—including courses offered on a pass/fail basis only; (2) a student may not enroll for more than two courses per semester on a pass/fail basis—excluding physical education activity courses and required courses offered on a P/F basis only; (3) courses may not be changed from A-F to the P/F basis beyond the last day to drop classes without penalty; and (4) courses may not be changed from P/F to A-F beyond the last day to resign without penalty.

For courses offered only on a pass/fail basis, the 30-hour and 2.0 GPA requirement does not apply. Any courses taken beyond the number of hours required for graduation also may be taken pass/fail, except that no more than two courses may be taken on the P/F option per semester.

Under the pass/fail grading system, a “P” is granted for earning a “D” or better in the course; otherwise an “F” is given. The “P” or “F” is recorded on the student’s transcript and credit given if the course is passed; if the course is failed, the “F” is considered as equivalent to an “F” received under the A-F grading system and is included in calculation of the GPA. The GPA is unaffected by a “P.” Once credit is received for a course taken on pass/fail, the course cannot be repeated under the A-F grading system.

Pass/Fail system (graduate students): A limited pass/fail grading system is available to encourage graduate students to explore courses outside their major. Subject to approval of the major professor, graduate students may take an unlimited number of hours of graduate course work (5000- and 6000-level) on a pass/fail basis, if outside the department and not on the plan of study. These courses may not be used to satisfy minimum degree requirements. All courses on the plan of study, including supporting courses, must be taken on a letter grade (A-F) basis except for those courses offered on a pass/fail basis only.

Under the pass/fail grading system, a “P” is granted for earning a “C-” or better in the course; otherwise an “F” is given. The GPA is unaffected by a “P.” Grades of “F” are counted in the calculation of the GPA.

Audit grade (undergraduate students): A student may choose to audit a course, without the necessary prerequisites, to enhance his or her educational experience. Permission of the course

instructor is required, in accordance with university policy 6360, "Auditing Courses." An audit is a mechanism for a student to reserve a seat in a course, with no performance evaluation required. If the student or faculty expect evaluation of course work, then the student must enroll either for the P/F option or for a letter grade. If a faculty member wishes to restrict the participation of auditing students in selected activities, then that should be stated in the syllabus.

The **"I" grade**: The "I" grade signifies incomplete work, but will not affect a student's GPA. It is assigned at the discretion of the instructor only. The "I" may be used when a student is unable to take the final examination during examination week, but the instructor may wish to confirm the legitimacy of the request with the Student Health Services or the student's academic dean. Except for certain laboratory courses, "I" grades must be removed by the end of the student's first subsequent semester of enrollment or one calendar year from the date of the original "I" grade. Official change-of-grade cards must be used to remove an "I" grade and submitted to the department of the course. Incompletes not removed during the designated time are changed to "F" and calculated in the student's GPA.

The **"NG" grade**: The "NG" grade is given when a student's name appears on the class roll, but he or she has never attended class or submitted work for grading.

The **"X" grade**: The "X" mark shows that pursuit of the project begun in the course will be continued. The "X" does not compute in the student's GPA. The "X" may be assigned only for courses pre-established as eligible for this treatment. Changes from the "X" to the final grade must be submitted on change-of-grade cards; the regular grade marked on a grade sheet for an "X"-eligible course will process to that term's enrollment only.

The **"EQ" grade**: The "EQ" grade is reserved for graduate students enrolled in research and thesis (5994), or research and dissertation (7994). The awarding of this grade shows that the enrollment has been reviewed and the credits are to be sent to the grade report system. Failure to assign an "EQ" grade will result in the computation of the credits as failing.

The **"NR" grade**: The "NR" (not reported) grade is automatically entered when an instructor fails to award a grade to a student. The "NR" grade computes as an "F."

The **"W" grade**: The "W" (withdrawn) grade is given to an undergraduate student who has applied the course withdrawal policy to a course. The "W" grade is automatically awarded based on the course option of "W." A regular grade cannot be awarded if a student has applied the withdrawal policy or "W" option to the course.

Mid-term grade reports: Mid-term grade reports are issued for first-term undergraduates and first semester transfer students for the purpose of informing them about their progress early in their first academic year. Courses that are oriented toward freshmen should be designed to include at least one substantial graded assignment in time for the mid-term grade report.

Projected grades for the graduating students, spring term: Projected grades for graduating students—all levels—must be submitted by the published tentative grade entry deadline in the spring semester. All students are completed for spring term based on the projected (tentative) grades received. Failure to submit tentative grades will result in the student's non-completion and non-receipt of diploma at the college ceremony. Entry of tentative grades follows the same process as the end of term entry via *Faculty Access*.

4.6 Course Grading

The assignment of final course grades is the sole responsibility of the instructor of record for a course; this responsibility may not be delegated to other colleagues or teaching assistants. However, department heads or chairs may ask instructors in their department to explain unusual profiles of grades or schemes of evaluation.

Faculty should adhere to principles of professionalism, fairness, and clear communication with respect to the assignment of grades. In particular, this includes: consistent treatment of all students in the class; clear criteria—communicated directly to the class—about the basis on which course work is evaluated and grades are assigned; timely return of graded work to the student; sufficient feedback through the grading process for the student to improve performance on future assignments; and attention to fair and reasonable measures of course content and student performance.

During the term (that is, before final grades have been assigned), the grading process is not only a record of evaluation for work completed, it is also an important device for providing information to the student about how his or her work could improve in the future. Grading should therefore be handled in such a way that it serves as a teaching tool to provide specific feedback to students. The teaching function of grading should be clearly kept in view in designing assignments and course work.

Students have the right to see their grades for a course and to lodge a grade appeal if they believe a grade has been assigned unfairly. (See sections 4.6.4 or 4.6.5.) The federal Department of Education stipulates that posting of grades using *even a portion* of the student identification number, is considered a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA protects the

confidentiality of educational records and prohibits distribution of that record unless with the student's written consent.

Faculty may *not* post any grades as a class listing using any portion of the student identification number, either via paper or electronically. (Note that this policy applies whether the student identification is the social security number or a generated identification number.)

4.6.1 Syllabus and Performance Expectation

Faculty are expected to provide students with a course syllabus on the first day of classes each semester, including course objectives, topical outlines, and the expected performance for which grades will be assigned as well as the instructor's attendance policy, if any. Also included should be a statement on the honor system and its application to the particular course (see section 4.8 for more information on the honor system), and references to accommodations for students with disabilities (see www.ssd.vt.edu/facultyresources.htm for sample statements and other faculty resources). The syllabus should also include information about the instructor's office hours and how he or she can be reached directly or through the departmental office during normal working hours.

Instructors must include in their course syllabus or assignment sheet an explicit statement concerning the prerequisites for the course and should call attention to these during the first week of classes. Before the official add-day deadline, the instructor may require specific students not having the prerequisites to drop the course. The student granted permission to enroll without prerequisites should be informed that course expectations and grading practices are the same for all students regardless of whether prerequisites were satisfied or waived.

The syllabus is a very important document to the student because it provides explicit information about course content, schedule, grading scale, and expectations of the instructor. Because the student perceives the syllabus as providing essential material about the course, the syllabus should be designed by the instructor as a useful means for setting the tone of the course. Any substantial changes in the syllabus constitute modifications in the structure or content of the course, which should be communicated clearly and in writing to students in a revised syllabus. These might include changes in the grading scale, significant departures from the schedule, or modifications of assignments.

All written work, with the exceptions noted below, should be given at such time that it can be graded and returned during a regularly scheduled class meeting. To the extent feasible, instructors should **not** schedule major assignments or tests for the last three calendar days of scheduled classes or

reading day. Students should have time to prepare for their final exams and have the benefit of feedback on material relevant to exams.

Common exceptions include:

- Dates for turning in term papers and project reports may be set at the discretion of the instructor, if the student is not to be held responsible on the final examination for the subject matter therein.
- Final examinations in laboratory courses and in other courses that do not warrant a final examination during the examination period. Such examinations, if required by the department and/or instructor, should be given during the last regularly scheduled laboratory or class period.
- Final examinations for master's and doctoral candidates, if approved by the vice president and dean for graduate education.

4.6.2 Class Attendance

Class meetings are an integral part of most courses and the central component of many. Therefore, both faculty and students are expected to meet at all regularly scheduled times, except for cancellations announced on a university-wide basis by appropriate authority.

When faculty cannot meet a class, it is their responsibility to follow departmental procedures so that appropriate measures can be provided for the missed classes.

When students cannot attend a class, it is their responsibility to make arrangements for any work missed as soon as possible.

In cases of prolonged absences, students may ask their academic deans to notify their instructors of the reason for their absence.

4.6.2.1 Religious Holidays

Consistent with the university's tradition of religious tolerance, faculty are encouraged to be sensitive to students who wish to observe religious holidays. It is the student's responsibility to request and provide justification for a religious accommodation, preferably during the first two weeks of classes or

as soon as the student becomes aware of the need for an accommodation. Faculty should inform students of their willingness to make accommodations for reasonable requests. Faculty are not required to compromise the academic integrity of the course to accommodate religious practices. Thus, accommodations for religious practices will be determined by the faculty member and will be consistent with their attendance policy.

4.6.3 Final Examinations

Instructors must adopt an appropriate means for evaluating and measuring student performance relative to the course objectives. A final examination schedule is displayed on *Hokie Spa* and *Faculty Access* in the timetable of classes for each academic term and final exams, if used, must follow this schedule unless the dean of the college has granted special permission. The method of evaluation must be made known to students in the course syllabus at the beginning of the term (see section 4.6.1). Faculty members will make available to students any final graded material at least through the following academic term.

A student with conflicting examinations or with more than two examinations within 24 hours may reschedule an examination with permission of the student's college dean at least 10 days before the beginning of the examination period and by arrangement with the appropriate instructor.

A re-examination in one course, in which the final grade is C- or below, may be authorized when the student was enrolled in the course during the final term of his or her senior year and a satisfactory re-examination in the course would qualify the student for graduation. A re-examination request must be made and the exam must be completed by the student as soon as possible, but no later than one academic term after the original examination in the course. Re-examination approval by the instructor, the student's department head or chair, and the student's college dean is required, with consideration given to class performance and completion of assigned work.

4.6.4 Undergraduate Student Appeals

The university provides a process for student appeal of a grade. If a student feels that a grade has been calculated incorrectly or has been assigned in a prejudiced or capricious manner, the student must first discuss the matter with the instructor. If discussion between the instructor and the student cannot resolve the issue, the student then has the option of requesting a formal appeal of the grade to the department head or chair who will examine the student's allegation, discuss the matter with the

instructor, and make every effort to resolve the matter at the department level. In the unusual circumstance that resolution does not occur at the departmental or divisional level, the student may appeal to the instructor's college dean. The dean will reconcile the matter by whatever mechanism seems most appropriate for that college and that case. The decision of the college dean is final in undergraduate appeals.

A grade appeal must be made by the student as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the next academic term of the regular academic year (i.e., fall or spring).

4.6.5 Graduate Student Appeals

Graduate education is a complex activity involving a high order of student-faculty relationship. It follows that the evaluation of the graduate students' progress is, and must be, dependent in large part on the judgment of their major professors, augmented by the collective judgment of the members of their assigned committees. The university, through the agency of the graduate school, defines minimal entrance standards and prescribes general rules governing eligibility for continuation. But the crucial agency in student evaluation is the department in which the student's work is centered, and the crucial evaluator is the faculty advisor.

It is important, therefore, that each graduate student be fully informed—not only of the university's expectations, but of the department's expectations as well. Each department shall prepare, in outline form, a statement for each of its graduate degrees. Such a statement should cover course requirements, the nature and timing of oral and written examinations, and the evaluation that will be given to the thesis. A copy of each departmental statement should be on file in the graduate school and should be made available to each student at the time of matriculation.

Most disputes over evidence of unsatisfactory progress will be informally discussed and reconciled at the departmental level. Discussions of this kind will occur among the student, the major professor, and the other members of the advisory committee. Nonetheless, there will from time to time arise serious questions regarding both the status of a graduate student (whether in a given course or as a candidate for the degree) and the basis of the evaluation that has placed the student's status in jeopardy. On these occasions it is important that the university provide full opportunity for the student's grievance to be reviewed in a judicious manner.

The procedures for a formal graduate student appeal are described in the *Graduate Policies and Procedures and Course Catalog*. Copies may be obtained from the graduate school or at www.grads.vt.edu.

4.6.6 Grade Adjustments for Honor Suspects

The honor system is described in section 4.8. Grades are not to be unilaterally adjusted in a course to compensate for suspected dishonesty. When an alleged violation of the honor system occurs, the incident should be reported to the honor system by submission of a violation report form. The Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost will recommend a grade change for undergraduate students found guilty of class I, II, and III offenses that are instituted by the instructor of the class. The university registrar will adjust grades for class V and class VI offenses.

4.6.7 Change of Grade

A change in grade is authorized only under unusual circumstances. Faculty must submit the change of grade via the department change of grade card. The change of grade process requires the signature of the instructor and the electronic approval of the department head or chair and dean for all grade changes—including removal of “I” grades. Grade change requests should carry a statement regarding the circumstances necessitating the change. This includes a description of the circumstances for an original award of an “I” grade. It is improper to permit a student to improve a grade by doing extra work unless all students in the class are given the same opportunity.

4.6.8 Final Grade Reports

Final grades are reported via the Web, using *Faculty Access*. Two methods of entry are available: direct entry or upload from an external data file. Grades must be submitted within 48 hours of the last final examination on the published schedule. Student grade reports are generated from these submissions and displayed via *Hokie Spa*.

Faculty may not post grades, either via paper or electronically, using even a portion of the student identification number. Pursuant to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, using a portion of the student identification number in conjunction with the course grade is not allowable without the written permission of the student. Faculty may wish to remind students that grades are available via *Hokie Spa* within 48 hours of the end of the term.

4.7 Instruction-Related Responsibilities

4.7.1 Office Hours

As a part of their teaching responsibilities, faculty members are expected to provide several regularly scheduled office hours each week for consultation with students. These hours should be reasonably spaced over the week at times mutually convenient to the instructor and students. Although a specific number of office hours is not stated in university policy, faculty members should ensure that they are readily available, both through office hours and by message at other times during the normal workweek. Information about office hours and about how to contact the faculty member through the department office should be included on the syllabus for the course.

Students should be encouraged by the instructor to seek clarification about their work if they are in need of counsel. Those in need of non-academic or personal counseling outside the purview of the faculty members' professional capabilities may be referred to the Cook Counseling Center.

4.7.2 Tutoring

Faculty members and graduate teaching assistants do not accept fees for tutoring students enrolled in their classes, either on a group or single-student basis. They are free to tutor for payment otherwise under university consulting policies.

4.7.3 Students with Disabilities

The university, as a federal aid recipient and state agency, is required to provide opportunities and reasonable accommodation to all identified students with disabilities. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Virginians with Disabilities Act, and presidential policy memorandum 178 provide guidelines and requirements for colleges and universities in providing academic assistance. Accommodation means more than the removal of architectural barriers and the provision of auxiliary services such as notetakers, readers, and interpreters for the deaf. It means reasonable accommodation must be made in the instructional process to ensure full educational opportunity. For faculty, this means that teaching strategies and methods, including Web page design and distance learning, as well as instructional policies, must be sensitive to the laws and the needs of students with disabilities and responsive to the university's legal obligations.

Students with disabilities at the university may self-identify and be qualified for accommodations through the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office. Students must present medical or extensive psychoeducational documentation of physical, medical, psychological, or learning disabilities to SSD. Accommodations for students with disabilities are established by the SSD, in accordance with medical and professional information in the student's record, legal precedent, and national standards for services for students with disabilities. Faculty are urged to include a syllabus statement that encourages the student with a disability to disclose their need for accommodation to the professor as early in the semester as possible. Examples of inclusive disability syllabi statements can be found at www.ssd.vt.edu. Faculty should contact SSD for more information regarding accommodation and services.

4.7.4 Referring Students in Distress

Classroom faculty members are often the first to learn of students in distress. There are a number of campus resources available to assist, including print and Web materials, offices and programs, and individuals on call. Information regarding Cook Counseling Center services available for distressed students may be found in section 4.14.2.1.

The Office of the Dean of Students offers two guides that may be helpful:

- *Responding to Disruptive or Threatening Student Behavior: A Guide for Faculty*, which is available online at www.dos.vt.edu. A print copy may be requested by calling the Office of the Dean of Students at 540-231-3787, or by sending an e-mail request to dean.students@vt.edu.
- A listing of *Resources for Student Referrals* may be obtained by calling the Office of the Dean of Students at 540-231-3787, or by sending an e-mail request to dean.students@vt.edu. The listing is available in two formats—a re-positional sticker, or a 4 x 6 inch card that includes contact information for student affairs departments able to assist with distressed students.

The Office of Dean of Students partners with faculty and staff members to support students for whom there may be concern. Concerns may be shared by phone (540-231-3787), e-mail (dean.students@vt.edu), or face-to-face contact with staff in the Office of Dean of Students. After regular business hours, contact VT Police at 540-231-6411 for connection to the dean of students' on-call staff member.

The Office of Dean of Students also offers an additional tool for faculty members to use in sharing concerns about a student. The "Dean of Students Reporting System" is available through the *Faculty*

Access/Hokie SPA menu. This system closely parallels the academic advising system already used by faculty. As always, matters needing immediate attention should be directed to the Virginia Tech Police Department at 540-231-6411. The online reporting system should not be used for emergencies.

Absence Verification: The dean of students' staff members will verify absence from class for those students who have documentation to support an absence beyond their control. The Office of the Dean of Students will send absence verification notes to the college dean, who then forwards the verification to faculty members. The dean of students' staff member will reinforce with the student that they must contact the faculty member to arrange make-up of any missed work.

4.8 The Honor System

The functions of the honor system are to communicate the meaning and importance of intellectual honesty to all students of the university; to articulate and support the interest of the community in maintaining the highest standards of conduct in academic affairs; and to identify, sanction, and educate those students who fail to live up to the stated expectations with regard to those standards. The honor code is the university policy that defines the standards of student conduct in academic affairs. Details may be found in the *Constitution of the Virginia Tech Honor System* and the honor system website at www.honorsystem.vt.edu.

4.8.1 Offenses and Sanctions

The honor system classifies offenses into one of six categories depending upon the severity of the offense and the circumstances of its occurrence. Each classification carries several sanctions, one or more of which may be imposed on those convicted of violating the honor code. These include probation, grade adjustments on assignments in question, permanent grade of "F," university service, suspension, and dismissal.

Among common offenses are: cheating (i.e., giving or receiving of any unauthorized aid, assistance, or unfair advantage on any form of any academic work); plagiarism (i.e., copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and passing it off as one's own); falsification and tampering with records; purchased work and work for hire.

Any attempt to commit one of these acts is a violation of the honor code as well.

4.8.2 Faculty Participation

Although the Virginia Tech honor system is a student program, the support of the faculty is an essential ingredient in making the system an effective and efficient means of handling academic violations. Faculty members are encouraged to support the honor system and are expected to abide by procedures designed for the effective implementation of the honor code.

Any suspected violations should be reported promptly, in writing, to the chief justice. Forms for this purpose are available from all department offices, the honor system office, and the honor system website (www.honorsystem.vt.edu). The chief justice will assign the case to an associate justice for investigation. If warranted, a judicial panel will hear the case to determine innocence or guilt. The honor system review board reviews the decision; it may return a case for rehearing or reinvestigation, overturn verdicts, or forward recommendations to the provost. Once the provost has imposed a sentence, the faculty complainant will be advised of the verdict and will be informed of the classification assigned to the offense, the sentence that has been imposed, and any recommended grade change, if applicable.

In order to protect the accuser and the accused, a faculty member bringing charges of an honor code violation has the right to decline discussion of the case with the accused, or, with the written permission of the accused, to have witnesses present at such a discussion. The faculty member will receive a copy of the case coordinator's report summarizing the evidence in the case. A faculty member involved in a case is expected to cooperate with honor system personnel, appear before the judicial panel if requested, and maintain confidentiality.

In addition, the honor system offers the following guidelines to faculty:

- When an alleged violation is detected, the suspected student(s)' paper should not be collected until the test is completed, as this would be contrary to the student(s)' right of presumed innocence. However, any evidence that would be necessary in an investigation should be collected immediately. The test should be graded without prejudice and the alleged violation should be reported to the honor system. Please provide the original of the instrument in question in the submission of evidence. Grades should not be adjusted in a course to compensate for suspected dishonesty.
- If a professor suspects that a student or students are cheating, it is permissible to speak with the suspected student(s)—after the test or other work has been completed—and indicate these suspicions. However, it is not permissible to penalize or berate the student(s) or to take any other action that might affect the student(s) or violate the student(s)' rights to due process.

- A statement is to be included on each course syllabus about the honor system and its application to the particular course.
- Faculty members are not required to proctor quizzes, tests, and examinations. Faculty are expected to personally administer the examination and to remain within reasonable proximity of the examination room to answer questions that may be raised by the students. However, it is not a compromise of the honor system to stay in the room or visit frequently, when a test is being given. In fact, precautionary measures in the spirit of reducing the opportunity for cheating are advisable, especially in large classes. Seats should be spaced in examination rooms whenever possible. Alternate test forms may be used. In some rare cases such extreme measures as requiring ID when a test is handed in may be necessary to prevent organized “paid substitutes” from taking tests for other students. Under no circumstances can measures be taken that would compromise student(s)’ rights.

The faculty, along with the students and other university personnel, share the responsibility for providing, explaining and disseminating information regarding honor practices and the honor system.

4.8.3 The Honor Pledge

The Virginia Tech honor pledge is as follows: “I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on this assignment.”

The pledge is to be written out on all graded assignments at the university, and is to be signed by the student. The honor pledge represents both an expression of the student’s support of the honor code and an unambiguous acknowledgment that the student has, on the assignment in question, abided by the obligation that the honor code entails. In the absence of a written honor pledge, the honor code still applies to an assignment.

4.8.4 Honor System for Graduate Students and Students in the College of Veterinary Medicine

Detailed information concerning the graduate honor system applicable to all graduate students can be found in the graduate honor system constitution, published in the *Graduate Policies and Procedures Catalog*. The graduate honor system constitution describes the rights and responsibilities of students as well as faculty with regard to the honor code.

The honor system for students in the College of Veterinary Medicine is described in the *Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine Student Honor Code*.

4.9 Classroom Conduct

Maintaining a good learning environment in the classroom is an important part of a faculty member's responsibility as a teacher. The teacher should endeavor to create a classroom atmosphere that is comfortable and welcoming of all students, including women and members of minority groups. Disruptive classroom conduct on the part of some students may be distracting, annoying, or intimidating to other students and should not be tolerated by the teacher.

As much as possible, the teacher should endeavor to create a classroom environment in which there is an active participation on the part of most of the students, rather than the domination of the class by a few individual students. This may require different teaching strategies such as the use of small groups or teams, as well as different approaches to the structure of classroom presentations. Assistance for faculty who are trying to improve the learning environment of the classroom can be gained through a variety of special resources on teaching and through the Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (www.ceut.vt.edu).

Faculty have the prerogative of deciding the classroom conduct and the appropriate dress of their students as long as these actions do not infringe upon the students' rights as guaranteed in principles underlying the section in *University Policies for Student Life*. It is the faculty member's obligation to ensure that the classes that follow find a clean and orderly space.

4.10 Teaching Evaluation

Good teaching evaluation processes are essential for maintaining the quality of academic programs, for reviewing the job performance of faculty members with respect to the instructional mission of the university, and for designing effective faculty development initiatives. All of the colleges have processes of teaching evaluation, which are used in promotion and tenure decisions and in yearly performance evaluations.

4.10.1 Student Evaluation of Courses and Instructors

Student evaluation of courses and instructors is an integral component of a good teaching program. While specific procedures may vary across the colleges, in general, committees in each college are responsible for designing appropriate evaluation procedures and for receiving such evaluations. Faculty members should ensure that their college's procedures for conducting student teaching evaluations are followed in a way that is absolutely free of intimidation or influence by the teacher's presence. Most of the colleges require that evaluation forms be filled out after the faculty member has given instructions and left the room, and that they be collected and delivered to the department by a responsible student in an envelope provided by the teacher for this purpose. Otherwise, students may believe that their grades will be affected by how they answer the questions. The university expectation is that all faculty members will be evaluated in all courses taught each year. More information about this matter is available from departmental offices and from the academic deans.

4.10.2 Other Evaluation of Courses and Instructors

Good teaching evaluation should include more than the student perception of instruction. The university expectation is that in-depth evaluation of teaching and feedback for faculty will be conducted periodically for all faculty members and at least twice during the probationary period for untenured faculty.

Colleges, departments, and individuals wishing assistance in devising evaluation forms may consult the Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (www.ceut.vt.edu), where a variety of such forms are available. Faculty members may find such evaluations helpful in revealing information that leads to improvement of classroom presentation, evaluation of students, and student response to their classes.

4.11 Student Record Policy

In response to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, a statement of policy on the maintenance and disclosure of student records was adopted by the university. This policy protects the privacy of student records; the specific policy document is available from the university registrar or online at www.registrar.vt.edu.

4.11.1 Academic Records

Names and addresses of students may be selected and released to non-university entities only on the basis of class level (freshman . . . senior), major, or place of residence. It is important to note that e-mail addresses are not directory information and may not be released without the student's prior consent.

The protection of academic records, which exist in enrollment services and in the college and departmental files, is covered by this policy. This includes the student's right to review these records. Responses to telephone inquiries are limited to the following information: whether the student is currently enrolled; dates of enrollment; degree(s) earned if any, date, major, and honors received; address and telephone number.

Grade reports may not be released to parents, guardians, or any other person without prior written approval from the student. Students may not have access to financial aid information about their parents or guardians without written approval from the parent or guardian.

The university may withhold transcripts, certificates, registration materials, or any other information about a student's record if financial obligations are unmet. The university also reserves the privilege of withholding materials if violations of university regulations have not been cleared.

4.11.2 Schiffert Health Center Records

In addition to the student record policy, the Schiffert Health Center complies with state and federal law as well as the standards and ethics of the American Medical Association.

4.11.3 Cook Counseling Center Records

In addition to the student record policy, Cook Counseling Center complies with the state and federal law as well as the ethical standards of the American Psychological Association in the maintenance of counseling records. Further information regarding the Cook Counseling Center is available in section 4.14.2.

4.12 Support for Instruction

4.12.1 Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching

The Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (www.ceut.vt.edu) provides a university-wide base to foster the design, development, implementation, and advocacy of excellence in higher education instruction. The center reflects the university's commitment to instruction and supports effective teaching at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (CEUT) serves as a clearinghouse for information on college teaching and disseminates information about teaching across campus. CEUT provides services in the area of faculty development, course development, and university-wide recognition of innovative teaching. The center also works collaboratively with other units across campus to strengthen the university's instructional mission.

4.12.2 Distance Learning and Summer Sessions

The Office of Distance Learning and Summer Sessions (www.dlss.vt.edu) provides university-wide leadership for eLearning and academic summer sessions. It provides strategic planning in support of the university's academic agenda; creates opportunities to enhance educational activities and initiatives; creates opportunities for potential, existing, and former students to complete their educational goals through flexible and non-traditional educational methods; develops procedures that ensure quality and reduce barriers to learning; and works with colleges and departments to ensure compliance with state and regional accreditation standards. The organization is under the direction of the associate vice president for distance learning and summer sessions.

Faculty, through their respective departments and colleges, exercise oversight of distance education, and ensure the rigor of programs and the quality of instruction.

4.12.2.1 Institute for Distance and Distributed Learning

The Institute for Distance and Distributed Learning (IDDL), www.iddl.vt.edu, provides leadership, coordination, management, and support to the distance and distributed learning (eLearning) activities of Virginia Tech. As an academic enterprise, the institute works collaboratively across the university community to electronically extend Virginia Tech's campus throughout the commonwealth and beyond; to provide an open learning environment where teaching and learning occur at any time and

in any place; to share the practical applications of the university community's knowledge and expertise; and to research eLearning environments and emerging technologies.

IDDL manages VTOnline, www.vto.vt.edu, the university's portal for eLearning credit and non-credit course offerings. The university offers 29 graduate degree, certificate, and licensure programs, a program of 55 undergraduate core course offerings, an undergraduate concentration in the humanities, and five non-credit professional or personal development programs.

Proposals to develop and deliver distance learning courses and programs (degrees, certificates, licensure, concentrations, and professional development programs) should involve IDDL faculty and staff to ensure that best practices in electronically delivered programs are followed, and that the university remains in compliance regarding its distance learning offerings.

IDDL also manages VTalumnNET, www.alumni.iddl.vt.edu, the university's virtual gateway to lifelong learning for Virginia Tech alumni. VTalumnNET highlights the exceptional expertise and experience of Virginia Tech faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as selected internationally recognized Web-based developers, to provide timely and high quality professional development and personal interest educational opportunities.

The following IDDL units are available to assist faculty, staff, and students:

- Instructional Design, Development, and Support provides design, development, and multimedia production support for courses taught in eLearning environments. Instructional designers assist faculty in effectively integrating content into accessible learning experiences. The unit provides faculty development workshops and one-on-one consulting services, as well as eLearning support services to students in distance learning courses.
- Systems Development, Integration, and Technology provides support to Virginia Tech's eLearning network, ensuring that eLearning systems are fully integrated with university systems and that content, interactive tools, and systems are accessible and dependable.
- Research and Assessment of Teaching and Learning in Electronic Environments manages the university's student perceptions of eLearning course surveys, conducts program assessments, investigates the effectiveness and efficiencies of teaching and learning in electronic environments, and collaborates with faculty on research projects in teaching and learning.

4.12.2.2 Office of University Summer Sessions

The Office of University Summer Sessions, www.summer.vt.edu, promotes summer sessions as an integral component of the student learning, discovery, and engagement experience. The office serves as a central planning and advocacy function by coordinating cross-college initiatives and promoting long-range planning for summer instruction.

The provost's summer session course delivery award provides faculty with a funding award to teach a summer session course in an area of targeted need. A total of 15 awards are typically given each year and are competitive. Criteria for the awards are published in early fall semester.

Teaching loads during the summer sessions are tightly controlled. Summer teaching appointments are the responsibility of the department head or chair. (See section 2.6.3.)

4.12.3 Learning Technologies

The mission of Learning Technologies is to provide a teaching and learning infrastructure that meets modern needs for integrating technology across content areas. Learning Technologies creates and supports robust teaching, learning, and discovery environments that are grounded in sound principles of learning, and in a thorough knowledge of integrating technology for effectiveness and efficiency of effort. Learning Technologies accomplishes this in several ways: through comprehensive development programs and training activities in the appropriate use of emerging technologies; through systematic application of appropriate resources to design, develop, implement, and evaluate technology-assisted instruction; and by providing highly responsive services that advance and support network-assisted teaching, research, and outreach.

The units described below in sections 4.12.3.1 to 4.12.3.11 are part of the Learning Technologies system and share responsibility for meeting the university community's learning technology needs.

4.12.3.1 Assistive Technologies

Assistive Technologies (www.assist.atc.vt.edu) supports research, development, disability accommodations, and public outreach activities that advance the use of assistive technologies in teaching, learning, employment, recreation, and daily living. Assistive Technologies (AT) coordinates a wide array of accessibility enhancements and computer-related disability accommodations and provides consulting and/or support services to university computing facilities, departments, faculty,

staff, and students for disability accommodations. AT also conducts research, instruction, and training to advance the use of technologies and tools that empower people for a lifetime. Assistive Technologies is responsible for:

- Newman Library's Special Services, which provides AT training for persons with a documented disability and a need for AT accommodations;
- Assistive Technologies Research Lab, which supports multidisciplinary research focuses on creating new AT or improving uses of existing technologies;
- Assistive Technologies Central Services, which coordinates and supports university centrally licensed AT software for university owned computers; and
- Assistive Technologies Teaching/Outreach Services, which demonstrates the benefits of assistive technologies and the results of AT research through classroom lectures and public outreach events.

4.12.3.2 Classroom Support and Integration Service

Classroom Support and Integration Service (www.emd.vt.edu/csi) provides support for the computer assisted teaching stations located in general assignment classrooms on the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg. It provides reliable computing equipment for faculty and students in the general assignment classrooms and computing labs; maintains the equipment; and provides assistance to the University Classroom Renovation Initiative. As an educational service center, it enhances teaching environments by identifying and integrating digital projection and computing technology in the classroom. Computer assisted teaching stations are located in the following buildings on the Virginia Tech campus: Durham Hall, Engel Hall, Hancock Hall, Litton Reaves Hall, McBryde Hall, Squires Student Center, Torgersen Hall, War Memorial Gym, and Whittemore Hall.

4.12.3.3 Computer-Integrated Learning Spaces

Computer-Integrated Learning Spaces is responsible for designing, installing, and maintaining many computer-integrated learning spaces around campus. Such stations are located in Ambler-Johnston Hall, the Architecture Annex, Hahn Hall-North Wing, the Graduate Life Center, Litton-Reaves Hall, the Math Emporium, Price Hall, Randolph Hall, Saunders Hall, Shanks Hall, and Torgersen Hall. Additional

information about computer-integrated learning spaces and how to reserve them may be found at www.cclab.vt.edu.

4.12.3.4 Digital Imaging and Archiving

Digital Imaging and Archiving (www.emd.vt.edu) provides a comprehensive range of scanning services in support of research projects and course development grants or proposals. This professional production department combines the graphic arts skills necessary for high resolution imaging along with state-of-the-art output and capturing devices to provide the highest quality services required to meet the needs of Virginia Tech faculty and students for archival quality image preparation and output. Faculty are encouraged to submit proposals to support projects in teaching and research with a rationale for conversion of these materials to a digital format. Support proposals should include a brief description of the scope of the project, the number of images included in the collection, a description of the image formats (slides, photographs, microfilm, etc.), along with a time line for completion.

4.12.3.5 ePortfolio

The ePortfolio system (<http://eportfolio.vt.edu>) provides students and faculty with an online digital portfolio to document and share academic, extracurricular, career, and personal accomplishments. ePortfolio is also used in support of course activities that improve student learning. Training is provided to help faculty effectively integrate digital portfolios into courses. The ePortfolio system allows students to share their key projects, skills, and accomplishments with members of the university community and with parties external to Virginia Tech. Members of the ePortfolio initiatives team will work with faculty and students to customize portfolios and create unique personal, intellectual, and professional presentations.

ePortfolio tools are also available to assist with departmental assessment and accreditation efforts. For example, ePortfolio enables curriculum leaders to visually represent the goals or objectives for a course or program. Within this “matrix” view, rows represent individual criterion and the columns typically represent milestones across time where student work is collected or submitted. This built-in scaffolding provides students with a structure within which they can submit and reflect upon their work. As a result, students become aware of how each assignment contributes to the course/program goals. ePortfolio provides a means through which unity for entire programs or university experiences

can be fostered, and because ePortfolio provides snapshots of student development over time, it can assist with department or program self-studies and/or accreditations.

4.12.3.6 Faculty Development Institute

The Faculty Development Institute (www.fdi.vt.edu) integrates new technologies in teaching and research by providing training, support, and resources to faculty.

The Faculty Development Institute (FDI) is a continuously evolving program that provides a very fluid approach to understanding technology through systematic approaches based on instructional design. The institute assists faculty in keeping pace with emerging and evolving technologies related to teaching and learning in their disciplines. Throughout the academic year, faculty members have the opportunity to attend over 60 two-hour short courses that address a multitude of technology issues at various skill levels. In the week prior to the beginning of the spring and fall semesters, there are a series of short, but intensive, courses known as Blitz Week. Blitz Week provides quick and direct assistance for faculty preparing for the upcoming semester's classes.

On a four-year cycle, one-quarter of the faculty are eligible to receive special training and new computers. After a three-day workshop, faculty participants receive their new computers—complete with a current operating system and the latest version of several software programs. The selection process for faculty to attend the three-day workshop to receive new computers begins at the departmental level. FDI allocates a specific number of seats to each college. The colleges, in turn, allocate seats to their departments. The department heads or chairs nominate members of their faculty to attend the workshops.

Faculty receive ongoing support through several computing resources, including InnovationSpace.

4.12.3.7 InnovationSpace

InnovationSpace (www.is.vt.edu) is a multimedia computer lab offering free access to software and hardware available to faculty, staff, and students, as well as the general public. Services include free assistance from specially trained staff, equipment loans, consultations, and tours designed to show the many resources available. InnovationSpace is committed to using technology in innovative ways for learning, discovery, and engagement.

4.12.3.8 Online Course Systems

Online Course Systems (www.edtech.vt.edu/ocs) provides support to faculty as they integrate instructional technology into their course presentations. Online Course Systems (OCS) administers Scholar, Courseware, and other instructional software; designs tools to augment software; and offers software training, documentation, and assistance through the Faculty Development Institute. OCS also researches and evaluates emerging instructional technology programs to continually enhance the systems available to faculty and students.

4.12.3.9 Graduate Education Development Institute

The Graduate Education Development Institute (www.gedi.vt.edu) is a collaborative effort between Learning Technologies and the graduate school to address the professional development concerns of Virginia Tech graduate students. GEDI focuses on multi-disciplinary pedagogical practices that integrate the critically engaged use of advance technologies. The GEDI course, "Pedagogical Practices in Contemporary Contexts," engages participants in an exploration of pedagogical approaches appropriate for contemporary learners across different collaborative uses of specific eTools for teaching and learning, such as Scholar, ePortfolio, and DyKnow.

4.12.3.10 Scholar

Scholar (<https://scholar.vt.edu/xsl-portal>) is an innovative and robust collaboration and learning management system. Designed by higher education for higher education, it offers tools in support of teaching and learning, research and collaboration, and assessment/accreditation projects.

In addition to tools found in traditional learning management systems, Scholar also offers a number of Web 2.0 technologies. Thinking beyond the classroom, Scholar makes it easy to collaborate on a variety of projects and committees, both internal and external to the university.

As a Virginia Tech faculty member, you may request a Scholar worksite at <https://ars.cns.vt.edu/prsubmit/ocssubmit.action> .

4.12.3.11 Test Scoring Services

Test Scoring Services (www.testscoring.vt.edu) provides optical mark reader processing of opscan forms used by Virginia Tech faculty and staff for test scoring and other data collection. Standard forms in various formats are provided free of charge and the scoring results are delivered via e-mail. Services offered by Test Scoring include test scoring and analysis; faculty and course evaluation; research data collection; and online surveys.

4.13 Curriculum

4.13.1 Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Under provisions of *The Code of Virginia* and terms of accreditation set by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the university regularly conducts assessments of student learning outcomes. The university's assessment plan is formally approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, which requires routine reports of assessment activities and the university's response to issues raised in the assessment process.

A core value cited in the *2006-2012 Strategic Plan for Virginia Tech* is the development of "a culture of continuous improvement." A major component of that culture is the assessment of student learning outcomes with the goal of improving teaching and learning. Virginia Tech has embedded assessment of student learning outcomes into its curriculum. The Office of Academic Assessment provides support to departments and programs throughout the university to move forward in a collaborative way, making Virginia Tech a leader in the assessment of student learning outcomes.

More information is available at www.aap.vt.edu.

4.13.2 New Courses and Course Revisions

Proposed new courses may be offered on an experimental basis as "special study" courses. Such courses must be approved by the instructor, the department head or chair, and by the dean on an appropriate form three weeks before the term begins. Approved forms must be sent to the university registrar. Experimental courses can also be offered in the university curriculum for liberal education. More information on the requirement and the approval processes for this can be obtained from the University Curriculum Committee for Liberal Education at www.cle.prov.vt.edu.

Additions to existing curricula, new courses, and major changes in courses require the use of a specified format and approval of the appropriate commission(s). Minor changes in course descriptions involving less than 20 percent of the course content may not need approval beyond the department.

4.13.3 New Academic Programs

When a new degree program or major change in an existing degree program is proposed, it is forwarded to the curriculum committee of the college in which the program is located. If approved, it is then sent either to the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies or to the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies, or both depending on the level of the program. The respective commission reviews and makes recommendations to the University Council, the president, and the board of visitors. On approval by the board, new programs or major revisions to degree programs are submitted to the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) for final approval. The format for preparing new programs may be obtained from the associate provost for academic administration. Concurrent with SCHEV notification, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is notified to ensure that the new program is consistent with Virginia Tech's institutional mission. New programs which constitute a substantive change in accordance with Southern Association of Colleges and School (SACS) definitions and procedures require SACS approval. The commissions do not normally review program and course changes during the summer months.

Changes in degree program titles also require approval by the college curriculum committee and both the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies and the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies (if a graduate degree is affected). The State Council for Higher Education in Virginia must also be notified and approve the change.

4.13.4 Curriculum for Liberal Education

The curriculum for liberal education (CLE) is a vital component of undergraduate education at Virginia Tech, and is required for every undergraduate student. CLE comprises 25 – 30 percent of an undergraduate student's credits toward graduation, and offers over 500 courses in more than 60 departments, across seven required CLE areas of study. Students choose from among approved courses in writing and discourse; ideas, cultural traditions, and values; society and human behavior; scientific reasoning and discovery; quantitative and symbolic reasoning; creativity and aesthetic experience; and critical issues in a global context. The curriculum includes a university writing program that offers direction for writing goals and provides assistance to departments and individual

faculty members to incorporate writing in course work. CLE empowers students with a broad base of knowledge and skills by exposing them to multiple disciplines and ways of knowing. It creates the conditions for growing creative and intellectual engagement; civic, personal, and social responsibility; and lifelong learning.

A curriculum for liberal education guide is provided electronically to entering freshmen. Students follow the guide dated for the year in which they enter Virginia Tech. Information is also available electronically for faculty and advisors at www.cle.prov.vt.edu.

4.14 Student Advising

Advising at Virginia Tech (www.advising.vt.edu) is a collaborative process between student and advisor, leading to the exchange of information that encourages the individual student to make responsible academic and career decisions. The university is committed to effective advising by recognizing and supporting the needs of both students and advisors. Each undergraduate student is provided information and assistance to aid the student in making academic and career decisions. Each advisor is provided the necessary tools to respond to student needs and the opportunity to be recognized for exemplary advising.

Statement of university responsibility: The university shares responsibility for successful advising. Senior leaders will: review the advising process to assess the impact of recommendations implemented; provide information for students, advisors, parents, and other constituents that clearly explain responsibilities and expectations related to advising; make information available about advising for all new faculty and appropriate staff; collect and disseminate information that contributes to effective advising; assist students in clarification of academic and long term goals; support initiatives that enhance the use of technology in advising; support Web-based interactive advising support systems for students, advisors, parents, and other constituents; and support a Virginia Tech plan that effectively assesses, recognizes, and rewards advising in the annual professional evaluation.

Statement of student responsibility: The student shares responsibility for developing an advising partnership with the advisor. Over time, this partnership results in increased responsibility for the student. The student will: communicate goals, needs, wants, and concerns to the advisor in a respectful and sincere manner; keep abreast of their own academic progress and requirements related to their academic programs; make, keep, and be prepared for appointments with the advisor; inform the advisor of changes in plans and/or circumstances that might impact academic performance; know departmental procedures regarding changing advisors; and bring concerns regarding quality of advising to the attention of the advisor.

Statement of advisor responsibility: The advisor shares responsibility for developing an advising partnership with undergraduate students. The advisor will: communicate with students and delivering individualized and accurate information in a professional and sincere manner; be informed of, and provide accurate information about current academic policies and procedures; keep appointments and be available for assistance; provide appropriate referrals, contacts, and information; do appropriate follow-up with students; and seek out and take advantage of opportunities for professional development.

4.14.1 Career Services

Career Services is a centralized office that provides services, programs, and resources to students who are: (1) exploring and making decisions about academic majors and career options; (2) seeking career-related experience while in college in order to explore their options and/or develop skills, knowledge, and experience (i.e., externships, internships, cooperative education); and (3) developing and pursuing their post-graduation plans for employment or graduate school.

Career Services offers career advising, workshops on job search and career decision-making, computerized career assessments, occupational information, job market statistics, a database of Virginia Tech alumni who have agreed to provide advice to students and other alumni concerning career decisions and pursuing specific fields, thousands of job listings, companies who come to campus to interview student candidates, internship listings, cooperative education opportunities with companies and government agencies, mock interviews, résumé samples, reports of where alumni found employment or pursued graduate school after graduation, and more.

Career Services' staff members are available to speak to classes and student organizations on related topics. Additional valuable resource information can be found at the Career Services website www.career.vt.edu.

4.14.1.1 Departmental Career Advisors

Career Services arranges for each academic department to have an individual designated as a career advisor. This individual works with the faculty, advisors, and students in the department to keep them abreast of career opportunities for students in that discipline. The career advisor also provides faculty, advisors, and students with information about Career Service programs and services, including

the cooperative education/internships, externships, career information and counseling, job search advice, and the like.

To view a listing of departmental career advisors, visit the Career Services website www.career.vt.edu.

4.14.1.2 Guide to Virginia Tech Majors

Available on the Career Services website (www.career.vt.edu) is the *Virginia Tech Guide to Majors* that describes all undergraduate programs offered at Virginia Tech, career paths of graduates, opportunities, department advisors, resources, and contacts. This resource is helpful to students who are considering a change of academic majors or to those who want to learn more about their current major and related career opportunities.

4.14.1.3 Externship Program

An externship is a volunteer job-shadowing opportunity for students to spend one to five days observing and working with professionals, investigating a career field and experiencing a typical week on the job. The experience is intended to help students better understand a work environment and a career field and thus help clarify career goals. The experience gives students a professional contact—the sponsor could possibly become a future employer or reference for an internship, co-op, permanent job or other type of work.

Virginia Tech students of all majors and academic levels, freshman through graduate level, are welcome to apply for the program. Opportunities will depend on what sponsors offer. Details and deadlines for application are available at www.career.vt.edu/Externship/Welcome.html.

4.14.1.4 Cooperative Education/Internship Program

Career Services coordinates the university's Cooperative (Co-op) Education/Internship Program (www.career.vt.edu/COOP/COOP1.html). Co-ops and internships are full-time, paid, career-related opportunities and are available in the fall, spring, and summer terms. The program is designed to promote self-awareness and career development through the integration of theoretical classroom

instruction with supervised practical on-the-job training in the student's major area of study. By blending the traditional academic function of the university with work-related assignments in industry, business, government, and community service, the program affords students the opportunity to apply academic training to practical work situations. Co-op provides occupational experience as an integral part of formal education. Students must have a 2.0 GPA to participate and, when a position is secured, the student and the supervisor will determine learning objectives. Evaluation of the student, the employer, and the program is continuous.

Co-op and internship opportunities are listed on the Career Services website, as well as the employers who are scheduled to interview on campus. Each spring, a co-op and internship job fair—"Connection"—is held to acquaint students with the available opportunities and employers. Each semester, orientation sessions are available to students who must register to attend. Faculty should advise interested students to attend these events and meetings and to make their interest known by visiting Career Services.

4.14.2 Cook Counseling Center

The Thomas E. Cook Counseling Center promotes the academic, intellectual, social, emotional, and personal development of students. Through individual and group counseling, brief psychotherapy, couples therapy, crisis intervention, medical and psychiatric referral, career counseling, and study skills counseling, the center's staff provides assistance designed to reduce the impact of personal and academic difficulties that interfere with student success at Virginia Tech.

Faculty members are urged to call Cook Counseling Center if they believe that a student with whom they have contact may benefit from professional counseling. It is recommended that faculty members assist students with making an appointment.

The Thomas E. Cook Counseling Center address is 240 McComas Hall. The phone number is 540-231-6557 and the website address is www.ucc.vt.edu.

4.14.2.1 Identifying and Referring the Distressed Student

The college years can be very stressful for students. In the contemporary climate of competition and pressure, some students adequately cope with these stresses, but others find that stress becomes

unmanageable and interferes with learning. In some cases, these students may even disrupt the learning of others.

Information regarding additional services available from the Office of the Dean of Students for referring distressed students may be found in section 4.7.4.

Identifying the distressed student: Many students initially seek assistance from faculty. A student in distress may display: excessive procrastination and very poorly prepared work, especially if inconsistent with previous work; infrequent class attendance with little or no work completed; dependency (e.g., the student who hangs around or makes excessive appointments during office hours); listlessness, lack of energy, or frequently falling asleep in class; marked changes in personal hygiene; impaired speech and disjointed thoughts; repeated requests for special consideration; threats to others; expressed suicidal thoughts; excessive weight gain or loss; behavior that regularly interferes with effective class management; frequent or high levels of irritable, unruly, abrasive, or aggressive behavior; inability to make decisions despite repeated efforts to clarify or encourage; bizarre behavior that is obviously inappropriate for the situation; or may appear overly nervous, tense, or tearful.

Guidelines for interacting with the distressed student: Talk to the student in private. Express concern and be as specific as possible in stating your observations and reasons for concern. Listen carefully and repeat the essence of what the student has told you so that your attempts to understand are communicated. Avoid criticizing or sounding judgmental. Consider the Cook Counseling Center as a resource and discuss referral with the student. If the student resists referral and you remain uncomfortable with the situation, contact the Cook Counseling Center (www.ucc.vt.edu) or the Dean of Students Office (www.dos.vt.edu) to discuss your concern.

Referring the distressed student to Cook Counseling Center: Suggest that the distressed student call or come in to make an appointment. Give him or her the Cook Counseling Center's phone number (540-231-6557) and location (240 McComas Hall). It is usually more effective to assist the student by calling for an appointment with the student present. When you reach the center's receptionist, identify yourself as a faculty member and ask for an appointment for the student. The student's name and Tech ID number are required for the appointment. Write down the appointment time, date, and name of the counselor for the student. If you feel the situation is an emergency or urgent enough to require immediate attention, tell the receptionist that the student needs to see a counselor immediately. It may be necessary for you to walk the student to the center. If you are concerned about the student, but unsure about the appropriateness of a referral, call the center for a consultation.

4.14.3 Center for Academic Enrichment and Excellence

The Center for Academic Enrichment and Excellence (CAEE) provides free academic support to undergraduate students, such as tutoring and study skills seminars. The center also has programs and activities for students who are already succeeding academically, and simply want to enrich their educational experience. CAEE empowers students to become lifelong learners and contributors to society, and facilitates Virginia Tech's successful achievement of an institutional climate that is supportive of student success.

The Center for Academic Enrichment and Excellence provides support through a network of programs and services that include: college transition programs to help freshman and transfer students make a successful transition from high school to college as well as facilitate academic and social adjustment to Virginia Tech; learning assistance programs to help students who want to improve their academic and non-academic skills such as time management, study skills, and networking skills; and academic excellence programs to help students who are already academically successful further enrich their educational experiences.

CAEE collaborates with Virginia Tech's colleges on pipeline initiatives, which target populations that are first-generation, low-income, and groups under-represented in higher education. In cooperation with high schools and pre-college programs throughout the commonwealth, CAEE provides information sessions and summer day camps to promote college attendance after high school.

More information on various programs and services is available at the center's website www.caee.vt.edu.

4.14.4 Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program

The Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program (www.maop.vt.edu) is an academic success community founded upon the principles of self-help, mentoring, and peer support. Central to the goal of the Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program (MAOP) is the promotion of diversification in the student body at Virginia Tech and on the post-graduate level—particularly in the science, math, and technology areas. Through a partnership with various departments at Virginia Tech, other college and university peers, governmental, private, and non-profit institutions, MAOP participants are provided academic guidance and financial support.

MAOP is open to all students who demonstrate a clear commitment to the pursuit of academic excellence and are interested in the promotion of diversity in an ever-closer global community. Major

initiatives of the program include the Undergraduate Scholars Program; Undergraduate Summer Research Internship; Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS); VT Prep; the Virginia-North Carolina Alliance for Minority Participations (VA-NC AMP); Graduate Scholars Program; and My Sister's Keeper program.

Participants are encouraged to engage in their own academic, personal, and career development by interacting with peer and faculty mentors; pursuing opportunities for research experiences and professional presentations; and participating in related student organizations. Virginia Tech's MAOP students have an excellent record of retention, graduation, and enrollment in graduate school.

4.14.5 Multicultural Programs and Services

Multicultural Programs and Services (www.mps.vt.edu) promotes the academic, personal, and social success of all students, particularly those from under-represented and historically marginalized populations. Multicultural Programs and Services (MPS) values diversity and strives to transform the Virginia Tech community through cross-cultural exchange. MPS offers a combination of programs and services that promote cultural awareness, multicultural education, retention, leadership development, and community building. Activities include administration of the Black Cultural Center and Multicultural Center; planning and implementing heritage celebrations and cultural awareness programs; advising multicultural student organizations; developing and managing the events of major programming organizations; education, outreach, and research; advocacy; recruitment; retention; and academic support services.

4.14.6 International Education Advising

The Office of International Research, Education, and Development (www.oired.vt.edu) advises students on options for study, volunteering, internships, or work in over 100 countries. The advising staff works with the student to identify options appropriate to the student's program of study, time available for international travel, and financial resources. Care is taken to ensure that international education advising is coordinated with academic advising the student receives in the college or department.

4.14.7 University Honors Program

The University Honors program (www.univhonors.vt.edu) consists of special classes, tutorial and research opportunities, and enriched advising in all academic fields. The honors program provides students with enriched curriculum options; direct and personal contact with faculty; intensive academic advising; honors independent study and research options; and priority registration.

Some honors colloquia are designed to integrate many topics in a broad field, while others investigate a single topic from the viewpoints of several disciplines. Within departments, honors sections of regular courses explore subject matter in greater depth; individual study and research give upperclassmen freedom to study topics of particular interest to them that are not part of the established curriculum.

In many departments, students may earn a bachelor's degree with an honors program distinction. The program leading to this recognition occurs in the junior and senior years and focuses on the student's own discipline rather than on general education.

The University Honors program offers six distinct diploma options: commonwealth scholar, scholar in health studies, honors scholar, in honors, honors baccalaureate, and the combined bachelor's/master's program.

4.15 Faculty Awards

4.15.1 Awards for Teaching and Advising

In recognition of the university's conviction that excellence in teaching and advising should be a major concern of every faculty member, several awards are presented annually to honor outstanding teaching and advising performance.

4.15.1.1 The Wine Awards

Three Wine Awards for Excellence in Teaching are made possible by a gift from the Alumni Association, honoring William E. Wine, a former rector of the board of visitors and Alumni Association president. Students, alumni, and faculty nominate possible recipients of the Wine Award. In each of the academic colleges, a Wine Award Committee composed of previous winners selects one or two

candidates from those nominated. The names are sent to the Wine Award Committee for the entire university. This committee, in turn, selects and recommends the three recipients and transmits their names to the vice president for alumni relations.

4.15.1.2 The Sporn Awards

The Sporn Awards, made possible by gifts from Dr. and Mrs. Philip J. Sporn and alumni of the university, are presented to a teacher of undergraduate engineering subjects (a college award) and a teacher of introductory subjects (a university award). Students from the freshman and sophomore classes and students in undergraduate engineering subjects nominate possible recipients. Committees of students and faculty make final selections and recommend them to the appropriate deans and the president.

4.15.1.3 Certificates of Teaching Excellence

The university annually awards certificates of teaching excellence to 21 faculty members who are selected by the individual colleges. The number of faculty receiving awards is proportionately distributed over the university according to the number of instructional faculty positions allotted to each college, with each college awarding at least one certificate.

4.15.1.4 Alumni Teaching Excellence Awards

Two Alumni Teaching Excellence Awards are presented each year to outstanding faculty, elected by the Academy of Teaching Excellence from among the recipients of the certificates of teaching excellence for the past three years. A committee of former recipients reviews those eligible and selects two candidates each year.

4.15.1.5 Diggs Teaching Scholar Awards

Three Diggs Teaching Scholars are selected annually from among all instructional faculty at Virginia Tech to recognize exceptional contributions to the teaching program and learning environment. The

Academy of Teaching Excellence sponsors the program. The Diggs Endowed Professorships, the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost, and the Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching provide funding for the award.

4.15.1.6 Alumni Advising Award

The Alumni Association has established two Alumni Advising Awards to recognize faculty who have been particularly dedicated and effective in advising either undergraduate or graduate students. Faculty and students may nominate candidates for consideration by a committee of former recipients of these awards.

4.15.1.7 Academy of Teaching Excellence

The six major award winners each year (three Wine Awards, one Sporn Award for the teaching of introductory subjects, two Alumni Teaching Awards) are inducted into the Academy of Teaching Excellence for a term of three years. Although "active service" in the academy is for three years, membership is for life. An individual who has received one of the six major teaching awards is ineligible for any other for a period of seven years; an individual may receive any particular award only once.

4.15.1.8 Academy of Advising Excellence

The provost established the Academy of Advising Excellence to recognize those advisors who have demonstrated exemplary advising practices. The academy consists of all advisors who have received university-level awards for excellence in advising.

4.15.2 Awards for Research, Extension, Outreach, and Service

4.15.2.1 Alumni Award for Research Excellence

The Alumni Association has established the Alumni Award for Research Excellence to recognize the contributions of members of the university faculty who have made outstanding contributions in research. Alumni, students, faculty, and staff members nominate faculty members. The selection committee is composed of a chair appointed by the vice president for research and faculty who are previous recipients of the award.

4.15.2.2 Alumni Award for Extension Excellence

The Alumni Association has established the Alumni Award for Extension Excellence to recognize the contributions of members of the university's Virginia Cooperative Extension, honoring those members of the university and field faculty who have made outstanding contributions outside the classroom. Two awards are conferred each year, with one going to an extension specialist and one going to an extension agent. Alumni and extension faculty members nominate faculty members. The selection committee is composed of a chair appointed by the director of Virginia Cooperative Extension, past faculty award recipients, and alumni representatives.

4.15.2.3 Alumni Award for Outreach Excellence

The Alumni Association has established the Alumni Award for Outreach Excellence to recognize the contributions of members of the university faculty who have made outstanding contributions extending the university's outreach mission throughout the commonwealth, nation, and world. One award is for individual excellence and another is presented to a nominated "team." Faculty members are nominated by their peers. The selection committee is composed of a chair appointed by the vice president for outreach and international affairs, faculty, and alumni representatives.

4.15.2.4 Alumni Award for Excellence in International Education

The Alumni Association has established the Alumni Award for Excellence in International Education to recognize contributions by faculty and staff that have demonstrated an impact on international

education at Virginia Tech. The honor is explicitly aimed at according recognition to individuals whose efforts have resulted in thoughtful programming, curricula, or approaches to international education including service to the community; study abroad; services to international students and scholars; curriculum development; program development and external partnerships, awards, and recognitions. Selection is based upon contributions to the internationalization of Virginia Tech; the impact on students; the impact on the campus and community; the significance of the initiative; and the sustainability of the initiative. Honorees may evidence some or all of these forms of exemplary activity.

4.15.2.5 Alumni Award for Excellence in International Outreach and Research

The Alumni Association has established the Alumni Award for Excellence in International Outreach and Research to recognize contributions by faculty and staff that have demonstrated an impact on international outreach and research at Virginia Tech. The honor is explicitly aimed at according recognition to individuals whose efforts are in the area of international scholarship; global public service to regions, countries, communities, public, private, and non-government organizations; sponsored projects; and innovation in international research and outreach. Selection is based upon contributions to the internationalization of Virginia Tech; global impact; significance of the research/outreach; and sustainability of the research/outreach. Honorees may evidence some or all of these forms of exemplary activity.

4.15.2.6 Academy of Outreach Excellence

The Academy of Outreach Excellence recognizes members of the faculty who have contributed to excellence in the outreach mission of the university. It also facilitates cooperation with the university in encouraging, promoting, recognizing, and rewarding excellence in outreach.

Academy members elect annually a maximum of four new members including the recipients of the Alumni Extension Award and the Alumni Award for Outreach Excellence and two at-large members who have made major contributions in outreach. At-large members, who are selected based on their outstanding outreach record, may be nominated by any university employee. The annual election of at-large members from the nominees is conducted by those selected to academy membership during the previous three years. All academy members retain their membership while employed by the university. Newly elected members have an "active service" status for three years.

Selection criteria for academy members include innovation, creativity, program results, subject-matter expertise, communication skills, and professional activities in extension and outreach.

4.15.2.7 Academy of Faculty Service

In recognition of exceptional service in university governance given by faculty members beyond the usual responsibilities of their faculty appointments, the university has established the Academy of Faculty Service. Appointments to the academy are made by the provost in the spring of each academic year to recognize individuals who have served in the following positions during that year: president of the Faculty Senate, vice president of the Faculty Senate, secretary of the Faculty Senate, chairperson of the Faculty Senate Reconciliation Committee, chairperson of the Academy of Teaching Excellence, chairperson of the Faculty Review Committee, and chairperson of the university Honor System Review Board, and other appointments as deemed appropriate by the provost.

4.15.3 Awards for Creating Good Teaching and Learning Environments

4.15.3.1 Exemplary Departments Award

Most of the university's rewards for excellence—whether in teaching, research, or academic advising—are based on individual achievement and merit. Yet the health of the undergraduate program surely depends as much on the collective commitment of faculty members in a given department as it does on the exemplary work of key individuals. Virginia Tech has established several major annual awards that go to departments and academic units that maintain an exemplary teaching and learning environment both for students and faculty.

The university exemplary awards program seeks to clarify the expectations of faculty, and define appropriate rewards for accomplishments. The theme of the awards changes annually and is decided and announced in advance by the committee. Selected departments receive a cash award, are honored at a university reception, and may use the exemplary department designation for a period of five years.

4.15.3.2 Diggs Roundtable

The Diggs Teaching Scholar Award and Roundtable recognize outstanding contributions to the teaching and learning environment at Virginia Tech. Three faculty members are selected annually for the award. Each receives \$500 and participates in the Diggs Roundtable, a forum devoted to public discussion of major teaching, pedagogical, or curricular issues facing Virginia Tech or American higher education. In addition, the departments or programs that nominate the recipients receive a matching award of \$500. The Diggs Teaching Scholar Award is designed to honor departments and programs as well as individuals who are dedicated to teaching excellence and to student learning.

4.15.3.3 XCaliber Award

In recognition of outstanding contributions to learning that faculty and teams of faculty and staff make as they develop learning activities using technology, the Center for Innovation in Learning established the annual XCaliber award. This award celebrates and illustrates innovative approaches to teaching using technology. The award may carry with it a stipend of as much as \$2,500 (depending on the number of awards in a given year) and a commemorative plaque. Honorees are asked to demonstrate their award-winning work at appropriate occasions.