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2020

## 2020 - 21 VCU Faculty Handbook

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# VCU

## Faculty Handbook

Academic Year 2020-21

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# 1. About the University

## 1.1 History

The university takes its founding date of 1838 from the year the Medical College of Virginia was created as the medical department of Hampden-Sydney College. MCV became independent in 1854 and state-affiliated in 1860.

VCU's Monroe Park Campus began in 1917 as the Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health. In 1925, it became the Richmond division of the College of William and Mary; and in 1939, its name was changed to Richmond Professional Institute. It separated from William and Mary in 1962 to become an independent state institution.

In 1968, Gov. Mills E. Godwin Jr. signed VCU into existence, based on recommendations set forth in a 1967 report developed by a legislative commission led by Edward A. Wayne Sr., president of the Richmond Federal Reserve Bank. Wayne was named vice-rector of the first Board of Visitors of VCU, and the university's Wayne Medal honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions or provided exemplary service to VCU. The full text of the Wayne Commission Report, explaining the development of Virginia Commonwealth University and the rationale for bringing together the Medical College of Virginia and Richmond Professional Institute, is available through VCU Libraries' Digital Collections website.

MCV and RPI merged to become VCU in 1968 and it remains the most comprehensive urban university in the state.

To learn more about the history of VCU, view the [James Branch Cabell Library Special Collections and Archives](#). To learn more about the history of healthcare at MCV, view the [Special Collections and Archives at Tompkins-McCaw Library](#) for the Health Sciences.

## 1.2 Mission, Vision, Core Values

### Mission:

Virginia Commonwealth University and its academic health sciences center serve as one national urban public research institution dedicated to the success and well-being of its students, patients, faculty, staff and community through:

- Real-world learning that furthers civic engagement, inquiry, discovery and innovation
- Research that expands the boundaries of new knowledge and creative expression and promotes translational applications to improve the quality of human life
- Interdisciplinary collaborations and community partnerships that advance innovation, enhance cultural and economic vitality, and solve society's most complex challenges
- Health sciences that preserve and restore health for all people, seek the cause and cure of diseases through groundbreaking research and educate those who serve humanity

- Deeply engrained core values of diversity, inclusion and equity that provide a safe, trusting and supportive environment to explore, create, learn and serve

### Vision

As a pre-eminent national, urban, public university and academic health center, Virginia Commonwealth University will be distinguished by its commitments to inclusion, access and excellence; innovative and transformative learning; impactful research; exceptional patient care and beneficial community impact.

### Core values

- Accountability
- Achievement
- Collaboration
- Freedom
- Innovation
- Service
- Diversity
- Integrity

## **1.3 VCU Strategic Plan**

Quest 2025: Together We Transform will be VCU's next strategic plan, providing high-level guidance and direction to ensure the VCU community is working towards common goals. As the name implies, Quest 2025 serves as a successor to the 2012-18 strategic plan, Quest for Distinction, as we continue to make VCU the premier urban, public research university.

Above all, the 2025 strategic plan strives to be:

- A plan for the VCU community, by the VCU community
- Flexible, strategic and realistic, encompassing the values we've been sharing for years
- A way for units to define distinction for themselves — to identify, and make the most of, what makes them stand out from the crowd

Stay up-to-date with the progress of the new strategic plan and review all the things that made the original Quest for Distinction great on the [Quest website](#).

## **1.4 Code of Conduct**

VCU's Code of Conduct expresses the university's values, ethical principles and commitment to doing the right thing. The Code of Conduct highlights some of the laws, regulations, universitywide policies and ethical standards everyone is expected to follow. Our actions shape the public's view of VCU, which is why it is so important that we each take responsibility to act ethically in all situations. Additionally, the Code of Conduct helps to identify potential issues, lists resources to find more information and outlines VCU's reporting options when there is a concern. It also serves as a reminder to treat others with the utmost respect and professionalism. VCU's Code of Conduct is part of the universitywide Ethics and Compliance Program, supported by the Board of Visitors, the president and senior leadership. The Integrity and Compliance Office

oversees the Ethics and Compliance Program with the support of the Compliance Advisory Committee. VCU's Code of Conduct can be accessed in full [here](#).

## **1.5 Ethical Standards**

Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to an environment of uncompromising integrity and ethical conduct. Our ethical standards are the foundation for our decisions and actions. As members of the faculty, staff and administration of Virginia Commonwealth University, our actions will be guided by these principles and values:

1. Respect
2. Honesty
3. Excellence
4. Responsibility and Accountability
5. Stewardship
6. Compliance

We recognize that our decisions and actions reflect not only upon our individual reputations but also upon the reputation of the university. Our actions will be guided by these ethical principles even when confronted by personal, professional, social, or economic pressures.

## **1.6 VCU Creed**

Academic institutions exist, among other reasons, to discover, advance and transmit knowledge and to develop in their students, faculty and staff the capacity for creative and critical thought. As members of the academic community, we should strive to exemplify the following specific ideals in addition to other worthy ideals:

1. To demonstrate academic and personal integrity.
2. To respect the rights and property of others.
3. To be open to others' opinions.
4. To uphold academic freedom and freedom of intellectual inquiry.
5. To appreciate diversity, and to value and learn from the uniqueness of each person.
6. To uphold the right of all persons to be treated with dignity and respect and to refrain from all forms of intimidation, harassment and illegal discrimination.
7. To demonstrate and respect intellectual courage in situations that demand it.

## **1.7 Organization**

### **1.7.1 Board of Visitors**

The university is governed by the Board of Visitors ("BOV" or "Board") and is under the control of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The BOV is the policy-making body of the university. Its 16 members are appointed by the governor for a four-year term with the possibility of a second consecutive term. One VCU faculty member, one VCU staff member, and one VCU student, recommended by the president and approved by the Board, are non-voting representatives to VCU's Board of Visitors. Board meetings are held quarterly, generally in February, May, August and November. At its meeting in May, the Board elects a rector to serve as its presiding

officer and spokesperson. The rector takes office in July and appoints the Board's standing committees. In August, the Board elects the vice rector, the secretary, and the members of the executive committee.

### **1.7.2 The President**

The president of Virginia Commonwealth University is the chief executive officer of the university and a member of the university faculty. The president presides at university meetings other than Board of Visitors meetings, and confers all degrees and diplomas. The president oversees the university in conformity with the purposes and policies of the Board. The president establishes the internal administrative structure in a manner that will ensure proper university management, adequate planning, and evaluation and improvement of academic programs. The president delegates responsibilities and authority to other officers and committees of the university. The president recommends to the Board of Visitors the establishment of faculty positions and the appointment, compensation, promotion, leave of absence, and termination of faculty after consultation with appropriate vice presidents. Vice presidents and other administrative officers are appointed by the Board of Visitors upon recommendation of the president and serve at the pleasure of the president.

### **1.7.3 Leadership and Vice Presidents**

Meet VCU's leadership team on the [VCU Office of the President administration webpage](#).

#### ***Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs***

The provost and senior vice president for academic affairs is the chief academic officer for the university, responsible for developing academic planning and supporting the academic mission of the university. The provost ensures that students enjoy a high-quality educational experience during their time at VCU, that faculty and staff have the resources they need to produce world-class scholarship and creative expression, and that the university maintains its strong commitment to the community of which it is a part. The office's functional areas of responsibility include academic finance and administration; curriculum and degree development; faculty recruitment, retention, and professional development; student recruitment, retention, and engagement; planning and decision support; teaching and learning; international education; and the VCU libraries. The provost also leads development and implementation of the university's strategic plan, including strategic and long-range planning with other university divisions.

#### ***Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and CEO, VCU Health System***

The vice president for health sciences (VPHS) and CEO for the VCU Health System ensures the effective implementation of the missions of education, research, and service as they relate to health sciences and the academic clinical enterprise. The VPHS is responsible for overseeing the schools on the VCU Health Sciences Campus, which include Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy, as well as the Massey Cancer Center. Areas of responsibility include academic affairs, academic and research space management, financial and administrative affairs, and

Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Care. The VPHS also serves as the chief executive officer of the VCU Health System.

***Senior Vice President for Finance and Budget***

The vice president for finance and budget serves as the chief financial officer of Virginia Commonwealth University. The vice president provides advice to the administration and Board of Visitors on all matters pertaining to the institution's financial affairs and oversees the business operations of key financial units across Virginia Commonwealth University.

***Vice President for Administration***

The vice president for administration serves as the chief administrative officer of Virginia Commonwealth University. The vice president provides advice to the administration and Board of Visitors on all matters pertaining to the institution's administrative affairs and oversees the business operations of key administrative units across Virginia Commonwealth University.

***Associate Vice President and Director of Athletics***

The vice president for athletics leads a division that includes baseball, basketball, cross country, golf, soccer, tennis, track and field, field hockey, lacrosse, and volleyball. The VCU Athletics website contains information for tickets, fans, shopping, information the division, the Ram Athletic Fund, and recruits.

***Vice President for Inclusive Excellence***

The vice president for inclusive excellence leads a division that focuses on nurturing a dynamic environment in which people of all life experiences and cultural backgrounds are valued and supported. This division promotes and fosters a climate of equity, diversity and inclusiveness; leads efforts to strengthen VCU's core mission and culture of inclusion and diversity; engages in promoting awareness and advocacy for the LGBTQIA+ community; provides diversity education and consultation to increase awareness, knowledge and skills; and serves as a campus and community resource on issues of access, diversity, excellence and inclusion.

***Vice President for Research and Innovation***

The vice president for research and innovation leads an office which seeks to partner with faculty in all schools and departments as they seek funding, plan studies, establish collaborations, calculate budgets, submit grant applications, negotiate industry contracts, and secure patents and licensing agreements. Skilled staff within each of the major divisions—sponsored programs administration, research subjects protection, animal research, technology transfer, industry partnerships, and education and oversight—help VCU faculty in all realms of the research process.

***Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations***

The vice president for development and alumni relations maximizes philanthropic support by engaging stakeholders with our institution working in partnership with all VCU schools, programs and campuses as one development and alumni relations community and implementing the best practices and efficient strategies to achieve a comprehensive development program.

### ***Vice President for University Relations***

The vice president for university relations serves as the chief communication officer for VCU and VCU Health, a cabinet level position with oversight of the offices of public affairs, university marketing, executive communications and events and special programs

#### **1.7.4 VCU Health System**

The Virginia Commonwealth University Health System is an urban, comprehensive academic medical center in central Virginia, established to preserve and restore health for all people, to seek the cause and cure of diseases through innovative research, and to educate those who serve humanity. The VCU Health System is committed to excellence in patient care and education as the preeminent academic medical center in the mid-Atlantic region. Quality and safety drive is the vision.

#### **1.7.5 University Governance and Committees**

##### ***Philosophy of Shared Governance***

VCU believes that shared governance aligns the board, administration and faculty in common directions for decision-making regarding institutional direction and should be grounded in commitment to educational quality and results.

VCU values and appreciates the distinct, but mutually-supportive responsibilities distributed among the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students of the university. VCU believes in collaboration that seeks and represents the voice of all constituencies in decisions and matters that impact those constituencies—recognizing that shared governance is neither consensus nor democratic governance.

VCU values transparency in university and unit decisions such that the various constituencies of the university are aware of how decisions are made and the rationale for those decisions, which will ensure the university remains mission-focused. Groups and individuals should have timely and easy access to information about the decisions for which they are responsible and about decisions that impact them. Such transparency also means that decision-making groups and individuals are accountable for the decisions they make and for involving the appropriate constituencies in those decisions.

## **2. Office of the Provost: Resources and Information**

For detailed information on the Office of the Provost, please visit the office [website](#).

### **2.1 Vice Provosts**

Detailed information on vice provosts can be found at the link above, as well as specific office initiatives and projects.

#### ***Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs***

The VCU Office of Faculty Affairs, under the leadership of a senior vice provost, oversees the university's promotion and tenure process, including providing tenure-eligible faculty with the tools to be successful in advancing their careers. The

office develops and implements a university wide mentorship program, strengthens professional development for department chairs and other academic leaders, oversees and develops faculty awards, and completes other tasks associated with academic personnel issues. An integral part of Faculty Affairs, the Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention (OFRR) leads initiatives to promote the hiring and retention of outstanding and diverse faculty members; the development, implementation and interpretation of faculty policies; the promotion and tenure process; and academic leadership development programs. The Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE) works to provide a robust array of developmental experiences that prepare faculty to create and facilitate effective and evidence-based instruction to promote student success.

### ***Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs***

The Office of Academic Affairs, under the leadership of a senior vice provost for academic affairs, ensures the integrity, quality and transparency of VCU academic programs with a focus on student success. Working collaboratively with the faculty and university leadership, the Office of Academic Affairs provides oversight of policies and procedures governing the undergraduate and graduate curriculum; leadership for university-level academic initiatives and faculty-driven student success efforts; infrastructure and procedural direction for academic program development, implementation, review and assessment; academic resources for faculty and students, such as the academic calendar and the academic bulletins. The Office of Academic Affairs also serves as a liaison to the VCU Graduate School, the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) and our accreditor, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

### ***Vice Provost for Community Engagement***

The vice provost for community engagement leads the Division of Community Engagement, which assists VCU's faculty, staff, and students who are involved with service-learning classes or community-based research projects. The division addresses the continuing studies and professional development needs of adults in the region and beyond. The division offers programs for the community through the resources of the Mary and Frances Youth Center and the Carver Neighborhood space. The division has launched ASPIRE, VCU's first living-learning residential hall with a focus on community engagement/ The Division also administers the Council for Community Engagement, a representative body from all academic and academic-support units committed to creating a culture of community engagement at VCU.

### ***Senior Vice Provost for Student Affairs***

The senior vice provost for student affairs leads the Division of Student Affairs, which provides essential services to support student success and life on both the Monroe Park and MCV Campuses. The central administration of the division also serves as a resource for students, parents, faculty and staff who have problems or concerns regarding their interactions with each other and with the university, and assists in resolving issues or refers inquirers to the appropriate individual elsewhere in the institution. Students, parents and staff members who have issues they wish to discuss or who are interested in various programs and opportunities are encouraged to contact

the associate vice provost for student affairs and dean of students. Division departments' services include career and financial, housing and social, and recreation and physical wellness.

### ***Vice Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management***

The vice provost for strategic enrollment management leads the Division of Strategic Enrollment Management, whose mission is to strive to attract and retain a talented and diverse student body that will not only graduate at a high rate, but will also go on to contribute to a highly skilled 21st century workforce. The first focus is on admissions and new students, including student admissions ambassadors, the transfer center, new student and family programs, and military student services. Next is academic support which includes university academic advising, the writing center, campus learning center, student-athlete support services, and TRiO student support services. Student accounts includes records and registration, student accounting, and financial aid, and the student services center. Lastly, the division supports summer and winter courses, which includes summer studies and intersession.

### ***Vice Provost for Planning and Decision Support***

The vice provost for planning and decision support leads the Office of Planning and Decision Support (OPDS) and is responsible for empowering decision makers, enhancing institutional effectiveness and maintaining compliance through accurate, accessible, and actionable data and analyses. Operational work revolves around compliance reporting, information access, and accreditation. Strategic work focuses on achieving institutional priorities in collaboration with partners across the university.

### ***Vice Provost for Life Sciences and Research***

The vice provost for life sciences and research leads a division that offers degrees at all levels, but also functions as a university-wide matrix organization. Its mission focuses on integrative scholarship, provides a framework for borderless academics, and seeks novel approaches which can be shared by molecular biologists, mathematicians, engineers, ecologists, physicians, and artists. Its studies span the spectrum of Life Sciences.

## **2.2 iCubed**

The Institute for Inclusion, Inquiry and Innovation (iCubed) strategically invests in academic and research programs that employ transdisciplinary approaches to solve challenging and persistent problems in urban communities. These program approaches draw stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and also set the stage for partnership equity between university and community partners where all perspectives are valued. Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of what iCubed does. The five concepts that make up iCubed's cores are: oral health in childhood and adolescence; social justice; health and wellness in aging populations; racial equity, arts and culture; and culture, race, and health.

## **2.3 New Faculty Orientation and Academy**

The Office of Faculty Affairs and the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE) offer a New Faculty Orientation and a New Faculty Academy to assist new



faculty members in their transition into professional careers at VCU. The orientation is a single day event designed to introduce new faculty to the wide range of resources and opportunities at VCU. The academy is a year long series of workshops, seminars, panel discussions, and presentations that address the variety of topics relevant to the first three years of employment as a faculty member at VCU.

## 3. Faculty

### 3.1 The Status of the VCU Faculty

A key goal of VCU's strategic plan is a commitment to the recruitment, retention, and support of talented and diverse faculty, who represent the core of the university's vision. Below are Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey and faculty status updates reported to the VCU Faculty Senate.

For a chronological archive of reports, as well as additional archived documents, visit the [Office of Faculty Affairs page via VCU Scholars Compass](#).

### 3.2 Faculty Appointments

Much of the information in section 3.2 can be found via the links below:

- [Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Working @VCU: "Great Place" HR Policies](#)

#### 3.2.1 Appointments

All faculty appointments are either tenured, probationary (tenure-eligible), term (non-tenure), or adjunct (non-tenure), in accordance with *Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures* policy. Other faculty appointments include clinical, faculty affiliate, emeritus/emerita, eminent scholar and visiting faculty. All faculty types mentioned are described below.

#### ***Teaching and Research faculty (T&R faculty)***

Employees in teaching and research faculty (T&R faculty) positions have principal and regularly assigned responsibilities that include a significant commitment to teaching that includes the development and delivery of the university curriculum for students enrolled at VCU and/or a significant commitment to original research and scholarship that includes the creation, dissemination and application of new knowledge and/or artistic expression. T&R faculty positions:

- Are generally full-time appointments to a faculty position with academic rank made under the ultimate authority and with the final approval of the board of visitors
- Are the employee's primary appointment
- Involve principal and regularly assigned duties and responsibilities of teaching, research, scholarship or creative activity that represents the majority of the contractual time
- Are subject to the criteria and expectations for promotion and/or tenure under the university's *Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures* (2013 rev.) policy

### ***Academic Administrators***

Faculty members who have administrative responsibilities may concurrently hold an administrative faculty assignment with their teaching and research faculty position. These faculty members are designated as academic administrators and generally serve as senior administrative officers of a college, school, program or equivalent and hold a faculty appointment (typically tenured) in a program, school or department. This term includes those in positions such as provost, vice provost, dean, associate or assistant dean, etc.

### ***Term Faculty***

A term (non-tenure) appointment is a full-time appointment to the faculty for a specified mix of duties and does not lead to tenure. Term appointments shall always be at the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor. Term (non-tenure) faculty members shall hold the same rights and responsibilities specified as tenured or tenure-eligible faculty except they shall not be afforded tenure or tenure eligibility. When appropriate to the duties assigned to the faculty member holding a term appointment, modifiers as defined by the unit (e.g., clinical professor, visiting professor, research professor, or teaching professor) should be used.

### ***Track Transfers***

The *Faculty Track Transfer* policy details how transfers from the term track to the probationary (tenure-eligible) track as well as transfers from probationary (tenure-eligible) track to term will be considered only in exceptional cases where there has been a clear change in the role and work of the faculty member within the degree-granting school or college.

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Faculty Track Transfer](#)**

### ***Adjunct Faculty***

Adjunct faculty (non-tenure) appointments are granted to faculty members who serve the university part-time and are employed for specific activities. The rights and privileges of adjunct faculty shall be specified in the guidelines of the unit making the appointment, but they shall not participate in the evaluation of full-time faculty members for promotion or tenure. Generally, adjunct faculty are evaluated by department chairs, although this Adjunct faculty are valued and integral members of the VCU community. The Office of Faculty Affairs is committed to providing resources to support their exceptional service and provides general employment resources, instructional support, mentoring and professional development information to further teaching and learning excellence.

### ***Affiliate Faculty***

Affiliate faculty appointments may be considered for individuals who, by virtue of their expertise, are deemed capable of making a significant contribution to a university program. The *Affiliate Faculty Appointments* policy covers types of faculty affiliate appointments, process of appointment, terms of appointment, faculty rank, basic criteria for affiliate appointments, promotion process, university privileges, and database of affiliate faculty appointments and maintenance of current affiliate information.

**Read the full policies at the following links:**

- [Affiliate Faculty Appointments](#)
- [Employee and Affiliate Identification](#)

### ***Commonwealth and University Professors***

The president and/or Board of Visitors may designate the rank of commonwealth professor, university professor or emeritus professor as deemed appropriate. The appointment of a faculty member to one of these distinguished professorships at Virginia Commonwealth University constitutes one of the highest honors that can be granted to a university member. *VCU's Commonwealth and University Professorships* policy sets forth procedures for nominations and approvals for this rank.

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [VCU Commonwealth and University Professorships](#)

### ***Emeriti Faculty***

The title emeritus/emerita is awarded for distinguished or exceptional service and outstanding dedication to the university. Normally, eligibility is limited to full-time faculty members who have retired at the rank of professor or associate professor and who have served the university for a period of not less than ten consecutive years prior to retirement. To be eligible for an emeriti appointment, a faculty member shall be nominated by the department chair or applicable unit head. The nomination then requires approval by the respective dean, vice president, president, and/or Board of Visitors, as applicable. Emeriti appointments carry the benefits of retired faculty, plus the following lifetime privileges: listing in university publications; participation in university processions; and ability to serve on dissertation committees.

Retired and emeritus faculty parking is a benefit bestowed by the Office of Faculty Affairs in partnership with VCU Parking and Transportation. This benefit allows for qualified retired and emeritus faculty members to receive a VCU parking permit at no cost. To qualify for a retired/emmeritus faculty parking permit, the faculty member must present a valid *Retired or Emeritus Faculty VCUCard* to a Parking and Transportation customer service office during normal business hours. Additionally, the faculty member must have been a VCU parking subscriber for their last five years of employment with VCU. Upon meeting these qualifications, a retired/emmeritus faculty parking permit will then be mailed to the faculty member's address on record. In the interim, the faculty member can use a valid VCUCard to gain access into the gated parking facilities.

Emeritus faculty are also eligible for many other discounts, which can be found on the Office the Provost website.

### ***Eminent Scholar***

An eminent scholar shall be a person who has achieved national eminence in a discipline as judged by his or her peers on the evidence of effective teaching and productive scholarship, or on the basis of artistic achievement or distinguished accomplishments in areas that lie beyond academic endeavor. The appointee must hold

the rank of associate professor or professor and must be full-time faculty. The Eminent Scholars Program provides matching funds to partially fund a compensation supplement for eminent scholar faculty positions over and above a base salary for the position.

### ***Endowed Chairs and Professorships***

The policy *Private Support for Endowed Chairs and Professorships* covers how the university seeks to attract, reward, and retain distinguished faculty, leaders, scholars, and artists of national and international reputation to occupy an endowed chair or professorship as one of the highest forms of recognition. An endowed chair or a professorship is intended to improve an existing program by providing support to attract new faculty members. The *University Advancement Policies and Procedures Handbook* codifies existing policies and procedures, including purpose and overview of advancement management, methods of giving, general policy on restricting use of gifts, endowment funds/ named endowment funds, campaigns, naming of physical facilities, annual funds, donor recognition societies, advancement series, donor relations and stewardships, advancement communications, corporate foundation relations, and university alumni relations.

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [Private Support for Endowed Chairs and Professorships](#)

### ***Visiting Faculty***

Under special conditions, the university may appoint eminent, nationally or internationally recognized scholars as visiting professors for a specific, limited period of time. The appointee shall hold the rank of associate or full professor, or its equivalent. The appointee shall be a person who has achieved national eminence in his discipline as judged by his peers. The eminence of the appointee shall be judged, generally, on evidence of effective teaching and productive research as attested by his peers.

### **3.2.2 Non-faculty**

#### ***University and academic professionals***

Employees who support the mission of the university in non-faculty roles. This group includes:

- Salaried employees hired after July 1, 2016
- Those who elect the university and academic professional employee group
- Those who were formerly administrative and professional faculty. Positions in this employee group are designated as either exempt or nonexempt under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

#### ***Academic Professionals***

Academic professionals apply specialized professional qualifications in direct support of academic programs to enhance the practice and quality of teaching and learning. They perform high-level duties in academic, research and service missions of the institution. They have advanced degrees, often terminal degrees, and academic backgrounds that

are similar to faculty in the professorial but 75 percent or more of their total assignment involves academic program management related to advising, curriculum development and instructional design. Academic professionals have significant expectations for research activity, including participation in peer-reviewed publications, juried exhibitions or performances, or professional presentations; the preparation and oversight of externally funded grants and contracts; and training and oversight of students in laboratories or studios. They do not hold tenure-track positions, are not eligible for tenure and do not accumulate probationary credit toward tenure. However, academic professionals typically hold concurrent faculty appointments that can either be affiliate faculty or adjunct faculty. For additional information see “Guidelines for Academic Professionals and Professional Faculty.”

### ***Executive and Senior Administrators***

Executive and senior administrators are the senior officers of the university, such as president’s cabinet, members of the president’s professional staff, senior leadership and direct reports to deans. This designation does not include academic administrators such as provosts, deans or vice provosts who are considered T&R faculty serving in an administrative assignment.

### ***Other***

Additionally, there are hourly employees, classified staff, postdoctoral scholars, graduate assistants, and student employees. For more information, please visit the VCU HR website.

### **3.2.3 Faculty Recruitment**

VCU has a prescribed faculty search process that is administered by the Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention (OFRR) in the Office of the Provost. The intent of this process is to recruit the best faculty members and to enhance efforts to increase the diversity of the VCU workforce. VCU is committed to recruit and retain diverse faculty, staff and senior leadership with the skills and talents to advance teaching and learning, high impact research, scholarship and creative expression.

The Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention provides information about faculty search process guidelines and search committees as well as video tutorials and more on the Office of the Provost website.

## **3.3 Faculty Employment**

### **3.3.1 Notice of Appointments (Employment Contract)**

Every faculty appointment or change of status shall be specified in a written notice of appointment issued by or on behalf of the president and/or board of visitors to the faculty member. The appointment is established upon the recommendation of and approval by the appropriate chair, director, dean or vice provost and vice president, with final approval by the university president and/or the Board of Visitors, as applicable.

The notice shall include the following information: rank, academic unit(s) in which the appointment is made, type of appointment (tenured, tenure eligible, term (non-tenure), or adjunct), period of appointment, whether it is part or full time and salary. If it is a tenure eligible position, the notice of appointment shall also include the length of the probationary period and the tenure review date.

### **3.3.2 Terms and Conditions**

A terms and conditions of employment document, including those specific to academic administrators, is to accompany all faculty employment contracts. This document is part of the faculty contract and includes references to some of the key laws, policies, procedures that apply to faculty appointments. It also contains important conditions regarding the terms of appointment (e.g. background checks, criminal history records check, documentation of academic credentials, etc.)

#### ***For initial faculty appointments, transfers, and promotions***

An offer of employment is conditional upon the following:

- Job-related background checks and consent to a criminal history records check. Criminal conviction investigations also will be conducted in connection with certain transfers and promotions.

**The full policy is available at the following link:** [Criminal Conviction Investigations](#)

- U.S. citizens' verifying that they have registered for the Selective Service or providing documentation from the Selective Service System that their requirement to register has been "terminated or become inapplicable."
- Each new faculty member answering whether he/she has an income withholding order for child support payments. An affirmative response will not adversely affect employment.
- Verification of eligibility for employment in the United States via the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Form I-9 and E-Verify system must be completed on or before the date employment begins. Verification of employment eligibility is required for current faculty working on federal contracts that include the E-Verify clause.
- **Transcript Requirement:** Within thirty (30) days of hire, employees are required to submit documentation to the hiring authority that they have the academic qualifications for the faculty position in which they are hired. Failure to comply with this documentation requirement and/or misrepresentation of their professional credentials in any manner may result in revocation of their contract and/or termination of their faculty appointment with VCU. In most instances, this required documentation will be an original, official seal bearing transcript from the institution which awarded their highest degree.

#### ***Terms of appointment***

A faculty appointment with the university is binding after approval of the President and/or Board of Visitors of the university. Renewal of tenure eligible and term (non-tenure) appointments shall be at the option of the university, subject to the non-renewal notice provisions noted below and/or any applicable policies of schools or units of the

university. To be valid, an extension or renewal of an appointment must be in writing and signed by the president, vice president or appropriate designee of the university.

***Non-renewal of tenure eligible and term faculty contracts***

Should a decision be made not to continue a faculty appointment beyond a specified date, the faculty member will be provided with advance notice based on the length of continuous employment as faculty member at VCU in a tenure-eligible or term position, as follows: At least three (3) months' notice before the contract end date during the first year of continuous employment in a faculty position (tenure-eligible or term) at VCU; or at least six (6) months' notice before the contract end date during the second year of continuous employment in a faculty position at VCU (tenure-eligible or term); or at least 12 months' notice, before the separation effective date after two years of continuous employment in a faculty position at VCU (tenure eligible or term). If the separation date is subsequent to the current contract end date, a new contract would be issued for the remainder of the notice period.

***Non-renewal of academic administrator appointments***

An academic administrator whose appointment is not to be renewed beyond a specified date is to notified in writing, pursuant to the provisions of the terms and conditions of employment for academic administrators, that a new appointment will not be forthcoming or that any subsequent appointments will be subject to different terms and conditions than the then-current employment. The letter of notification will specify the different terms and conditions of employment. An academic administrator who reverts to T&R faculty upon termination of an administrative appointment is subject to the university's faculty salary administration guidelines. Notice of non-renewal is provided based on date of hire in accordance with the schedules available on the *Terms and Conditions of Employment for Teaching and Research Faculty Designated as Academic Administrators*, available on the [VCU HR Intranet](#) (requires VCU authentication) or from a unit HR administrator.

***Academic year***

For 12-month faculty, the academic year is July 1 through June 30. For 9-month faculty, the academic year is August 16 through May 15.

***Payment of earnings***

For 12-month faculty, dates of appointment are July 1 through June 30, the contract pay cycle is July 1 through June 30, and pay dates are July 16 through July 16. For 9-month faculty, dates of appointment are August 16 through May 15, the contract cycle is August 10 through May 9, and pay dates are September 1 through August 16. VCU faculty are required to receive their pay by direct deposit.

***Academic Administrator Terms and Conditions***

There is a separate Terms and Conditions of Employment for Academic Administrators document which can be found on the VCU HR website.

### **3.3.3 Benefits**

Detailed faculty Benefits information can be found at VCU Human Resources faculty benefits webpage.

#### ***Employer Provided Benefits***

##### **Retirement**

Full-time and part-time faculty may choose between the VCU Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) or the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) for their retirement plan. This decision must be made within 60 days of employment or participation in a retirement plan will default automatically to the VRS.

##### **Life Insurance**

Faculty, university and academic professionals, and classified staff who work 20 or more hours per week are eligible for basic and optional life insurance coverage from the Virginia Retirement System (VRS).

##### **Disability insurance and the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program**

There are options if you are unable to work due to an illness or injury. Disability insurance may replace some or all of your income during an extended illness or injury. Family and medical leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles eligible employees to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons.

##### **Workers' Compensation**

Under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act and the Virginia Personnel Act, VCU is required to provide benefits to its employees who incur an injury or illness arising out of and in the course of official work-related duties. The VCU Human Resources workers' compensation office provides information to employees and supervisors to assist them in understanding how to prevent workplace injuries and how to process workers' compensation claims.

##### ***Leave***

As an employment benefit, leave provides a means for employees to take approved time off from work for various reasons. Leave packages may vary slightly depending on employee classification. Twelve-month teaching faculty and administrative and professional faculty (nine- or 12-month) who work 50 percent or more of the pay period accrue the following leave:

- Annual leave at the end of each semi-monthly pay period in proportion to the number of hours they work.
- Sick leave as follows, depending on which sick leave program the faculty member participates in:
  - Traditional Sick Leave Program (TSLP) - at the end of each semi-monthly pay period in proportion to the number of hours they work.
  - Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP) - on Jan. 10 of each year in proportion to their total months of state service and whether they are full-time or part-time.



- Personal and family leave (only if they participate in the VSDP) on Jan. 10 of each year

Teaching faculty on nine- or 10-month contract observe the same holidays as students; they also accrue sick leave at the beginning of each fall and spring semester but do not accrue annual leave. When faculty members have a status change (e.g., full-time to part-time, part-time to full-time, or 12-month to nine- or 10-month teaching), the conditions of annual leave and sick leave change, including accruals and payouts. Eligible faculty qualify for other leaves of absence. Faculty earn leave before using it and, when possible, request approval in advance to take it.

Other leave types (Please visit the VCU Human Resources faculty leave webpage for more details on leave types):

- Administrative leave
- Bone marrow and organ donor (BMOD) leave
- Community service leave
- Educational leave
- Holiday leave
- Family and medical leave (Policy)
- Inclement weather leave
- Military leave
- Predisiplinary action leave
- Study-research leave
- Workers' compensation leave

**Read the full policies at the following links:**

[Leave and Time Reporting](#)

[Faculty Sick Leave Reporting](#)

[Family and Medical Leave](#)

### ***Optional Benefits***

Healthcare, dental, and employee assistance programs

Eligible full-time and part-time faculty may participate in the Commonwealth of Virginia's health benefits program. Premiums are paid with pre-tax dollars. Participants choose plans based on coverage needs and geographical location.

Flexible Spending Accounts

Full time faculty members have the option to start a flexible spending account (FSA). An FSA is an IRS-approved, tax-favored account that allows employees to stretch their eligible medical and/or dependent care dollars.

Tax-deferred annuity (TDA) and Roth 403b

VCU offers all employees the opportunity to participate in a Tax-Deferred Annuity (TDA) 403(b) retirement savings program. The program accepts both pre-tax and after-tax (Roth) paycheck savings contributions, as well as incoming rollovers from most other

retirement plans. Eligible faculty, university and academic professionals, and classified employees who contribute at least \$10 each pay period to their TDA plan may participate in the Cash Match Plan.

Other optional benefits include  
Deferred compensation plan (DCP)  
Optional group life insurance  
Voluntary long-term care insurance  
Purchase of prior service  
Tuition waiver  
Pre-tax parking

The VCU Human Resources website provides detailed information on all employee provided and optional benefits.

### ***Work/Life Resources***

As a proud member of the College and University Work/Family Association, Work/Life offers faculty and staff a multitude of resources — at no charge — to help balance work and home responsibilities throughout the life cycle. Please visit the VCU Human Resources Work/Life webpage to find out details on the services offered.

### **3.3.4 Faculty Resignation**

Faculty have a professional obligation to provide notice of resignation at the earliest possible opportunity in order to provide for a smooth transition and to not disrupt academic or administrative operations. Resignations should normally be given at least three months prior to the separation date, which would usually become effective at the end of an academic year (e.g. May 15th or June 30th). Notice of resignations should be provided to the immediate supervisor with a copy to that person's supervisor.

### **3.3.5 Faculty Retirement**

When planning for retirement, there are many things to think about such as retirement income, health and life insurance. The Office of Faculty Affairs, together with VCU HR, provides resources for retired faculty or faculty seeking information about retirement at VCU. Retirement vendors provide individual retirement counseling sessions for the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP), Tax-Deferred Annuity (TDA) Program and Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP). Faculty can set up meetings with a representative from TIAA Cref or Fidelity.

The Retired Faculty Council provides a means for retired faculty to participate in the life of the university and remain involved with university affairs. It also serves as a way of gathering and disseminating information of interest to retirees, and it brings together long-time colleagues for stimulating events occurring on campus. The group is open to all retired faculty members and meets several times a year.

Retired faculty can also receive discounts and parking. Please see “Section 3.2.1 Faculty Appointments, Emeriti Faculty” or the Office of the Provost website.

## ***Retirement Programs***

### Faculty Retirement and Transition Programs

The university may offer a Faculty Early Retirement Incentive Program (FERIP) and/or a Faculty Transition Incentive Program (FTIP) in an effort to provide a financial early retirement incentive for certain tenured faculty that will facilitate the release of tenured faculty resources for budget reallocation or reduction in accordance with the university Strategic Plan goals, changes in enrollment, and other university needs. The *FERIP* and *FTIP* policies go into greater detail on each program.

### **Read the full policies via the following links:**

[Faculty Early Retirement Incentive Program \(FERIP\)](#)

[Faculty Transition Incentive Program \(FTIP\)](#)

[Faculty Alternative Severance Option \(FASO\)](#)

### Rehire of Retirees

Effective April 1, 2016, the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management issued a change in state policy that applies to all state agencies including VCU. Under this new policy, VCU may not rehire former full-time or quasi-full-time faculty (working 30 hours or more) into positions ineligible for state health coverage (e.g. wage or adjunct) until the employees have been separated from the university for a minimum of 26 weeks.

## **3.4 Faculty Responsibilities**

### **3.4.1 Research and Scholarly Activities**

Each day VCU researchers make progress toward improving quality of life and understanding of the world. VCU's research provides an incubator for training new scholars and a new generation of students who understand where and how knowledge is formed. No matter their chosen career, all benefit from the curiosity instilled and the recognition that learning is a lifelong process. The VCU Office of Research and Innovation seeks to partner with faculty in all schools and departments as they seek funding, plan studies, establish collaborations, calculate budgets, submit grant applications, negotiate industry contracts and secure patents and licensing agreements. Skilled staff within each of the major divisions—sponsored programs administration, research subjects' protection, animal research, technology transfer, industry partnerships, and education and oversight—look forward to helping VCU faculty in all realms of the research process

### ***Intellectual Property Policy***

The *Intellectual Property* policy discusses how VCU is committed to supporting its faculty, staff and students in their creation of new discoveries, original works of authorship and art, and the application and dissemination of those discoveries and works to benefit the public. This policy defines the ownership, distribution and commercialization of rights associated with intellectual property developed at the university. The purpose of this policy is to support the discovery of new knowledge; foster creative expression and innovation at the university; provide a framework for

ownership of rights in intellectual property developed at the university or through the use of university resources that respects both individual rights and the university's reasonable interests; protect the integrity of the research emanating from the university; facilitate appropriate commercial development of intellectual property owned by the university; and, encourage and support research and teaching activities of faculty, staff, and students.

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Intellectual Property](#)**

### ***Outside Professional Activity and Employment***

The *Outside Professional Activity and Employment* policy discusses how faculty members may participate in limited service to or association with organizations and persons external to the institution to contribute to the growth of faculty competence and the purposes of the university. The policy details various types of outside professional activity; continuing education; the policies and procedures that apply to outside professional activity; the clinical practice of medicine and dentistry; other outside employment; grants, contracts and consultation using university facilities, services, or personnel; and implementation.

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Outside Professional Activity and Employment](#)**

### ***Conflicts of Interest***

The purpose of the *Conflicts of Interest* policy is to define the process for identifying, evaluating, managing and reporting investigators' financial relationships that have, or may appear to have, an impact on the objectivity and integrity of research conducted at Virginia Commonwealth University. This policy applies to research as well as to all sponsored projects. It states that investigators are required to report: 1) financial interests annually, 2) updates in financial interests and, 3) research related interests to enable identification of conflict of interests in research.

**Read the full policies via the following links:**

[Conflicts of Interest in Research](#)

[Institutional Conflicts of Interest in Research - Interim](#)

Visit the VCU Policy Library for additional research policies.

### **3.4.2 Safety and Health**

It is the policy of Virginia Commonwealth University to maintain a healthy and safe campus and to conduct all university-related activities in compliance with applicable requirements for health and safety from federal, state, and local agencies. The *Environmental Health and Safety and Risk Management* policy discusses minor and major noncompliance, issues immediately dangerous to life and health, and Safety and Risk Management's duty to provide a safe environment to all.

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Environmental Health and Safety and Risk Management](#)**

### **3.4.3 Duty to Report**

The *Duty to Report and Protection from Retaliation* policy discusses how VCU is committed to an environment of uncompromising integrity and ethical conduct wherein all individuals are expected to understand and comply with the laws, regulations, and policies that govern our university activities. The policy covers reporting emergencies or crimes; reporting misconduct; how to handle suspected child abuse or neglect; reporting discrimination; sexual misconduct, harassment or retaliation; reporting fraud; and reporting research misconduct.

Read the full policy at the following link: [Duty to Report and Protection from Retaliation](#)

### ***Copyright and Privacy***

VCU Libraries offers copyright resources and guidance as part of their commitment to educate the VCU community about copyright, fair use, intellectual property, and related issues affecting teaching, research, and scholarship.

#### Privacy

VCU Libraries are committed to protecting the privacy of website visitors. They do not collect any personal information such as name, telephone number, address, VCUCard number, etc. unless users provide it voluntarily when conducting an online transaction on the VCU Libraries website. They do collect non-personal information from each visitor to the VCU Libraries website to allow them to manage the website.

#### Personal Information Collected

When users choose to provide personal information to conduct an online transaction, the information is used only for the purpose of conducting the specific online transaction requested. Each online transaction requires only the minimum amount of personal information required to process a request.

#### Non-Personal Information Collected

Non-personal information is collected from every visitor to the VCU Libraries website. For example, to track the number of computers used to visit the site and to identify most popular pages, the internet protocol address is collected - a series of distinct numbers that identify a user's computer.

#### Security

The VCU Libraries site has security measures in place to protect against the loss, misuse and alteration of information under its control.

## **3.5 Faculty Performance**

### **3.5.1 Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures**

The *Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures* institutes a unified promotion and tenure system throughout the university, while allowing variations in the

academic units to accommodate their specific needs. In regards to promotion and tenure, this policy covers goals, objectives, and authority; faculty ranks; appointments; university promotion and tenure policy review committee; school promotion and tenure committee; university appeal committee; academic review procedures for promotion and tenure for tenured, tenure-eligible, and term (non-tenure) faculty; administrative review procedures for academic personnel actions; the appeal process; the president and Board of Visitors; and procedure for termination of employment for tenured faculty members.

### **3.5.2 Faculty Roles and Rewards**

The purpose of the *Faculty Roles and Rewards* policy is to create a balanced roles and rewards system based on the premise that flexibility and accountability for faculty and their work units are all integrally related. This policy covers the governing criteria and guidelines for implementation around the following premises: a system of work unit accountability must become the focus of planning and evaluation; faculty work roles must be flexible, keyed to the work unit's mission, and consistent with promotion and tenure criteria; standards of excellence must be basis for evaluation of all faculty and work units; and how the institution must implement a fair and consistent system of merit-based reward.

Read the full policy at the following link: [Faculty Roles and Rewards](#)

### **3.5.3 Annual Assessment of Faculty Performance**

The purpose of the *Annual Assessment of Faculty Performance* policy is to establish the criteria, implementation, and procedures by which to carry out the annual assessment of faculty performance. The policy covers criteria and implementation; an overview of the process of annual reports and departmental/ unit evaluations; sources of evaluation; annual assessment of deans and department chairpersons; clinical-track faculty; research-track faculty; faculty on leave or limited appointments; joint appointments; and appeal of faculty evaluation.

Read the full policy at the following link: [Annual Assessment of Faculty Performance](#)

### **3.5.4 Faculty Salary Administration Guidelines**

Detailed information in this section can be found in VCU's Faculty Salary Administration Guidelines.

#### ***VCU's Compensation Plan***

In 2015, a VCU Compensation Plan was developed and serves as the framework for the continued implementation and development of compensation practices that embrace and support the mission of the university. The basis of this plan ensures that salaries are in-line with competitive market data, and that they are internally equitable. VCU's Compensation Philosophy states that VCU is committed to attracting, engaging and retaining diverse, high quality faculty and classified staff in support of the university's Quest 2025: Together We Transform.

### ***Pay Administration***

Deans/unit heads have latitude to administer pay within the established compensation policy guidelines. The Central Human Resources Compensation Team will provide compensation advice and guidance to deans/unit heads to assist them in making sound salary decisions. This includes providing information on market data, up-to-date salary structures, and analytical compensation reports. Market based salary structures have been developed for teaching and research faculty for each school based on rank, discipline, and specialty. The deans/unit heads are provided with these salary structures and are required to manage effectively individual pay within the applicable salary structure.

### ***Salaries and Salary Conversions***

Salaries of VCU faculty are established upon review and recommendation by the appropriate chair, director, dean, vice provost or vice president, with final approval by the university president and/or the Board of Visitors, as applicable. Salaries for T&R and A&P faculty vary by school/college and discipline. Salaries for initial faculty appointments are set and approved through VCU's Compensation Plan. Salary structures have been developed for each school, based on rank, discipline and/or specialty. In determining initial salary to be offered to a prospective faculty member, hiring managers should reference the appropriate salary structure and range. Salaries for adjunct faculty are set at the discretion of the dean/unit head (in compliance with applicable FLSA guidelines) and carry no fringe benefits.

### ***Institutional Salary***

In determining the dollar amounts for each faculty position, the "institutional salary" is used. Institutional salary is defined as the contract salary approved by executive level management following prescribed administrative procedures. This definition meets the Federal "institutional base salary" definition, which is the "annual compensation that the applicant organization pays for the individual's appointment, whether that individual's time is spent on research, teaching, patient care, or other activities." Institutional salary excludes any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of duties to the applicant organization. Faculty working on grants are not allowed to receive higher rates of pay than other faculty performing the same work.

### ***Salary Supplements***

In limited instances, supplementing an employee's salary can be appropriate. The *Salary Supplements* policy discusses establishing rates of pay, payments excluded from salary supplements, and penalties.

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Salary Supplements](#)**

### ***Administrative Supplements***

Each of the university's colleges and schools (and other administrative units as appropriate) may maintain established administrative supplements for positions of associate and assistant deans, directors, department chairs, and others identified for assuming additional administrative responsibilities. Administrative supplement scales will be reviewed every five years and recommended by the appropriate vice president

and approved by the president. These administrative supplements will be identified specifically in the respective administrator's initial and annual appointment contract. The identified supplements will end when the individual's corresponding additional duties and responsibilities end; for example, leaving a department chair or assistant dean position to assume normal faculty responsibilities.

### ***Compensation for Faculty in Schools of Dentistry and Medicine***

The schools of Dentistry and Medicine have specific university-approved policies on clinical faculty compensation, which may include compensation from non-VCU funds. For School of Dentistry, T&R faculty salaries are guided by the School of Dentistry's Teaching and Research Faculty Salary Plan. For School of Medicine, Compensation plans are governed by the [Medical School Faculty Appointment and Compensation policy](#).

### ***Procedures for Salary Conversions***

The standard conversion rate for faculty who change from a 9-month appointment to a 12-month appointment is 122 percent of the 9-month salary. The standard conversion rate for faculty who change from a 12-month appointment to a 9-month appointment is 82 percent of the 12-month salary. If a 12-month faculty member has an administrative supplement, the supplement should first be removed before the salary is converted to a 9-month appointment. Any exceptions to these standard conversions must be approved by the respective vice president and the president through the "Off-Cycle" faculty salary increase process

### ***Merit Increases and Bonus Awards ("on-cycle")***

#### **Merit increases**

The university has a prescribed annual faculty salary administration and bonus award process. This merit process is the usual basis for any individual salary increase and is contingent upon funding as authorized by the General Assembly. The faculty member's performance evaluation serves as the justification for each salary recommendation. Faculty, chairs, deans, and administrative faculty are evaluated annually in accordance with VCU's *Faculty Roles and Rewards* policy and the *Annual Assessment of Faculty Performance* policy.

#### **Bonus Awards**

The Faculty Bonus Award policy provides recognition and a financial reward for VCU faculty members. Bonuses may be awarded to those faculty members whose performance exceeds the normal expectations and requirements for their positions or for superior accomplishments or achievement. All full-time faculty are eligible for the bonus award. The *Faculty Bonus Award* policy covers eligibility requirements, parameters, and procedures of the faculty bonus process.

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Faculty Bonus Award](#)**



### **Salary Increases outside Merit Process (“off-cycle”)**

#### “Off-cycle” salary increases

Since the usual basis for any individual salary increase is through the prescribed annual faculty salary administration (merit) and bonus award process, any salary increase outside this process is considered an exception. Accordingly, these requests must be made in writing and require the approval of the dean and respective vice president. In addition, all salary increases are contingent upon approval by the president and/or the Board of Visitors, as applicable. The amount of the salary increase is based on objective factors, such as comparable positions within VCU and peer institutions of VCU, along with competitive market data and will be in accordance with the standard review procedures for salary increases.

#### Competitive Salary Offers

The university does not support the solicitation of competitive offers as a means of obtaining salary adjustments but does acknowledge that competitive offers occur naturally and, in situations where legitimate competitive offers have originated from comparable institutions of higher education, these offers should be considered and responded to based on the value of the faculty member and the quality of performance, in accordance with VCU’s Compensation Plan. Internal salaries for like positions, along with competitive market data, will be used in the review of competitive offer recommendation.

#### Expanded/Additional Duties

Opportunities to receive additional compensation, such as a salary adjustment for an expansion of duties (permanent or temporary), will be made available to all teaching/research and administrative/professional faculty, which may/may not include a title change. Temporary changes in duties/job responsibilities are to be compensated on a temporary basis defined by the term of the additional responsibilities. If additional responsibilities become permanent, the base salary increase will also become permanent. Competitive market data, along with internal equity review, will be used to ensure equity in any recommendation for a salary supplement for temporary duties or if the duties become permanent.

#### Other Salary Increases

Salary increases may also be requested for other reasons including retention, internal alignment, change of duties, etc. The requests should be limited and must include a detailed written justification. All base salary increases outside of salary structure range must be reviewed by the dean and respective vice president, in consultation with Central Human Resources, to ascertain the weight of supporting documentation and the impact of the increase on internal equity within the school/unit. Competitive market data, along with internal equity review, will be used to ensure equity in any salary increase recommended.

### **“Off-Cycle” Bonuses**

Bonus awards normally coincide with the university’s salary administration process for faculty salary increases. If no annual salary increases are scheduled, a bonus may still be awarded with approval of the president and/or the VCU Board of Visitors.

### **Promotions in Rank through VCU’s Promotion and Tenure Process**

If faculty are promoted in rank through VCU’s *Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures*, salary adjustments may be made as approved by the Board of Visitors. Upon granting of promotion by the Board of Visitors, these salary adjustments are made at the beginning of the faculty member’s contract.

### **Secondary Assignments (Overload Jobs)**

The *Secondary Assignments (Overload Jobs)* policy permits, under certain circumstances, employees to hold multiple positions within the university. There is an established approval process for requesting a secondary assignment.

In general, only nine to 10-month T&R faculty are permitted to have a secondary assignment, subject to certain restrictions and with the required approvals. T&R faculty in 9/10-month appointments are not routinely permitted to hold secondary assignments during the course of the academic year. Nine to 10-month faculty are permitted to have summer appointments. The total compensation for all secondary assignments during the academic year and summer may not exceed 33.33 percent of the faculty member’s 9/10-month contractual salary.

T&R faculty in 12-month appointments are not routinely permitted to have a secondary assignment. Secondary assignments for 12-month faculty are only permitted where the faculty member’s position is not support by grant funding and where the secondary assignment meets all of the following criteria:

- The secondary assignment is for teaching duties only;
- The secondary assignment occurs during the academic year (excluding summer and intersession);
- The teaching is outside the scope of the faculty member’s regular responsibilities; and
- The compensation for teaching duties is paid at the standard rate for adjuncts in the respective school/college where the faculty member is teaching.

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Secondary Assignments \(Overload Jobs\)](#)**

### **Salaries for Summer and Intersession Studies**

Summer appointments may include instruction, research, advising, department curricula development, etc. The *Summer Studies/Intersession Faculty Compensation Policy* specifies faculty compensation related to Summer and Intersession instruction for full-time as well as adjunct faculty and graduate students. This policy also details procedures around instructor responsibility, pay date information, and appropriate summer loads.

Read the full policy at the following link: [Summer Studies/Intersession: Faculty Compensation](#)

### ***Continuing Education (CE) Instruction***

Continuing education (CE) is an integral part of the mission of Virginia Commonwealth University, and faculty are encouraged to participate in such activity. "Continuing education" means VCU-sponsored short courses, seminars, and workshops directed at specific professional groups or target populations, and noncredit short courses advertised and open to the general public. Faculty participation in such activities sponsored by other institutions is considered outside professional activity (see previously mentioned policy on *Outside Professional Activity and Employment, Research and Continuing Education*).

### **3.5.5 Faculty Awards and Recognition Programs**

VCU strives to recognize faculty excellence and facilitate the award process in an effort to highlight the dedication and perseverance of our diverse faculty members. Detailed information and types of awards can be found on the Office of the Provost website.

## **3.6 Faculty Development and Resources**

### **3.6.1 Professional Learning and Development Resources**

Detailed information on professional learning and development resources for faculty can be found on the Office of the Provost website.

*Academic Learning Transformation Lab (Alt Lab):* ALT Lab models and inspires connected learning for a networked world through faculty development, student engagement, communities of practice, and technology enhanced active learning. We cultivate distinctive experiences of deeper learning fostered by high engagement for student success.

*Community Engagement:* The Office of Community Engagement offers training and development which includes The Community Engagement Institute, a Service-Learning Workshop, a Service-Learning Faculty Mentoring Program, the Service-Learning Faculty Fellows Program, Faculty Learning Community, and email interest groups related to CEnR and service-learning.

*Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute:* The Institute develops and implements programs based on principles of collaboration and partnership. Other unique features include its strong theoretical grounding in the concept of transformational leadership, its commitment to long-term relationships with clients and participants, and its focus on leadership in academic and community settings.

*VCU Office of Continuing and Professional Education (OCPE):* The Office of Continuing and Professional Education (OCPE) creates the best learning opportunities available to nontraditional adult learners. The team covers the gamut in nontraditional higher education, offering services such as noncredit, credit and CEU continuing education

programming; customized training for all sectors; organizational needs analysis; content development; and more.

*VCU Office of Research and Innovation:* The Office of the Vice President for Research's Research Development team takes a comprehensive and proactive approach to assisting faculty in obtaining external funding. Services cover the full range of the grant life cycle, including identifying sponsors, building collaborative teams, supporting proposal development, providing training, and working with funding agencies.

*VCU Opportunities for Learning and Development:* The VCU Opportunities for Learning and Development home page is a portal to many of the VCU sponsored learning and development opportunities for employees (faculty, staff and affiliates). You can use the page to search for learning and development opportunities of interest and ultimately be connected to the sponsor's webpages for registration and other specific information.

*VCU Technology Services Lynda:* Lynda is a leading online learning company that has thousands of tutorials aimed at teaching business, software, technology and creative skills to allow its members to achieve personal and professional goals. Lynda's robust and vast library is able to meet the varied needs of the VCU community. Faculty can utilize Lynda's vast library of course material to supplement their online and classroom instruction.

*National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity:* The National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity is an independent professional development, training, and mentoring community for graduate students, post-docs, and faculty members. They are dedicated to supporting academics in making successful transitions throughout their careers. They offer on-campus workshops, professional development training, and intensive mentoring programs.

### ***Educational and Training Opportunities***

Detailed information on educational and training opportunities can be found on the Human Resources website.

VCU's *Educational and Training Opportunities* policy covers guidelines including Human Resources' Educational and Training Opportunities Guidelines; tuition waiver for faculty, classified, and adjunct faculty employees; tuition reimbursement for courses taken at other educational institutions; educational leave of absence with one-half pay or without pay; university learning and development programs; and outside seminars and continuing education.

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [Educational and Training Opportunities](#)

#### **Tuition Waiver**

Full-time faculty may apply to take up to six credit hours of tuition-free courses per semester at Virginia Commonwealth University. Adjunct faculty may receive a waiver of tuition and fees (excluding special course fees) for one class (1-3 credit hours) once they complete nine credit hours of adjunct teaching. The adjunct faculty tuition waiver

must be used within the three-semester period immediately following the completion of teaching the nine credit hours. The summer semester counts as a semester.

#### Tuition Reimbursement

Full-time faculty may be reimbursed for job-related courses taken at other educational institutions provided that the courses are not offered at VCU (classroom or online) and are directly related to the employee's job.

#### Educational Leave of Absence with One-Half Pay or without Pay

This benefit (regardless of funding source) is available for a maximum of one year to full-time faculty who have been employed by the university for at least one year; are in good standing with the university, as determined by the appropriate department head; have been accepted into an approved course of study at an accredited institution of higher learning or the planned coursework is in the institution's best interest; and obtain the proper approvals at least 30 days in advance.

#### Study-Research Leave

VCU enables faculty members to apply for a study research leave to enrich their professional growth and development. The *Study-Research Leave* policy includes procedures on eligibility for study-research leave; return commitments with study-research leave; applications for study-research leave; and benefits while on study-research leave.

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Study-Research Leave](#)**

### **3.6.2 Real Estate and Relocation Assistance**

VCU offers a relocation program for current and prospective university employees, utilizing relationships established with two local real estate firms, Joyner Fine Properties and Long & Foster. VCU's relocation program is dedicated to providing new and current VCU employees with quality service in all areas of destination services. In addition to options such as overview tours, drive-around rental assistance, and lending services, employees of the university also have access to financial incentives and real estate services.

### **3.6.3 Black Education Association**

The Black Education Association (BEA) of Virginia Commonwealth University promotes the interests of African-American faculty. The BEA's mission is to help advance the professional development of black faculty at VCU, to help improve the socio-cultural and academic experience of African-American students, and to make general service contributions to the larger African-American community in the city of Richmond. Interested faculty should contact the assistant vice provost for institutional equity, in the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, to locate the current officers of the BEA.

## **3.7 Discrimination, Grievances, and Complaints**

### **3.7.1 Policy on Sexual Misconduct/Violence and Sex/Gender Discrimination**

The *Sexual Misconduct/ Violence and Sex/ Gender Discrimination* policy prohibits specific forms of behavior that may violate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”); relevant provisions of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (“VAWA”); Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“Title VII”); the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (“Clery Act”); and the Virginia Human Rights Act. This policy includes VCU’s investigative, administrative and disciplinary procedures that will be followed in response to allegations of Prohibited Conduct. In any case of alleged Prohibited Conduct, this policy supersedes other university policies and procedures. It is the responsibility of every member of the VCU community to foster an environment free of Prohibited Conduct. The procedures established under this policy will be used to address, investigate and/or resolve all uncompleted cases on or after the effective date of this policy, regardless of when the underlying conduct occurred. VCU supports an environment free from retaliation. Summarized information is available at [equity.vcu.edu](http://equity.vcu.edu).

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [Sexual Misconduct/Violence and Sex/Gender Discrimination](#)

### **3.7.2 Equal Opportunity**

As an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer, VCU promotes the full realization of employment opportunity for all persons, including minorities, women, individuals with disabilities and veterans. VCU does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin (including ethnicity), age, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions), parenting status, marital status, political affiliation, veteran status, genetic information (including family medical history), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or disability. VCU also prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants because they have inquired about, discussed or disclosed their own pay or the pay of another employee or applicant.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies and to serve as the overall coordinator for purposes of Title IX compliance: Laura Walsh Rugless, director of Equity and Access Services and Title IX coordinator, Moseley House, 1001 Grove Ave., P.O. Box 842549, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA 23284-2549, (804) 828-6404, [titleix@vcu.edu](mailto:titleix@vcu.edu). The following individual has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act and related statutes and regulations: ADA coordinator, Equity and Access Services, Moseley House, 1001 Grove Ave., P.O. Box 842549, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA 23284-2549, (804) 828-8532.

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [Notice of Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action](#)

### **3.7.3 Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities**

Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to ensuring accessibility and equal access to its information, programs, and activities, including its technologies and web pages. VCU will provide reasonable accommodations to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform jobs, participate in classes or other university functions, or access university information, including information delivered through digital or online methods. The *Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities* Policy covers accessibility; requesting accommodation; interactive and individualized assessment to determine reasonable accommodation; providing accommodation; regular review and continued accommodation; confidentiality and record; complaints; and exclusions.

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities](#)

### **3.7.4 Pay Transparency**

As a federal contractor, Virginia Commonwealth University will not discharge or in any other manner discriminate against employees or applicants because they have inquired about, discussed, or disclosed their own pay or the pay of another employee or applicant. However, employees who have access to the compensation information of other employees or applicants as a part of their essential job functions cannot disclose the pay of other employees or applicants to individuals who do not otherwise have access to compensation information, unless the disclosure is (a) in response to a formal complaint or charge, (b) in furtherance of an investigation, proceeding, hearing, or action, including an investigation conducted by VCU, or (c) consistent with VCU's legal duty to furnish information. 41 CFR 60-1.35(c)

### **3.7.5. Faculty Mediation and Grievance**

Disputes are best resolved amicably and informally through effective communication within and between academic units, and it is expected that any Grievant shall have attempted to resolve any dispute with another individual with the assistance of the department head, dean/director, vice president for health sciences or provost/vice president for academic affairs, and/or ombudsperson before invoking the grievance process set forth in the *Faculty Mediation and Grievance Procedure* policy. The policy covers the VCU Faculty Grievance panel, the VCU mediation process, the grievance process, findings/ remedy, and documentation.

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [Faculty Mediation and Grievance Procedure](#)

### ***VCU Ombudsperson***

The ombudsperson is a confidential resource for all faculty, staff, administrators and students at Virginia Commonwealth University. In addition to providing assistance in problem, complaint and conflict resolution, the ombudsperson will monitor the policies, procedures and practices of the university for fairness and equity. The ombudsperson is a resource for information and guidance who, if necessary, directs clients to the university's formal processes for grievances.

### ***Alternate Dispute Resolution***

Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to developing and promoting the use of stakeholder collaboration and alternative dispute resolution processes as appropriate. Through these alternative processes, university decision-makers and affected parties may reach mutually beneficial results without incurring the high cost of adversarial proceedings. The *Alternative Dispute Resolution* policy covers developing alternative dispute methods.

Read the full policy at the following link: [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)

### **3.8 Other Faculty Policy Resources at the University**

#### **Academic Rights and Responsibilities:**

The purpose of the *Academic Rights and Responsibilities* policy is to highlight important collegial academic rights and responsibilities for the VCU academic community including those related to academic freedom; matters of instruction and curriculum; admission, retention and graduation of students; university governance; matters of faculty status; selection of administrators; evaluation of performance; academic tenure; and termination of service and resignation.

#### **Virginia Commonwealth University Rules and Procedures**

The *Virginia Commonwealth University Rules and Procedures* policy governs the conduct of all persons on university premises; that is, on the campuses of VCU, and other property or facilities owned, controlled, or being used by the university. This policy covers rights and prohibited conduct; penalties and other disciplinary actions; procedures for complaints and charges; records and release of information; and implementation.

## **4. Academic Affairs**

Detailed information on Academic Affairs can be found at the Office of the Provost's Academic Affairs webpage.

### **4.1 Academic Program Review**

Academic affairs oversees academic program reviews. Every degree program and certificate is reviewed on a cyclical basis. Within the academic unit, the dean of a school/college is accountable for program review. The program review process involves an intensive review to:

- Describe and reevaluate a unit's contribution to the university mission and strategic plan, the needs of the commonwealth of Virginia, and where appropriate, the needs of the profession it serves.
- Measure and analyze the overall productivity and quality of performance (including teaching, research and scholarship, service and/or patient care) of a defined unit.
- Identify existing and potential areas of excellence and distinctiveness.
- Guide decisions regarding funding, continuation and continuous improvement.



## 4.2 Academic Programs

As an urban, public research university, Virginia Commonwealth University offers more than 215 certificate and degree programs. For the complete list of degree and certificate programs, along with academic requirements, course descriptions and more, visit the [VCU Bulletin](#).

### Academic units

College of Humanities and Sciences

- Richard T. Robertson School of Media and Culture
- School of World Studies
- da Vinci Center
- Honors College
- L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs
- Office of Research and Innovation
- College of Health Professions
- School of the Arts
- School of Business
- School of Dentistry
- School of Education
- College of Engineering
- School of Medicine
- School of Nursing
- School of Pharmacy
- School of Social Work
- University College
- VCU Graduate School
- VCU Life Sciences

### ***Program Development and Approval***

The process for developing new degree proposals and certificate programs, modifying programs of study, and making organizational changes in academic units has been updated. These streamlined processes reinforce VCU's commitment to academic integrity while maximizing efficiency for proposal development and approval.

The Office of Academic Affairs provides support and guidance for developing proposals and directing them through VCU's review and approval processes. These processes include priority setting, formal vetting of the proposed change, full proposal development guidelines, and interfacing with other internal stakeholders and programs.

The Office of Academic Affairs interfaces with two key external stakeholders, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) on behalf of the academic units. Typically, the final phase of the approval process involves a submission to SCHEV and/or SACSCOC.

### **4.3 Accreditation**

Virginia Commonwealth University is accredited by SACSCOC to award certificate, baccalaureate, master, and doctorate degrees. SACSCOC accredits institutions, not individual programs. The SACSCOC conducts a full review every ten years and an interim review every five years. The reviews are institution-wide and cover all aspects of VCU's operations: governance, academics, online education, faculty, student support services, library and information services, finances, physical facilities and institutional effectiveness. Between scheduled reviews, VCU notifies and/or requests approval for specific actions.

Accreditation by SACSCOC signifies that VCU has (1) a mission appropriate to higher education, (2) resources, programs, and services sufficient to accomplish and sustain its mission, (3) clearly specified educational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate to the degrees it offers, and that it is (4) successful in assessing its achievement of these objectives and demonstrating improvements. By VCU maintaining good standing, our students can access funds for financial aid, sit for licensure exams, and obtain other loans and grants that require admission in an accredited college or university.

### **4.4 Assessment**

#### **4.4.1 Assessing student learning outcomes: asking and answering questions about the efficacy of the curriculum**

The primary purpose of assessing learning outcomes is the continuous improvement of student learning and degree program effectiveness. The assessment of expected student learning outcomes is, in simple terms, asking and answering questions about the efficacy of the curriculum. Assessment should answer the question, "To what degree are students achieving the learning that the curriculum has been designed to effect?"

#### **4.4.2 Annual assessment reporting**

All programs leading to a degree or certificate awarded by the university are mandated to maintain an assessment plan. This plan shows how the student learning outcomes are measured, the extent to which they are achieved, and how faculty use the results to improve student learning.

#### **4.4.3 Assessment quality review (AQR)**

The Assessment Quality Review (AQR) is a process that supports academic integrity at Virginia Commonwealth University. The AQR is an evidence-based review of 14 quality criteria of a degree or certificate program's assessment plan and practices, promotes keeping assessment practices timely and useful.

### **4.5 Operations**

The Office of Academic Affairs and Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs ensures the integrity, quality, and transparency of academic programs and oversees policies and procedures governing the undergraduate and graduate curriculum.

#### **4.5.1 CAT and CIM**

CourseLeaf CAT and CIM products provide a centralized electronic information source for all bulletin and curriculum activities.

#### **4.5.2 Syllabus Statements**

*Faculty members are strongly encouraged to use a course syllabus and incorporate student-relevant information from the Syllabus Statements.* Detailed information can be found at the Office of the Provost website.

#### **4.5.3 Textbook Selection/Adoption**

A standard policy for textbook selection and adoption is in effect at VCU. In accordance with the Code of Virginia (Sec. 23-4.3:1), it is the policy of VCU to encourage efforts to minimize the cost of textbooks for students while maintaining the quality of education and academic freedom. Faculty are encouraged to review this policy and should follow these guidelines when making textbook selections for courses.

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [Textbook Sales](#)

#### **4.5.4 VCU Bulletins**

The Virginia Commonwealth University Bulletins are published yearly for each of the student populations served by the institution. The Undergraduate, Graduate, and Professional bulletins contain information about university policies, course descriptions, and academic requirements for the programs offered to the respective student populations. Visit [bulletin.vcu.edu](http://bulletin.vcu.edu) for more information.

### **5. Students**

Detailed information students can be found at the Student Affairs website. Detailed information on university policies, course descriptions and academic requirements for the programs offered to the respective student populations can be located in the VCU Bulletin.

#### **5.1 Student Affairs**

Through its programs, services, and facilities, the Division of Student Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University champions holistic student development by fostering inclusive communities and providing dynamic, integrative learning experiences that prepare its students to be thoughtfully engaged contributors to the global community. Its departments provide essential services to support student success and life on both the Monroe Park and VCU Health Sciences Campuses. As the university continues to grow and evolve, so do its services and facilities. The central administration of the division also serves as a resource for students, parents, faculty, and staff who have problems or concerns regarding their interactions with each other and with the university, and assists in resolving issues or refers inquirers to the appropriate individual elsewhere in the institution.

Departments include:

- Central Office, Division of Student Affairs

- Dean of Students Office
- Office of Multicultural Student Affairs
- Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity
- Recreational Sports
- Residential Life and Housing
- Student Accessibility and Educational Opportunity
- Student Media Center
- Technology Support Services
- University Counseling Services
- University Student Health Services
- University Student Commons and Activities
- The Wellness Resource CenterVCU LEAD

## **5.2 Student Conduct and Academic Integrity**

The Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity is committed to cultivating an atmosphere of civility and respect among our students; this will in turn foster an environment conducive to academic achievement and personal development. The office supports the educational mission of the university by educating students about appropriate behavior and fostering a community supporting academic success. The Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity is responsible for administration of the Student Code of Conduct, the VCU Honor System, and other related policies – including policy creation, regular assessment, and compliance with federal reporting. We strive to assure that the hearing Boards are representative of the diversity of the university community and that they reflect the community’s commitment to civility, honor and integrity. We develop and educate of students, faculty, and staff through their engagement with and participation in the conduct process – including their critical thinking, ethical decision making, empathy and social justice.

### ***VCU Honor System***

In a community devoted to learning, a foundation of honor must exist if that community is to thrive with respect and harmony. Therefore, all members of the university community must conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty, ethics, and integrity at all times. Additional standards of academic and professional integrity consistent with this Honor System may apply to students in professional programs.

Because academic dishonesty is a violation of the profound trust of the entire academic community, the Honor System intends to:

- Foster an environment at VCU where academic dishonesty is not tolerated;
- Prevent any student from gaining, or attempting to gain, an unfair advantage over other students through academic misconduct;
- Define what constitutes academic misconduct and what conduct is expected of all members of the university community;
- Cultivate a centralized system of education and awareness of the Honor System; and

- Instill in members of the university community their responsibility for upholding academic integrity by recognizing that:
  - There is NO neutral stance when dishonesty occurs;
  - Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of academic dishonesty is not a neutral act;
  - Failure to take action detracts from a community of trust; and
  - Knowingly allowing others to represent the work of others as their own is as serious an offense as submitting another's work as your own.

It is important to report EVERY suspected incident of academic misconduct to ensure consistency across courses and departments, due process rights, appropriate response to repeated academic misconduct, and protection from unfounded allegations of misconduct. The Academic Integrity Reporting form can be found [here](#).

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Honor System](#)**

### **5.3 Classroom and Laboratory Guidelines**

Classes must meet regularly and on time and must be conducted in a professional manner for the full duration of the assigned class period. Absences for personal or for professional reasons, such as scholarly meetings, are to be approved in advance by the department chair. These absences, however, should be limited in number and should not hinder the progress of normal class work. If a faculty member experiences an extended illness or disability, arrangements must be made through the department chair to have classes taught by other faculty. Faculty must, by grades or comments and in timely fashion, periodically evaluate each student's achievement.

### **5.4 Registration Policies**

There are student registration policies on the following.

Continuous Enrollment

Student load

Full-time and part-time students

Academic overload

Credits allowable during summer sessions

Prerequisite enforcement

Audit registration

Concurrent registration

Change in registration.

Cancellation of registration

During the add/drop period.

After the add/drop period

Evening studies

Withdrawal from the university

### **5.5 Examinations, Grading and Marking System**

VCU course work is measured both in terms of quantity (semester hours of credit) and quality (grades). Grades are assigned according to a letter system. Each letter is

assigned a grade-point value. These letter grades and their respective meaning and grade-point values are available for review in the VCU Bulletin. At the beginning of each course or program, students should be informed in writing as to how they will be examined and how their performance will be evaluated.

Final exam schedules and deadlines for submitting grades are available in advance of each semester via the [VCU Academic Calendar](#), and faculty should not alter the schedule in any way. However, due to certain authorized circumstances, faculty may change the schedule, but only with the specific approval of the dean. Faculty must enter grades via [eServices](#) within 48 hours of the exam administration. Once a grade has been approved, it may be changed only under authorized circumstances and with the approval of the department chair and the dean on an office [Change of Grade Form](#). If a student misses a test the instructor may use personal discretion in deciding whether or not to give a make-up test, unless departmental policy dictates another course of action.

#### **5.5.1 Midterm Alert Grading**

The Midterm Alert Program notifies first year students having academic difficulty in 100 and 200 level courses. While university policy requires that all faculty provide students with an evaluation of their academic performance prior to the semester withdrawal date, for those instructors teaching 100 and 200 level classes, actual midterm grades must be submitted through eServices for any student who is earning a grade of "D" or "F". The notification allows students to seek assistance in increasing their grades or to withdraw from a course in which they are not performing well.

#### **5.5.2 Grade Review Procedure**

Undergraduate and graduate students of VCU have a right to appeal course grades they consider to have been arbitrarily or capriciously assigned or assigned without regard for the criteria, requirements and procedures of the course stated in the syllabus or guidelines for assignments. The VCU Bulletin details information on the appeal process.

#### **5.6 Graduation Application**

VCU confers degrees in May, August and December. A commencement exercise is held in May for May graduates only. A commencement exercise is held in December for August graduates and December graduates. Each student who expects to complete the degree requirements by the end of a semester or summer session must apply to graduate in accordance with dates published on the university academic calendar. Candidates who do not graduate at the end of the semester for which they have applied must reapply.

#### ***Graduation Checklist***

The total number of semester credits required for graduation depends upon the degree program. Specific information may be found in the VCU Bulletin.

## **5.7 Appeals to Waive an Academic Regulation, Academic Regulations Appeals Committee**

The Academic Regulations Appeals Committee considers appeals for exceptions to undergraduate program academic regulations listed in the VCU Bulletin. The committee — composed of faculty and administrators from each school and the college, and representatives from the Division of Strategic Enrollment Management and the Office of Student Accessibility and Educational Support — is a standing committee of the Office of Academic Affairs.

Undergraduate students who wish to petition the university for a waiver of the regulations in this bulletin may do so through the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee. Students who have been accepted to the graduate portion of a five-year bachelor's/master's program may also need to make an appeal through the Graduate School.

## **5.8 Students with Disabilities**

As a result of the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, any university receiving public funds is required to ensure equal access and provide reasonable accommodations to its students, as needed. Fulfilling such an obligation involves careful considerations and collaborations among departments and schools. This responsibility frequently involves faculty and staff, particularly in considerations of equal access to educational opportunities and programs.

### **5.8.1 Reasonable Accommodations and Equal Access**

VCU has two offices in place to oversee the determination and provision of reasonable accommodations: Student Accessibility and Educational Opportunity (SAEO) serves students and programs on the Monroe Park Campus and The Division of Academic Success (DAS) serves the health sciences programs. In either case, student seeking accommodations must provide documentation verifying and detailing their disability. Based on the severity of the disability, the specific accommodations being requested, and the content/quality of the documentation provided, SAEO or DAS will determine the student's eligibility for accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to provide their approved accommodations to the appropriate faculty member. Unless the provision of a specific accommodation would constitute a fundamental alteration to the course design or learning objectives, faculty and staff should work with the student (and SAEO or DAS) to determine how they may be implemented.

### **5.8.2 Accessibility**

VCU is committed to ensuring all of its programs, activities, digital platforms, and opportunities are accessible to all students. Inherent in this commitment is a recognition that different students have different ways of accessing information and facilities or participating in activities. It becomes the responsibility of all members of the VCU community to strive towards ensuring access for all.

### **5.8.3 Confidentiality**

Disability documentation is considered confidential information covered by FERPA guidelines and does not become part of a student's academic transcript. All disability-

related information is housed in the SAEO or DAS offices, unless the student elects to provide it to other individuals/offices. Disability documentation shall be released only in accordance with the law and VCU policies and procedures. Some basic student information may be released to departments on campus on a strict, educational, need-to-know basis, unless the student has explicitly requested a release of their records/information. SAEO and DAS take student confidentiality very seriously, and cannot make exceptions to these conditions, including for parents, in order to protect highly sensitive student information.

#### **5.8.4 Disclosing a Disability**

Students are under no obligation to disclose their disability unless an accommodation is being requested; likewise, faculty and staff have no authority to view or review disability documentation or have any information concerning a student's disability without a legitimate educational need to know or written permission from the student.

#### **5.9 Assisting Distressed Students**

*Safety and Support for VCU Students, Faculty, and Staff* or simply [go.vcu.edu/safety](http://go.vcu.edu/safety) or the "lifebuoy website" is a website designed to help faculty recognize the signs of distress in a student, to express concerns and to reach out for support. Faculty members interacting with students are in unique position to identify students who are in distress. They may be the first person a student reaches out to for help.

#### Common indicators of concern:

##### Academic Indicators:

- Persistent unexplained absences
- Decline in quality/quantity of work
- Extreme disorganization or erratic performance
- Persistent and inappropriate demands for special permission (extensions, make-up work)
- Disproportionate response to grades or other evaluations

##### Emotional Indicators

- Significant change in mood
- Inappropriate emotional outbursts, yelling or aggressive comments
- Withdrawal or isolation from others
- Expression of hopelessness or suicidal thoughts
- Disturbing or disruptive social media comments

##### Physical Indicators

- Deterioration in physical appearance or personal hygiene
- Excessive fatigue, exhaustion
- Noticeable cuts, bruises, burns
- Disorganized speech, rapid or slurred speech; confusion
- Substance abuse

All members of the VCU community are strongly encouraged to report behaviors or incidents of concern. Please visit the Dean of Students [Report It](#) page for information on how and where to report various types of concerns. Under certain circumstances,



faculty and staff are obligated to report acts of violence, threatening behavior or misconduct. See VCU's Duty to Report and Protection from Retaliation policy for specific information. Faculty and staff have a responsibility to immediately report incidents of prohibited conduct involving sexual assault, sexual exploitation and partner or relationship violence to the Title IX coordinator.

If you are concerned about a student:

1. Discuss the concern directly with the student.
2. Refer the student to appropriate resources.
3. [Submit the concern online.](#)

If a student appears to be in crisis, offer to walk them to University Counseling Services. Even if the student has been connected or referred to counseling, also submit the concern online so it can be routed to the appropriate behavioral intervention team. These teams receive reports from across the university and have the ability to centralize information, ensuring that concerns are assessed contextually.

### **5.10 Release of Student Information**

For detailed information on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), please visit the Division of Strategic and Enrollment Management's FERPA website.

FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records:

- The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day the university receives a request for access.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the university has contracted (e.g., an attorney, auditor or collection agent); a person serving on the board of visitors; or a student serving on an official committee (e.g., a disciplinary or grievance committee), or assisting another school official in performing their tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility. Upon request, the university discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll; to specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; to appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; to accrediting organizations; to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; to appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and to state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific

state law. Directory information may be released without a student's prior consent; this information is limited to:

- Student's name
- Date admitted
- Birthdate
- Mailing address and telephone number
- Local address and telephone number
- University email address
- Semesters of attendance
- Major(s)
- Minor(s)
- Specialization
- School
- Full- or part-time status
- Classification (freshman, sophomore, etc.)
- Degree sought
- Honors and awards
- Degree(s) and date(s) received
- Participation in officially recognized intercollegiate sports and weight, height, hometown, parents' names and previous school(s) attended (for members of athletic teams)
- Photograph
- Emergency contact information
- Student ID (V number)

## **6. University Services and Resources**

### **6.1 Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE)**

Located on the fourth floor of the Academic Learning Commons (1000 Floyd Ave), the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE) works to promote, enhance and assess teaching effectiveness and student learning through faculty development. In addition to CTLE sponsored programs and events, it acts as a hub to link faculty to various faculty development opportunities throughout the university, on both campuses, and in every department.

### **6.2 VCU Libraries**

The Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries offers a wide range of digital and print library collections and services that advance the education, research, and teaching of students, faculty, and other members of the university community. The James Branch Cabell Library on the Monroe Park Campus emphasizes the arts, humanities, engineering, social work, business, social sciences, and basic sciences, with particular support for undergraduate student learning and research needs. The Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences on the MCV Campus focuses on basic and health sciences, health care professionals, clinical care, and patients, with emphasis on graduate and professional students and research faculty needs.

Services to faculty on both campuses include access to a wide variety of instruction and outreach assistance, along with digital information resources (including hundreds of thousands of journals, databases, books, and data resources), borrowing privileges, film, video, and DVD booking services for classes, print and digital course reserves, item purchase requests, and more. The VCU Libraries encourages and supports partnerships with individual faculty to help them develop their instructional and research programs.

### **6.3 ALT Lab**

The Academic Learning Transformation Lab (ALT Lab) models and inspires connected learning for a networked world through faculty development, student engagement, communities of practice, and technology enhanced active learning. It cultivates distinctive experiences of deeper learning fostered by high engagement for student success. The ALT Lab provides four types of services including faculty development, student engagement, communities of practice, and Technology Enhanced Active Learning (TEAL).

### **6.4 VCU Technology Services**

For detailed information on this section, please visit the VCU Technology Services website.

Information technology is integral to the academic and personal lives of VCU's students, faculty, and staff. It serves as a vital and essential tool to support the highest caliber of instruction, research, public service, health care, and administrative activities.

#### **6.4.1 Technology Support Services**

Technology Support Services provides a mix of support and services for the VCU community primarily through the work of six teams:

- Campus Card Services is in the unique position to directly support every person at VCU and VCU Health with the VCUCard identification card. Campus Card Services also supports the campus dining and retail operations, pay-for-print, and the door access system for VCU.
- Desktop Services provides hands-on computing and technical services support for administrative and academic departments at VCU. The team works within the customer environment per defined service level agreements allowing them to be closely aligned with customer needs. Services covered include purchasing assistance, configuration, deployment, and troubleshooting.
- IT Support Center provides computing support, online training and consultation services for students, faculty, and staff on both the Monroe Park and MCV campuses via the IT Support Center walk up counters and the 24/7 call center. Training support is provided via one-to-one consultation and the LyndaCampus online training service.
- IT Service Management Office is leading the adoption of the ITIL® framework for VCU Technology Services (VCU TS). This team coordinates planning and implementation for processes based on the ITIL® framework across VCU TS with the goal to improve service consistency and reliability.

- Strategic Communications works with all of VCU Technology Services (VCU TS) to promote consistent communications and timely service offerings to the VCU community.
- Technology Innovation provides technical planning, testing, and support for many groups within VCU Technology Services as well as departmental IT groups around VCU. Bringing new tools and workflows to these teams assist them to support their customers better.

#### **6.4.2 Academic Technologies**

Academic Technologies encompasses the university's teaching and learning technologies, instructional media services, and essential academic computing to support and expand the growth of technologies in VCU academic spaces across both campuses and online.

Departments in Academic Technologies and services they offer include:

Blackboard

Echo360

LONCAPA

Kaltura

Integrated components

#### ***Labs and Classrooms Computing***

Classroom Podium PCs

Computer Labs and Kiosk PCs

Laptop Carts

#### ***Media Support Services***

Video Production and Teleconferencing

Video capture and production

Live streaming

Teleconferencing solutions

Engineering and Design

Audio/Visual System Design

A/V System programming

A/V Consultation and Project Management

Classroom Support

Classroom A/V System User Training/Support

Classroom A/V System Troubleshooting/Maintenance

#### **6.4.3 Administrative Systems (Banner)**

Banner (from Ellucian) is a suite of administrative software applications for student information, human resources, financial aid, finance, and more. It includes system interfaces to and from other processing systems at VCU and elsewhere. Banner Forms is the administrative user interface; access must be specifically requested and approved. Specifically, faculty members who advise students must request Banner access.

#### **6.4.4 Application Services**

- Authentication and Directory Services - Provides technical leadership and guidance with Active Directory services and eDirectory services. Lead group to recommend and direct the future implementation of an Identity and access management system.
- Business Application Services - Provides technical leadership and guidance in support of various third-party applications. Coordinates future application developments and improvements with other technical and administrative areas.
- Campus Services IT - Provides technical leadership and guidance in support of various third-party applications for Business Services and Parking and Transportation.
- Collaboration Services - Provides technical leadership and guidance in support of the e-mail systems. Coordinates future email communication advancements with other technical and academic areas.
- Records Management - Oversees and administers the university's records management program.

#### **6.4.5 Fiscal and Administrative Services**

##### ***Information Technology Policies, Standards, Baselines, and Guidelines***

Virginia Commonwealth University provides and maintains computing resources to support the university's mission critical operations of education, research, service, and administration. In order to ensure that these resources are used ethically, equitably and legally by faculty, staff and students, VCU has established certain IT policies, standards, baselines, and guidelines. All users of VCU systems, data, information and technology resources must adhere to these requirements.

#### **6.4.6 Information Security**

VCU is committed to protecting members of its community and information resources that are critical to its academic and research mission. Protection may be governed by legal, contractual, financial, or university considerations. VCU is equally committed to preserving an environment that encourages academic and research collaboration through the responsible use of information technology resources.

**Read the full policy at the following link: [Information Security](#)**

#### **6.4.7 Planning and Project Management Office**

At the Technology Services Planning and Project Management Office Web site you can find information on the various aspects of project management activities at the university, including:

VCU's Project Management Methodology

Project Manager resources

Project Management Information and Tracking (PMIT) System

Training Resources

Links to Project Management sites

Updates and news

#### **6.4.8 Telecommunication Services**

Telecommunication Services provide state-of-the-art telecommunications technology (voice and data communications services and equipment) to the entire university and VCU Health community, on both the Monroe Park and VCU Health Sciences campus and throughout Virginia.

Our services include local and long distance, voice mail with web access features, automated attendant (call menus), remote/telework features such as integration of a VCU telephone number with mobile devices and using a PC/laptop to make and receive calls, ACD (automated call distribution), e-911 call management, 24 x 7 maintenance support, conferencing services and online billing.

#### **6.4.9 VCU Computer Center**

The VCU Computer Center's (VCUCC) mission is to provide secure, reliable and cost-effective computing power, data storage and system backup and recovery services with 24x7 operations and systems support to the VCU community.

#### **6.4.10 askIT Knowledge Base**

Technology Services provides an online collection of user documentation and resources for applications and services available to the university community.

- eID
- Email
- Essential computing
- Network services
- Policies and Publications
- QuickStart With VCU Technology
- Research
- Services and networking
- Teaching and learning
- University Resources
- Video services
- Web tools

#### **Policies and resources related to Technology Services**

[Computer and Network Resources Use](#)

[Technology Services for the College of Humanities and Sciences](#)

#### **6.5 Child Development Center**

VCU Child Development Center is a full-day, inclusive young children's program which provides high-quality care and education for the children of VCU faculty, staff and student families. Its unique relationship with the School of Education allows them to serve as a learning lab for student pre-service experiences, faculty research, and community outreach and education.

#### **6.6 Business Services**

Information on VCU's Business Services is available on the unit websites for Parking and Transportation, Dining Services, Mail Services and the VCU Bookstore:

## **6.7 Residential Life and Housing**

Residential Life and Housing at VCU provides safe, inclusive and well-maintained facilities where we build intentional communities to empower residents in their academic excellence, citizenship and personal growth.

## **6.8 Recreational Opportunities**

The Department of Recreational Sports operates the Cary Street Gym, Outing Rental Center and Thalheimer Tennis Center on the Monroe Park Campus, and the MCV Campus Recreation and Aquatic Center, in the Jonah L. Larrick Student Center. Faculty and staff can purchase Rec Sports memberships for themselves and family members at discounted rates. The Ram Express membership offers an additional 30 percent discount for members who visit the gym on weekends and before 1:00 p.m. on weekdays. Rec Sports offers a wide variety of programming, including group exercise classes, wellness programs, Personal and Small Group Training, Aquatics programs, Outdoor Adventure gear rentals and trips, and instructional programs. Youth programming includes children's swim, family swim hours and summer Mini Ram Camp.

## **6.9 Cultural Opportunities**

Members of the university community have the opportunity to attend many scholarly and cultural activities sponsored each year by schools, departments and organizations. These activities include lectures, seminars and symposia in the humanistic and scientific disciplines; concerts, plays and performances in music, dance and theater at the VCU Singleton Center for the Performing Arts and the Grace Street Theatre; and art exhibitions in the Anderson Gallery and the Institute for Contemporary Art. Announcements about scheduled events are widely circulated. Many of the cultural opportunities are presented by VCU's School of the Arts.

## **6.10 Travel – Domestic and Foreign**

Travel is subject to current Virginia and university policies and guidelines. Deans and department chairs and directors may develop specific guidelines to manage travel funds efficiently so that university costs are minimized through special fares and other economical arrangements. Travel for professional purposes (to attend a convention, conference, seminar, workshop or similar function) must be requested on a VCU Chrome River form, regardless of funding source. Travel request forms and guidelines are available from the department or school. Permission to travel outside the contiguous 48 states requires the appropriate vice president's approval.

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [University Business-Related Travel](#)

## **6.11 Emergency Procedures and Information**

### **6.11.1 VCU Alert**

Visit the VCU Alert Web page at [alert.vcu.edu](http://alert.vcu.edu) for alerts and information to stay safe. VCU uses a variety of communication methods to alert the campus community about emergency situations and safety threats

- Alertus
- Digital signage

- Mass email
- Outdoor sirens
- Social media
- Text messages
- LiveSafe App

### **6.11.2 VCU/Campus Police**

The mission of the VCU Police Department is to provide a safe and secure learning, living and working environment for the students, faculty, staff, and visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University. This mission will be accomplished through the development of various community-based crime prevention strategies and initiatives in conjunction with traditional law enforcement and progressive community policing practices. All members of the department will provide the highest levels of courtesy and customer service to the community.

### **6.11.3 Office of Environmental Health & Safety**

The primary mission of the Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) is to advance and support a safe and healthful environment at VCU and VCU Health. OEHS works to meet this goal through surveys, consultation, teaching, advising, and environmental monitoring. As the university's liaison, OEHS works with outside agencies and organizations to address all applicable standards. OEHS is divided into two sections: Radiation Safety and Chemical/Biological Safety. OEHS offices are located on both campuses and provide emergency response 24-hours a day. The Safety Awareness Program and Handbook for New Employees and the VCU Safety Manual offer more detailed information about the office and its services.

### **6.12 Identification: VCUCard**

The VCUCard offers VCU identification and a wide variety of other services. It is the official identification card for Virginia Commonwealth University and Health System. While on the Monroe Park or MCV campuses, all students, faculty and staff are required to carry their VCUCard. In addition to being your university ID, your VCUCard has a wide variety of uses. If you lose your card, report it immediately to a VCUCard office or visit our online card office at [vcucard.vcu.edu](http://vcucard.vcu.edu). Although there is no fee for the initial issuance of the card, there is a charge for a replacement.

### **6.13 Administrative Services**

A large number of activities that support instruction and research are organized under the vice president for finance and vice president for administration. Faculty members are encouraged to review and adhere by the policies and procedures maintained by these offices:

#### **Finance**

Budget and Resource Analysis  
 Business Services  
 Procurement Services  
 Treasury Services  
 Financial Reporting/Controller



## **Administration**

Human resources

Facilities management

Police

Technology services

Safety and risk management

Planning and assessment and quality improvement.

### **6.14 Global Education Office**

Whether it is an academic unit aiming to develop an innovative program that supports VCU's global priorities, a faculty member looking to enrich their research and teaching through an expanded global network, or a student seeking a real world engagement with other cultures either abroad or on campus, the Global Education Office helps to improve the recruitment and retention of international students and scholars; increase the global engagement of VCU students and faculty; and expand VCU's global footprint through our research, teaching, and service especially as they impact global health.

### **6.15 The Honors College**

The Honors College is composed of more than 1,000 of Virginia Commonwealth University's most creative, talented, and committed students. The Honors College is an intellectually diverse community, comprised of students from virtually every major on campus. Experiences gained through The Honors College provide the foundation for advanced academic success and set the stage for lifelong learning. The Honors College grants students access to the vast educational, cultural, and social resources of a vibrant metropolitan research university while maintaining an intimate community of scholars.

### **6.16 The University College**

The University College enhances student engagement and success by providing a central home for curricular innovation, including a distinctive first-year seminar sequence leading to a course in inquiry and the craft of argument, and interdisciplinary degree programs with opportunities for customized majors and study concentrations. The University College's mission is to enhance student success through curricular innovation and support for learning excellence, and has many programs and services available that will help students experience the full transformative potential of contemporary higher education in a large, public, urban research university.

#### ***Department of Focused Inquiry***

The Department of Focused Inquiry offers small, seminar-style classes for first- and second-year students as part of the core curriculum at VCU. Its interdisciplinary faculty strives to foster curiosity about the world at large through inquiry-based, community-engaged, and experiential learning.

## 6.17 Employee Health Services

Employee Health Services provides a wide range of services to university and hospital faculty and staff.

- Pre-placement examinations for new employees.
- Periodic exams designed to detect signs or symptoms of ill health related to employment conditions.
- Evaluation and treatment of occupational injuries and illnesses.
- Medical monitoring for biohazard exposure.
- Vaccinations and immunizations for employees working with infectious agents or at risk of exposure to infectious diseases.
- Evaluations of on-the-job, non-occupational illnesses to ensure that employees do not transmit communicable diseases to co-workers or hospital patients.

## 6.18 Office of Communications and Public Relations

University Public Affairs helps Virginia Commonwealth University communicate with the general public by working with news media regionally, nationally and internationally, and by providing other communications services.

## 6.19 University Relations

University Relations provides editorial, print, exhibition and multimedia design, Web development and design, photography and other creative elements in support of the mission and goals of the university.

## VCU Brand Standards

All VCU faculty members must adhere to current university brand standards when using or creating collateral such as letterhead, posters, web and social media graphics, slideshows and PowerPoint presentations, which includes visual identity elements, nomenclature and editorial style guidelines. **It is strongly discouraged to use outdated or incorrect VCU branding, nomenclature and graphic elements available from search engines or out-of-date websites.**

A full brand standards guide and overview, as well as current and approved university and school-level brand marks, memo and fax templates, and PowerPoint decks are available to all members of the VCU community via [identity.vcu.edu](http://identity.vcu.edu). In addition to downloading current files, please review any saved files or templates you're currently using to ensure they meet brand standards and replace/delete anything outdated.

If you have questions about branding or school-level styles, contact <mailto:identity@vcu.edu> or your school/unit communications officer.

## VCU Preferred Style: Associated Press

The university provides nomenclature standards and usage guidelines for writers of internal and external university communications. VCU's preferred style is that of the Associated Press (AP) and the editorial guidelines available on the Identity website as a

resource to ensure consistency. The AP Stylebook Online is also accessible online with your VCU eID through VCU Libraries, via [apstylebook.com/vcu\\_library](http://apstylebook.com/vcu_library).

If your material is scholarly or technical, consult manuals specific to your discipline, such as guides published by the American Psychological Association or the Modern Language Association.

## **6.20 Reservation of Rooms for Special Events and Meetings**

The Event and Meeting Services Office assists users in reserving facilities and arranging for other services. Event spaces, including audio-visual support, are available to registered student organizations, VCU departments, VCU Health Systems and, on a limited basis, non-university clients. VCU student organizations, VCU departments and VCU Health Systems can reserve space through the Virtual EMS.

## **7. Other Policies and Information**

Policies articulate requirements and expectations for behavior, actions and activities of the university community. A policy may require or prohibit an action, support compliance with applicable laws and regulations and/or mitigate risk. There are two distinct types of university policy: Board of Visitors policies (address matters of university governance and/or require the BOV to take an action item) and Administrative policies (address universitywide operational expectations and/or compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies and procedures) . Both are mandatory.

Procedures are mandatory actions and processes necessary to comply with a policy, support compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and mitigate risk.

The Integrity and Compliance Office, within Audit and Compliance Services, is responsible for the university's [Policy Program](#), which oversees the development, review and approval processes for universitywide policies and procedures. The Policy Program can be contacted at [policy@vcu.edu](mailto:policy@vcu.edu) or (804) 828-2336.

### **7.1 Inclement Weather/Office Closings**

The decision to close VCU due to inclement weather is made by university administration. University employees will be notified by their supervisors or department heads as to whether they are designated employees who are required to work their scheduled shifts during inclement weather. If the university remains open or reopens during inclement weather, approved employee absences will be covered by accrued leave or leave without pay, as appropriate.

### **7.2 Alcohol and Other Drugs**

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of members of the university community and the public being served by the university. The policy covers procedures for policy education and enforcement, alcohol and other drug counseling and treatment programs available for VCU students and employees and procedures for

accessing services, and procedures for university sponsored events associated with alcohol.

**Read the full policy at the following link:** [Alcohol and Other Drugs](#)

### **7.3 Smoking in the Workplace**

In accordance with the Virginia Indoor Clean Air Act, Virginia Commonwealth University provides reasonable no smoking areas in all university buildings. This policy covers building plans and employee responsibilities.

**Full policy:** [Smoking in the Workplace](#)

### **7.4 Campus Maps and Directions**

See [vcu.edu/maps](http://vcu.edu/maps).