

GRADUATION INFORMATION

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 (<http://academiccalendars.vcu.edu>). Candidates who do not graduate at the end of the semester for which they have applied must reapply.

Students who may have enough credits to be eligible to graduate will be notified by email of the graduation process each semester. The email will contain submission deadlines and steps to begin the graduation checkout process. Eligible students should apply to graduate by the dates indicated in the email and noted in the university academic calendar (<http://academiccalendars.vcu.edu>), which is available online. Departments are notified once a student applies to graduate. Students should schedule a conference with an adviser well in advance of the deadline to ensure they are on track for graduation and should note that approval by the department chair and dean is also required.

Students planning to graduate in the current semester should proceed as follows:

- Complete the Apply to Graduate procedure on eServices (<https://my.vcu.edu>). The undergraduate graduation application will be provided during this process. **If a student is graduating from more than one program (ex. dual or double degree program), they must complete the entire graduation checkout process through eServices for each program. The student's department will be notified once all steps are completed.**
- Complete the undergraduate graduation application according to the instructions provided. A separate set of graduation forms must be completed and submitted for each program from which students intend to graduate.

No degrees will be conferred unless students apply to graduate.

Degrees will be awarded and diplomas issued in a current semester only. Students who do not complete the graduation checkout process in the semester in which they actually complete their programs will be awarded their degrees in the semester in which they apply to graduate. In such cases, a text notation will be added to the transcript to indicate the date that course work for the degree was completed.

Graduation checklist

The total number of semester credits required for graduation depends upon the degree program. Specific information may be found under degree program descriptions. In addition to the specific requirements listed by the college/school/department, the following graduation checklist for undergraduate students summarizes all general requirements for graduation and issuance of a diploma.

- Overall undergraduate GPA and major area GPA must be, at minimum, 2.0.
- Student must have completed 25 percent of the semester-hour credits required for the bachelor's degree in residence at VCU, including at least 30 of the last 45 credits.

- Student must have earned a minimum of 120 credits, including transfer credits.
- Student must have earned a minimum of 45 upper-level credits.
- All grades of Incomplete (I), Continued (CO), Progress (PR), Not Recorded (NR) and No Grade (NG) must be converted to final letter grades no later than the last day of class of the semester in which the candidate plans to graduate.

Students are reminded to complete a final check of their academic records before they exit the university to ensure that all temporary grades have been converted, that the record accurately reflects their academic histories and that all degrees have been posted. Requests for changes to the academic record must be made within the first six months following graduation, but this requirement may be superseded by other university-specific deadlines (e.g., those governing requests for a change of grade). Commonwealth of Virginia record-retention requirements may affect the university's ability to address requests for changes to the academic record. Students must settle all financial obligations to the university prior to the issuance of a diploma.

Graduating with honors

Dean's list

The dean's list is a recognition of superior academic performance. A student is automatically placed on the dean's list for each semester in which a minimum semester GPA of 3.5 is attained, based on a minimum of 12 semester credits, excluding courses graded credit/noncredit, with no grade below C. A notation is placed on the student's academic record. Students earning marks of I or PR are ineligible for the dean's list for the semester in which these grades were earned.

Laudatory honors

Candidates for a baccalaureate degree who complete a minimum of 45 credits at VCU may qualify for graduation honors. Cum laude is awarded for a 3.30 to 3.59 GPA, magna cum laude is awarded for a 3.60 to 3.89 GPA and summa cum laude is awarded for a 3.90 GPA or better, at the time of graduation.

Calculation of the GPA for honors determination is based on grades received for all courses taken for credit at VCU, as well as for credits accepted for transfer at VCU. However, to qualify for graduation honors, a student's GPA for courses taken for credit at VCU must be at least as high as the minimum required for the specific honor bestowed. Recognition of graduation honors is made on the student's diploma, permanent record and in the commencement program (because of the early publication of the commencement program, the honor status from the last semester prior to graduation will be reflected in the commencement program).

Students who have participated in the Honors College and who have met requirements of that program may graduate with "University Honors." Please refer to The Honors College (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/honors-college>) section of this bulletin for more information.

Special notes for graduating financial aid recipients

If a student plans to continue enrollment at VCU after graduation and wants financial aid, he or she must apply and be accepted as a degree/certificate-seeking student and enroll at least half time to meet financial aid enrollment requirements. If a student received federal loan funds during enrollment at VCU, he or she will be required to complete exit

counseling. The student's diploma or transcript will not be released until he or she completes this required obligation.

Exit counseling required

Exit counseling is required for students receiving the following loans: William D. Ford Federal Direct Loans (subsidized or unsubsidized), Federal Perkins Loan, Health Professions Student Loan, Nursing Student Loan, Loans for Disadvantaged Students, Primary Care Loan and University Long-term Loan. Borrowers will be notified about exit counseling during the semester in which they are scheduled to graduate or drop below half-time enrollment. Visit the VCU Office of Financial Aid website for additional information about exit counseling for the Direct Loan program (<http://www.finaid.vcu.edu/assistance/loans/exit.html>).

Commencement participation

When a student has submitted a degree application for spring graduation but does not meet degree requirements due to extenuating circumstances, the student's dean may permit the student to participate in commencement exercises. Permission may be granted only when six or fewer credits are lacking for degree completion and the student demonstrates his or her intent to complete the needed credits by the end of the summer session.

When such an exception is made, the dean confirms the following conditions to the student:

- Participation in the commencement ceremonies does not mean the student has been awarded a degree.
- The degree will be awarded in the semester or summer session in which all degree requirements have been met.
- The exemption is made only to accommodate the student's request and does not obligate VCU to ultimately grant a degree unless all requirements and conditions have been met.

MCV Campus graduation candidates for degrees to be conferred at the close of the spring semester must be present at the universitywide graduation ceremony to receive their degrees. No individual may be exempt from this regulation unless excused by the dean of his or her school.