VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (http://www.gradeuate.vcu.edu) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the Graduate study section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students)

Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for degree candidacy if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student’s faculty regarding the student’s academic achievements and the student’s readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the Graduate study section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/degree-candidacy)

Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the Graduate study section for additional information on graduation requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/graduation-requirements)

Apply online at graduate.admissions.vcu.edu (http://www.graduate.admissions.vcu.edu).

Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, Master of Arts (M.A.)

Program goal

The Master of Arts in Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness degree program is designed in the broadest interdisciplinary sense. Students will learn theoretical and practical knowledge that will prepare them for private or public sector employment in the expanding area of homeland security and emergency preparedness and/or further study in numerous areas of public policy. The curriculum focuses upon international and domestic security and preparedness issues related to terrorist threats, such as the 9/11 attack, and natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina. Since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, homeland security and emergency preparedness has become a critical aspect of governmental policy at the federal, state and local levels as well as within the private sector. The L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs believes that a stable and productive evolution of public and private sector policies in this area can only be achieved if academe recognizes and accepts its role in developing scholars, professional policy analysts and informed governmental decision makers.

The master's degree is primarily an off-campus, online, distance-learning program. It has both off-campus (online) and on-campus (at VCU) components. VCU's program takes a broad interdisciplinary approach to preparedness that will give students the ability to see the larger organizational, social, political, ethical and economic aspects of disaster studies, in addition to the policy-making and implementation aspects. The scholarly study of homeland security and emergency preparedness rests at the intersection of national defense, emergency management, law enforcement and policy management. With expertise in criminal justice, geography, government (local, state, federal and foreign), international affairs, policy planning and public administration, the Wilder School is particularly well-suited for such a program. Its location in the state capital and situated just 90 minutes from the nation's capital also makes VCU's program a particularly well-suited for such a program. Its location in the state capital and situated just 90 minutes from the nation's capital also makes VCU's program particularly well-suited for such a program. Its location in the state capital and situated just 90 minutes from the nation's capital also makes VCU's program particularly well-suited for such a program. Its location in the state capital and situated just 90 minutes from the nation's capital also makes VCU's program particularly well-suited for such a program. Its location in the state capital and situated just 90 minutes from the nation's capital also makes VCU's program particularly well-suited for such a program. Its location in the state capital and situated just 90 minutes from the nation's capital also makes VCU's program particularly well-suited for such a program. Its location in the state capital and situated just 90 minutes from the nation's capital also makes VCU's program particularly well-suited for such a program. Its location in the state capital and situated just 90 minutes from the nation's capital also makes VCU's program particularly well-suited for such a program. Its location in the state capital and situated just 90 minutes from the nation's capital also makes VCU's program particularly well-suited for such a program.

Student learning outcomes

1. Students will achieve comprehension of the theory and practice of homeland security and emergency preparedness and be able to analyze policy and synthesize information in four key areas: risk and vulnerability analysis, strategic planning dilemmas of disasters and disaster preparedness, institutional coordination, and intelligence operations and legal/constitutional aspects.
2. Students will develop advanced skills in expository writing and oral presentation.
3. Students will achieve comprehension of the theoretical and practical principles of emergency preparedness for both natural disasters and terrorist incidents and be able to analyze key topics related to natural disasters, emergency planning, terrorism and counterterrorism.
4. Students will perform research, policy analysis and risk assessment using several methodological and theoretical approaches to homeland security and emergency preparedness.
5. Students will also be able to evaluate scholarly and practitioner analyses of homeland security and emergency preparedness.
Admission requirements

Degree: Semester(s) of entry: Deadline dates: Test requirements:
M.A. Fall Apr 1 (Mar 1 for financial aid) GRE, GMAT, MAT or LSAT
Spring October 1

Special requirements
• These deadlines are designed to allow sufficient time for application review and admission processing. Applications may be submitted after the deadline; however, there is no guarantee of sufficient time for processing. Any application submitted too late for current semester processing will be considered for the following semester.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements), selection is made on the basis of prior academic performance, professional accomplishments and other indicators of the ability to pursue graduate studies and a professional career in a field related to homeland security and emergency preparedness. The application for admission requires:
1. A transcript documenting the completion of a bachelor’s degree
2. Three letters of reference (including both academic and professional references if possible)
3. A current resume
4. Satisfactory standardized test score (GRE, GMAT, MAT, LSAT)
5. A minimum 2.7 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) in the last 60 semester hours of undergraduate work

Students not meeting these requirements who have demonstrated advanced competency on a professional basis may be admitted to the program provisionally. The provisional period shall consist of the first nine hours of designated graduate work in which all grades must be no less than B. Provisional admission does not constitute a waiver of the requirement related to a standardized test.

Degree requirements
In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/graduation-requirements), students must complete a minimum of 36 graduate credit hours with a cumulative minimum GPA of 3.0.

On-campus study
During the final week of the semester, each class will have a three-day in-class session from Thursday to Saturday. It features presentations and discussion of student projects and papers, as well as lectures, seminar sessions and exercises. These sessions will include the formation of working groups of students from a number of classes in the program. Exceptions will be made for students who are unable to attend these sessions, such as active-duty military personnel or emergency managers involved in ongoing operations with provisions for maximum possible inclusion via electronic means and/or the substitution of additional student assignments equivalent to the on-campus study requirements.

Curriculum requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EGMN 630</td>
<td>Technology, Security and Preparedness</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSEP 501</td>
<td>Institutional Challenges of Security Preparedness</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSEP 502</td>
<td>Survey of Terrorism</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSEP 601</td>
<td>Emergency Management: Response Planning and Incident Command</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSEP 602</td>
<td>Government, Industry and Community Strategic Planning</td>
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<td>HSEP 603</td>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
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<td>HSEP 610</td>
<td>Law Enforcement Policy and Judicial Precedent</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSEP 620</td>
<td>Private Sector Issues in Security and Preparedness</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSEP 650</td>
<td>Public Health Preparedness</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSEP 690</td>
<td>Capstone Seminar</td>
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<td>INFO/CISS</td>
<td>Principles of Computer and Information Systems Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>PADM/GVPA/CRJS/URSP 623</td>
<td>Research Methods for Government and Public Affairs</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
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Total Hours 36

Total graduate credit hours required (minimum) 36

Graduate program director
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Program website: wilder.vcu.edu/academic/security/grad.html (http://wilder.vcu.edu/academic/security/grad.html)