

# Academic Policies and Procedures

---

## Withdrawal from Course: Policies for all Students

These policies apply to all students (undergraduate and graduate) at Valdosta State University for all classes offered by VSU, whether delivered face-to-face or online. However, some VSU students may be enrolled in classes offered through collaborative partnerships with other institutions or eCore (eMajor, GOML, WebMBA, etc.). In these programs, some policies and processes may differ slightly. Students taking classes in those programs should visit the appropriate program links for further information.

### Before the Designated Withdrawal Date

Students may withdraw from courses following the drop/add period until approximately one week after midterm by completing the online withdrawal process on BANNER. A grade of "W" will appear in the student's official records. For undergraduate students only: Students must meet the requirements of the Limited Withdrawal Policy (see below).

However, a student may not exercise this right to withdraw to avoid sanction for academic dishonesty (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/academic-dishonesty.php>). Instructors may assign a "W" on the proof roll for students not attending class. It is the responsibility of the student to complete the withdrawal process. A withdrawal is official when it is received and processed by the Office of the Registrar.

### After the Designated Withdrawal Date

Students will not be allowed to withdraw after the designated withdrawal date as published in the school calendar as required by Board of Regents' policy; however, students may petition an exception to the Board of Regents' withdrawal deadline for cases of hardship or medical reason by completing a Request for Medical or Hardship Withdrawal form available online with the Office of Student Affairs. The petition will become a permanent part of the student's file. If the petition is approved, the instructor may assign a grade of "W" after mid-term. Any student who discontinues class attendance after midterm and does not officially withdraw may be assigned a grade of "F." No fee adjustment will be made for withdrawals except as outlined in the Tuition, Fees, and Costs section of this catalog. The Office of Student Financial Services will receive a copy of the withdrawal form for refunding if applicable. Students receiving financial aid or graduate assistantships should be aware that withdrawal from courses may affect continued financial aid eligibility.

To petition for withdrawal after the designated date, students must document either a medical or hardship situation and follow the process below:

### Medical Withdrawals from the University

After the term's designated withdrawal date, a student who has an injury or illness that prevents the completion of all classes for that term may request a Medical Withdrawal through the Office of Student Affairs. The Medical Withdrawal process is outlined below. A student wanting to withdraw before the designated withdrawal date must follow the Withdrawal from Course Policy outlined in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. **Questions regarding the late withdrawal process should be directed to the Office of Student Affairs (229-333-5941).** It is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially in accordance with university regulations. Only in very rare instances will a partial withdrawal be considered, such as in cases in which a student may not be able to complete a specific class because of a medical condition or injury that prohibits class participation. For more detailed information on the Medical Withdrawal policy and procedures, click here (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/advising/medical-withdrawal-process.php>).

### Hardship Withdrawals from the University

A student who has an emergency that prevents the completion of all classes for that term may request a Hardship Withdrawal. The Hardship Withdrawal process is outlined below. It should be noted that a Hardship Withdrawal can be requested only after the designated withdrawal date. A student wanting to withdraw before he designated withdrawal date must follow the Withdrawal from Course Policy outlined in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. **Questions regarding the late withdrawal process should be directed to the Office of the Dean of Students (229-333-5941).** It is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially in accordance with university regulations. Only in very rare instances will a partial withdrawal be considered, such as in cases in which a student may not be able to complete a specific class because of a hardship that prohibits class participation. For more detailed information on the Hardship Withdrawal policy and procedures, click here (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/advising/hardship-withdrawals.php>).

### Mental Health Withdrawals

To ensure that its students receive due process rights, Valdosta State University has initiated the following Mental Health Withdrawal Procedure. Before a student may be withdrawn for mental health reasons, there must first be the following chain of events:

1. The student displays behavioral indicators, which are determined by a mental health professional to be of danger to the student or others.
2. When a mental health professional recommends that a student needs to be withdrawn from school for mental health reasons, an informal hearing will then be set up to determine whether or not the student should be withdrawn.
3. In this informal hearing conducted by the Office of Student Affairs, the student or his or her representative may present any pertinent information that he or she believes will have a bearing on the particular case.

This procedure is enacted to ensure that the student's legal rights are not violated and that the University has the right to remove any student who it feels, based on professional evaluation, may present a danger to himself or herself or to others.

No fee adjustment will be made for withdrawals except as outlined in the Tuition, Fees, and Costs section of this catalog. The Office of Student Financial Services will receive a copy of the withdrawal form for refunding if applicable.

## Limit on Course Withdrawals (10 "W" Policy): For Undergraduate Students Only

Effective Summer 2021, all undergraduate students are limited to ten course withdrawal ("W") grades for their entire enrollment at Valdosta State University. A student may not accumulate more than 3 course withdrawals in an academic year. Beginning on the sixth withdrawal during enrollment at VSU and each subsequent withdrawal, academic advisor approval must be received prior to the student withdrawal taking place. Once a student has accumulated three "W" grades in an academic year or more than ten "W" grades during their entire undergraduate enrollment, all subsequent withdrawals (whether initiated by the student in Banner or initiated by the instructor during attendance verification) will be recorded as "WF." The grade of "WF" is calculated as an "F" for GPA purposes. Any appeal for additional "W" grades must be made to the Office of Student Success.

The limit on withdrawals does not apply if a student withdraws from all classes in a given semester before the designated withdrawal date of the semester. The following types of withdrawals do not count against the limit of ten course withdrawal ("W") grades:

- Hardship withdrawals (see policy above)
- Medical or mental health withdrawals (see policy above)
- Military withdrawals
- Grades of "WF"
- Withdrawals taken in semesters before Fall Semester 2010
- Withdrawals taken at other institutions

Transfer students, regardless of their classification upon enrolling at Valdosta State University, are also limited to the same withdrawal criteria at Valdosta State University.

## Change in Major Program

Changes in major programs are made on the basis of careful consideration and planning with the advisor well before the registration period. Any change from one major program to another, especially if made late in the student's college career, may necessitate additional courses that were not required in the major program originally selected. Additional semesters in residence may also be necessary. Students who change their major or interrupt their college work for more than a year become subject to the requirements of the catalog in effect at the time of the change or re-enrollment, as they fulfill degree requirements.

Students seeking a change of major should be referred to one of the two University Advising locations. Once a student has been advised of new major requirements and time to degree, the major change will be processed by University Advising staff.

- *North Campus Advising* is located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Thaxton Hall and serves Communication Sciences and Disorders (COMD), the Langdale College of Business, and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.
- *Main Campus Advising* is located in Ashley Hall 1001 and serves the College of Science and Math, the Dewar College of Education and Human Services (minus COMD), the College of the Arts, and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

## Course or Prerequisite Substitutions and Waivers

Requests for course substitutions or course waivers must contain specific justification for the request and must be approved by the student's advisor, the head of the department and the dean of the college of the student's major, and the Registrar. If the substitution or waiver involves a Core Curriculum course, approval of the Office of Academic Affairs is also necessary. A "Request for Course Substitution/Waiver" form (<https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/registrar/documents/undergrad-course-sub-form.pdf>), available in the major's department, must be completed before approval is official.

Requests for a prerequisite substitution or waiver must be approved by the instructor of the course requiring the prerequisite and by the administrator of that department or school. The department head and course instructor will be notified of all administratively approved prerequisite substitutions or waivers.

## Absence Regulations

For students, success in class, whether face-to-face or online, begins with regular attendance/participation. Instructors must clearly outline their absence/participation expectations in their course syllabus, including any penalties for absence or non-participation and any procedures for missed work. All students are responsible for knowing the specific attendance/participation requirements as prescribed by their instructors and for the satisfactory

make-up of missed work. When students are compelled for any reason to be absent from or unable to participate in class, they should immediately contact the instructor.

## Attendance Verification:

During a designated period each term, instructors are required to verify student attendance for disbursement of Financial Aid. If a faculty member reports that a student has not attended a class, the Registrar's Office will assign a drop for that student and the course will disappear from the student's list of classes.

The University does not issue an excuse to students for class absences. In case of absences as a result of illness or special situations, instructors may be informed of reasons for absences, but these are not excuses. Students may use the Absentee Notification Form (<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/absentee-notification-form.php>) to report absences.

For Online Classes:

To comply with Federal Financial Aid regulations for considering "attendance" in an online class, instructors:

- Must not count students' logging into a course's learning management system (e.g., BlazeVIEW, Google Apps Sites) as participation in that course.
  - Must count any "academically related" activity in a given course as participation in that course. For online classes, the activities in the following categories are considered "academically related":
1. Participating in any assigned activity (e.g., attending a synchronous teleconference or video conference class session, submitting prepared material, taking examinations, engaging in an assigned study group, providing a self-introduction to the class in a discussion forum designated for this purpose);
  2. Completing interactive tutorials or interactive, computer-assisted instruction; or
  3. Discussing the course's subject matter (e.g., online with other students, by email with the instructor)

**Whether online or face-to-face, a student who misses or does not participate in more than 20% of the scheduled course or course activities could be subject to receiving a failing grade in the course.**

The University does not issue an excuse to students for class absences. In case of absences as a result of illness or special situations, instructors may be informed of reasons for absences, but these are not excuses.

**Students participating in authorized activities** as an official representative of the University (i.e., athletic events, delegates to regional or national meetings or conferences, participation in university-sponsored performances) **are automatically excused by the university**. These students will not receive academic penalties and, in consultation with the instructor of record, will be given reasonable opportunities to complete assignments and exams or given compensatory assignment(s) if needed. The student must provide written confirmation from a faculty or staff advisor to the course instructor(s) not fewer than 10 days prior to the date for which the student will be absent from the class, except in the case of short notice events. Written confirmation and explanation of short notice events must be provided to the instructor as soon as possible. The student is responsible for all material presented in class and for all announcements and assignments. When possible, students are expected to complete these assignments before their absences. In the event of a disagreement regarding this policy, an appeal may be made by either the student or the instructor of record to the department head.

**Students with Military Obligations** that require their absence from class may seek an exemption from the class attendance policy. Students requesting an exemption should provide their military orders to the college Associate Dean, along with a request for an exemption prior to the start of the first week of classes. Working with the appropriate college Associate Dean, the student's instructors are contacted and made aware of the request for an exemption. Instructors will carefully consider all such requests and base their decision upon the course attendance policies and the student's ability to catch up on missed course materials upon his or her return.

**Religious Observances:** The University permits students, faculty, and staff to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith. The faculty should be sensitive to the observance of these holidays so that students who choose to observe these holidays are not seriously disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of those who wish to be absent to make arrangements in advance with their instructors.

**Appeals for Attendance Disputes:** Attendance issues which cannot be resolved between the instructor and student should be referred immediately to the department head responsible for the course. Students who stop attending or participating in a course without officially withdrawing from a course will receive the penalties indicated in the instructor's syllabus.

## Auditing Classes

Students may be permitted to enroll as auditors in selected courses, provided regular enrollment in the course permits and if such an arrangement is completely agreeable to the instructor concerned. Fees for auditing classes are the same as for credit courses. Students are not permitted to change from audit to credit or from credit to audit after the last day for course changes as specified in the official calendar.

## Mid-Term Grades

In-progress grades are reported at the mid-term date of Fall and Spring terms for students in lower division (1000- and 2000-level) courses. Students who want to review their grades on the Student Information System should log in to MyVSU, select “Banner” from the list of portals. Select “Student Profile” from the Student Main Menu, then “Academic Transcript.” Those experiencing difficulties in their academic work should contact the instructor, advisor, or advising center for guidance on available options to improve their academic standing.

## Final Examinations

Each faculty member is expected to select appropriate times for the periodic examination or assessment of students. A copy of the **final examination schedule** is included as a part of each semester's published Registration Guide and on the Registrar's Office website. Each faculty member is required to use the specified schedule for final examinations and assessment. Whenever unusual circumstances require a departure from the published schedule, clearance for such deviation must be obtained in advance from the department head and dean and be announced in the course syllabus, or, if the departure is not anticipated at the beginning of the semester, students should be informed in time to allow adequate preparatory time.

Typically students should not ask for permission to depart from the schedule unless for extenuating circumstances (e.g., students are scheduled for three or more examinations on the same day). In that case, students should ask one of their faculty members for an alternative examination time.

## Grading System

The semester hour is the basic unit of work, in which each course offered has credit value in terms of a certain number of semester hours normally conforming to the number of contact class hours per week. For example, courses meeting three hours a week normally carry three semester hours of credit. A typical exception occurs in laboratory work, in which two or three hours of class contact have a one-credit-hour value.

Grades and quality points represent the instructor's final estimate of the student's performance in a course. All grades assigned remain on the student's permanent record and transcript. The following letters denote grades which are included in the computation of the grade point average:

A = Excellent	4 per hour
B = Good	3 per hour
C = Satisfactory	2 per hour
D = Passing	1 per hour
WF = Withdrew failing	0
F = Failing	0

The following letters denote cases in which the grade is not included in the computation of the grade point average:

I = Incomplete

IP = In progress (course scheduled for more than one semester)

K = Credit by examination

S = Satisfactory

U = Unsatisfactory

V = Audit

W = Withdrew, without penalty

NR = Not reported by instructor or course ending date is after the scheduled end of the semester

A cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.00 (i.e., an average of at least “C” in all work attempted) is required for graduation from VSU. Grades for credit accepted in transfer or by examination are posted on a student's permanent record but are not included in the calculation of the VSU cumulative grade point average.

The cumulative grade point average will be calculated by dividing the number of hours scheduled in all courses attempted in which a grade of A, B, C, D, F, or WF has been assigned into the number of quality points earned on those hours scheduled.

Computation of the cumulative grade point average treats WF and F grades identically. Grades of W, NR, S, V, U, K, IP, and I are not computed.

Courses passed with a grade of D cannot be counted as satisfying the requirements in the major area or in a minor.

A student may repeat an undergraduate course taken at VSU in order to replace an earlier grade earned in the same course. This policy went into effect with courses repeated Spring 2019 or later. The courses must be taken and repeated at VSU. When undergraduate courses taken at VSU are repeated at VSU with a higher grade, the *highest grade received* will be counted in the institutional (VSU) GPA calculations. If a student repeats a course at VSU

but receives a lower grade, the higher grade from a previous attempt will be used in the calculation of the institutional (VSU) GPA. The repeated course must have the exact same title as the original course. This policy does not apply to courses that must be repeated or are allowed a defined number of repeats as part of the course of study for a major.

The student's transcript and cumulative (Regents) GPA will retain all course attempts and grades. The institutional (VSU) GPA will be used for all purposes except for those mandated by financial aid regulations and other state and federal requirements. The VSU transcript will reflect both GPAs.

This policy applies only to courses that were taken and repeated at VSU. Transferred courses are not calculated in the institutional (VSU) GPA. If a student repeats an institutional course as a transfer/transient student and receives a higher grade in the transfer/transient course, the repeated grade will be excluded from the institutional (VSU) GPA.

Students seeking to repeat a course are encouraged to meet first with an academic advisor to review why they have not been previously successful in the course and to assess whether they are following the appropriate course of study or major.

A report of I (incomplete) indicates that a student was doing satisfactory work at the end of the term but, for non-academic reasons, was unable to complete all requirements for the course. A report of I requires the subsequent completion of all course requirements within a time limit specified by the instructor, not to exceed one calendar year from the end of the term in which a grade of incomplete is assigned, regardless of the student's enrollment status during the period specified for completion. Students are responsible for making arrangements with their instructor for completion of course requirements within the time specified, in accordance with this regulation. If an I is not changed to a letter grade within one calendar year, it will be changed to the grade F.

NR is assigned when an instructor does not submit final grades by the established deadline or when the course ending date is after the schedule end of the semester. The Incomplete or NR grade will remain on the student's permanent record and transcript. An Incomplete will be changed to an F or WF if not removed by the required period of time indicated above.

## Grade Changes

Final grades submitted by the course instructor may not be changed except for approved special circumstances. A request for grade change form must be submitted by the instructor, and the change-of-grade form must be approved by the appropriate officials and forwarded to the Registrar.

## Grade Appeals

Students have the right to appeal their grades; however, they should do so within 30 calendar days of the grade's posting on Banner. To appeal a grade, a student should complete the grade appeal form (available online at the Registrar's Office) with all pertinent information and then speak with the professor about the change. If the professor and the student do not resolve the situation, the student may then proceed to appeal to the department head and, finally, the dean.

## Academic Renewal Policy

The Academic Renewal Policy allows Valdosta State University degree-seeking undergraduate students who have experienced academic difficulty to have one opportunity to make a fresh start at Valdosta State University after an absence of three consecutive calendar years from any postsecondary institution. Students may attend other institutions during the Period of Absence; however, that coursework will not be eligible for Academic Renewal. Transfer credit for any coursework taken during the Period of Absence shall be granted in accordance with the prevailing USG and institutional policies and procedures regarding the awarding of transfer credit. If a student does not request Academic Renewal status at the time of re-enrollment, the student may do so within two academic semesters of re-enrollment or one calendar year, whichever comes first.

Former Developmental Studies students may apply for Academic Renewal only if they successfully completed all Developmental Studies requirements before the commencement of the 3-year period of absence.

All previously attempted coursework continues to be recorded on the student's official transcript. A complete statement of the policy and the form, Application for Academic Renewal, are available in the Office of the Registrar.

## Academic Probation and Suspension

Valdosta State University seeks to provide an environment suitable for promoting the systematic pursuit of learning. To ensure this primary goal, the University requires of its students reasonable academic progress. The retention of those students who repeatedly demonstrate a lack of ability, industry, maturity, and preparation would be inconsistent with this requirement.

Academic probation serves as the initial notice that the student's performance is not currently meeting the minimum grade point average required for graduation. Continued performance at this level will result in the student's being placed on academic suspension. Academic probation is designed to serve three purposes: (1) to make clear to all concerned the inadequacy of a student's performance; (2) to provide occasion for necessary counseling; and (3) to give students whose success is in doubt additional opportunity to demonstrate performance.

Academic suspension is imposed as a strong indication that the student incurring such suspension should withdraw from the University, at least for a time, to reconsider the appropriateness of a college career or to make necessary fundamental adjustments in attitudes toward the academic demands of college.

## 1. Stages of Progress with Minimum Grade Point Averages Required

An individual's stage of progress is determined on the basis of the number of academic semester hours attempted, including those transferred from other institutions. Transfer credits are not included in computing grade point averages.

Semester hours attempted at VSU and hours transferred to VSU	Cumulative grade-point average required on VSU courses
1-29	1.60
30-59	1.75
60-89	1.90
90-graduation	2.00

## 2. Academic Probation

A student will be placed on academic probation if, at the end of any semester while the student is in good standing, the cumulative GPA falls below the minimum specified in the table above or the semester GPA falls below 2.00. Even though a student on probation is making some progress toward graduation, it should be clearly understood that without immediate academic improvement, suspension may result.

## 3. Academic Suspension and Academic Dismissal

1. A student will be suspended if at the end of any term, while on academic probation, the cumulative GPA falls below the minimum specified in the table above, and the term GPA falls below 2.00.
2. A first suspension will be for one semester. (See readmission procedures below.)
3. A second suspension shall be for two academic semesters.
4. A third or subsequent suspension shall result in the student's being academically dismissed from the institution for a minimum period of three years.

## 4. Right of Appeal

Upon appeal by the student, the Suspension Appeals Committee has the authority to waive the first, second, or third suspension if unusual circumstances warrant.

## 5. Appeal Process

Students must submit a written appeal using the online form (<https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/registrar/forms/suspension-appeal-form.php>) available from the Registrar's Office according to the posted appeal schedule. Following the first, second, or third suspension, readmission on probation may be granted for unusual and compelling reasons by the Suspension Appeals Committee. A suspended student readmitted on probation may have specific academic requirements imposed. A student whose appeal is granted but does not reenroll will remain on academic suspension.

## 6. Readmission Procedures

Students who complete their suspension and wish to return must complete the Application for Undergraduate Readmission (<https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/registrar/forms/undergraduate%20readmission%20application.php>) prior to registration for the semester in which they plan to return.

## Work by Correspondence and Extension

Not more than 30 semester hours of undergraduate work may be earned by extension and credit by examination, of which not more than 17 semester hours may be by correspondence. Under no circumstances will students in the final year of residence (30 semester hours) be permitted to take more than seven (7) semester hours by correspondence or extension. Students in residence may not enroll for correspondence or extension work except by permission of the appropriate dean or director. No course which a student may have failed while in residence at Valdosta State University may be taken by correspondence or extension for degree credit. The Student Affairs Office coordinates correspondence study. Credit from University of Georgia Extension Centers will be restricted to lower division (1000 and 2000 level) in addition to the 30-hour limitation.

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is the responsibility of all VSU faculty and students. Faculty members should promote academic integrity by including clear instruction on the components of academic integrity and clearly defining the penalties for cheating and plagiarism in their course syllabi. Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the Academic Integrity Policy as set forth in the *Student Code of Conduct* and the faculty members' syllabi. All students are expected to do their own work and to uphold a high standard of academic ethics. Appendix A of the *Student Code of Conduct* in the *VSU Student Handbook* outlines academic integrity violations as well as the academic response and disciplinary response to such violations. The online VSU Student Handbook reflects the most current policy on academic integrity. Academic integrity violations may result in suspension or expulsion from the university. Additional information on academic integrity as well as resources for faculty and students can be found at the Academic Affairs web site (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/academic-honesty-at-vsu.php>).

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as "the copying of the language, structure, programming, computer code, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and passing off same as one's own, original work" (*Virginia Tech Honor Code Constitution*). The violation, then, consists of both copying and misrepresenting the material in question. When a student places his or her name on any kind of work, he or she claims responsibility for the originality of the contents except for



those parts that are specifically attributed to another or that are considered common knowledge. If a student has consulted any outside source, whether published or not, and has incorporated any of its “language, structure, ideas, programming, computer code, and/or thoughts” into his or her work without acknowledging that source, he or she may be guilty of misrepresenting the work’s originality. When paraphrasing material from an outside source, the student must change both the sentence structure and the vocabulary (where possible) in expressing the original material in his or her own words. Any instance where the “language, structure, ideas, programming, computer code, and/or thoughts” have been borrowed from another’s work, paraphrased or not, without proper reference/citation, the act constitutes plagiarism on the part of the writer.

Course sections may use plagiarism-prevention technology. Students may have the option of submitting their written work online through a plagiarism-prevention service or of allowing the instructor to submit their work. The written work may be retained by the service for the sole purpose of checking for plagiarized content in future student submissions.

## The Academic Year

All curricula and courses at Valdosta State University are offered within the framework of the semester system. Fall and spring semesters make up the traditional academic year, though students may pursue degree requirements on a year-round basis in courses that consist of parts-of-terms (weekends or shorter formats). Traditional fall and spring semesters run for approximately 16 weeks each, including the examination period. Some programs also run 8-week terms with an A and B part of term for both fall and spring. The summer semester is often reduced in length, with the length of class periods appropriately adjusted.

## Valdosta State University — Regents' Engineering Pathways Program

Valdosta State University participates in the Regents' Engineering Pathways Program (REPP), which satisfies at least two full years toward a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering before transferring to another institution to complete the degree. For more information, contact the Coordinator of Engineering Studies.

## Second Baccalaureate Degree

A student may work for a second baccalaureate degree, and credits applied toward the first degree will be permitted to meet the second degree requirements, where applicable and appropriate. Students must meet all requirements for the second degree in effect when work on the second degree is begun.

## Minors

Minors require 15 to 18 semester hours of course work, with at least 9 hours from courses numbered 3000 or above. Courses taken to satisfy Core IMPACTS may not be counted as coursework in the minor. Courses taken as part of the 18 hours in the core curriculum Field of Study may be counted as coursework in the minor, if departmental policies allow. Minors are offered by various departments and interdisciplinary areas throughout the university. See descriptions of minors in the departmental sections of the catalog. A grade of “C” or better must be earned in each course comprising the minor, and all prerequisites for specific upper division courses must be met.

The completed minor will be recorded on the student’s transcript, but not on the diploma. For students completing a minor before graduation, the minor will appear on the transcript at the time of graduation. For students completing a minor after graduation, the minor will be listed on the transcript with a comment indicating when the minor was completed. A student must be enrolled at the time a minor is approved by the Board of Regents, or subsequent to that date, to receive credit for the minor. A student may have more than one minor.

## Classification

Promotion from class to class (from freshman through senior) is based on hours earned in academic subjects. The semester hours required for different classifications are:

Class	Semester Hours
Freshman	0-29
Sophomore	30-59
Junior	60-89
Senior	90 or more

## Academic Load

Twelve or more semester hours constitute full-time enrollment for undergraduates. The typical academic load for undergraduate students is approximately 15 hours per semester. An academic load of 19 hours is permitted without special approval. An academic load greater than 19 hours requires completion of the VSU *Petition to Register for More Than Nineteen Hours*, showing approvals of the academic advisor, the department head of the student’s major, and the appropriate dean or director. The maximum load for which approval may be given is 21 semester hours credit.

Institutional credit is a unit of credit included in a student’s total hours of academic load, which is the basis for fee calculations. Institutional credit does not apply toward the total number of hours required for graduation nor is it transferable to another institution.

## Course Numbering

**0000-0999** Remedial Courses. Such courses do not carry credit toward graduation.

**1000-2999** Lower Division Undergraduate Courses. Courses with these numbers are basic undergraduate courses.

**3000-4999** Upper Division Undergraduate Courses. Courses with these numbers are advanced undergraduate courses. Some schools or divisions may require junior class standing as a prerequisite for these courses.

**5000-6999** Mixed Graduate/Upper Division Courses. Some courses numbered 3000-3999 are open to graduate students; such courses carry dual numbers, with the graduate version of the course numbered between 5000 and 5999.

Similarly, courses numbered 4000-4999 may be taken by graduate students using a corresponding number in the range 6000-6999.

**7000-9999** Graduate Courses. Enrollment in these courses is restricted to graduate students.

Certain courses require prerequisites (other courses that must be taken before a given course), and/or corequisites (other courses that must be taken during the same term as a given course), or the consent of the instructor or of the Department Head. Students must be sure they have met these requirements, as listed in the course descriptions of this catalog.

## Determination of Credit Hours

Valdosta State University utilizes the federal definition of the credit hour as a basis for determining the amount of credit assigned for student work, complying with Federal Regulation Program Integrity Rules, University System of Georgia (USG) Policy 3.4, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Standard 10.7 and Policy Statement on Credit Hours. The Academic Committee of the VSU Faculty Senate is responsible for ensuring that credit hours awarded for course work are appropriate, and the VSU Registrar's Office ensures that credit hours are accurately attached to courses in the student information system. The Registrar's Office ensures that the number of class minutes for lecture- and laboratory-based courses have been accounted for in the scheduling of courses. The full policy statement is available upon request from the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of the Registrar.

## Cross-Disciplinary Courses

Certain courses, because of their scope and focus, are identified by different designations, that is, cross-listed. Students may decide which designation they wish to register for, depending on their needs, but such a dual-listed or cross-listed course can count only once and cannot be taken a second time for credit under a different designation. Cross-disciplinary courses are clearly identified in the descriptions of the "Courses of Instruction" section as "Also offered as ...."

## Registration

Currently enrolled students may register for courses during the following registration periods:

- Priority Registration is held the first four days of registration for each term. Registration priority is based on student classification in the following order: Graduate students and seniors; juniors; sophomores; freshmen.
- Regular Registration and drop/add, held immediately prior to the beginning of classes. Registration is held on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Late Registration and continued drop/add, held for approximately three or four days after the term begins.

New students are expected to register for classes during orientation programs held prior to the first day of classes.

All undergraduate and graduate students must be advised before registration. Students who have not been advised will not be able to access the registration system.

Registration in all courses offered by the University is under the direct supervision of the Registrar. Published schedules, policies, and procedures for registration must be strictly observed. Registrations are canceled for students who do not pay fees by the published deadlines.

For more information on fee payment procedures, see the section on Tuition, Fees, and Costs.

## Graduation Requirements for Undergraduates

Candidates for degrees must complete a minimum of 120 (somewhat more in selected majors) semester hours of academic work, with an institutional grade point average of 2.00 or better calculated from all work attempted at Valdosta State University. Transfer credit applied to degree requirements may be used to satisfy hours but is not included in the institutional GPA requirements for graduation. No person will be graduated with less than a 2.00 institutional GPA. The academic work must include a minimum of 39 hours of upper division courses (that is, courses numbered 3000 or above), including at least 21 semester hours of upper division in the major field. Students must earn a "C" or better in ENGL 1101 (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/search/?P=ENGL%201101>)/ENGL 1101H (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/search/?P=ENGL%201101H>) and ENGL 1102 (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/search/?P=ENGL%201102>)/ENGL 1102H (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/search/?P=ENGL%201102H>). A grade of "C" or better is also required in major area courses and in the courses for the minor. Programs may specify other courses in which a grade of "C" or better is required.



Of the 40 semester hours immediately preceding graduation, at least 30 must be taken in residence at Valdosta State University. Any student admitted to the University for the final year must be in residence for two semesters and must complete in this time at least 30 semester hours in residence, including 21 hours of senior college work in the major.

Students who change their major or interrupt their college work for more than a year become subject to the requirements of the catalog in effect at the time of the change or re-enrollment to fulfill degree requirements. Approved Change of Major forms must be submitted to the Registrar. The academic department and college of your major may require an undergraduate course to be repeated for credit, if the course is evaluated to be out of date.

Prospective graduating students must apply to the Office of the Registrar for final evaluation of credits and programs two full semesters in advance of the expected graduation date. A \$50 graduation fee must be paid at the Bursary prior to final evaluation. This fee is valid for one year beyond the initial term selected for completing degree requirements.

## Credit by Departmental Examination

Students currently enrolled who present satisfactory evidence that they are qualified in a particular subject may receive credit by an examination developed and administered by the appropriate instructional department. Satisfactory evidence may be, but is not limited to, work experience, non-credit courses, course work taken at non-accredited institutions, or military courses. Permission must be obtained from the head of the instructional department offering the course; however, exams will not be permitted in courses for which a student has previously taken an examination for credit or was previously enrolled at Valdosta State University as a regular or audit student. It is suggested that students check with their advisor and the Registrar's Office prior to requesting an examination for credit, to ensure that the credit will apply toward their graduation requirements. The credit will be entered in the student's academic record; however, the grade received will not calculate in the semester or cumulative grade point average since students are typically awarded either an "S" or "U".

Students must pay the Bursary, in advance of the examination, the current non-refundable fee for credit by examination. The student will show the receipt to the faculty member conducting the examination. The instructional department is responsible for reporting the course number, title, credit hours, and fee receipt to the Registrar's Office for processing. Failing grades will be reported and posted to the student's record.

Semester hours can be earned through any combination of CLEP, credit by departmental examination, correspondence courses, extension work, and advanced placement.

## Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is a process through which students identify areas of relevant learning from their past experiences, demonstrate that learning through appropriate documentation, and submit their materials so that they can be assessed and possibly awarded academic credit at Valdosta State University. The University will work with students from diverse backgrounds to evaluate their prior learning and determine if it meets the standards and requirements of college-level learning. Semester hours can be earned through any combination of CLEP, credit by departmental examination, CPL Portfolio, and advanced placement. For more information about CPL at VSU, consult the CPL web site (<https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/amp/returning-to-college/credit-for-prior-learning/>).

## Exemption Tests

Tests that exempt a student from taking certain courses are conducted by some departments for placement purposes. Credit hours are not awarded for successful completion of placement tests, and there is no fee required to take such a test.

## Guidelines for Granting Academic Credit for Participation in Internship Programs

Students who take part in an internship program under any of the various internship courses offered at Valdosta State University derive benefits of a diverse nature from their participation. Some of the benefits inherent in an internship are of an academic nature, and even the non-academic benefits of practical experience may well justify participation in an internship program.

By awarding academic credit for enrollment in an internship program, VSU formally recognizes the academic benefits of the program. The University grants semester hours of academic credit to students involved in internships, the number of hours depending upon the specific departmental internship course in which the student enrolls.

The guidelines that follow have the purpose of allowing maximum flexibility within any given internship program and, at the same time, of requiring the careful thought and work by the participants that will make their internship experience academically significant.

1. **Acceptable Programs.** In order to receive academic credit for an internship program, students must be enrolled in an established internship course offered by an academic department of Valdosta State University.
2. **Supervision.** All interns will be assigned a faculty supervisor from the academic department in whose internship course they enroll. Supervisors will accept direct responsibility for each intern under their supervision. Faculty supervisors will carefully work out in advance all individual internship programs according to these general guidelines and college or departmental guidelines and shall specify academic requirements. The actual work experience supervision will be by the project directors of the various internship programs.
3. **Academic Credit**

- a. Each department that desires to offer internship opportunities will establish an internship course, with the approval of departmental faculty, appropriate executive committee(s), and the Academic Committee, carrying credit of 3, 6, or 9 semester hours or variable credit up to 12 hours in increments of three hours.
- b. Internship courses not required as part of the major will be counted as elective credit.
- c. The number of credit hours to be granted for a particular internship experience will be determined in advance with the intern in keeping with the guidelines pertaining to credit hours as set forth below.
- d. Academic credit will be granted on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

#### **4. Guidelines for Granting Academic Credit**

- a. For academic credit of three semester hours, the internship will involve, at the minimum:
  - i. Work in an area directly or indirectly related to the major field of study.
  - ii. Ten (10) hours of service each week.
  - iii. A daily log of activities.
  - iv. A report on the internship experience, relating it to the major field of study. The report will be made after completion of the internship.
- b. For academic credit of six semester hours, the internship program will involve, at the minimum:
  - i. Work in an area directly or indirectly related to the major field of study.
  - ii. Twenty (20) hours of service each week.
  - iii. A daily log of activities.
  - iv. A report on the internship experience, relating it to the major field of study. The report will be made after completion of the internship.
  - v. A research paper in an area appropriate to the major and bearing on some aspect of the internship program.
- c. For academic credit of nine semester hours or more, the internship program will involve, at the minimum:
  - i. Work in an area directly related to the major field of study. The program should provide an opportunity for direct application of the knowledge gained in the classroom in the major field of study.
  - ii. A daily log of activities.
  - iii. Thirty (30) hours of service each week.
  - iv. A report on the internship experience, relating it to the major field of study. The report will be made after completion of the program.
  - v. A research paper or assessment in an area appropriate to the major and bearing on some aspect of the internship program.
  - vi. Academic credit of 12 semester hours will be granted for 40 hours of approved service per week.

## **University System Regents' Testing Program**

Each institution of the University System of Georgia must assure the other institutions, and the System as a whole, that students obtaining a degree from that institution possess literacy competence, that is, certain minimum skills of reading and writing.

Therefore, students enrolled in undergraduate degree programs shall pass the Regents' Test as a requirement for graduation. For undergraduate students at Valdosta State University, the Regents' Test requirement will be fulfilled by a passing grade in ENGL 1102 (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/search/?P=ENGL%201102>)<sup>1</sup> or an approved substitute.

## **Foreign Language Requirements**

1. Students are advised to take the Web Cape Placement Test to determine their placement in the appropriate course level for foreign language study. It is the expectation that students who are opting to continue with the foreign language they took in high school will begin at the FL 1002 level. If students choose not to take the placement test, they should begin with FL 1002. Taking the test may allow students to enroll in a more advanced course. The Web Cape Placement Test will guide students and their advisors in this placement. Please refer to Frequently Asked Questions (<http://www.valdosta.edu/colleges/arts-sciences/modern-classical-languages/webcape.php>) (FAQ).

Prior to your registration date, you may take the Web Cape Placement Test by logging into the web site. You will have to create a WebCAPE TrueNorth account using your VSU email. See the WebCape page (<https://www.valdosta.edu/mcl/webcape.php>) for placement test registration links. Please print your results and bring the paper with you to your advising appointment.

### **Twelve-hour foreign language requirement**

B.A. with a major in biology

### **Nine-hour foreign language requirement:**

B.A. with a major in history, Spanish, political science, sociology and anthropology, or psychology.

### **Six-hour foreign language requirement:**

B.A. with a major in music or art

B.S. with a major in chemistry or environmental geosciences

## Foreign language requirement through MCL 2002:

B.A. with a major in English

## State of Georgia Legislative Requirements

In accordance with an act of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, all candidates for degree are required to possess and demonstrate a reasonable mastery of United States history, Georgia history, the United States Constitution, and the Georgia Constitution. These history requirements are met by the successful completion of HIST 2111 (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/search/?P=HIST%202111>) (3 hours) or HIST 2112 (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/search/?P=HIST%202112>) (3 hours). The constitution requirements are met by the successful completion of POLS 1101 (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/search/?P=POLS%201101>) (3 hours). Transfer credit for these three courses may not satisfy the requirements of the State of Georgia. Exemption tests in Georgia History or Georgia Constitution are offered to transfer students whose American History or Political Science course(s) did not include Georgia History or Georgia Constitution and to students who have obtained credit in American Government or in American History via the CLEP program, which does not include credit for satisfying the legislative requirements. See the VSU Testing Office (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/services/testing/>) in the University Center concerning the exemption tests in Georgia History and in Georgia Constitution.

## Health and Physical Education

There is no University-wide physical education requirement. However, certain degree programs, particularly teacher certification programs in education, may include KSPE 2000 (<http://catalog.valdosta.edu/search/?P=KSPE%202000>) Health and Wellness for Life within the degree requirements. Review the degree requirements for your particular degree program.

All students are encouraged to include at least one development and one recreational physical education course in their programs.

## Junior and Senior College Work

Required lower division courses are introductory in nature and are designed as prerequisites to upper division work. These include courses required by the University System Core Curriculum and are to be taken normally before a student achieves junior classification.

Recognition of Undergraduate Superior Achievement

## Graduation with Honors

Three levels of graduation honors recognize exceptional students qualifying for the bachelor's degree. These honors are based upon all academic work attempted, including all courses attempted at other institutions. A minimum of 60 semester hours of academic work, including any student teaching, must be successfully completed in residence at Valdosta State University. Credit by examination or exemption will not be included in the work considered for residence.

**Cum Laude** for an overall grade point average of **3.50** and a VSU cumulative average of **3.50**.

**Magna Cum Laude** for an overall grade point average of **3.70** and a VSU cumulative average of **3.70**.

**Summa Cum Laude** for an overall grade point average of **3.90** and a VSU cumulative average of **3.90**.

Honors shown in the graduation program reflect grades on student transcripts entered through the term immediately preceding graduation. For students who participate in a graduation ceremony before they have completed all degree requirements, honors recognitions will appear in the program of the next scheduled ceremony after they have completed all graduation requirements. Official honors included on diplomas include all work attempted at VSU and all other institutions, including accepted and non-accepted credit.

## Dean's List

Students achieving a semester GPA of 3.50 or higher on nine (9) or more semester hours with an institutional (VSU) GPA of 3.00 or higher are recognized by being placed on the Dean's List. Neither incomplete grades (I) nor the final grades and hours when the incomplete is removed are included in the Dean's List calculation. (Developmental Studies, transients, and graduate students are not eligible for Dean's List status.)

## Student Records

The Office of the Registrar maintains the academic records of students and issues transcripts of records and certificates for various governmental agencies.

Students are encouraged to check with the Registrar's Office when questions arise concerning academic status. All students have a permanent record to which only they and authorized personnel have access, and it is to the student's advantage to check this record periodically. Official transcripts are provided upon written request of the student. All undergraduate and graduate work constitutes a complete academic record. Portions of that record will not be deleted when transcripts are provided. All grades assigned remain on the student's permanent record and transcript. One week's processing time should be allowed for the preparation of transcripts and certifications.

Transcripts of academic records from other colleges and high schools are not provided. The student must contact previous institutions attended for those transcripts. It is also the student's responsibility to contact testing agencies for test score reports. Students may request copies of other academic records through the Registrar's Office.

## Transcript Policy

A transcript is an official copy of the official permanent academic record maintained by the Registrar. Recorded on the permanent academic record are all VSU courses attempted, all grades assigned, degrees received, and a summary of transfer hours accepted with VSU equivalent course numbers indicated. Official transcripts and certifications of student academic records are issued by the Office of the Registrar for all students of the University. Copies of high school records and transfer transcripts from other schools must be requested from the institutions where the course work was taken.

Transcripts may be requested in writing or online. (See Transcript Fees, in the section on Tuition, Costs, and Fees.) Normally, transcripts will be mailed within one week of the request unless the request is delayed because of a "hold" on the record or delayed for posting of a grade change, an earned degree, or current semester grades. Requests are processed in the order they are received. Students requiring priority service may pay a special processing fee.

All transcripts must be requested by the individual student, including transient students desiring transfer credit at another institution. No partial or incomplete transcripts including only certain courses or grades are issued.

## Diploma Replacement

Valdosta State University will provide replacement diplomas for graduates whose diplomas have been damaged or lost. The cost of this service will be the current diploma replacement fee charged by the University.

Valdosta State University (through a third-party vendor) mails diplomas to graduates. The institution will replace lost or damaged diplomas, without cost to the student, when such loss or damage occurs during that mailing. The student must return damaged diplomas or documentation from the United States Post Office that the diploma cannot be located. A period of 2 to 4 weeks is required to process all special replacement orders.

Diplomas will not be reissued when graduates change their name from that officially recorded at the time when degree requirements were met.

## Enrolling at Another Institution as a Transient Student

A currently enrolled undergraduate student wishing to attend another institution for one term, with the intention of returning to Valdosta State University, will be considered a "transient" student at the other school. The following procedure must be followed to obtain "transient" status:

1. A transient request form must be completed in the Registrar's Office. The form is available online on the Registrar's website.
2. Once the online form is submitted, it must be approved by the student's advisor, who must also approve specific courses to be taken as a transient student.
3. The form must be returned to the Registrar's Office for evaluation of proposed transient course(s) and for sending the approval letter to the requested institution(s).
4. Students should contact the school they are planning to attend to inquire about admission requirements.
5. Students must request an official transcript from the other institution for transfer credit evaluation by the Office of the Registrar.

Credit will not be accepted and posted to the Valdosta State University record until an official transcript has been received from the other institution, and all transfer credit requirements have been met as specified in the current VSU Catalog. Transfer credit applied to degree requirements may be used to satisfy hours but will not be calculated into the student's VSU cumulative grade point average requirements for graduation. Valdosta State University accepts a maximum of 90 total semester hours in transfer. Of the 40 semester hours immediately preceding graduation, at least 30 must be taken in residence at VSU. Any student admitted to the University for the final year must be in residence for two semesters and must complete in this time at least 30 semester hours in residence, including 21 hours of senior college work in the major. Students who have not attended Valdosta State University for over one year must apply for readmission and must satisfy degree requirements as specified in the VSU Catalog current at the time of reapplication.