Graduate Student Advocacy Guide

Virginia Tech Department of Entomology
Alwood Society Resource Guide

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Overview

Graduate school is an exciting and challenging academic endeavor. Graduate students come from a variety of backgrounds and with diverse experiences and are expected to fulfill multiple different roles during their time as a student. With this, there may be challenges along the way.

In this document, we will cover the expectations of graduate students, faculty, departments, and the graduate school. We will also look at some challenges and resources for graduate students. To advocate for yourself, your peers, and others, it is important to first be informed of the policies and resources that are available. This guide was created by the Alwood Society and is intended to equip graduate students, specifically those in the department of Entomology, with the information they need to thrive in their research, academics, and beyond. Throughout this guide, the Department of Entomology handbook is reference, and the current version can always be found on departmental website: www.ento.vt.edu.

The Alwood Society

The Alwood Society is the Entomology department's student organization. The goal of the society is to create a space for students interested in entomology (and science in general) to share their passion and interest with each other and with the public. As a student organization, we have social events, regular meetings, and outreach opportunities for students who wish to be involved. Any student interested in entomology can join the Alwood society or participate in our events. In addition to planning events and meetings, the Alwood society acts as a resource for student support and advocacy.

Virginia Tech's Definition of a Graduate Student (graduateschool.vt.edu)

"Graduate students are individuals seeking advanced degrees or certificates, either full- or part- time, at any of the campuses or programs of Virginia Tech. They are in the process of advancing from receiving knowledge to creating, enhancing, and taking ownership of new knowledge. Graduate students have various backgrounds, life experiences, and goals. Graduate students have diverse needs related to their multiple roles at Virginia Tech, such as student, researcher, educator, mentor, emerging and advancing professional, engaged scholar, and responsible citizen."

Expectations

There are expectations of both graduate students and of faculty. The following pages will outline those expectations according to the Graduate School. Your specific advisor *may* have expectations that deviate from those outlined below. Any expectations that deviate from those outlined are not required of graduate students unless explicitly stated and agreed upon in a formal setting (i.e. written consent such as email or in the presence of an administrator or other advising professional).

For graduate students to meet their expectations it is integral that faculty, the department, and the graduate school are meeting their respective expectations so that the student has all the resources they need to meet their expectations. If the faculty, department, or graduate school are not meeting expectations then it will be incredibly challenging or even impossible for graduate students to meet expectations.

****The following pages of expectations are directly from the VT Graduate School "Expectations for Graduate Education" which can be accessed at graduateschool.vt.edu (OR google search "expectations for graduate education Virginia Tech" and select the "Expectations for Graduate Study" webpage which has the pdf link) and was last updated in November 2019. ****

Start of expectations from graduate school:

"

Expectations for Graduate Education: Graduate students

Graduate students in all programs are expected to gain expertise in a particular area of study and, especially in Ph.D. programs, to expand the knowledge of that disciplinary field or to push disciplinary boundaries through interdisciplinary/collaborative research, by discovering and pursuing a topic of scholarly inquiry and research. As junior colleagues and professionals-in- training, graduate students will learn to impart disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge through appropriate forms of instruction and publication.

Progress Toward Degree

Graduate students are expected to:

- Work within the guidelines provided by the department to select an appropriate advisor and committee members. Those selected should be free of conflicts of interest or coercive relationships among committee members and with the student that might preclude a committee member from evaluating student work by academic merit alone.
- Take primary responsibility to inform themselves of and conduct themselves in accordance with the Graduate School's policies and procedures, specific program requirements, and standards of performance established by faculty and articulated in departmental graduate student handbooks and their respective professional associations or organizations. Students should locate and review their departmental graduate student handbook.
- Take the initiative to ask questions that will promote their understanding of the academic requirements of their specific graduate program. In addition, students should understand the assistantship requirements and seek to fulfill them satisfactorily.
- Fulfill the requirements of their programs in a timely manner and participate in the annual progress review. Each department or program may have different policies regarding time limits to degrees.
- Devote an appropriate amount of time and energy toward achieving academic excellence and earning the advanced degree or certificate. A full-time assistantship amounts to an average of 20 hours of work per week, independent of time spent on courses or tasks related to research credits.
- Take initiative to keep the advisor and committee informed about academic progress. Schedule committee meetings at least annually.
- Inform the faculty advisor and the department graduate program coordinator of any leaves of absence that may be needed, as well as their date of departure and expected date of return. To maintain a healthy work-life balance, students should be able to take some scheduled time off; discuss the timing and length with your faculty advisor and assistantship supervisor. Note that

international students have additional requirements for approved leaves of absence; consult the office of International Graduate Student Services (IGSS) for details.

- For international students, recognize that the immigration form specifies the normal length of the academic program (2 years for master's degree, 5 years for PhD). Extensions to the immigration form may be requested based on academic reasons; consult with IGSS staff for more information.

Research and Ethics

It is expected that graduate students will:

- Communicate regularly with faculty advisors and committee members, especially on matters related to research, academic progress, concerns, and problems within their graduate program.
- Request clear guidelines of expectations from the supervising faculty member on the research activities, including timetables for deliverables.
- Recognize that the faculty advisor and committee members are responsible for guiding graduate-student research but that students are responsible for conducting the independent research required for the graduate degree.
- Recognize the time constraints and other demands imposed on faculty members and program staff.
- Exercise honest and ethical behavior in all their academic pursuits, whether these undertakings pertain to study, course work, research, Cooperative Extension, engagement, or teaching, as outlined in the Graduate Honor Code, the “Ethics in Academe” page on the Graduate School’s website, and on the Office of Research Integrity website. Additional resources include the AAUP’s Statement on Professional Ethics, professional standards of the academic disciplines, and the Council of Graduate School’s Ethics and Scholarly Integrity website.
- Contribute to the maintenance of an ethical environment by reporting any unethical actions they observe or are aware of to the Honor System.
- Appropriately acknowledge the contributions of faculty and other members of the research team in all publications and conference presentations. Some contributions deserve co-authorship, some a mention in the acknowledgements section, some just a mention in the dissertation acknowledgements section; match the acknowledgement to the contribution.
- Work with faculty to agree prior to submission of scholarly contributions (e.g. papers, abstracts of presentations) upon authors4hip positions or acknowledgements commensurate with levels of contributions to the work. Authorship should never be only honorary but should reflect actual contribution to the work according to the standards of the profession.
- Recognize that research results, with appropriate acknowledgement, may be incorporated into progress reports, summary documents, applications for continuation of funding, and similar documents authored by the faculty advisor, to the extent that the student’s research is related to the faculty advisor’s research program.
- Work with faculty to understand and follow Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects (IRB) and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) guidelines and complete required Office of Research Compliance training when pursuing projects requiring human or animal subjects.
- Know and follow the Virginia Tech intellectual-property policies (University policy 13000, which replaces Presidential Policy Memo # 121).

- Avoid situations that can result in conflicts of interests. See the University's conflict of interest policies and procedures for more information.

Teaching and Training

Graduate students are expected to:

- Seek and receive appropriate training and evaluation for instructional roles they are asked to undertake.
- Pursue, to the extent possible, teaching and training opportunities that are relevant to their career expectations and that enhance teaching to diverse learners and populations.
- Devote sufficient time and commitment to instructional duties to provide high quality education to their students.

Professional Development

It is expected that graduate students will:

- Pursue professional training programs, seminars, and courses that will enhance their professional and personal growth and development and help them build a broad network of professional contacts. See the Graduate School's website on Professional Development.
- Seek out mentors and advisors to help them prepare for professional careers and responsibilities.
- Contribute, to the extent possible, to the discourse of the scholarly discipline through presentations, publications, collaborative projects, and other means.

Assistantships and Financial Support

If appointed to a graduate assistantship (GA, GRA or GTA), graduate students are expected to:

- Request clear guidelines for the responsibilities of the graduate assistantship from the appropriate faculty or staff member.
- Fulfill the responsibilities and requirements of the appointment as stated in the contractual agreement with the department and university. Students on full-time assistantships are expected to work an average of 20 hours/week. The expected effort for GTA is 1 hour of instruction plus at least one hour of preparation time per credit (e.g., 3-credit course requires a minimum of 6 hours per week). Note, these hours are in addition to the hours required for coursework and individual thesis/dissertation research. (updated Fall 2014)
- Act in a professional manner in all aspects of their duties as graduate assistants.
- Elect to decline tasks that are not related to or are more than their contractual obligations. This includes work on assigned projects that, on average over the course of a semester, are more than the hours for which they are being paid (for details on definitions of graduate assistantships in terms of hours of effort, see Section 8 of the Faculty Handbook).
- International students: adhere to the requirements of immigration regulations for F-1 and J-1 students, including limitations on employment, and consult immigration advisors in the Graduate School regarding immigration questions. (see GSS website at https://gss.vt.edu/ OR google Global Strategic Services Virginia Tech).
- Recognize that fellowships carry with them responsibilities that might be different than assistantships. Fellowship recipients are responsible for learning about and complying with all requirements associated with their appointment.

- Report any additional employment beyond the assistantship or fellowship to the Graduate School.

Community

It is expected that graduate students will:

- Abide by the student code of conduct, which applies to all students at Virginia Tech, as described in the Student Handbook.
- Uphold, in their own classrooms, research groups, and laboratories, an ethos of collegiality and collaboration.
- Behave consistently with the VT Principles of Community, as a citizen of the community who respects and celebrates diversity.
- Contribute to the department and university community to the extent that each is able.
- Contribute to the mission of Virginia Tech by providing high-quality teaching to undergraduate students, supporting the scholarly activities and fellow graduate students whenever possible, and upholding the public-service aspects of the university mission.

Expectations for Graduate Education: Faculty

Members of the graduate program faculty and others who have supervisory relationships with graduate students serve a variety of critical roles as model teachers and researchers, as well as graduate-student advisors, committee members, and mentors. Graduate program faculty provide intellectual guidance and support for graduate students' scholarly and pedagogical efforts and are responsible for the ongoing evaluation of graduate students' performance in academic, research, and scholarly activities.

As mentors and advisors, faculty are responsible for helping graduate students discover and participate in appropriate channels of scholarly, professional, and disciplinary exchange. In addition, faculty are responsible for helping graduate students develop the professional research, teaching, and networking skills required for a variety of career options, both within and outside academia. More information and guidance about mentoring is provided here.

Progress Toward Degree

It is expected that faculty will:

- Support the academic progress of graduate students in their program. In some cases, faculty advisors are assigned to entering graduate students to assist them in academic advising and other matters. In other cases, students select faculty advisors in accordance with the disciplinary interest or research expertise.
- Establish a meeting schedule that has been mutually agreed upon with their graduate students and that is adequate to fulfill all expectations in this document, including effective frequency of communication.
- Take reasonable measures to ensure that graduate students who carry out thesis or dissertation research do so in a timely fashion.
- Communicate their expectations of graduate students by providing clear descriptions of the requirements each student must meet, including course work, research tools, examinations, and thesis or dissertation.

- Support and respect graduate students' work–personal life balance. Allow students to take some scheduled time off and discuss the timing and length in advance.
- Conduct annual evaluations of each graduate student, which should be factual, specific, and based on criteria that are understood by both the faculty advisor and the student (see Presidential Policy Memos 126, 229), the results of which should be shared with the student so as to enhance performance.
- Recognize that the international student immigration form specifies the normal length of the academic program (2 years for MS, 5 years for PhD). Extensions to the immigration form may be requested based on academic reasons; consult with IGSS staff for more information.

Research and Ethics

It is expected that faculty will:

- Provide intellectual guidance on and promote rigor in students' educational programs and specific research projects.
- Provide students with knowledge of the current frontiers and opportunities in disciplinary and inter-or cross-disciplinary research.
- Provide appropriate guidelines for completion of research projects.
- Create an environment of the highest ethical standards and act as role models for ethical behavior in all professional activities.
- Treat all students fairly and assess their work in meaningful ways, consistent with the discipline. Assessment of work should be judged by academic scholarly merit alone.
- Avoid situations that might create conflict of interest for graduate students. This includes supporting the student selection of a committee that avoids conflicts of interest or coercive relationships among the committee members as well as between the student and committee members.
- Recognize graduate student participation in supervised research and ensure that ethical standards of attribution and acknowledgment in collaborative settings are followed.
- Work with graduate students to agree prior to submission of scholarly contributions (e.g. papers, abstracts of presentations) upon authorship positions and acknowledgments commensurate with levels of contributions to the work.
- Work with students to understand and follow Office of Research Compliance guidelines, when appropriate.
- Mentor and monitor students' compliance with the Graduate Honor Code, including avoiding plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity.

Teaching and Training

It is expected that faculty will:

- Encourage and assist students in developing teaching and presentation skills that meet the needs of diverse learners and populations.
- Help students develop interpretive, writing, oral, and quantitative skills, in accordance with the expectations of the discipline.
- Assist graduate students in developing grant-writing skills, where appropriate.
- Provide training for any equipment, instruments, laboratory procedures, or field skills that are necessary for the student's research and teaching program.

- With graduate students, model and create a culture of safety in the research environment that includes proper training, planning, always wearing personal protective appropriate to the activity and environment and following the principle that if an experiment is not and cannot be made safe, it should not be carried out. The faculty member should create an environment where no students or faculty will tolerate unsafe acts by others.
- Model and mentor ethical practices in teaching and training.

Professional Development

It is expected that faculty will:

- Encourage graduate students to participate in professional meetings or to display their work in public forums and exhibitions.
- Model and mentor ethical professional behavior, and engage in discussions about managing situations that would be considered as unethical.
- Encourage graduate students to pursue professional training programs, seminars, and courses that will enhance their professional and personal growth and development.
- Prepare students to be competitive for employment, which includes portraying a realistic view of the field and the job market and making use of professional contacts for the benefit of their students. See the Graduate School website on Professional Development.

Assistantships and Financial Support

It is expected that faculty will:

- Avoid assigning tasks to graduate assistants that are not related to or are more than their contractual obligations.
- Recognize that students on graduate assistantships (GAs, GRAs, & GTAs) should not be expected to work on assistantship responsibilities, on average over the course of a semester, more than the hours for which they are being paid (e.g., average of 20 hours/week for students on full-time assistantship) (for details on definitions of graduate assistantships in terms of hours of effort, see Section 8 of the Faculty Handbook). Absences (whether for illness or personal reasons) should be accommodated, and the work schedule adjusted to enable graduate students to complete their academic and assistantship work commitments. Graduate students are generally not required to work when the university is closed unless they are designated as essential personnel.
- Recognize that the employment of international students in F-1 and J-1 visa status is strictly limited by immigration regulations and assist international students to stay within these limitations. Consult immigration advisors in the Graduate School if questions about the status of an international student arise.

Community

It is expected that faculty will:

- Demonstrate and encourage collegiality with students, faculty, and staff.
- Act fairly, impartially, professionally, and in the student's best interest in all dealings with graduate students, in accordance with university policies governing non- discrimination and harassment of all sorts, as outlined in university policy 1025.(https://policies.vt.edu/1025.pdf OR Google Virginia Tech Policy 1025)

- Behave consistently with the VT Principles of Community, as a community member who respects and celebrates diversity.
- Follow FERPA guidelines, which mandate a student's right to reasonable privacy and confidentiality in all communications among students, professors, staff, and administrators.

Expectations for Graduate Education, Departments and Programs

The graduate degree program bears primary responsibility for developing and communicating specific guidelines and procedures governing study in the discipline. It should provide all incoming and enrolled students with a clear structure of the expected stages of progress towards the degree. It should offer a curriculum and appropriate forms of instruction necessary to ensure timely completion of that degree, and it should provide specific details regarding likely career opportunities for those seeking the degree. In addition, it should encourage the development of interdisciplinary skills and, whenever possible, participation in interdisciplinary research. The department should also provide clear information about the procedures for assessing students' satisfactory progress toward the degree.

Progress Toward Degree

It is expected that departments and programs will:

- Inform graduate students of the requirements (see Presidential Policy Memo #152, and update of Presidential Policy #126) for the academic program, including the expected time-to-degrees within their program, the plan-of-study requirements, and the availability of courses required for their graduate studies.
- Provide accurate, timely, and clearly stated information concerning academic requirements and academic evaluation, as well as guidance toward establishing and maintaining acceptable academic standing.
- Provide relevant course offerings at the graduate level; these courses are listed in the Graduate Catalog.
- Provide supervision, external to the institution, if necessary, if the student's dissertation or thesis advisor departs Virginia Tech after the student's work has begun.
- Ensure that graduate students receive regular evaluation and feedback throughout their academic program, including annual evaluation (see Presidential Policy Memos #152, #229). Written evaluations should, at a minimum, include annual progress reports.
- Provide graduate students with a fair opportunity to correct deficiencies in their academic performance before being dismissed. Dismissal of a graduate student from a graduate program for academic reasons should typically be based on annual progress reviews (see Presidential Policy Memo #229).
- Refer international students to IGSS staff to learn about requirements for international students to maintain adequate progress.

Research and Ethics

It is expected that the department or program will:

- Provide appropriate resources to allow students to complete their education and research in a timely and productive manner.
- Ensure that advisors and committees treat all students fairly and assess their work in

meaningful ways, consistent with the discipline.
- Ensure the highest standards of academic quality in all aspects of the graduate program.
- Follow FERPA guidelines, which mandate a student's right to reasonable privacy and confidentiality in all communications among students, professors, staff, and administrators.
- Provide graduate students with a safe working environment (see Environmental Health and Safety Services)

Teaching and Training

It is expected that the department or program will:
- Provide training appropriate to the teaching assignment given to graduate students.
- Review teaching evaluations of graduate teaching assistants and work with them to improve their teaching skills through mentoring and participation in teaching workshops.
- Encourage graduate students with interests in teaching to participate in opportunities to enhance teaching and pedagogical skills, including those provided by the Academy for GTA Excellence, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and TLOS (Technology-Enhanced Learning and Online Strategies), as well as other Transformative Graduate Education initiatives.

Professional Development

It is expected that the department or program will:
- Provide information to graduate students about professional meetings, public forums, and exhibitions relevant to their research area.
- Provide information to graduate students about professional training programs, seminars, and courses that will enhance their professional growth and development.
- See the Graduate School website on Professional Development.
- Assist students to be competitive for employment by providing information about opportunities and, when appropriate, making use of professional contacts for the benefit of graduate students.

Assistantships and Financial Support

It is expected that the department or program will:
- **Provide clear expectations to students on their responsibilities as GAs, GTAs, or GRAs.**
- Inform graduate students of the requirements and qualifications necessary for academic employment, training, or financial support.
- Provide graduate students on assistantships (GA, GTA, GRA) with a written agreement, as well as the terms and conditions of any graduate-assistant appointments (see
- Presidential Policy Memo #152, which updates and replaces policies #14 and #126).
- Inform graduate students that they must work an average of 20 hours/week for those individuals on full assistantship (for half-time assistantship, 10 hours/week would be expected) and that these hours are in addition to the hours needed for coursework and individual research.
- Inform graduate-student assistants of academic or other institutional policies affecting their role as employees.
- Inform graduate students of available funding sources, including departmental or program of study sources of funding.

- If departmental funding is not available, assist graduate students in seeking assistantships and other funding sources outside of the home department or program. Should a funding source be terminated through no fault of the graduate student, the department should make reasonable effort to find alternative funding for that student.
- Recognize that the employment of international students is governed by immigration regulations and adhere to policies and procedures that are set forth by International Graduate Student Services and the payroll office.
- Recognize that international students do not have the same financial resources available to them as domestic students (e.g., federal financial aid, loans)

Community

It is expected that the department or program will:

- Create a collegial learning environment in which faculty and students work together in mutual respect and collaboration.
- Establish an environment in which members of diverse communities feel welcome and honored.
- Provide specific mechanisms for appeal or complaint when standards of collegiality or fairness may have been violated; see the complaint/appeals process.

Expectations for Graduate Education, Graduate School

The Graduate School is responsible for the development, administration, and evaluation of graduate education throughout the university. As such, the Graduate School works in partnership with the faculty, program chairs, and department heads to maintain and further the high quality of graduate education at Virginia Tech. In addition, the IGSS staff in the Graduate School provides immigration information and support to international students.

Progress Toward Degree

It is expected that the Graduate School will:

- Review the plan of study submitted by each graduate student to ensure that the plan contains sufficient credits to obtain the desired graduate degree.
- Monitor graduate students' progress toward degrees and regularly inform students of their progress.
- Maintain comprehensive data on student completion rates, time to degree, placement in professional employment, and attrition.

Research and Ethics

It is expected that the Graduate School will:

- Develop graduate training programs which best serve the interests of both faculty and graduate students at Virginia Tech.
- Provide support to departments, programs, and units to develop high quality graduate programs that excel in research, teaching, and community service.
- Facilitate, wherever possible, development of interdisciplinary research and training programs which push the boundaries of current disciplinary fields and agendas.

- Administer the Graduate Honor Code.
- Provide guidance on ethics and scholarly integrity

Teaching and Training

It is expected that the Graduate School will:

- Ensure that individual graduate programs offer a curriculum of graduate instruction to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need for the broad array of postgraduate careers they may wish to pursue.
- Ensure that all aspects of the graduate program conform to the highest academic standards and provide mechanisms of redress when they fall below those standards.
- Ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place, both centrally and in individual degree programs, to aid in successful inclusion of international students to academic life in the U.S. and at Virginia Tech.

Professional Development

It is expected that the Graduate School will:

- Help develop support services in the Graduate School and communicate about services provided by other programs at Virginia Tech (e.g., the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, the TLOS Professional Development Network, and the Graduate Education Development Institute) that enhance the professional, academic, and scholarly interests of graduate students.
- Provide courses and opportunities for graduate students to better prepare themselves for academic and nonacademic careers (e.g., preparing the future professoriate, preparing the career professional).
- Provide education and training for graduate students who serve as GTAs.
- Assist with additional education programs and opportunities including interdisciplinary research and education, ethics and scholarly integrity, global perspectives, and civic engagement.

Assistantships and Financial Support

It is expected that the Graduate School will:

- Provide guidance on financial and other mechanisms to support students in their pursuit of graduate degrees.
- Communicate opportunities for graduate students at Virginia Tech, including scholarships, assistantships, grant opportunities, employment opportunities, and nominations for graduate-student awards.
- Assist international graduate students in the maintenance of their student visa status.

Community

It is expected that the Graduate School will:

- Promote collegial climate for education through academic, social, and community programs.
- Establish an environment in which members of diverse communities feel welcome and honored.
- Maintain a comprehensive description of the goals and expectations of individual graduate programs.
- Provide clear and appropriate avenues of redress whenever particular faculty members' or students' experiences fall short of the expectations articulated in this document. ”

That's the end of the expectations!

Again, those expectations are directly from the Virginia Tech Graduate School, and we have copied them into this document to equip students with the knowledge they need to succeed. If you are interested in knowing more about sick time, holidays, and vacations for graduate students read here: https://policies.vt.edu/6210.pdf Or google search "Management of Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Remission" to find the VT Policy

For Entomology-specific requirements, make sure you review the **Entomology student handbook** with your advisor to ensure you are meeting all the requirements. The current version is always available on the Entomology home page (ento.vt.edu, Menu>Academics>General>Graduate Forms and Handbook).

AREC Students

The Entomology department regularly has AREC students who spend most of their time conducting research off campus, at AREC stations. As such, AREC students can face specific challenges during their time as students. It is important to emphasize that AREC students are in a unique circumstance in terms of being away from campus; however, it is essential that all available resources are available for these students as well. Alongside this, it is highly recommended that students and professors as soon as possible layout a timeline or plan to have an idea of what is expected of the student while at and away from Blacksburg. Alwood society has an AREC representative that can address questions or provide resources.

Challenges and Resources

Overview: Now that we have reviewed the expectations of graduate students, faculty, departments, and the graduate school, we can review some challenges that graduate students face as we seek our degrees. These can include academic bullying, financial instability, overworking, mental health troubles, discrimination, and others. In this section we will look at these challenges and the resources that Virginia Tech has for graduate students in facing them.

Academic Bullying is common (read below for some research looking at academic bullying and its impact on students), and Virginia Tech is not immune. As graduate students we may feel the need to be tough and to tolerate behaviors that are unacceptable. The only way to improve conditions is to report and address them which can sometimes be more difficult than tolerating them. By reporting and addressing unacceptable behavior, you are making Virginia Tech a better school and are improving conditions for the students that come after you. If you are facing academic bullying or other unacceptable behaviors from faculty or staff, you do not need to face it alone, there are resources and other students here to help. *It is important to note that bullying, discrimination, misconduct, etc. can go in various directions (faculty to student, student to faculty, student to student, faculty to faculty, etc.) and these resources are intended to help graduate students navigate these behaviors should they be witness to or involved in any of these circumstances.

Further reading:

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2021.101121 https://doi.org/10.1080/08824096.2015.1052904

What is Bullying?

General types of Bullying:

- Predatory Bullying occurs when the target has done nothing to provoke the bully. This type tends to be more prevalent in organizations that reinforce bullying like government and academia.
- Dispute-related Bullying occurs as the result of escalated conflict. Coercive or aggressive strategies are used to resolve an ongoing dispute.

Four types of Bullies:

1. Chronic- Those who use aggressive, dominating, and coercive strategies in nearly every encounter in and out of work/classroom.
2. Opportunist- Those who suspend their aggressive behavior outside of work but believe 'careers are built with political gamesmanship'.
3. Accidental- Those who unknowingly take actions that victimize recipients and may retreat/apologize when confronted about the behaviors.
4. Substance-Abusing- Those bullying behaviors initiated by substance abusers where 'rationality and logic are tossed out the window'.

From: Theiss, Sue "Bullying in Academia: What's an Ombudsman to do?"

Bullying can be indirect. Indirect aggression can make it hard to identify the bully or lead instigator. Here is more information regarding different forms of bullying:

- Indirect manipulative aggression refers to aggressive acts involving a peer group such as spreading rumors or isolating someone from their group.
- Covert insinuative aggression is when the aggressive act is disguised in the form of malicious insinuations and suggestions such as imitating the person in an insulting manner.
- Rational–appearing aggression is characterized by the bully's attempt to conceal their intention to hurt the victim by shrouding their aggressive acts in seemingly rational actions. Often these acts appear to others as everyday communication and not as targeted attempts at aggression.
- Relational Aggression- The point of relational aggression is to manipulate or disrupt relationships and friendships.
- Mobbing- Gang bullying or group bullying is often called mobbing and usually involves scapegoating and victimization.

From: Morris, Jenny Lane. "The Influence of Bystanders in Subsequent Bullying Behavior." (2014).

How does bullying manifest in academia?

Academia, especially graduate school, has many characteristics that create situations where bullying is not only tolerated but sometimes considered normal. Graduate students are in especially vulnerable positions. Our funding, and thus our livelihood, is dependent on our advisors who are under the stress of academia themselves and are often not held accountable for their behavior. It may be scary to address bullying behaviors as a graduate student, for fear of losing your position and all your work. However, Virginia Tech has systems in place to help students deal with the situations that may arise because of bullying.

So, what does bullying look like?

Some bullying behaviors may leave you feeling uncertain and uncomfortable. You may not know if it is bullying or "normal" academic behavior. For example, physical, verbal, or written acts and behaviors are obvious forms of bullying, but ignoring, dismissing concerns, ignoring contributions, and withholding information are also bullying and should not be tolerated. Below is a list of **"red flags"** of academic bullying to help you recognize behaviors that might be toxic or become toxic.

- Continual threats of dismissal or intimidation.
- Constant and repeated criticism.
- Unrealistic work demands.
- Isolating a victim.
- Spreading false information about the victim.
- Setting up a victim for failure.
- Forced misconduct.
- Attempts to humiliate.
- Attempts to destroy a victim's self-esteem, dignity, integrity, and self-image.
- Unnecessary tasks derived of purpose.
- Threats of dismissing funding.
- Career or physical sabotage.
- Authorship bullying.
- Comments or insults based on identity.

Now what?

Okay, so you've experienced some of these behaviors, now what? Some behaviors need to be reported, including concerns dealing with Title IX and discrimination, but others can seem more subtle. For those, VT does have resources. Keep in mind, many VT employees are mandatory reporters, meaning that they must report concerns dealing with Title IX, so if you choose not to report, it is advised that you make sure to talk to someone who is not required to disclose the information.

Talking with the Ombudsperson is a great **first** course of action (gradombud@vt.edu). It can allow you to decide whether the academic relationship is repairable through conversation and dialogue or if more serious actions must be taken. For Entomology students, we have the Graduate Student Advocacy Officer who is informed on resources, possible steps to take, and will remain discreet. Depending on the type and severity of behavior, some possible next steps may be having a mediated discussion, meeting with the Office of Equity and Accessibility or Office for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, meeting with department or college administration, moving work environments, etc.

Reporting

If you were the victim of academic bullying, you can formally report the incident online here: https://virginiatech.questionpro.com/a/TakeSurvey?tt=VG9Gn66if5O5RCNGxsIbHA%3D%3D&lcfpn=fals

e (Or google search “Disrupting Academic Bullying Referral Form - Official Virginia Tech” and use the webpage to access the form link).

Beyond Academic Bullying: misconduct, discrimination, and other concerns

The following is from the Virginia Tech webpages on Civil Rights Compliance:
The Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education promotes a learning and working environment free from harassment and discrimination for employees and students. We strengthen the university’s institutional values through civility, compliance and education while mitigating risks. This office is responsible for the university’s :

- Americans with Disability Act and section 504 compliance
- Compliance related trainings and conflict resolution program
- Prevention efforts as well as response to discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct.

Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of age, color, disability, sex (including pregnancy), gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, ethnic or national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, or military status, or otherwise discriminate against employees or applicants who inquire about, discuss, or disclose their compensation or the compensation of other employees or applicants, or on any other basis protected by law.
The process that the Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education follows in responding to reports depends on whether the individual accused of violating a university civil rights policy is a student or an employee and whether Title IX policies and procedures are applicable to the complaint.

- When a student is accused of prohibited conduct under Policy 1025, the office will apply the Policy 1025 Procedures for Student Respondents, unless the conduct alleged is based on sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Learn more about harassment based on sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation at safe.vt.edu.
- When an employee is accused of prohibited conduct under Policy 1025, the office will apply the Policy 1025 Procedures for Employee Respondents.
- When an employee is accused of sexual harassment under both Policy 1025 and the Title IX sexual harassment policy, Policy 1026, the office will apply the Policy 1026 Procedures for Employee Respondents.

Reporting
The Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education encourages anyone who experiences discrimination or harassment to report to us via one of the following methods:

- **Online:** Discrimination and Harassment Reporting Form can be found with the follow link or by searching “Discrimination and Harassment Reporting Form Virginia Tech” (https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?VirginiaTech&layout_id=40)
- **Email:** civilrights@vt.edu
- **Phone:** (540) 231-2010

- **In Person:** 220 Gilbert Street, Suite 5200

The compliance team provides a prompt response to all reports of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Typically, within two business days of receiving a report, a trained civil rights expert will respond to any individual who was reported to be impacted by an incident of discrimination or harassment with an offer to meet and discuss resources and options for pursuing a resolution to the presented concerns."

Again, if you are uncertain which office or resource is best suited to the situation, the ombudsperson (gradombud@vt.edu) is a great place to start. If you find yourself in immediate danger, crisis, or need of help, there are **emergency resources at the end of this document**. Additionally, for a comprehensive University policy on filing complaints and appeals, visit this site:

https://graduateschool.vt.edu/academics/expectations/expectations-for-graduate-education-overview/complaints-and-appeals.html

OR Google search " Virginia Tech Expectations for Graduate Education, Complaints and Appeals"

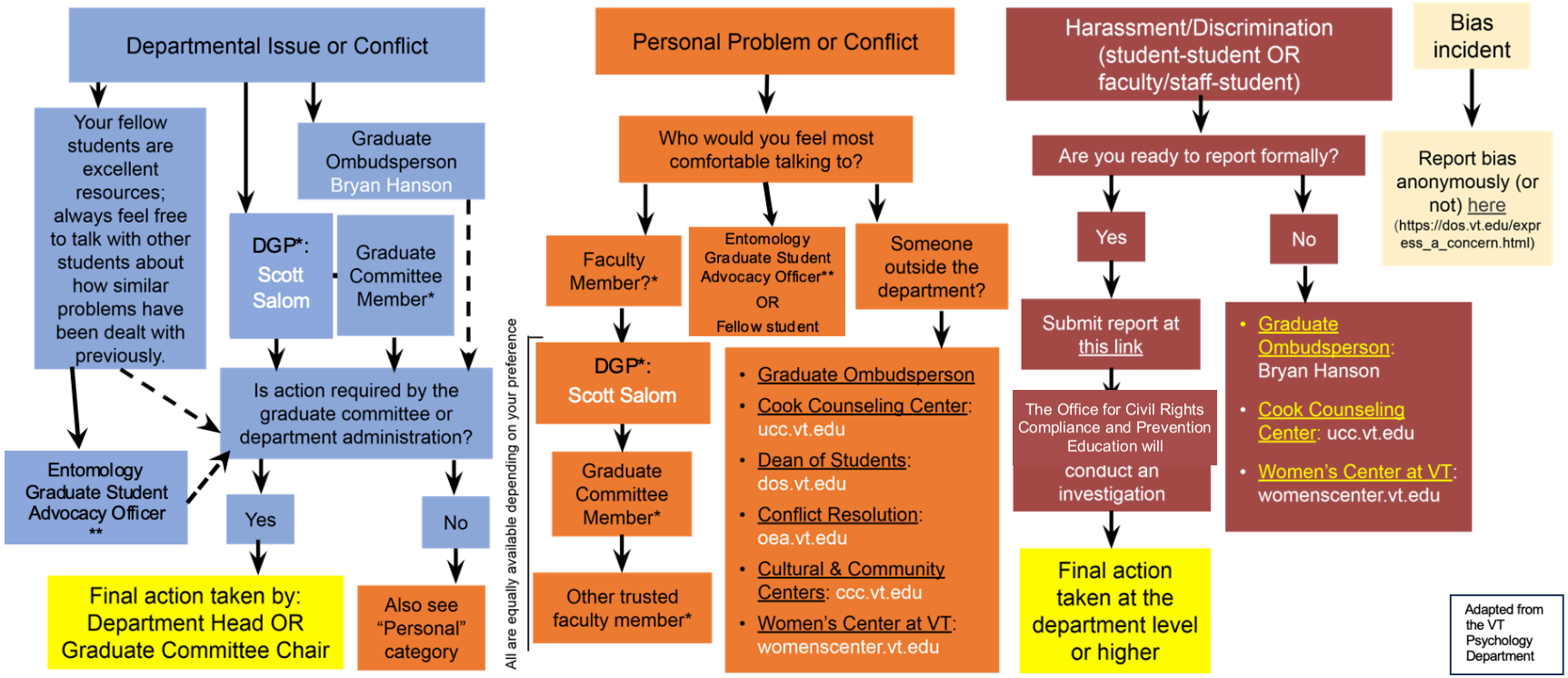
Conflict Resolution

The Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education at Virginia Tech has resources for conflict resolutions that include conflict coaching, mediations, conflict resolution training, and group conflict facilitation. They are a fantastic resource that can help in a variety of conflict situations. To access these resources, contact hyampols@vt.edu who is the Assistant Director for Education, Outreach & Conflict Resolution. To read more about their resources, visit the The Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education> Conflict Resolution webpage.

Graduate Student Resources for Navigating Conflict and Reporting Discrimination

Graduate Student

Resources for Navigating Conflict and Reporting Discrimination- Entomology Department



If you are ever unsure who to talk to, the Graduate Ombudsperson can always provide a safe place for you to be heard and engage in a confidential and informal conversation aimed to bring clarity to your situation and plan a path forward. Note that the Ombudsperson is **not** a mandatory reporter*. Email gradombud@vt.edu or call 540-231-9573 to set up an appointment.

*VT Faculty, Staff, and persons who are employed to teach are mandatory reporters; they are obligated by law to report any incident that might be reasonably construed as constituting discrimination/harassment to the Office for Equity and Accessibility. This obligation exists regardless of the desires of the complainant. Please see University Policy 1025.

** The graduate student advocacy officer is an entomology student who is a member of the Alwood Society and is well-informed on student resources and will remain discreet in any communications.

Financial and General Resources for Graduate Students

As graduate students we may face challenges outside of our work and classes for which there are resources from both Virginia Tech and the surrounding community that can help. Below are resources regarding housing, food, finances, health, and wellbeing, supporting dependents, and disability accommodation.

The descriptions of resources below are pulled directly from Virginia Tech webpages and are intended to provide a compiled, easy to navigate, list of resources for students.

Housing

The Graduate Life Center at Donaldson Brown

Converted from a former hotel and conference center, this on-campus housing option for single graduate and professional students provides privacy, convenience, and a place where you can learn and get work done. No family housing is available. The community is tailored to provide a private, professional living atmosphere for 115 graduate students with single- or double-occupancy rooms with a full private bath. Rooms are furnished, including telephone, Ethernet, and cable TV services. There are also laundry facilities, study lounges, and a kitchen on site. The GLC is close to downtown Blacksburg, Newman Library, Squires Student Center, and several on-campus dining centers, and in easy walking distance of academic buildings, athletic facilities, and many restaurants and retail shops. Nearby bus stops provide access to destinations in Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Roanoke, including Roanoke Regional Airport, so private transportation is not a necessity.

See rates and requirements: https://housing.vt.edu/contracts/apply/graduate_students.html

(Search: Apply to the graduate life center at Donaldson brown Virginia Tech)

Off Campus

Graduate Family Housing

While campus housing is reserved for individual students, these apartment complexes designate units in quiet, convenient areas for individual graduate students as well as families.

Search for Off-Campus Housing (https://offcampus.vt.edu/, Google search Off Campus Virginia tech)

Find information about rentals, subleasing, roommates, transportation, utilities, and more. You can search for a rental property, or a roommate using specific criteria or browse the online housing and roommate forums.

Finding Furnishings

If you need to furnish your rental, there are local stores where you can shop for new items, or you can find affordable used furniture at the following places or websites:

- YMCA Thrift Shop
- Second Time Around Store
- Blacksburg Craigslist
- CORT - Furniture for rent and at student rates
- vatech.forsale and bburg.forsale forums in My VT (log in with a Virgina Tech PID to access)
- Postings in the Squires and Johnston Student Centers

Utilities and Services
Your landlord or leasing office should provide you with a list of local utility companies that service your rental or check the Off Campus Housing Resource Guide. Generally, electric service in the area is provided by Appalachian Power.

Emergency Housing
New River Community Action: Winter overnight Shelter
https://newrivercommunityaction.org/to-our-house/

Other Shelters: https://www.shelterlist.com/city/va-blacksburg (Google Search: Blacksburg VA Shelter list)

Food Assistance to Students

209 Marketplace
Any student with a Hokie Passport can come to the Marketplace. There are no "requirements" and you do not have to prove need. If you need food, toiletries, and other necessities, then 209 Marketplace is the place for you! Located at the Wesley Foundation at 209 W. Roanoke Street, 209 Marketplace is a donation-based, emergency, local food pantry that provides food, toiletries, and school supplies free to Virginia Tech students in need.
https://www.209marketplace.com/

Market of Virginia Tech
If you are a Virginia Tech undergraduate or graduate student interested in food assistance through the Market of Virginia Tech or other options, the first step is to contact the Dean of Students' office through this form: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?VirginiaTech&layout_id=15 (Google search term: The Market of Virginia Tech Interest Form)

Interfaith Food Pantry
Serving qualified residents of Blacksburg and McCoy, the Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry is a joint ministry of over twenty-five faith-based communities in Blacksburg. We are also supported by individuals, organizations, and clubs that are members of our community. https://newrivercommunityaction.org/IFP/ (Google Search: New River Community Action Interfaith Food Pantry)

SNAP Food Assistance
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is to reduce hunger and increase food security. It permits low-income households to have a more nutritious diet by increasing the food purchasing power for eligible households. Low-income households must file an application for SNAP benefits with Social Services in the locality where the household resides. Apply online or screen for eligibility through CommonHelp. Eligibility screening may be bypassed, and an application submitted in person. Fill

out the application for benefits form on the Virginia Department of Social Services' web site and return it to Social Services. https://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/how-do-i/obtain/food-assistance-snap

Additional food assistance is available through the Community Foundation of the New River Valley.

Financial

Aside from graduate stipends, there are some financial resources for graduate students. Some may be eligible for Federal loans and what is listed below.

Student Emergency Fund

The Student Emergency Fund (SEF) is used as a last resort to support currently enrolled students who, through no fault of their own, experienced a one-time financial hardship with related unexpected expenses or loss of income and the student is now facing conflict or disaster, housing or food insecurity, an inability to continue their education mid-term, or the need to travel for a personal or family emergency.

Apply here: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?VirginiaTech&layout_id=19 Or Search Student Emergency Fund Virginia Tech

Graduate School Work-Life Grants

The Work-Life Grant Program provides temporary financial assistance to departments to enable them to continue support for graduate students on assistantship during periods of pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, and medical emergency. Departments can request financial assistance equivalent to a graduate assistantship stipend for 6 weeks (3 payroll periods). The Graduate School provides one-half of the 6-week stipend and the college/senior management area provides the other half of the 6-week stipend. These resources may be used to ensure that the research/teaching/administrative effort is not adversely impacted and the graduate student continues to be supported while on leave. The Graduate School coordinates the distribution of work-life grants.

Financial Wellness Workshops:

https://hokiewellness.vt.edu/students/program_areas/financial_wellness.html or search Financial Wellness Workshops Virginia Tech

Setting up a bank account

If you are new to the area or are an international student, you will likely need to set up a bank account with a bank you can easily access in Blacksburg. Most students set up an account with the Wells Fargo in town. If you are a domestic student, you'll need a photo ID and your SSN. If you are an international student, you will need to bring your passport. When classes are in session it is a good idea to make an appointment beforehand because they can get busy.

Wells Fargo: 920 University City Blvd, Blacksburg, VA 24060 (540) 951-7100

Additional Funding from the graduate school can be accessed here:
https://graduateschool.vt.edu/funding/funding-sponsored-by-the-graduate-school.html

Health and Wellbeing

Health Insurance

The Graduate School encourages you to purchase medical insurance for yourself and your family. International students in F-1 or J-1 status are required to purchase insurance for themselves and any accompanying dependents for the duration of their stay.

University-Sponsored Insurance Program

If you are a full-time graduate student, you have the option to enroll in the university-sponsored insurance program through Aetna. The university-sponsored program is managed by the Student Medical Insurance Office. This office can provide detailed information about the insurance plan, coverage costs, effective dates, and other relevant information. You may purchase the university health care plan online or in person at the Student Medical Insurance Office.

Graduate Assistant Insurance Benefit

With a graduate assistantship of at least 10 hours per week (50%), you are eligible for a subsidy on the premium of the university-sponsored plan. Please visit the Graduate School's health insurance benefits.

Student Health Services

The Schiffert Health Center provides student medical services that are equivalent to those provided by a general family physician. These services are included in the cost of your comprehensive fees. The center also manages immunization and health-history requirements for students enrolled at the Blacksburg campus.

Counseling Services

The Cook Counseling Center provides individual, group, and couples counseling, assessment, consultation, and campus outreach services to currently enrolled students. These services are included in the cost of your comprehensive fees.

Students have free, 24/7 access to virtual care services with TimelyCare – the virtual health and well-being platform from TimelyMD, designed for college students. With TimelyCare, students have access to:

- unlimited on-demand mental health support 24/7, available to all Virginia Tech students, through TalkNow,
- unlimited access to health coaching, available to all Virginia Tech students, and scheduled counseling sessions, limited to 12 sessions per academic year, available to all Virginia Tech students throughout the United States.

Register for TimelyCare online (https://app.timelycare.com/auth/login) or download the app. It only takes a few minutes to register. Visit the Cook Counseling Center TimelyCare webpage to learn more.

Fitness Facilities

The Graduate School encourages you to take advantage of the two fitness facilities available to students on campus, McComas Hall and War Memorial Hall. You can learn more about these facilities, their hours,

and their policies at the Recreational Sports webpage. Students' dependents may use the facilities at War Memorial Hall. https://recsports.vt.edu/facilities.html

Recreational Sports
Virginia Tech provides a wealth of activities to help you stay active and fit. Recreational Sports offers non-credit instruction, fitness activities, wellness education and assessment, intramural sports, and extramural sports competition for students, faculty, staff, and their families.

Graduate Students with dependents

Caregiving resources: https://caregiving.vt.edu/

Bringing a Spouse or Children to the U.S.
International students in F-1 or J-1 visa status may request an I-20 or DS-2019 form for a dependent (spouse or unmarried minor child). Contact the Cranwell International Center to learn more.

Little Hokie™ Hangout
Little Hokie Hangout is an early childhood education program offered by the Graduate School.

Childcare Providers
Virginia Tech's Hokie Wellness office provides lists of family day care providers, childcare centers, and babysitters, as well as tools to help you make the best childcare decisions for your family's needs.

Free Weekly Babysitting: Kids' Night Out
During fall and spring semesters while classes are in session, the Virginia Tech Women's Center sponsors Kids' Night Out, a free weekly drop-in childcare program, on Thursdays between 6:30-8 p.m. The center, at 206 Washington Street provides care for children ages 2-12 (must be toilet trained). Please check the Women's Center website womenscenter.vt.edu every Monday afternoon for a link to the sign-up page. The program provides children with games, toys, books, crafts, homework help, and plenty of fun. Childcare is provided by volunteers of Chi Delta Alpha sorority. For more information, contact Jessie Meltsner at jmelts@vt.edu or 231-7806.

Services for Students with Disabilities

At SSD, the goal is to remove disability related barriers for students in the learning, living, and dining environments. They strive to maximize access and opportunity. Through iterative interactive process, they determine accommodations tailored to the individual needs of students. The department provides numerous accommodations, services, and resources for students with disabilities and temporary injuries or illnesses. SSD provides both in-person academic coaching and practical help for everyone in our Academic Coaching Nook. https://ssd.vt.edu/

Transportation

Driving around and parking on Virginia Tech's campus is not a walk in the park. What is a walk in the park is walking or biking around campus and using the bus system and other forms of alternative

transportation. You can use the Blacksburg transit system for free with your HokiePassport. If you do not have access to a car, it is most convenient to live within Blacksburg, and ensure that you are able to walk or bike to campus or bus stops.

Blacksburg Transit: https://ridebt.org/
Routes and Schedules: https://ridebt.org/routes-schedules

Parking
If you bring a car with you to campus, you'll need to register with Parking Services and purchase a university parking permit. Buy one online after August 10 or get it at their office when you get to campus. Make sure you check out the different options for passes including the commuter alternative programs. Carpool passes are a great way to save money and gas!

Biking
Biking is a popular way to get around at Virginia Tech, and bikeshare, bike racks, and Fix-It Stations are provided throughout campus and at residence halls. For bike parking locations and designated bike routes and trails, check out the campus bike map. You'll have to register your bike like you'd register your car, but bike registrations are free! Need help working on your bike? Check out the Hokie Bike Hub or visit an on-campus Fix-It Station.

Ride Share
No need to be nervous about coming to campus without a car! You can take advantage of a wide range of regional, statewide, and out-of-state transportation options that will get you to Roanoke, Northern Virginia, and far beyond. There are buses (greyhound) and trains out of Roanoke (Amtrak). Virginia Tech also has a ride sharing program on campus. Contact the Alternative Transportation Department at gettingaround@vt.edu or 540-231-2116 with any questions.

Community Centers

Note that some of the community centers specifically have a graduate student group associated with their center

Ati: Wa:oki Indigenous Community Center
Ati: Wa:oki Indigenous Community Center, commonly known as the Indigenous Community Center (ICC) serves as a community gathering area and study space. "Ati: Wa:oki" translates to "meeting house" in the Tutelo language. You'll find the ICC in room 122 of the Squires Student Center, just to the left of the Welcome Center on the first floor.

The center comfortably holds 50 people and offers a communal area, study spaces, and TV/projection capabilities. The space hosts an expanding library of over 200 books, CDs, and DVDs, many of which were donated by faculty, staff, and Indigenous communities. The space also includes a variety of Indigenous art, historic artifacts, and ceremonial pieces representing the cultures and traditions of several Indigenous tribes. There are also nods to Native people in contemporary and popular culture as well as a piece which highlights the eleven tribes within the Commonwealth of Virginia. If you would

like to learn more about the center, the pieces displayed, or how to donate art and resources, please contact the center director.

APIDA+ Center
The APIDA + Center's mission is to advocate for the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) communities, including Virginia Tech faculty, staff, students, and alumni. We also aim to educate the campus community on issues centered around or related to our communities. All members of the campus and local community are welcome in the APIDA + Center and can participate in the APIDA + Center's events, programs, and activities. GAPIDA is the graduate branch that is specifically geared toward graduate students' social life.

The Black Cultural Center
In 1984, Black student leaders from the class of 1985 proposed the establishment of the Black Cultural Center to correlate with the increase in recruitment of Black students. The BCC opened in 1991 in 126 Squires Student Center.

The BCC is an important component of Virginia Tech's efforts to create a welcoming and inclusive campus. It is utilized by the campus community for educational programs, exhibits, meetings, and receptions. The BCC includes comfortable space for community building and for studying.

El Centro
El Centro is the Cultural and Community Center for the Latinx community at Virginia Tech. This is a support space for all the people that identify themselves as Latinos or Hispanos, for the people interested in our culture, and for all our allies. El Centro works with The Latinx Library, initiated by a 2015 Virginia Tech Graduate School Diversity Scholar now hosts over 500 texts in multiple languages for all ages.

Pride Center
The Pride Center (formerly the LGBTQ+ Resource Center) at Virginia Tech was opened on August 15, 2016, as a direct result of the advocacy and support of many past and present LGBTQ+ students, faculty, and staff. Today the Pride Center is first and foremost a queer and trans community center that offers a variety of annual programs which explore the identities and experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals and creates opportunities for those searching for community. The pride center provides resources related to chosen name and pronouns in the University System, on the HokieID card, and in classes- drop in and inquire if you need assistance with any of these.

The Pride Center also offers various educational resources for non-LGBTQ+ folks including but not limited to our VirTual Safe Zone training program, which provides participants with the opportunity to explore their own experiences through the lens of queer and trans oppression and liberatory practices.

Other information and services

Library and Data Services
The Virginia Tech Libraries have resources and services for graduate students that include interlibrary loans, special collections, data management, statistics consulting, workshops, subject guides, and more.

Search Virginia Tech Library Grad student resources for more information or email the Entomology library liaison, Inga Haugen (ihaugen@vt.edu). For data services email dataservices@vt.edu.

Statistics Consulting (SAIG)
Statistical collaborators are trained to help design experiments, analyze and plot data, run statistical software, interpret results, and communicate statistical concepts to non-statisticians. Our assistance is free for university faculty, staff, and students on academic research projects. The collaborators are faculty and students in the Department of Statistics. Search 'SAIG Virginia tech' for the walk-in hours for statistical consulting. You can also email statistics@vt.edu for more information.

The Cranwell Center for International Students
Cranwell staff support all international students to make the most of your time at Virginia Tech. The Cranwell academic calendar has a regular pulse of events each year to provide consistent, ongoing support to all international students across campus. We create experiences to enhance your well-being and belonging and to build a more inclusive community welcoming to all. Current international students receive our monthly CranwellConnect emails with events organized by Cranwell staff.

Student Legal Services
You can get assistance with a review of your lease agreement and other legal documents and processes. To schedule an appointment, or to contact SLS with questions, please call the office at 540-231-4720 and leave a voicemail with your name and number, or e-mail us at
studentlegalservices@vt.edu
https://legal.uss.vt.edu/

Mail Service
The U.S. Postal Service offers an easy tool to change your address online. There are two post-office branches available within 0.5 miles of campus:
Downtown Post Office: 118 N. Main Street, Blacksburg, VA 24060
Blacksburg Main Post Office: 909 University Blvd., Blacksburg, VA 24060

Driver's License and Car Registration
Visit the Department of Motor Vehicles in Christiansburg to obtain a license or car registration. (Note that possessing a Virginia driver's license does not guarantee eligibility for in-state tuition.)

Phone Plans
There are many providers that serve the area depending on the type of plan you would like. Most students have Verizon, AT&T, or T-mobile. For international students, Tello has a plan that allows for unlimited international calls at a fair price.

Virginia Tech Hokie Passport (ID card)
To obtain a Hokie Passport, you must be a registered student. This means you cannot be issued a card if you are not currently registered for at least one class.

When you visit the Hokie Passport Services office, you will need to fill out an ID Request Card (example

shown below). The ID request cards are on tables in the Student Services Building lobby. Take the card along with a valid U.S. driver's license or international passport to the ID window. There is no charge for the first ID you are issued, but replacement IDs cost $25. The $25 charge will be waived if the picture is unrecognizable or if the card has been damaged from normal wear. The existing card must be presented at the time of replacement. A $25 replacement charge will apply to stolen IDs. Cash, check (made out to Treasurer, Virginia Tech), or Hokie Passport Account are accepted as forms of payment for IDs.

You will be required to present valid, original, and commonly recognized official photographic credentials at the time you obtain your VT ID. Current forms of valid photographic credentials accepted by Hokie Passport Services include U.S. state issued drivers licenses, International Passports, and the United States Military Identification Card. Photocopies, photographs, and electronic copies of the aforementioned credentials are not acceptable. Should your identity be unverifiable for any reason, additional documentation or processing may be required.

Emergency Resources

- Virginia Tech Police
    - Emergency phone: 911
      Note: This will reach the NRV Dispatch center, which covers campus, town, and county emergency calls
    - Non-emergency phone: 540-382-4343
- Virginia Tech Rescue - Emergency medical care
    - Phone: 911
- Cook Counseling Center
    - Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.: 540-231-6557
    - After hours/holidays/weekends: 540-231-6557
    - **Suicide prevention: 540-231-6557**
- Environmental Health and Safety Services
    - Phone: 540-382-4343 (via campus police)
- Office of Emergency Management
    - Phone: 540-231-4873
- Dean of Students Office
    - Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.: 540-231-3787
    - After hours/weekends: 540-382-4343 (via campus police)
- Schiffert Health Center
    - Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon: 540-231-5313
    - After hours/weekends: 540-231-6444
- Facilities Services: Technicians are available on most shifts to respond to emergency calls until midnight Monday through Friday and from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.
    - During normal business hours, Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m.: 540-231-4300
    - To report an emergency outside of normal working hours call Virginia Tech Police at 540-382-4343.
- Women's Center at Virginia Tech
    - 540-231-7806 or call the 24-hour crisis hotline operated by the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley at 540-639-1123
- Were you the victim of discrimination based on your gender identity, sexual orientation, or pregnancy status?
    - Report to Title IX online: safe.vt.edu
    - Call the women’s center (confidential): 540-231-7806
    - Call Cook Counseling Center (confidential): 540-231-6557