Academic Advisor: The academic advisor is either a member of the teaching faculty or a professional who works with students on their academic progress, course selection, career and major options, and navigating the academic process at Virginia Tech. Students who work closely with their advisors often avoid costly mistakes.

Academic Year: The school year that begins with fall semester classes (August - December) and ends with either the spring semester (January - May) or Summer Sessions I and II (May - August) depending on your enrollment plan.

Add/Drop Period: This is a period of time during which a student may make changes to their schedule without any academic or financial consequences. Add/drop information can be found at: https://registrar.vt.edu/dates-deadlines-accordion/Drop-Add.html. Students will want to check with their academic advisor and Financial Aid before making a major change to their schedule. Students should also be careful about adding a new course after too much time has passed because they may have missed vital material at the beginning of the course.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend class. Most professors announce their attendance policy on the first day of class or state their policy in the class syllabus. If no mention of attendance is made, ask! Many professors count attendance towards class participation grades and students who miss classes may receive lower grades.

Audit: To attend a class without receiving academic credit.

Bachelor's Degree: An undergraduate degree in a specific area of study. Depending on the major, this may be called a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree.

Blue Book: A small notebook with a soft blue cover that some professors require students to use when writing essay exams. Blue books are available at the University Bookstores.

Bursar: The Bursar is responsible for the billing and collection of tuition and related fees, the disbursement of financial aid and scholarship to student accounts, and processing payments, credits, and refunds.

Class Ticket: The original class ticket is the scheduling result of the course request entered by students each semester. The class ticket, available on the Hokie SPA, shows which section of each course the student has been enrolled in for a given semester. The sections are identified by a course request number (CRN). Once the add/drop period opens, students may make changes to their original class ticket.

Clery Act: This law requires any public or private college or university which receives federal financial aid to keep and disclose crime statistics on and near campus. Amendments to the Clery Act passed in 2008 require institutions to include a campus emergency response plan in their reporting. Institutions are required to publish their report each fall and it must contain information for the prior three years.

Co-Curricular or Extracurricular Activities: Activities, programs, and learning experiences that complement the formal academic curriculum. Research shows that students who are involved outside the classroom are more invested, more successful academically, and more satisfied with their college experience. Go to GobblerConnect (https://gobblerconnect.vt.edu/) to find ways to become involved and engaged. Be sure to check out the organization for first generation students by searching for 1st Generation at Virginia Tech.

College: Virginia Tech is a university made up of nine colleges: Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture and Urban Studies, Business, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Natural Resources and Environment, Science, Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, and Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Research Institute. Each of these colleges houses a number of departments, which in turn offer majors.

Course Number (CRN): The number your college or university uses to classify a course. This number is needed in order to register for a class in Hokie SPA.

Course Request: This is the process through which students plan and indicate the courses they would like to enroll in for the upcoming semester. Course request for summer and fall classes occurs in the spring semester and during the fall semester for spring classes. Students are often asked, encouraged, or required to meet with their academic advisor before registering for courses to ensure that they understand their course requirements. NOTE: Submitting a course request is not an automatic registration in the courses requested. Course request results from registration week are sent to students via Hokie SPA immediately before the opening of add/drop for the semester. A tutorial to assist students with all the details regarding registration is located at https://registrar. vt.edu/content/dam/registrar_vt_edu/documents/Updates/registration/Registration_Tutorial.pdf.

Credit Hour: A credit hour is equivalent to one hour of class time per week. Courses are usually measured in credit hours, with most being three or four credit hours. Students may refer to how many credit hours or credits they are carrying for a particular semester. A general rule of thumb is that students should be averaging about two hours of work per week outside of class for each credit hour or hour of time spent in class. The number of credit hours a student enrolls in determines whether they are a full-time student or a part-time student.

Curriculum: A set of sequential courses that constitute a major.

Department: A department is an administrative unit at the university that offers classes and majors or minors in a subject or discipline.

Elective: An elective is a class students can take that is not specifically required by a major or minor.

FAFSA: This is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and is the starting point for almost all financial aid. The FAFSA is available on October 1 prior to the upcoming aid year and must be submitted annually.

FERPA: The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act is a federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records. Without written permission from the student, parents or other family members will not have access to academic records - including grades.

Major: The primary area of study and the field a student plans to get a job in after graduation (for example: business, linguistics, anthropology, psychology, etc.).

Minor: A student's secondary area of study. Fewer classes are required for a college minor than for a major. A minor is optional.

Office Hours: Time set aside by professors or teaching assistants for students to visit their office and ask questions or discuss the course they teach. Professors or teaching assistants announce when and where office hours will be every week. This information is also listed on each course syllabus.

Pathways Planner: The pathways planner (https://registrar.vt.edu/graduation-multi-brief/index5.html) is a comprehensive way for students to plan their time at Virginia Tech. While planning courses is a central piece of this process, it is also crucial to begin thinking about long-term goals, extracurricular and co-curricular activities, and other aspects of the college experience. The pathways planner helps students do all of this.

Pre-Requisite: Pre-requisites are courses that students are required to take prior to registering for an upper-level course. Some courses may have no pre-requisites while others may require several introductory level courses before the student may take them.

Reading Day: Reading Day is the day between the last day of classes and the first day of final exams. It is included in the academic calendar to give students time to prepare for exams.

Registrar: The University Registrar is responsible for maintaining the permanent academic record for each student. In addition to maintaining student records, the Registrar's office is also responsible for scheduling of classes, registering students in classes, maintaining class lists, and recording student grades. Remember that FERPA restrictions require a student's written permission to discuss grades or academic progress with anyone else.

Resident Assistant or RA: Resident assistants are trained student employees responsible for supervising students in the residence halls. They can assist with questions, social issues, roommate issues, or other problems that might arise. They are also responsible for enforcing university policy and rules.

Residential Learning Coordinator: A residential learning coordinator (RLC) is a professional, trained university employee responsible for the management and daily operations of campus residence halls. RLCs are usually college graduates or graduate students who oversee the resident assistants and are responsible for managing the overall well-being of the residence hall. Residential learning coordinators often live in the hall or in a separate adjoining apartment. They are on call 24 hours a day to assist RAs if problems arise.

Satisfactory Academic Progress: Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is defined by the federal government as successful completion of coursework to maintain eligibility for financial aid. The federal government requires that universities establish, publish, and apply standards to monitor progress toward completion. These standards apply both to grade point average (GPA) and to progress toward degree completion. Students must maintain the standard minimum GPA established by their university and must complete the required number of credits for graduation within a maximum number of attempts.

School: A grouping of related departments in a college.

Syllabus: The syllabus is an outline or overview of a course distributed by the instructor at the beginning of the course. The syllabus contains a wealth of information about the course and may include requirements, expectations, textbook information, contact information for the instructor, office hours, objectives, assignments, and a daily schedule of topics. Students are encouraged to read the syllabus carefully and refer to it often throughout the course.

Teaching Assistant: A teaching assistant (TA) is an individual who assists an instructor or professor with teaching duties. TAs are qualified graduate students employed by the university on a temporary contract. They may assist by conducting labs or study groups, grading papers, or preparing lectures.

University Course Catalog and Academic Policies: This catalog is an important tool for understanding the university's course offerings and academic and administrative policies and procedures. The Virginia Tech undergraduate catalog can be found at https://www.undergradcatalog.registrar.vt.edu/.

VT Username: Your VT Username, formerly referred to as your PID, is the first part of your VT email address. It is used for a number of things, including registration, logins, etc.

Withdraw: To remove oneself from a registered course.

Work Study: Federal work study (FWS) is a program that provides part-time employment opportunities to eligible students to help meet expenses related to education. The federal work study portion of the financial aid package is the portion that a student can earn through a part-time job on campus. For information, consult Scholarships and Financial Aid, suite 200 in the Student Services Building.