

Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies
Revise Policy 6815 Undergraduate Graduation
Resolution 2025-26C

Resolution Proposal Form Sent to University Council Cabinet	09/26/2025
First Reading by Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies	11/10/2025
Approval by Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies	01/26/2026
First Reading by Faculty Senate	11/21/2025
Approval by Faculty Senate	02/06/2026
Staff Senate Comment	11/17/2025
Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Comment	12/05/2025
Graduate and Professional Student Senate Waived Right to Comment	02/02/2026
Undergraduate Student Senate Waived Right to Comment	02/02/2026
First Reading, University Council	02/16/2026
Approved, University Council	03/02/2026
Approved, President	03/03/2026
Effective Date	Fall 2026

WHEREAS, Virginia Tech’s strategic plan identifies timely degree completion as a University goal; and

WHEREAS, the university is committed to providing students clear and consistent graduation requirements across departments and colleges; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Tech is committed to removing unnecessary barriers to degree progression and completion that increase the cost of an undergraduate education; and

WHEREAS, Policy 6815, Undergraduate Graduation, was last updated in 2002 and clarifications and technical changes are needed due to lack of revision over time; and

WHEREAS, The Senior Residency Rule created a barrier to students and added no value beyond existing transfer course equivalency rules and SACSCOC minimum credit requirements.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the following revision of Policy 6815 should be adopted.

No. 6815 Undergraduate Graduation

1.0 Purpose

2.0 Policy

2.1 Graduation Requirements

A student must complete all courses with at least a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) for all hours attempted. In addition, a student must present an equally satisfactory record in courses attempted in the major. The number of credit hours required is at least 120 but can vary from one degree to another. The requirements in effect at the time of entrance as listed in the catalog apply.

2.1.1 Hours Passed

The "total credits" figure on the displayed grade report is not necessarily the same as the total hours (often referenced as hours passed) required for completion of the degree (not all credit hours are effective toward graduation requirements). Students are responsible for verifying required hours for completion by reviewing their degree audit (DARS) with their academic advisor.

Listed below are typical situations yielding "pass" hours that must be subtracted to determine the total credits useful toward graduation requirements:

1. Transfer and/or advanced placement credits that have been subsequently duplicated by courses at Virginia Tech.
2. Credits earned at Virginia Tech that have been duplicated by repeating courses or taking courses ruled to have duplicating credit.
3. Transfer credits allowed from a two-year college that are in excess of one-half of the total credit hour requirement for the curriculum.
4. PHYSICAL EDUCATION SERVICE ACTIVITIES courses that exceed a total of two credits, the maximum allowed toward a bachelor's degree.
5. Credits for military science that exceed the total specified by the college for the student's curriculum.
6. Credits on the pass/fail grading basis that exceed 10 percent of the credits COMPLETED AT VIRGINIA TECH toward the graduation requirements for the curriculum.

2.1.2 Minimum Number of Virginia Tech Credits Needed for a Degree

To receive a degree from Virginia Tech at least 25% of the required credits have to be earned through

Virginia Tech courses. This requirement aligns with the SACSCOC minimum of 25% of total credits that need to be earned at an institution in order to receive a degree from that institution.

2.1.3. Analysis of Graduation Status Form

Undergraduate candidates for degrees must file an application for degree with the University Registrar's Office at least two months before the degree is to be awarded. Degree candidates should retrieve information from the academic catalog of their year of entry or obtain it from their assigned academic advisor. The university maintains a degree auditing system that can be used throughout the student's candidacy for degree. In the final analysis, degrees are conferred when the Registrar lists the candidate as having met requirements.

Completion of degree requirements are determined by traditional processes after the final grade reports are available. Degrees are regarded as having been conferred effective on the appropriate conferring date upon determination that degree requirements have been met by the deadline for a given term. This deadline is to be established by the University Registrar and is typically around 30 days after the conferral date. All course enrollments and attendance obligations must have been completed on or before this deadline.

2.2 Double Majors and Second Degrees

An undergraduate student who satisfies graduation requirements for two curricula concurrently may request recognition of the second major. Two diplomas will not be awarded, but a notation recognizing completion of requirements for the second major will be posted on the student's transcript and a certificate of recognition awarded.

Students who already have a bachelor's degree and who become a candidate for a second undergraduate degree must earn a minimum of 30 additional credit hours before a second degree may be granted. In addition, all requirements of the department and college concerned must be satisfied.

Students who have completed 30 credits more than the minimum number required for completion of a degree may be considered for two degrees (diplomas) provided they have satisfied all requirements of both the department and the college.

Students cannot earn multiple degrees under the same degree program.

2.3 Combination Degrees

The bachelor's degree will be awarded to a student who has satisfactorily completed 3 years of undergraduate work in an appropriate curriculum and the first year of work in an accredited medical, dental, veterinary, or law school, provided the student fulfills the requirements for the 3-year program, as follows:

1. At least two of the three years of pre-professional work must be at this university.
2. A minimum of 96 semester hours of undergraduate work, i.e., pre-professional school credit, must be earned.
3. Core curriculum requirements must be met, plus at least 18 of the 30 hours required in the major must be earned during the 3-year, pre-professional work

program.

2.4 Graduation Ceremonies

Graduates with GPA's of 3.40, 3.60, and 3.80 and higher and with at least 60 credit hours completed at Virginia Tech will be distinguished with titles of CUM LAUDE, MAGNA CUM LAUDE and SUMMA CUM LAUDE, respectively. In computing eligibility for graduation with distinction, all work attempted at Virginia Tech will be used.

2.4.1 Degree Conferring Dates

In addition to the traditional Fall and Spring commencements, two other "Degree Conferring Dates" have been established for each May-to-May year. These dates appear on the diplomas for qualified graduates. The degree conferring dates fall on the last day of final examinations of summer term and winter term. No commencement ceremonies are conducted at the end of these periods, but each graduate may attend Fall or Spring commencement after completion of degree requirements.

Diplomas are ordered after completions are established and are distributed by mail. Distribution of diplomas is generally 2 or 3 months after completion.

3.0 Procedures

3.1 Graduation Requirements

All authorized undergraduate degrees (majors and major options) are defined operationally by departments and promulgated in the form of program requirements. To establish consistent actions among the departments affecting changes in degree requirements (total hours, specific course requirements, courses in major, courses in major options, etc.), there will be a system to monitor or review over time the collective actions of departments in changing degree requirements, maintain historical records to track degree requirement changes, and put records in codified form.

1. The University Registrar will maintain a file of all the "official" degree requirements (degree, option, and minor) produced annually in the course catalog
2. The University has the following guidelines to assist departments and colleges in the revision and implementation of curricula changes in a reasonable and open manner:
 - a. The department offering an undergraduate degree will assume primary responsibility for its quality and take the initiative in any revision of its degree programs.
 - b. All newly proposed changes to existing undergraduate degree programs (majors, major options or minors) will be submitted once each year to the college curriculum committee (and dean) for review and approval and then to be forwarded to the University Registrar for incorporation into the "official" program requirements for students entering the next academic

year and published in the course catalog.

4.0 Definitions

Degree Program: An integrated, structured curriculum comprising an approved course of study that leads to the awarding of a baccalaureate degree and is identified by a unique CIP code.

Major: An academic sub-unit within a degree program that shares the degree's core requirements, total credit hours, and CIP code but is distinguished by a specialized area of study within the discipline.

5.0 References

1. Policy Memorandum No. 41, "Revising Degree Requirements," approved by University Council and the President October 18, 1982, and issued November 24, 1982.
2. Policy Memorandum No. 41, "Resolution for Changing Catalog Disclaimer Statement," approved by University Council and the President October 18, 1982, and issued November 24, 1982.
3. Policy Memorandum No. 109, "Guidelines for Undergraduate Degree Requirement Changes," approved by University Council and the President, May 3, 1990.

6.0 Approval and Revisions

Approved August 22, 1990, by the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, James F. Wolfe.

- Revision 1
 - Section 2.1.3. Revised process for analysis of graduation form.
 - Section 3.1 Deleted item 2. Item 2b, revised when approved changes in degree programs would become effective.
 - Section 5. Added item 3.

Approved January 12, 1999, by Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, David R. Ford.

- Revision 2
 - Reference to "QCA" updated to "GPA" throughout policy.
 - Added Section 3.2. "Changing Major Requirements."

Approved April 17, 2002 by Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, David R. Ford.

No. 6815 Undergraduate Graduation

1.0 Purpose

2.0 Policy

2.1 Graduation Requirements

A student must complete all courses with at least a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) for all hours attempted. In addition, a student must present an equally satisfactory record in courses attempted in the major. The number of credit hours required is at least 120 but can vary from one degree to another. ~~The university reserves the right to modify requirements in the student's program if necessary.~~ The requirements in effect at the time of entrance as listed in the catalog apply.

2.1.1 Hours Passed

~~The "total credits" figure on the displayed grade report is not necessarily the same as the total hours (often referenced as hours passed) required for completion of the degree (not all credit hours are effective toward graduation requirements). Students are responsible for verifying required hours for completion by reviewing their degree audit (DARS) with their academic advisor. The "total credits" total on the grade report is not necessarily the same as the total hours passed which are effective toward graduation requirements. The latter must be assumed not to exceed the "total credits" figure.~~

Listed below are typical situations yielding "pass" hours that must be subtracted to determine the total credits useful toward graduation requirements:

1. Transfer and/or advanced placement credits that have been subsequently duplicated by courses at Virginia Tech.
2. Credits earned at Virginia Tech that have been duplicated by repeating courses or taking courses ruled to have duplicating credit.
3. Transfer credits allowed from a two-year college that are in excess of one-half of the total credit hour requirement for the curriculum.
4. ~~Credits for~~ PHYSICAL EDUCATION SERVICE ACTIVITIES courses that exceed a total of ~~two~~three credits, the maximum allowed toward a bachelor's degree.
5. Credits for military science that exceed the total specified by the college for the student's curriculum.
6. Credits on the pass/fail grading basis that exceed 10 percent of the credits COMPLETED AT VIRGINIA TECH toward the graduation requirements for the curriculum.

~~2.1.2 Senior Residency Rule~~

~~The SENIOR RESIDENCY RULE requires that the senior year, with a minimum of 30 semester hours, must be completed in residence, or 30 semester of the last 45 semester hours must be completed in residence, provided that only approved elective courses taken IN ABSENTIA are transferred to complete requirements.~~

2.1.2 Minimum Number of Virginia Tech Credits Needed for a Degree

To receive a degree from Virginia Tech at least 25% of the required credits have to be earned through Virginia Tech courses. This requirement aligns with the SACSCOC minimum of 25% of total credits that need to be earned at an institution in order to receive a degree from that institution.

2.1.33. Analysis of Graduation Status Form

Undergraduate candidates for degrees must file an application for degree ~~with a written application at~~ the University Registrar's Office at least two months before the degree is to be awarded. Degree candidates should retrieve information from the academic catalog of their year of entry or obtain it from their assigned academic advisor. The university maintains a degree auditing system that can be used throughout the student's candidacy for degree. ~~Degree candidates should obtain full information on completion of degree requirements from their course advisor or academic dean at the beginning of their senior year. Degree audits are processed by the Registrar after receiving applications for degrees. Degree Analysis (DARS) are initiated by the Application for Degree and are subject to revision if found to be incorrect.~~ In the final analysis, degrees are conferred when the Registrar lists the candidate as having met requirements.

~~All applicants for graduate degrees/certificates must file an "Application for Degree" at the Graduate School.~~

Completion of degree requirements are determined by traditional processes after the final grade reports are available. Degrees are regarded as having been conferred effective ~~retroactively~~ on the appropriate conferring date upon determination that degree requirements have been met by the deadline for a given term. This deadline is to be established by the University Registrar and is typically around 30 days after the conferral date. All course enrollments and attendance obligations must have been completed on or before this deadline ~~the degree conferring date~~.

2.2 Double Majors and Second Degrees

An undergraduate student who satisfies graduation requirements for two curricula concurrently may request recognition of the second major. Two diplomas will not be awarded, but a notation recognizing completion of requirements for the second major will be posted on the student's transcript and a certificate of recognition awarded.

Students who already have a bachelor's degree and who become a candidate for a second undergraduate degree must earn a minimum of 30 additional credit hours ~~in residence~~ before a second degree may be granted. In addition, all requirements of the department and college concerned must be satisfied.

Students who have completed 30 credits more than the minimum number required for completion of a degree may be considered for two degrees (diplomas) provided they have satisfied all requirements of both the department and the college.

Students cannot earn multiple degrees under the same degree program.

2.3 Combination Degrees

The bachelor's degree will be awarded to a student who has satisfactorily completed 3 years of undergraduate work in an appropriate curriculum and the first year of work in an accredited medical, dental, veterinary, or law school, provided the student fulfills the requirements for the 3-year program,

as follows:

1. At least two of the three years of pre-professional work, ~~including the third year in residence,~~ must be at this university.
2. A minimum of 96 semester hours of undergraduate work, i.e., pre-professional school credit, must be earned.
3. Core curriculum requirements must be met, plus at least 18 of the 30 hours required in the major must be earned during the 3-year, pre-professional work program.

2.4 Graduation Ceremonies

Graduates with GPA's of 3.40, 3.60, and 3.80 and higher and with at least 60 credit hours completed at Virginia Tech will be distinguished with titles of CUM LAUDE, MAGNA CUM LAUDE and SUMMA CUM LAUDE, respectively. In computing eligibility for graduation with distinction, all work attempted at Virginia Tech will be used.

~~Traditionally, degrees are conferred upon candidates who are present to receive them at the May commencement. Candidates may have their degrees conferred IN ABSENTIA if they cannot be present at commencement for good reason. Undergraduate students graduating in May and unable to attend commencement must write the University Registrar to establish their absence. Graduate students graduating in May must attend Commencement unless permission not to do so has been secured from the Graduate School. Such requests should be submitted in writing at least 60 days before graduation.~~

~~Diplomas for May candidates will be available at commencement.~~

2.4.1 Degree Conferring Dates

In addition to the traditional ~~Fall and Spring~~ ~~one a year~~ commencements, ~~two~~^{three} other "Degree Conferring Dates" have been established for each May-to-May year. These dates appear on the diplomas for qualified graduates. The degree conferring dates fall on the last day of final examinations (~~last day of term~~) of ~~first summer term,~~ ~~second of~~ summer term, ~~and fall and winter~~ term. No commencement ceremonies are conducted at the end of these periods, but each graduate may attend ~~Fall or Spring~~ ~~the annual~~ commencement after completion of degree requirements. ~~Undergraduate students are expected to declare their intentions to participate by writing to the University Registrar. Graduate students who desire to attend commencement must send a written declaration to the Graduate School office by the first week of April.~~

~~All degrees conferred from first summer term through fall term will be listed in the annual commencement program.~~

~~Diplomas for May candidates will be available at commencement.~~ Diplomas for other "Degree Conferring Dates" are ordered after completions are established and are distributed ~~either~~ by mail, ~~or to individual graduates who appear in person in the Office of the University Registrar.~~ Distribution of diplomas, ~~except in May,~~ is generally 2 or 3 months after completion.

3.0 Procedures

3.1 Graduation Requirements

All authorized undergraduate degrees (~~majors and major~~ options ~~and concentrations~~) are defined

operationally by departments and promulgated in the form of program requirements checklists. To establish consistent actions among the departments affecting changes in degree requirements (total hours, specific course requirements, courses in major, courses in major option concentrations, etc.), there will be a system to monitor or review over time the collective actions of departments in changing degree requirements, maintain historical records to track degree requirement changes, and put records in codified form.

1. The ~~Commission on Undergraduate Studies secretary~~ (University Registrar) will maintain a file of all the "official" degree requirements ~~s checklists~~ (degree, option, and minor) produced annually in the course catalog in effect for the current academic year as well as checklists in effect during the past six (6) academic years.
2. The University ~~(CUS)~~ has the following guidelines to assist departments and colleges in the revision and implementation of curricula changes in a reasonable and open manner:
 - a. The department offering an undergraduate degree will assume primary responsibility for its quality and take the initiative in any revision of its degree programs.
 - b. All newly proposed changes ~~to existing~~ undergraduate degree programs (majors, major options or minors) will be ~~submitted~~ collected over the academic year by the department/division and submitted as a package no more frequently than once each year to the college curriculum committee (and dean) for review and approval and then to be forwarded to ~~the University Registrar CUS for review and, if approved,~~ for incorporation into the "official" program requirements for students entering the next academic year and published in the course catalog. ~~checklist for the effective graduation year two years hence.~~
 - c. ~~New (i.e., updated) checklists will be entered into the CUS and Registrar's files only once each year, following commencement day at the end of the spring semester. At that time, any checklists more than seven (7) years old will be discarded, unless there are no more recent approved checklists in the file for the program in question.~~

3.2 Changing Major Requirements

~~Proposals to initiate or revise any of the above categories may originate within a department two years prior to the effective date of graduation. Any changes proposed less than two years must include an explanation for accommodation of student. When requirements for a departmental major are involved, the proposal must be sent to the college curriculum committee for consideration. Proposals endorsed by the curriculum committee are sent to the Commission for Undergraduate Studies (CUS). Proposals approved by the CUS will be considered endorsed by the University Council when the applicable CUS minutes are approved without exception to the specific item containing the proposal.~~

4.0 Definitions

5.0 References

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- Revision 2
 - Reference to "QCA" updated to "GPA" throughout policy.
 - Added Section 3.2. "Changing Major Requirements."

Approved April 17, 2002 by Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, David R. Ford.



AP Faculty Senate Comments

CUSP 2025-26C - Resolution to revise Policy 6815 Undergraduate Graduation

December 5, 2025

The A/P Faculty Senate Policies and Issues Committee has reviewed and approves/endorsees CUSP 2025-26C - Resolution to revise Policy 6815 Undergraduate Graduation.



Staff Senate Comments
CUSP Resolution 2025-26C
11/17/2025

Staff Senate has reviewed CUSP Resolution 2025-26C and has no questions or comments.

Staff senate has no further comment.

Thank you,

Gabe Petry, Chair, Staff Senate Policies and Issues Committee