This Faculty & Staff Handbook is provided to all employees of Virginia International University for informational purposes only and does not contain every policy that may affect employment. This is not an employment contract and it does not create contractual obligations of any kind. The policies and procedures outlined in this Handbook will be applied at the discretion of the University. The University reserves the right to change, update, modify, or eliminate any of the provisions in this Handbook at its sole discretion. Employees will be notified within a reasonable period of time when a change in policy or procedure has been made.

Virginia International University
4401 Village Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030
Telephone: 703-591-7042
www.viu.edu
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Virginia International University’s (VIU) Department of Human Resources has prepared this Handbook to provide information about many of the personnel policies, benefits, and University procedures that apply to employees. While this compilation is not to be considered complete, it does include information on personnel matters frequently of interest to employees.

An employee having questions concerning personnel matters of a departmental nature should contact her/his immediate supervisor. Questions relating to University policies, employee benefits, and matters not contained in this Handbook should be referred to VIU’s Department of Human Resources.

1. SECTION I: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1.1. VIU’s Mission Statement

Mission Statement

Virginia International University’s mission is to educate students from all over the world through a highly qualified, equally diverse faculty and staff while striving to provide academic programs that engender the intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and creativity urgently needed in the global community with a commitment to providing students with the knowledge to achieve excellence in research, scholarship, and creative endeavors.

Learning Objectives

Upon graduation from Virginia International University, students will be able to:

- Think critically and creatively
- Communicate effectively in speech and writing
- Demonstrate expertise in a scholarly discipline and understand that discipline in relation to the larger world
- Work productively as individuals and in groups
- Use their knowledge and skills to make a positive contribution to society
- Use reason to make decisions based on an understanding of ethics, a respect for diversity, and an awareness of issues related to sustainability
- Engage in lifelong learning
- Exhibit professional integrity, leadership, and effective collaboration skills

Philosophy

As a community of students, staff, and faculty drawn from diverse national, cultural, and social backgrounds, VIU aims to improve the environment in which freedom of thought and diverse interpretations of human experiences are cherished. It is our hope and expectation that each member
of the university will develop a greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, fellow members as well as to those beyond our campus who are less privileged. In the fulfillment of this mission, the university shall seek an efficient use of all available resources to ensure the highest quality of service to its students, faculty and staff. The ultimate goal of VIU is no less than to graduate scholars of moral, intellectual, and professional excellence who will not only make a better life for themselves and their families but who, more importantly, will lead the way to a better world for everyone.

At VIU, we believe that learning is not confined to the formal instruction of the traditional classroom. We offer a number of extracurricular clubs and activities where experts in a variety of subjects are brought in to discuss topics of interest to students.

In order to further the Mission and Philosophy of the University, VIU is committed to the following objectives:

- To recruit and retain outstanding and diverse faculty and staff and to support teaching, research, and the service mission of the university.
- To elevate the university’s learning environment to attract and retain excellent students from all over the world as well as from the USA.
- To offer learning experiences beyond the classroom that enhances traditional instruction and prepare students for the global workforce.
- To offer an up to date curriculum that is relevant which ensures each student has the following competencies: to think critically; to reason analytically; to solve problems realistically; and to communicate clearly.
- To endeavor to provide successful employment placement options for students.

1.2. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

It is the policy of VIU to provide equal employment and educational opportunities for all people regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, family responsibilities, political affiliation, disability, source of income, place of residence or business, and veteran status. An integral part of this policy is to administer recruiting, hiring, working conditions, benefits and privileges of employment, compensation, training, opportunity for advancement including upgrades and promotion, transfer, and termination of employment, including layoff and recall, for all employees in accordance with this policy.

1.3. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination against a person with a disability in the offer or conditions of employment, and in the participation or furnishing of services. VIU is obliged to provide reasonable accommodations to enable qualified individuals with documented disabilities to perform a job, participate in a class, or participate in other University functions. A qualified employee or applicant with a disability is an individual who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of a particular job or meet specific academic/program requirements for participation in a University-sponsored program, service or activity. To be covered under ADA, the disability must be substantial and not temporary. The ADA does not alter VIU’s right to hire the best-qualified applicant, but does prohibit discrimination
against a qualified applicant or employee because of her/his disability. For more information on ADA, contact the Department of Human Resources.

1.4. Civil Rights and Sexual Harassment

Virginia International University does not and will not tolerate sexual harassment of students, faculty, and/or staff. This policy is part of the University’s effort to maintain a learning, and working, environment free from sexual harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Violation of this policy will subject individuals to disciplinary actions, up to and including dismissal for employees and students. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that is illegal under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 for employees and under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 for students. In keeping with the guidelines provided by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on sexual harassment in employment, Virginia International University defines sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed at an individual, or action taken in retaliation for reporting such behavior, regardless of where such conduct may occur. Sexual harassment is deemed to have occurred when:

1. Submission to the conduct is either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic performance; or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions, including, but not limited to, promotion, transfer, selection for training or performance evaluation, or used as the basis for academic evaluation; or
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an affected employee’s work performance or an affected student's academic performance or participation in educational pursuits; or
4. The conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or study environment.

Sexual harassment is a serious offense. As a consequence, any faculty or staff member who engages in such conduct or encourages such behavior by others shall be subject to disciplinary action that may include dismissal. The conduct includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome offensive behaviors referring to a person’s race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, political affiliation, or disability. Questions, assistance, or violations related to these policies should be directed to the Department of Human Resources.

1.5. Whistleblower Policy

It is the intent of VIU to remain in compliance with all laws and regulations that apply to our organization. In accordance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, Virginia International University will not retaliate against an employee who has raised a complaint against VIU, or of another individual or entity with whom VIU has a business relationship, on the basis of a reasonable belief that there is a violation of law. Employees that raise complaints about their immediate supervisor being in violation of the law or regulations will not be subject to termination or disciplinary action, if that complaint is reasonably found.

1.6. Workplace Safety
The University is committed to maintaining a safe, hazard-free workplace. It is the responsibility of each employee to maintain safe working habits on the job. Unsafe working conditions and work related accidents should be immediately reported to your supervisor. An accident should be reported by the supervisor to the Department of Human Resources.

1.7. Violence in the Workplace

VIU has a policy of zero tolerance for violence. If an employee engages in any violence in the workplace, or threatens violence in the workplace, his or her employment may be terminated immediately. No talk of violence or joking about violence will be tolerated. “Violence” includes: physically harming another, shoving, pushing, harassing, intimidating, coercing, brandishing weapons, and threatening or talking of engaging in those activities. It is the intent of this policy to ensure that everyone associated with VIU, including employees and students, never feels threatened by any employee’s actions or conduct.

If an employee believes that she/he has been the subject of such acts or that she/he has observed such acts, she/he must report these acts immediately to the Department of Human Resources. It is the policy of VIU that these acts should be reported regardless of the relationship between the person engaging in the act and the person to whom the act is directed. Employees are not required to make such reports to the employee’s supervisor if the supervisor is perceived to be engaged in such acts. Supervisors and managers who become aware of such acts must immediately report the matter to the Department of Human Resources.

VIU officials will take seriously all reports of such acts. If an employee is found to have engaged in such conduct, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, and may be reported to law enforcement authorities. Furthermore, VIU will not tolerate retaliation against employees who report such acts or who participate in investigations of such conduct as witnesses or in other capacities.

1.8. Weapons

In the interest of safety and security, it is the University’s position that no employee or other person may possess, use, sell, or store, while conducting University business, on campus, or on property under the control of VIU, any dangerous weapon (operational or decorative), firearm, explosive, or any other potentially harmful device. Violation of this policy will result in serious disciplinary action up to and including termination.

1.9. Safe and Drug-Free School Policy

In compliance with the US Department of Education and the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act Amendment of 1989, PL 101-226 20 USC’s 1145g, Higher Education Act of 1965, Section 1213, VIU has adopted the following safe and drug-free school policy for the protection and welfare of all students and staff:

1. VIU will not tolerate the unlawful possession and use of alcohol or controlled substances (drugs) on its premises.
2. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of alcohol and controlled substances is prohibited in and on property owned by or under the control of VIU.
3. Students and employees who violate this policy may be subject to arrest and prosecution and will be subject to the disciplinary procedures provided by the various negotiated agreements or such other corrective action as the President or the President’s designee may deem appropriate. Other corrective action may include satisfactory participation in an approved alcohol or drug rehabilitation program.

4. Students and employees should be aware that the legal sanctions that may be imposed under current laws regarding the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, use, or sale of alcohol or controlled substances include fines and prison terms ranging from one year to life in prison upon conviction.

5. Students and employees should also be aware that the health risks associated with the abuse of alcohol and the unlawful use of controlled substances include, but are not limited to, memory loss, depression, seizures, falls, accidents, heart and lung diseases, frequent infection, and sudden death.

6. VIU will make a good-faith effort to maintain an alcohol-free and drug-free workplace.

The premises consist of any leased or owned property by VIU or any site where official duties are being performed by VIU employees. All employees of VIU are subject to random drug testing by a contracted third party organization. Any employee who commits any prohibited act under this policy shall be subject to the full range of disciplinary actions, including discharge, and may be required to participate satisfactorily in an appropriate rehabilitation program.

1.10. No-Smoking Policy

Smoking is not permitted within facilities owned or leased by the University nor in university-owned vehicles. Smoking is not permitted within 50 feet of any university facility.

2. SECTION II: EMPLOYEE POLICIES

2.1. Employment at-will

In accordance with the laws of the state of Virginia, employment at the University may be terminated at the will of the employee or the University at any time without notice or cause. No representative of the University has the authority to enter into a contract agreement with an employee except for the President or Vice President of Business Affairs. Any such contract agreement must be in writing and signed by the President or Vice President of Business Affairs.

2.2. Employee Classifications

Each employee at VIU will be classified as non-exempt or exempt as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Classification of a position is determined based on a series of exemption criteria that evaluate the levels of responsibility within a position, as stated in a position’s job description. The Department of Human Resources will inform all employees of the classification of their position.

2.2.1. Non-Exempt Employees

Non-exempt Employees - Basic Work Schedule

Rev: 08/19/2014
The basic schedule of work for full-time, non-exempt employees is eight hours per day, five days per week. The employee’s supervisor will decide the regular hours of the position.

Non-exempt Employees - Overtime
Federal law requires all non-exempt employees to be paid one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for any hours worked over the standard 40 hour workweek. A non-exempt employee cannot work overtime without prior authorization given by their supervisor and the Department of Human Resources. An employee who may be required to work more than 40 hours in a workweek, that includes one or more days of PTO or paid holidays, is not entitled to overtime for that particular week if the actual number of hours worked did not exceed 40. A time sheet should be completed for overtime hours, approved by their supervisor, and submitted to the Department of Human Resources for payroll processing.

Non-exempt Employees - Attendance and Leave Records
All non-exempt employees are required to be present and ready to work at the beginning of their scheduled shift. Non-exempt employees who arrive late for work, and/or are absent from work (and who do not present an acceptable reason to their supervisor), may be subject to disciplinary action and may not be paid for the time during which they were absent.

Time records must reflect the actual hours worked and in most cases will coincide with the hours assigned. (In the rare circumstance when actual time worked does not coincide with hours assigned, the employee should obtain written authorization from his or her supervisor prior to working the different hours.) No changes, alterations, or notations may be made on any time records without the approval and signature of the employee’s supervisor and the Department of Human Resources.

An employee’s failure to record his or her time in a prompt, accurate and regular manner and/or an employee’s negligent or intentional falsification of time or leave records is a serious offense. An employee who engages in such conduct will be disciplined up to and including termination of employment.

2.2.2. Exempt Employees
Employees who are classified as exempt are paid a base salary and are not eligible for overtime. Sometimes, for instance, an exempt employee may need to work extra hours or days to complete a project or task to perform his or her work in a professional and acceptable manner. No additional compensation or paid time-off is provided to an exempt employee when such an employee works extra or additional hours or days.

One’s status as an exempt employee also means that the compensation will not be decreased or docked due to lateness or partial day absences that are less than 4 hours. However, unexcused absences and absences for which leave with pay is not available, and which last for a full day or more, will result in a decrease in compensation for each such full day of absence.

The University seeks to employ individuals who are dedicated to their work and who exercise sound judgment in the conduct of their work and work schedules. With one’s status as an exempt employee comes the expectation that the employee is capable of conducting their work schedule in a mature and wise manner. It is expected that exempt employees will maintain regular office hours as approved by
their supervisors. Exempt employees are required to attend VIU’s annual graduation for our students, and are highly encouraged to participate in other VIU events.

2.3. Employment of Non-US Citizens

VIU employs Non-US Citizens (both Immigrants and Non-Immigrants) in accordance with the Immigration and Nationality Act and within the regulations of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Immigrants are defined as permanent residents that may permanently work in the US, but are Non-US Citizens; and Non-Immigrants are defined as individuals that are given temporary authorization to work in the US by the USCIS. Applicants seeking visa sponsorship by VIU must be permanent employees in a “permanent” position at the University. A “permanent” position is defined by the USCIS as a position in which there is no anticipated ending date on the part of both the employer and the employee. Future employment cannot be guaranteed to any employee, regardless of residency status. The University is given sole discretion in assuming any financial liabilities in the visa application process, and unless otherwise determined, any and all financial liabilities are to be held by the employee.

F-1 - Student Employment
Students who are attending VIU full-time and have begun attending classes at VIU may apply for part-time employment on-campus. In compliance with the USCIS regulation, student employees may work up to 20 hours a week while school is in session, and up to 40 hours a week when school is not in session. The number of hours a student employee is scheduled to work is determined by the requirements of the department, and any change in hours must be authorized with the written approval of the Department of Human Resources. Student employees are officially evaluated each semester by their immediate supervisor. Evaluations are directly submitted for review to the Department of Human Resources and will determine the continuation of a student’s employment. (Please see VIU’s On-Campus Student Employment Policy for additional policies, which are available on the VIU Faculty & Staff webpage.)

F-1 - OPT Employment
Student employees wishing to obtain OPT (Optional Practical Training), upon graduation of their studies, may make an official request by submitting the Employee Application for OPT Form. The student employees’ direct supervisor must also submit a Supervisor Recommendation for OPT Form. In addition, a written recommendation from another staff member must also be submitted. All forms must be submitted directly to the Department of Human Resources at least two (2) months prior to the start of the student employees’ authorized OPT period.

H-1B - Sponsored Employment
OPT (Optional Practical Training) employees may make an official request for H-1B sponsorship by submitting the Employee Application for H-1B Status Form. The OPT employees’ direct supervisor must submit a Supervisor Recommendation for H-1B Form. In addition, a written recommendation from another staff member must also be submitted. All forms must be submitted directly to the Department of Human Resources at least seven (7) months prior to the end of the employees’ authorized OPT period or expiration of current H-1B visa. It is preferred that employees possess a minimum of a US Master’s degree (or evaluated foreign equivalent) in the specific specialty or a related field to their position at the time of the request or renewal of H-1B sponsorship. VIU reserves the right to deny any visa sponsorship requests.
Travel and Re-Entry to the U.S. on H-1B Visas

WARNING: Current U.S. regulations require new security clearance checks on certain foreign nationals applying for non-immigrant visas to the U.S. These checks may be random, or they may be triggered by criteria such as country of birth or citizenship, or field of study or research. These checks can delay the visa application process by as much as two to three months. Please check www.state.gov for more information.

If you travel out of the U.S. while you are in H-1B Status, you should have the following documents in order to be re-admitted to the U.S.

• Passport valid 6 months into the future
• Letter from Human Resources confirming current employment in same position described in H-1B petition.
• Recent check-stubs proving current employment at VIU
• Copy of complete H-1B petition filed with the CIS
• Valid Form I-797 H Approval Notice.
• Valid H1-B visa for re-entry to the U.S.

If your travel visa or your H-1B visa stamp has expired, you will need to apply for a new H-1B visa stamp at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy abroad the next time you travel outside of the U.S. You must have a valid visa stamp in order to return to the U.S.

WARNING: Whenever you apply to the U.S. consulate for a new entry visa stamp, you always run the risk that your application may be denied. For this reason, VIU discourages travel abroad with an expired visa stamp. Further, VIU reserves the right to terminate an H-1B visa at any time.

Permanent Residence (Green card) Employment

Employees wishing to obtain a green card must be employed by VIU full-time for at least two (2) years and a minimum of a US Master’s degree (or evaluated foreign equivalent) at the time of the request is preferred. The employee must be employed the entire time of the green card application process and until the green card has been issued. A request for green card sponsorship must be made in writing to the Department of Human Resources. A response to this request will be given within 30 days in writing. All requests must be made at least two (2) full years prior to the end of an H-1B visa holder’s expiration date. VIU reserves the right to deny any visa sponsorship requests.

2.4. Recording Time/Attendance

At the recommendation of the University’s independent auditors, a time-clock system has been established to verify and track employee work hours. Employees, including adjunct faculty, must punch in when they arrive at the University and punch out when they leave the University. For full-time staff, this system will not be used to determine pay; rather, it will serve as proof that the staff member was present at the times required by his/her work schedule. Full-time staff or faculty that are not required to use the time-clock system will be made aware of their exemption from this policy.
2.5. Holidays

For the 2014 – 2015 Academic Calendar year, Virginia International will observe the following 12 holidays, during which there will be no classes.

- Labor Day: September 1, 2014
- Thanksgiving: November 27, 2014
- The day after Thanksgiving: November 28, 2014
- Memorial Day: May 25, 2015
- Independence Day: July 3, 2015 (as July 4 falls on a Saturday in 2015)
- Christmas Eve: December 24, 2014
- Christmas Day: December 25, 2014
- December 26, 2014
- December 29, 2014
- December 30, 2014
- New Year’s Eve: December 31, 2014
- New Year’s Day: January 1, 2015

- Winter Break:
  - VIU students are on Winter Break from December 24, 2014 through January 1, 2015
  - VIU offices are closed Christmas Day, December 25, 2014 and New Year’s Day, January 1, 2015
  - Departments that must have an employee working on campus during Winter Break (December 24, 26, 29-31) are the following:
    - Registrar Office
    - Admissions Office
    - Inquiries
    - Accounting Office
    - International Student Services/DSO
    - Student Affairs (Housing)
    - IT
  - The employees that work December 24, 26, 29-31 may choose alternative days off
  - If you are not required to work during the Winter Break (see above) but choose to do so you may, provided this is not during a blocked-out time for your department. This must be approved by your Departmental Supervisor and Vice President and communicated to Human Resources.
• Birthday - VIU full-time staff may have their birthday off. This should be the actual date of your birth or the day before or after whenever possible. If this is not possible, your Departmental Supervisor must approve the day and communicate this to Human Resources.

**Religious Holiday Policy**

VIU seeks to extend hospitality to all persons regardless of race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, economic or social background. Diversity is valued at VIU, and the University is committed to assuring that all persons who enter this community are welcomed and respected. VIU, a secular institution of higher education, stands at the same distance to all world religions and does not observe religious holidays. VIU does not observe religious holidays of any type other than what the state and federal governments observe officially in the US. Therefore, all scheduled educational activities and University sponsored events will take place as scheduled as publicized by our Academic Calendar.

2.6. **Workers’ Compensation**

In accordance with the Virginia Workers’ Compensation Act, VIU provides Workers’ Compensation insurance to all employees for work-related illnesses and injuries. If an employee experiences a work-related illness or injury, they must immediately report the situation to their supervisor and the Department of Human Resources. To be considered work-related, the illness or injury must take place during the course of employment, occur during activities required of the employee’s position, and while working on VIU’s premises.

2.7. **Liens and Garnishments**

Liens and garnishments will be honored by the University in accordance with the State of Virginia Garnishment Law and the Federal Wage Garnishment Act. A garnishment or lien is the result of any legal or equitable procedure through which earnings of any individual are required to be withheld for the payment of any debt. Federal law prohibits an employer from firing an employee whose earnings are subject to garnishment for any one debt, regardless of the number of levies made or proceedings brought to collect that debt, because of the single garnishment. The law does not prohibit discharge because an employee's earnings are separately garnished for two or more debts. Deductions are made in accordance with the law.

2.8. **Final Paycheck**

The employee’s final paycheck shall be issued by the University only upon receipt of all pertinent materials from the employee; including office keys, office supplies and equipment, and anything that is considered property of the University. In the case of contracted faculty members, these materials include the course information sheet, the course syllabus, the attendance records, make-ups, grade report, and other required University forms. These materials should be submitted to the person designated as the employee’s supervisor.

2.9. **Discipline**
Employees are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures set forth in the Employee Handbook, policies on equal employment opportunity and sexual harassment, rules and regulations, (which may be revised from time to time), and the lawful directives of their supervisors. However, the University recognizes that some employees will unfortunately engage in improper conduct and/or fail to perform their duties adequately. Employees who engage in misconduct are subject to discipline. Employees who fail to achieve and maintain acceptable levels of performance are subject to remedial action. Discipline may include, but is not limited to, a verbal warning, a written warning, suspension, demotion or discharge. Virginia International University reserves sole discretion to determine what level of discipline is appropriate under the circumstances. Formal discipline will be made a permanent part of the employee’s personnel file.

Remedial action for poor performance may include the formulation of a corrective work plan, or reassignment, and/or additional training. VIU reserves the right in all situations to determine the acceptability of work and whether any individual should be retained as an employee.

2.10. Termination of Employment

Employment with the University is at-will. Employment with the University may be terminated in accordance with the following polices.

Voluntary Termination
Employees may terminate their employment at the University at any time, for any or no reason. Employees who voluntarily resign from their employment are requested to provide at least two weeks of advance notice of their resignation in writing to their supervisor and to the Department of Human Resources. Employees who voluntarily resign will receive their final paycheck (minus any appropriate deductions to the extent permitted by law) on the next regular payday or within seven days of their resignation. There will be no compensation for unused PTO. It is the policy of the University that all employees leaving the University complete an exit interview with a staff member from the Department of Human Resources.

Involuntary Termination
The University may terminate the employment of any employee at any time, for any reason or for no reason. Employees who are involuntarily terminated will receive their final paycheck (minus any appropriate deductions to the extent permitted by law) upon termination. There will be no compensation for unused PTO. It is the policy of the University that all employees leaving the University complete an exit interview with a staff member from the Department of Human Resources.

2.11. Unemployment Insurance

In accordance with the Virginia Unemployment Compensation Act, VIU provides Unemployment Insurance benefits to eligible former employees. A claimant’s eligibility for Unemployment Insurance is determined solely by the state employment commission that is handling the unemployment benefit claim.

3. SECTION III: OTHER EMPLOYEE POLICIES
3.1. Employment Practices and Public Relations

No member of the University community shall engage in any employment practice that is a violation of federal law, or the law of the state of Virginia. No one in a supervisory position or in any position of higher authority in the University is to use his or her position to intimidate subordinate employees or to exact personal favors or things of value from employees of lesser rank within the University. It is expected that all employees will refrain from discussing their employment at or promoting other academic institutions while in the classroom or advising and/or assisting VIU students.

3.2. English Only-Specific Circumstances

Although it is the policy of VIU to encourage diversity and inclusiveness in all of its educational/business pursuits, there are some occasions when VIU will require that its employees converse or take direction and guidance in English. Thus, this English-only policy will provide specific circumstances where English-only rules must be observed:

1. English will be used when dealing with students/customers who express a preference or the expectation that our employees are proficient in English.
2. All task directions and work directives will be provided in English and, while employees are engaged in such work-related efforts or on project teams, they will be expected to communicate in English.
3. All departmental and team meetings that relate to business operations will be expected to be conducted in English.
4. All work-related e-mailing is expected to be communicated in English unless customer requirements state a preference that another language be used.

3.3. Professional Etiquette

It is the expectation of the University that all employees will behave in a professional manner at all times while conducting University business. Every member of the University community is expected to treat each other and members of the public with courtesy, professionalism, and civility. Professionalism is conveyed through responsible and respectful communication and actions, which create a constructive learning and working environment. This includes professionalism in all forms of communication, whether in person or electronically, with other staff, faculty, students, and affiliated businesses; and conduct of professional behavior at all University functions and events. All employees are required to leave all personal electronic devices outside of University meetings. Personal electronic devices are only to be used in emergency situations at the workplace, or with prior approval. Employees who fail to achieve and maintain acceptable levels of professionalism are subject to remedial action.

All VIU employees are expected to answer the telephone at their workspace. Please identify yourself and your department in a courteous and professional manner. For example – “VIU Accounting Department, this is Michelle, how may I help you?” If it is necessary to transfer a call, always ensure the call is transferred to an individual prior to transferring the call. If you must put the call into a voice mail box, please inform the caller you are doing so.
3.4. Dress Code

The University is firmly committed to avoiding illegal discrimination on the basis of personal appearance. The University does require its employees to observe reasonable standards of neatness, good grooming and appropriate business attire at all times while working in the University community. Consideration should be given to the sensitivity of the many cultures represented here. Each employee’s dress, while on duty at the University and working off-campus on behalf of the University must be appropriate to the employee’s job responsibilities. Offices in the Department of Student Affairs may wear casual dress, which consists of approved VIU apparel with jeans or khakis. All other offices may participate in casual dress on Fridays. VIU is a business environment and when dressing casually, no running shoes, t-shirts with writing or casual t-shirts without collars are permitted.

3.5. Grievance Procedure

Work-related problems can arise in any place of employment. VIU’s management encourages employees to try to reconcile differences on an individual basis. If this is not possible, in order to resolve a problem quickly and fairly, VIU has developed a four-level process for employee grievances.

**Procedure**

1. The employee attempts to resolve the complaint as close to the source as possible in an informal, verbal manner. *If the matter is not resolved;*
2. The employee notifies their supervisor in writing as to the nature of the grievance and the measures used to resolve it. Discussion should be held between the employee, the supervisor and any other relevant party. This level is usually informal, but either party may request written statements about the interaction from the supervisor. This level should not exceed 5 business days. *If the matter is not resolved;*
3. The employee must send a letter stating the nature of their grievance to the Department of Human Resources and inform her/his supervisor of this action. The supervisor will forward to the Department of Human Resources any additional information relevant to the grievance. The Department of Human Resources may elect to mediate the situation. The Department of Human Resources will provide a written response to the employee within 5 business days. *If the matter is not resolved;*
4. The employee will be advised of her/his rights to pursue the matter with external arbitrators if they wish.

3.6. Personnel Records

Virginia International University’s Department of Human Resources maintains one personnel file for each employee relating to their employment with VIU. To assist in keeping these records up to date, it is important for each employee to report any changes in the information contained in their files; such as address, telephone number, change in tax status, or change of legal status. In addition, employees should inform the Department of Human Resources when they have attended any conferences or participated in continuing education. Copies of certificates from workshops/conferences will be included in the file. Although personnel files are the property of VIU, current employees can request access to certain records in their files. All requests for such records should be made directly to the
Department of Human Resources. Human Resources will locate these records and set up a mutually agreeable time for the employee to review these files with the employee. The employee may receive copies of specific materials in their personnel record; including transcripts, resumes, evaluations, and employment letters. However, the employee may not alter, remove, or copy (other than those previously specified) their records. If the employee disagrees with any of the information in the files, the employee may prepare a written rebuttal and the rebuttal will be included in the file.

3.7. FERPA Regulations & Policy

In order to maintain the confidentiality of student information at VIU, Faculty and Staff is required to be FERPA certified and comply with FERPA regulations. To complete the FERPA certification, Faculty and Staff will have to visit the U.S. Department of Education website and complete a FERPA Awareness Training Course. Once completed, the next step is to submit a hard copy or soft copy of the FERPA certificate along with the VIU acknowledgement form to the Human Resources Department. New Faculty and Staff will receive an email with guidelines two weeks after they are hired and will be given two months to submit a hard copy or soft copy of the FERPA certificate together with the VIU acknowledgement form to the Human Resources Department.

Students’ Records and Release of Information

In compliance with Public Law 93-380, “The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act” (FERPA), which is Section 438 of the General Education Provision Act, VIU has adopted policies and procedures that permit students the opportunity to view their educational records upon request. Educational records mean those records, files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to a student. The institution will not permit access to or release of confidential information from a student’s records to any individual or agency without the written consent of the student, except for the following situations:

1. Name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, program undertaken, dates of attendance, and certificates, diplomas, and degrees awarded may be provided to third parties unless the request to omit such information is presented in writing.
2. Records are required by VIU officials in the proper performance of their duties. VIU defines a school official as a person employed by the university including a full-time or adjunct professor/instructor, an administrator, clerical staff, a member of the board of trustees or a member of committees and disciplinary boards, or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary committee, with legitimate educational interests.
3. In accordance with FERPA, a school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility.
4. Information may be provided to organizations conducting studies for educational and governmental agencies.
5. Information may be provided to US government agencies as listed in Public Law 93-380 who request information for specific purposes.
6. Information may be provided at the request of any accrediting agencies.
7. Information may be provided to parents of dependent children as defined in the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.
8. Information may be provided to appropriate persons in connection with an emergency.
9. Information may be provided for the purposes of awarding financial aid.
10. Information may be provided in response to legal court orders.
4. SECTION IV: STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

4.1. Scope

The standards of conduct apply to the following members of Virginia International University:

- Board of Trustees
- Faculty and Staff
- Volunteers and other representatives when speaking or acting on behalf of the University

4.2. Proper Use of University Resources

University resources shall not be used for anything other than their intended purpose. Resources should not be used for personal reasons or offered to anyone outside of the University for their use. Resources cannot be used in violation of the law.

4.3. Relationship with Vendors

No member of the University community may approve, recommend, or promote a business transaction in which that person has a direct personal interest, or otherwise cause the University to do business with a firm in which that person is an officer or senior management employee or in which that person owns equity interest unless such person discloses her/his relationship and the relevant circumstances or the contemplated activity, in writing, to the President and: It is determined that the proposed activity is fair to the University and will not result in the University foregoing revenues, or incurring costs in excess of the costs that would be incurred for goods, property, or service of like quality if acquired from another source.

4.4. Gratuities

No member of the University community shall receive or solicit anything of value in return for influencing or exercising her/his discretion in a particular way on a University matter. In addition, Trustees and Senior Administrative Personnel are prohibited from accepting or soliciting any gratuity or thing of value for or because of any official act performed or to be performed by the Trustee or senior employee in his or her official capacity with the University. This provision does not prohibit the acceptance of an item having a nominal value or ceremonial gifts received by Officers or Trustees of the University in their official capacity.

4.5. Confidentiality and Maintenance of Accurate Accounts

The accounts and records of the University are maintained in a manner that provide for an accurate and auditable record of all financial transactions in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles, established business practices, and all relevant provisions of controlling law. No false or deceptive entries may be made and all entries must contain an appropriate description of the underlying
transaction. All University funds must be retained in the appropriate University accounts with appropriately designated financial institutions and no undisclosed or unrecorded fund or asset shall be established or maintained for any purpose. All reports, vouchers, bills, invoices, payroll information, personnel records, and other essential business records must be prepared with care and honesty.

Since the unauthorized use of the records and accounts described in the preceding paragraph can cause the University harm, access to such data will be closely controlled. Members of the University community who improperly convert these records and accounts for their own personal use or the personal use of another, or who wrongfully disclose such records or accounts will be subject to appropriate legal sanctions by the University. To further the enforcement of this standard of conduct, the President may direct that certain employees who occupy sensitive or confidential positions execute confidentiality agreements with the University as a condition for employment or continued employment.

4.6. Educational Benefits and Opportunities

No member of the University community shall deny a student fair access to all educational opportunities and benefits available at the University. Invidious harassment, discrimination, or intimidation of students that deny or impede their right of access to these benefits and opportunities will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action. No member of the University community shall deny any member of the faculty a fair opportunity to teach, conduct research, and to provide services to the University in a setting that provides the academic freedom necessary to cultivate a wide expanse of ideas and teaching methods. Unwarranted interruption of classes or other academic activities is an abridgement of the right of the faculty to teach and an abridgment of the rights of the affected students to learn.

4.7. Social Networking

In general, the University views social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace), personal websites, and weblogs positively and respects the right of employees or University representatives to use them as a medium of self-expression. If an employee or representative of the University chooses to identify himself or herself as an employee or representative of VIU on such Internet venues, some readers of such websites or blogs may view them as a spokesperson of the University. No member of the University community should express that their personal views represent that of Virginia International University. All members of the University community are expected to respect the confidentiality and proprietary information of VIU at all times, regardless of the medium.

Use of social networking sites during working hours is prohibited except when considered essential to the performance of a University-related task.

Departmental Use of Social Media Sites

Some University departments (e.g., Marketing, Student Affairs, etc.) may utilize social media to pursue departmental goals. Any department wishing to maintain a VIU-related and endorsed social media site must first receive approval from the Vice President of Finance & Technology. Use of VIU’s name and/or logo is not permitted until approval is granted. All account and login information must be shared with the Vice President of Finance & Technology, as well as any updates made thereto.

5. SECTION V: ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF POLICIES AND BENEFITS
5.1. Staff Evaluations

The appraisal process offers an excellent opportunity to establish work objectives, to review results, and to provide a vehicle for effective two-way communication between the employee and the supervisor. Every employee should receive an annual written appraisal of his/her performance conducted by their supervisor. A copy of the completed appraisal will be provided to the employee when requested and an additional copy forwarded to the Department of Human Resources for placement in the employee’s personnel file.

The performance review period for all employees is an annual cycle. The non-probationary cycle runs each year from January 1st to December 31st. An employee’s performance will be evaluated at the end of the review period by the criteria outlined on the performance evaluation form.

In addition to the annual evaluation, as deemed necessary, verbal and written performance appraisals may be conducted throughout the year. These appraisals may be performed through supervisor evaluation, management feedback, peer review, and other forms of appraisal.

5.2. Probationary Period

Upon hire as an employee with the University, employees will participate in a three (3) month probationary period during which time both the employee and their supervisor will have a chance to determine the employee’s suitability for the position. Probationary reviews include a written evaluation and are conducted regularly during this period. A probationary period may be extended up to six months if necessary. This policy applies to part-time and full-time staff members; it does not apply to adjunct faculty members. For the evaluation process of faculty members, please refer to Policy 6.5.

5.3. Job Descriptions

Full-time staff members receive a job description that outlines their responsibilities, employment classification, supervisor, department, and other details that relate to their position. This position description will be reviewed between the supervisor and the employee and should be signed by the employee. A signed copy will be kept in the employee’s personnel file. An employee’s job description does not state or imply that these are the only duties to be performed by the employee within this position. The employee is expected to perform other duties necessary for the effective operation of the department and university.

5.4. Promotions and Transfers

The University encourages promotion from within whenever practical. It is the University’s expectation, whenever possible, that employees will remain in their position for one year prior to requesting or applying for a position or department change. Where appropriate, an employee may be promoted to a more responsible position in their current department, or other department, without the position being posted. Employee eligibility for promotion will be determined by the requirements of the position, as well as by the employee’s performance evaluations. In addition, to be considered, employees must have a satisfactory performance record and have no disciplinary actions during the same period. Employees
interested in a promotion or transfer should make their interests known to the Department of Human Resources.

5.5. Compensation

The University determines compensation for each employee by factoring in the duties, responsibilities, and skills necessary for the position held by the employee; as well as the needs and financial condition of the University and the particular qualifications and abilities of the individual in that position. The University follows an established job evaluation manual and pay scale to determine the appropriate salary for each position and individual within that position. The University retains the sole discretion to determine and adjust compensation.

**Hourly, non-exempt employees** are paid for the number of exact hours that they worked for each pay period. Payments will be released following the service performed the previous pay period. All hourly, non-exempt employees must punch-in and out every day.

**Salaried, exempt and non-exempt, employees** are paid following the service performed the previous pay period. Non-exempt employees must not work over 40 hours within one workweek, unless authorization is given in advance. The Department of Human Resources will review punch clock records for exempt and non-exempt employees periodically. Exempt and non-exempt employees must punch-in and out every day (those employees that are not required to use the time-clock system are notified).

5.6. Hours of Operation and Attendance

As important as it is to maintain a good attendance record at work, there will most likely be times when an employee cannot avoid being late or absent. **If an employee knows in advance that they will be late or absent, it is their responsibility to tell their supervisor and inform the Department of Human Resources.**

The employee may not always be able to plan in advance when they will be late or absent. In such instances, the employee should let their supervisor know prior to the beginning of their scheduled work time that they will be late or absent. Failure to report a late arrival or absence according to University requirements is considered an unexcused absence and may result in disciplinary action. The employee should determine in advance from their supervisor to whom they should report if their supervisor is unavailable. It is important that all employees report late arrivals or absences to the proper person to avoid being charged with failure to report to work.

During normal work hours, an employee should not leave their work area for personal matters (other than lunch or breaks) without permission from their supervisor or the individual responsible in the absence of their supervisor. All employees must notify the Front Desk when they leave the building during office hours.

5.7. Workweek
Full-time, exempt and non-exempt, employees normally work between 32 - 40 hours per week, 5 business days per week. The University’s normal work hours are between 8:00am and 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. Employees in certain areas may work non-standard shifts or workweeks to provide adequate coverage and service to the University community. An employee’s work schedule should be pre-arranged with their supervisor and submitted to the Department of Human Resources. Any deviation from their work schedule should be approved by an employee’s supervisor. All full-time employees are expected to report to work no later than 9:00 am. No employee may telecommute without prior approval from both their supervisor and the Department of Human Resources.

5.8. Breaks/Lunch

An employee’s supervisor may grant a break from the regular work schedule, but is not required to do so. There may be no more than two of these breaks in a normal workday, and they may not exceed 15 minutes. The break periods shall not be used to extend lunch hours, offset late arrival to work or early departure from work, nor be used to create paid time-off (PTO) for other purposes.

Lunch should last one hour and be scheduled with the approval of the employee’s supervisor. Lunch periods should be staggered to provide departmental coverage. However, like breaks, lunch periods are not to be used to offset late arrivals to work, early departure or other absences. They must be taken and cannot be used to create paid time-off (PTO). All offices should have office hours posted at the door.

5.9. Alternative Work Schedules

Alternative works schedules may be necessary in some instances to provide effective services to the University community. When feasible, the University also tries to provide employees with a work schedule that is flexible enough to allow an opportunity to balance work and other responsibilities. Alternative work schedules must be approved by an employee’s supervisor and the Department of Human Resources.

5.10. Outside Employment

VIU employees that engage in outside employment must inform their immediate supervisor of their other employment. Employees may not engage in this employment during the hours they are scheduled to work at VIU. All employees who are considered part of the Senior Staff at VIU may not engage in outside employment that is considered direct competition and within the same industry as VIU. Continuation of one’s employment at VIU is contingent on whether or not the outside employment affects the employee’s work performance at VIU.

Full-time employees that serve as an administrator, manager, or director in our academic programs at VIU may have limited outside teaching engagements. Full-time employees who are affected by this policy will be informed directly in writing, and are limited to teaching one online course at any time at an outside academic institution.

5.11. Official Closings

Decisions to close all non-essential University operations will be made by personnel in University Advancement in conjunction with the President. All employees are expected to report to work on time;
however, when weather conditions create transportation difficulties that result in late arrival, supervisors may authorize up to two hours of such lost time as an authorized absence. Upon an authorized official closing, all full-time employees will receive their regular pay. When the school is not officially closed, and an employee determines they are still unable to commute to work, the employee will be required to use an equal amount of their accrued PTO or be unpaid. All full-time employees that have received pre-approved leave on the day of an authorized official closing will still be charged for leave that day.

For information regarding late openings or official closings, please listen to local television stations or visit the VIU website. If Essential Personnel (see Policy 5.12) are required to report to work, it will be specified in the official announcement.

**Alert System** - VIU uses an SMS Alert System as part of our ongoing emergency management efforts. This system is available for all members of the VIU community to enroll with a cell phone number, and receive important alerts about the University. For example, if there is bad weather that forces the campus to close or classes to be cancelled, VIU will send a text-message alert to all who have enrolled in the SMS Alert System notifying them of the closures and cancellations. Also, if there is a hazard or emergency on campus, VIU will inform all members of our community by text message. Our goal is to keep our student body, faculty, and staff safe and informed at all times.

In order to enroll in this system and stay informed about the status of the University, text GOVIU to the number 25827. VIU will not share your telephone information with third parties, and will only use the system when there is a compelling University-wide announcement, such as a snow closing or delay. As always, weather delay and closing information will also be posted on the VIU website and on all major media outlets.

**5.12. Essential and Non-Essential Personnel**

**Essential Personnel** are classified as those individuals or positions that are deemed vital to the continuation of the University’s operations. Essential Personnel may be required to report to work during an authorized official closing, weather permitting. Individuals will be specified by the head of the department in writing, and a list of these employees will be kept on file with the Department of Human Resources. The head of the department must inform Human Resources by September 15th of each year of who is considered Essential Personnel for the coming Academic year. Essential Personnel that report to work for a full day, if required during an authorized official closing, will receive one day of leave added to their PTO.

**Non-Essential Personnel** are classified as those individuals that are not required to report to work during authorized official closings.

**5.13. Travel Expenses and Compensation**

Certain expenses employees incur while traveling on University business will be reimbursed by the University. These normally include transportation, lodging, and meals. Employees are normally expected to utilize the most economical methods of air transportation and lodging available. Questions concerning acceptable, reimbursable expenses should be directed to the employee’s supervisor. All expenses must be submitted on an Expense Request Form and approved in advance by the Budget Administrator/Supervisor, Purchasing Coordinator, and the Vice President of Finance & Technology.
Failure to do this will result in non-approval of expenses. All receipts will be carefully reviewed and any unrelated expenses or expenses over the allowed budget will not be considered for reimbursement.

If an employee’s private vehicle is used for a University activity or University sponsored events they will be reimbursed at the rate of $0.555 per mile. VIU is not responsible for the penalties and fines incurred due to irresponsible use of the vehicle. VIU only carries liability insurance on the vehicles it owns.

A more detailed description of travel expenses and compensation is available in the Purchasing Expense Request Travel Policy.

5.14. Employee Benefits

The following policies (5.15 – 5.23) explain the benefits offered through employment at VIU. Certain benefits and their corresponding policies apply only to full-time employees. Employees will be informed in advance of any changes, additions or removal of benefits. For more information or questions concerning benefits, employees should contact the Department of Human Resources.

5.15. Health & Dental Insurance

VIU offers group healthcare and dental coverage for all full-time employees. The University covers a percentage of the cost of the health care premium for the individual employee. Additional family coverage is available upon request; however, the individual employee is responsible for the healthcare and dental premiums for his/her dependents added to the plan. For more information about the group plans offered and employee eligibility, please consult with the Department of Human Resources.

5.16. Short-Term Disability & Term Life Insurance

All current full-time employees are automatically enrolled in Short-term Disability and Term Life Insurance group plans offered through the University. The plans are effective during the entirety of employment, and will be terminated at the end of employment. VIU covers 100% of the premiums for both plans; there is no expense to the employee. For more information about the group plans offered and employee eligibility, please consult with the Department of Human Resources. Prior to taking Short-Term Disability, the employee must use their accumulated Paid Time-Off.

5.17. COBRA

If an employee leaves the University voluntarily or involuntarily, or if a qualifying event occurs, then an employee has the option to extend their health care coverage under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA) if they have been enrolled in VIU’s group health plan for at least three (3) months prior to their ending date of employment. If an employee enrolls in COBRA, they may elect to extend their health care coverage at their own expense. If a qualifying event occurs, the Department of Human Resources will notify the employee of their eligibility within 14 days in writing. The employee has 60 days after the date of receipt of the written notification to elect the extended coverage of their health insurance through COBRA.

5.18. Paid Time-Off
Paid Time-Off (PTO) is to be used for any purpose including vacation, sick leave, doctor appointments, and personal leave. Except for emergency situations, an employee wishing to use PTO shall complete the Paid Time-Off Request Form and submit it to their supervisor at least two (2) weeks in advance of the anticipated dates for which the employee will be absent. When scheduling leave, supervisors should endeavor to avoid conflicts between employee requests and workloads. Once leave is approved in writing, the Department of Human Resources should receive the form from the employee.

The University has the authority to determine when and to what extent annual leave requests will be granted, and may in some circumstances require that PTO be taken. Employees are permitted to take no more than 15 consecutive business days of PTO at one time. Employees are requested to be mindful of the Academic Calendar when scheduling their leave, and employees are expected to use discretion when scheduling leave two weeks prior to the start of a semester and one week following the start of a semester.

No more than 8 employees may be scheduled for PTO at the same time University-wide. Department Supervisors, their Vice President and Human Resources must approve if more than one employee per department is on PTO at the same time.

**Blocked-out time:** Department Supervisors will determine what time periods are blocked out for their staff according to the departmental busy times.

Paid Time-Off (PTO) is earned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Years at VIU</th>
<th>Number of Days PTO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 months - 2</td>
<td>15 (See below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- VIU employees do not earn PTO during their probationary period. After the probationary period, PTO is earned at the end of the month at the rate of 10 hours a month.
- Unused PTO will be available for rollover each year, but not to exceed 30 days for all employees.
- Borrowing of future leave is not permitted.
- For exempt employees, hours less than four will not be deducted from their PTO; however, employees are expected to make-up missed hours for late arrivals and outside appointments.
- For non-exempt employees, all missed hours shall be either documented on a PTO form or, with authorization from direct supervisor, may be made up during the same pay period.
- While part-time employees do not receive the benefit of PTO, they must complete and submit the PTO form as unpaid leave for the purpose of staff planning during their absence.
- The PTO recording cycle will be January 1st to December 31st, with the first year of employment being prorated from the end of the employee's probationary period.
- VIU will not pay for unused PTO at termination of employment.

**Paid Time-Off for President and Vice Presidents**
The VIU President and Vice Presidents are granted thirty (30) days of PTO each calendar year. The 30 days is not accrued monthly, but awarded in January at the beginning of each calendar year to be used...
by the President and Vice Presidents during the next 12 months. Unused PTO at the end of the calendar year will not be rolled over into the next calendar year. To request PTO, Vice Presidents must inform the President in writing, as well as the Department of Human Resources, of the requested dates of leave for approval. Requests for leave should be made in advance if possible. The above policies referring to restrictions on dates of leave, taking no more than 15 consecutive business days of PTO at one time, and not receiving pay for unused PTO at termination of employment, all apply to Vice Presidents.

5.19. Bereavement Leave Policy

In the event of the death of certain members of an employee’s family, and upon request, VIU will grant paid and unpaid bereavement leave. This policy applies only to full-time employees who receive full benefits.

In the event of the death of a parent or foster parent, sister, brother, spouse, domestic partner, child, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandparent, or grandchild, employees may be granted up to three (3) consecutive business days of paid leave. One (1) additional day of paid leave is permitted if the employee must travel more than 500 miles each way. These days do not count against the employee’s regular accrued PTO.

Employees may request approval for additional leave other than the granted days of bereavement leave, which will be charged against accrued PTO. If no accrued PTO is available, VIU may grant unpaid leave. VIU will consider requests for bereavement leave in the event of the death of a person not bearing one of the above-stated relationships to the employee on an individual basis.

VIU reserves the right to request verification of relationship, death, and distance traveled before approving leave of the employee under this policy. Whenever possible, employees should request bereavement leave before their absence. Additional leave must be approved in advance.

5.20. Jury Duty Policy

If a full-time employee is required to report to Jury Duty while employed at the University, they will be provided their regular salary during their time of absence. An employee’s accrued PTO will not be deducted or otherwise affected. In accordance with the policies of the state of Virginia, an employee cannot be released, demoted, or otherwise penalized for missing work while performing Jury Duty. Employees that receive a summons to report to Jury Duty must supply evidence of the summons and a copy will be kept in an employee’s personnel record. Employees should inform their supervisor and HR of the summons as soon as possible in advance of an employee’s leave. Failure to report Jury Duty leave and to provide proper documentation may result in disciplinary action.

5.21. Staff Workforce Development Scholarship

Full-time employees, who have successfully completed their probationary period, may take one course per academic semester from the University. The corresponding form must be submitted and approved prior to registering for the class each semester. The tuition and student services fee associated with the course are both waived. Not more than four (4) courses may be taken in one calendar year with the tuition and student services fee waiver. Additional courses may be taken at the expense of the employee. Coursework cannot interfere with an employee’s regular work schedule.
On-Campus Student Employees may receive a Campus Employment Scholarship per the On-Campus Student Employment Policy. If a student qualifies for more than one scholarship, only one will be applied.

Staff and Board Members Family Discount Policy
The University will offer a 15% tuition discount per semester for immediate family members studying at VIU. Immediate Family members are identified as parents, children, brothers, sisters and spouses of staff and/or board members in determining eligibility for the discount.

The deadline to apply for this discount is the last day of add/drop in each semester. Applications after this deadline will only be considered for the next semester. Please complete the Application for Staff and Board Members Family Discount and submit it to the Accounting Office for approval. The discount will be applied to Tuition only. Scholarships will be deducted first. The discount will be applied to the remaining amount. If a student qualifies for more than one discount, only one will be applied.

5.22. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) entitles eligible employees with the right to take unpaid, job-protected leave, or paid leave if accrued, for up to twelve (12) workweeks in a 12-month period for specified situations. This leave should be requested in writing and may be taken for the birth of a child; adoption or foster care; to care for a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition; or due to the employee’s own serious health condition.

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 amended FMLA to entitle eligible employees with the right to take unpaid, job-protected leave, or paid leave if accrued, for up to twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave to care for a member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness.

To be eligible for FMLA leave, employees must have been employed for at least 12 months (one year) preceding the leave, have been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period of employment preceding the leave, and have been employed within 75 miles of the worksite. The request for leave should be forwarded to the Department of Human Resources and documentation of the reason for the requested leave may be required. The Department of Human Resources will give a response to this request, in writing, within 5 business days. FMLA leave will run concurrently with any accrued PTO by the employee in conjunction with the specified situations.

While an employee is taking consecutive FMLA leave, they are not permitted to telecommute or work at the University during the period of leave. If an employee returns to work, by granted permission to telecommute or if returning to work at the University, they are no longer considered to be on consecutive FMLA leave. The University may request the written permission of a doctor before the employee may return to work from FMLA leave.

Under extreme circumstances and when the leave is in the best interest of the employee and the University, an unpaid leave of absence, with the length of the leave to be determined by the University,
may be granted. Requests for leave should be submitted in writing to the Department of Human Resources outlining the reason for and duration of the leave.

5.23. Parental Leave

Employees may be eligible for an unpaid, job protected leave for up to 12 consecutive workweeks due to the birth and/or adoption of a child. This leave should be requested in writing and forwarded to the Department of Human Resources and documentation of the reason for the requested leave may be required. The Department of Human Resources will give a response to this request, in writing, within 5 business days. Any accrued PTO must be taken first. Parental Leave will run concurrently with the PTO in conjunction with the specified situation. Full-time employees will also be granted 10 business days of paid Parental Leave, which will be applied in addition to their PTO.

While an employee is taking Parental leave, they are not permitted to telecommute or work at the University during the period of leave. If an employee returns to work, by granted permission to telecommute or if returning to work at the University, they are no longer considered to be on Parental leave. The University may request the written permission of a doctor before the employee may return to work from Parental Leave.

5.24. General Leave Policy

Employees planning to take leave for three (3) or more consecutive days must do the following at least 1 week (5 business days) in advance to ensure their responsibilities are continued in their absence: Inform Human Resources of the time frame they are out of the office and provide them with an alternate employee’s contact information; update their outside contact information (auto reply e-mail and voicemail) with their out of office time frame and alternate contact information; and create a plan for the continuation of their work while they are absent, which must be submitted to their direct supervisor for advance approval.

6. SECTION VI: COPYRIGHT, FAIR USE, COMPUTER AND INTERNET USAGE POLICIES

6.1. Copyright and Fair Use Polices for Software and Other Materials

VIU, its students, faculty, and employees must comply with the provisions of the United States Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). Copyright is the right of the creator of a work of authorship to control the use of that work by others. Copyrighted work may not be reproduced, distributed, performed, or adapted by others without the copyright owner’s permission. Works protected by copyright include, but are not limited to: literary, musical, and pictorial works; sound recordings, motion pictures, and other audiovisual works; and computer software.

VIU employees shall use computer software only in accordance with the terms of the VIU Computer Software Policy and the licensing agreement for the software. The University does not condone or support the use of any unauthorized copies of software. All software used by University employees to perform their responsibilities shall be purchased through appropriate procedures.
Violation of copyright law may subject the guilty party to severe civil and criminal penalties. There are some exceptions in United States copyright law such as the fair use doctrine. The fair use doctrine allows limited use of copyrighted material without the permission of the copyright owner for several purposes, including teaching and scholarship. It is the responsibility of each student, faculty, and staff to inform oneself about what is and what is not permissible use of copyrighted material. Copyright and fair use guidelines for students, faculty, and staff can be found on the VIU Library website and are posted in the VIU Library as well as at all photocopy machines at VIU. For additional assistance with copyright and fair use issues, please consult the VIU Librarian.

Violations of VIU’s copyright and fair use policies will be dealt with in the same manner as violations of other University policies and may result in disciplinary review. In such a review, the full range of disciplinary sanctions is available, including the loss of computer use privileges, dismissal from the University, and legal action.

Student’s Records and Release of Information
In compliance with Public Law 93-380, “The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act”, which is Section 438 of the General Education Provision Act, VIU has adopted policies and procedures that permit the student the opportunity to view his or her educational records upon request. Educational records mean those records, files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to a student. The institution will not permit access to or release of confidential information from a student’s records to any individual or agency without the written consent of the student, except for the following situations:

1. Name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, program undertaken, dates of attendance, and certificates, diplomas and degrees awarded may be provided to third parties unless the request to omit such information is presented in writing.
2. Records are required by VIU officials in the proper performance of their duties.
3. Organizations are conducting studies for educational and governmental agencies.
4. US government agencies as listed in Public Law 93-380 request information for specific purposes.
5. At the request of any Accrediting agencies.
7. Appropriate persons in connection with an emergency.
8. For the purposes of awarding financial aid.

6.2. Computer and Internet Policies
The purpose of the Computer and Internet Policies is to outline the accepted and unaccepted uses of Virginia International University's computers and network facilities, to provide guidelines for appropriate use by students, faculty, and staff, and to educate users about their responsibilities.

It is not a comprehensive document covering all aspects of computer use. It offers principles to help guide members of the Virginia International University community, and specific policy statements that serve as reference points. It will be modified as new questions and situations arise.
While the proliferation of computers and information technologies does not alter basic codes of behavior in academic life, it does place some issues in new contexts. Using these technologies enables people to do varied things, both ethical and unethical, more easily. They are an enormously rich resource for innovation in the furtherance of Virginia International University's academic mission. In spite of many positive aspects, they also increase the risks of actions, deliberate or not, that are harmful in various ways, including: (a) interference with the rights of others; (b) violation of the law; (c) interference with the mission of the University; and/or (d) endangering the integrity of the University's information computer network.

While some of the guidelines therefore call for respectful and responsible use of the computer networks to protect the rights of individuals, others warn against actions that may violate the law: users must understand the perils of illegal use, exchange, or display of copyrighted, deceptive, defamatory, or obscene materials on a web page or through other electronic communication channels.

The guidelines seek to protect the integrity of the University information systems themselves: the computing or networking resources need to be accessible and secure for appropriate uses consistent with the mission of the University; the usurpation of these resources for personal gain, commercial gain or without authorization is unacceptable. Moreover, even the individual right to privacy may, when personal files may need to be accessed for troubleshooting purposes, be overridden by authorized personnel to protect the integrity of the University's computer systems.

**Permitted Use of VIU’s Computer Network and Internet**

The computer network is the property of VIU and is to be used for legitimate business purposes only. Users are provided access to the computer network to assist them in the performance of their jobs. All Users have a responsibility to use VIU’s computer resources and the Internet in a professional, lawful and ethical manner. Abuse of the computer network or the Internet, may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination, and civil and/or criminal liability.

1. The University does not monitor the content of web pages, electronic mail, or other on-line communications and is not responsible for the views expressed by individual users. Users should lawfully access computer resources.
2. Users are responsible for all activity involving their user accounts. User accounts should be kept secure and private. Users should not use identifying data or common words as a password; passwords should be difficult to crack or otherwise guess either by individuals or by sophisticated computer programs.
3. It is recommended that users change passwords for all user accounts every 90 days in order to secure access to accounts.
4. The University is the custodian of a wide array of personal and financial data concerning its students, staff, and faculty, as well as the University itself. Users should respect the University obligations of confidentiality, as well as their own. Only users with authorization may access, communicate or use confidential information.
5. Material posted on web pages is generally accessible and thus deserves even greater thought and care than your private electronic mail. Absent restrictions, the user’s web page is available to anyone, anywhere, and the user should act accordingly.
6. The University has a right to expect that computer users will properly identify themselves. Computer accounts are assigned and identified to individuals.

7. Today's information technology is a shared resource. Users should respect the needs of others when using computer and network resources. Users should not tamper with facilities and avoid any actions that interfere with the normal operations of computers, networks, and facilities.

8. Users should avoid excessive use of computer resources. They are finite and others deserve their share. "Spamming" and similar inappropriate uses of University resources are not acceptable. Web pages that are accessed to an excessive degree can be a drain on computer resources and, except where significant to the University's mission, may require the University to ask that they be moved to a private Internet provider.

8. Although a respect for privacy is fundamental to the University's policies, almost any information is read or copied and some user information is maintained in system logs as a part of responsible computer system maintenance. The University must reserve the right to examine computer files, and that, in rare circumstances, the University may be compelled by law or policy to examine even personal and confidential information maintained on University computing facilities.

9. Requests from employees for software, hardware, or network privileges should be relative to their position at the University and should reflect the scope of their responsibilities. Before granting any privileges to employees, the IT Department may request approval from the employee's supervisor and/or management.

10. Users are granted privileges and responsibilities with their account. While these vary between groups, the use of University resources for personal commercial gain or for partisan political purposes (not including the expression of personal political views, debate and the like) is inappropriate and possibly illegal. Individual University computer systems have varying resources and demands. Some have additional and sometimes more restrictive guidelines applicable to their own user.

Prohibited Use of VIU’s Computer Network and Internet

The following uses of VIU’s Computer Network and Internet are strictly prohibited:

1. The use of restricted-access University computer resources or electronic information without or beyond one's level of authorization.
2. The interception or attempted interception of communications by parties not explicitly intended to receive them without approval of an authorized University official.
3. Making University computing resources available to individuals not affiliated with Virginia International University without approval of an authorized University official.
4. Making available any materials the possession or distribution of which is illegal.
5. The unauthorized copying or use of licensed computer software.
6. Unauthorized access, possession, or distribution, by electronic or any other means, of electronic information or data that is confidential under the University's policies regarding privacy or the confidentiality of student, administrative, personnel, archival, or other records.
7. Intentionally compromising the privacy or security of electronic information.
8. Intentionally infringing upon the intellectual property rights of others in computer programs or electronic information (including plagiarism and unauthorized use or reproduction).
9. Interference with or disruption of the computer or network accounts, services, or equipment of others; including, but not limited to, the propagation of computer "worms" and "viruses".
the sending of electronic chain mail, and the inappropriate sending of "broadcast" messages to large numbers of individuals or hosts.

10. Failure to comply with requests from appropriate University officials to discontinue activities that threaten the operation or integrity of computers, systems or networks, or otherwise violate this policy.

11. Revealing passwords or otherwise permitting the use by others (by intent or negligence) of personal accounts for computer and network access.

12. Altering or attempting to alter files or systems without authorization.


14. Attempting to alter any University computing or networking components (including, but not limited to, bridges, routers, and hubs) without authorization or beyond one's level of authorization.

15. Unauthorized wiring, including attempts to create unauthorized network connections, or any unauthorized extension or re-transmission of any computer or network services.

16. Intentionally damaging or destroying the integrity of electronic information.

17. Intentionally disrupting the use of electronic networks or information systems.

18. Intentionally wasting human or electronic resources.

19. Negligence leading to the damage of University electronic information, computing/networking equipment and resources.

An individual’s computer use privileges may be suspended immediately upon the discovery of a possible violation of these policies. Such suspected violations will be confidentially reported to the appropriate member of management at the University. The appropriate member of management will judge an offense as either major or minor. A first minor offense will normally be dealt with by the IT Department or management after consultation with the user or administrator requesting the account. Additional offenses will be regarded as major offenses and dealt with accordingly. Violations of the policies will be dealt with in the same manner as violations of other University policies and may result in disciplinary review. In such a review, the full range of disciplinary sanctions is available including the loss of computer use privileges, dismissal from the University, and/or legal action.

Computer Software Copyright Policy

Software piracy is the installation, use, or distribution of unauthorized copies of software, which is protected property under intellectual property laws. Purchased commercial software packages include license agreements that indicate how the software should be used. Pirating software or failure to comply with restrictions in license agreements is illegal and may result in substantial fines for the University. The University has adopted the following computer software policies on the use of computer software.

Virginia International University, in purchasing computer software, commits to specific licensing agreements. Misuse or unauthorized uses, including duplication of licensed software for backup or archival purposes or duplication of related documentation may be a violation of United States Copyright laws.

Virginia International University employees shall use computer software only in accordance with the terms of the licensing agreement. Virginia International University does not condone or support
the use of any unauthorized copies of software. All software used by Virginia International University employees to perform their University responsibilities shall be purchased through appropriate procedures.

Any employee who makes, acquires, or uses illegally reproduced software can be subject to civil and criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment. Further, employees who violate this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.

1. The IT Department will maintain a current inventory of all software installed on computers/networks in the University.
2. The IT Department staff will not install software on a network unless specifically allowed in the licensing agreement.
3. If a software package is licensed to be operated across a network, the IT Department staff will make sure that any usage limits (per seat or concurrent) are observed and copying is disabled unless explicitly allowed under the license.
4. The IT Department staff will ensure that software is not copied for use on more than one computer and that software user manuals are not copied.
5. The IT Department staff will ensure that backup copies of software are not used to run the software on additional computers.
6. When software upgrades are purchased, previous versions and associated user manuals should be destroyed, if no longer needed. (Some upgrades require that the previous version(s) be installed before the upgrade is installed, so the previous version(s) must be maintained.)
7. The IT Department staff will conduct a software inventory every year or periodically perform spot checks or ‘audits’ of University-owned computers to make sure that illegal software has not been inadvertently or deliberately installed.
8. VIU computing facilities are used by departments, offices, and faculty members for a number of classes. This creates a complex environment for providing a reliable, useful facility for all involved. Pieces of software added into the environment become part of an integrated system the IT Department must maintain. For this reason, there are a number of policies regarding software requests and installation.

All software packages may be available for use by any other group using the facility, regardless of the purchasing department.

**Requesting Updates**

1. Departments wanting updates to software they have purchased must make requests through the IT Department.
2. The IT Department must be provided with the proof of purchase of any non-free updates before the update will be installed.
3. Departments may request updates to IT Department purchased software, and such requests will be evaluated. Such requests must also be submitted in writing or e-mail to the IT Department four weeks before the start of the semester.

**Maintenance**

1. The IT Department will maintain the original installation of the software for one academic year from its initial installation, or until the license expires, whichever occurs first.
2. Software packages must be retested after each semester as new software, hardware, or operating systems may be installed. The IT Department will notify the department of any
new conflicts and make all efforts to resolve those conflicts. If unavoidable conflicts arise, the IT Department will work with the department to find the best solution.

3. The IT Department will not provide students, faculty, or staff with technical support for software not purchased by the IT Department. This means that instructors intending to use department-requested software are expected to be proficient in said software; the IT Department will not provide training, support, or documentation for software not purchased by the IT Department.

Implementation

1. All University codes of conduct apply to information technology as well as to other forms of communication and activity.

2. Systems managers or other individuals within an academic or administrative unit may be empowered to suspend some or all privileges associated with computer use in cases of misuse or threat to the integrity of all or part of the University’s information management resources.

3. Before any permanent action is taken against a user, the user will be advised of the bases for the proposed action and given an opportunity to respond. Concerns about such actions may be raised through the usual administrative or academic channels associated with the dean, school, facility or resource in question.

4. Where a violation of University policies or applicable law appears to warrant action beyond a suspension or elimination of computer privileges, the matter may be referred to a supervisor, administrator or University disciplinary body with appropriate authority or to law enforcement authorities.

5. Complaints or concerns about another's use of University computer resources should be directed to the administrator responsible for the facility or resource in question.

6.3. Personal Electronic Devices

Employees are not permitted to bring personal computers or data storage devices (such as external hard drives, flash drives*, or other data storage media) to the workplace or connect them to the University’s electronic property or network unless expressly given written permission to do so by the University. All personal cellular devices are permitted in the workplace, but must be kept stored away from the working area/desk during office hours and should only be used in emergency situations.

*Flash Drive Use: Faculty members are permitted to use this device for instructional purposes in the classroom.

Please note: The following policies in the Handbook apply to faculty only.
7. SECTION VII: FACULTY INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES

Please Note: In this section, the terms adjunct faculty member, faculty, and instructor are all used interchangeably as per the origination of the individual policy. All terms refer to those employees that have been assigned to teach a course at the University.

7.1. Faculty Qualifications

The University shall have an adequate and competent faculty working under conditions that encourage the best efforts of each individual. In judging the competence of faculty, consideration shall be given to the academic preparation and experience of each individual. Faculty members shall be assigned in terms of their major and minor areas of academic preparation and related experience, and in accordance with the requirements of the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV).

The following criteria shall be considered in the appointment, reappointment, and promotion of faculty.

Teaching Effectiveness
Components of teaching effectiveness may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Performance in the classroom as observed in administrative evaluations and classroom observations;
- Continuous updating, improvement, and innovation in teaching materials, methods, and assignments as reflected in the Annual Faculty Development Plan; and
- End-of-Term Course evaluations completed by students each semester.

Education and Occupational Training
Components of education and occupational training may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- College degrees;
- Number of graduate credits in major teaching disciplines;
- Courses in related teaching fields will normally pertain directly to concepts or application of the principal discipline field for which the faculty member is hired. The faculty member must supply documentation of such direct pertinence to the School Dean, who will determine the appropriateness of the course content;
- Professional and occupational certificates or licenses (only when they are competitively earned);
- Apprenticeships;
- Training in the related field;
- Internships;
- Advanced studies; and
- Previous occupational experiences in business, government, industry, and the profession.

Professional Growth Activities and Contributions
In addition to teaching effectiveness, faculty members are expected to engage in and contribute toward personal and professional growth as well as for the good of the University and its community. This requires that faculty members maintain current competence in their disciplines or specializations, and that they share their expertise, time, and talents with the University community. Performance in this category will be measured not only by membership or affiliation, but also by the quality of the contributions made by faculty members toward these endeavors. Such activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:
• Membership and activity in professional and civic organizations (general and/or specialized organizations at the local, state, and/or national level);
• The accomplishment of professional development activities that may or may not be part of an individual professional development plan;
• Attending and participating in professional conferences, workshops, and meetings;
• Keeping current regarding developments in education and industry;
• Participating in business or industrial activities related to professional field;
• Engaging in writing speeches and reports and in consulting; and
• Engaging in research to improve training or in discipline-based research that may lead to publication.

There are some funding allocated to support professional growth activities. Please refer to the Scholarly Research Honoraria Policy of this handbook.

7.2. Teaching Course Load

Faculty members shall be assigned a teaching course load in accordance with the policies of the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) and the University.

Non-degree Programs
The following criteria, as developed by ACICS, apply to faculty members that are assigned courses in our non-degree programs.

Teaching Load: An instructor’s teaching load, including night school, shall not exceed 32 clock hours per week, except that an overload of not more than one subject per term for additional compensation is permitted. Teaching loads may differ when using alternative methods of instruction and must be commensurate with the type of delivery method utilized. For purposes of this calculation, assigned courses offered by nontraditional or distance learning modes of instruction are deemed to consist of one clock hour per week for each unit of academic credit awarded.

Field Preparation: Assignments requiring more than three preparations in different fields shall not be given to an instructor during one academic term.

Subject Preparation: Not more than five preparations in different subjects within the same field shall be assigned to an instructor during one academic term.

Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programs
The following criteria apply to faculty members that are assigned courses in our degree programs.

Teaching Load for On-ground courses: A faculty member’s teaching load shall not exceed 4 courses (12 credit hours) in the Fall and Spring academic semesters. A faculty member’s teaching load shall not exceed 2 courses (6 credit hours) in each of the Summer I & Summer II sessions.

Teaching Load for Online courses: A faculty member’s teaching load shall not exceed 3 courses (9 credit hours) during any given 8-week online session.

Teaching Load for On-ground and Online courses: This applies to any faculty member that is assigned both on-ground and online courses in any given academic semester or session. A faculty
member’s teaching load will be determined on a case by case basis and will be appropriate for the number of students enrolled in each course, the number of different fields of preparation, and how many courses will be instructed in each method of delivery (on-ground or online) simultaneously.

The following criteria, as developed by ACICS, apply to faculty members that are assigned courses in our degree programs.

**Field Preparation:** During any academic term, a faculty member shall not be assigned to teach in more than three fields of instruction and preferably in not more than two fields.

### 7.3. Contract Faculty Employment Agreement

All part-time Adjunct Faculty Members receive a Contract Faculty Employment Agreement (the Agreement) for each academic semester they are assigned a course. Listed below are the Terms and Conditions on the Agreement. These Terms and Conditions are subject to change, and Adjunct Faculty Members will be notified of these changes.

#### 7.3.1. On-ground Courses

**Terms and Conditions**

The Adjunct Faculty Member (Faculty Member) named in the Agreement will be considered a part-time (W-2) employee of the University for the stated Academic Semester. The Agreement may be cancelled at any time in writing by the Faculty Member or the University, in compliance with the University’s Employment at-will Policy as stated in our Faculty & Staff Handbook. If the Agreement is cancelled, the compensation will be prorated from the date of the written cancellation as received by both parties.

The continuation of employment from one Academic Semester to another is not guaranteed or implied. Subsequent Agreements are issued based upon several determining factors; including course evaluations, classroom observations, course demand, and student enrollment.

**Compensation** will be subject to change based on the class size after the Course Add/Drop Period for Credit/Contact Hours assigned. Payment per **credit hour** assigned is compensated following a pre-determined payment schedule as stated in the Agreement. Payment per **contact hour** assigned is compensated via timesheet and based on the Agreement.

Amendments in compensation due to class size will be documented and signed as an addition to the Agreement at the time of change; a copy of these Amendments will be provided to the Faculty Member.

1. **Compensation for Courses assigned:**
   a) The compensation agreed upon in the Agreement reflects a class size of four (4) to twenty-five (25) students after the Course Add/Drop Period.
   b) If the class size is between one (1) to three (3) student(s) after the Course Add/Drop Period, the compensation will be changed to 60% of the regular pay rate.
   c) If the final class size is above the regular class size, twenty-six (26) or more students after the Course Add/Drop Period, the compensation will be increased as follows:
      i. 26 – 40 students: $250 per 3 credit class
      ii. 41 – 60 students: $500 per 3 credit class
      iii. 61+ students: $750 per 3 credit class
d) Compensation Cap: Regardless of the class size, the cap for courses is as follows:
   i. Graduate level courses: $4000 per 3 credit class
   ii. Undergraduate level courses: $3750 per 3 credit class

2. Compensation for Contact Hours assigned:
   a) The compensation agreed upon in the Agreement reflects a class size of five (5) or more students after the Course Add/Drop Period.
   b) The compensation will be changed to the following pay rates according to class size:
      i. If the class size is 1-4 students after the Course Add/Drop Period, the compensation will be decreased by 20% of the instructor’s hourly rate.
      ii. If the class size is 16-20 students after the Course Add/Drop Period, the compensation will be increased by 20% of the instructor’s hourly rate.
      iii. If the class size is 21 or more students after the Course Add/Drop Period, the compensation will be increased by 25% of the instructor’s hourly rate
   c) Compensation Cap: Regardless of the class size, the contact hour cap for courses is as follows:
      i. $45 per contact hour

3. Compensation for cancelled classes (applies to both Credit Hours and Contact Hours assigned):
   There is a possibility that classes with zero or minimal enrollment will be cancelled; therefore when
   a) Classes are cancelled and the Faculty Member is notified prior to the first class; no compensation will be paid.
   b) Classes are cancelled due to low enrollment after the Course Add/Drop Period; the Faculty Member will receive a prorated amount for the Contact Hour(s) already taught, based on the Faculty Member’s regular class size pay rate.

First Paycheck
The first paycheck for the Academic Semester shall be issued by the University as regularly scheduled only if the Agreement and all other required pertinent materials, are received by the University on the required date (as stated in the Agreement). The first paycheck will be held until all pertinent materials are received. If these items are outstanding for more than 15 business days, the Agreement is subject to cancellation.

Final Paycheck
The final paycheck for the Academic Semester shall be issued by the University only upon receipt of all pertinent materials from the Faculty Member; including the Course Survey, Attendance Records, Grade Report, Annual Faculty Development Plan, and other required forms by the University. Once these materials are received; the paper paycheck will be processed on the next regular semi-monthly payroll date and released as per the Dean and Registrar.

Faculty Late Arrivals
The University reserves the right to deduct a prorated amount of the day’s pay for any and each time the faculty member is late for the start of class without a legitimate excuse, except reporting on illness, and/or emergency situations. The University punch clock system will be monitored for class time consistency.

Class Cancellation and Make-up Policy
Faculty members must receive University permission prior to canceling a class or arranging a make-up class. Any hours not made up will be deducted from the faculty member’s paycheck. Any change in class
hours shall require at least (5) days’ notice. Faculty members must notify the School Dean of any cancellation and make-up classes. The employer will pay for snow days; however, the faculty member will need to hold make-up classes for each class missed due to inclement weather.

It is the faculty member’s responsibility to arrange make-up classes which will best fit the schedule of the majority of students in his/her class. Faculty members are not allowed to schedule a make-up class solely based on their own availability, without discussing and forming a consensus among the students. At least half of the class should agree and sign-up for the make-up class.

- Make-up classes must be scheduled at least 15 days in advance during the regular academic semester, so that timely notices and reminders can be posted on student bulletin boards, and timely e-mail reminders can be sent. At the minimum an e-mail reminder must be sent out to all students three (3) days before the make-up class.
- Faculty members may not schedule future make-up classes during a make-up class.
- Faculty members must take attendance.
- In occasions where substitution is necessary, advance approval must be obtained from the School Dean with appropriate arrangements made by the faculty and approved by the School Dean.
- If less than 30% of students happen to be attending the make-up class, the faculty member then should consult with the School Dean as to how to handle the case. The School Dean must keep a copy of the make-up documentation in the form of a case study, and file this information with supportive documentation.

7.3.2. Online Courses

Terms and Conditions
The Adjunct Faculty Member (Faculty Member) named in the Agreement will be considered a part-time (W-2) employee of the University for the assigned Online Course Building and/or Revision. The Agreement may be cancelled at any time in writing by the Faculty Member or the University, in compliance with the University’s Employment at-will Policy as stated in our Faculty & Staff Handbook. If the Facilitation Agreement is cancelled, the compensation will be prorated from the date of the written cancellation as received by both parties. There will be no compensation for cancelled build or revision contracts, unless the course is fully built or revised. The continuation of employment from one Academic Semester to another is not guaranteed or implied. Subsequent Agreements are issued based upon several determining factors; including course evaluations, classroom observations, course demand, and student enrollment. Accepting and signing the Agreement for an online course building and/or revision assignment does not imply that the Faculty Member will be issued a subsequent Agreement for online course facilitation of the same course(s) listed in the Agreement.

Online Course Building and/or Revision Compensation
Payment for Online Course Building and/or Revision is compensated following a pre-determined payment schedule as stated in the Agreement.

First Paycheck
The first paycheck for the Academic Semester shall be issued by the University as regularly scheduled only if the Agreement and all other required pertinent materials, are received by the University on the
required date (as stated in the Agreement). The first paycheck will be held until all pertinent materials are received. If these items are outstanding for more than 15 business days, the Agreement is subject to cancellation.

**Online Course Building and/or Revision Compensation**
The pay for online course building and/or revision shall be issued by the University only upon final approval of the online course is given by the Dean/Director. Once this approval is given; the direct deposit pay will be processed on the next regular semi-monthly payroll date.

The Faculty Member should submit the course(s) for approval within eight (8) weeks of the contract issuance date. The course(s) will be reviewed by the respective school and/or the School of Online Education to ensure they meet the guideline standards. The Faculty Member will be contacted regarding any changes that need to be made to the course(s) and is required to make the changes within four (4) weeks of contact date in order for the Faculty Member to be compensated. The final approval of the online course is given by the Dean/Director. Failure to comply with the requests and feedback from the Dean/Director may result in cancellation of the Agreement.

**Online Course Facilitation Compensation** will be subject to change based on the class size after the Course Add/Drop Period for Credit Hours assigned. Payment per credit hour assigned is compensated following a pre-determined payment schedule as stated in the Agreement. Amendments in compensation will be documented and signed as an addition to the Agreement at the time of change; a copy of these Amendments will be provided to the Faculty Member.

1. **Course Facilitation Compensation for Credit Hours assigned:**
   a) The compensation agreed upon in the Agreement reflects a class size of five (5) to twenty-five (25) students for Undergraduate courses, and a class size of three (3) to twenty-five (25) for Graduate courses, after the Course Add/Drop Period.
   b) **For Undergraduate courses:** If the class size is between one (1) to four (4) student(s) after the Course Add/Drop Period, the compensation will be changed to 70% of the regular pay rate for course facilitation.
   c) **For Graduate courses:** If the class size is between one (1) to two (2) students after the Course Add/Drop Period, the compensation will be changed to 70% of the regular pay rate for course facilitation.

2. **Course Facilitation Compensation for cancelled classes:**
   There is a possibility that classes with zero or minimal enrollment will be cancelled; therefore when
   a) classes are cancelled and the Faculty Member is notified prior to the first day of classes; no facilitation compensation will be paid.
   b) classes are cancelled due to low enrollment after the Course Add/Drop Period; the Faculty Member will receive a prorated amount of compensation based on the Faculty Member’s regular class size pay rate for course facilitation.

**First Paycheck**
The first paycheck for the Academic Semester shall be issued by the University as regularly scheduled only if the required pertinent materials are received by the University on the required date (as stated in the Agreement). The first paycheck will be held until all pertinent materials are received. If these items are outstanding for more than 15 business days, the Agreement is subject to cancellation.
**Final Paycheck**
The final paycheck for the Academic Semester shall be issued by the University only upon receipt of all pertinent materials from the Faculty Member; including the Course Survey, Attendance Records, Grade Report, Annual Faculty Development Plan, and other required forms by the University. Once these materials are received; the paper paycheck will be processed on the next regular semi-monthly payroll date and released as per the Dean and Registrar. All final paychecks will be provided by paper paycheck, unless otherwise notified.

**Online Faculty Policies**
Section V: Online Faculty Policies, on pages 52 - 58 of the Faculty & Staff Handbook, explain in detail the expectations of our online faculty and the structure of our online courses. The Faculty Member will receive a copy of the Handbook and is expected to adhere to all enclosed policies. In addition, more detailed and up-to-date Online Course Guidelines will be provided by the Dean.

**Ownership of the Online Course**
The online courses developed pursuant to this Agreement shall be owned exclusively by the University. The structure, sequencing, and presentation requirements, as well as associated templates will be maintained by the University.

**7.4. Teaching Faculty Responsibilities**
The primary responsibility of a faculty member at Virginia International University shall be to provide quality instruction to the students. The major emphasis shall be on the faculty member’s ability to instruct students in classrooms, laboratories, individual conferences, and related activities in order to help the students develop their interests and abilities to their fullest capacity. As part of this primary responsibility, the University expects each faculty member to:

- Teach assigned classes on time (start and end) and on schedule according to lesson plans, and to submit records and reports as required.
- Create an environment conducive to learning through effective class management, including, but not limited to:
  - Include reasonable break times during class. VIU requires minimum 10 minutes and a maximum of 20 minutes of cumulative break(s) per class sessions that runs 2 hours or more.
  - Manage and limit disruptions during classes, such as cellphone usage, tardiness and disruptive students.
  - As a prominent member of the learning community at VIU, all faculty members are required to maintain and monitor the academic integrity of their students during the teaching and learning process, and report any misconduct stated in the VIU’s Academic Integrity and Code of Excellence to the School administrator. The relevant policy and procedure can be found under “Grounds for Warning, Suspension, or Dismissal” section of this document.
- Teach the assigned courses using the identified text(s) in the syllabus;
- Develop a syllabus for each course based on the approved curriculum and appropriate syllabus template;
- Help maintain the School’s retention rate;
- Conduct periodic assessment of student progress, including but not limited to
- Create a gradebook for each course taught in the Faculty Portal by the end of the second week of classes.
- Entering grades in the Faculty Portal and providing individual feedback, where applicable, for assignments within two weeks of student submission;
- Submitting the gradebook twice during semester, Mid-Term and End-of-Term. Dates for the submission of the grades are defined by the registrar’s office for each term. Midterm grades should be submitted during the 8th week of the term for on ground courses and the end for the 4th week for online courses; Final grades are to be submitted by the Monday following the last day of classes.

- Contribute to the development of the program of instruction; and
- Adhere to the statement on professional ethics; maintain current competence in the particular discipline or field of specialization.
- On ground adjunct faculty, as well as, online adjunct faculty that reside locally to VIU are required to attend VIU’s annual graduation, and are highly encouraged to participate in other VIU events.

### 7.5. Personal Use of Class Hours and Equipment

The University offers a faculty lounge, equipped with desk space and computers, that is located at the Pender Campus for use by its faculty members for class preparation and other activities related to their courses. Faculty members are not allowed to use class hours for personal matters such as working on other classroom assignments, personal e-mails, or spending time for any other third party matters. University equipment, including telephones, copiers, computers, and fax machines, are to be used to conduct the work of the University and any use that interferes with this purpose is prohibited.

### 7.6. E-mail Correspondence

All faculty members are issued a VIU campus e-mail account. Primary communication between VIU and its faculty members will occur via this VIU campus e-mail. **This e-mail account should always be used to correspond with VIU students.**

### 7.7. Textbook Policy

Students must acquire the required textbooks by the end of the course add/drop period. If students do not have proper materials, the faculty member has the right to ask such students to leave the classroom and mark them absent with the School Dean’s approval.

### 7.8. Course Syllabus Policy

The distribution of a course syllabus to students is required at VIU. The syllabus is a statement of intent and serves as an implicit agreement between the faculty member and students. **The course syllabus must be distributed during the first week of classes and/or made available on the LMS for students in PDF format.** The following information should be provided in the course syllabus:

- Course Title
- Class Dates/Hours and Semester
- Credit hours and contact hours
- Course Outcomes
- Schedule of
  - Assignments
- Class Location
- Faculty Member Contact Information and E-mail
- Hours of availability for synchronous communication
- Course Description
- Prerequisite
- Course Credit Hours and Contact Hours
- VIU grading system
- Course evaluation Criteria
- Instructional Methods
- Instructional Materials and References
- Required/Optional Textbook, and materials
- Assessment Criteria and Methods of Evaluating Students

- Quizzes
- Midterms
- Final
- Other expected deliverables
- Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Code of Conduct
- Plagiarism Policy
- Student Complaint Policy
- Additional Information on VIU Policies
- Weekly Course Outline
- Expected minimum outside academic workload
- Attendance Policy
- Americans with Disabilities Act Policy
- Inclement Weather Policy
- Last revision date
- VIU Academic Support Resources

• A statement is permissible indicating that the information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grading criteria and attendance policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the faculty member. Changes to the syllabus shall also be given to the student in writing only if receiving initial permission from the School Dean.

• Faculty members should possess a VIU issued e-mail address to communicate with the students. This VIU e-mail address should be listed in the course syllabus and is the only approved method of communication with students via email. Personal email accounts should not be used.

• Faculty members are required to use the VIU Syllabus Template received from the School Dean’s office to update for their use in classes.

• A soft copy of the course syllabus should be submitted to the School Dean’s office before the start of a semester.

• Each faculty member should commit to utilizing the textbook(s) that is/are selected and listed in the course syllabus. Textbooks selection and change should be reviewed and approved by the School Dean prior to the semester beginning.

• As technology and other resources are generally required in the students’ respective professions, faculty members are strongly encouraged to utilize additional instructional technology to deliver course materials and make necessary requests and arrangement with the respected School.

7.9. Student Attendance Policies

Good academic standing requires the presence of students at all class meetings. Therefore, course attendance at VIU is mandatory. There are only two acceptable reasons for absence from class or lab: 1) serious illness on the part of the student, or 2) a family emergency. In the former case, the student must submit a doctor’s note explaining the reason for the absence to the instructor(s) and the Registrar’s Office. In the latter case, the student must submit a note to their instructor explaining the reason for the absence. Explanations for excused absences must be received no later than one week after the last missed class. Exceptions can be made by the instructor for prolonged emergencies when a student does not have means or opportunity to inform the University in advance.
Students are required to contact the instructors for absences prior to the missed class. The student must contact each instructor and arrange to make-up work immediately upon returning to the University. All make-up work is assigned by the instructor. Instructors are not obligated to provide make-up work for unexcused absences.

Absence for unexcused reasons may negatively affect the student’s final course grade. More importantly, under faculty discretion, unexcused absences in excess of 25% of the total class and lab time may result in failure of the course. A student will be withdrawn after missing seven (7) consecutive instructional days without prior approval from the Registrar’s Office or school dean.

All students are expected to arrive to on-ground classes on time. Late attendance is disruptive to both the instructor and students. If a student is tardy for an on-ground class more than the instructor deems advisable, the instructor will report the issue to the student’s School Dean for appropriate action. Three class sessions of tardiness per course whether arriving late or leaving early or a combination of both are counted as one absence.

**Attendance in Online Classrooms**

Attendance in an online classroom for a given week is based on the student’s engagement in an academically related activity that can be documented. The following are academically related activities for the purposes of attendance in the online classroom:

- Meaningful participation in an online discussion.
- Quizzes, tests, assignment submissions, and other work that is graded by the instructor.
- Student initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a course-related question via email, phone or chat room.

The following are examples of activities that are not acceptable for the purpose of documenting attendance in the online classroom:

- Student login on the course site; or
- Student posting of bio in Discussion forum.

Attendance in the VIU online classroom is collected in weekly cycles. For administrative purposes, attendance is recorded on Sunday of each week, regardless of the day of the week on which the semester starts. A weekly unit in VIU Online Education consist of activities that students are engaged in from a Monday to the following Sunday.

The last day of attendance of an online class is defined as the last day in which the student was engaged in an academically related activity that can be documented.

### 7.10. Final Examination Policies

Final examination dates and times are set by the University and may not under any circumstances be changed. Exam dates (including mid-term exams, if applicable) should be announced by the faculty member at the first class meeting, and printed in the syllabus handed out at the first meeting. Students
failing to appear for a final exam (or mid-term) must demonstrate that the absence is excusable under the conditions outlined under “Attendance Policies” above. In such cases, the student must be prepared to take the exam at a time set by the faculty member. To ensure fairness, the exam questions may also be different from those on the original exam. If a student misses the final exam without a verifiable excuse, the faculty member may assign an “Incomplete, I” grade. The student may work with the faculty member during the following semester to convert it to a valid letter grade.

7.11. Academic Grade and Grade Submission Policies

In order to assess and evaluate VIU programs for ACICS and other reporting requirements, VIU maintains a standard grading scheme and reporting mechanism. This policy addresses our methods. In addition to the grade categories, we must be able to tie the grading rubric to the objectives for the course. The objectives for the course have to be related to the objectives of the School and then up to the mission of VIU. Some reporting requirements necessitate this form of analysis.

Grade Submission Policy
All faculty members are required to submit the following:

1. All grades and categories used to determine a student’s final grade;
2. All grades must be based on a numerical scheme (0-100);
3. The grading rubric used (should be the same as on the course syllabus);
4. Grade books must be created on Faculty Portal; and
5. Grade submissions must be made on Faculty Portal with both numerical and letter final grades

Grade categories include, but are not limited to exams, quizzes, midterm exam, final exam, homework, project, research paper, discussions/participation, etc. Grade categories are required for all academic Schools to prepare reports with statistical analysis comparing different courses. Midterm grade submissions are required for all academic including online courses.

7.12. Grading System and Grade Point Average

Explanation of Grades
For graduate level courses, the grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, and C are passing grades, and C-, D+, D, D-, and F are failing grades. For undergraduate level courses, the grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, and D- are passing grades, and F is failing grade. The grade of S is a passing grade and the grade of U is a failing grade for ESL courses. The grade of “I” (Incomplete) is given to a student whose work has been of passing quality but who has, for compelling reasons, been unable to complete all of his or her required coursework by the end of the semester. The quality of performance in any academic course is reported by a letter grade. These grades denote the character of work and are assigned grade points as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
<th>CGPA</th>
<th>Academic Standing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-95</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94-90</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-85</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Symbols: The following symbols may appear next to a grade or in the grade column:

- **AU**: Audited Course
- **R**: Repeat Course
- **NR**: Not Reported
- **S**: Satisfactory (non-credit)
- **TC**: Transfer-in Credits
- **W**: Withdrawn

**Grade Point Average (GPA):** GPA is defined as the total grade points (PTS) divided by credit hours (HRS).

**Cumulative GPA (CGPA):** Is defined as the overall GPA attained so far in an ongoing education period.

The GPA is determined by dividing the total number of grade points earned in courses by the total number of credits attempted. The GPA is carried out to three digits past the decimal point (example 1.000). No rounding up or down shall be done to arrive at the GPA. When a course is repeated, only the highest grade earned is counted in the computation of the GPA and the CGPA for graduation.

**Course Codes and Levels:**
- **ESL 0100-0899**: English as a Second Language courses (ESL is a non-credit program)
- **XXXX 100-499**: Undergraduate level courses, classified by academic subject (alternatively division or area) and level of difficulty.
- **XXXX 500-799**: Graduate level courses, classified by academic subject (alternatively division or area) and level of difficulty.

**7.13. Grade Change Policy**
Faculty members (instructors) are responsible for and have the authority to assign grades due to their position to evaluate the student’s academic work and performance in a course. It is the responsibility of the instructor to initiate any grade change. Grade changes from an incomplete grade must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office within the first six weeks of the following semester/session as stated in the Academic Calendar. Other grade changes must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office no later than the end of the following semester. Any grade change submitted after the deadline will not be accepted by the Registrar’s Office.

**Incomplete Grade (“I”):** The grade of “I” (Incomplete) is given to a student whose work has been of passing quality but who has, for compelling reasons, been unable to complete all of his or her required coursework by the end of the semester. An “I” grade is not to be given for reasons including late submission of work. A grade of “I” must be evaluated and changed within six weeks of the following semester/session. At this time, all work from the previous semester/session must be completed and submitted to the instructor. If a grade is not submitted by the end of the sixth week, the grade will be changed from “I” to “F” with the assumption that the student has not fulfilled his/her requirements for the course.

The impact of an “I” grade on a student’s satisfactory academic progress is as follows:

- A grade of “I” is not included in the calculation of the CGPA, but will count as credit hours attempted for the purposes of calculating the successful course completion percentage.
- Courses that remain as an “I” at the end of the six-week period will automatically become an “F” and will be calculated in the CGPA.
- “I” grades are also counted in the calculation of the successful course completion percentage if the student was charged for any portion of the course.
- Incomplete and Withdrawal grades may have an adverse effect on the successful course completion percentage of a student if he/she has been charged tuition for any part of the course.
- The “I” grade is only issued for verifiable, unavoidable reasons. Since the “I” grade extends enrollment in the course, requirements for satisfactory completion will be established through student/faculty consultation and documented on the student’s transcript.

Prior to the submission of a grade change from an Incomplete to an actual letter grade, an instructor must send a request for grade re-submission to the Registrar by email. Upon receiving the request, the Registrar enables the grade book to allow a grade to be amended by the instructor. Then, the instructor will make changes to the grade book on the faculty portal and re-submit the grade to the Registrar via the faculty portal.

**Grade Change:** The following are examples of appropriate reasons for grade appeals:

- Arithmetical errors, typos, or incorrect calculations in the grade book
- Coursework submitted was excluded in grade calculation
- Grade appears to be based on impermissible factors such as discrimination, bias, or retaliation

The following are examples of denial reasons for grade appeals:

- To enable a student to graduate
- To allow a student to be awarded a scholarship, President’s/Dean’s List inclusion, or Latin honors
• To avoid receiving an academic warning, probation, or dismissal
• Personal issues that are not related to academics
• To comply with internal and/or external program standards
• Demonstration of not having completed course requirements

**Grade Change Initiated by an Instructor:** A grade can be changed by an instructor regardless of whether the change was a requested by the student. After final grades are submitted, an instructor must notify the Registrar by email at registrar@viu.edu and copy the dean/program director prior to making any changes or corrections to a grade. Upon request, the Registrar can enable the grade book to allow a grade to be amended by the instructor. Then, the instructor will make changes to the grade book on the faculty portal and re-submit the grade to the Registrar via the faculty portal.

**Grade Change Initiated by a Student:** A student who wishes to question a grade must contact the instructor of the course in writing within the first two weeks of the next semester/session. This includes the summer sessions, even if the student decides not to take course(s) during the summer sessions. The instructor will review the request and reply to the student regarding the decision. The school dean and Registrar may be copied on the written request and decision.

In the event that the instructor does not respond within 2 weeks or the issue remains unresolved after receiving the instructor’s decision, the student may appeal in writing to the school dean within seven (7) days. The school dean will call a meeting with the Academic Committee and both the student and faculty member will be invited to present their sides of the issue. The Academic Committee will then determine an appropriate resolution; both the student and faculty member will be notified of the decision within seven (7) days. The decision made by the Academic Committee is final and cannot be further appealed.

### 7.14. Withdrawals ("W")

1. **Withdrawals after the Add/Drop Period**
   A student who wishes to change his/her schedule by dropping a course may do so only during the add/drop period by filing a Course Add/Drop/Withdrawal Form. From the second week to the end of the tenth week of classes for the 15-week courses, from the second week to the end of the fifth week of classes for the 8-week courses, or from the second week to the end of the fourth week of classes for the 7-week courses, students may withdraw only after obtaining the school dean or academic advisor’s signature on the Course Add/Drop/Withdrawal Form. A grade of “W” (indicating official withdrawal) will be recorded on the student’s transcript. After a grade of “W” is issued, the course may be repeated once. The grade of “W” will not be assigned to any student who has taken the final examination in the course. “W” grades are not calculated in the CGPA; however, they will be considered credit hours attempted if the student has incurred a financial obligation for the course. “W” grades affect the successful course completion percentage. A student who does not withdraw from a course before the deadline will receive a failing grade or a letter grade based upon his/her performance in the course. To withdraw from a course, the student must complete the relevant section of the Course Add/Drop/Withdrawal Form, obtain the school dean or academic advisor’s signature, and submit the completed form to the Registrar’s Office.

2. **Withdrawals from the University**
   A student may withdraw from the university when circumstances beyond the student’s control make it impossible for him or her to complete their coursework for the semester. A student wishing to withdraw
from the university must complete the relevant section of the Institutional Withdrawal Form, obtain the school officials' signatures, and submit the completed form to the Registrar's Office. The student will receive a grade of “W” if he or she withdraws between the second and tenth week of the semester for 15-week courses, or between the second and fifth week of the session for 8-week courses. A student who does not withdraw from the university before the deadline will receive a failing grade or a letter grade based upon his/her performance in the course. The institutional refund policy is applied to determine if the institution is required to provide a refund to the student. Students who fail to register by the end of add/drop period are automatically considered to be officially withdrawn from the University.

7.15 Course Auditing (“AU”)

Auditing courses may be approved on a space-available basis. Audited courses are subject to all regular tuition and fees. VIU offers a special tuition rate for course auditing that applies only to VIU Alumni and senior citizens (age 65 and up), which is $175 per course. This special tuition rate applies to all program levels. Tuition and fees are subject to change without notice. Funds for personal expenses (e.g., food, health insurance, books, supplies, etc.) are not included.

Students may register to audit courses with the written approval of the school dean. Students who wish to change from audit to credit-seeking must inform the Registrar’s Office by the end of add/drop period. A student auditing a course is not required to actively participate in class activities. For example, an auditing student may not be required to complete exams, quizzes, and projects. However, an instructor may request an auditing student to participate in-class activities. Classes taken for audit may be repeated for credit. Audited courses do not count as credits attempted for the purpose of determining satisfactory academic progress. Therefore, they have no effect on the student’s GPA computation. Program and prerequisite policies will apply to all auditing courses.

7.16 Not Reported (“NR”)

An “NR” grade means that a grade has not yet been reported by an instructor at the time of grade processing. If an instructor does not submit grades by the deadline of grade submission, the Registrar’s Office records a temporary grade of “NR” to the student records. An actual letter grade will replace the NR grade once final grade processing takes place.

7.17 Course Add/Drop

After registration, a student may add a course at any time before the deadline specified in the Academic Calendar. Permission to add a course after the last day of the add/drop period requires proof of extenuating circumstances and the written approval of the school dean. Under no circumstances may a course be added after three (3) calendar days beyond the last day to add a course. Students wishing to drop a course must do so before the last day of the add/drop period. A course that is dropped before the specified date will not appear in the student’s academic record. To add or drop a course, the student must fill out a Course Add/Drop/Withdrawal Form (available from the Registrar’s Office and on our website at www.viu.edu), obtain the school dean’s or the academic advisor’s signature, and submit the completed form to the Registrar’s Office.
7.18 Academic Standing of Students

The University will take the initiative to advise and assist students who are having academic difficulty. The student will be assisted in setting objectives, in planning improved study habits, and in dealing with other factors related to academic progress. There must be some point at which the student, having been offered assistance by the University and having been apprised of the situation, is best served by being prevented from further registration for a period of time if no academic improvement has been shown.

Faculty/Course Remediation
Faculty members are expected to conduct remediation sessions with students who fail to meet the minimum requirements for assignments and who are not making satisfactory progress toward course completion. All meetings should be recorded by the faculty member in order to document that such meetings occur. Additionally, any student receiving below a C average in the course by the time that midterm grades are submitted must receive a remediation session to discuss the students’ progress to date and any subsequent actions that would need to be taken to ensure success for the remainder of the course.

Academic Warnings
Any student falling into one of the categories below will receive an academic warning at the end of that semester/ session:
1. Fails to maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 in an undergraduate degree program or an undergraduate certificate program, or a 3.0 in a graduate degree program or a graduate certificate program for any semester; or
2. Receives a grade of “F” or incomplete “I”; or
3. Failed to pass the level in the ESL program; or
4. Engages in academic dishonesty as defined in the Academic Catalog below.
The student will continue to receive warnings until the situation improves. The Registrar has the authority to place on academic probation any student who receives warning letters for three consecutive semesters.

Academic Probation
Students who fail to maintain the required CGPA and successful course completion percentage minimums at 25%, 50%, and 75% of the Maximum Time Frame (MTF) at the end of each academic year (for those programs equal to one year in length or longer) will be placed on academic probation as shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Points (% of MTF attempted*)</th>
<th>Probation Period for Undergraduate Level Programs</th>
<th>CGPA Falling in Probation Period for Graduate Level Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At 25% of MTF</td>
<td>CGPA &lt; 1.25</td>
<td>CGPA &lt; 2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At 50% of MTF</td>
<td>1.25 &lt; CGPA &lt; 1.50</td>
<td>2.25 &lt; CGPA &lt; 2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At 75% of MTF</td>
<td>1.50 &lt; CGPA &lt; 1.75</td>
<td>2.50 &lt; CGPA &lt; 2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At 100% of MTF</td>
<td>No probation is allowed. Dismissal is required.</td>
<td>No probation is allowed. Dismissal is required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students who do not maintain satisfactory academic progress will be placed on academic probation for one semester. The student on academic probation will be counseled and given assistance, if needed, in order to improve their CGPA. The statement “Placed on Academic Probation” will be entered into the student’s permanent record. The academic probationary period is normally one semester, except under mitigating circumstances. The student is considered to be maintaining satisfactory academic progress while on probation.

If a student fails to attain a minimum CGPA of 2.0 at the end of the academic probationary period, the student will be dismissed and the statement “Academic Dismissal” will be entered into the student’s permanent record.

**Academic Dismissal**

Students who do not maintain at least a CGPA of 2.0 at the end of the academic probationary period, and who cannot meet the minimum CGPA requirement at the evaluation points shown in the table below, will be dismissed from the University.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Points (% of MTF attempted*)</th>
<th>Dismissal Points for Undergraduate Level Programs</th>
<th>Dismissal Points for Graduate Level Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At 25% of MTF</td>
<td>No dismissal is required.</td>
<td>No dismissal is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At 50% of MTF</td>
<td>CGPA &lt; 1.25</td>
<td>CGPA &lt; 2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At 75% of MTF</td>
<td>CGPA &lt; 1.50</td>
<td>CGPA &lt; 2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At 100% of MTF</td>
<td>CGPA &lt; 2.00</td>
<td>CGPA &lt; 3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statement “Academic Dismissal” will be entered into the student’s permanent record. Academic Dismissal normally is permanent unless, with good cause, students reapply and are accepted under special consideration for readmission by the University. (See the “Reinstatement as a Regular Student” policy below.)

**7.19 Grounds for Warning, Suspension, or Dismissal**

Any of the following may be considered as cause for probation, suspension, or dismissal:
1. Academic dishonesty of any kind.
2. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress.
3. Violation of institutional rules and regulations.
4. Failure to maintain financial obligations.

**Academic Integrity and Code of Excellence**

In the pursuit of academic excellence, it is the policy that all parties associated with Virginia International University (VIU) conduct themselves with a high level of honesty and responsibility in regard to academic scholarship. VIU is committed to the establishment of and adherence to high academic and integrity standards in order to foster reputations that students, faculty, staff, and alumni can be proud of. This reputation directly correlates to the value of the degrees conferred by the institution and is viewed with utmost importance. This requires that students understand the importance of integrity and adhere to the highest standards while in class or on internships, at work, and in continuing education.
The university commits to preparing students to be professionally and academically prepared for the professional rigors of the world of work. In order to ensure that high quality educational opportunities are offered and to ensure the rigors of academic excellence, VIU requires that students adhere to the Code of Academic Excellence in order to build upon and foster the educational demands of the institution.

I. Academic Integrity

Formal oversight of the Academic Integrity is monitored by the entire VIU learning community including students, faculty, and staff of VIU. The student body is involved with the formal review, investigation, and recommendation of sanctions against violations of the Code of Academic Excellence through the participation of the President or Vice President of the Student Union, who will participate in Programmatic Grievance Panels as required. Suspected violations of academic integrity shall be directed to the appropriate school dean or office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs in writing.

II. Code of Academic Excellence

The Code of Academic Excellence is a commitment by students to adhere to and build the reputation of the academic rigors and continual conduct focused on integrity and personal-academic growth. The following statement is adopted by VIU and applies to all students at the Institution:

“All Virginia International University students are expected to perform with integrity and respect for the high rigors of academic excellence espoused by VIU. Academic integrity includes the maintenance of a learning environment where everyone is given an opportunity to succeed through their own efforts and violations to the Code of Academic Excellence are not tolerated by the learning community.”

Academic Misconduct

Violations to the Code of Academic Excellence can ultimately lead to the improper evaluation of assessment tasks leading to unjust attribution of grades or course status. Therefore, it is integral to monitor and evaluate any allegation of academic misconduct. Forms of violation can include, but are not limited to the following:

A. Unauthorized use of material or improper collaboration
B. Intended or unintended plagiarism
C. Submissions of the same work for multiple courses
D. Falsifying, purchasing or altering the work of others or representing others’ materials as one’s own work
E. Unauthorized access to or the theft of the work of others

Each instance of alleged abuse of the Academic Code of Excellence will be evaluated and reviewed by members of the VIU learning community taking into consideration such factors as the student’s prior academic history. Therefore, the listing above is not intended to be exhaustive and is merely meant to serve as a list of potential areas for violation.

Reporting and Resolving Academic Misconduct

VIU is committed to the immediate resolution of allegations of misconduct. Wherever possible, if academic misconduct can be stopped prior to the occurrence of a violation, it is encouraged that members of the learning community hold each other accountable. When necessary, students, instructors, administrators and staff members, or other external parties may report misconduct. In
doing so, it is important to understand both the scope of program oversight regarding allegations of misconduct and the adjudication process for allegations of misconduct.

I. Scope of School/Program Oversight
In cases where violations of the Code of Academic Excellence are suspected, the student, staff or faculty member shall notify the dean of the school in which the allegation took place. Each school within the university has an appointed designee (“Program Designee”) who oversees and manages the adjudication process to completion. This designee will either be the dean of the school or someone on the dean’s staff. In the rare instance where the dean has a conflict of interest, a dean from another school will be made the de facto designee for the proceedings as selected by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

II. Adjudication of Allegations
In the event that an instructor or colleague suspects academic dishonesty, he or she will follow the procedures outlined below in order to encourage a fair and equitable solution for any and all violations to the Code of Academic Excellence. Consultation with the program designee (dean, chair, or director) is compulsory. To verify if this is repeated misconduct, the first step in reporting every instance of academic misconduct is through consultation with the Program Designee, based upon which the instructor will follow the forthcoming procedures.

1. Resolution for the First Allegation of Misconduct:
   a. The instructor alleging misconduct must inform the student in writing of the violation and host a meeting between him/herself and the student whereby the student is given a verbal warning and a zero grade on the assignment with the option of resubmitting the work.
   b. The instructor must submit a letter of allegation to the dean of the school to be placed in the university records.

2. Resolution for Second Allegation of Misconduct
   a. If a violation to the Academic Code of Excellence is alleged again for the same student a second time, the instructor shall inform the student in writing of the charges against violating the Code of Excellence & Academic Integrity Policy and that the allegation has been escalated to the dean’s office.
   b. The instructor shall gather the original student documentation related to the incident (which includes the student’s work and plagiarism report from Turn-it-in and/or any supporting documentation) and submit it to the Program Designee.
   c. The Program Designee shall schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the allegation.
   d. During the meeting, the student is reminded of the Code of Excellence & Academic Integrity Policy. The student is also shown the copy of the Code of Excellence & Academic Integrity Policy that was signed by him/her.
   e. The Program Designee informs the student that he/she will receive a zero for the assignment with no option to resubmit the work.
   f. A copy of the student’s work is given back to the student, while the original work and case supporting documentation is kept in the student’s permanent file at VIU.

3. Resolution for Third Allegation of Misconduct:
   a. If a violation to the Academic Code of Excellence is alleged again for the same student for the third time, the Program Designee shall send a written or electronic notice to the student explaining the nature of the allegation and inform the student that this matter will be handled
by the school’s grievance panel, which consists, at minimum, of the dean and/or Program Designee, one faculty member, and the President or Vice President of the Student Union.

b. During the grievance panel meeting, the Program Designee shall present documentation about all the instances of academic misconduct. The panel will then discuss the violation and possible consequences of the violation. Consequences of violations to the code can include but are not limited to:
   i. Failure of a course with the option to repeat the course.
   ii. Failure of an internship or externship with the option to repeat.

c. A formal meeting will be arranged between the dean and/or Program Designee and the student in which the verdict will be presented to the student in the form of a formal letter. A copy of this letter will also be provided to the Registrar’s Office where it will be added to the student’s permanent record. Appeals to decisions can only be made to the Institutional Grievance Committee.

d. At this time, the Program Designee will return a copy of the paper (with comments) to the student while keeping the original paper and supporting documentation in the university records.

4. Resolution for the Fourth Allegation of Misconduct:
   a. If a violation to the Academic Code of Excellence is alleged again for the same student for the fourth time, a written or electronic notice shall be sent to the student explaining the nature of the allegation and informing the student that this matter will be handled by the Institutional Grievance Panel, which consists, at a minimum, of the dean and/or Program Designee, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and a designee from the Office of the President.
   b. During the Institutional Grievance Panel hearing, the Program Designee will provide documentation of all allegations of misconduct. The panel will then discuss the violation and possible consequences of the violation. Possible consequences can include:
      i. Suspension from the school for a minimum of one semester
      ii. Permanent expulsion from the university
   c. The student will be notified in writing by a letter from the Vice President of Academic Affairs regarding the decision. Appeals to decisions can only be made to the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
   d. At this time, the Program Designee will return a copy of the paper (with comments) to the student while keeping the original paper and supporting documentation in the university records.

Non-Academic Dishonesty/Misconduct

By enrolling in the university, the student recognizes that the following types of behavior are prohibited and that being found guilty of engaging in them can serve as grounds for certain sanctions, including expulsion or the involvement of the local police department:

1. **Illegal activities**: Violation of any federal, state, and local laws and any published or decreed university policies will be reported to the proper authorities.

2. **Copyright infringement**: Most printed materials, photographs, motion pictures, sound recordings, and computer software are protected by copyright. Copyrighted works may not be reproduced, distributed, performed, or adapted by students without the copyright owner’s permission. For more information please see the Copyright & Fair Use Policies for Software & Other Materials section in this Catalog.
3. **Computer misuse**: Some software products are protected by copyright laws. Students may not copy the institution’s software without permission of the copyright holder. Additionally, students may not place personal software on the institution’s computers or damage or destroy either software or computers. For more information please see the Copyright & Fair Use Policies for Software & Other Materials section in this Catalog.

4. **Drug use**: The manufacture, sale, dispensation, possession, or use of any controlled substances or illegal drug paraphernalia on university premises or at university sponsored events is considered an illegal activity and is prohibited on all university property.

5. **Alcohol consumption**: The use, possession, or sale of any alcoholic beverage, regardless of its potency or lack thereof, is prohibited on all university property.

6. **Firearms possession**: The use, possession, or sale of firearms or other weapons or any dangerous explosives or explosive elements or component parts on university property is strictly prohibited.

7. **Physical and psychological abuse**: Any form of physical and/or psychological abuse, threat, or harassment of another person or fighting on university property will result in sanctions. If the abuse is judged severe enough, the local police department may be consulted.

8. **Property damage**: Littering, defacing, destroying, stealing, or damaging university property (or attempting to do so), initiation thereof, or causing such damage to be initiated is prohibited. Any false report, warning or threat of fire, explosion, or other emergency under the University’s jurisdiction is also prohibited.

9. **Gambling**: Gambling or holding a raffle or lottery at the university without proper approval is forbidden.

10. **Obscene language or conduct**: Use of profanity and disorderly or obscene conduct is strictly prohibited.

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the university’s policies on the following activities: unauthorized entry or presence in any university building or facility; solicitation and sales; smoking; sexual harassment; physical or psychological assault/abuse of others; and unauthorized or disorderly assemblies that hamper the effective functioning of the university, its students, staff, and visitors, and its daily routine operations.

The university does not excuse any violation of its policies on the basis that the student was not aware of these policies and their subsequent penalties and sanctions.

The university reserves the right to expel any student for illegal activity and/or for any action outlined above.

**Disruptive Classroom Behavior**
In general, classroom management is the responsibility of the instructor. The learning environment of the entire class should not be jeopardized for the sake of a single student or group of students. Inappropriate classroom behavior may include, but is not limited to:

1. Disruption of the classroom atmosphere;
2. Engaging in non-class activities, for instance, talking to another student, talking on a cell phone, or working on an assignment for another class;
3. Use of profanity in classroom discussion; or
4. Use of abusive or disrespectful language toward the instructor or a student in the class, or about other individuals or groups.
Instructors have the right to dismiss a student temporarily from class when the student’s behavior distracts or disrupts the other students’ learning.

8. Section VIII: ONLINE FACULTY POLICIES

8.1. Responsibilities of Faculty Teaching Online Courses

Online Courses: The faculty teaching online courses use innovative technologies and teaching methodologies. The VIU online courses are taught completely online in a virtual classroom via the Internet, and use the Moodle learning management system as a delivery platform. When appropriate, other web-based technologies are used to supplement the functionalities of the learning management system. Unlike the residential, on-ground courses, the online courses do not meet in a classroom at scheduled times. Almost all activities in the online classroom are asynchronous. Faculty will, however, engage in synchronous activities (e.g. virtual office hours) to enhance the student experience to the extent appropriate and needed by the students. Faculty is also encouraged to engage one or two synchronous Google Hangout or Skype sessions with students over the 8 week-semester although it’s not mandatory. The online courses are structured using innovative frameworks and pedagogic approaches proven successful in the online environment.

The online courses include learner-centered strategies which help the student be actively engaged in the course activities, and promote active learning and retention of knowledge. This includes problem-based and knowledge-based strategies which involve higher order thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation, instead of only recall and command applications.

Online Sessions: The online courses at VIU span over 8 weeks and are launched in the beginning or the second half of the Fall, Spring and the Summer semesters. The sessions in which they are offered are referred to as Fall I, Fall II, Spring I, Spring II, Summer I and Summer II. All online courses that VIU offers are 3-credit courses, and assume student involvement of 16-18 hours per week in activities related to the course that include, but are not limited to: textbook readings, article reviews, watching videos, performing library or research online, preparing discussion posts or reactions to peers’ posts, writing reports or other deliverables for the assignments. The student learning outcomes of the online courses are equivalent to those of the same courses taught in the face-to-face format in a classroom setting and will be assessed as such.

VIU OE Policies and Procedures: All VIU policies and procedures apply to the faculty teaching online courses as they are stated in this Handbook. Additional policies may be imposed by the appropriate Schools, or VIU School of Online Education (VIU SOE), as communicated to the Faculty, as needed by the School, VIU Online Education, or required by the nature of the online course(s). Faculty teaching online courses must meet VIU’s requirements and complete appropriate VIU online training programs prior to teaching their first online course. They are encouraged to participate in the periodic refresher courses and trainings provided by VIU SOE on topics relevant to the online teaching environments, methods and methodologies.

VIU SOE carefully monitors the building of the online classrooms, and all activities within the course, and works with the faculty and the students on all aspects of the online courseware. It ensures that the online class meets the same objectives as its on-ground equivalent, and that the student engagement and time estimates fall within the required for 3-credit courses, and are adequate for the subject matter and the level of the students that are enrolled in them.
Faculty Resources: VIU SOE maintains a rich repository of resources relevant to teaching and teaching online specifically. They are accessible under the “Faculty Resources” section in VIU Moodle. Extensive manuals on setting up and using the Moodle classrooms are available via http://it.viu.edu. The same site houses manuals relevant to the student use of the system. Faculty is encouraged to provide guidance to the students in using these resources in overcoming the technical difficulties in navigating the online classroom, typically in the appropriate sections of the syllabi. VIU SOE can provide any other assistance to the faculty in setting up the online classroom, executing learning objects, consult and implement new technologies in the online classroom, and consult on strategies for classroom management. It can provide assistance and on-boarding on a variety of topics relevant to online course design, development and teaching, as outlined in the Faculty Resources section of the VIU Moodle and IT sites. Faculty is expected to use these resources as a self-service repository in their on-boarding and developing as online facilitators.

Use of Copyrighted Materials: VIU OE expects that all work found in the online classroom is the original work of the faculty building the course. They are held responsible for any omissions in appropriate credentialing of other individuals work. VIU OE performs random checks of verbiage in online classrooms using the TurnItIn system.

Faculty should by default assume that all material that they have not written or produced themselves is copyrighted, and that in the online environment, the Fair Act doctrine may not be applicable, or is not applicable in the same fashion as it relates to the residential classroom. As such, it is their responsibility to ensure that only materials that can be legally used in the online classrooms are used with the proper permissions.

VIU OE can assist the faculty member in checking the copyright status of a particular body of work that a faculty member may suggest to be used in the online classroom. VIU Online Education, in its periodic checks will remove materials that are posted in the online classrooms without the proper authorization, and will work with the faculty member to either obtain the rights to use the work, or find alternatives. As an example, PowerPoints that publishers provide to use with the textbooks may or may not be used in the online classroom. Different rules apply in the online classroom, as the online medium is also a medium that distributes the work. In this case, instead of loading the PowerPoint files in the online classrooms, the faculty member should provide links to these files on the publisher’s websites.

8.2. Pre-Launch Activities

This section outlines the activities of the online faculty before the course launch.

Preparing for a Course Launch: Online courses require a significant amount of pre-launch work, and constant collaboration with the team of VIU SOE, in ensuring sound instructional design and quality of the learning objects in the classrooms.

Syllabus: All VIU courses must use the standard VIU Online Syllabus Template. The course syllabus must be submitted to the School prior to the start of the semester and made available to students on the first day of class. The course syllabus should include information on technical support of the online environment where applicable.

Course Shells: The online course should be taught as it was developed using the course syllabus, the established unit objectives, assessment, and discussion. The faculty is responsible for populating the general course area of the online classroom, and the contents of the eight (8) weekly units according to
the VIU Online Build and Revision Guidelines. When faculty is given access to the online classroom, the shells of the minimum expected components of the classroom will already be in the classroom. The faculty is expected to populate all of them with contents and add additional components as necessary. Examples of additional components in the course can be found in the “Model Course”.

**Recommendations:** VIU SOE recommends that there is one to two discussions and assignments in each weekly unit (except midterm and final weeks). VIU SOE recommends that the initial post of the discussions is due on Day 2 (Tuesday) each week, the assignment is due on Day 4 (Thursday), and the responses to the peers’ comments in discussions is due on Day 6 (Saturday) each week. Faculty should insist on highest standards in academic honesty, and when possible require students to take the Plagiarism learning object in Moodle. When possible, assignments should be collected using the TurnItIn assignment boxes in Moodle, which will enable discovering inappropriately credentialed work in the student submissions.

**Build and Revision Timeline:** The expectations from the faculty building or revising online courses are as follows:

Faculty will have 8 weeks to build or revise a course usually starting 10 weeks before the class start date. The online faculty must perform the following activities in collaboration with VIU SOE and the appropriate VIU School:

- Check the status of the setup of the course shell,
- Customize and review the course syllabus, familiarize themselves with the role of the course within the context of the programs the course is a part of,
- Create and upload the instructional and assessment contents. This includes course introduction video, lecture videos (30 to 90 minutes each week except midterm and final weeks), lecture notes, presentations, discussion questions, assignments and projects that the students are expected to complete, with clear submission and evaluation details,
- Update any supporting resources that will be used in the course, including clear directions on how they can be accessed (library or web resources, graphical, media and multimedia elements that are outside the core instructional contents for the course),
- Fill out the Self Check List Form to ensure all the necessary elements required by VIU Online guidelines are present and send the form to the respective school,
- Work with the respective school and VIU SOE in ensuring that the contents uploaded in the online classroom satisfy the minimum quality expectation from the online classes.

**Facilitation Timeline:** The expectations from the faculty facilitating online courses are as follows:

Online semesters are 8 weeks long and facilitating faculty should start working on the course at least 2 weeks before the semester start date. The online faculty must perform the following activities in collaboration with VIU SOE and the appropriate VIU School:

- Check the status of the setup of the course shell,
• Customize and review the course syllabus, familiarize themselves with the role of the course within the context of the programs the course is a part of,
• Update the course introduction section with their contact information, instructor introduction video and virtual office hours,
• Give timely feedback to students. Expected turnaround time for student inquiries is 24 hours. Expected turnaround time for assignment feedback and posting grades is 7 days.
• Update any supporting resources that will be used in the course, including clear directions on how they can be accessed (library or web resources, graphical, media and multimedia elements that are outside the core instructional contents for the course),
• Create the structure for the grade book and implement it in the online classroom environment,
• Fill out the Facilitation Self Check List Form to ensure that all the required activities by VIU Online guidelines are executed properly on a timely manner then send the form to the respective school,

Note: By the beginning of the session, VIU SOE will have communicated to all the enrolled students in the class how to access the class. Students in the online courses are able to access the online classroom on the first day of the session.

Virtual Office Hours: The faculty teaching online courses will post their virtual office hour in the course syllabus and introduction section of the shell. They are expected to be available during those hours in a chat/conference room, on the phone, or accessible synchronously online as specified in the syllabus. All students taking the online course must be able to access these online forums and services, if they are offered outside the basic functionalities in the learning management system. VIU SOE will work with the faculty in identifying services that would best fit the needs of a course for effective delivery of synchronous online office hours activities.

Collaboration with VIU School of Online Education: The faculty can design and develop their online course in templates that VIU SOE can provide upon request, and will have access to sample courses that can serve as models in the course building process. Developing the course using the templates follows a process that focuses on the quality of the instructional design and content delivery, by bypassing any barriers that the technology might introduce if contents were input directly into the course shells. Faculty is expected to share their work in the templates with VIU School of Online Education, whose team will provide feedback on any areas of concern early in the process.

8.3. Activities in the Live Classroom

This section outlines the activities of the online faculty after the beginning of the session in which the online course is launched. The activities relate to the facilitation of the online classroom.

Scheduled Activities: Online faculty must participate in the activities of the online classroom at least four days each week, without missing three consecutive days. Online faculty must participate in threaded discussions every week, and elevate the level of the discussions by responding productively and substantially at least once to each student’s post, by

• Asking a probing question,
• Making a suggestion,
• Sharing insights from having read the student’s post.
• Offering and supporting an opinion,
• Validating an idea with their own experience.

Online faculty must respond to student e-mails and discussions, as well as queries within the online classroom (such as questions posted on forums in the online classroom) within 24 hours.

*Note:* Faculty is encouraged to conduct the communication with the student via the means of the learning management system, for documentation purposes. For example, if e-mailing outside the facilities of the system is deemed necessary, the faculty will use the VIU e-mail account, and respond to the student’s VIU e-mail account.

*During the length of the course, the online faculty will:*

• Post announcements on the course homepage regarding the course policies, as well as any events or changes that appear throughout the term.
• Communicate any changes to the course syllabus to the students by e-mail and via announcements in the online classroom.
• Answer questions posted by students within a maximum of 24 hours.
• Be present online during announced virtual office hours as specified in the syllabus. Faculty is encouraged to provide and use additional channels of communication with the students in addition to the chat tools in the online classroom, especially in cases when demonstrations are needed or are desirable in helping students meet course objectives.
• Perform quality assurance of the content and mechanics of the assessment tools (assignments, test, quizzes etc.) and tests before they are launched.
• Maintain efficient communication with the students by participating in discussions with the students and encouraging the discussions between the students in the online classroom via the available online classroom or other channels.
• Indicate places and mechanics to submit assignments, and do not accept e-mail as submission method for assignments. The faculty needs to ensure that the submission details are clear and present for each assignment that requires action from the student.
• Grade all students’ assignments within seven days from the posted deadline.
• Provide detailed feedback to students, and give precise instructions regarding makeup work, and resubmission of assignments. The feedback can be given by providing the commented version of the submissions to the students or via a commentary in the grade book. The use of detailed grading rubrics available to the students before they submit their work is highly encouraged.
• Maintain an average presence online of 6-10 hours weekly, and
• Enforce the highest standards of academic honesty by example, by checking student’s work for plagiarism, and enforcing the VIU Academic Honesty Policy, as stated in the Academic catalog.

**Administrative Activities Regarding Live Courses:** This section overviews specific activities that faculty teaching the online courses are required to participate in, and relate to the administration of the courses, and activities involving the implementation of selected retention strategies.

*Every week,* the online faculty must perform the following activities:

• Correct assignments, provide personalized feedback and update the gradebook within seven days of the assignment deadline.
• Initiate communication with those students that are not submitting their work, or are doing so late, as well as when their work does not meet quality standards and expectations.
• Take actions necessary to encourage students to participate in the class activities and give additional directions to enable the students to succeed.

• Seek and share with the students resources that would aid their progress in the classroom, and provide references to individual students when individual knowledge gaps are identified.

During the third week of the online session, the online faculty must perform the following:

• Review student activity and report any student that has not participated in academically relevant activities to the School Dean or Director and the Registrar.

• Review the grade book activity and report those students that have not responded to any assessment items posted in the course to the appropriate VIU Academic School.

On the last day of each calendar month, and at the end of the session, faculty should send attendance sheets to the Registrar or the School office. The attendance sheets register weekly attendance and participation in the online classrooms as per the following parameters:

**Attendance** in an online classroom for a given week is based on the student’s engagement in an academically related activity that can be documented. The following are academically related activities for the purposes of attendance:

• Meaningful participation in an online discussion;

• Quizzes, tests, assignment submissions and other work that is graded by the instructor; or

• Student initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a course-related question via email or chat room.

The following are not acceptable for purposes of attendance:

• Student-tracking of course site login; or

• Student posting of bio in Discussion forum.

Attendance in the VIU online classroom is collected in weekly cycles. For administrative purposes, the date that attendance is recorded for is the Saturday of each week, regardless of the day of the week on which the semester starts. If a week spans over two months, the attendance for that week will be reported as a part of the later month. A weekly unit in an online class consist of activities that students are engaged in spanning from a Monday to the adjacent Sunday.

The last day of attendance of an online class is defined as the last day in which the student was engaged in an academically related activity that can be documented. **Attendance** in an online classroom for a given week is based on the student’s engagement in an academically related activity that can be documented.

The following are academically related activities for the purposes of attendance in the online classroom:

• Meaningful participation in an online discussion.

• Quizzes, tests, assignment submissions, and other work that is graded by the instructor.

• Student initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a course-related question via email or chat room.

The following are examples of activities that are not acceptable for the purpose of documenting attendance in the online classroom:
- Student login on the course site; or
- Student posting of bio in Discussion forum.

Attendance in the VIU online classroom is collected in weekly cycles. For administrative purposes, attendance is recorded on Sunday of each week, regardless of the day of the week on which the semester starts. If a week spans over two months, the attendance for that week will be reported as a part of the later month. A weekly unit in VIU Online Education consist of activities that students are engaged in from a Monday to the following Sunday.

The last day of attendance of an online class is defined as the last day in which the student was engaged in an academically related activity that can be documented.

**Course Evaluations:** VIU Quality Assurance department administers the end of term class evaluation survey from 5th the 8th weeks of the online courses. Faculty is provided with the cumulative summaries of the evaluation after the submission of the final grades. Faculty is expected to assist VIU QA in encouraging students to participate in providing feedback.

**Faculty Feedback:** Typically, towards the end of the session, faculty is asked to provide input in the form of a faculty survey. Faculty is encouraged to provide any feedback to the School or VIU SOE whenever necessary and desired. The Schools and VIU SOE may act on this feedback as necessary.

**Midterm and Final Grades:** Faculty members are required to submit midterm grades (mid-term progress reports) and final grades through their Faculty Portal. In order to submit the grades, grade books must be created on Faculty Portal using the grading rubric that is on the course syllabus. Midterm grades are due on Monday of the fifth week of the session, and final grade submissions are due at noon on the first Monday after the end of the session. It is imperative that faculty members plan their time in order to meet these deadlines. The grade due dates are available at the VIU Academic Calendar.

**Collaboration with VIU School of Online Education:** After the course launch, VIU SOE independently monitors and evaluates the dynamics in the online classroom and provides support and counseling to instructors when necessary on issues including, but not related to, the following topics: classroom management, student motivation, managing discussions, providing clear instruction to the students regarding submission of their work, etc.

VIU SOE is committed to providing any assistance to the faculty needed to present the students in the online courses with a superb experience, while meeting the learning objectives via meaningful activities and discussions.
9. Section IX: OTHER POLICIES FOR FACULTY

9.1. Faculty Development Activities Policy

Virginia International University encourages its faculty members to attend faculty development activities to help increase their knowledge, skills and expertise. All VIU Faculty Members must complete and submit an Annual Faculty Development Plan (FDP) Form to the administrator of the VIU School in which their primary teaching responsibilities are carried out. The Annual FDP cycle starts on January 1st and ends December 31st.

All FDPS are due to the School administrator by calendar year are due by the third week of December or the end of the fall semester prior to the beginning of the FDP cycle. Notification reminders will be sent out to faculty members from the Schools as early as November 1st.

For new faculty members, the first FDP cycle of a faculty member starts on the date of their employment and spans until December 31st of that year. The first FDP is due within 15 days from the date of hire, or the successive semester start date, whichever comes last.

Proof/supporting documents for the FDP are to be requested and compiled by the administrators of the VIU Schools at the end of each calendar year.

VIU supports two types of faculty development activities: in-service training and professional growth activities.

**In-service training activities** refer to training events organized by the University and cover a variety of topics relevant to the teaching process. Faculty are required to participate in a minimum two in-service events per FDP cycle, one in Fall semester and one in Spring semester. When a faculty fails to attend the required number of in-service trainings during a FDP cycle, they will be given an extension of one semester to complete an in-service training. This in-service training will not count towards the in-service training requirement for the successive FDP cycle. One faculty member can only be given one in-service completion extension every three years.

**The professional growth activities** are typically carried out by external professional organizations, and may include conference meetings, and professional training activities. The University encourages the faculty members to attend professional development activities to stay abreast with the latest developments in the in the subject matter area in which they teach. For participation in these activities, faculty members can request reimbursement of up to $250 per year.

The approval and reimbursement procedure for professional development is as follows:

1. Prior to attending an event, faculty members need to submit a request for approval form to the VIU School administrator.
2. The administrator reviews the planned activities ensuring they are within the specialization of the faculty member.
3. Once approved (and the form signed) by the School administrator, the faculty member attends the event as an employee of VIU, representing only VIU.
4. Within 30 days after the completion of the professional development activity, the faculty member files for reimbursement by submitting an Expenditure Request Form with supporting documentation (receipts, etc.) attached. The following expenses can be reimbursed by VIU: conference registration fees, transportation costs, and lodging. Membership fees for any professional organization are not reimbursable.

The $250 total is applicable to the period of time covered by the annual FDP. No left-over funds carry over to the next FDP cycle.

9.2. Scholarly Research Honoraria Policy

Virginia International University (VIU) encourages members of its faculty to engage in scholarly research in the area of their academic discipline or classroom subject and to share the findings of such research with the broader academic community at VIU. All requests for scholarly stipends will be approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs upon recommendation from the Scholarly Research & Publication Review Committee (hereafter referred to as the Review Committee). The Review Committee will be assembled by the applicant’s School Dean with no less than three Members.

Guidelines

1. The combined stipend payments per academic year for an applicant will not exceed $1,000.00.
2. The scholarly work and publication should be within the applicants’ academic discipline and classroom subject area at VIU.
3. A scholarly work published in multiple publications is eligible for only one VIU stipend. Multiple presentations of scholarly research findings are likewise eligible for only one VIU stipend. However, if the publication is in more than one category, the applicant may make submissions in each category assuming the total amount of the stipend will not exceed the academic year limit for the applicant.
4. Each submission should include the application form, a copy of the manuscript and other supporting documents. The Review Committee may request additional documentation as deemed necessary to evaluate the request.
5. All applications for stipends must be submitted in the academic year in which the scholarly work has received its acceptance for publication.
6. The Review Committee will determine the “scholarly” nature of the publication.
7. The applicant’s affiliation with VIU must be identified as the primary place of employment in the author's or presenter's published biography.
8. The applicant for VIU's Scholarly Research & Publication Stipend must be an active faculty member at VIU at the time of application for the stipend.
9. By accepting VIU’s Scholarly Research & Publication Stipend, recipients agree, if asked, to share their research findings with the VIU community at VIU colloquia and/or to be interviewed by VIU publications. They also agree to allow VIU to publicize their names, scholarly accomplishments, and stipend awards.
10. Monetary award of an approved stipend will be made available after the submission of the actual copy of the publication.
11. Authors of works published in Potential or VIU Today are not eligible for VIU’s Scholarly Research & Publication Stipend. Likewise, scholars who present their research findings at VIU-sponsored events are not eligible for VIU Scholarly Research & Publication Stipend.

9.3. Academic Freedom and Responsibility

To ensure instructional programs are marked by excellence, Virginia International University supports the concept of academic freedom. In the development of knowledge, research endeavors, and creative activities, university faculty members and students must be free to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism. Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subjects, but they should be careful not to introduce teaching matters that have no relation to their field. Faculty members and students must be able to examine ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence and to participate as responsible citizens in community affairs.

The University also recognizes that commitment to every freedom carries with it attendant responsibilities. Faculty members must fulfill their responsibility to society and to their profession by manifesting academic competence, professional discretion, and good citizenship. When Faculty members speak or write as a citizen, they are free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As professional educators, they must remember that the public may judge their profession and institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate that they are not an institutional spokesperson. At no time shall the principle of academic freedom prevent the institution from making proper efforts to assure the best possible instruction for all students in accordance with the objectives of the institution.

9.4. Professional Ethics

Faculty members, guided by a conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them. Faculty members’ primary responsibility to their subject is to seek and to state the truth as they see it. To this end, faculty members devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence and feel the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. Faculty members practice intellectual honesty. Although they may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must never harm or compromise their freedom on inquiry.

As teachers, faculty members encourage the free pursuit of learning in their subjects. Faculty members hold before them the best scholarly standards of their discipline. Faculty members demonstrate respect for the student as an individual, and they adhere to their proper role as intellectual guide and counselor. Faculty members make every effort to foster honest academic conduct and to assure that students’ evaluations reflect the students’ true merit. Faculty members respect the confidential nature of the relationship between faculty and student. They avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students.

9.5. Evaluation and Observation

Evaluation is a process whereby the performance and competence of a person holding a rank of Faculty is systematically examined and compared with established criteria.
Evaluation material and other appropriate professional information will be added to the faculty member’s personnel file after that evaluation period. Each faculty member may request a personal copy of any evaluation or observation material added to his or her personnel file; and if the faculty member elects to make a written response to this material, such written response shall be included in the personnel file.

Additionally, faculty members are encouraged to observe their peers in an effort to improve personal quality of instruction. Peer observation is a way to learn new skills, develop new practices, and learn from and contribute to your peers. If you wish to conduct a peer observation, make plans with the teacher that you wish to observe and/or the Dean of the School. Meet with the teacher prior to the observation to agree on the specific skills and/or behaviors that you wish to observe. Observations can be conducted for any length of time as agreed upon by both teachers. Conduct a post observation debriefing session with the faculty member that you observe. This is an opportunity to give and receive feedback on teaching styles, techniques, activities, etc. Write a brief log of the observation, receive permission from the observe, and submit this to the Dean of the school.

NOTE: With or without prior notice, VIU management may observe classroom instruction.

9.6. Faculty Governance Policy

The Faculty Governance Policy at Virginia International University encompasses faculty’s primary role in the development, evaluation, institutional effectiveness, and oversight of programmatic and course support materials through regular feedback and input. The goal is to create an atmosphere where all faculty (full time and adjunct) are part of a collaborative unit assisting to maintain the effectiveness of the programs and the university.

To this end, faculty are given a role in the academic governance in order to help the university meet its long-term and short-term goals. Academic Staff and Faculty share the responsibility to support Virginia International University’s mission and goals in following areas:

• **Monitoring Course Content and Programmatic Goals**: Establishing learning goals for degree programs; developing course descriptions and content, lessons, and effective delivery techniques to meet the learning outcomes for the courses.

• **Strategic Programmatic Development**: Reviewing proposed new course offerings and revision to current course offerings, providing their expertise and input on areas for improvement and development. Participating in the systematic evaluation and revision of the curriculum through several standing committees, such as the Advisory Board, Graduate Council, and Curriculum Review Committee.

• **Maintaining Up-to-Date Learning Resources**: Providing suggestions for the addition of programmatic and course materials, instructional equipment, and educational resources.

• **Maintain Oversight And Assurance Of Curriculum Effectiveness**: Measuring and evaluating learning objectives, and the students’ ability to accomplish these goals. Revising course syllabi for the purpose of monitoring course content. Monitoring the achievement of student learning outcomes through a variety of review mechanisms including the advisory board, curriculum committees, and ongoing feedback from the faculty.
• **Planning For Institutional Effectiveness:** Assisting the Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness & Quality Assurance to develop, implement, and monitor the Campus Effectiveness Plan

The roles and responsibilities of faculty and their role in academic governance can be found in the Faculty and Staff Handbook, which is provided to faculty at the time of hire and from thereafter, as changes have been made. Additionally, this information is provided to faculty upon hiring and reinforced in School meetings and Academic Affairs meeting.
FACULTY & STAFF HANDBOOK
2014 - 2015
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

- I have received a copy of Virginia International University’s (VIU) Faculty & Staff Handbook (the Handbook). I understand that the Handbook is not a contract. I understand that I should contact the Department of Human Resources for additional information regarding the information in the Handbook.

- I understand that the Handbook does not contain every policy or employment practice of VIU. I further understand that the Handbook supersedes any and all prior communications, handbooks, memoranda, and notices that I may have received regarding the topics covered therein.

- I understand that VIU in its sole discretion may make changes to the Handbook at any time, and if changes are made, the University may require an additional acknowledgement from me to indicate that I have been informed of the changes.

- I understand that it is my responsibility to become familiar with and follow the University practices set forth in the Handbook.

- I understand that my violation of any policies and procedures contained in the Handbook is grounds for immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Please provide a signed copy of this page to the VIU Department of Human Resources.

________________________________________
Employee’s Signature

________________________________________
Employee’s Printed Name

_____/_____/_____
Date