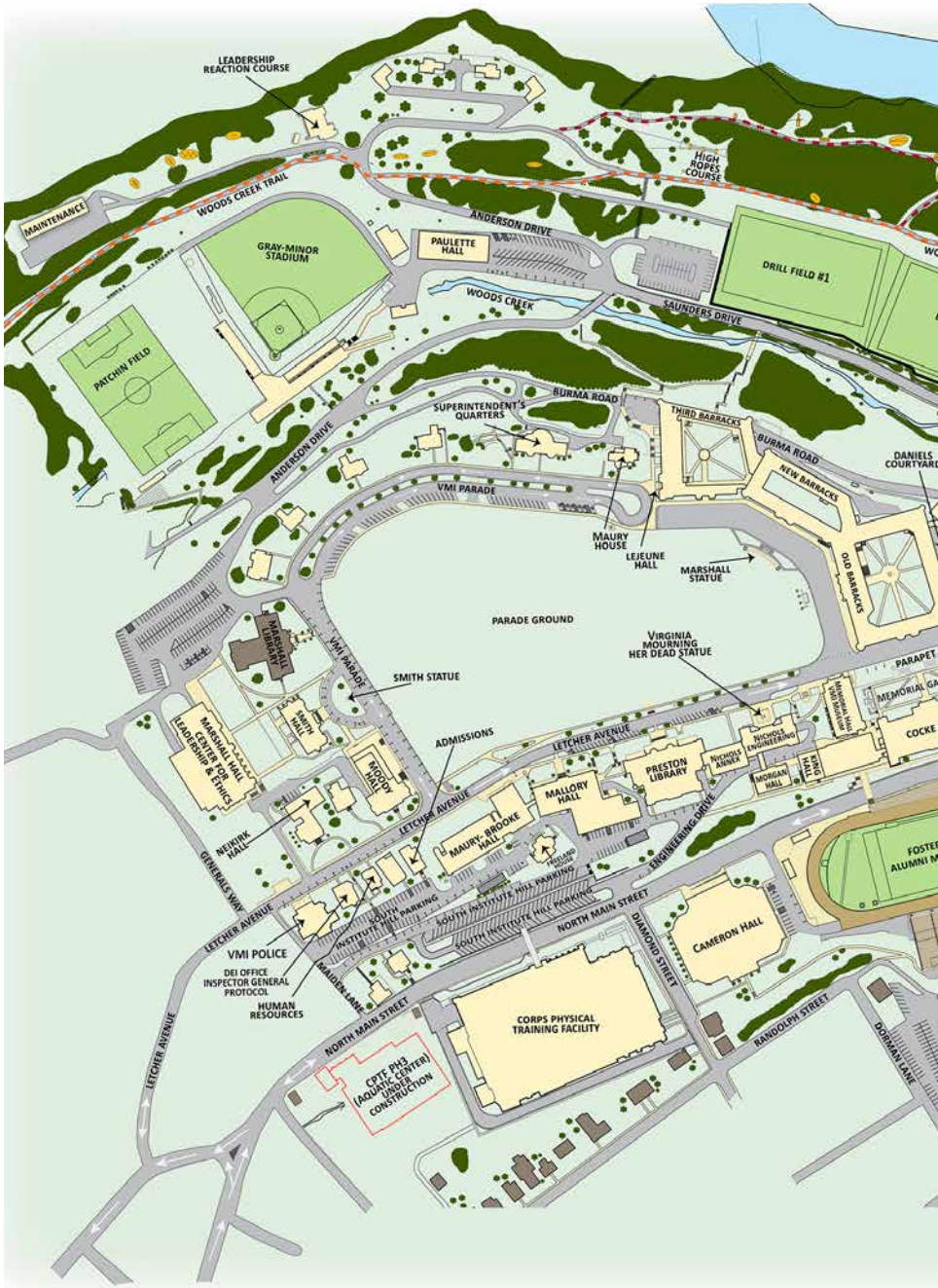


# New Cadet Handbook

2022-23





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## Preface

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The purpose of the New Cadet Handbook is to provide information necessary for the transition from civilian life to life as a new cadet at Virginia Military Institute. It is intended to present information not found in other VMI publications, such as the VMI Catalogue, which is provided to cadets at matriculation. If you have detailed questions on academic programs and academic support, tuition and financial aid, or the Reserve Officer Training Corps, please refer to the VMI Catalogue. If you have questions regarding National Collegiate Athletic Association sports,

contact the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics at 540-464-7251. Information is also available at [www.vmi.edu](http://www.vmi.edu).

The three major components to life at VMI are academics, military, and athletics. This handbook focuses on the Corps of Cadets military component and, specifically, the Rat Line. It is important that you fully understand all aspects of the Corps of Cadets so that you can prepare yourself for success. New cadets at VMI embark on a road less traveled. Use this handbook to plan your journey. Good luck!





Rat Mass of 2023+3,

Congratulations on your appointment and your desire to attend the Virginia Military Institute. I commend you on your decision as you have chosen to attend the hardest school in the country. Understand that your time at VMI will be filled with adversity and hardship, however, no other institution in the world will better prepare you for all your life-time endeavors. VMI has been preparing model citizen soldiers and world leaders since the founding of the school in 1839. You are their legacy as the future of our Institute is in your hands. Having this in mind, it is up to you as an individual to work unselfishly for your peers and the betterment of the Institute.

As you enter through the gates of our barracks on Matriculation day, you will be standing alongside your brother-rats. You and your brother rats will endure significant adversity and hardship together within the ratline, in the classroom, and on the playing fields. Enduring this same hardship, you will collectively form yourselves from a Rat-mass into a class, unbreakable and stronger than any class of 2026 in the world. Your class bond will last a lifetime as you will always recall your shared hardships.

In order to succeed at VMI, you must work hard in everything you do, have a positive attitude, and treat everyone with respect. The only thing you can control is your reputation. The building of your reputation begins as you step into the walls of our Institute.

Sincerely,  
Blake T. Smith  
Regimental Commander 2022–2023

# VMI—An Overview

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## The Mission of Virginia Military Institute

Virginia Military Institute, founded in 1839 and now in its 183<sup>rd</sup> year, has remained true to its mission to produce educated and honorable men and women by preparing them with an education for the future. VMI combines the studies of a full college curriculum within a framework of military discipline, with emphasis placed on the qualities of honor, integrity, and responsibility. VMI is a state-supported college, organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Institute is governed by a Board of Visitors appointed by the governor. In accordance with the provisions of the Code of Virginia, the cadets constitute a military corps. Most of the members of the faculty and staff are commissioned in the Virginia Militia (Unorganized) by the governor acting as commander-in-chief.

We at VMI believe that the measure of a college lies in the quality and performance of its graduates and their contributions to society. Therefore, it is the mission of VMI to produce educated and honorable men and women, prepared for the varied work of civil life, imbued with love of learning, confident in the functions and attitudes of leadership, possessing a high sense of public service, advocates of the American democracy and free enterprise system, and ready as citizen-soldiers to defend their country in time of national peril.

To accomplish this result, VMI seeks to provide qualified young men and women an undergraduate education of the highest quality, that embraces engineering, science, and the arts, all conducted in, and facilitated by, the unique VMI system of military discipline.

## Vision 2039

[www.vmi.edu/vision2039](http://www.vmi.edu/vision2039)

In 2003 VMI began a journey that will culminate in the year 2039, VMI's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday. This journey involves physical change in the form of renovation and new construction. It also involves cultural changes—a move toward more civility within the Corps of Cadets and across the VMI post.

## Academic Program

A four-year undergraduate college, VMI is recognized as one of the nation's top institutions of higher education. Acknowledging VMI's total educational value as well as the high demand for VMI graduates in the job market, major ratings publications name VMI in their lists of top undergraduate programs. U.S. News and World Report consistently ranks VMI among the nation's top five public liberal arts colleges.

Almost 100% of full-time faculty hold either a doctorate or the terminal degree in their field. Nearly 1,700 cadets pursue B.A. or B.S. degrees in 14 major fields of study: Biology; Chemistry; Civil Engineering; Computer and Information Sciences; Economics and Business; Electrical and Computer Engineering; English, Rhetoric and Humanistic Studies; History; International Studies and Political Science; Applied Mathematics; Mechanical Engineering; Modern Languages and Cultures; Physics; and Psychology.

Civil engineering, a subject rarely taught in colleges and universities before 1839, was the cornerstone program at VMI's founding. The first industrial chemistry course in the South was offered at VMI, and, in 1868, modern courses in physics and meteorology were developed. Today

the Institute's engineering program remains nationally recognized for its quality. In fact, in its most recent rankings, U.S. News & World Report again ranked VMI engineering among the nation's best undergraduate programs.

VMI's demanding academic program reflects the established needs and the emerging trends of a constantly changing society on the local, regional, national, and international levels. VMI's global outreach includes student/faculty exchanges with a number of foreign academies and universities, internships, numerous semester-abroad programs, and summer-abroad programs. More than 100 cadets are involved in VMI's international programs annually. VMI also offers outstanding academic enrichment programs in writing, undergraduate research, and honors.

Successful completion of VMI's unique educational system enables cadets to enter many civilian professions, the armed forces, or to continue at graduate and professional schools. VMI produces leaders for all walks of life: business, industry, public service, education, the professions, and the military. One reason the Institute is held in such high regard is that approximately 98% of each class has full-time employment or has entered graduate school within five months of graduation. Between 50-60% of graduates commission, and about 18% of VMI graduates make the armed forces a career.

## **Athletic Program—NCAA and Club Sports**

VMI believes that all cadets are athletes and all athletes are cadets. Athletics at VMI form an integral part of the mission to develop the whole person. VMI's proud intercollegiate athletic history dates back to 1866 with the formation of a baseball team. In 1892, Cadet Walter H. Taylor

served as captain and coach of the first football team.

VMI fields 18 teams on the NCAA Division I level: baseball, basketball, men's and women's cross-country, football, lacrosse, men's and women's rifle, men's and women's soccer, men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's indoor track & field, men's and women's outdoor track & field, women's water polo and wrestling.

VMI also boasts a thriving club sports program. While the sports vary from year to year based on the interests of the cadets, the standard sports include lacrosse, rugby, ice hockey, basketball, running, trap and skeet, triathlon, powerlifting, equestrian, and wrestling. New cadets may join a club sport in full member status after the Rat Line ends.

## **VMI Corps of Cadets**

The challenging military-based portion of the VMI program is a distinctive aspect of the VMI experience. All cadets are part of the Corps of Cadets and participate in officer training programs associated with one of the three ROTC units on post: Army, Naval (which includes the Marine Corps), and Air Force (which includes the Space Force). New cadets are called "rats" until they break out of the Rat Line in the spring semester and earn their cadet status.

Cadets live together in barracks, eat together in Crozet Hall, and wear the cadet uniforms daily. Cadets' lives and conduct are regulated by the traditions and rules of the Institute and the Honor Code.

# Pre-Matriculation

## Packing









While bringing a trunk to VMI is allowed, they're highly discouraged due to limited storage space. Each cadet is allowed one piece of luggage. The dimensions of a large suitcase are between 28 and 32 inches long and approximately 19 inches wide and 12 inches deep. Smaller luggage pieces/stored belongings must fit inside the large piece of luggage because there isn't unlimited space in the trunk rooms located in the concourse area of the barracks. It is recommended that the luggage be lockable. Sensitive and expensive items should not be stored in the barracks trunk room. VMI is not responsible for damage, loss, or theft of personal property stored in the barracks trunk room, barracks cadet rooms, or other areas on post. It is recommended that personal items be labeled with the cadet's


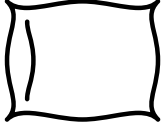



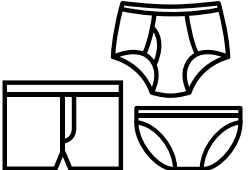

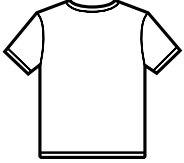



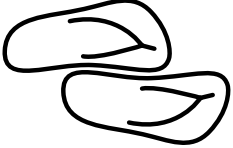

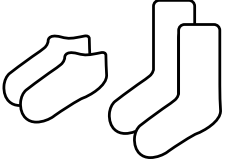


name. If you are driving to VMI, consider bringing some of your items in a cardboard box that can be recycled or a plastic bin that can go back home after you are dropped off at VMI.

Use the following list to pack for VMI. Most items should be brought from home, but some items may be purchased at the VMI Bookstore (540-464-7637 or [www.bkstr.com/vmistore](http://www.bkstr.com/vmistore)). The bookstore accepts all major credit cards. The number of clothing items recommended is the minimum based on having to change clothes two or three times a day during the August heat. Laundry is sent out once a week so plan accordingly.




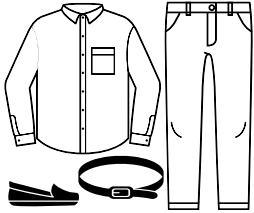





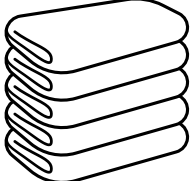





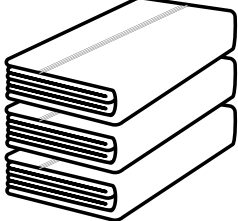
New cadets may purchase shower shoes, hydration system, shirt stays, mouth guards, and academic bags at the VMI Bookstore on Matriculation Day.

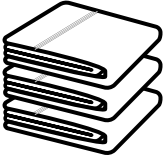
## Mandatory and Optional Items

Clothing—MANDATORY			
 1	Each	<b>Black 1.5-liter (50 oz.)</b> hydration system, i.e. Camelbak, Blackhawk, or equivalent— <b>very important to have before matriculation</b>	
 1	Each	Watch, black, athletic style recommended. <i>Rats cannot wear smart watches during the Rat Line.</i>	
 2	Pair	Running shoes, predominantly white or black	
 1	Pair	Please see "Boots" on page 10 or visit <a href="http://www.vmi.edu/auxservices">www.vmi.edu/auxservices</a> for information regarding purchasing approved military-style boots, breaking them in, and other details.	

 1	Each	White pillow	
 7	Pair	Compression shorts (reduces chafing), black	
 14	Pair	Underwear, must be white (males: boxers OR boxer briefs OR briefs); females do not need male underwear	
 14	Each	Crew neck t-shirts, must be white (v-neck or tank top style not authorized)	
 7-10	Each	Females—Sports bras (minimum), must be white, high-impact recommended	
 1	Pair	Shower shoes (rubber thong sandals)	
 14	Pair	Plain white, ankle or crew length athletic socks with no visible logos	
 10	Pair	Long (over the calf) black boot/hiking socks to be worn with combat boots	



 14	Pair	Plain black dress socks to be worn with low quarter shoes	
 1	Set	One pair civilian clothes and shoes	
 1	Each	Swimsuit, conservative one piece or traditional swim trunks, navy or black	
 1	Each	Mouth guard (for boxing class)	
 5	Each	Plain white bath-size towels (minimum)	
 1	Each	Plain white wash cloth (minimum)	
 1	Each	Blanket (comforter), dark solid color, twin XL size	
 3	Each	Twin XL white flat sheets (no elastic)	

<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Each	White pillow cases	
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### Personal Hygiene—MANDATORY

<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Toothbrush
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Toothpaste
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Kit	Razor and Shaving Cream (non-electric)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Sunscreen, tube or bottle
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Bottle	Shampoo/conditioner
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Bar	Soap
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Pair	Eyeglasses, if needed
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Body/foot powder
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Deodorant

### School Supplies

<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Academic Planner
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Laptop Computer or iPad
<input type="checkbox"/>			Black fabric brief case style computer bag (not a backpack)
<input type="checkbox"/>			Pens/Pencils
<input type="checkbox"/>			Notebooks
<input type="checkbox"/>			Binders
<input type="checkbox"/>			Calculator
<input type="checkbox"/>			Highlighters
<input type="checkbox"/>			Flash drive

### Miscellaneous—Highly Recommended

<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Set	Dusting supplies
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Lint roller
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Set	Shirt stays
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Floss
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Lotion
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Lip balm
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Shower Caddy
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Lockbox—can be purchased from 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class Finance Committee on Matriculation Day
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Each	Desired personal hygiene products not listed

## Prohibited Items

### Weapons of any type

Appliances including microwave ovens, hot pots, heating elements, etc.

Plants and Pets

Flammable materials including candles, fireworks, incense, etc.

TVs or any other type of entertainment media

Alcohol, illegal drugs or associated paraphernalia

## Prohibited Items Until After Breakout

Electric razors

DVDs, CDs, computer games

iPods or similar devices, MP3 players, and Computer speakers

Clothing with emblems/logos, to include socks, underwear, t-shirts, linens, and towels

Transition lens in eyeglasses

Smart watches that can access social media, email or can text





## Boots

New Cadets are required to arrive with one pair of properly fitting boots selected from the list of authorized boots below.

Boots may be purchased from a variety of sources, including online/brick & mortar retailers or the VMI Military Store, located in Richardson Hall and open Monday–Friday, 0730–1530. The Military Store sells Belleville C390 boots and offers a comprehensive fitting service. Cadets attending STP will be afforded the opportunity to utilize this service, if desired.

New Cadets arriving with unauthorized boots, to include those with USMC markings or zippers, will be directed to the Military Store to purchase the correct style during Matriculation Week.

## Sizing/Fit

Proper fit is critical to preventing injury and maximizing training time during Matriculation Week and beyond. Videos on proper fit and wear of combat boots can be found here: [www.vmi.edu/cadet-life/events-and-traditions/matriculation/what-to-bring](http://www.vmi.edu/cadet-life/events-and-traditions/matriculation/what-to-bring).

### Specific sizing recommendations:

- » Boots marked as unisex are listed in men's sizes
- » Belleville recommends men order unisex boots 1-1½ sizes smaller than their normal shoe size and women order unisex boots 3-3½ sizes smaller than their normal shoe size
- » Belleville recommends women order female-specific boots 2 sizes smaller than their normal shoe size

- » Women are not required to purchase female-specific boots
- » New Cadets with shoe sizes that fall outside the range of the sizes listed below should contact the Military Store for assistance, at 540-464-7303 or [auxservices@vmi.edu](mailto:auxservices@vmi.edu).

## Authorized Boots

### **Belleville C390:**

Hot Weather Combat—*Standard issue boot in a wide range of sizes*

- » Unisex Sizes: 2-16
- » Widths: Narrow, Regular, Wide, Extra Wide

### **Belleville FC390 (Women's)**

- » Women's Sizes: 4-10
- » Widths: Regular, Wide

### **TR by Belleville Khyber II TR550**

Multi Terrain—*All-terrain, light-weight boot*

- » Unisex Sizes: 4-15
- » Widths: Regular, Wide

### **Belleville C320:**

One Xero Ultra-Light Assault—*Ultra-light (20 oz per boot)*

- » Unisex Sizes: 4-14
- » Widths: Regular, Wide

### **Belleville FC320 (Women's)**

- » Women's Sizes: 4-10
- » Widths: Regular, Wide

### **Belleville Sabre C333**

Hot Weather Hybrid—*Light-weight, comfort-focused boot*

- » Unisex Sizes 4-14
- » Widths: Regular, Wide





Rats of 2023+3,

Congratulations on your acceptance to the Virginia Military Institute. VMI is a very unique school and provides very unique opportunities for college students. Very few schools in the nation will demand such high performance and ethics from their students. At every step of the way, you will be challenged to become the best version of yourself. This will not be an easy task. Just the fact that you are reading this handbook means that you are accepting the challenge. If you choose to embrace the process of the Institute and buy into the system set before you, VMI will never fail you. VMI has produced some of the most intelligent, disciplined, and honest men and women that the world has ever seen. Now it is your turn to be transformed and molded into the best and brightest of this generation.

A common question you will be asked when you get to school is, "Why did you choose VMI?" I struggled to answer this question for the longest time because I always felt like I needed to have the best answer. You do not. To be completely honest, it does not matter why you chose VMI. What truly matters is why you choose to stay. Find your "why", continue to lean into it, and push yourself to new limits at each step and you will get more than you could ever imagine out of what opportunities VMI has to offer.

With all that being said, there are ways you can prepare yourself to be successful at VMI. The first being physically. The physical standards of the Institute are above average compared to the normal population. You will be tested multiple times for performance and body composition. You are expected to pass these tests from the beginning. Nobody can pass the tests for you. Begin training now if you have not already. I recommend you work on running and calisthenics. There are plenty of plans that will get you to a good baseline but again, nobody is going to do it for you.

The second thing you need to focus on is academics. Do not forget that VMI is still a full-time academic institution,

and you have to pass classes in order to graduate. A big part of being successful academically at VMI is being able to manage your time. Your days will be filled with all kinds of obligations and you need to be able to organize your time and effort to complete the tasks set before you. No one is going to hold your hand or do your schoolwork for you. You need to take academics into your own hands and understand that schoolwork will only intensify from this point on.

Last, but not least, you need to begin focusing on your mentality. This is arguably one of the hardest things to change because VMI's system contradicts the very way that society influences you to think. VMI and the ratline are not for weak-minded individuals. You are going to be humbled many times during your time here and you need to be prepared mentally for these instances. Respect is another area that you will need to reinforce. You will need to respect people, organizations, time, perspectives, and plans at VMI. Finally, you will need to learn to be selfless. This is not a solo mission, nor should you attempt to make it such. There are people going through this experience with you that are going to need your support and you will need to lean on others for their support. You will need to learn to work as a team as well as be a team player. Lean into your brother rats and remember that you are not alone.

The path set before you is far from easy, but if you invest all you have into it, it will be the most rewarding thing you will ever accomplish. Nothing will be given to you. Everything must be earned. My cadre and I will give you all the tools necessary for success and we will not give up on you. Ultimately, it is up to you whether or not you succeed. No one is going to do it for you. Look into the history of VMI and look at all the amazing men and women that have gone through the same system you are about to enter and realize that you are their legacy. Make them proud. Do not waste the little time you have now. Get to work.

Cadet Captain Joseph O. Egbo  
Regimental Executive Officer

# Matriculation

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## Matriculation Overview

After you say goodbye to your family and form up with your company for the first time, you will march into barracks to meet your cadre. Fourteen upper class cadets from each company known as cadre are responsible for the training new cadets undergo to become VMI cadets. Collectively you are known as a rat mass and the Class of 2023 plus 3. You will not earn the status of 4<sup>th</sup> Class cadet, Class of 2026, until after Breakout.

Meeting your cadre will be the first in a long series of events designed to train and test you as you prepare for assuming the responsibilities of cadetship. During Matriculation Week, you will participate in numerous training activities, get your rat haircut, engage in daily physical fitness

routines, learn about the history of VMI, and become familiar with the requirements of cadet life. You will also purchase textbooks, so ensure funds are available. Matriculation Week concludes with an event called the Rat Crucible.

## Uniform Issue

Fitting and issuing of many uniform items is done during Matriculation Week. Identification of clothing is made by a laundry number assigned by the VMI Laundry Department. New cadet bags containing various supplies issued during the first week include a marking pen. New cadets are given time to mark all washable items they bring with them. These issued items are subject to change.







# The Rat Line and Life as a Rat

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During the first several months at VMI, new cadets are called “rats,” the accepted term (since the 1850s) for a new cadet. You will be part of a tradition and encounter the challenges that VMI cadets who came before experienced—the Rat Line. The purpose of the Rat Line is to assemble a class imbued with honor, discipline, pride, and respect. The Rat Line is conducted in phases of development, employing supporting virtues such as cohesion, humility, physical fitness, knowledge, and self-reliance, while teaching self-control, self-discipline, time management, and followership as prerequisites for becoming a VMI cadet. Even those who matriculate with advanced academic standing or prior military service must go through the Rat Line. To achieve success, new cadets must depend on their mental and physical skills, and the help and support of classmates (brother rats). With persistence and determination, new cadets will get through the Rat Line. It is through the rigors of the Rat Line that the bonds of brother rat spirit are forged.

## The Dyke System

A new cadet’s greatest ally during and after the Rat Line is his or her 1<sup>st</sup> Class mentor, known as a dyke. The phrase originated in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century mispronunciation of the term “to get decked out,” or to dress up in one’s finery, as it takes two cadets to “dyke out” (put on the white cross belts) for the dress uniform worn at parades. In exchange for certain tasks performed by the new cadet, the dyke offers good advice, moral support, and a haven on the first stoop (“floor”) of barracks. New cadets learn that the dyke, as a mentor, will not allow avoidance of duties, but will help them through the rat year. Normally, the upper-class cadet

initiates the contact with a new cadet for a possible dyke relationship. This contact may be based on common background, sports team, or shared hometown with the new cadet, or it may be facilitated by a member of the faculty, staff, or a coach. New cadets are closely monitored to ensure they receive a dyke.

## A Typical Rat’s Day

Initially, new cadets are awakened by their cadre. After classes begin, they learn to wake up in time to get properly dressed, roll up their “hay” (mattress) and complete chores in their dykes’ rooms before Breakfast Roll Call (BRC).

At BRC and all other formations, squad corporals (3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadets) inspect new cadets for personal appearance. They then march down to Crozet Hall for breakfast. After breakfast, classes begin at 0800. All cadets must be on time and prepared for class.

After Supper Roll Call (SRC) and the following dinner, cadets must be in an approved study area such as barracks, the library, or an academic building. The end of the duty day is signified by Taps (lights out) at 2230 Sunday–Thursday. Saturdays are filled with various activities including military duty and academic meetings. On Sunday mornings, cadets are offered the opportunity to attend services at one of the local churches. On Sunday evenings, VMI’s full-time chaplains hold a non-denominational service in Memorial Hall.



To the Rats of 2023+3,

Congratulations on your acceptance to VMI. Our institute is a special place, truly unlike any other school in the nation. Take pride in your decision to come here. It speaks volumes about your character and your willingness to embrace hardship to mold yourself into something great. Make no mistake, your path here will not be an easy one. It will be wrought with challenges and adversity, however, with continued hard work and perseverance, the lessons and experiences you gain here will prove fruitful beyond measure.

VMI will seek to imbue you with the highest qualities of leadership and integrity. It is up to you to embrace and internalize these qualities. However, there is one sacred possession whose discarding will not be tolerated. That is your honor. We as cadets live by a strict and enduring code, which states: **A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate those who do.** This statement is more than just another piece of information to memorize from your Rat Bible. It is more than just a charter on your wall. It is the foundation of our Institute, upheld by all members of the Corps, meant to serve as your moral compass here and throughout your life. From the moment you sign the matriculation book, you commit yourself to a life of honesty and integrity. This standard will need to be consciously upheld at all times. It will not come without challenge. Temptation will confront you. Do not give in. Choose the hard right over the easy wrong. Choose courage over comfort. Choose honor over personal gain. Someone will not always

be there to watch over your shoulder to make sure you are doing the right thing. As stated, it must come from you. I trust you will live up to the standard you are capable of. You will do the Institute and your country proud through the character you exhibit.

When you enter VMI, you come in with a blank slate. Make that slate into something you would be proud of.

I wish you the best of luck.

Very Respectfully,  
Brandon H. Marks  
Honor Court President

# Cadet Life

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## The VMI Honor System

On arrival at VMI, new cadets and parents will realize that it is indeed a unique place with a culture and a life all its own. The life of a VMI cadet is one of self-denial, self-control, and strict discipline. Nevertheless, as generations of cadets have discovered, it is possible not only to survive, but to thrive within these stone walls. Aiding and guiding cadets are several systems at the Institute that regulate and advocate for cadets.

The VMI educational system provides cadets with a constantly changing set of academic, military, physical, and psychological challenges. These diverse challenges are designed to provide each cadet with the opportunity to develop life skills that will contribute to his/her success regardless of endeavor. Paramount among those skills and the common thread that ties all aspects of the VMI experience together is honor. Above all else, cadets are

men and women of honor and integrity who can always be trusted. They live by the VMI Honor Code, which simply states that “A Cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate those who do.” The Code pervades all aspects of a cadet’s life. A cadet’s honor is his/her most guarded possession. The education of new cadets about the honor system is the responsibility of the Honor Court. The Honor Court is comprised of fourteen 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadets elected by their classmates. In addition to education, the Honor Court is also responsible for adjudicating reported violations of the Honor Code. The VMI honor system is unique in that it is a single-sanction system. The system does not recognize degrees of honor. The sanction for any breach of honor is dismissal. So when new cadets sign the book on Matriculation Day, they are committing themselves to a life of honesty and integrity. If their commitment is not complete, their stay at the Institute may be short.





Rat Mass of 2023+3,

Congratulations!

What an exciting time it is!

It is my privilege to be writing to you. The nature of the VMI experience brings with it great perspective. It was 3 years ago that we, the Class of 2023, your Dyke's Class, were preparing to embark upon the journey of which you are about to become quite familiar with. Now, we stand with open arms, awaiting your arrival into our ranks. The beauty of the Class System will come into fruition as you live out and see for yourself how "everything is earned and nothing is simply given".

Though there are endless morsels of knowledge and advice that will be shared with you, I'd like to disclose a few... the rest you will discover and internalize as you see fit.

I would encourage you to try your very best to comprehend your purpose in being at this Institution. Though backgrounds and motivations vary, understand that VMI is only ever as strong as those who give it life... that would be you.

Furthermore, understand that those to your left and right, your Brother Rats are the only ones who are thinking what you are thinking and feeling what you are feeling. The distress that may come, is present for a reason, it forges the strongest of unified bonds.

Do not ever become complacent to the thought that your actions do not matter. I can assure you everything you do carries immense weight, as the value of a VMI degree is based upon a collection of small decisions Cadets will make on a daily basis.

Through everything, keep a smile on your face, a gratefulness in your heart, and a passion in your veins, that will drive you towards obtaining the honor of calling yourself a VMI Cadet. We have all the faith in you!

God Bless!

Rah Virginia Mil & Rah '23

Gratefully Yours,  
Cameron M. Cavanaugh  
General Committee President

## The Class System

At VMI, the class system is the peer-to-peer leadership structure, promoting a brother and sisterhood of cadets who progress through the VMI system together. Rights and privileges, as well as responsibilities, depend on class. There are four classes: rats (who eventually become 4<sup>th</sup> Class cadets [freshmen] after Breakout), 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadets (sophomores), 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadets (juniors) and 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadets (seniors). There are also some fifth-year cadets who require additional time to complete their degree requirements, or remain for a 9<sup>th</sup> semester to participate in athletics resulting from a redshirt year or injury.

New cadets enjoy only one privilege: to strain. First class cadets, however, having completed three years at the Institute, enjoy many privileges, including the use of any arch to enter and exit barracks and operating a vehicle in Rockbridge County.

The class system is upheld by the General Committee, which is a board of cadets voted into office by each class and oversees the student government of VMI. Each class has a president, a vice president, and a historian, who are elected for life. The new 4<sup>th</sup> Class will elect its officers after spring furlough.

## Regimental System

The regimental system administers the military component and structure of the Corps of Cadets promoting a sense of belonging, pride, and commitment. The regimental system should not be confused with ROTC. Consisting of three battalions composed of three companies each (nine line companies plus a Regimental Band), this system is, after the Honor Code, the most enduring aspect of VMI. The regimental structure of the Corps of Cadets parallels that of a regular infantry regiment. Cadets are grouped into squads

led by corporals, (selected 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadets); squads into platoons led by sergeants (selected 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadets) and lieutenants (selected 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadets); platoons into companies commanded by 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadet captains; other cadet officers and noncommissioned officers, makes up the military structure of the Corps of Cadets. It is important to note that at VMI, rank is not given freely by class; each cadet with rank has applied and been selected for rank based on demonstrated performance and leadership potential.

## Company Transfer Policy

The Commandant of Cadets has the authority to assign and transfer cadets to and from any company within the Corps of Cadets for the purpose of health, welfare, morale, safety, security, or any other reason deemed necessary by the Commandant.

## Regimental Band and Pipes

The Regimental Band is organized as its own company, comprised of approximately 150 full-time members. The Regimental Band, along with the Pipe Band, performs at over 150 events annually and in the past five years they have appeared at the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, Pearl Harbor Commemoration in Hawaii, and at the New Orleans Mardi Gras Parade. They also perform at home and away athletic events. While representing VMI to the public, they are still required to participate in the duties and activities required of every VMI rat and cadet.

## Club and Service Opportunities

[www.vmi.edu/cadet-life/clubs-and-activities](http://www.vmi.edu/cadet-life/clubs-and-activities)

Opportunities for cadet engagement and volunteerism include the Cadet Equity Association, Promaji Club, International Club, VMI Theatre, and Building BRIDGES.

# Cadet Government

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VMI has several governing committees run by cadets under the supervision of the assistant commandant for cadet government. These committees handle the issues of the Corps and enforce regulations of the Institute.

The General Committee (GC) makes up the cadet leadership of the school. The GC upholds the standards and traditions of the Corps. It is the guardian of the class system through its enforcement of class privileges, and it is the officially recognized voice for cadets when interacting with the administration. The GC consists of the nine class officers and one elected 1<sup>st</sup> Class secretary.

The Officer of the Guard Association (OGA) maintains order and harmony within the Corps. This is the main organization through which the Corps

polices its own, dealing with offenses from the most trivial to the most important. This organization, among other things, is charged with enforcing VMI's anti-hazing policies. The OGA consists of 1<sup>st</sup> Class privates.

The Cadet Equity Association (CEA) promotes the Superintendent's Statement on Equity at VMI, and monitors a post-wide climate of respect and equitable treatment for cadets. The mission of these cadets is to receive reports of incidents of discrimination or sexual harassment, to investigate these matters when appropriate, and to protect the privacy of the individuals involved insofar as it is possible. CEA cadets receive training in matters and procedures related to investigations and legal issues that



involve gender, racial, religious, sexual orientation, and ethnic discrimination.

## Physical Fitness

Cadets have to take the fitness test every semester. It is gender-normed and consists of push-ups, sit-ups, and a run. It is highly encouraged that rats begin to get themselves into shape as soon as possible. VMI is notorious for ample stairs and never-ending hills. This is very important to keep in mind while preparing for the Rat Line. Following is a basic workout outline. Make sure to modify it to your ability.

- » Day 1: 1 mile run at a fast pace/ 3 sets of 15 body weight squats/ 3 sets of lunges 10 each leg/ 4 sets of 30 seconds flutter kick then 25 crunches then 30 seconds plank
- » Day 2: max set of push-ups/ 3 sets (1 min between sets). Diamond push-ups till exhaustion wait 30 seconds. Regular grip push-ups till exhaustion wait 30 seconds Wide grip push-ups till exhaustion.
- » Day 3: 3 mile run/ 4 sets of pull ups till exhaustion
- » Day 4: rest/ stretch
- » (Repeat)

Cadets are also required to take seven semesters of physical education classes. Cadets are also involved with several programs that encourage physical fitness. Physical Training Time (PTT) is administered by the respective ROTC departments. These sessions are mandatory. PTT is conducted twice each week and consists of a variety of physical training activities. Additionally, rats will engage in NCAA sports or Rat Challenge. This is where they will learn teamwork and leadership principles while doing many physical tasks such as runs, rope climbs, obstacle courses, rappelling, and swims. In the spring, New Cadet Military Training (NCMT) teaches basic military

skills, marksmanship, first aid, and land navigation.

## Privileges and Leaves

Privileges and leave are based on General Committee (GC) class and are tempered by a cadet's academic performance and/or conduct record. A cadet's GC class is the class with which he/she matriculated unless the cadet has left and returned to VMI. Only 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadets with full class privileges are authorized to register, maintain, and operate a motor vehicle in Rockbridge County. New cadets are authorized two weekends leave after Breakout if they have full class privileges. Emergency leave of 72 hours may be granted because of serious illness, death, or other emergency in a cadet's immediate family. The emergency leave must be approved by the commandant's office or officer-in-charge and recommended by the chaplain. A time limit of 72 hours is stipulated for this furlough, but may be extended with the commandant's approval. Special leaves are granted by permit. A cadet must have full class privileges and a cumulative 2.0 GPA to take advantage of special leaves. Cadets may submit a permit to attend religious conferences, retreats or encounter weekends off post. Religious permits may be submitted through the chaplain to the commandant and will require use of a weekend, unless the event is Institute sponsored or approved. A cadet may be placed on medical leave if he/she has a medical condition requiring an absence from duties at VMI. Medical permits are submitted through the Institute physician to the commandant. Other permits must be submitted by the cadet. Parents should not be involved in the permit process.

## Women's Health at VMI

The VMI Infirmary staffs a physician and nurse practitioner who offer full gynecological services while you are at VMI. Most of these services are free or at very low cost. The physician and nurse practitioner are available Monday–Friday from 0700–1700 and Saturday at sick call (0700).

Nurses are available at the VMI Infirmary 24 hours a day while cadets are in barracks.

What extra items might women need to bring to VMI?

- » Pads, tampons, or other hygiene products
- » Sports bras
- » Any prescriptions or over-the-counter medications you use regularly
- » Neutral colored hair clips & bobby pins (elastics not permitted after rat haircut)

It is not uncommon to get your period during Matriculation Week. Getting your

period during Matriculation Week can be frustrating, but here is what to expect if that happens.

During that time, all 4<sup>th</sup> stoop bathrooms will be stocked with pads and tampons for rats if needed. All EMTs will be carrying pads and tampons for rats if needed while not in barracks. If you get your period, let an EMT know, so that you have additional support. A woman having her period will be given additional time for showers and hygiene if an EMT is aware.

Some women have irregular periods or miss their periods completely during times of high stress or intense exercise. Let the Infirmary know if you miss more than three periods in row.

If you get painful cramps or have questions, go to the Infirmary. There is a medicine you can take to decrease the cramping. Many women at VMI use birth control pills, not just to prevent pregnancy, but for painful periods, irregular periods, or acne treatment.





# Expectations for Cadet Conduct

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## General

Cadets are expected to conduct themselves as men and women of character at all times. Exemplary conduct both at and away from the Institute reflects credit on the cadet, the Corps, and the Institute.

A cadet is always considered to be of good conduct and honorable under all circumstances, unless proven otherwise by the cadet's own actions.

Conduct unbecoming of a cadet is any behavior which compromises, or can reasonably be expected to compromise, the character of the cadet, or the name and reputation of the Institute. Actions which constitute improper conduct are described in the Blue Book (regulation on standards and behavior) or established as such by the traditions of the Institute. Unacceptable conduct of a cadet may result in dismissal or other disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.

## Alcohol

The VMI post is commonwealth of Virginia property and subject to its laws concerning consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs. Consumption of alcohol on post by cadets, regardless of age, is strictly prohibited. There are severe penalties for all cadets who violate VMI's policy regarding alcohol. All visitors to post should be aware of VMI's rules regarding alcohol and illegal drugs and that they must absolutely refrain from providing alcohol or illegal drugs to cadets anywhere, to include "tailgate" parties. The Institute closely monitors the Parade Ground and all on-post activities.

## Civility

VMI expects every cadet to be committed to respectful living, while treating

everyone with dignity and fairness and encouraging others to do the same. In that light, cadets must understand the impact of their behavior on others and strive to uphold the values outlined in the Code of a Cadet.

## Dating Among Cadets

Dating within the Corps is acceptable among the three upper classes as long as it is in accordance with policy. Typical cadet friendships based on shared backgrounds, academic or extracurricular interests, or organizational associations do not constitute dating. Cadets are not allowed to date within their own chain of command. New cadets may not date another member of the Corps during their entire first year at VMI.

## Dangerous and Destructive Behavior

VMI is committed to the well-being and safety of cadets and the VMI family as a whole, as well as to the integrity of its learning environment. A cadet who presents a serious danger to self or others, or who substantially disrupts the learning environment on post, may be required to engage in a psychiatric evaluation followed by treatment on post if possible, and if not, while at home on a medical furlough.

## Drug Testing Program, Controlled Substances, and Drug Paraphernalia

[www.vmi.edu/drugtestpolicy](http://www.vmi.edu/drugtestpolicy)

VMI General Order 53 is the Policy on Prohibiting Controlled Substances and Drug Paraphernalia. VMI does not tolerate the possession, solicitation, distribution, sale, or use of controlled substances, and/or of drug paraphernalia. VMI prohibits all cadets at any time or place, whether on- or off-post, from possessing or using

any controlled substances or other drug paraphernalia as defined in sections 18.2-250 (included in schedule I through VI of the Drug Control Act, Chapter 34 (§ 54.1-3400)) and 18.2-265.1 of the Code of Virginia, unless authorized by legal prescription for such substance or otherwise specifically permitted by law. Any cadet knowingly and willfully possessing or using such a substance or item in violation of this policy will be dismissed from the Institute. However, if the possession or use is not knowing and willful, the cadet will be subject to a penalty up to and including dismissal from the Institute.

VMI may conduct unannounced random drug tests of members of the Corps of Cadets for the presence of illegal drugs and other controlled substances periodically during the academic year. All matriculating at VMI do so with the understanding that they are subject to requirements of VMI's random drug testing policy. In addition, the Commandant may direct members of the Corps of Cadets to be tested when a reasonable suspicion of drug use exists. Refusal to provide a specimen for testing upon request in accordance with the provisions of VMI policy may be treated as the equivalent

of a positive test and turned over to the Commandant for appropriate disciplinary action. A positive finding of the presence of a prohibited substance shall be treated as confirmation of possession and use of the prohibited substance in violation of VMI policy and will result in dismissal.

## **General Order 16 Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Retaliation Policy**

Virginia Military Institute is committed to providing an environment that emphasizes the dignity and worth of every member of its community and that is free from harassment and discrimination based on any protected status, against otherwise qualified persons with disabilities, or based on any other status protected by law. In pursuit of this goal, any question of impermissible discrimination on these bases will be addressed with efficiency and energy and in accordance with General Order 16, which includes VMI's Discrimination Grievance Procedures (Appendix A of General Order 16). Retaliation against those who have alleged violations of this policy, those who have filed complaints or reports under this policy, and those who have testified or



otherwise participated in enforcement of this policy will be addressed in a separate General Order.

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination based on sex. It is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other conduct of a sexual nature including: verbal (e.g., specific demands for sexual favors, sexual innuendos, sexually suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or sexual threats); non-verbal (e.g., sexually suggestive emails, other writings, articles or documents, objects or pictures, graphic commentaries, suggestive or insulting sounds or gestures, leering, whistling, or physical (e.g., touching, pinching, brushing the body, any unwelcome or coerced sexual activity, including sexual assault). Sexual harassment, including sexual assault, can involve persons of the same or different sexes. Sexual harassment may also include sex-based harassment directed toward stereotypical notions of what is female/feminine versus male/masculine or a failure to conform to those gender stereotypes.

## **Inclusive Excellence Training**

VMI is dedicated to the highest standards of leadership and personal development. It is imperative that cadets are equipped with the competencies that will allow them to be successful in any environment they enter. As a member of a global and diverse society, effectively navigating the varying and sometimes polarizing beliefs we encounter is an essential leadership skill. In support of this development, VMI uses Inclusive Excellence training to foster conversations and stimulate discussion about complex social issues.

Inclusive Excellence is a framework developed by the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) as a guide

when incorporating diversity, equity, and educational quality. Inclusive Excellence features four tenets:

1. Achieving educational attainment in an inclusive, accepting setting.
2. Learning the skills, information, and mindsets cadets need to impact a diverse society.
3. Building a climate in classrooms and on the post that supports all cadets.
4. Fostering learning opportunities that accept diversity is a benefit to problem-solving.

Cadet Inclusive Excellence training takes place on Friday mornings at 0800. Cadet facilitators lead their peers through different exercises that allow a forum for open dialogue and mutual understanding.

## **Bystander Intervention Training**

VMI adopted the “Step UP! Bystander Intervention program” beginning in 2014. As new cadets, you will receive training in a small group setting to maximize your understanding of the program and the need to be proactive in helping others.

The goals of Step UP! are to:

- » Raise awareness of helping behaviors
- » Increase motivation to help
- » Develop skills and confidence when responding to problems or concerns
- » Ensure the safety and well-being of self and others

Most incidents on college campuses involve bystanders. Step UP! training provides a framework explaining the bystander effect, reviews relevant research and teaches skills for intervening successfully using the 5 Decision Making Steps, and the S.E.E. Model (Safe; Early; Effective). A survey at three universities (The University of Arizona, University of California, Riverside and University of Virginia), revealed that students are encountering multiple situations where bystander intervention would be

appropriate including, among other things, alcohol abuse, hazing, eating disorders, sexual assault, and discrimination. Almost 90% stated a problem could have been avoided with intervention and up to 85% of the student-athletes indicated they would like to learn skills to intervene. The bottom line is that many, if not most, unfortunate results are **preventable**.

## Hazing

The Rat Line and cadet life is difficult, but the conduct of cadre is absolutely professional and hazing is prohibited under Virginia law. Rats cannot choose to be hazed. Section 18.2-56 of the Virginia Code states: "Hazing is unlawful; civil and criminal liability; duty of school, etc., officials" is as follows: "It shall be unlawful to haze, or otherwise mistreat so as to cause bodily injury, any student at any school, college or university. Any person found guilty thereof shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. Any person receiving bodily injury by hazing or mistreatment shall have a right to sue, civilly, the person or persons guilty thereof, whether adults or infants. The president or other presiding official of any school, college or university, receiving appropriations from the State treasury shall, upon satisfactory proof of the guilt of any student hazing or mistreating another student, sanction and discipline such student in accordance with the institution's policies and procedures. The institution's policies and procedures shall provide for expulsions or other appropriate discipline based on the facts and circumstances of each case. The president or other presiding official of any school, college or university receiving appropriations from the state treasury shall report hazing which causes bodily injury to the attorney for the Commonwealth of the county or city in which such school, college or university

is, who shall take such action as he deems appropriate."

## Marriage and Parenthood

All VMI cadets must live in barracks and participate in a demanding and rigorous military program that does not permit attention to the duties implied by marriage or parenthood. Pursuant to the policy adopted by the Board of Visitors, any cadet who marries or becomes a parent is expected to resign from the Corps. Absent voluntary resignation, should the Institute, in its reasonable judgment, conclude that a cadet is married or the parent of a child, such cadet shall be separated from the Corps, for failure of eligibility, at the end of the semester in which the information is received and investigated. For the purpose of the policy, the responsibilities of parenthood are deemed to begin upon a cadet's learning that a child has been conceived as a result of his or her conduct. All cadets shall, upon matriculation and return each fall, sign a statement confirming their knowledge of this policy.

## Penalties

Penalties that may be assigned for violations are demerits, confinement, penalty tours, and suspension or dismissal from the Institute. In addition, cadets may be declared ineligible for privileges or be placed on conduct probation. Appeals for reconsideration of a penalty assigned as a result of a special report must be submitted in writing to the Commandant within one week of the date of the special report. Appeals of disciplinary dismissals may be heard only in the most unusual of circumstances. The president of the United States and the governor of Virginia may suspend confinement and penalty tours through the granting of amnesty to the entire corps. Amnesty does not affect

demerits or any probationary status, i.e., conduct or academic probation.

## **Punitive Restrictions**

Restrictions placed on a cadet affect his/her status by redefining limits and negating privileges. Cadets given restrictions will be fully aware of the limits of their restrictions. Ignorance is not an acceptable explanation for breach of restriction. Restrictions include arrest, room confinement, barracks confinement, conduct probation, and physical training probation.



## **The Blue Book**

The Blue Book outlines the regulations governing the Corps of Cadets and provides broad guidelines for cadet standards and conduct. Cadets adhere to the provisions of the Blue Book at all times including during furloughs (including summers) and while on and off post. VMI cadets are subject to this regulation from the time they sign the Matriculation Book and become a cadet until relieved of duty at graduation. Violations of the Blue Book that occur, for example, during the summer furlough and off post, may result in action being taken for misconduct.

## **Support Services and Information**

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### **Campus Security**

[www.vmi.edu/police](http://www.vmi.edu/police)

540-463-9177

The Jeanne Clery Act requires all institutions of higher education to publicly disclose three years of campus crime statistics and basic security policies. In addition, federal regulations require disclosure of graduation rates for each institution. VMI has chosen to include its sexual harassment and sexual assault policies with this information.

The personal safety of cadets and the security of the community are of vital concern to Virginia Military Institute. A copy of the Institute's annual security report is available upon request. This report includes statistics for the most recent three-year period concerning

reported crimes that occurred on post, in certain off-post buildings, on property owned or controlled by VMI, and on the public property within or immediately adjacent to and accessible from the post. The report also includes information regarding the law enforcement authority of the post police and policies concerning campus security, such as crime prevention, alcohol and drug use, sexual assault, and reporting of any crimes that may occur on campus.

### **Commandant's Office**

540-464-7962

Overseeing cadet life in barracks is the responsibility of the commandant and his staff. There are at least two experienced individuals on duty within the barracks

24 hours per day. Their most important responsibility is to ensure the health and well-being of cadets. The officer in charge can be contacted at 540-464-7962. In addition to this, each cadet is a member of a company, and each company is supervised by a member of the commandant's staff. Cadets and parents with questions or concerns can also contact the appropriate tactical officer for assistance.

## **Emergency Management**

[www.vmi.edu/cadet-life/health-and-safety/emergency-management](http://www.vmi.edu/cadet-life/health-and-safety/emergency-management)

VMI is committed to informing the community of an emergency, disaster or potential disaster immediately upon determining the nature of the emergency. It is important for you to take an active role in staying informed.

VMI takes a proactive approach to effective communication through the VMI Mass Notification system, which allows VMI to instantly send emergency information to users via text messaging, email, and a phone call to its community. This is a no-cost service. Cadets, faculty, and staff have the opportunity to participate in or opt-out of this program during the registration process. VMI encourages everyone in the VMI community to sign up for this service to receive immediate alerts when threatening situations arise such as natural disasters, fires, bomb threats, or acts of violence.

## **VMI Reach Out app**

VMI has developed the VMI Reach Out app for safety and security information. The home page on the app displays icons that direct users to information, reporting contacts and services they may need. Users only need to tap the icon to access information concerning police, emergency services, the Title IX coordinator, chaplain,

infirmary, and cadet counseling. The app also provides direct hotlines for support organizations such as Project Horizon, which assists victims of dating, domestic, and sexual violence. The app can be downloaded free of charge from the Apple App Store and from Google Play. Search for the "Reach Out-College Edition" app, download it, and select "Virginia Military Institute" when prompted. VMI encourages all cadets to have this safety app on their mobile phones.

## **Barber Shop**

[www.vmi.edu/auxservices](http://www.vmi.edu/auxservices)

Each rat receives a "rat haircut" during Matriculation Week at the Institute's own barber shop, located in the concourse of New Barracks. New cadets are required to get a haircut every week during the Rat Line. New cadets should not get a regulation haircut before matriculating. The quartermaster charge covers the cost of all haircuts.

## **Preston Library**

[www.vmi.edu/library](http://www.vmi.edu/library)  
540-464-7129

The mission of Preston Library is to provide library materials and services of the highest quality; to teach skills needed for academic inquiry and lifelong learning; to support faculty and undergraduate research; to provide access to and promote the use of Institute historical materials; and to offer library services to the community at large.

Renovation of Preston Library was completed in spring 2021. The library's collections include books and journals in print and electronic formats, non-print items such as DVDs, and databases covering a wide range of academic fields. Preston Library is also a selective depository of U.S. government publications. Patrons interested in doing

primary source research involving rare books and photographs, along with Institute historical records and growing digital archives, can find those materials in the VMI Archives in Preston Library.

Cadets may check out books, videos, and other materials for their research and study needs and can access materials on course reserves. Preston Library also offers cadets free interlibrary loan service, which provides access to materials not owned by our library. Personalized research consultations are available by appointment or on a drop-in basis.

Workstations with access to the internet, the library's online catalog, discovery tools, databases, digital resources, Microsoft Office and local network drives are available in the library and the open computer lab. Wireless network access and FindMe printing are available throughout the building. Study and learning spaces include study carrels, group study rooms, large study tables, whiteboards, and gallery areas on each floor with comfortable seating.

More information about Preston Library and its resources, services, staff, and facilities is available at [www.vmi.edu/library](http://www.vmi.edu/library).

## Lejeune Hall

Food Court (also called "The X" or "PX") is located in Lejeune Hall and is adjacent to Third Barracks. It is open seven days a week, from 0830–2300, Monday–Saturday; 1100–2300 on Sunday. An assortment of food, from salads to pizza, is available. Sales are for cash, check, or major credit card. Orders can also be taken for special event items (birthday cakes, exam packs, etc.).

## SNAP Accounts

[www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/snap.cgi](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/snap.cgi)

Cadets may be eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance

Program (SNAP), which allows individuals use a SNAP account to buy eligible food items from authorized retailers. More information, including the application process, can be found at [www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/snap.cgi](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/snap.cgi).

## VMI Bookstore

[www.bkstr.com/vmistore](http://www.bkstr.com/vmistore)

540-464-7637

The VMI Bookstore, located in Lejeune Hall, sells textbooks, authorized supplies, and toiletry items. For the convenience of cadets, the Bookstore also carries stationary, paperbacks, greeting cards, post cards, imprinted sportswear, grooming supplies, and souvenirs. Free gift wrapping is provided. New cadets will make several purchases in the Bookstore during Matriculation Week. These purchases must be paid for at the time of sale by cash, check, or major credit card. Cadets may order books online and pick them up at a later time.

## Religious Support

540-464-7390

The chaplain to the Corps of Cadets provides religious support and opportunities for spiritual development to the members of the Corps. The chaplain leads a vibrant, growing Sunday chapel service in Memorial Hall with contemporary worship, cadet testimonies, and inspirational preaching and teaching from the scriptures. Cadets are encouraged to mature in their faith through prayer, Bible study (small Bible study groups meet on each stoop weekly), fellowship (numerous religious groups assemble on and off post each week), worship (local churches offer weekly services), community service (students are encouraged to participate in activities benefiting those in need), and missions (spring and summer furlough mission

trips are made available). The chaplain also provides personal counseling and mentoring. The chaplain's office liaisons with local denominational churches that include Episcopal, Lutheran, Baptist, Presbyterian, Catholic, Pentecostal, Methodist, etc. Support is provided through a local Hillel group for Jewish cadets. The chaplain provides religious support for all faith groups based upon availability of local churches, mosques, and synagogues. For any questions, please contact Col. Robert "Bob" Phillips '87, Institute chaplain, at his office.

## Telephones

New cadets are not authorized to have a cell phone in their possession. They will often keep their cell phones in their dykes' rooms until the end of the Rat Line. Since rats are difficult to directly contact, parents should contact their son or daughter's dyke if they want to reach their cadet quickly. In the event of a true emergency, parents should call the Commandant's Office during normal duty hours at 540-464-7313 or the officer in charge of barracks at 540-464-7293.

## Uniform Laundry, Cleaning, Pressing, Alterations and Repairs

[www.vmi.edu/auxservices](http://www.vmi.edu/auxservices)

Laundry service is provided once a week. Each cadet is assigned a laundry number on Matriculation Day. New cadets will receive a permanent laundry marker in their rat-bag to mark their laundry number on all of the non-issued clothing. Uniforms are cleaned and pressed in the VMI Laundry Department. The cost of laundering, cleaning and pressing of regulation uniform items is included in the quartermaster charge. The VMI Tailor Shop alters and repairs uniforms. There is no charge for normal uniform alterations and repairs due to fair wear and tear.

## Military Store

[www.vmi.edu/auxservices](http://www.vmi.edu/auxservices)

540-464-7303

The Military Store, located in Richardson Hall, stocks regulation uniform items. Additional and replacement uniform items may be purchased, but must be paid for at the time of purchase by cash, check, or credit card. Hours: Monday–Friday from 0730–1100 and 1200–1530.

## Health Services

### COVID-19

[www.vmi.edu/COVID](http://www.vmi.edu/COVID)

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, see [\*\*www.vmi.edu/COVID\*\*](http://www.vmi.edu/COVID).

### Center for Cadet Counseling

[www.vmi.edu/counseling](http://www.vmi.edu/counseling)

540-464-7667

The Center for Cadet Counseling (CCC) offers services that help develop awareness, knowledge and skills necessary for cadets to make healthy choices, meet future challenges and lead meaningful lives. Services include educational programming, individual assessment, and counseling, psychiatric services, crisis intervention and consultation. Counseling services are confidential and conducted by licensed mental health professionals.

### Post Infirmary

[www.vmi.edu/infirmary](http://www.vmi.edu/infirmary)

540-464-7218

An infirmary, with 24-hour nursing provided, is located on post. The infirmary offers full primary care services in a confidential setting. A doctor and nurse practitioner are available daily. Emergencies are referred to the local hospital, Carilion Rockbridge Community Hospital, which serves the Lexington-Rockbridge County area. Medical conditions that must be treated off-post are



treated at the cadet's expense. Cadets are permitted to keep personal prescriptions and over-the-counter medications in their rooms.

It is strongly recommended that any cadet not covered by the parents' health insurance purchase a personal health insurance policy.

If you have specific questions, please email: [infirmary@vmi.edu](mailto:infirmary@vmi.edu).

## Information Technology Department

[www.vmi.edu/it](http://www.vmi.edu/it)

The Information Technology Department serves as the management and support group for all technological services offered at VMI. From maintenance to training courses, the continually modernizing program provides many courses aimed at promoting learning and assisting faculty and staff. The IT Department's home page contains links to many helpful resources.

## Wireless Network Connectivity

[www.vmi.edu/it](http://www.vmi.edu/it)

VMI provides wireless network access in many classrooms and general access areas around post, giving cadets ample opportunity to use laptops equipped with wireless network adapters in the completion of academic obligations. There are two IT help desks located at VMI. One help desk is located in room 315 of Nichols Engineering building,

and the other help desk is located in the barracks study room. Office hours are Monday–Friday, 0700–1200 and 1300–1600. Instructions for gaining access to the wireless network can all be found on the IT Department's homepage.

## Museum System

VMI operates three historic sites: the VMI Museum, the Jackson House Museum, and the Virginia Museum of the Civil War and New Market Battlefield State Historical Park. Founded in 1845, the VMI Museum is the oldest museum in Virginia. It preserves and exhibits the history of the Cadet Corps and is located in the lower two levels of Memorial Hall. The Jackson House Museum is an historic house museum located at 8 Washington Street in Lexington that interprets Jackson's domestic life of the late 1850s. Purchased by then professor Maj. Thomas Jackson in 1858, Jackson owned the home until his death in 1863. The New Market Battlefield State Historical Park is a 300-acre battlefield park commemorating the Battle of New Market and participation by the VMI Cadet Corps on 15 May 1864. The Virginia Museum of the Civil War is the Commonwealth's only state-owned Civil War museum and is located on the grounds of the park, just off Interstate 81 at Exit 264. All three museums are open daily, 0900–1700. Parents and current cadets receive free admission at all three sites.





### Rat Mass of 2023+3

You have committed to one of the hardest undergraduate experiences in the nation. Your decision is commendable. However, remember that this is only the first step in your journey as a VMI cadet. While your peers at conventional universities coast through their undergraduate experience, you will be tested emotionally, mentally, and physically in and outside the classroom in ways inconceivable to you. Shortly, upon your arrival at VMI, you will have the opportunity to prove your determination and capability to withstand the challenges laid before you.

While the transition from high school-level academics to college-level academics is demanding, you and your brother rats will be challenged to balance your academic performance along with the Rat Line. Your biggest challenge will be time management accompanied by daily trials and tribulations as a VMI cadet. Although you may feel that you are overwhelmed with stress, remember that you are not alone in this VMI journey. Take advantage of having your brother rats for help and support. Additionally, my S-2 Staff, composed of cadets that have mastered the academic systems of the Institute, will be there to support you in the transitioning process to the rigorous academic environment at VMI. In tandem with the Miller Academic Center, we will provide you access to a network of cadet-peer tutors, group study sessions, and professionally staffed organizations devoted to the educational development of all VMI cadets. Your S-2

company representative will work with you personally to determine your areas of weakness and provide academic resources that are unique and most applicable to you.

It is my promise to you that my staff and I will do everything in our power to provide you with every opportunity to succeed. However, remember that your success is contingent on you, the individual rat. It is on you to take your academic success into your own hands by seeking help and challenging yourself to pursue the grades you are capable of earning. Remember that you will receive nothing for free at the Virginia Military Institute. You must fight relentlessly and earn every grade through your own individual effort. The S-2 staff's mission is to support and ensure that you have every opportunity to be successful at VMI. Yours is to use those opportunities to improve and succeed throughout your cadetship here at the Virginia Military Institute.

Very respectfully,  
Binh Q. Tran  
S-2 Captain AY 22-23

# Academics and Related Support

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## S-2 Staff Description

The S-2 staff serves as academic advisors to the Corps of Cadets, and representatives of the Corps to the VMI faculty. Each company is assigned an S-2 academic representative who monitors the company's academic performance and helps struggling cadets in need of academic help. The S-2 staff is particularly focused in working with rats and ensuring that they have a successful academic transition from high school to college academics. Additionally, the S-2 staff serves as scribes for cadet meetings and writes permits relating to academics.

## Recommendations for Incoming Rats

- » New cadets need to be aware that courses in colleges are much more difficult than courses in high school, especially here at VMI, where new cadets need to learn how to manage their time between the Rat Line and academics.
- » It is better to over-prepare than under-prepare.
- » Be ready to create and maintain good relationships with your professors. Introducing yourself to your professors at the beginning of the semester will be beneficial to your success throughout the course.
- » Use your allotted free time wisely. Triage assignments according to their length and importance. For example, do a worksheet during a free hour, but use the uninterrupted Dean's evening hours to work on a long paper.
- » Seek help as soon as you feel you're struggling—even if only a little bit. It's better to get help as soon as something is unclear so that you don't fall behind even more.

- » Place your academics first. It's easy to get so caught up in the Rat Line that you put your homework off. You don't get kicked out for unshined shoes, but you can easily get kicked out for bad grades.
- » Familiarize yourself with the Academic Handbook to find out more about academic policies, departmental information, program requirements, and opportunities by reading through the course catalog on the website [www.vmi.edu/majors](http://www.vmi.edu/majors).
- » Start off strong. At VMI, you are starting fresh and developing/maintaining a strong work ethic will be important for succeeding later in life.
- » New cadets need to be aware that they have a lot of academic resources they can use, and we are here to help. (Writing Center, Group Study Sessions, Miller Academic Center, and especially the tutor system).

## Academic Advising

Upon entry into VMI, each cadet is assigned an academic advisor who, unless the cadet subsequently changes academic major, will work with the cadet until graduation. During the first year there is extensive contact between the advisor and cadet in order to facilitate the cadet's transition into the VMI culture, assist the cadet in mastering the academic policies and regulations, and assist the cadet in coordinating the demands of a multi-faceted academic and co-curricular experience.

The academic advising program is a pivotal element of the broader program of academic support services provided by Virginia Military Institute and is a major force in ensuring a successful progression

through the VMI program. Cadets are encouraged to take full advantage of the Institute's commitment to the academic advising process.

## Financial Aid

[www.vmi.edu/financialaid](http://www.vmi.edu/financialaid)

The mission of the Office of Financial Aid is to provide financial assistance and counseling to cadets and prospective cadets, so as to reduce the financial barriers that could hinder enrollment, retention, and success at VMI. The office strives to provide responsible and courteous service and functions in compliance with all federal, state, and VMI policies.

The application process for financial aid consists of two important steps:

- » The completion of the VMI Financial Aid Application

- » The completion of the FAFSA—the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (#003753)

Deadline: March 1 of each year for new and returning cadets. Failure to submit materials by the deadline may affect VMI's ability to provide financial assistance.

The completion of these two forms determines the level of need-based aid for which a cadet qualifies. In addition to aid awarded by VMI (need-based grants, merit scholarships, and ROTC scholarships), assistance may also be received through Federal Direct Loans and Parent PLUS Loans. All aid received by a VMI cadet, regardless of the source, will be processed through the Office of Financial Aid. Please visit [www.vmi.edu/financialaid](http://www.vmi.edu/financialaid) to find additional details regarding VMI's Financial Aid program, as well as contact information for staff members.



## Special Academic Programs

### Office of Disabilities Services.

[www.vmi.edu/ds](http://www.vmi.edu/ds)

The Office of Disabilities Services (ODS) is committed to meeting the ethical and legal responsibilities to ensure equitable educational access for cadets with documented disabilities. We support cadets' development of academic, life and leadership skills in a manner that fosters self-awareness, self-determination, and self-advocacy. ODS also serves as a resource to the VMI community by promoting awareness and understanding of disability issues in higher education.

Cadets with documented disabilities are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the director of ODS as early as possible to allow adequate time for review of documentation, to allow for a thorough assessment of academic needs, and to familiarize new cadets with administrative procedures.

### Institute Honors Program

[www.vmi.edu/honors](http://www.vmi.edu/honors)

This program exists to enrich the academic experience of VMI's outstanding cadets through activities that encourage an affinity for intellectual inquiry and develop the capacity for sophisticated engagement of issues and problems, whether ethical, civic, or professional. In all of its elements, the program stresses peer leadership, strong oral and written communication skills, and the highest standards of academic integrity and excellence. The Institute Honors Program recognizes a broader range of achievement than honors earned in any particular major. Attainment of Institute Honors is viewed as the highest academic achievement at VMI.

## International Programs

[www.vmi.edu/ip](http://www.vmi.edu/ip)

Broadening global perspectives and increasing cultural awareness is an inherent component of VMI's mission of educating citizen-soldiers. The Office of International Programs (OIP) offers a complete portfolio of study abroad opportunities designed to prepare young men and women for successful service in an increasingly global community. VMI's study abroad opportunities include programs at both civilian and military institutions around the globe. Because cadets are not permitted to study abroad during their first two semesters at VMI, the summer following the rat year presents cadets with their first chance to take advantage of this remarkable opportunity. Cadets may study abroad one semester during their cadetship and as many summers as they like. Faculty-led summer programs occur during the same time frame as the VMI summer sessions and are intended not to conflict with regular duties during the year, such as ROTC training, intercollegiate athletics, or other responsibilities within the Corps.

### Open Math Lab (OML)

[www.vmi.edu/oml](http://www.vmi.edu/oml)

The Open Mathematics Laboratory (OML) is designed to allow cadets to freely seek and find as much help as needed for any of VMI's mathematics core curriculum courses. The model for the lab is one wherein tutors are prepared to help cadets in an open and shared setting. Walk-ins are welcomed. OML tutors are trained, knowledgeable, and current on the specific techniques and problems taught by VMI mathematics teaching faculty. The OML is meant to complement and support, but not replace, course activities within the VMI mathematics curriculum.

## **Miller Academic Center Academic Success Programs**

[www.vmi.edu/mac](http://www.vmi.edu/mac)

The Miller Academic Center (MAC) helps cadets transition to college academics and college life. Cadets can learn how to effectively manage their time through the use of the VMI College Success Planner. Group Study Sessions (GSS) are available for a number of core courses including science, math, history, and foreign languages. The GSS meetings are a weekly opportunity for new cadets to discuss coursework and strategies with successful upper-class cadets. Academic Saturday workshops provide new cadets with valuable information on effective study skills and strategies to optimize their time. Staff will also meet with individual cadets to discuss concerns or questions about academic success at VMI. New cadets are encouraged to learn more about the MAC programs and services designed with them in mind by visiting [www.vmi.edu/mac](http://www.vmi.edu/mac).

## **Writing Center**

[www.vmi.edu/iwp](http://www.vmi.edu/iwp)

The Writing Center complements and extends the writing instruction cadets receive in the classroom by providing help with a full range of activities to improve their writing, at any level and in any discipline. Professional tutors work with cadets in one-on-one conferences on every aspect of the writing process, from planning a paper to polishing a final draft. For further information, contact Colonel Christina R. McDonald, Institute director of writing, or visit the Institute Writing Program's website.

## **Transfer Credit**

[www.vmi.edu/admissions-and-aid/apply](http://www.vmi.edu/admissions-and-aid/apply)

VMI has stringent rules in regards to transfer credit approval. It should be

known that VMI requires cadets to have at least 6 semesters in residence at VMI to graduate, with a 75% rule requiring that at least 75% of all credits a cadet graduates with were earned at VMI. In regards to AP credit and college credit transfer, VMI requires students to earn a C or better in order for the credit to transfer.

## **VMI Center for Undergraduate Research**

[www.vmi.edu/academics/research](http://www.vmi.edu/academics/research)

The VMI Center for Undergraduate Research (VCUR) is both a program and a centralized office with the mission



of promoting and facilitating faculty-mentored undergraduate research at VMI. VCUR operates on the premise that some of the most enduringly meaningful academic experiences of college students come through opportunities to be mentored one-on-one by faculty outside the classroom, while also believing in the merit of research and other inquiry-based experiences within a more traditional classroom setting. VCUR simultaneously nurtures existing mentoring efforts and coordinates new institutional support for joint investigative projects by faculty members and cadets. Programs include an annual Undergraduate Research Symposium held on post; a Summer Undergraduate Research Institute; cadet travel grants to present at professional meetings or conduct research in the field; Wetmore Fund for supplies for cadet academic year research; and awards to encourage and acknowledge faculty who engage cadets in undergraduate research experiences. For more information, contact Col. Scott Frein or visit VCUR's website.

## **ROTC**

In order to graduate from VMI, every cadet is required to take eight semesters of ROTC classes and successfully pass each semester. Each ROTC unit prepares cadets to receive a commission in their respective branch, whether a cadet chooses to commission or not. Throughout the year, there are two scheduled training exercises during which it is likely that cadets will leave post to train in the field for a weekend. These weekend Field Training Exercises (FTXs) provide experience specific to the service the cadet has selected. If a cadet is interested in earning a commission, scholarship and non-scholarship commissioning programs are available in each of the four service branches.

New cadets are required to select a ROTC branch during the summer scheduling process. In attempting to determine which ROTC branch they should enroll, new cadets can contact representatives of each branch through their departmental emails. Each ROTC department will be available at matriculation to answer additional questions. In order to enroll in the Air Force/Space Force or Naval (Navy or Marines) ROTC programs, new cadets must express a desire to commission and meet individual service requirements. Cadets who are not anticipating commissioning will be assigned to Army ROTC. VMI also has a Coast Guard Auxiliary University Program that allows cadets interested in seeking a Coast Guard commission to serve in the Coast Guard Auxiliary during their time at VMI. Participation in the Coast Guard Auxiliary University Program does not satisfy the ROTC requirements for graduation.

The Army National Guard and United States Army Reserve Simultaneous Membership Programs are avenues that a cadet may take for additional income and possible tuition assistance. While these are great programs, prospective cadets are strongly encouraged to contact the Army ROTC Department (USAR or ARNG Liaison Officers) before enlisting, as Basic Training and School dates could prevent the cadet from completing a semester, which could result in disenrollment from VMI. There could also be some conflict when applying for an ROTC scholarship. For more information contact Mr. Thomas Atkinson (Army) 540-464-7680, [armyrotc@vmi.edu](mailto:armyrotc@vmi.edu); Retired Chief Yeoman Rick Schemehorn (Navy) 540-464-7277, [nrotc@vmi.edu](mailto:nrotc@vmi.edu); Ms. Diane Fishburn (Air Force) 540-464-5354, [afrotc@vmi.edu](mailto:afrotc@vmi.edu).





# Glossary of Common VMI Terms

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**1857 Limits Gates:** Brick pillars on Letcher Avenue near Mallory Hall denoting an old boundary between VMI and the town.

**Barracks:** Where cadets live; dominant architectural feature of VMI; original section completed in 1851; a National Historic Landmark.

**Barracks Study Room:** Room in the concourse of barracks with study carrels, computers, and printers available to all cadets, including rats, for studying.

**The Bomb:** The VMI yearbook; the oldest college annual in the South, first published in 1885.

**Boned:** The act of being placed on report for an infraction of the rules.

**Bone:** the specific punishment for being boned.

**Boxed Lunches:** A to-go lunch hand made for cadets during times they can't make it to Crozet.

**BRC:** Breakfast Roll Call; the first formation of the day.

**Breakout:** Culminating event signaling the end of the Rat Line.

**Breach of Permit:** Failure to adhere to both the letter and the spirit of conditions associated with specific permission to do something. (See also: Permit.)

**Brother Rat, "BR":** A term of affection for those who go through the Rat Line the same time you do.

**CAD:** Completion of Academic Duty. This is when the student is finished with class for the day.

**CEA:** Cadet Equity Association. Monitors the post-wide climate of respect and equitable treatment for cadets.

**Certified:** An oath, as in "I certify;" also, the promise not to share confidential information

**Citizen-Soldier:** The goal of a VMI education; modeled on the actions of Cincinnatus, the legendary Roman farmer/warrior/statesman who fought to save Rome, then returned to civilian life.

**Class:** First class (senior); second class (junior); third class (sophomore); fourth class (freshmen); rats become fourth class cadets after the Rat Line ends (following Breakout).

**CLE:** Center for Leadership and Ethics

**CMD:** Completion of Military Duty. This is when the cadet is finished with all required responsibilities for the day.

**Coatee:** Woolen jacket with tails and many buttons; part of full-dress uniform.

**Commandant:** Senior administrative officer responsible for the supervision and training of the Corps.

**Concourse:** Underground level of barracks.

**Confinement:** A restriction to room, barracks, or post; results from being boned for a rules violation.

**CCQ:** Close Call to Quarters. This is when cadets are required to be in their rooms if they are not in an authorized location.

**CPTF:** Corps Physical Training Facility

**CQ:** Call to Quarters. This is when the guard teams have checked barracks after Taps has sounded to release cadets from their rooms.

**QORB:** Call to Quarters, Release in Barracks. This is announced 15 minutes before Taps.

**CTT:** Commandant's Training Time used for training and inspections.

**DTT:** Dean's Training Time; Dean's weekly time for special academic activities.

**Demerits:** mark made against a cadet's record for a fault or for misconduct; issued for breaking rules and as a result

of being boned; excess demerits may result in suspension or dismissal.

**DRC:** Dinner Roll Call

**Drum Out:** the formal announcement to the Corps of an expulsion of a cadet for an honor offense. The ceremony begins with a long drum roll.

**Ducks:** White cotton trousers worn with coatee during formal occasions.

**Dyke:** The term used for a first class cadet in relation to his/her rat.

**Dyke Out:** To get dressed in Coatee and don the signature white crossing straps, worn only for parades.

**EC:** Executive Committee; is composed of the GC (see definition) and the President of the OGA (see definition) and hears special cases of cadet misconduct.

**Formation:** Cadets standing in ranks for a specific event, such as parade formation, meal formation, etc.

**Form 24:** A form to self-bone. Used when cadets break a rule, which they are honor bound to follow.

**Furlough:** Vacation scheduled or approved by VMI.

**GC:** General Committee; composed of the nine class officers; maintains/enforces the standards of the Corps. The EC, OGA, and CEA are subcommittees of the GC.

**Gim:** Term applied to Sick Call or those who receive relief from duty as a result of an injury or illness. The first Institute Physician had a horse named “Gimlet,” nicknamed “Old Gim,” which he used to transport cadets who were too ill to walk. Thus, cadets “rode the Gim” to sick call.

**General Orders:** Standing orders for members of the Guard Team or orders pertaining to VMI employees and/or cadets.

**Gray Blouse:** Woolen jacket (equivalent to coat and tie in formality)

**Guard Room:** Headquarters for the Guard Team; in Old Barracks Main Arch.

**Guard Team:** The group of cadets responsible for barracks for a 24-hour period.

**Guard Tree:** Formerly a tree on the Parade Ground where the guard team assembled; site now marked by a memorial tablet.

**Hay:** Traditional term for mattress which must be rolled up each morning; term originated from days when cadets slept on hay pallets.

**Hay Rack:** Folding cot upon which the hay is placed for sleeping; also known as one’s rack; must be placed against wall each morning.

**Help Received Statement:** Official, certified statement on any “work for grade” that acknowledges any work not belonging to the cadet whose work it is.

**Honor Court:** See section on Honor System in this handbook.

**Honor System:** See section on Honor System in this handbook.

**Hops:** Organized dances/mixers/social events at VMI.

**House Mountain:** Double mountain seen in profile from Parade Ground; located about five miles west-northwest of VMI; a Rockbridge County landmark.

**McKethan Park:** A recreation park and pavilion used for Corps and Institute activities located two miles east of Lexington.

**Memorial Hall:** The primary assembly hall for Corps functions; contains cadet chapel and VMI Museum.

**Military Duty:** The part of the day devoted to military duties and/or the intramural athletic program; follows academic duty and precedes supper.

**New Market:** A town located in southern Shenandoah County, Virginia where the May 15, 1864 Battle of New Market was fought. It is approximately 80 miles north of Lexington. This battle was fought through the town and on the

rolling hills surrounding it. It is also known for the role of the VMI Corps of Cadets in the action with 257 engaged, 47 wounded and 10 killed.

**North Post:** Location of the military leadership field training grounds

**OC:** Officer-in-Charge, an Institute official; represents the Commandant and monitors guard team performance after hours.

**OD/OG:** Officer of the Day/Officer of the Guard; the two ranking members of the guard team (usually first class cadets).

**OGA:** Officer of the Guard Association (first class privates); helps create and maintain an environment that facilitates communications, harmony, and discipline in the Corps.

**Old Barracks Main Arch:** Main entrance to Old Barracks; contains entrance to Commandant's office.

**Optional BRC:** Authorization to miss Breakfast Roll Call.

**Orderly:** A cadet from each room who is responsible for the cleanliness of the room. Will receive all bones for an out of order room.

**Parade Ground:** Open field in front of barracks used for parades, physical training, and tailgates during football season.

**Parapet:** Wall along the south side of barracks overlooking Memorial Gardens and Cocke Hall; has a famous inscription which rats must memorize.

**Penalty Tours:** A punishment consisting of an hour's worth of supervised marching while carrying a rifle.

**Permits:** Typed documents approved by the appropriate authority to address situations needing special attention and/or to grant approval for exceptions to policies. Permits must be submitted no later than four days prior to the effective date. The Commandant approves certain Standing Permits at the start of each

academic year for special purposes such as dine with family. Cadets must acquire the appropriate signatures prior to submitting permits. This includes professor signatures for class absences, coach approval for intercollegiate absences, the doctor's signature for urgent medical appointments or furloughs, adviser signatures for club activities, and Career Service approval for interviews.

**PTT:** Physical Training Time with a cadet's ROTC affiliation or, if a non-commissioning second or first class cadet, with their VMI company.

**PX:** Post Exchange; where cadets get food and can eat with families

**QMD:** Quartermaster Department; issues uniforms.

**Ranker:** Any cadet who holds an official position in the regimental system.

**Rat:** Term applied to all new cadets during their first year at VMI; precedes being a fourth class cadet, which comes after Breakout from the Rat Line.

**Rat Bible:** A small book of facts about VMI's history and certain information specific to the current year; must be in a rat's possession at all times; rats are responsible to know and recite the contents of this book.

**Rat Challenge:** A physical program that includes obstacle courses; promotes teamwork and leadership; rats participate during the fall semester.

**Rat Line:** The whole experience of being a rat; also the specific path in barracks which rats must use in going from one place to another.

**Ring Figure:** The weekend events at which second class cadets receive their class rings.

**Run the Block:** To leave post against regulations, usually at night—results in a major bone.

**Section Marcher:** A cadet official in charge of accountability (attendance) for a particular academic class and responsible for presenting the class to the professor.

**Sent up:** Recommended to the GC (see definition) as a disciplinary measure.

**Sentinels:** Rats or fourth class cadets assigned to a daily rotating guard position around barracks and charged with upholding the regulations of the Institute.

**Shako:** Tall hat bearing either a pom-pom or feather plume (officers only) worn for full-dress parades.

**Special Orders:** Any additional orders posted for specific members of the Guard Team.

**The Spirit:** VMI's "fight song;" also doubles as the Alma Mater.

**SRC:** Supper Roll Call; Supper formation with the entire Corps.

**Visitor Slip:** Colored note sent to a cadet's room by the guard team notifying the cadet of the presence of a visitor, a phone message, etc.

**Stoop:** A floor of barracks; rats live on the fourth stoop.

**Strain:** An exaggerated position of attention; what rats are supposed to do when they walk the Rat Line.

**Superintendent:** The president of VMI, Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins '85

**Supernum:** Supernumerary; an additional third class cadet attached to the Guard Team who acts as a messenger.

**Sweat Party:** Fifteen minute physical fitness workout reserved for rats.

**Taps:** This is the last bugle call at night blown as a signal that lights are to be put out.

**Tailgate:** To picnic out of the trunk of a car; usually on the Parade Ground preceding/following a football game.

**Uncle Dykes:** The first class cadets who room with one's dyke.

**VMI Museum:** Preserving and interpreting the heritage of VMI and its alumni, the VMI Museum features galleries dedicated to the history of VMI, the Henry Stewart Antique Firearms Collection and VMI alumni service as citizens and soldiers. The oldest museum in the state of Virginia, it houses over 20,000 artifacts.

**Woolies:** Term for wool pants—part of the winter uniform

**Work for Grade:** Any work submitted to a professor for a grade is subject to the Honor System; it must be the cadet's own work; any help must be acknowledged in the Help Received Statement.





## VMI Telephone Quick Reference List

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### Must dial the 540 area code

General Hours are 0800–1630 Monday–Friday unless otherwise specified.

VMI Visitor Center (Use this number to contact cadets) ..... 540-464-7306

### Academic Information

Academic Advising.....540-464-7741  
 Applied Mathematics ..... 540-464-7335  
 Biology ..... 540-464-7247  
 Chemistry ..... 540-464-7244  
 Civil and Environmental Engineering  
 ..... 540-464-7331  
 Computer and Information Science  
 ..... 540-464-7858  
 Economics and Business..... 540-464-7234  
 Electrical and Computer Engineering  
 ..... 540-464-7236  
 English and Fine Arts ..... 540-464-7240  
 History ..... 540-464-7338  
 International Studies and Political Science  
 ..... 540-464-7676  
 Mechanical Engineering ..... 540-464-7308

Modern Languages and Cultures

..... 540-464-7241  
 Physical Education ..... 540-464-7317  
 Physics and Astronomy ..... 540-464-7225  
 Psychology/Philosophy ..... 540-464-7194  
 Registrar ..... 540-464-7213  
 Summer Session Office..... 540-464-7319

### Cadet Support

Athletic Academic Advising.. 540-464-7722  
 The Bomb (VMI yearbook) ... 540-464-7325  
 Cadet Counseling..... 540-464-7667  
 Career Services (0800–1630 M–F)  
 ..... 540-464-7560  
 Financial Aid..... 540-464-7208  
 Information Technology/Barracks Help  
 Desk (0700–1300, 1400–1600 M–F)  
 ..... 540-464-7341  
 Inspector General/Title IX Coordinator  
 ..... 540-464-7072  
 International Programs ..... 540-464-7421  
 Learning and Disabilities Services  
 (Miller Academic Center) .. 540-464-7661

Post Infirmary.....	540-464-7218
Post Police.....	540-464-7017
Postal Services.....	540-464-7745
Preston Library.....	540-464-7129
Writing Center.....	540-464-7045

**Administrative Offices**

Business Office.....	540-464-7321
Chaplain's Office.....	540-464-7390
Chief Diversity Officer.....	540-464-7789
Commandant's Office.....	540-464-7313
Communications and Marketing.....	540-464-7207
Comptroller's Office.....	540-464-7270
Dean of the Faculty.....	540-464-7136
Deputy Commandant's Office.....	540-464-7314
Officer-in-Charge (nightly).....	540-464-7293
Student Accounting.....	540-464-7217
Superintendent's Office.....	540-464-7311
Treasurer's Office.....	540-464-7215

**ROTC Programs**

U.S. Air Force/Space Force....	540-464-7354
U.S. Army.....	540-464-7351
U.S. Navy/Marine Corps.....	540-464-7275

**General Information**

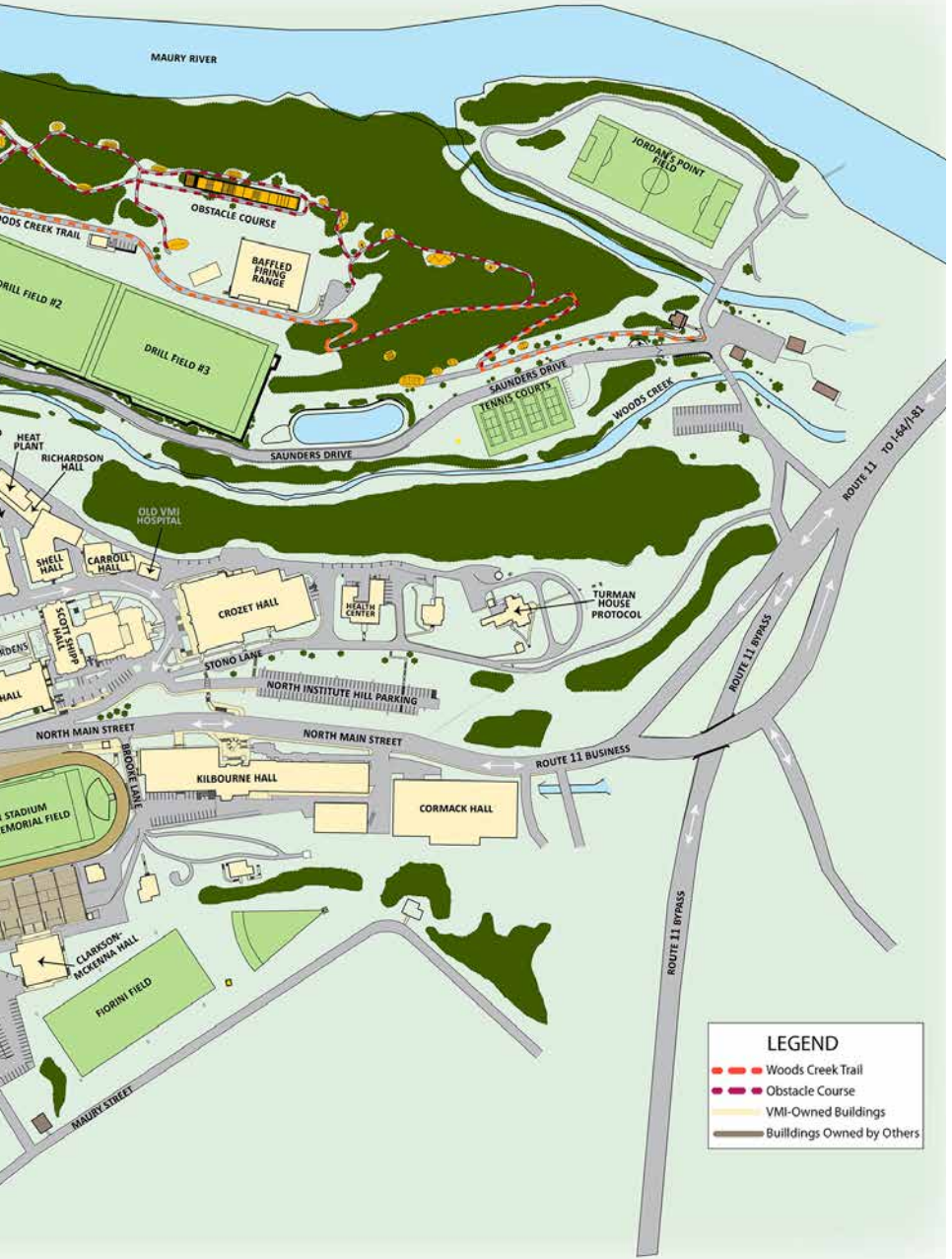
Admissions Office.....	540-464-7211
Alumni Office.....	540-464-7221
Athletic Ticket Office.....	540-464-7266
Auxiliary Services.....	540-464-7096
Bookstore (0800-1630 M-F, 1000-1600 Sat., <b>closed</b> Sun.).....	540-464-7637
Keydet Club.....	540-464-7328
Military Store.....	540-464-7303
Physical Plant Customer Service.....	540-464-7357
Sports Information Office.....	540-464-7515
Visitor Center.....	540-464-7306
VMI Foundation.....	540-464-7287
VMI Museum (0900-1700 daily).....	540-464-7334
VMI Theatre.....	540-464-7389

**VMI Health Center**

Cadet Counseling.....	540-464-7667
Post Infirmary.....	540-464-7218

For numbers not listed, please contact the VMI Visitor Center 540-464-7306.





**LEGEND**

- - - Woods Creek Trail
- - - Obstacle Course
- VMI-Owned Buildings
- Buildings Owned by Others

[flickr.com/VMIPhotos](https://www.flickr.com/photos/vmiphotos/)



[VMINews.tumblr.com](https://www.tumblr.com/vminews)



[youtube.com/VMIWeb](https://www.youtube.com/vmiweb)

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