

Student Handbook



Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

2270 Litton Reaves Hall (0343)
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Phone: 540-231-6836
Fax: 540-231-3824
Email: gov.school@vt.edu
Website: <http://www.gsa.vt.edu>

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Mission of the GSA

To provide hands-on, cutting-edge, scientific, and academic instruction to future leaders and scientists in developing their understanding of the scope, opportunities, and challenges, through academic and scientific rigor of the broad fields of agriculture, human health, natural resources, and veterinary medicine.

Goals of the GSA

The goals of the Governor's School for Agriculture at Virginia Tech are to:

1. Provide structured educational programs in agriculture, natural resource management, veterinary medicine, environmental systems, and life sciences that will challenge the gifted and talented youth to study and research the scientific nature of agriculture as it relates to and affects environmental sustainability;
2. Provide educational programs designed to increase student understanding of the infrastructure, scope, and implications of Virginia's largest industry, agriculture;
3. Acquaint rising juniors and seniors with professional and scientific education and career opportunities available to them in the agricultural, human health, natural resource, and veterinary medicine sectors;
4. Promote an atmosphere of inquiry and dialogue, with an appreciation for multicultural diversity;
5. Increase understanding of the complexities involved in providing safe, economical, and aesthetically pleasing food, fiber, and shelter.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to develop an appreciation of the broad nature and tremendous scope of world agriculture and natural resource systems. Your experience will include instruction and activities designed to provide exposure and insight into the real-world challenges involved in feeding, clothing, and housing over six billion people.

Your total experience will consist of core courses, an in-major course, elective courses, an independent group project, career awareness activities, seminars, and extracurricular activities. All courses will consist of mixed classroom instruction with hands-on activities in the laboratory and the field.

Majors

You will request a major based on your interest areas. Not all students will receive their first choice of major. You will be organized into groups based on your assigned major. These groups will be used for scheduling some of your classes, field trips, and independent group projects. The "content focus" of a major will include one in-major course and an independent group project.

The Governor's School will offer you the following choice of majors:

- Agricultural Economics
- Agricultural Leadership
- Animal Science
- Plant Science
- Veterinary Medicine

Core courses

You will attend a core course in each of the six majors. Core and in-major courses should not be confused. Core courses will typically cut across several academic disciplines so that any given core course might have implications for multiple majors.

In-major courses

Once you have been assigned a major, you will attend a specialized course within that discipline. The in-major course will be intended to carry you further in your assigned major and prepare you for your independent group project.

Elective courses

Elective courses are designed to explore areas of your special interest outside the core and major.

Global Seminar

Global Seminar is designed to make students more aware of problems and issues surrounding the field of agriculture. Students will be assigned to cooperative work groups of 5-6 members. It is anticipated that work groups will schedule additional time at their own initiative. The groups will produce the following items as a result of their research: 4-6 page personal reflection report, research poster, brochure, and a 10-15 minute illustrated oral presentation with a powerpoint.

Symposium and Poster Session

At the conclusion of the School, a symposium and poster session will be held to showcase the results of your independent group project. You are encouraged to invite a high school teacher and your parents/guardians to campus. The symposium and poster session day will conclude with a Parent-Teacher Appreciation Banquet to recognize the contributions of your parents/guardians and a high school teacher to your life.

GSA Faculty and Staff

Instructional Faculty

University faculty members are selected for their participation in the instructional program based on research and academic specialty and on documented instructional excellence. Faculty members in the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, as well as life sciences faculty in other colleges at Virginia Tech participate in the Governor's School program as instructors. In addition, teachers of agricultural education in Virginia participate as instructors at the GSA.

Residence Life Director

The Residence Life Director will be available to you as a resource at all times. The Residence Life Director's role will be to provide you with guidance in terms of career options and continuing educational options.

Governor School Leaders

Governor's School Leaders are senior-level or graduate students with knowledge in the respective academic disciplines for which they will provide instruction, mentorship, and assistance. Leaders were selected for their academic ability, enthusiasm, potential as instructional assistants, and leadership. Each leader will be assigned to work with a major. They will also be available to you as resource at all times.

Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants are undergraduate students. The Teaching Assistants will provide instruction, mentorship, and other support as directed by the Governor's School Leader.

Housing Information

Harper Hall has been selected for housing of the 2009 Governor's School. Harper is an air-conditioned, suite-style building, with either two or three rooms sharing a common living room and bathroom. Each suite living room is furnished with a coffee table, sofa, side chair, and rocker. **The 4th floor in Harper Hall is also equipped with a kitchenette facility that includes a microwave oven, a stovetop range and oven, refrigerator, and a kitchen sink.**

Each room in Harper is carpeted and comes with 2 beds, 2 three-drawer chests, 2 desks, 2 bookcases, 2 chairs, and closet space. Each bedroom will house two students of the same gender. Females and males will live in the same dormitory; however they will be placed in separate areas of the building and supervised by Governor School staff.

Coin-operated laundry facilities are conveniently located in Harper Hall and cost \$1.50 to wash and \$1.25 to dry. Students are advised to bring a drying rack if they prefer not to dry their clothes in a dryer.

Two room keys will be issued at registration, one for your suite and one for your

individual room. You are responsible for keeping track of keys throughout the program. **You will be charged a \$50 fee for each lost or stolen key.** You are also responsible for respecting the property of Virginia Tech and will be charged for damaged or stolen property.

Telephone Access

You will have telephones to make local calls and receive long-distance calls. You will be able to make long distance calls using a calling card or by dialing other 1-800 numbers upon request to the Residence Life Director. The phones are **NOT** equipped with a voice messaging service.

You may bring cell phones but they may not be taken to class. Abuse of cell phones during class will result in temporary confiscation.

Rooms are equipped with the following:

- Twin Bed (Extra Long)
- Mattress
- Closet
- Pillow
- Telephone
- Bureau/Dresser
- Chair
- Desk & Bookcase
- T-100 Ethernet Connection
- Electrical Outlets

Scholars are required to bring:

- Toiletries
- Alarm clock
- Blanket/bedspread
- Towels and wash cloths
- 3-4 sets of professional clothes for graduation, college night, etc.*
- Quarters for washing and drying clothes
- Laundry detergent
- Rain gear/poncho/umbrella
- Old clothing, including long pants and long sleeve shirts to be worn during outdoor field experiences
- Sweatshirt or Jacket
- About \$20 in quarters for laundry
- Footwear suitable for hiking
- Pens, pencils, and notebooks
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- 1-2 sets of business casual dress for Opening Ceremony, etc.*
- Closed toe shoes for barns and wading in wet locations
- **Money for leisure spending
- Calculator
- Twin size sheets (Extra long) and pillow case
- Trash can with trash bags
- 1 inch 3 ring binder and dividers

*Business Casual-	Males	Khakis, slacks, polo shirts, , button down shirt, etc.
	Females	Khakis, slacks, skirts, polo shirts, blouses, etc.
*Professional Dress-	Males	Shirt and tie, dress slacks, blazer, etc.
	Females	Business suit, dress slacks, button down shirt, etc

** The Virginia Department of Education and participating schools pay for all of your educational and room and board expenses. However, you will have opportunities to participate in activities such as bowling, going to the movies, and shopping. Former GSA students recommended bringing \$50.00-\$150.00 to participate in these activities. ATM's are located on campus for debit cards.

Scholars may want to bring:

- Personal computer, printer and UL Listed Power Strip
- Stationary and Stamps
- Pre-paid calling cards for long distance phone calls
- Snacks and drinks
- Stapler
- Portable iron and ironing board
- Swimsuit
- Camera
- Clothes hangers
- Personal CD Players, iPOD, MP3 players
- First Aid Supplies
- Room decorations and Poster Putty
- Personal sports equipment (Rubber cleats, ball glove)
- Musical instruments
- Hats for sun protection
- Extra pillow
- Personal refrigerator
- Recreational games
- USB Memory Stick
- Dishware

Scholars are PROHIBITED from bringing or possessing:

- Automobiles
- Bicycles
- Unicycles
- Roller blades/skates
- Skateboards
- Other wheeled recreational devices
- Televisions
- Large stereo/stereo equipment
- Walkie-Talkies/Two-way radios

Security

The campus of Virginia Tech is very safe, however, to reduce the chance of theft please keep your door locked to protect your personal valuables.

The GSA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Objects susceptible to theft include PDAs, laptops, or other easily portable or expensive items.

Virginia Tech police have general responsibility for dormitory security and make routine unscheduled visits around and throughout the public portion of all dorms.

Computer Requirements

The computer access the GSA provides will meet all of your academic and personal needs while attending the Governor's School for Agriculture. However, you may find it convenient to have a computer at the GSA if you have that option.

If you and your son/daughter decide to bring a personal computer, the first three bullets need to be addressed in order to access the World Wide Web:

- Computer needs an Ethernet Card (a.k.a. network adapter, Network Interface Card, or [NIC]) to access the Internet.
- The NIC needs to run on a 10Base-T network and have an RJ-45 connector in order to connect the computer in the residence hall.
- Students will need an Ethernet cord measuring 20 feet or longer.
- **MODEMS DO NOT WORK in the dorm rooms.**
- Students who choose to bring a computer will benefit if equipped with a printer, and CD rewriteable drive.
- You may also want to bring recordable CDs, and a 128 MB or higher USB memory stick/flash drive.

Please do not bring a wireless router since wireless service is not available to you.

Student E-mail

You will receive Virginia Tech e-mail accounts for your use while attending the school. These accounts will be active on the first night of school and will continue to be active through graduation.

These e-mail accounts are intended for use as an educational tool and **should be checked daily**. However, we also encourage you to keep in contact with your parents/guardians through these e-mail accounts. You will have time to check your e-mail account daily and with your intense courses and schedules e-mail may be the most efficient way to reach them.

You will receive instruction on how to set up and access your account. You will also receive instruction on how your GSA accounts are to be used. The University Acceptable Use Guidelines are linked from the GSA and are also available at <http://www.policies.vt.edu/acceptableuse.html>.

Dining Facilities

The dining hall is a traditional, all-you-care-to-eat venue. Faculty and staff will be provided with meals at the same facility as the students. All University dining facilities routinely provide for special dietary needs of students in response to written request. Meals for vegetarians and vegans are available on a daily basis in the dining hall and are clearly labeled. The request for dining accommodations is included on the Student Information form.

Meal cards will be issued at registration. You are responsible for keeping track of your meal card. **Lost or stolen meal cards will result in a \$5 charge for replacement.** Students are only allowed entrance into the dining hall once during a meal period.

Dining Facility Hours of Operation

Breakfast	7:00 am—9:30 am
Lunch	11:00 am—1:30 pm
Dinner	5:00 pm—6:30 pm

Note: Dining Facility stops serving meals one half hour prior to closing. Hours may change.

Library

The Newman Library located on the Virginia Tech campus has many resources that may be helpful to you during your stay at Virginia Tech. The hours of operation are:

- Monday-Friday: 8:00 am until 7:00 pm
- Saturday: 9:00 am until 6:00 pm
- Sunday: 1:00 pm until 7:00 pm

Code of Conduct

Becoming a member of the GSA family is an elite honor. Upon acceptance of your nomination, please remember that you are representing GSA, your school, your parents/guardians, and yourself at all times.

Attendance

In order to receive a certificate of completion from the Governor's School for Agriculture at Virginia Tech, you must be in residence from opening to closing ceremony. Participants are expected to attend all activities set forth by GSA of Virginia Tech. These activities include but are not limited to scheduled classes, meetings, and field trips. Participants are not allowed to leave GSA unless special permission is obtained from an appropriate party. Special permission is granted in cases of emergency only. These guidelines are in place to ensure the participants receive the maximum amount of benefits offered by this program.

Standards of Conduct

The following occurrences result in immediate expulsion from the program:

1. Using or possessing alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or illegal substances of any type.
2. Leaving GSA designated areas without special permission.
3. Possessing or using weapons of any kind.
4. Committing any act of violence.
5. Intentionally damaging or stealing the property of Virginia Tech, GSA, or another.
6. Leaving the residence hall after curfew without permission from the director.
7. Exhibiting potentially harmful behavior to yourself or others.
8. Bringing a vehicle to campus, riding in a vehicle while not accompanied by parent/guardian, or riding in a vehicle not approved by GSA staff/faculty.
9. Disrespecting faculty, staff, presenters, other students, university employees or others on campus.

Compliance with the following rules is mandatory for all GSA participants:

1. Participants are to be on GSA designated floors in Harper Hall by 9:30 every night unless otherwise stated by GSA Staff.
- 2. Participants will be in and remain in their suites at 10:30 pm until 6:00 am.**
3. Participants are to attend all scheduled activities as set forth by GSA staff. In case of an emergency (i.e. illness, extenuating circumstances), a GSA staff member must be notified immediately.
4. Participants are required to walk in groups (two or more) at all times.
5. Visitors are not permitted in resident rooms or suites at any time unless granted permission by the GSA Director.
6. Compliance with resident hall rules as set forth by the GSA and Virginia Tech officials.
7. Room and suite doors shall be locked when vacant.
8. Participants are not allowed in Staff rooms.

Residence Hall Procedures

1. Male students are not allowed in the female student's living area and vice versa.
2. Quiet hours are set by Virginia Tech residency program and will be respected by all GSA staff and students.** No loud music is to be played or other loud noise created during these hours.
3. Students may not have any guests.
4. Students may not play ball games or throw frisbees or other projectiles in the residence hall.
- 5. Pets are not permitted in the residence hall.**
- 6. Students must keep rooms and suites tidy for the duration of the school.**
7. Students must also clean rooms and suites completely prior to check out.
8. One suite per night will be responsible for cleaning the common areas.

**Quiet hours are as follows: Sunday-Thursday 7:00 pm-10:00 am
Friday-Saturday 11:30 pm-11:00 am

Please note: The Governor's School reserves the right to have authorized staff enter any student's room without notice if reasonable cause suggests that regulations are being violated.

Violation of Rules

For minor rule violations, the following steps will be taken:

1st Offense: Conference with student and Governor School Leader (GSL).

2nd Offense: Conference with student, GSL, and Assistant Director/Director.

3rd Offense: Conference call with student, GSL, Assistant Director/Director, and student's parent/guardian.

4th Offense: Expulsion from the school.

In case of severe violations, some steps may be omitted.

Dress

- **Clothing should fit, be neat and clean, and conform to standards of safety, good taste, and decency.**
- Opening ceremony: Business Casual (Khakis, slacks, polo shirts, button down shirts, skirts, blouses)
- College Night, Symposium, graduation, banquet, some evening programs: Professional Dress (Nice pants, shirts and ties, dresses, blouses, and skirts.)
- Class, field trips, recreation: Long and short sleeve shirts, long pants, shorts, comfortable shoes, footwear suitable for hiking. Closed toe shoes and long pants may be required for some activities. Old clothes and shoes for getting wet and muddy are also necessary.
- Name Tags will be provided and must be worn at all times unless otherwise stated by the GSA staff. **Name tags will be worn above the waist and be clearly visible.**

The following dress/attire, for example, **is unacceptable**; please refrain from bringing these items:

- Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia.
- Clothing that exposes cleavage, the midriff, or undergarments, or that is otherwise sexually provocative.
- Sagging or low-cut pants, low-cut necklines that show cleavage, tube tops, spaghetti straps, halter tops, backless blouses or blouses with only ties in the back and clothing constructed of see-through materials.
- Bathing suits are only allowed if in the appropriate setting.

Please note:

Virginia Tech has a diverse population; you should keep this in mind when choosing your attire and avoid controversial clothing and accessories.

The Governor's School reserves the right to require students to return to their room to change clothing if deemed inappropriate before participating in further activities.

Worship Services

If your son/daughter is interested in attending a religious service during his/her stay at the school, we ask that you would make note of the place of worship on the scholar survey. The GSA office will contact you if arrangements need to be made for vehicular transportation. State of Virginia regulations prohibit the Governor's School from using state vehicles to transport students to and from religious services. Students will be escorted by a GSA staff member to off-campus services within walking distance. We have listed some of the denominations available in the area. If you do not see the denomination of your choice, please visit <http://www.bev.net/organizations/index.php> or contact the GSA office and someone will assist you in finding the appropriate phone number.

ON-CAMPUS

Catholic Campus Ministry	951-0032
New Life Campus Fellowship	951-2636
Presbyterian Ministry.....	552-2473
University Chapel	231-6240

OFF-CAMPUS

Islamic Society of the New River Valley	961-5210
Blacksburg Baptist Church	552-3869
Blacksburg Institute of Religion The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.....	951-4593
Blacksburg Jewish Community Center.....	951-2628
Blacksburg Presbyterian Church.....	552-2504
Blacksburg United Methodist Church	552-5424
Christ Episcopal Church	552-2411
Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship.....	382-8787
First Baptist Church	552-6393
First Church of God	382-6350
Luther Memorial Lutheran Church.....	951-1000
The Blacksburg Community for Spiritual Living.....	951-4848
The Dwelling Place Christian Fellowship	381-5500

****All Telephone numbers listed below have a 540 Area Code**.**

Recreational Facilities

War Memorial Gym-\$

Indoor swimming pool-\$ Racquetball Courts-\$

Fitness room-\$** Squash Courts-\$

Weight room-\$** Basketball Courts-\$

**Age restrictions may apply to various facilities

Squires Student Center

Pool tables \$ Bowling alley \$

Arcade \$

Various other recreational facilities on campus

Tennis courts Volleyball courts

Cross Country Course Basketball courts

Golf \$ Fishing (Fishing License required)

\$-These activities will have an associated cost which will not be paid by the GSA.

GSA cannot guarantee that all facilities will be in operation for the duration of the school. Students who wish to participate must bring their own equipment.

Directory

Virginia Tech Police/Fire and Rescue	
Emergency	911
Non-emergency	(540) 231-6411
University Student Health Services	(540) 231-6444
Montgomery Regional Hospital	(540) 951-1111
Governor's School Office (8:00 am – 5:00 pm)	(540) 231-6836
Governor's School E-mail Address	gov.school@vt.edu
Residential Housing HELP DESK (GSA Emergency Number from 5pm-8am and weekends)	(540) 231-9811

Note: When dialing these numbers from a campus phone, dial only the last five digits, e.g. 1-6836.

In case of emergency your parents may contact you by calling the numbers listed above. You will have phones in your rooms; you will receive phone numbers when you arrive at the school.

Mailing Address

Student's Name
C/O GSA
2270 Litton Reaves Hall (0343)
Blacksburg, VA 24061