



Parents Handbook



Contents

Preface.....	1	Female Cadets.....	14
Parental Perspective.....	1	Health Services.....	15
Key Events for Incoming Rats.....	3	FTX (Field Training Exercises).....	16
Academics and Related Support.....	13	Common Words in a Cadet’s Life.....	16
Finances.....	14	Important Contacts.....	20

Preface

This *VMI Parents Handbook* was designed by the Parents Council to help parents manage the transition of their children to life at Virginia Military Institute, compiled and edited from information available in other VMI publications. Information regarding academics, tuition, financial

aid, ROTC, and the Corps of Cadets is also addressed in the *VMI Catalog*, www.vmi.edu/catalog, and the *VMI New Cadet Handbook*, www.vmi.edu/newcadethandbook. Parents may also consult www.vmi.edu/generallorders for information on regulations governing employee and cadet activities.

Parental Perspective

Introduction

During their time at the Institute, VMI cadets develop time management abilities, academic skills, and character traits that will equip them to be honorable, responsible, and punctual, to perform under pressure, and to remember details. Academics, physical fitness training, and Corps activities provide for a very full schedule with many daily challenges. Your support as a parent is an important motivator toward cadets’ success.

However, parents must remember that the VMI “system” is based on the fundamental principle that each cadet must take personal responsibility for his or her own decisions and actions.

The physical, mental, and emotional demands of the Rat Line will be difficult and are intended to be stressful. Your rat may or may not want to talk about the rat experience by telephone or during parental visits to post. You will likely

hear about or sense frustration and should simply listen and be supportive. A modicum of parental sympathy with expression of firm confidence in the cadet’s ability to handle the VMI system will be the best help during the cadet’s rat year. Some rats will not adjust quickly to VMI and may experience challenges in one or more areas of VMI life. Fortunately, there is help. Many people and resources are available. As every cadet will learn, this is a team effort: they cannot make it through VMI alone. Parents are an essential part of that team.

Should you be concerned about the welfare of your cadet, counselors in VMI’s Center for Cadet Counseling are available for consultation at 540-464-7667 or via the infirmary after hours at 540-464-7218. The Center’s website – www.vmi.edu/counseling – also offers guidance to parents should your son or daughter need additional professional assistance. Others you may

consult include the Commandant of Cadets, at 540-464-7313; the Sergeant Major, at 540-464-7706; or the associate registrar for advising support, at 540-464-7741, who can help you contact your cadet's academic adviser.

Regulations

VMI regulations are numerous and strictly enforced. Infractions (many of which are self-reported) result in a variety of consequences for even the most well-intentioned cadet. It is essential that parents understand and accept this as part of the process of education at VMI. The desired outcome of a VMI education cannot be achieved unless a cadet struggles through the challenges on his or her own. *The Blue Book* outlines the regulations governing the Corps of Cadets and provides guidelines for cadet standards and conduct. Cadets must adhere to the provisions of *The Blue Book* at all times – on and off post, including furloughs. Cadets are subject to these regulations from the time they sign the Matriculation Book until they are relieved of duty upon graduation.

A word of caution: Parents should not get involved with the permit process. Permits to leave post are “permission slips” that are approved by the Commandant (and sometimes the Dean) and allow a cadet to take part in events that are not routine or to miss required activities (such as a formation or military duty). Permits are listed in *The Blue Book*. Cadets receive a copy of *The Blue Book* at the beginning of each academic year and will know which permit they need (or are eligible to use). Parents should consult the appropriate Institute calendar before making travel arrangements and/or scheduling appointments, as early departure permits are seldom approved.

Honor Code

The honor code, “A VMI cadet will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate those who do,” is taken seriously during all four years of the cadetship. The single-sanction disciplinary system means that cadets who violate the code are dismissed. Other infractions of VMI regulations, such as wearing the uniform improperly, missing class, or not being in the right place at the right time, fall outside the honor system and incur punishments such as penalty tours or confinement.

Support from Parents

VMI needs the support of parents in ensuring that cadets adhere to all VMI regulations, whether it be the honor code, proper wear of the uniform, or being in the right place at the right time. Learning to conduct oneself as a VMI cadet requires considerable effort, and we ask parents to emphasize the importance of this goal.

In particular, VMI needs the support of parents in discouraging cadets from violating laws and regulations governing the use of alcohol. Underage drinking is illegal, and drinking to excess is dangerous. VMI condones neither. Parents are urged not to make local dwellings available to cadets as locations for parties or to make alcohol available to underage cadets.

Support for Parents

As parents or guardians of new cadets (rats), you are full members of the VMI family, even though your son or daughter – until Breakout – is earning the right to become recognized as a member of the Corps of Cadets. Parents and guardians of 3rd, 2nd, and 1st-class cadets know about and are sympathetic to the adjustments parents and cadets are making. Don't hesitate to ask them questions – they are a wealth of information.

Parents Council

The VMI Parents Council was formed in 1957 to provide information and assistance to parents of cadets. Members of the Parents Council are selected from parents of cadets in the upper three classes. The Parents Council develops closer ties between parents and VMI and assists the Institute in providing for the welfare of cadets; its members serve as ambassadors for VMI. The Parents Council meets twice a year: on Parents Weekend and in February. Council representatives regularly attend VMI events to answer questions and act as hosts and hostesses. The Parents Council affords the parents of approximately 90 cadets each year an opportunity to actively support cadets and VMI. More information about Parents Council and these events can be found at www.vmi.edu/parentscouncil.

One way the Parents Council keeps parents informed and provides answers to

questions is through the Parents Council Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ParentsCouncil.VMI/>. This is a closed group, so parents should send a request to join and be sure to check their messages since the Parents Council will confirm requesters are parents of current cadets before adding them to the group.

The Dyke System

Each rat is assigned a 1st-Class mentor, called a “dyke,” who offers advice and support. Dykes do not allow rats to avoid duties, but at certain times rats may find respite from the Rat Line in their dykes’ first-floor barracks rooms. Rats are expected to perform small tasks to assist their dykes, including assisting with “dyking out” – putting on the dress uniform worn in parades. Friendships resulting from this partnership often endure throughout the cadetship and beyond.

Key Events for Incoming Rats

www.vmi.edu/calendar

Before Matriculation

Your child must come to VMI prepared and ready to succeed. Encourage your child to be in the best physical shape possible. Mental preparation should include self-discipline and time management strategies as well as tools to deal with stress and fatigue. Your child must be prepared to be pushed to the limit, physically and mentally, and exhibit self-control under the most rigorous circumstances.

Summer Transition Program – STP

STP is designed to improve the academic and physical readiness of incoming rats. Though participants live in barracks and

eat in Crozet Hall, they are not subject to Rat Line rules until they matriculate in August. Attendance is voluntary, but the cost is money well spent. STP allows participants to become acquainted with VMI and its facilities in a relaxed setting. Participants take an academic class, which lightens the course load during the Rat Line and facilitates the adjustment to college-level academics by allowing participants to focus on a single class. It also gives participants the opportunity to get into physical shape.

Gear for STP

Casual civilian attire is worn during STP. Men should wear jeans, slacks, or dress shorts and shirts with sleeves that are designed for outer garment wear.

Women should wear skirts, dresses, dress shorts, slacks, jeans, and blouses or shirts with sleeves. Only women may wear earrings.

- » Athletic gear: The VMI athletic uniform, or “gym dyke,” will be issued during STP; participants should bring athletic shoes.
- » Shoes: Both men and women must wear shoes or sandals with straps. VMI low quarter (black leather dress) shoes and combat boots will be issued and worn at certain times during STP. Participants will therefore need a few pair of black boot socks and a few pair of dress socks. Plain black dress socks are fine.
- » Foot care: Participants should bring some moleskin (and a pair of scissors) for blisters, adhesive bandages, foot powder, gel insoles, heel protectors, and first aid ointment.
- » Flip-flops are not allowed except in the shower.
- » Sheets and towels: Participants should bring at least two sets of sheets (extra long flat sheets are required of incoming rats), a pillow, pillowcases, and towels. A lightweight blanket or comforter is sufficient for summer nights.
- » Fan: **A fan is essential** (one per room). Barracks is not air-conditioned and the weather can be hot in Lexington during the summer months.
- » Laundry: Laundry service is not provided during summer sessions. Coin-operated machines are located in the basement of barracks. Participants should bring detergent, dryer sheets, quarters, and a laundry bag or basket.
- » School supplies: Participants should bring notebooks, pens, pencils, highlighters, calculator (for math classes), a desk lamp, and anything

else one might need for class.

Textbooks are available for purchase or rent at the VMI Bookstore.

Vehicles:

STP participants are authorized to have a car on post, but use of cars is restricted to weekends. Vehicles are registered and parking permits issued during STP registration.

All STP participants must vacate and clear barracks after final exams. No belongings may be left on post between STP and Matriculation.

New Parent Orientation

New Parent Orientation is held on the afternoon of STP registration and is open to parents of all matriculating students, whether they are participating in STP or not. Information sessions, including a presentation on preparing for Matriculation, are followed by a question-and-answer session with a panel including representatives from the Parents Council, Student Accounts, Financial Aid, Office of Disabilities Services/Center for Cadet Counseling, Registrar’s Office (Academic Advising), Miller Academic Center, and the Open Math Lab. An opportunity will follow to speak one on one with representatives from these and other departments, including ROTC, Athletics, Chaplain, VMI Health Center, Information Technology, Cadet Life, Inspector General, QMD (uniform issue), Financial Aid, Career Services, International Programs, Institute Writing Program, Center for Undergraduate Research, Institute Honors Program, and Aramark (the company that operates the Mess Hall, the PX, and the Keydet Card program).

Packing for VMI

The complete list of mandatory and optional items is below. For more

information, refer to the New Cadet Handbook. If it is not on the list, it is not needed; do not bring it.

Space in the trunk room is limited.

Trunks are authorized; however, large, soft-sided bags, luggage, and duffel bags are encouraged. All smaller luggage pieces and stored belongings must fit inside the largest piece. It is recommended that the luggage be lockable, and all possessions should be clearly labeled with the cadet's name.

Mandatory Items

- » 18 Underwear (minimum number) – must be white
- » 4 Compression shorts (reduces chafing) – black
- » 10 Women – Sports bras (5) (minimum) and regular bras (5) – must be white
- » 18 Men & Women White crew neck t-shirts only. V-neck or tank-top undershirts are not authorized
- » 18 Pairs (minimum) of plain white, ankle-length or crew length athletic socks with no visible logos; socks must show above the shoe
- » 18 Pairs (minimum) of plain black dress socks to be worn with low quarter shoes
- » 10 Pairs (minimum) of long (over the calf) black boot/hiking socks to be worn with combat boots
- » 2 Pairs of running shoes (Asics, Brooks, Nike, or Reebok are recommended), predominantly white or black (no fluorescent soles or laces)
- » 6 Plain white bath towels (minimum)
- » 6 Plain white wash cloths (minimum)
- » 1 Blanket, quilt or comforter (dark solid color), twin size, extra long
- » 6 Twin XL white flat sheets (no elastic)
- » 2 White pillow cases (twin or king)

- » 1 Small duffel bag for overnight Corps trips
- » 1 White pillow (twin or king to fit pillow cases above)
- » 1 Swimsuit (conservative one piece)/ traditional swim trunks (not jammers)-navy or black
- » 1 Pair Flip-flops (for showering)
- » 1 Mouth guard (for boxing class)
- » 2 Sunscreen (tube or bottle)
- » 1 Black hydration pack without external compartments (70 oz.; i.e., Camelbak, Blackhawk!, or equivalent)

Optional Items

- » 5 Pairs of compression/support knee-high nylons (helps prevent blisters when worn under socks)
- » 1 Small fan 12"-16" (since barracks rooms are not air conditioned)
- » 1 Study lamp (black, goose neck 18" maximum height), fluorescent-style or traditional-style with compact fluorescent lamps
- » 1 Watch
- » 1 Alarm clock
- » 1 Calculator (scientific or graphing)
- » 1 Civilian clothes outfit for furlough (collared shirt/khakis)
- » 1 Iron and small ironing board (only one per room; should be purchased after cadre week)
- » 1 Lock box (available for purchase during STP and on Matriculation Day, with proceeds going to the 3rd Class's Ring Figure)
- » 1 VMI book/computer bag; black fabric briefcase style computer bag; not a backpack
- » 1 musical instrument (band members)
- » Long johns or compression running pants – worn under the wool pants in winter to prevent itching and for added warmth are recommended.

Also recommended is a computer – laptop, notebook computer, or tablet. Desktop computers are not permitted in barracks. Recommended computers may be viewed at www.vmi.edu/laptops.

Matriculation

Matriculation is the beginning of the journey at VMI; it is the day incoming students become rats. The first step of the process involves reporting to Cameron Hall. To make the process more efficient, incoming rats are assigned staggered blocks of time in which to report.

Here the students and their parents have the opportunity to:

- » speak with Admissions Office personnel to ensure everything is in order
- » finalize financial accounts
- » receive company and room assignments
- » discuss studies with an academic adviser from the major curriculum and receive a preliminary class schedule
- » receive ROTC information
- » be issued VMI athletic uniforms
- » sign the Matriculation Book

The second step of the matriculation process is the Matriculation Fair, held on the upper level of Crozet Hall. It is designed to acquaint incoming rats and parents with many VMI agencies and activities, as well as local banks and churches.

In the third step, incoming rats move into barracks. All trunks and luggage should be marked with the incoming rat's full name and unloaded in front of barracks at designated arches. Incoming rats should keep one set of civilian clothes in their trunk or luggage to be stored at VMI. After unloading and prior to

checking into barracks, cars must be moved to designated all-day parking on the Parade Ground (weather permitting).

All incoming rats will enter into barracks through Marshall Arch and should approach the cadet-manned check-in table only after their car is parked, all family who wish to enter barracks are present, and all belongings are present and ready to go to the room. Members of the Parents Council will be present to direct you.

Incoming rats and their parents may then take their luggage to the assigned room in barracks. Rats and parents get only one opportunity to go up to the new rat's room. Parents should give incoming rats spending money, credit cards, checkbooks, etc., at this time. These items, as well as watches and phones, should be secured out of sight in the barracks room, as incoming rats cannot carry items when they depart Cameron Hall.

Lunch is provided at Crozet Hall; incoming rats eat at no charge; family members may pay at the door. The PX in Lejeune Hall is an alternative location for lunch. It is important that incoming rats eat during this time and drink plenty of fluids with the meal. There are also numerous restaurants in Lexington; however, incoming rats may not wear the athletic uniform off post.

The final step in the matriculation process is the Superintendent's Welcome. All incoming rats must be in athletic uniform at this time and should report to Cameron Hall no later than 1:45 p.m. Parents and incoming rats will be welcomed by VMI's Superintendent and introduced to the Dean of the Faculty, the Commandant of Cadets, the Athletic Director, the Co-Presidents of the Parents Council, and other key staff. Parents should say their goodbyes prior to this event.

After the Superintendent's remarks, the incoming rats are called down to the floor by company, and the rats are marched out of Cameron Hall and into barracks to begin training. It is appropriate for all family members to depart immediately following the ceremony.

Matriculation Week

Twelve upper-class cadets from each company are known as "cadre" and are responsible for the training rats undergo to become VMI cadets. Collectively, the new rats are called a "rat mass." Within the Corps, they do not earn the status of 4th Class cadets, and are not considered a class, until after Breakout. During Matriculation Week, rats will participate in numerous training activities, get a rat haircut, engage in daily physical fitness training, learn the history of VMI, and become familiar with the requirements of barracks life. During the week, rats will also purchase academic books, so parents should make sure funds are available. Matriculation Week concludes nine days later with an event called Rat Crucible. This event is not open to parents.

Communicating with your Rat

E-mail

E-mail is the most effective way to communicate with rats. Cadets are assigned e-mail addresses at Matriculation, and they are required to check their e-mail at least once a day. They tend to check their e-mail constantly in hopes of hearing from friends and family. Be aware, however, that rats are not allowed to use their personal computers until after Matriculation Week.

Mail

A package from home is one of the best gifts a cadet can receive. Rats often feel

they are alone in the world. Letters and packages brighten their day. An occasional package of food is most welcome and does wonders for morale. Frequent small packages are preferable, as food storage space is limited and no refrigeration is available. It is advisable to address packages and letters to "RAT (followed by name)" until after Breakout.

Cadets can send letters and packages from the Mail Room via UPS or USPS. The Mail Room uses a postage meter and processes parcel post packages. Each cadet is assigned a box in the Mail Room, which will be the mailing address throughout his or her cadetship.

Cards and Letters

Cadet or Rat (followed by name)

Virginia Military Institute

VMI Box (box number)

Lexington, VA 24450-0304

Packages

Cadet or Rat (followed by name)

450 Burma Road

Virginia Military Institute

VMI Box (box number) Lexington, VA

24450-0304

(Please do not send cash through the mail or by commercial carrier.)

Telephone

Rats are not allowed to have cell phones in their rooms. However, all cadets can be reached by calling the Visitor Center at 540-464-7306 or the Guard Room 540-464-7294. The cadet on duty will deliver messages left at the Visitor Center within 20 minutes. Nonetheless, with the rigors and demands of VMI life, there is no guarantee that the cadet will be present to receive the message. Cadets, and especially rats, are severely limited in the times they are permitted to use telephones.

New Cadet Oath Ceremony

The New Cadet Oath Ceremony, typically held the Sunday of Labor Day weekend, takes place at New Market Battlefield State Historical Park in New Market, Va. The Battle of New Market marks a rare occasion in the history of the United States in which an entire student body fought in a battle. After touring the park and taking the Cadet Oath, the rats will charge up the hill in the footsteps of the “Old Corps” cadets who fought at New Market on May 15, 1864.

Parents are encouraged to attend the New Cadet Oath Ceremony, but are asked to observe from designated areas. Parents may have a picnic lunch with their sons and daughters following the charge. Boxed lunches may be purchased on Matriculation Day for the picnic at New Market or you may bring a picnic lunch to the ceremony. If attending and picnicking with your rat, you will probably want to bring a pop-up tent, table and chairs or blanket, and a cooler with drinks. Parking is rather far from the field, so a wagon or cart or some other way to transport these items is recommended. Following lunch, the rats are bused into the town of New Market for a parade down Main Street. The most recent information concerning New Cadet Oath Ceremony may be found at www.vmi.edu/newmarketoath.

Football Game Day/Tailgating

Tailgating at VMI is serious business. Although the Parade Ground does not open to parking until 7:30 a.m., parents often line up much earlier. Tailgaters must enter VMI via Jordan's Point. There is a fee to park on the Parade Ground, and those with pop-up tents, no larger than 10'x10', must park on the perimeter.

Some recommended items for tailgating:

- » Pop-up tent

- » Tables and tablecloths
- » Chairs
- » Propane stove or grill, if cooking (no charcoal grills or generators allowed)
- » Plates, utensils, napkins, serving spoons, tongs, etc.
- » Hanger for storage of “covers,” or cadets’ hats (a length of twine and clothes pins will suffice)
- » Cooler with beverages – **no alcohol allowed on post**
- » Food

Information on all VMI NCAA athletics, including schedules, is available at www.vmi.edu/athletics.

Parents Weekend

Parents Weekend, which is held each fall, is an opportunity for parents see their rats in the VMI environment and witness the new skills and self-reliance they have acquired in the early weeks of their cadetship. It is important for you to be supportive and to encourage your rat to meet the many challenges and responsibilities head-on.

Parents will have an opportunity to sit in on classes Friday, visit their son or daughter's barracks room, attend a parade and football game, and take their rat off post. Between the parade and football game, there will be time for tailgating. During tailgating, parents may share food and spend time with cadets; however, alcohol is strictly prohibited on post.

Leaving your rat after Parents Weekend can be difficult for both you and the rat. Know that the rat's dyke, company commander, and other upper-class cadets have prepared him or her for this separation. You need to be prepared too. Remember that the separation and the challenges the rats face are part of the VMI experience, in which your son or daughter will become independent, self-sufficient,

and resourceful. They are part of an experience in which cadets learn how to overcome life's many challenges and frustrations.

Corps Trip

In most years, the entire Corps of Cadets takes a trip to attend an away football game. Typically, rats are required to travel to the game on an Institute-chartered bus. At the completion of the football game, all cadets have the option of returning to VMI on the bus or spending the weekend with family or friends. Cadets are encouraged to plan ahead to enjoy this opportunity to spend a weekend with their dykes or other friends, away from VMI.

Ring Figure

The most anticipated event of the cadetship, besides Breakout and graduation, is Ring Figure, typically held in the fall semester of the 2nd Class year. During the celebration, cadets receive their class rings. Each class's ring is unique, with one side containing pictorial representations and symbols of the things that define the class as a whole, such as memorable events of the Rat Line or certain aspects of the Institute that the class holds particularly dear. The other side typically contains an arrangement of VMI images.

Ring Figure is an expensive event, and class dues must be paid promptly in order to arrange for decorations, bands, gifts, and other necessities for the celebration.

Events begin with the class supper, for cadets only, and continue with a ring presentation ceremony, which parents are welcome to attend. That evening, cadets and their dates attend the Ring Figure Ball. In some years, Ring Figure falls adjacent to a Game Day weekend, in which case parents are encouraged to stay and enjoy the tailgating, parade, and football game.

Parents should be aware that any serious alcohol offense during the week of Ring Figure forfeits a cadet's participation in Ring Figure activities, including the ring presentation.

Furloughs

Due to the military protocol followed by the Institute, **departure times from VMI are firm**. Cadets and families must schedule travel times, family events, and medical appointments to avoid conflicts with Corps requirements and responsibilities. Note that the phrase "completion of academic duty," often used to establish furlough start times, is partially dependent on the individual cadet's schedule. It is wise therefore to confirm with your cadet the date and time of his or her close of academic duty before making travel reservations.

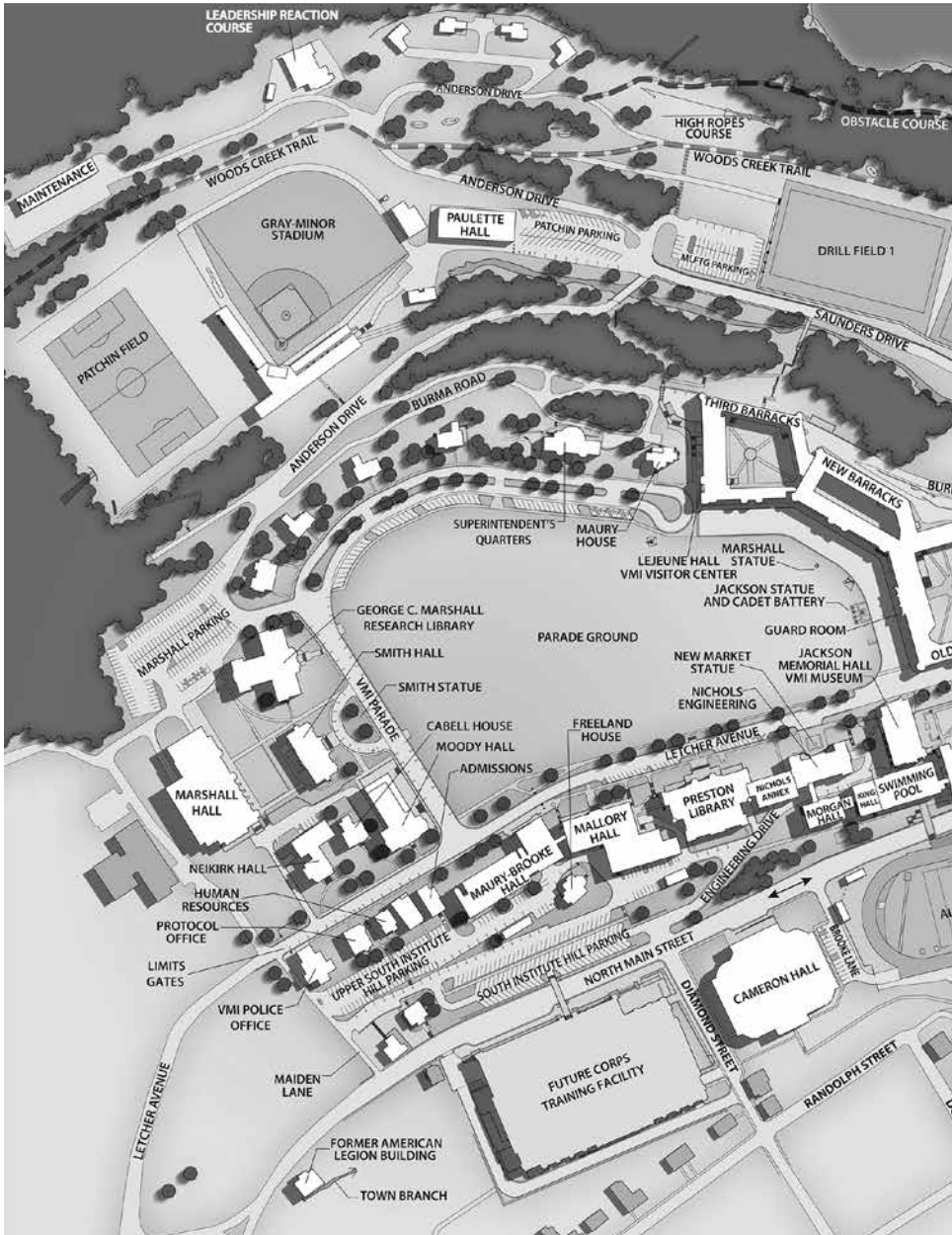
Barracks is usually closed and locked during furloughs. Cadets are responsible for transportation to and from airports and may arrange to help one another.

Thanksgiving furlough

Thanksgiving furlough typically begins upon completion of academic duty (CAD) on the last day of classes prior to Thanksgiving. Typically, furlough ends at 10 p.m. the Sunday following Thanksgiving. The Corps often transitions to the winter class dyke on return from furlough, so your cadet may want warm layers such as long johns, insulated tops, silks, or compression pants to wear under his or her woolies.

Christmas furlough

Christmas furlough begins upon completion of academic duty (exams), and cadets may depart post following completion of their last scheduled exam. Because exam schedules vary with individual cadets' academic schedules,



www.vmi.



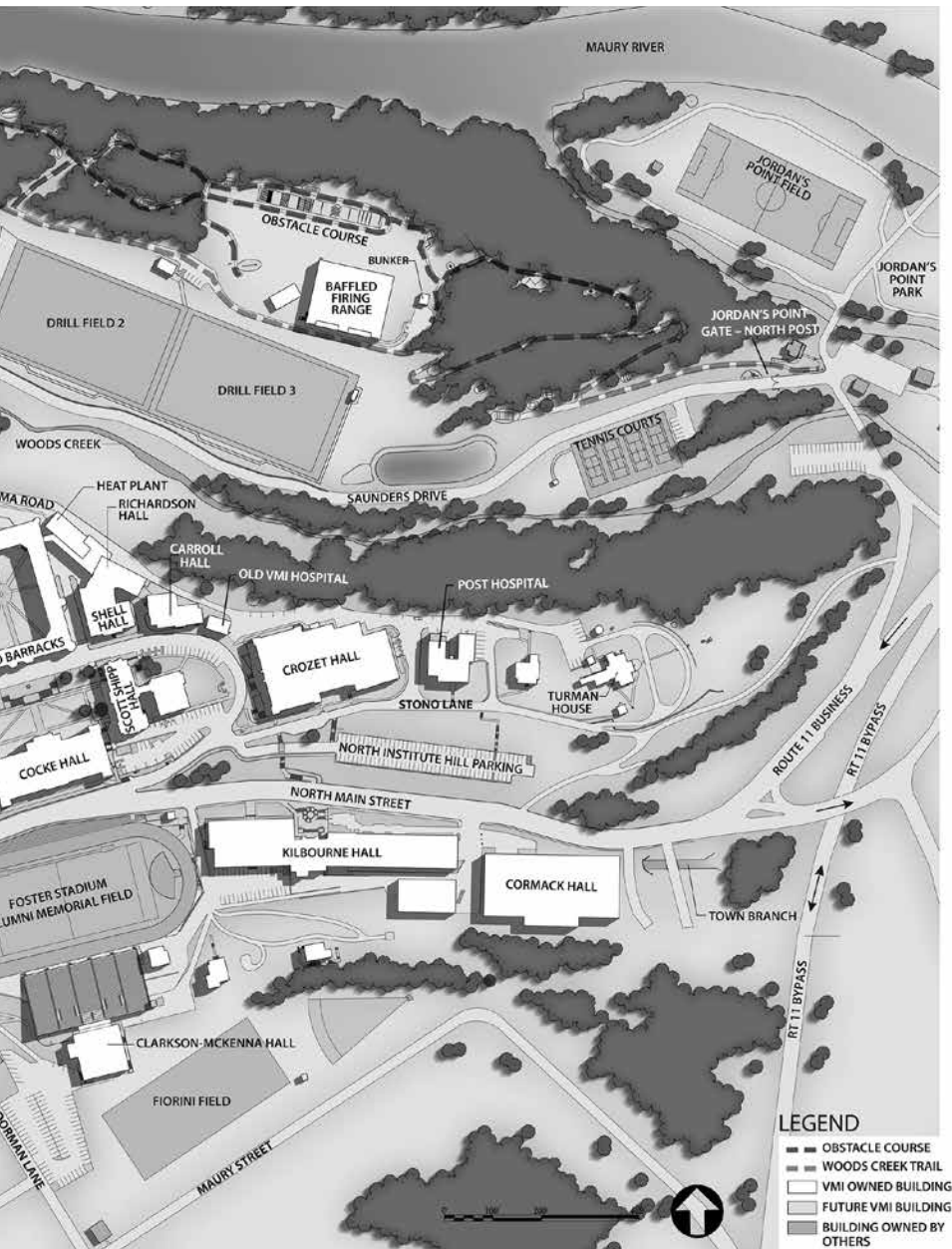
@VMINews or @VMILife



facebook.com/vmi1839



virginia_military_institute



[edu/visit/](#)

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



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



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

parents should check with their cadets to find out when they will be finished with their exams before making travel reservations. All cadets must be checked out of barracks by 5 p.m. on the last day of exams. Return for spring semester usually occurs approximately three weeks later, on a Sunday by 10 p.m.

Spring furlough/Easter break

Spring furlough/Easter break are usually separate events, but in some semesters do coincide.

Summer furlough

Summer furlough begins May 16 upon conclusion of graduation. All cadets must clear (including all personal items) barracks by 5 p.m. VMI prohibits departures prior to graduation except in the case of family emergencies and graduations of immediate family members. Please ensure adequate time is allotted, as clearing will require inspection and certification of the cleared room. Medical appointments and other engagements must be scheduled after May 16.

Validation Week/Breakout

Validation Week is the week prior to Breakout and is characterized by intense physical workouts in the morning, before classes, and at the close of the academic duty day. The Rat Line officially ends with Breakout, a combination of physical challenges and a ceremony, which occurs on a Saturday any time between late January and early March. Breakout is a milestone event in which the Old Corps recognizes the former rat mass as the 4th Class and rats as 4th Class cadets. Parents and family members do not attend.

Commissioning

Each year on May 15, the day before graduation, most of those cadets planning

on serving in the U.S. armed forces are commissioned as second lieutenants in the Air Force, Army, or Marine Corps, or as ensigns in the Navy. The event begins with a joint ceremony that all cadets are required to attend, after which the four services conduct individual “pin-on” ceremonies around post. Senior officers from the four services visit post to administer the oath, lending the ceremonies an air of gravity. The occasion is nonetheless festive, as newly commissioned officers can be seen for the first time in their service uniforms and newly earned gold bars.

New Market Parade and Ceremony

The New Market Parade and Ceremony commemorate the courage and dedication to duty of the cadets who participated in the battle at New Market in 1864 as well as the sacrifice of all Institute alumni who have served the nation. This solemn event is held on the anniversary of the battle, May 15.

The Ceremonial Formation:

The Corps of Cadets marches from barracks to the Parade Ground, forming two battalions centered on the statue *Virginia Mourning Her Dead*, located in front of Nichols Engineering Building.

The Roll Call:

In the historic roll call, cadet company commanders call out the names of the 10 cadets who died as a result of the battle. In response to each, an appointed cadet gives the traditional reply, “Died on the field of honor.” The Regimental Commander then gives the full report to the Commandant.

The Ceremony and Review:

Floral tributes are laid, the Chaplain recites the New Market Prayer, and a three-volley salute is fired. After the gun

salute, trumpeters sound “Taps” and “Amazing Grace” is intoned by the pipe band, followed by the eyes-right salute to the Superintendent and the Commandant as the Corps of Cadets marches from the Parade Ground along Letcher Avenue, passing in front of the monument.

The New Market parade is the final parade of the year and the last in the cadetship.

Graduation

The cadetship culminates in graduation, held on May 16 and attended by the entire Corps of Cadets. Graduation is likely the last time that the graduating class will be together as a whole, and it is an emotional event for both cadets and family. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the Corps is released from duty for summer furlough.

Academics and Related Support

Academics

From a parent’s perspective, this is the “meat and potatoes” of the Institute. A strict grading regimen, free of grade inflation and with penalties for missing classes, will challenge cadets throughout the academic year. Leading the program is the VMI faculty, who are eager to share their enthusiasm about their fields of study and their love of learning with your son or daughter. Grades during the Rat Line are often lower than those achieved in high school as rats deal with the myriad challenge of the Rat Line and adjust to college-level academics. Some find they must repeat a class. The important points to pass on to your cadet: Do not stop trying! Ask for help!

A variety of resources are available to cadets who need academic help. The Miller Academic Center, the Writing Center, and the Open Math Lab offer tutoring and study groups. Group study sessions are available for introductory and upper-level courses. These weekly meetings offer opportunities to discuss coursework and strategies with successful upper-class cadets. NCAA athletes are assisted by the Cadet-Athlete Development Office. Furthermore, professors are willing to meet one on one to answer questions and/or clarify expectations, and each cadet is

assigned an adviser who will work with the cadet throughout his or her time at VMI; the adviser is also a resource. The key is to ask for help early, often, and to never give up. For additional information, please see www.vmi.edu/mac, www.vmi.edu/writingcenter, and www.vmi.edu/MERC.

Incoming rats with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible and to submit documentation to support the need for accommodations at VMI. For more information, visit www.vmi.edu/ds.

Grades are posted to Post View in a timely manner, but are not sent home. Rats’ grades are posted four times during the semester. Be aware that your rat is expected to manage grades and finances on his or her own, so if you want access to grades and billing information, your cadet will need to provide you with his or her Post View ID and password.

Study Abroad Programs

VMI offers cadets the opportunity to study abroad during regular semesters and during the summer. Programs are available through VMI’s military exchanges and through enrollment at civilian universities worldwide. Short-term international travel and

cultural immersion programs are offered during VMI furloughs. There are also opportunities for international internships during the summer. The first opportunity to study abroad is during the summer after the rat year, so explore opportunities early. For more information, visit www.vmi.edu/ip.

Summer Opportunities

Summer Sessions

Cadets can take classes toward degree programs, or repeat a class, if necessary,

during the two five-week summer sessions at VMI.

SURI

The Summer Undergraduate Research Institute (www.vmi.edu/suri) provides a structured program, financial support, and academic credit for research projects conducted during the summer at VMI, or at an approved off-site location. SURI pairs VMI faculty mentors with cadets, allowing the cadet to take on the role of principal investigator.

Finances

VMI expects the individual cadet to be responsible for prompt payment of all tuition and fees in accordance with VMI policies and deadlines.

Cadet financial accounting (tuition, fees, and financial aid) is available on Post View. VMI does not send paper bills. Cadets will be instructed on setting up their parents or guardians as authorized bill payers. Cadets and authorized bill payers may pay their tuition and fees by electronic checks, manual checks, or by credit/debit card. VMI accepts MasterCard, Discover, and American Express with a 2.25% convenience fee assessed when credit or debit cards are used. VMI does not accept VISA.

Tuition and fee payments are always due by Aug. 1 for fall semester and Dec.

15 for spring semester. Late fees will be assessed if payments are not received by these due dates.

Financial Aid

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

1. Completion of the VMI Financial Aid Application, and
2. Completion of the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), which must be filed every year.

These two forms will determine the level of need-based aid for which a cadet may qualify. There are other sources of assistance available in the form of merit and ROTC scholarships. For more information, visit www.vmi.edu/financialaid.

Female Cadets

VMI operates in a military environment and, as such, regulates hairstyles, makeup, and the wearing of jewelry.

VMI's hair stylists do their best to provide an appropriate and stylish cut,

but cadets should be aware that their time is limited.

Some incoming rats donate their hair (if it is at least 10 inches long) to Locks of Love or similar charities. Incoming rats

should let the barber or stylist know if they want to donate their hair to one of these charities.

Female rats are prohibited from wearing jewelry other than watches; watches, too, are prohibited until after Matriculation Week.

When authorized, usually after Breakout, post-type earrings in gold, silver, white pearl, or diamond may be worn, and must fit snugly against the ear. Necklaces symbolizing a cadet's religious affiliation and military dog

tags may be worn, but must be out of sight.

Female rats are also prohibited from wearing makeup, except a conservative application for social occasions such as Homecoming.

There are many safeguards in place to ensure the safety of all cadets in barracks. No cadet is allowed to stay overnight alone in a room. If a cadet's roommates are not on post, the cadet is required to bunk in another room with other cadets of the same gender.

Health Services

VMI Infirmary

At the VMI Infirmary, a team of nurses, nurse practitioners, and a physician evaluate and treat cadets for routine illnesses and injuries.

Routine medical appointments, however, must be scheduled with the cadet's family doctor during furloughs. Emergencies and serious illnesses are treated at Stonewall Jackson Hospital, which serves the Lexington-Rockbridge County area.

Medical conditions requiring treatment off post are at the cadet's expense. Free flu shots are offered to all cadets in the fall.

If your rat is admitted to the infirmary, you may contact the nurse to receive information only if your child has signed the Consent to Disclose form.

Cadets not covered by a parent's health insurance are advised to purchase a personal health insurance policy. As part of the fees paid by each cadet, VMI provides accident insurance for all cadets, which will cover up to \$5,000 for accidents occurring during VMI-sanctioned, supervised activities. This policy is secondary to any private health insurance the cadet may have.

For additional information, contact the infirmary at 540-464-7218 or www.vmi.edu/infirmary.

Counseling Services

The Center for Cadet Counseling offers free, confidential, individual counseling to help cadets address personal and interpersonal concerns or stressors. Services include educational programming, individual assessment and counseling, crisis intervention, referrals, and consultation.

A staff of upper-class cadets, known as Cadet Peer Educators, assists the professional staff with health and wellness programs throughout the year. In addition, the Cadet Peer Educators are available to cadets on an individual basis. They are especially helpful in guiding rats through the transition to college and the VMI culture.

Counseling services are confidential and are conducted by licensed mental health professionals.

For more information, contact the Center for Cadet Counseling at 540-464-7667 or www.vmi.edu/counseling.

FTX (Field Training Exercises)

There are two scheduled training exercises, during which cadets may leave post to train in the field. These exercises provide experience specific to the ROTC branch the cadet has selected.

During Spring FTX, noncommissioning members of the 1st and 2nd classes and excepted members of the 3rd and 4th classes participate in

activities specified by the Commandant of Cadets. These required activities may include community service and post improvement projects, as well as training.

All 4th Class cadets are required to participate in the New Cadet Military Training program's FTX in the days between final exams and graduation.

Common Words in a Cadet's Life

ACUs: Army Combat Uniform; camouflage

All Right: In correct location, correct time

AOC: Assistant Officer in Charge

Assembly: The precise time at which cadets must be lined up in ranks; also refers to the bugle call denoting such time

AWOL: Absent without leave, being away from post without permission; also called "running the block"

Barracks: Where cadets live; dominant architectural feature of VMI, the original section of which was completed in 1851; designated as 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

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

The Blue Book: VMI cadet regulations

Bone: To report; place someone's name on the delinquency sheet

BRC: Breakfast Roll Call; the first formation of the day, mandatory for the entire Corps

Breakout: Transition event from rat to cadet

Brother Rat (BR): A classmate

Bust: To reduce in rank to private

The Cadet: The student VMI newspaper, published weekly during the school year

CAD: Completion of Academic Duty

CCQ: Close Call to Quarters; cadets in barracks in their assigned room; outside barracks - in "all right" location

CQ: Call to Quarters; announcement establishing authorized locations and time frames

QORB: Call to Quarters, Release in Barracks; evening CQ, rats can visit on first and fourth stoops

CEA: Cadet Equity Association; monitors a postwide climate of respect and equitable treatment for all cadets

Certify: To attest to the truth of a statement, oral or written, in terms of the published rules of the Honor Code

Check Formation: Mandatory attendance at a particular function

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

Class: 1st Class, senior; 2nd Class, junior; 3rd Class, sophomore; 4th Class, freshman

CLE: Center for Leadership and Ethics

CMD: Completion of Military Duty

Coatee: Woolen jacket with tails and many buttons; part of the 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

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

Demerit: A mark against a cadet's record for a fault or for misconduct; issued for breaking rules or as a result of being boned

Deputy Commandant: Administrative officer responsible for the discipline of cadets and operation of barracks

Doxology: Sung at Institute ceremonies to the tune of the traditional hymn, the Doxology celebrates the honor system, the fellowship, and the spirit of VMI.

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

DTT: Dean's Training Time, weekly time for special academic activities

Ducks: White cotton trousers

Dyke: 1) A 1st Class mentor and confidant.
2) A uniform, e.g., class dyke, gym dyke, or church dyke. 3) As a verb, to get dressed, especially for parade ("dyke out"). 4) The white cross-belts of the dress uniform

EC: Executive Committee; composed of the GC and the President of the OGA, which enforces the standards of appearance and conduct of the Corps

Excess: More than the allowed number of demerits for the period

First Call: Bugle call alerting the Corps that Assembly is in 10 minutes

Food Boxes: Cardboard cartons kept by each cadet for the storage of non-perishable food items, snacks, etc.

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

Form 24: Used to explain all absences from any type of duty, especially breaches of permit

Furlough: Vacation scheduled or approved by VMI, such as spring furlough

FCP: First Class Privileges; a series of unique and convenient permissions enjoyed only by the First Class

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

Gim: Term applied to Sick Call or those who receive relief from duty as a result of injury or illness; from the name of the first VMI physician's horse, Gimlet, nicknamed "Old Gim," who was often used to transport ill or injured cadets to the infirmary

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

George C. Marshall Library: A museum/research facility operated by the George C. Marshall Foundation; library located on post

Grey Blouse: Semi-formal uniform: woolen jacket combined with matching woolen pants (called straight pants or "woolies") in winter and white pants in summer

Guard Room: Headquarters for the Guard Team, in Jackson Arch

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

Hay: The cadet mattress, which must be rolled up every morning

Hay Down: Privilege releasing a cadet from the requirement to roll up and stow his or her hay for morning CQ

Help Received Statement: Official, certified statement on any “work for grade” that acknowledges help was received on an assignment

Hold It: Appeal made to the bugler when one finds oneself in the arch as assembly for a formation is imminent

Honor Court: Responsible for the education of rats about the Honor System and for adjudicating reported violations of the Honor Code; composed of 1st and 2nd Class cadets elected by their classmates

Honor System: The single-sanction system enforcing the VMI Honor Code: “A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate those who do.”

Hops: Organized dances

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

Jackson Arch: Main entrance to Old Barracks (west side); contains the entrance to the Guard Room

JM Hall: Jackson Memorial Hall; the primary assembly hall for Corps functions; contains the chapel and VMI museum

LRC: Leadership Reaction Course; a series of team-building obstacles located at North Post

Limits Gate: Brick pillars on Letcher Avenue near Mallory Hall denoting the old boundary between VMI and town; the confines of a cadet’s confinement.

McKethan Park: Acreage and pavilion used for Corps and Institute activities and training located two miles east of Lexington

Military Duty: That part of the day devoted to military duties and the intramural athletic program; follows academic duty and precedes supper

MI: Military Inspection

New Market: Civil War battle on May 15, 1864, involving VMI’s Corps of Cadets. Also the town of the same name, located 80 miles north of Lexington; location of VMI’s New Market Battlefield State Historical Park

Nile: Woods Creek, the creek behind barracks

NCO: Non-Commissioned Officer

North Post: Location of VMI’s Military and Leadership Field Training Grounds, including obstacle courses, the leadership reaction course, Patchin Field, and Gray-Minor Stadium

OC: Officer in Charge, an Institute official; represents the Commandant and monitors the guard team after hours; a tactical officer

OCMNI: Officer in Charge, Midnight Inspection; an after-taps check of cadets by the OC to ensure all right status

OD/OG: Officer of the Day/Officer of the Guard; the two ranking members of the guard team (usually 1st Class cadets)

OGA: Officer of the Guard Association (1st Class privates); helps create and maintain an environment that facilitates communication, harmony, and discipline within the Corps

Optional BRC: Authorization to miss Breakfast Roll Call

Orderly: Members of the Guard Team, usually 2nd Class cadets, assigned to Jackson Memorial Hall and Cocke Hall to assist civilians in their use of the facilities

Parapet: Wall alongside the south side of barracks overlooking Memorial Gardens and Cocke Hall

PDA: A too public display of affection by a cadet and his or her date

Penalty Tour: An act of atonement 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 or to grant approval for exceptions to policies

Police: To clean up; to put in order

Post: 1) VMI campus;

2) Get to your post

PT: 1) Penalty Tour, punishment;

2) Physical Training

PTT: Physical Training Time; biweekly time during which all cadets conduct physical training with their ROTC units or cadet companies

PX: Post Exchange; place to purchase food and other items

QMD: Quartermaster Department, including the tailor shop and the military store, located in Richardson Hall

Rack: Wooden frame that holds the hay

Ranker: Any cadet who holds rank in the Corps

Rat Bible: Small book of facts about VMI's history and information specific to the current year; must be in a rat's possession at all times; rats are responsible for learning to recite the contents of this book

Rat Challenge: A fall semester physical program for rats that promotes teamwork and leadership; includes activities on the obstacle courses and culminates in Rat Olympics

Rat Line: The experience of being a rat; also the specific path in barracks and on post that rats must use

RDC: Rat Disciplinary Committee; in charge of determining punishment for rat infractions of rules

Ring Figure: The celebration during which 2nd Class cadets receive their class rings

Run a Period: To go without demerits for the whole demerit period and earn privileges

Run the Block: To leave cadet limits without authorization

Section Marcher: Cadet official in charge of accountability (attendance) for a particular academic class, responsible for presenting the class to the professor

Sent Up: Recommended to the RDC or GC as a disciplinary measure

Sentinels: Rats or 4th 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, for officers, a feather plume worn during full dress parades

Sounding Brass, now Cadence: Cadet literary magazine established in 1966 as Sounding Brass and now published each spring as Cadence

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; mandatory formation for the entire Corps

Status Slip: Colored notes sent to a cadet's room by the Guard Team notifying the cadet of the presence of a visitor, phone message, etc.

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

Strain: To rack in one's chin and come to the proper position of attention; a position practiced by rats in barracks

Superintendent: The president of VMI; reports to the Board of Visitors

Supernume: Supernumerary; an additional rat or 4th Class cadet attached to the Guard Team who acts as a messenger

Sweat Party: Fifteen-minute physical fitness workout for the rat mass

TAC: A Tactical Officer; administers the regimental system

Tailgate: To picnic out of the trunk of a car, usually on the Parade Ground preceding and following a football game

Turn Out: An official announcement over the barracks public address system

Uncle Dykes: The 1st Class cadets who room with one's Dyke

VFT: VMI Fitness Test; administered by the Commandant's Office once per semester

VMI Museum: Museum located in Jackson Memorial Hall that preserves and interprets the heritage of VMI and its alumni; the oldest public museum in the state of Virginia, housing over 13,000 artifacts

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

Important Contacts

540 area code

Contact a Cadet (Visitor Center) .. 464-7306

Academic Information

Dean of the Faculty.....464-7212

Academic Advising464-7741

Registrar464-7213

Summer Session Office464-7319

General Information

Admissions Office 464-7211

Athletic Ticket Office..... 464-7266

Visitor Center 464-7306

VMI Bookstore.....464-7637

VMI Museum 464-7334

Cadet Support

Guard Room 464-7294

Athletic Advising 464-7722

Chaplain's Office 464-7390

Infirmary464-7218

Cadet Counseling 464-7667

Financial Aid..... 464-7208

Information Technology464-7341

Anonymous Reporting..... 464-7702

Inspector General/Title IX..... 464-7072

Office of Career Services 464-7560

Postal Services464-7745

The Bomb (VMI yearbook) 464-7245

The Cadet
(VMI cadet newspaper)..... 464-7242

Writing Center..... 464-7045

Administrative Offices

Chief of Staff464-7104

Commandant's Office..... 464-7313

Dean of the Faculty.....464-7212

Office of the Superintendent 464-7311

Sergeant Major, Corps of Cadets . 464-7706

Student Accounting..... 464-7217

VMI Police (non-emergency) 464-7017

Non-discrimination Statement

The 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 race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, genetic information, against otherwise qualified persons with disabilities, or based on any other status protected by law. Every VMI staff member, faculty member and cadet has the right to work and study in an environment free from discrimination and should be treated with dignity and respect. VMI complaint and grievance procedures provide employees and cadets with the means for resolving complaints when this Statement has been violated. VMI is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Anyone having questions concerning discrimination or the application of Title IX regulations should contact Title IX Coordinator, 212 Carroll Hall, VMI, Lexington, Va. 24450, (540) 464-7072. Any cadet or prospective cadet having questions about disability services for students should contact the Director of the Center for Cadet Counseling and Disability Services, 448 Institute Hill, 2nd floor, Post Infirmiry, Lexington, Va. 24450, (540) 464-7667. For employment-related disability services, contact the Employee Disability Services Coordinator in the VMI Human Resources Office, Lexington, Va. 24450, (540) 464-7322.



VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

Admissions Office

Lexington, VA 24450-0304

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 19
LEXINGTON, VA
24450-0304