Dear Parents:

These are clearly unprecedented times in which we are living. The 2019-20 academic year ended quickly and in a manner that no one could have foreseen. Not since World War II or the Korean Conflict has the Corps of Cadets been away from post for such duration. Since the day the Corps left in March, we have been preparing and anxiously awaiting for their safe return to the Institute. The planning process has been no small task, and this pandemic and our response to it impacts every facet of cadet life. Nevertheless, we are excited for the Corps to return and some semblance of normal with cadets in residence, beginning in August.

By now, you have seen on the VMI website our Fall 2020 Return to Post and In-Person Classes Operations Plan. If you have not, I recommend you familiarize yourself with it and its complexities. It will be updated with regularity throughout the semester. As an institution of higher education with a military mission, we face a unique set of challenges. Unlike many other institutions, we cannot deliver on our mission through an online environment or an optional daily calendar. Though we did portions of that last semester, we must now persevere through in-residence attendance and adversity, and mitigate risk to provide our cadets with the VMI experience they desire and for which they enrolled. We have learned that our system requires time to execute our unique programs, and truncated semester options will not accommodate the full cadet experience. This is particularly true as we respond to the changing virus threat and the need for flexibility. There will be more institutional centralized control in terms of directives and standards to safeguard health and safety. As the fall unfolds, Corps operations will become more “centric” at the battalion and company levels, versus regimental, in terms of execution. There will be emphasis on civility and consideration of others in the way we live our daily lives, with courage by all of us to make corrections and enforce standards to maximize well-being across the VMI community.

Providing this experience in an environment where COVID-19 exists is not without its challenges. Because of our “One Corps” and “commonality of purpose” philosophy, your cadet will live in close proximity with brother rats and roommates in our historic barracks, participate in military formations, continue physical activity and ROTC training, and learn in small classroom settings. The Institute will follow the most recent local, state, and federal guidance to mitigate risks to your cadet; many of these activities will be adjusted. Cadets will be required to follow strict protocols on face coverings, social distancing, and personal hygiene. Their movements will be restricted, and they will be required to conduct a daily self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms. We have established protocols for isolation (COVID-19 positive) and quarantine (COVID-19 exposed). We are confident in our plan, but it will require compliance and enforcement on everyone’s part. We will commence with very conservative approaches and, based on careful assessment, will open (or close) the post and the Corps access to external activities. We cannot bring this virus into the Corps and our faculty and continue the essence of the experience.

For parents, the biggest change for the coming semester will be the Institute and cadet schedule. Large-scale events and ceremonies have been a staple of the VMI parent’s life. Some events, such as the new cadet oath at New Market Battlefield, will not occur this year as there is no way to ensure social distance standards while moving the entire rat class via bus transportation, nor their integration with parents and large visiting crowds. Rather, I will swear in these new cadets on their Matriculation Day. Others, such as Parents Weekend, football tailgates, class reunions, open houses, and Ring Figure remain under study and are tentative. Our intention and planning effort is to have a full NCAA athletic program this fall that will see certain adjustments to attendance and seating parameters. Decisions on all these events will be made on a rolling basis, a minimum 30 days in advance and based on the latest guidance from our health and government partners and Institute assessments of the health and readiness of the Corps. Matriculation will be spread out over the course of two days on 15 and 16 August to reduce overcrowding and accommodate the safety of families and officials associated with the event. The new rat mass will not meet their cadre until the following week. The time in between matriculation and meet the cadre will be a “soft opening” necessary to complete a myriad of administrative functions, uniform issue, haircuts, significant COVID-19 testing, and the Corps access to external activities—procedures normally presented in the following weeks and months.

Our planning has been guided by two principles: 1. Maintaining the health and well-being of our cadets, faculty, staff, and local community, and 2. Executing a superb academic program. The academic offerings will be considerably different from those we’ve offered in the past. The emphasis will continue to be on providing traditional, in-person instruction; however, some courses will be in an online environment or in a hybrid in-person /online manner. There will be Saturday morning ROTC and commandant instruction. This is necessary in order to free up classrooms, maintain social distancing, and protect those
Return of the Shako
Celebrating their 14-21 win over the Citadel, members of the Keydet football team hold the Silver Shako aloft Oct. 5 in Charleston, South Carolina. The victory over the Citadel was VMI’s first since 2002. With a total of five wins, VMI had its best football season since 2005.—Photo courtesy of Chuck Steenburgh ’86, VMI Athletic Communications.
Commissioning

Commissioning into the armed services is a goal for many cadets, and with good reason.

With its emphasis on virtues such as honor, duty, and service, plus the obligation to take responsibility for self and others, a military career can serve as an excellent springboard to a civilian career later in life.

Each year, more than half of the graduating class accepts a commission, and many VMI graduates make the military a career. Options are Active Duty, National Guard, or Reserves.

At VMI, ROTC is an integral part of the Institute’s mission to produce citizen-soldiers. Each cadet is required to take eight semesters of ROTC training, regardless of whether he or she plans to commission, with Army ROTC being the default unit for cadets who have not chosen an ROTC program.

The discipline inculcated by ROTC serves cadets well in all of their future endeavors, and it is quite possible and even common for a cadet to commission even if he or she entered the Institute unsure about commissioning.

VMI’s Army ROTC program is the largest in the country and commissions more second lieutenants than any other Army ROTC unit in the nation. It has won the prestigious MacArthur Award, given by the U.S. Army Cadet Command, several times in recent years. The VMI Air Force ROTC is the third largest in the nation.

Army ROTC

VMI’s Army ROTC is by far the largest of the three ROTC units on post—and offers a plethora of career paths. There are 17 basic branches in the Army, ranging from Infantry to Chemical Corps to Cyber Warfare and Medical Service Corps. Within each branch are numerous career opportunities for cadets.

Cadets of all majors are welcome to seek a commission in the Army. Scholarships are available for both high school seniors and current cadets. For additional information on how to apply for four- and three-year scholarships, visit www.goarmy.com/rotc.

Cadets commissioning with an Army scholarship will be required to serve four years on active duty, followed by four years remaining on active duty, or four years in the Army Reserve or the Army National Guard.

Cadets with or without scholarships can also commission directly into the Army National Guard or the Army Reserve, which allows them to pursue a civilian career while serving their country on a part-time basis.

At VMI, 75 to 80 percent of cadets commissioning into the Army choose active duty, while the remainder choose to serve in the National Guard or Reserve. In fiscal year 2019, 114 cadets commissioned into the Army. For fiscal year 2020, more than 140 cadets are on track to commission.

Army ROTC classwork stresses leadership training, Army structure, and functions. Army field training emphasizes
physical training, marksmanship, land navigation, and tactical missions.

The Army offers a wide variety of summer training opportunities for cadets, including Airborne School, Air Assault School, Cadet Troop Leader Training, DoD-sponsored study abroad, and more.

Army ROTC cadets can also apply for internships with government organizations such as the National Security Agency, the Army Medical Department, and the Defense Forensic Science Center.

All of these summer programs are optional. Cadets who have been contracted into the Army must attend Advanced Camp, held at Fort Knox, Kentucky, the summer before their 1st Class year.

Navy/Marine Corps ROTC

Navy/Marine Corps ROTC offers a wide variety of career paths to cadets, and in fiscal year 2020, more than 50 cadets chose to commission in either the Navy or Marine Corps.

Cadets interested in commissioning in either the Navy or the Marine Corps should be aware that scholarships are available for high school seniors through 2nd Class cadets. To have their names submitted for scholarships, cadets must have at least a 2.5 grade point average—but to obtain a scholarship, a grade point average of 3.0 to 3.2 is generally necessary. Scholarships are awarded on a national basis.

Cadets not offered scholarships may still be accepted to commission through a designation known as College Program Advanced Standing. Cadets with College Program Advanced Standing are offered a contract to commission into either the Navy or the Marine Corps but must continue to pay their own way at VMI.

Cadets of any major may seek a commission in the Marine Corps. For the Navy, there is a heavy preference for STEM majors.

Navy ROTC cadets spend their classroom time learning about leadership, the history of the Navy, navigation, naval engineering, and naval weapons, among other topics. Outside the classroom, they practice survival swimming skills in the pool and also develop their climbing skills on the climbing walls and high ropes courses at the Corps Physical Training Facility.

Marine Corps ROTC cadets also learn about leadership and history in their classes, but they also study amphibious warfare and the evolution of warfare. Field work for Marine Corps ROTC cadets includes land navigation exercises, going through the leadership reaction course on the North Post, patrolling, and small unit tactics exercises.

Air Force ROTC

Commissioning numbers are strong for VMI’s Air Force ROTC, with approximately 25 new second lieutenants commissioning in 2020. The Air Force welcomes cadets from all majors, although academic standards are high. There are approximately 40 different occupational specialties within the Department of the Air Force, which, as of December 2019, includes the U.S. Air Force and the newly established U.S. Space Force. At this time, all cadets wishing to join either the Air Force or Space Force should join Air Force ROTC.

Cadets wishing to become pilots should be aware that while private flying lessons are valuable, and do contribute to selection, they are not a requirement. The Air Force ROTC now has a flight simulator, which can help prospective pilots decide if a pilot slot is the right fit for them. In addition, Air Force ROTC cadets have the opportunity to fly with the Civil Air Patrol from the Roanoke and Lynchburg, Virginia, airports.

Recently, the Air Force has been granting fewer scholarships to college students, although this change has not affected the number of scholarships granted to high school students. High school seniors and 3rd and 4th Class cadets must meet minimum score requirements on the SAT and ACT; all applicants for an Air Force ROTC scholarship must have at least a 3.0 grade point average, though the SAT scores lower from 1240 for high school scholarships to 1100 for in-college scholarships. ACT drops from 26 in high school to 22 in college.

Scholarship applicants should be aware that there is a national competition for scholarship money. Factors determining the assignment of scholarships include commandant’s ranking, physical fitness, and grade point average. Parents should be aware that while some scholarships cover the full amount of tuition at VMI, no scholarships cover the cost of room and board.
As the 21st century enters its third decade, the Institute must continue to advance. Highlighting the 2020–21 academic year will be the ongoing renovation of Scott Shipp Hall, and the completion of renovations to Preston Library. In addition, the VMI Police will move into a newly constructed headquarters and access to post via Jordan’s Point will be eased by a new, two-lane bridge over Woods Creek.

The Institute is in the planning stages for a few additional projects: a post-wide safety and security initiative and a renovation and expansion of Nichols Engineering Building. All of the above projects either have been or will be paid for with state funds.

Scott Shipp Hall

A $43.2 million renovation of Scott Shipp Hall, one of VMI’s most heavily used academic buildings, began in June 2019 and is scheduled for completion in August or September 2021. Currently, a wing of the building originally constructed in 1955 is undergoing renovation, while a 28,000-square-foot addition is under construction. Over the winter furlough in December 2020, those spaces will open for use by professors and cadets, while the original portion of the building dating to 1918 will be renovated, a process that is anticipated to take approximately 10 months.

Preston Library

By the time the 2020–21 academic year begins, a $19.2 million renovation of Preston Library will be in the final stages. Completion of the renovation, the library’s first in nearly 25 years, is scheduled for November 2020. The renovated library will offer a variety of study seating options for cadets, as well as consistent wi-fi access throughout the building, expanded VMI archives, and a fire sprinkler system.

VMI Post Police

Very soon, the VMI Post Police will move into a new, modern headquarters on Letcher Avenue. The new police headquarters is part of the $33.2 million post infrastructure improvement plan, an initiative that began in early 2019 to modernize a wide variety of areas and support structures across post.

Anderson Drive

Also part of the post infrastructure improvement plan is a widening of Anderson Drive, which provides a back entrance to the Institute via Jordan’s Point. Work is scheduled for completion before Matriculation Day in August 2020. The Anderson Drive project includes replacing the one-lane bridge over Woods Creek with a two-lane bridge and adding a sidewalk to enhance pedestrian safety for cadets and visitors to Gray-Minor stadium and other areas on North Post.
Chessie Nature Trail Bridge

A long-awaited project for the Institute, a pedestrian bridge carrying the VMI-owned Chessie Nature Trail over the South River, is expected to get underway in the summer. The original bridge was washed away by Hurricane Isabel in 2003, and ever since then, trail users have had to detour onto Stuartsburg Road to continue on the 7.2-mile journey from Lexington to Buena Vista.

Plans for a new bridge have now been in the works for several years, but the project had been held up recently by the need to negotiate an easement with Dominion Virginia Power, which owns power lines in the area.

Partial funding for the $1.3 million bridge project is coming from a grant from the Eastern Federal Lands Access Program.

Utility Upgrades

As part of the $33.2 million post-infrastructure improvement project, the steam plant located behind barracks has recently undergone its first renovation in three decades with the goal of increasing energy efficiency and allowing physical plant staff to operate the boilers with modern controls. In addition, a 250-kilowatt generator now provides a backup heat source for barracks and Crozet Hall in the event of an emergency.

Another utility-related upgrade completed in 2019-20 was a new water line serving barracks and an upgrade of the stormwater management system.

Postwide Safety and Security

This $9.8 million project will involve the construction of 14 vehicular gates arranged in an inner and outer loop. The inner loop will provide the ability to separate vehicular traffic from normal cadet group activities and also large visitor events. The outer loop will provide the ability to lock down the entire main post during postwide training activities and when significant incidents occur, whether on post or in the surrounding community.

Engineering and Laboratory Facilities

Since the engineering facilities were last renovated, the Corps has grown from 1,300 cadets to 1,700 cadets, while enrollment in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) majors has grown from 39 percent to 61 percent. A $51.2 million project will include an addition of more than 33,000 square feet to Morgan Hall as well as a full renovation of Nichols Engineering Building.

Lackey Park Parking Lot

Another project kicking off this summer will be construction of a parking lot for cadet cars at Lackey Park, off Greenhouse Road in the vicinity of Rockbridge County High School. For the past several years, VMI has rented space for cadet vehicles at a parking lot off U.S. 60 east of Lexington, but once the new parking lot is completed in time for the 2021-22 academic year, that lot will be closed.

The new, $3.5 million lot will include safety features such as security lighting and a fence. Cadets will travel to and from the lot via an Institute-provided shuttle.
Cadet Life

Blue Book

The Blue Book contains the rules and regulations that govern a cadet’s daily life, from matriculation to graduation. Cadet knowledge and understanding of "status”—right place, right time, right uniform, doing the right thing—is a constant and continuous point of emphasis. It is the responsibility of all cadets to know when they are in an "all right" status and when to place themselves on report. Cadets should refer to the Blue Book with frequency and ask questions if unsure of rules or procedures.

Honor Code

Cadets live by the VMI Honor Code, which states that "A Cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate those who do." Cadets must ensure that their actions are in line with the honor code’s standards, and that they do not turn simple Blue Book violations into honor code violations through being untruthful.

The Honor Court, which is comprised of fourteen 1st and 2nd Class cadets, is responsible for educating cadets on the honor code. In addition to education, the Honor Court is responsible for adjudicating reported violations of the honor code.

The honor system is a single-sanction system. The sanction for any breach of honor is dismissal.

Dating

VMI’s military-based regimental system operating in the close quarters of barracks requires strict rules about relationships within the Corps.

No cadet may date another cadet within his or her chain of command. Since the focus of the 4th Class year is training, all dating within the Corps is prohibited during the 4th Class year.

Motor Vehicle Use for Cadets

VMI restricts most cadet use of automobiles, and the Institute expects consistent and continued parental support for these policies.

Only 1st Class cadets with full class privileges are authorized to register, maintain, and operate a motor vehicle in Rockbridge County. However, 2nd and 3rd Class cadets who are active members of drilling Reserve or National Guard units outside of Rockbridge County may request permission to store a car in VMI-designated parking areas for the sole purpose of attending drill.

Upon returning for the start of the fall semester, 1st Class cadets must register their vehicles, and each will be provided a designated location for parking. Parking spaces will be provided on post for nearly half of the 1st Class vehicles. Parking spaces for the remaining vehicles will be provided at a remote parking area. The goal is to provide at least one permanent parking space on post for each 1st Class room.
Parents are reminded that parking fines and penalties for unauthorized vehicles or non-registered cadet vehicles are strictly enforced.

Also strictly enforced will be the 15-mile-per-hour postwide speed limit and parking in unauthorized spaces generally marked by yellow stripes. Exceptions are made for major conferences and Corps events.

Use of Social Media

www.vmi.edu/ITApproUse
www.vmi.edu/GO71

VMI takes the proper use of social media very seriously. Social media is constantly monitored by law enforcement, media organizations, and others. If a post to any social media site, such as Jodel or Twitter, is perceived as threatening, the consequences can be serious for the cadet who made the post. Though cadets may believe they are posting anonymously, the source of the post can usually be discovered and the post could lead to legal action or dismissal from the Institute.

Parents should remind their cadets that social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are checked by employers to screen applicants for hire and by the federal government for security clearances. Careless posts could be used as the basis to deny a cadet employment or the security clearance needed for employment in the future.

A good rule for social media posts is, “If you wouldn’t want your family to see it, you shouldn’t post it.”

Parents are encouraged to follow official VMI accounts and those administered by the VMI Parents Council to ensure they are receiving accurate information. Parents should also be wary of social media accounts mimicking VMI’s official accounts, which have spread misinformation in past years.

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Post Safety

Weapons

www.vmi.edu/GO25

VMI’s weapons policy is governed by state law, which prohibits possessing, carrying, or storing any weapon by any person, except a police officer, in any building on post and at any event held on post. This restriction applies to everyone: cadets (except where authorized by the Cadet Weapons Policy), parents, faculty, staff, and the public.

Cadets are not allowed to bring personal weapons onto VMI property unless they are current members of the skeet or marksmanship clubs and have the appropriate permit. Other exceptions to this policy are very rare. Cadets who wish to bring a privately owned weapon to VMI for official business must submit a permit to the superintendent through the Commandant’s Office.

Alcohol and Drug Use

www.vmi.edu/GO02
www.vmi.edu/GO53

Preventing underage drinking is one of the major goals of VMI’s alcohol and drug use policy. Not only is underage drinking illegal, but it is also quite dangerous.

All new cadets must complete “Alcohol eCheckup To Go,” an online training program, before matriculation. Throughout the year, the Center for Cadet Counseling offers events, such as a drunk-driving simulator brought in by the Virginia State Police, to increase cadets’ awareness of the dangers of alcohol abuse. There is also an anonymous, online self-assessment for substance abuse on the Center for Cadet Counseling’s website.

Cadets caught with alcohol in barracks are automatically referred for substance abuse education offered by the counseling center.

Though strict rules, stiff penalties, and constant briefings deter most cadets from serious alcohol incidents both on and off post, parents should remind cadets of the risks associated with infractions of these rules.

Continued on next page

Cadet First Captains Plaque

Austin Stansberry ’20 adds his name to the plaque of regimental commanders April 24. Normally, the name plate would be added on the day of the change of command parade with next year’s regimental commander present. This year, Stansberry added his when he returned to post to clean out his barracks room. —VMI Photo by Kelly Nye
Disciplinary actions following a first violation, either on or off post, include several months of confinement, many hours of marching, demerits, and conduct probation. A second alcohol-related offense will normally draw a suspension, and a third offense, a dismissal. Depending on the seriousness of any offense, VMI reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a cadet.

Without parental support, VMI cannot prevent underage drinking and alcohol abuse. Parents are urged not to make local houses available to cadets as locations for parties or to make alcohol available to underage cadets or to any cadet in violation of Institute regulations. This includes tailgating, where alcohol is prohibited for everyone.

VMI maintains a zero-tolerance stance in regard to the illegal use of drugs. The use of illegal drugs and the illegal use of prescription medications by cadets will normally result in automatic dismissal.

General Order 53, Policy on Prohibiting Controlled Substances and Drug Paraphernalia, authorizes VMI to randomly test cadets on a periodic basis for the presence of illegal drugs and controlled substances.

Security in Barracks

www.vmi.edu/GO63

VMI utilizes closed-circuit cameras in barracks as a law enforcement and security tool.

The cameras are used to optimize the cadet guard team’s and the officer in charge’s ability to be aware of unusual or suspicious activity and to provide a record should a violation of the law take place.

Cadets in the guardroom can see the arches on the closed-circuit TV but cannot save or replay the video. The officer in charge, a member of the commander’s office staff, can see the courtyards and the stoops, but cannot see into any cadet rooms and cannot save or replay the video.

Footage can be requested only under certain conditions and following specific procedures outlined in General Order 63.

Reach Out App

The VMI Reach Out app provides users with 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 need only 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 Editions” app, download it, and select “Virginia Military Institute” when prompted. VMI encourages all cadets to have this safety app on their mobile phones.

Sexual Misconduct Prevention

www.vmi.edu/GO02
www.vmi.edu/GO16

The abuse of alcohol and sexual misconduct often go hand in hand, with alcohol being involved in 80 percent of sexual assaults that occur on college campuses. As with alcohol abuse, VMI takes a proactive stance on preventing sexual misconduct, emphasizing safe choices, responsible behavior, and concern for the welfare of others. Throughout their cadetships, cadets receive training on bystander intervention and sexual misconduct prevention.

VMI works closely with Project Horizon (www.projecthorizon.org), a local organization whose purpose is to reduce dating, domestic, and sexual violence. The Institute has a memorandum of understanding with Project Horizon, ensuring that its resources are available to cadets, faculty, and staff, and that all are informed of its services.

VMI’s policies concerning alcohol abuse and sexual misconduct are outlined in General Orders 2 and 16 and apply to cadets and employees, on and off post. Outside the judicial system, the maximum penalty for cadet violations of either policy is normally dismissal from the Institute. New cadets and their parents should familiarize themselves with both orders prior to matriculation.
Health and Wellness

Infirmary
www.vmi.edu/infirmary

A modern 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. There is no charge for infirmary visits or the medical care provided there. All medical conditions that must be treated off post are treated at the cadet’s expense. Emergencies are referred to the local hospital, Carilion Stonewall Jackson Hospital.

Cadets and parents should make sure that their family doctors inform Dr. David Copeland, Institute physician, of any mental or physical health concerns, as these often rise to the forefront once cadets matriculate at VMI.

Cadets are permitted to keep personal prescriptions and over-the-counter medications in a lockbox in their rooms. With proper documentation, the Institute physician will refill maintenance medications such as those for asthma, ADHD, etc. Most routinely prescribed medications are available on post at no charge, along with over-the-counter medications, but cadets also have the right to have prescriptions filled at a local pharmacy of their choice.

A team of local orthopedists visits weekly to treat and assess cadet injuries, both sports and non-sports related. Those visits are billed to the cadet’s insurance carrier.

Free flu shots are offered to cadets in the fall. In addition, the HPV vaccine is recommended for all cadets.

It is strongly recommended that any cadet not covered by his or her parents’ health insurance purchase a personal health insurance policy.

Each cadet is automatically enrolled in an accident insurance policy which will cover up to $5,000 for an injury incurred while participating in official VMI activities. This insurance policy will be secondary to any health care coverage provided by families. All international students are assessed a mandatory health insurance fee which covers the cost of a student medical insurance policy. Call the Post Infirmary at 540-464-7218 for additional information.

Mental Health
www.vmi.edu/counseling

The Center for Cadet Counseling, located on the second floor of the post hospital, stands ready to assist cadets with their mental health needs. Among the center’s many offerings are health and wellness programs; free, confidential individual assessment and counseling; crisis intervention; and consultation.

The professional and licensed staff at the Center for Cadet Counseling view cadets from a strength-based perspective and routinely encourage cadets to develop resilience skills to help them bounce back more quickly from adversity and the rigors of the VMI system. Topics of interest to cadets include maintaining emotional wellness, stress management, alcohol and drug abuse prevention, and building healthy relationships.

For more information, please call 540-464-7667.

Nutrition

Parkhurst Dining, which manages all of the Institute’s food service operations, emphasizes fresh, locally sourced ingredients. Crozet Hall offers gluten-free and allergen-free options for cadets, along with vegetarian fare.

Proper nutrition is vital for all cadets, but especially for new cadets, who are adjusting to the rigors of the Rat Line, while also adjusting to the physical challenges of military training and the intense demands of college-level academics. Parents should encourage their cadets to take nutrition seriously and to seek help if necessary.

On Matriculation Day, rats find nutritious options provided by Parkhurst Dining in Crozet Hall. —VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.
COVID-19 Health and Safety Updates

The coronavirus pandemic has necessitated implementing a large number of new post-wide health and safety regulations. These regulations have been developed in accordance with federal, state, and local health guidance. The success of VMI’s plan depends on the support of every member of the VMI community.

The VMI Pandemic Task Force and Institute leadership continue to monitor the latest information regarding the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19). Based on the analysis of the current COVID-19 situation, changes to operations, events, and protocols may occur throughout the school year. Increased cleaning and sanitizing protocols have been implemented across all aspects of cadet life, and leadership has identified key areas for social distancing enforcement to maintain safety throughout the course of physical training and activities required of all cadets.

Cadets will be subject to strict protocols regarding face coverings, social distancing, and personal hygiene. Their movements will be restricted, and they will be required to conduct a daily self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms. Those cadets who present with symptoms will be evaluated by the VMI Infirmary. Medical staff will determine the next steps of testing, isolation, quarantine, and contact tracing. Isolation and quarantine protocols and locations have also been identified.

Many adjustments must be made to life in barracks. The wearing of masks outside of assigned rooms, restricted visiting of other cadet rooms, elimination of large stoop gatherings, controlled lavatory and shower access, as well as frequent cleaning and sanitation of those same areas will be required. Increased noise restrictions will be in effect during the day to facilitate academic study due to the shortage of classroom space caused by social distancing.

The Institute physician, and his team, in coordination with Human Resources and Emergency Management, will develop COVID-19 training to be completed by the entire VMI community upon return to post.

Dining

Parkhurst corporate has mandated all employees will wear facial coverings and gloves, including catering operations, during business operations. Additionally, Parkhurst will follow CDC and VDH guidelines and best practices while serving food at VMI.

Therefore, VMI shall adhere to public health guidelines (as published in Virginia Governor’s Executive Order 65) with respect to occupancy of food and beverage service establishments. To achieve the occupancy limitation (50 percent of the lowest occupancy load on the certificate of occupancy), VMI will provide multiple seatings for each meal period that are further governed by staggered march-downs for BRC and SRC and an extended DRC period.

BRC and SRC will be conducted in three separate formations. Three seatings will allow for proper social distancing, cleanliness and sanitation requirements for Crozet Hall, and ensure adequate throughput in a timely manner. Cadets will eat the DRC meal on their own due to class scheduling. They will maintain appropriate social distancing and PPE requirements while eating lunch.

Cadets will seat themselves, with no more than six cadets per table in accordance with Virginia Department of Health and CDC guidelines for dining. All tables will be six feet apart, allowing for diners to maintain social distancing requirements.

Self-serve meals and beverages will be prohibited. Cadets and guests will be served by Parkhurst employees. Cadets and guests must wear facial coverings unless they are actively consuming food or beverages. All items will be removed from the tables, and condiments will be provided in single-serve packets.
Opportunities for cadet engagement in sports and activities abound. Options are as varied as cadets’ imaginations, and if a cadet would like to start a new club, he or she is welcome to do so. All club sports and activities are cadet-run, providing members of the Corps with a wide variety of leadership roles.

NCAA Sports

VMI competes in Division I of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and momentum is building in several sports. Highlights of the 2019-20 athletic season include the Keydet football team defeating the Citadel for the first time since 2002 and winning the most games in a year since 2003. The young basketball team is likewise promising, with more than a third of team members only in their 3rd Class year, and the rifle team is coming off a 5-2 season, with head coach Lt. Col. Bill Bither named co-coach of the year by the Southern Conference.

The Institute fields men’s teams for baseball, basketball, cross country, football, lacrosse, rifle, soccer, swimming and diving, track and field, and wrestling. For women, NCAA sports offered are cross country, rifle, soccer, swimming and diving, track and field, and water polo. In addition to scholarship and recruited athletes, there are tryouts at the start of each NCAA season for cadets of all classes to earn a place on VMI’s NCAA teams.

Club Sports

There are 21 club sports, including but not limited to men’s and women’s rugby, basketball, lacrosse, golf, and running. In many cases, VMI offers both NCAA and club versions of a sport, so cadets who are not NCAA athletes can still participate in their chosen sport. This is true for baseball, basketball, lacrosse, and soccer.

All club sports welcome beginners, so parents should encourage their cadets to try something new. There is no additional fee for participation in club sports.

In the spring of 2020, club sports attracted over 600 cadets. Club sports are well coached and well resourced.

Clubs and activities

Cadet activities are as varied as cadets themselves. Music is very much a part of life at VMI, as evidenced by the Regimental Band, Institute Brass, the Pipe and Drum Band, Glee Club, and more. Band Company is one of the 10 companies which make up the Corps of Cadets, and any cadet is welcome to participate in the Regimental Band.

Community service is a key theme of many cadet activities such as EMTs, local fire stations, Building BRIDGES, and more. Other clubs, such as the Fishing Club and Ducks Unlimited, mix service with enjoyable activities. Still others, such as the Theater Club, celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, are primarily about fun and camaraderie.

No matter what activity a cadet might enjoy for relaxation and fellowship, chances are good it can be found at VMI.

Religious Observances

VMI respects the religious convictions of each cadet regardless of his or her faith. Cadets are not required to attend any religious services while at the Institute. However, the chaplains’ office supports cadets who wish to express or deepen their faith. Many cadets participate in churches and other faith communities in and around the Lexington area. An on-post chapel service is held each Sunday evening during the academic year, and various Bible studies and fellowship meetings take place each week. The chaplains’ office provides opportunities for mission trips, conferences, and retreats during the course of the year. Above all, the chaplains’ office works to accommodate the religious needs of all cadets and provides pastoral care and mentoring, regardless of religious affiliation.
VMI’s academic support offices have one purpose: to further cadet success. All cadets are encouraged to take advantage of the assistance provided. There is no extra charge for any academic support service at VMI.

**Miller Academic Center**

**202 Carroll Hall**  
[www.vmi.edu/mac](http://www.vmi.edu/mac)

The Miller Academic Center supports cadet learning in a variety of ways, among them group study sessions open to all cadets and “academic Saturdays” for 4th Class cadets. “Academic Saturday” topics include time management, navigating course registration, and how to read a college textbook, among many other topics. Staff at the center also strive to teach subject-appropriate study skills, as well as the concept that when it comes to study, quantity does not equal quality.

Cadets on academic probation are invited to the center to learn what they can do to improve their standing, but when it comes to academic difficulties, prevention is key. Parents should stress that seeking help when necessary is a necessary life skill, and no one will think less of cadets who request academic support.

For the 2020-21 academic year, plans are in the works for GRE study sessions for cadets interested in graduate study. MAC staff is available from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, for individual meetings. To make an appointment (required), call 464-7741.

**Writing Center**

**215 Carroll Hall**  
[www.vmi.edu/writingcenter](http://www.vmi.edu/writingcenter)

The Writing Center extends and complements the classroom-based writing instruction at VMI by providing assistance with all stages of the writing process, from choosing a topic to polishing a final draft. Cadets of all majors and all class years are encouraged to utilize the center’s services.

Both professional and cadet consultants offer feedback to many different types of assignments, including essays, lab reports, electronic portfolios, honors theses, presentations, speeches, and creative writing. While adhering to the honor code and work-for-grade policy, writing consultants also help cadets develop the skills necessary to edit and proofread their own writing.

The Writing Center is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.-10:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m.-11 a.m.; and Sunday, 3 p.m.-10 p.m. The Writing Center plans to offer both online and in-person consultations by appointment only. Cadets can sign up in advance at [www.vmi.mywconline.com](http://www.vmi.mywconline.com).

**Mathematics Education and Resource Center**

**600 level, Preston Library**  
[www.vmi.edu/merc](http://www.vmi.edu/merc)

The Mathematics Education and Resource Center’s (MERC) mission is to support our cadet Corps in their pursuit of mathematical studies, engage our VMI faculty and staff in their goals of maintaining rigor and excellence in their respective disciplines, and work with our community in their desire for productive, inspired, and healthy citizens. The Open Mathematics Laboratory (OML) is free and open to all cadets in need of help with mathematics.

Professional adult and STEM major cadet tutors assist with math assignments from a variety of classes, including but not limited to Math That Matters, Calculus and Analytic Geometry, Fundamentals of Matrix Algebra, Probability & Statistics for Engineers, and Differential Equations.

Cadets should sign up online for one-on-one tutoring Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Tutoring services are also available Monday through Thursday from 12 p.m.-4 p.m. and 6 p.m.-11 p.m. Tutors also have Sunday night availability from 6 p.m.-11 p.m. Contact the tutor on the schedule on the website to make an appointment. All tutoring will be either in person or online, depending on the tutor at the time.

Cadets should check [www.vmi.edu/merc](http://www.vmi.edu/merc) for tutoring details in case they change during the semester.
**VMI Center for Undergraduate Research**

*600 level, Preston Library*

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

During their time at VMI, cadets have the opportunity to partner with a faculty mentor and conduct research. The VMI Center for Undergraduate Research (VCUR) holds workshops and information sessions on these opportunities as well as provides funding for research supplies and travel.

VCUR supports three summer programs for cadets interested in participating in mentored research. All three programs offer cadets the opportunity to work with a faculty mentor for either five or ten weeks over the summer on a research project. The deadline for the Summer Undergraduate Research Institute (SURI) is mid-February. The deadline for the Applied and Industrial Mathematics program and the VMI/Virginia Commonwealth University engineering memorandum of understanding is mid-March.

Each spring, usually mid-April, VCUR hosts the VMI Undergraduate Research Symposium where cadets can present their research. Proposals for the Undergraduate Research Symposium are due in late February. For inquiries, call 464-7031.

**Office of Career Services**

*311 Carroll Hall*

[www.vmi.edu/academics/support/career-services](http://www.vmi.edu/academics/support/career-services)

The Office of Career Services seeks to meet the needs of every cadet, whether commissioning or non-commissioning, with activities, workshops, and individualized counseling designed to identify and build upon career-related strengths and interests. Staff with the Office of Career Services are available throughout the cadetship to assist not only with identification of strengths and interests, but also internship placement, resume writing, and job interviews. Emphasis is placed on preparation for long-term career development and growth.

Online resources available to all cadets include Handshake, which matches cadets with employers seeking both interns and permanent employees. The Office of Career Services also offers a full complement of online tools designed to identify a wide variety of careers possible for each major. For cadets interested in graduate study, the office provides numerous resources to prepare for entrance exams such as the GRE, LSAT, MCAT, etc.

Each fall and spring, VMI hosts an annual Career Fair, with a wide mix of employers represented. The Office of Career Services can assist cadets in making the most of this opportunity with mock interviews, guidance on the proper use of social media, and more.

No matter what their plans after graduation, cadets should visit the Office of Career Services as early in their cadetships as possible. To learn more, call 464-7560.

**Center for Leadership and Ethics**

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

The Center for Leadership and Ethics educates, engages, and inspires the Corps of Cadets and faculty and staff in leadership and character development.

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**Courageous Leadership Speaker**

The VMI Center For Leadership and Ethics proudly hosted John Urschel, author, Ph.D. candidate in mathematics at MIT, and former offensive lineman for the Baltimore Ravens on March 4. As part of the Courageous Leadership Speaker series, Urschel talked about family, academics, football, and the value of applying quantitative reasoning to life.—VMI Photos by Mary Price and H. Lockwood McLaughlin.
and shares insights gleaned from VMI’s programs with a broader national audience.

The center’s programming falls into three broad mission sets: cadet co-curricular programs, curricular leader development, and strategic engagement. These provide opportunities for cadets to develop new skills and leadership learning.

Cadet Co-Curricular Programs

Cadet programming focuses on engaging and inspiring members of the Corps of Cadets. Several programs incorporate experiential learning, critical thinking, and engagement opportunities. Activities and programs include but are not limited to the Cadet Superintendent’s Advisory Board, the Intercollegiate Ethics Team, Leadership Book Program, and the Leader-in-Residence.

Curricular Leader Development

Starting in the 2020-21 academic year, Col. David Gray, Ph.D., will be the course director for the core “Leadership in Organizations” course for cadets. LEAD 344 (formerly PS 344) is an interdisciplinary study of leadership in an organizational context, focusing on the integration of theory and practice. Because leadership cuts across academic disciplines, the course will be taught by the current leadership faculty from the psychology department and several new leadership fellows. The dean will choose leadership fellows from interested and qualified faculty.

Leadership Resource Publications:

- VMI Leader Journey—This VMI publication provides an overview of the VMI system of leader development.
- Cadet Leadership Opportunities Inventory—A listing of every cadet leadership position by class year and role with descriptions, qualifications, and how to apply.

Strategic Engagement

Programs engage outside professionals, subject matter experts, and leading practitioners as speakers during one of VMI’s conferences or as part of one of our speaker series programs.

Conferences / Symposia

The center hosts and organizes major conferences each academic year. The flagship event is the annual Leadership & Ethics conference, where VMI cadets engage with students from peer senior military colleges, institutions, and leadership programs, along with academics and interested private citizens, to discuss topics of national importance.

- H.B. Johnson Distinguished Speaker—A leader from high levels of business, government, or the military who has a national or international reputation. This series is free and open to the public.
- Caroline Dawn Wortham ’12 Speaker—Commemorative series sponsored by the family of the late Carrie Wortham, part of the annual Leadership and Ethics Conference.
- Courageous Leadership Speaker—An evening series open to the public offered during the spring semester featuring a noteworthy figure whose life experiences demonstrate courage.

2020-2021 Conference Schedule:

- Feb. 15-16, 2021: VMI’s 11th Annual Leadership & Ethics Conference—“Strong Leaders, Strong Teams: Negotiating the Leadership Labyrinth”
- March 23-25, 2021: 32nd Annual Environment Virginia Conference

Requirements to Graduate

www.vmi.edu/GO66

All cadets should familiarize themselves with General Order 66, which outlines the requirements that must be met for cadets to participate in commencement and receive diplomas during the commencement ceremony, traditionally held on May 16 of each year.

Note: This does not impact or change the “10-hour rule.” This only applies to cadets being able to sit on the floor and cross the stage during the May 16 commencement ceremony.

Cadets are responsible for meeting all degree and graduation requirements. In order to receive their diplomas, cadets must have a conduct record that is satisfactory to the superintendent, be confirmed by the academic board, and complete all course requirements and grade-point average requirements. They also must have been in residence at VMI for at least three years.

If you are concerned that your 1st Class cadet may not meet degree requirements in time to graduate May 16, you and your cadet should be aware of the “six-hour rule” and the “10-hour rule.”

Cadets who are within six credit hours of completing degree requirements may submit an appeal to the Committee on Academic Appeals, which will consider the appeal if there are demonstrated extenuating circumstances, and if the cadet is a full-time student at VMI in the semester preceding graduation, with a 2.0 or above cumulative and major GPA, and provides proof of summer preregistration in approved classes.

If the committee grants the appeal, the cadet will be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony May 16 but will not
receive a degree until requirements have been met.

Cadets who are within 10 credit hours of completing degree requirements, with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0, may complete the remaining hours at another college and transfer the credits to VMI. These cadets will receive their diplomas after their graduation requirements have been met and may then plan to participate in May, September, December, or January graduation ceremonies.

Financial Literacy

www.vmi.edu/about/offices-a-z/financial-aid/financial-literacy/

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools’ Commission on Colleges, which gives VMI accreditation, requires schools to provide financial literacy information to student loan borrowers. Financial literacy is an important part of understanding financial aid and other issues cadets may encounter during their time at the Institute.

The VMI Financial Aid office provides a webpage for cadets to learn the aspects of financial literacy.

International Programs/Study Abroad

www.vmi.edu/ip

The Office of International Programs (OIP) provides cadets with the global perspective and cultural competence required to operate in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. OIP does so through individual advising to help cadets choose an international program that best fits their personal, academic, and career goals.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, study abroad programs will not be available for the fall 2020 semester. However, staff with the OIP are cautiously optimistic that study abroad will resume in the spring and summer of 2021. Cadets are encouraged to schedule appointments through the OIP website to discuss options for both of those time frames.

International programs include semester study abroad, summer study abroad, military academy exchanges, internship and research opportunities, and cultural exchanges and study tours that are open to all cadets, including STEM majors, NCAA athletes, and those who hold rank in the Corps. Cadets interested in participating in an international program can do so as early as the summer after their 4th Class year. They are encouraged to come by OIP at the beginning of the fall semester to learn more about their options and, if they decide to pursue it, notify their academic advisers of their plans as soon as possible.

In academic year 2019-20, 163 VMI cadets studied in or visited 22 different countries: Argentina, Belgium, China, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Lithuania, Morocco, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Taiwan (ROC), Tanzania, United Kingdom, and Vietnam.

Semester study abroad requires a minimum grade-point average of 2.5. Summer study abroad requires a cadet to be in good academic standing (cumulative GPA of 2.0).

Important dates for study abroad:
- Spring and summer program application cycle opens: Aug. 26
- Spring semester program deadline: rolling until filled but usually middle to late October
- Summer program deadline: registered by mid-January and committed by mid-February
- Fall semester program deadline: rolling until filled but usually middle to late April

The cost of study-abroad programs varies greatly and it is important to note that financial aid, institutional aid, and scholarships follow cadets when they go overseas on semester study abroad programs. This is not always the case for summer study abroad; however, VMI offers a number of partial scholarships that are available through a competitive process. There are also scholarship opportunities for Pell Grant recipients and numerous national scholarship opportunities for cadets interested in pursuing immersive critical language programs.

Additionally, VMI has expanded its military exchange programs and there are now opportunities available in the U.K., France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, South Korea, and Taiwan. The only additional costs are travel expenses. Cadets interested in pursuing any of these scholarship or exchange opportunities should contact Col. David Hall at 540-464-7350, halldb@vmi.edu or Mrs. Patricia Hardin at 540-464-7421, hardinpd@vmi.edu for more information.
Visiting the Institute

Due to the ongoing pandemic, all postwide events will be evaluated at least 30 days in advance, and updates will be available at www.vmi.edu.

Parades

The Corps of Cadets marches in full parade on many Friday afternoons and certain Saturday mornings during the school year. These parades—military reviews of the cadet regiment by the superintendent—are open to the public and display the level of discipline, order, and uniformity the cadets train hard to achieve. Witness one of the longest-held traditions at VMI on most Friday afternoons at 4:35 and select Saturday mornings at 10:30. For the full schedule of parades, check the calendar at www.vmi.edu.

Parking

Parking spaces across post not otherwise designated may be used by visitors to the Institute, although visitors should be aware that ongoing construction will limit the availability of on-post parking this academic year.

Free parking is also available on city streets. The two-hour time limit does not apply on weekends. No parking is allowed on Diamond and Randolph streets as spaces on those streets are reserved for residents, and violators will be ticketed.

On home football game days, off-post parking will be available, with locations to be posted on the vmi.edu home page. Shuttle service will run continuously between the parking lot and Cameron Hall beginning at 9 a.m.

Game Day

www.vmi.edu/gameday

Game day tailgating is one of VMI’s most memorable traditions. Tailgaters must use the Jordan’s Point entrance and, in good weather, may park on the Parade Ground for a small fee. Visitors are discouraged from bringing pets onto post, except for service dogs.

Get up-to-the-minute information about weather, traffic, parking, and more on your cell phone. Text the word “Keydet” to 772-95.
Summer Furlough

Summer furlough begins at the conclusion of the graduation ceremony May 16. VMI policy prohibits departures prior to graduation except in the case of family emergencies and graduations of immediate family members. Medical appointments and surgeries must be scheduled after May 16. Cadets seeking internships and summer jobs must not accept positions requiring a start earlier than May 16.

Important Information

Furlough Protocol: Cadets and families must schedule travel times, family events, and medical appointments to avoid conflicts with Corps requirements and responsibilities. Please use the following information to make plans and take particular care to build in adequate travel time to meet VMI’s departure and arrival requirements. Cadets may use Academic Days only to extend a furlough and may not depart VMI until their scheduled classes are completed. Note that cadets’ individual exam schedules may vary; talk to your cadet before scheduling end-of-semester travel.

Find us at:
- www.facebook.com/vmi1839
- Twitter: @VMI1839
- Instagram: Virginia_Military_Institute
- Tumblr: vminews

For the most accurate information and event updates, please visit www.vmi.edu.

Founders Day

The 2019 Founders Day marked the 180th anniversary of the Institute’s founding, Nov. 11, 1839. Former Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James took review of the Founders Day parade alongside Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III ’62, superintendent, and current BOV president Bill Boland ’73, and the Cadet Battery fired four howitzers for a 17-gun salute. —VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.
Critical dates—Academic Year 2020-21

All events on post will be reviewed in advance to determine the ability to meet local, state, and federal public health guidance. Decisions about each event will be made on a rolling basis 30 days prior to the event, and all event updates will be made available at www.vmi.edu.

EMT cadets arrive .......................... Aug. 1-8
Cadre return ................................ Aug. 8-9
Matriculation Days ......................... Aug. 15-16
Old Corps returns ......................... Aug. 25-26
Registration ............................... Aug. 27-28
Classes begin .............................. Aug. 31
Founders Day ................................ Nov. 11
Thanksgiving Day ........................ Nov. 26
Friday of Thanksgiving .................. Nov. 27
Last day of classes ....................... Dec. 11
Reading Day .............................. Dec. 12
Final Exams ............................... Dec. 14-18
Commissioning ......................... Dec. 18
Class of 2020 Commencement .... Dec. 19
Christmas Furlough ..................... Dec. 19

Important Contacts

540 area code
Contact a Cadet (Visitor Center) ........ 464-7306

Academic Information
Dean of the Faculty ....................... 464-7212
Academic Advising ..................... 464-7741
Registrar ................................. 464-7213
Summer Session Office ............... 464-7319

General Information
Admissions Office ......................... 464-7211
Athletic Ticket Office .................. 464-7266
Visitor Center ............................ 464-7306
VMI Bookstore ......................... 464-7657
VMI Museum ............................. 464-7334

Cadet Support
Guard Room ............................... 464-7294
Athletic Advising ....................... 464-7722

Administrative Offices
Chief of Staff ............................. 464-7104
Commandant’s Office .................. 464-7313
Dean of the Faculty ..................... 464-7212
Deputy Commandant & Officer-in-Charge ........... 464-7314
Office of the Superintendent ........ 464-7311

Chaplain’s Office ........................ 464-7390
Infirmary .................................. 464-7218
Cadet Counseling ....................... 464-7667
Financial Aid ............................. 464-7208
Information Technology ............... 464-7341
Anonymous Reporting ................ 464-7702
Inspector General/Title IX ............ 464-7072
Office of Career Services .......... 464-7560
Postal Services ........................... 464-7745
The Bomb (VMI yearbook) ............ 464-7325
The Cadet (VMI cadet newspaper) .... 464-7242
Writing Center ........................... 464-7045
Sergeant Major, Corps of Cadets .... 464-7293
Student Accounting .................... 464-7217
VMI Police (non-emergency) ......... 464-7017

ROTC Programs
U.S. Air Force ............................ 464-7354
U.S. Army ................................. 464-7351
U.S. Navy/Marine Corps ............... 464-7275

Parents Council
Bill and Lisa Haiges ................. parents council@vmi.edu

To mail a package:
Cadet (followed by name) 
450 Burma Road
Virginia Military Institute
VMI Box (followed by box number)
Lexington, VA 24450-0304

To mail cards and letters:
Cadet (followed by name)
Virginia Military Institute
VMI Box (followed by box number)
Lexington, VA 24450-0304

Keep this information—tear at perforation →