

FROM MAJOR *to* MARKET

How Virginia Colleges Can Drive Workforce Growth
and Regional Prosperity



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES AND ALUMNI
Institute for Effective Governance®



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The **American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA)** is an independent, nonprofit organization committed to academic freedom, academic excellence, and accountability at America's colleges and universities. Founded in 1995, ACTA works with alumni, donors, trustees, and education leaders across the country to support the study of the liberal arts, uphold high academic standards, safeguard the free exchange of ideas on campus, and ensure that the next generation receives an intellectually rich, high-quality education at an affordable price. Our network consists of alumni and trustees from over **1,300** colleges and universities, including over **23,000** current board members. Our quarterly newsletter, ***Inside Academe***, reaches over **15,000** readers.



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For over two decades, ACTA has led calls for transparency and accountability in college spending and has provided university boards with guidance to address rising costs. ACTA's one-of-a-kind higher education financial analysis tool, **HowCollegesSpendMoney.com**, makes it possible for board members to evaluate their institutions' spending patterns and benchmark them against their peers. ACTA's trustee guide, ***How Much Is Too Much? Controlling Administrative Costs through Effective Oversight***, takes a deeper look at the challenges trustees face in balancing the cost of administration with the university's core mission—teaching and learning.

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Introduction

It has been a difficult season for higher education in America, with high-profile scandals, violent protests, and budget shortfalls within the last year affecting institutions across the country. Increasing numbers of Americans are reporting little or no confidence in higher education.¹ Effective and serious leadership has never been needed more, and the role of university governing boards has never been more important.

Despite these challenges, however, higher education continues to be a driver of economic success in Virginia and throughout America. The knowledge, training, and skills gained while in college or university are vital for students, allowing them to work in technologically advanced fields as well as in careers that require analytical thinking and communication abilities that are often far beyond what is taught by secondary education. Surveys continue to show that a majority of students enroll in college in order to increase their earning potential and that those who finish college do so for the same reason.² Students want better jobs and expanded career opportunities. The key to restoring public confidence in higher education is to deliver on these hopes, ideally in a way that does not plunge students into massive debt.

The goal for responsible governing boards is clear: to deliver high-quality education at an affordable price. Our times make this task difficult but far from impossible. The difficulties, therefore, must be faced head on. First among these is the so-called “enrollment cliff,” which promises to wreak havoc on many a balance sheet.³ The facts here are well-known to everyone in higher education: Fewer students are moving through the secondary education system, which means that there will be fewer students enrolling in college. This is not an issue for the future, but one that administrations and governing boards must plan for today. These plans must be multidimensional, including everything from endowment spending to restructuring real estate portfolios. There is also a curricular question: What mix of programs will best serve the students that an institution will be enrolling five or ten years from now? How do these programs serve the economic needs of the state and region? How do schools create the most value possible even as available resources may shrink?

Overview

The primary responsibility of a governing board is to govern. In the Commonwealth of Virginia, state law makes clear that boards' primary duty is to the Commonwealth, that is, the taxpayers to whom the university is ultimately accountable. This means that boards must, at times, make fiscal decisions that may disappoint campus constituencies, but which are in the public's best interest. This is necessarily the case because there is no other entity (apart from the legislature and the governor, albeit both far less directly) in the higher education ecosystem whose express purpose is to provide direct accountability. In the words of a national commission of higher education leaders convened by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) a decade ago:

A lack of clarity of institutional purpose—or a failure of governing boards to ensure that institutions adhere to their stated purpose—is a major contributor to the rapidly rising cost of higher education over the past several decades. Competition among colleges and universities has caused many—regardless of the mission or community they are intended to serve—to adopt a “bigger and better” model of growth, as opposed to a focus on quality and prioritization. Institutions of all sizes and specialties strive to add academic programs (and non-academic amenities) in hopes of attracting larger enrollment bases. Yet few institutions have the resources to sustain this strategy and level of growth. As a result, the whole enterprise suffers—programs that were previously an institution's strengths are stretched thin, while students are forced to absorb the higher costs through their tuition dollars.⁴

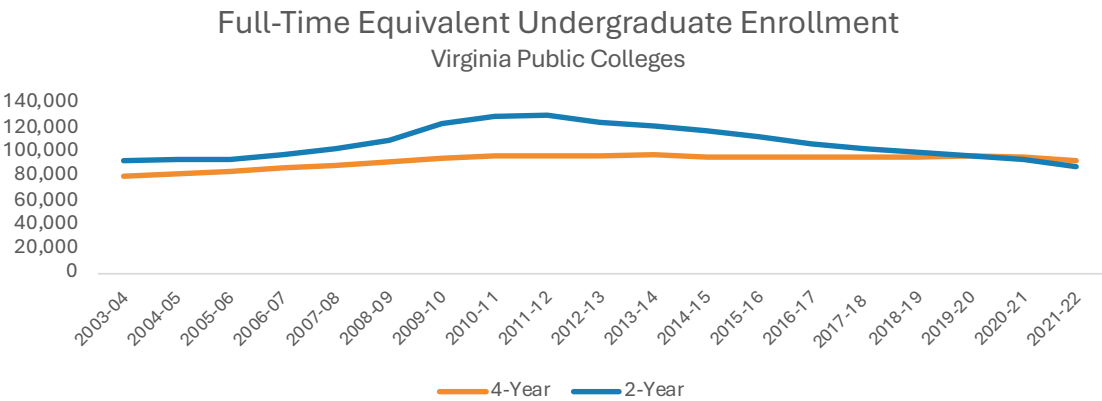
This does not mean that boards should act unilaterally to curate the institution's portfolio of academic programs. But they must set in motion conversations that lead to creative ways to fulfill the educational mission in the most cost-effective manner possible, even if that means collaborating, not competing, with other institutions across the Commonwealth. This starts with discussions initiated by the board's academic affairs committee that include the questions: What is our strategic value-add to the Commonwealth? In what programmatic fields are we—or can we be—best-in-class? In what sectors of commerce does our institution have the most leverage relative to others? The finance committee must ask parallel questions such as: How many students can the university serve and how many research programs can it maintain sustainably for the next five years? Ten? Twenty? In what financial scenarios would the university be able to maintain these levels without increasing tuition?

Boards also have a responsibility to ensure that classroom space is being used efficiently before signing off on extensive capital projects that will undoubtedly incur future maintenance costs—the gift that keeps on giving. According to data from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), in 2022, only one campus of a public, four-year institution in Virginia, the main campus of George Mason University, met SCHEV's classroom utilization guideline of 40 hours per week. And only four campuses—George Mason's main campus, James Madison University, Norfolk State University, and the main campus of Virginia Commonwealth University—met SCHEV's class laboratory utilization guideline of 24 hours per week.⁵

Not offering Friday classes and funding new buildings when classrooms remain empty often leads to unnecessary spending that can only be curbed by better classroom utilization. Boards need data from their institutions that indicate the percentage of classrooms that are in use throughout the week, disaggregated by time of day and day of the week. A search of Spring 2025 courses at Northern Virginia Community College shows that while more than 1,200 classes are held each day on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, less than 500 are held on Fridays.⁶

Exacerbating this trend of rising costs and fragile finances is the expected enrollment cliff. Nationally, undergraduate enrollment at community colleges has been falling since the 2010–2011 academic year.⁷ While undergraduate enrollment at four-year schools has risen in the past few decades, an expected drop in the number of high school students graduating in the next several years will likely mean fewer attendees.⁸

These same national enrollment trends can be found across Virginia. Additionally, a growing state population means that Virginia will still need workers to fill jobs, even with the likely decrease in undergraduate enrollees. To cope with the expected changes in undergraduate enrollment, Virginia’s public colleges and universities will need to choose more efficiently their program offerings for students.



Fortunately, decades of responsible fiscal stewardship by the Commonwealth means that Virginia’s public colleges and universities face no imminent threat of financial collapse, as is sadly the case for a disturbing number of institutions as of late.⁹ Recently, West Virginia University, the state’s only R1 university, public or private, was forced to cut 28 academic programs in the face of enrollment decline and financial problems.¹⁰

Virginia can do better. This report will outline ways that Virginia’s colleges and universities can efficiently merge programs with nearby schools and expand programs that align with employer demand.

Current Programming at Virginia Colleges

ACTA examined data on the number of graduates of associate- and bachelor-level programs at Virginia's public two- and four-year institutions, as well as certificate programs.

We focused on four regions where public colleges and universities are clustered:

■ **Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News, VA-NC**

- Christopher Newport University, Old Dominion University, Norfolk State University, Virginia Peninsula Community College, and Tidewater Community College.

■ **Blacksburg–Christiansburg–Roanoke, VA**

- Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), Radford University, Virginia Western Community College, New River Community College, and Wytheville Community College.

■ **Richmond, VA**

- Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia State University, Reynolds Community College, and Brightpoint Community College.

■ **Washington–Arlington–Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV**

- George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College.

ACTA created an interactive program map of the full dataset that can be found at bit.ly/3ZMqtWx.

Our Methodology

ACTA collected program data for the 2022–2023 academic year (the latest-available program data) using each school's College Navigator webpage.¹¹ College Navigator is run by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Every college and university receiving federal financial aid is required to report data to the NCES's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. NCES then publishes this data on College Navigator to provide students, parents, researchers, and others with an easy-to-use tool.

ACTA created its own database using the College Navigator website, focusing on graduates of associate-level programs at community colleges and bachelor-level programs at four-year institutions, as well as undergraduate certificates at both two- and four-year schools. All data represent the number of graduates for each program in the 2022–2023 academic year.

We then matched up all program data with their Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes. CIP codes classify all academic programs into categories.¹² Collectively, all programs offered by Virginia institutions of higher education included in this report fall into 36 CIP codes, or program categories.

ACTA used the occupations in the Virginia Economic Development Partnership's Virginia Office of Education Economics' (VOEE) 2024 High Demand Occupations List to find the relevant Standard Occupational Classification System codes from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to match up with the corresponding CIP codes.¹³

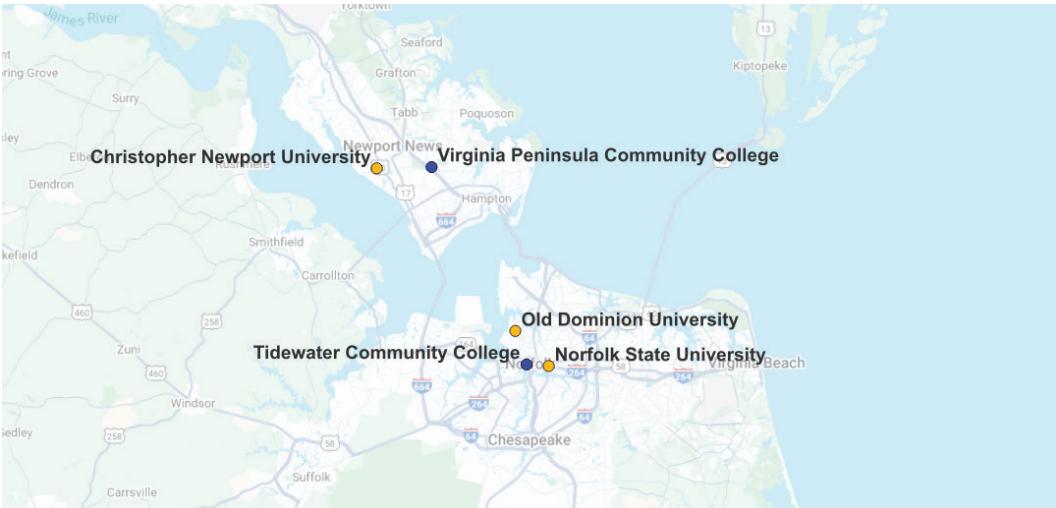
Virginia's In-Demand Industries

The VOEE compiled a report highlighting the occupations with the highest demand in 2024 and creating clusters of these occupations.¹⁴ "High-demand occupations" are defined as occupations whose educational requirements range from no formal education up to a bachelor's degree; an expected minimum of 1% in job growth in the next five years; a minimum wage at the 50th percentile of occupational earnings; and more than 100 annual openings across the state. Alternatively, an occupation is considered high demand if it is formally registered as an "apprenticeable occupation" through the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry. The career clusters with the most high-demand occupations across the state are:

- **Manufacturing** (57 high-demand occupations)
 - Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians
 - Engineering
- **Architecture and Construction** (39 high-demand occupations)
 - Architecture and Related Services
 - Architecture Engineering Technologies/Technicians
 - Construction Trades
 - Engineering
 - Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians
- **Business Management and Administration** (35 high-demand occupations)
 - Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services

ACTA broke down the in-demand industries further by region, based on each metropolitan statistical area (MSA), to connect more accurately the local in-demand industries to the programs offered by the local colleges and universities.

Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News



About Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News

There is a cluster of five higher education institutions in Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News, including three four-year institutions and two two-year colleges. Norfolk is home to Old Dominion University (ODU), with an undergraduate population of 18,000; Norfolk State University (NSU), with an undergraduate population of 5,000; and Tidewater Community College (TCC), with an undergraduate population of 16,195. Newport News houses Christopher Newport University (CNU), with an undergraduate population of 4,000. Virginia Peninsula Community College (VPCC), with an undergraduate population of 6,018, is in nearby Hampton. The largest city in the area is Virginia Beach, and the area also includes the state’s Eastern Shore.

The area’s largest employer is the U.S. Department of Defense, followed by Huntington Ingalls Industries, a military shipbuilding manufacturer in Newport News.¹⁵

VOEE High-Demand Occupations: Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News

According to VOEE’s data, the Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News MSA’s most in-demand occupations are primarily hospitality roles (waiters and waitresses, janitors and cleaners, etc.) and laborers and stock movers. By examining only those roles associated with a specific CIP code, ACTA compiled the in-demand VOEE Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News MSA occupations with the largest projected annual openings.

■ Customer Service Representatives

- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Receptionist*
 - *Customer Service Support/Call Center/Teleservice Operation*

■ Cooks and First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation

- Culinary, Entertainment, and Personal Services
 - *Cooking and Related Culinary Arts, General*
 - *Culinary Arts/Chef Training*
 - *Restaurant, Culinary, and Catering Management/Manager*
 - *Food Service, Waiter/Waitress, and Dining Room Management/Manager*
- Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences
 - *Food Service Systems Administration/Management*

■ General and Operations Managers

- Agricultural/Animal/Plant/Veterinary Science and Related Fields
 - *Veterinary Office Management/Administration*
- Parks, Recreation, Leisure, Fitness, and Kinesiology
 - *Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Facilities Management, General*
 - *Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Facilities Management, Other*
- Public Administration and Social Service Professions
 - *Public Administration*
- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Business/Commerce, General*
 - *Business Administration and Management, General*
 - *Non-Profit/Public/Organizational Management*
 - *Retail Management*
 - *Risk Management*
 - *Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies*
 - *Social Entrepreneurship*
 - *Finance, General*
 - *Financial Risk Management*
 - *International Business/Trade/Commerce*
 - *Management Science*

■ Nursing Assistants

- Health Professions and Related Programs
 - *Health Aide*
 - *Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide*
 - *Practical Nursing, Vocational Nursing, and Nursing Assistants, Other*

Program Categories: Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News

Despite a high need for general and operations managers, only one of the three four-year institutions in the area, ODU, has a dedicated business school that offers an MBA program for bachelor’s-degree-holders. Nearby NSU, at which less than 2% of students choose a business-related major, might well consider partnering with ODU to take advantage of its business program. A well-constructed partnership could enhance educational opportunities for NSU students as they continue to benefit from attending this historically black university (HBCU) with a unique campus environment.

Conversely, a much larger percentage of NSU’s undergraduates choose a psychology track than undergraduates at ODU. Expanding Norfolk State University’s psychology program may encourage additional enrollment, although the field is not necessarily tied to an in-demand occupation.

Most Common Program Categories

Total BAs	Category	ODU	NSU	CNU
783	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*	504	98	181
654	Health Professions and Related Programs*	573	81	**
561	Psychology	305	112	144
512	Social Sciences	318	76	118
402	Computer and Information Services and Support Services	279	28	95

Total AAs	Category	TCC	VPCC
628	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities	600	28
472	Health Professions and Related Programs*	317	155
395	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*	306	89
327	Social Sciences	202	125
268	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	171	97

Total Cert.	Category	TCC	VPCC	ODU
327	Health Professions and Related Programs*	151	95	81
299	Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians	200	99	**
297	Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians	289	8	**
153	Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences*	143	10	**
113	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*	85	27	**

*Denotes that the category or program is associated with one of the area’s most in-demand occupations.

**Denotes that the category or program is not offered at a particular university.

Programs: Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News

Despite the popularity of psychology at all three four-year universities in the area, neither TCC nor VPCC offer an associate's degree in psychology. TCC and VPCC could share resources to facilitate students earning a psychology degree.

Criminology is extremely popular at ODU and both community colleges but is not offered at NSU or CNU. One or both schools should consider creating a new criminology program on campus or collaboratively constructing a degree program among the institutions.

Most Common Programs

Total BAs	Program	ODU	NSU	CNU
561	Psychology, General	305	112	144
353	Biology/Biological Sciences, General	170	56	127
273	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies, Other	189	62	22
188	Criminology	188	**	**
170	Rhetoric and Composition	170	**	**

Total AAs	Program	TCC	VPCC
583	General Studies	583	**
327	Social Sciences, General	202	125
268	Biological and Physical Sciences	171	97
80	Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement Administration	69	11
58	Business Administration, Management, and Operations, Other*	40	18

Total Cert.	Program	TCC	VPCC
263	Automobile/Automotive Mechanics Technology/Technician	259	4
153	Child Care Provider/Assistant	143	10
120	Mechanical Engineering Related Technologies/Technicians, Other	120	**
112	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities, Other	74	38
109	Electrical, Electronic, and Communications Engineering Technology/Technician	37	72

*Denotes that the category or program is associated with one of the area's most in-demand occupations.

**Denotes that the category or program is not offered at a particular university.

Least Common Programs (Under 10 Graduates Total)

Total BAs	Program
0	Acting
0	African American/Black Studies
0	Art Teacher Education
0	Business and Innovation/Entrepreneurship Teacher Education
0	Environmental/Environmental Health Engineering
0	Geographic Information Science and Cartography
0	Journalism
0	Occupational Health and Industrial Hygiene
2	Technology Teacher Education/Industrial Arts Teacher Education
5	Asian Studies/Civilization
5	Women's Studies
7	Business/Managerial Economics
7	Computer Engineering Technology/Technician
8	Nuclear Medical Technology/Technologist
9	Construction Engineering Technology/Technician

Total AAs	Program
1	Architectural Engineering Technologies/Technicians
4	Applied Horticulture/Horticulture Operations, General
6	Sign Language Interpretation and Translation
8	Clinical/Medical Laboratory Technician
8	Fire Science/Firefighting
8	Interior Design
9	Hospitality Administration/Management, General
9	Industrial Technology/Technician

Total Cert.	Program
0	Allied Health and Medical Assisting Services, Other
0	Dental Assisting/Assistant
0	Design and Visual Communications, General
0	Engineering Technologies/Technicians, General
0	Health/Health Care Administration/Management
0	Homeland Security, Other
0	Medical/Clinical Assistant
0	Visual and Performing Arts, Other

Takeaways for Virginia Beach–Norfolk–Newport News

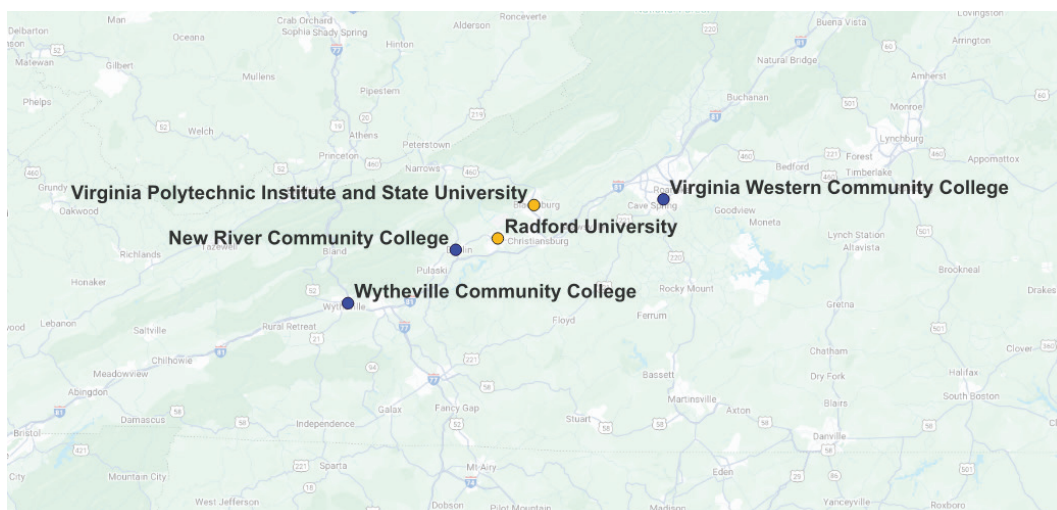
■ Programs Worth Collaboratively Combining

- Collaboratively combine ODU and NSU's business programs into one led by ODU.
- Collaboratively combine ODU and NSU's elementary education and teaching programs into one led by ODU.
- Collaboratively combine ODU and NSU's special education and general teaching programs into one led by ODU.

■ Programs Worth Expanding

- Either TCC or VPCC might consider adding an associate's degree in psychology.
- Either or both NSU and CNU might consider adding a criminology program or constructing a collaborate degree program.

Blacksburg–Christiansburg–Roanoke



About Blacksburg–Christiansburg–Roanoke

Blacksburg, located in rural Montgomery County, is primarily known as the home of Virginia Tech, which has an undergraduate population of 30,000. Virginia Tech is the second largest public university in the state and is the economic center of the region. Roanoke's largest employer is Carilion Clinic, a healthcare provider with more than 10,000 employees.

Located near Blacksburg is Radford University, with 6,000 undergraduates, and three community colleges: Virginia Western Community College (VWCC), with an undergraduate population of 6,170; New River Community College (NRCC), with an undergraduate population of 4,156; and Wytheville Community College (WCC), with an undergraduate population of 2,119.

VOEE High-Demand Occupations: Blacksburg–Christiansburg–Roanoke

The top high-demand occupations in the area—assemblers and fabricators, stockers and laborers—are not associated with a CIP code. But the area is expecting to see growth in healthcare positions, including registered nurses and nursing aides, which are expected to be two of the highest openings in the next five years.

■ Customer Service Representatives

- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Receptionist*
 - *Customer Service Support/Call Center/Teleservice Operation*

■ Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers

- Transportation and Materials Moving
 - *Truck and Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator and Instructor*

■ Registered Nurses and Nursing Assistants

- Health Professions and Related Programs
 - *Adult Health Nurse/Nursing*
 - *Clinical Nurse Leader*
 - *Clinical Nurse Specialist*
 - *Critical Care Nursing*
 - *Emergency Room/Trauma Nursing*
 - *Family Practice Nurse/Nursing*
 - *Forensic Nursing*
 - *Geriatric Nurse/Nursing*
 - *Health Aide*
 - *Maternal/Child Health and Neonatal Nurse/Nursing*
 - *Nursing Administration*
 - *Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide*
 - *Nursing Assistants*
 - *Nursing Practice*
 - *Nursing Science*
 - *Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing*
 - *Palliative Care Nursing*
 - *Pediatric Nurse/Nursing*
 - *Perioperative/Operating Room and Surgical Nurse/Nursing*
 - *Practical Nursing, Vocational Nursing, and Nursing Assistants, Other*
 - *Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse/Nursing*
 - *Public Health/Community Nurse/Nursing*
 - *Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research, and Clinical Nursing, Other*
 - *Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse*
 - *Women's Health Nurse/Nursing*

■ **General and Operations Managers**

- Agricultural/Animal/Plant/Veterinary Science and Related Fields
 - *Veterinary Office Management/Administration*
- Parks, Recreation, Leisure, Fitness, and Kinesiology
 - *Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Facilities Management, General*
 - *Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Facilities Management, Other*
- Public Administration and Social Service Professions
 - *Public Administration*
- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Business/Commerce, General*
 - *Business Administration and Management, General*
 - *Non-Profit/Public/Organizational Management*
 - *Retail Management*
 - *Risk Management*
 - *Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies*
 - *Social Entrepreneurship*
 - *Finance, General*
 - *Financial Risk Management*
 - *International Business/Trade/Commerce*
 - *Management Science*

Program Categories: Blacksburg–Christiansburg–Roanoke

While Virginia Tech has a medical school and all three community colleges in the area have many associate’s- and certificate-level graduates in the health professions and related programs, not many students seek a bachelor’s degree in the health professions. This is surprising, since registered nurses and nursing assistants are two of the area’s most in-demand occupations.

It is unsurprising that engineering is one of the most popular program categories at Virginia Tech, given the school’s technology focus, but less obvious that Virginia Tech had almost as many business graduates as it did engineering graduates in 2022–2023.

Most Common Program Categories

Total BAs	Category	VT	Radford
1,973	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*	1,756	217
1,774	Engineering	1,774	**
757	Social Sciences	679	78
728	Biological and Biomedical Sciences	657	71
578	Computer and Information Services and Support Services	526	52

Total AAs	Category	VWCC	NRCC	WCC
532	Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies	94	259	179
284	Health Professions and Related Programs*	145	59	67
169	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*	107	46	16
69	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	69	**	**
64	Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians	26	29	9

Total Cert.	Category	VWCC	NRCC	WCC
292	Health Professions and Related Programs	172	53	67
189	Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians	39	144	6
182	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities	113	41	28
133	Construction Trades	30	37	66
104	Precision Production	25	62	17

*Denotes that the category or program is associated with one of the area’s most in-demand occupations.

**Denotes that the category or program is not offered at a particular university.

Programs: Blacksburg–Christiansburg–Roanoke

While Virginia Tech matriculates many students in biology and biological sciences, typical pre-med tracks, it offers no health-related degrees besides public health. Radford University offers bachelor’s degrees in registered nursing, EMT technician, and healthcare administration, suggesting that students eager to enter the healthcare industry may attend Radford over Virginia Tech.

While Virginia Tech and Radford both offer education programs at the master’s level, there is only one associate’s or bachelor’s program in education offered between all five schools in this region. Virginia Tech and Radford might consider expanding bachelor’s-degree programs in education since there is so much interest at the master’s and doctorate levels.

Most Common Programs

Total BAs	Program	VT	Radford
484	Management Science*	484	**
401	Finance, General*	357	44
379	Biology/Biological Sciences, General	315	64
343	Psychology, General	247	96
337	Mechanical Engineering	337	**

Total AAs	Program	VWCC	NRCC	WCC
438	Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies	**	259	179
77	General Studies	77	**	**
69	Biological and Physical Sciences	69	**	**
43	Industrial Elements Technology/Technician	**	43	**
42	Business Operations Support and Secretarial Services, Other	18	10	14

Total Cert.	Program	VWCC	NRCC	WCC
292	Health Professions and Related Programs*	172	53	67
189	Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians	39	144	6
182	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	113	41	28
133	Construction Trades	30	37	66
104	Precision Production	25	62	17

*Denotes that the category or program is associated with one of the area’s most in-demand occupations.
 **Denotes that the category or program is not offered at a particular university.

Least Common Programs (Under 10 Graduates Total)

Total BAs	Program
0	Architecture
0	Business/Managerial Economics
0	Environmental Studies
2	Philosophy and Religious Studies, Other
5	Computational Biology
8	Community Health and Preventive Medicine
9	Engineering Mechanics

Total AAs	Program
3	Corrections
4	Forensic Science and Technology
7	Clinical/Medical Laboratory Technician
8	Surgical Technology/Technologist
9	Cooking and Related Culinary Arts, General

Total Cert.	Program
0	Accounting
0	Clinical Laboratory Science/Medical Technology/Technologist
0	Design and Visual Communications, General
0	Fire Science/Firefighting
0	Geographic Information Science and Cartography
0	Ground Transportation, Other
0	Industrial Technology/Technician
0	Public Health, General
0	Surgical Technology/Technologist

Takeaways for Blacksburg–Christiansburg–Roanoke

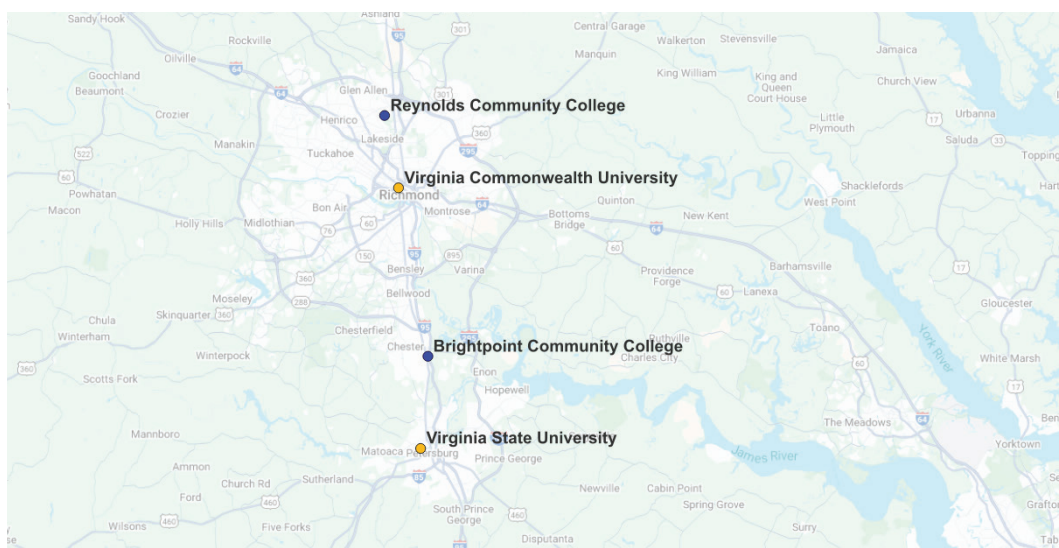
■ Programs Worth Combining

- Collaboratively combine Radford's business programs with Virginia Tech's.

■ Programs Worth Expanding

- Expand Radford's degrees in the health professions and related programs.
- Offer a program in agricultural/animal/plant/veterinary science and related fields at VWCC due to this program's popularity at Virginia Tech.
- Offer an architecture technology major at VWCC.
- Consider adding an A.A. or B.A. in education at any school.

Richmond



About Richmond

Richmond is the state capital and is home to Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), which has an undergraduate population of 20,000. Virginia State University (VSU), with an undergraduate population of 4,300, is in nearby Petersburg. The area has two community colleges: Brightpoint Community College, with an undergraduate population of 9,023, and Reynolds Community College, with an undergraduate population of 7,707.

Aside from state government, one of the area's largest employers is VCU Health, a healthcare system that operates four hospitals and other care centers in the region. Other major employers include Capital One, the HCA Virginia Health System, and VCU itself.

VOEE High-Demand Occupations: Richmond

Compared to the other regions, Richmond's high-demand occupations that are associated with a CIP code are more closely tied to business needs, including customer service representatives, general and operations managers, and bookkeepers.

■ Customer Service Representatives

- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Receptionist*
 - *Customer Service Support/Call Center/Teleservice Operation*

■ Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers

- Transportation and Materials Moving
 - *Truck and Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator and Instructor*

■ General and Operations Managers

- Agricultural/Animal/Plant/Veterinary Science and Related Fields
 - *Veterinary Office Management/Administration*
- Parks, Recreation, Leisure, Fitness, and Kinesiology
 - *Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Facilities Management, General*
 - *Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Facilities Management, Other*
- Public Administration and Social Service Professions
 - *Public Administration*
- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Business/Commerce, General*
 - *Business Administration and Management, General*
 - *Non-Profit/Public/Organizational Management*
 - *Retail Management*
 - *Risk Management*
 - *Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies*
 - *Social Entrepreneurship*
 - *Finance, General*

- *Financial Risk Management*
- *International Business/Trade/Commerce*
- *Management Science*

■ **Cooks, Restaurants**

- Culinary, Entertainment, and Personal Services
 - *Cooking and Related Culinary Arts, General*
 - *Culinary Arts/Chef Training*

■ **Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks**

- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping*

Program Categories: Richmond

VCU offers 14 majors in the visual and performing arts, while VSU offers only two. If the two programs were combined, VSU students would have access to VCU's popular offerings, including illustration (131 graduates) and graphic design (70).

A much larger percentage of graduates from VSU choose a major in business, management, marketing, and related fields than those from VCU. VSU might consider expanding its program offerings in this area, especially as the region is expecting to see more business-related occupations in the next five years.

Most Common Program Categories

Total BAs	Category	VCU	VSU
682	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*	564	118
603	Visual and Performing Arts	592	11
534	Psychology	458	76
415	Education	372	43
404	Biological and Biomedical Science	375	29

Total AAs	Category	Brightpoint	Reynolds
363	Health Professions and Related Programs	231	132
299	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*	96	203
298	Social Sciences	**	298
244	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities	138	106
177	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	38	139

Total Cert.	Category	Brightpoint	Reynolds	VCU
257	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities	190	67	**
219	Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians*	158	61	**
191	Health Professions and Related Programs	33	158	**
190	Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Services	42	148	**
82	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*	22	44	16

*Denotes that the category or program is associated with one of the area's most in-demand occupations.

**Denotes that the category or program is not offered at a particular university.

Programs: Richmond

All four schools offer a degree in registered nursing, but VCU's program has the highest enrollment. If VSU combined its program in registered nursing with VCU's program, it could save resources and students would have better access to a high-demand field of employment

VCU offers a major in parks, recreation, and leisure studies, which had no graduates last year. VCU should consider if this major is worth offering, given such low interest.

Most Common Programs

Total BAs	Program	VCU	VSU
367	Biology/Biological Sciences, General	338	29
313	Health Teacher Education	313	**
218	Business/Commerce, General	218	**
203	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies, Other	186	17
157	Marketing/Marketing Management, General	135	22

Total AAs	Program	Brightpoint	Reynolds
298	Social Sciences, General	**	298
204	General Studies	110	94
115	Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General	115	**
45	Visual and Performing Arts, Other	45	**
40	Humanities/Humanistic Studies	28	12

Total Cert.	Program	Brightpoint	Reynolds
257	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities, Other	190	67
190	Child Care Provider/Assistant	42	148
177	Electrical, Electronic, and Communications Engineering Technology/Technician	122	55
54	Welding Technology/Welder	41	13
49	Computer and Information Sciences, General	22	27

*Denotes that the category or program is associated with one of the area's most in-demand occupations.

**Denotes that the category or program is not offered at a particular university.

Least Common Programs (Under 10 Graduates Total)

Total BAs	Program
0	Junior High/Intermediate/Middle School Education and Teaching
0	Teacher Education, Multiple Levels
0	Nursing Practice
0	Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Studies
4	Manufacturing Engineering
4	Religion/Religious Studies
5	Electrical/Electronic Engineering Technologies/Technicians, Other
5	Foreign Languages and Literatures, General
7	Early Childhood Education and Teaching
7	Special Education and Teaching, General
7	Family and Consumer Economics and Related Services, Other
8	Finance and Financial Management Services, Other
9	African American/Black Studies

Total AAs	Program
0	Manufacturing Engineering Technology/Technician
0	Allied Health Diagnostic, Intervention, and Treatment Professions, Other
0	Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician
1	Engineering Technologies/Technicians, General
1	Automobile/Automotive Mechanics Technology/Technician
3	Music, General
4	Web Page, Digital/Multimedia, and Information Resources Design
9	Cooking and Related Culinary Arts, General
9	Architectural Engineering Technologies/Technicians

Total Cert.	Program
0	Dental Laboratory Technology/Technician
0	Electrical/Electronic Engineering Technologies/Technicians, Other
0	Foods, Nutrition, and Wellness Studies, General
0	Health and Medical Administrative Services, Other
0	Hospitality Administration/Management, General
0	Industrial Technology/Technician
0	Information Science/Studies
0	Interior Design
0	International Agriculture
0	International Business/Trade/Commerce
0	Public Administration and Social Service Professions, Other
0	Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse
0	Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist
0	Surveying Engineering
0	Web Page, Digital/Multimedia, and Information Resources Design

Takeaways for Richmond

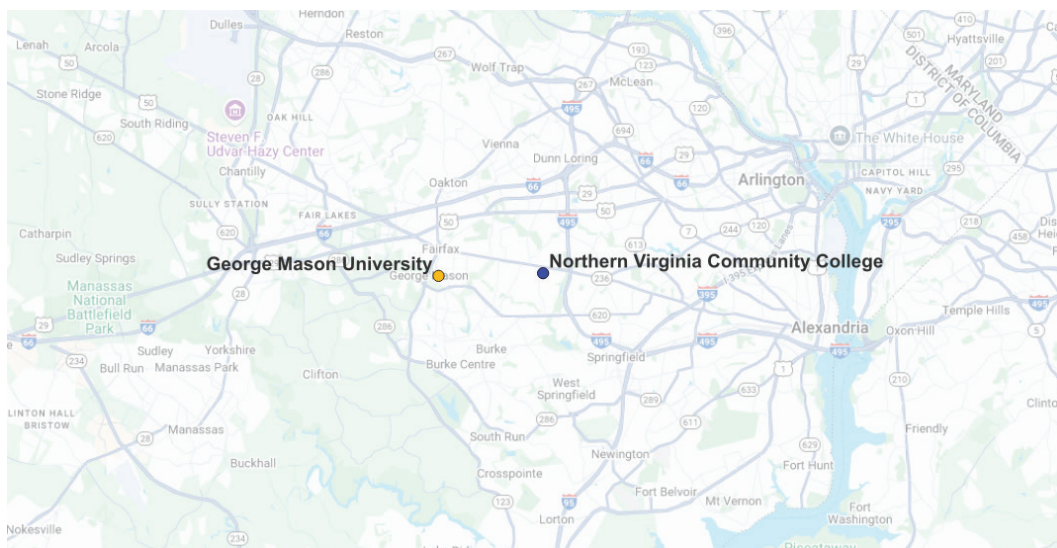
■ Programs Worth Combining

- Collaboratively combine VSU's visual arts program, which had only two majors, with VCU's large visual arts program.
- Collaboratively combine VCU and VSU's registered nursing programs.
- Collaboratively combine Reynolds and Brightpoint's visual and performing arts programs.
- Collaboratively combine Reynolds and Brightpoint's industrial technology/technician programs.

■ Programs Worth Expanding

- VSU might consider adding more programs in business, management, marketing, and related support services.

Washington–Arlington–Alexandria



About Washington–Arlington–Alexandria

The Washington–Arlington–Alexandria metro area is home to George Mason University (GMU), the state's largest public university by total enrollment, and Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC), the largest community college. Combined, the two schools enroll nearly 100,000 students. Their proximity to Washington, DC, gives GMU and NVCC students access to a wide range of industry options compared to other parts of Virginia.

The area's major employers are government contractors, including Booz Allen Hamilton, Northrop Grumman, and Capital One.

VOEE High-Demand Occupations: Washington–Arlington–Alexandria

The high-demand occupations with the most expected growth are those requiring bachelor's and higher degrees, including management analysts, business operations specialists, and software developers. Computer science is a top category for bachelor's degrees, associate's degrees, and certificates.

■ General and Operations Managers

- Agricultural/Animal/Plant/Veterinary Science and Related Fields
 - *Veterinary Office Management/Administration*
- Parks, Recreation, Leisure, Fitness, and Kinesiology
 - *Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Facilities Management, General*
 - *Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Facilities Management, Other*

- Public Administration and Social Service Professions
 - *Public Administration*
- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Business/Commerce, General*
 - *Business Administration and Management, General*
 - *Non-Profit/Public/Organizational Management*
 - *Retail Management*
 - *Risk Management*
 - *Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies*
 - *Social Entrepreneurship*
 - *Finance, General*
 - *Financial Risk Management*
 - *International Business/Trade/Commerce*
 - *Management Science*

■ **Management Analysts**

- Education
 - *Educational Evaluation and Research*
 - *Educational Statistics and Research Methods*
 - *Educational Assessment, Testing, and Measurement*
 - *Institutional Research*
 - *Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research, Other*
- Mathematics and Statistics
 - *Applied Statistics, General*
- Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies
 - *Data Analytics, General*
 - *Business Analytics*
 - *Data Visualization*
 - *Financial Analytics*
 - *Data Analytics, Other*
- Psychology
 - *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*
- Business/Commerce, General
 - *Business Administration and Management, General*
 - *Organizational Leadership*
 - *Business/Managerial Economics*

■ **Business Operations Specialists, All Other**

- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Business Administration and Management, General*
 - *E-Commerce/Electronic Commerce*
 - *Business Operations Support and Secretarial Services, Other*

- *Hotel/Motel Administration/Management*
- *International Business/Trade/Commerce*

■ **Customer Service Representatives**

- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
 - *Receptionist*
 - *Customer Service Support/Call Center/Teleservice Operation*

■ **Software Developers**

- Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services
 - *Artificial Intelligence*
 - *Information Technology*
 - *Informatics*
 - *Computer Programming/Programmer, General*
 - *Computer Programming, Specific Applications*
 - *Computer Programming, Vendor/Product Certification*
 - *Computer Game Programming*
 - *Computer Programming, Specific Platforms*
 - *Information Science/Studies*
 - *Computer Science*
 - *Modeling, Virtual Environments and Simulation*
 - *Cloud Computing*
- Engineering
 - *Computer Engineering, General*
 - *Computer Software Engineering*
- Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians
 - *Computer Software Technology/Technician*
 - *Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies*
 - *Mathematics and Computer Science*
 - *Accounting and Computer Science*
 - *Economics and Computer Science*
 - *Linguistics and Computer Science*

Program Categories: Washington–Arlington–Alexandria

GMU and NVCC offer many of the same high-demand programs. However, GMU offers several different programs in the field of education, while NVCC offers none. NVCC should consider offering an associate's degree in education.

GMU has nearly 100 graduates in the parks, recreation, leisure, fitness, and kinesiology category, while NVCC does not have any programs in the category. Similarly, GMU has more than 100 graduates in the public administration and social service professions, while NVCC has no program offerings in this category.

Most Common Program Categories

Total BAs (GMU only)	Category
1,138	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*
786	Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services*
533	Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Related Protective Services
491	Health Professions and Related Programs
447	Social Sciences

Total AAs (NVCC only)	Category
1,293	Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services*
914	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*
351	Social Sciences
298	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities
295	Health Professions and Related Programs

Total Cert.	Category
692	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services*
287	Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians*
247	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities
197	Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences
184	Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services*

*Denotes that the category or program is associated with one of the area's most in-demand occupations.

Programs: Washington–Arlington–Alexandria

Nearly all popular bachelor's degree programs at GMU have a related associate's degree counterpart at NVCC, with one exception. In 2022–2023, GMU had 139 graduates from its speech communication and rhetoric program, but there are no associate's degree programs at NVCC in the communication, journalism, and related programs category.

Most Common Programs

Total BAs	Program
645	Business/Commerce, General*
359	Criminal Justice/Police Science
179	Political Science and Government, Other
178	Community Health and Preventive Medicine
139	Speech Communication and Rhetoric

Total AAs	Program
351	Social Sciences, General
232	Engineering, General
79	Child Care Provider/Assistant
51	Business Administration, Management, and Operations, Other
46	Automobile/Automotive Mechanics Technology/Technician

*Denotes that the category or program is associated with one of the area’s most in-demand occupations.

Least Common Programs (Under 10 Graduates Total)

Total BAs	Program
1	Athletic Training/Trainer
2	Astronomy
2	Rehabilitation Science
3	Religion/Religious Studies
4	Russian Studies
4	Atmospheric Sciences and Meteorology, General
8	Medical Informatics
8	Art History, Criticism, and Conservation
9	Clinical Laboratory Science/Medical Technology/Technologist

Total AAs	Program
0	Industrial Technology/Technician
0	Fire Science/Firefighting
4	Biology/Biotechnology Technology/Technician
8	Sign Language Interpretation and Translation
9	Photography

Total Cert.	Program
0	Accounting
0	Allied Health Diagnostic, Intervention, and Treatment Professions, Other
0	Art/Art Studies, General
0	Biological and Physical Sciences
0	Biology/Biological Sciences, General
0	Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)
0	Hospitality Administration/Management, General
0	Information Technology*
0	Massage Therapy/Therapeutic Massage
0	Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer

*Denotes that the category or program is associated with one of the area's most in-demand occupations.

Takeaways for Washington–Arlington–Alexandria

■ Programs to Expand

- NVCC might consider adding a major in the parks, recreation, leisure, fitness, and kinesiology category.
- NVCC might also consider adding a major in the communication, journalism, and related programs category.

Classroom and Class Lab Utilization at Virginia Colleges

To ensure that Virginia’s colleges and universities are fully utilizing their space, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) requires all schools to submit a space utilization report every other year. They must document how many hours per week their classrooms and class labs are occupied.

With an enrollment cliff expected in the next few years, institutions should be especially aware of how much extra classroom space is available to lease out to the community. By auditing extra space now, institutions can more easily adapt to upcoming enrollment changes.

Four-Year Institutions

■ Classroom Utilization

Only a few of Virginia’s four-year institutions meet SCHEV’s guidelines for usage. SCHEV notes that classrooms should be in use at least 40 hours per week, class stations should be in use at least 24 hours per week, and classrooms should have an occupancy rate of at least 60% per week. In the charts that follow, an asterisk indicates rates of use that meet SCHEV’s guidelines.

Institution	Campus	Weekly Hours of Room Use	Weekly Hours of Station Use	Percent of Occupancy
Christopher Newport University		35	10	28
George Mason University	Arlington	23	10	43
	Main Campus	48*	28*	58
	Prince William County	25	9	35
James Madison University		38	29*	75*
Longwood University		25	10	41
Norfolk State University		28	11	40
Old Dominion University		29	18	61*
Radford University		34	16	49
University of Mary Washington		25	14	55
University of Virginia		19	27*	72*
University of Virginia–Wise		24	9	37
Virginia Commonwealth University	Health Sciences	34	18	52
	Main Campus	23	10	46
Virginia Military Institute		5	5	98*

Institution	Campus	Weekly Hours of Room Use	Weekly Hours of Station Use	Percent of Occupancy
Virginia State University		25	17	68*
Virginia Tech		37	23	63*
William & Mary		27	19	71*
Richard Bland College		25	11	46

*Meets SCHEV guidelines.

■ Classroom Lab Utilization

Similarly, only a few schools meet the thresholds issued by SCHEV for utilization of class labs: 24 weekly hours of room use, 18 weekly hours of station use, and a 75% occupancy rate. Only James Madison University meets all three of these guidelines.

Institution	Campus	Weekly Hours of Room Use	Weekly Hours of Station Use	Percent of Occupancy
Christopher Newport University		23	14	59
George Mason University	Arlington	15	11	63
	Main Campus	33*	18*	54
	Prince William County	17	8	49
James Madison University		28*	22*	80*
Longwood University		17	8	47
Norfolk State University		32*	18*	56
Old Dominion University		20	6	31
Radford University		1	9	12
University of Mary Washington		11	8	73
University of Virginia		14	19*	75*
University of Virginia–Wise		18	12	68
Virginia Commonwealth University	Main Campus	24*	16	65
Virginia Military Institute		4	5	68
Virginia State University		21	12	57
Virginia Tech		23	12	51
William & Mary		17	11	66
Richard Bland College		16	8	53

*Meets SCHEV guidelines.

Two-Year Institutions

■ Classroom Utilization

Similar to four-year institutions, very few two-year colleges met SCHEV’s guidelines for classroom utilization (40 hours of weekly use, 24 hours of weekly station use, and a 60% occupancy rate). In fact, no school meets the weekly station use threshold.

Institution	Campus	Weekly Hours of Room Use	Weekly Hours of Station Use	Percent of Occupancy
Brightpoint Community College		25	12	47
Blue Ridge Community College		18	8	42
Central Virginia Community College		29	13	46
Danville Community College		33	10	30
Eastern Shore Community College		26	8	32
Germanna Community College	Fredericksburg	25	17	69*
	Main Campus	26	13	50
Laurel Ridge Community College	Fauquier	18	11	62*
	Main Campus	20	11	56
Mountain Empire Community College		62*	11	17
Mountain Gateway Community College		47*	8	17
New River Community College		33	11	33
Northern Virginia Community College	Alexandria	19	7	37
	Loudon	25	11	43
	Main Campus	22	9	42
	Manassas	13	8	57
	Medical Education	17	10	58
	Woodbridge	18	7	42

Institution	Campus	Weekly Hours of Room Use	Weekly Hours of Station Use	Percent of Occupancy
Paul D. Camp Community College	Main Campus	19	8	43
	Suffolk	69*	10	15
Patrick & Henry Community College		38	16	42
Piedmont Virginia Community College		40*	17	42
Rappahannock Community College	Main Campus	29	9	31
	Warsaw	19	6	33
Reynolds Community College	Downtown	40*	13	33
	Goochland	12	6	47
	Main Campus	18	10	56
Southside Virginia Community College	John H. Daniel Campus	23	7	30
	Main Campus	11	3	29
Southwest Virginia Community College			4	15
Tidewater Community College	Chesapeake	12	7	54
	Main Campus	16	7	42
	Norfolk	11	5	42
	Virginia Beach	16	8	51
Virginia Highlands Community College		40*	10	25
Virginia Peninsula Community College	Historic Triangle	23	9	38
	Main Campus	53*	14	27
Virginia Western Community College		18	8	43
Wytheville Community College		17	8	34

*Meets SCHEV guidelines.

■ Classroom Lab Utilization

No two-year college meets all three SCHEV guidelines for class lab utilization: 24 hours of weekly room use, 18 hours of weekly station use, and a 75% occupancy rate. No school meets the percent of occupancy threshold.

Institution	Campus	Weekly Hours of Room Use	Weekly Hours of Station Use	Percent of Occupancy
Brightpoint Community College		29*	17	59
Blue Ridge Community College		13	8	63
Central Virginia Community College		15	8	54
Danville Community College		34*	6	18
Eastern Shore Community College		29*	13	46
Germanna Community College	Fredericksburg	16	12	71
	Main Campus	34*	23*	66
Laurel Ridge Community College	Fauquier	15	8	53
	Main Campus	25*	12	48
Mountain Empire Community College		18	7	40
Mountain Gateway Community College		32*	8	25
New River Community College		39*	17	44
Northern Virginia Community College	Alexandria	30*	8	28
	Loudon	25*	13	52
	Main Campus	22	10	48
	Manassas	17	10	58
	Medical Education	51*	18*	35
	Woodbridge	19	9	50
Paul D. Camp Community College	Main Campus	29*	9	31
	Suffolk	41*	5	13

Institution	Campus	Weekly Hours of Room Use	Weekly Hours of Station Use	Percent of Occupancy
Patrick & Henry Community College		34*	13	39
Piedmont Virginia Community College		49*	26*	53
Rappahannock Community College	Main Campus	76*	19*	25
	Warsaw	22	12	57
Reynolds Community College	Downtown	16	9	56
	Goochland	33*	19*	56
	Main Campus	13	9	67
Southside Virginia Community College	John H. Daniel Campus	46*	12	28
	Main Campus	17	7	40
Southwest Virginia Community College		21	9	41
Tidewater Community College	Chesapeake	15	10	65
	Main Campus	40*	14	35
	Norfolk	13	5	35
	Virginia Beach	18	10	58
Virginia Highlands Community College		28*	10	37
Virginia Peninsula Community College	Historic Triangle	27*	12	45
	Main Campus	27*	15	56
Virginia Western Community College		32*	14	42
Wytheville Community College		13	6	46

*Meets SCHEV guidelines.

Conclusion

As this report has shown, the Commonwealth contains many fine curricular programs that generate social and economic capital for graduates, employers, and citizens. As is the case with any enterprise, however, it is necessary to set priorities and become more efficient in the face of declining revenues. Any institution that fails this test will be left behind by those with greater vision and determination to succeed. This report provides useful information for governing boards that wish to begin conversations about program efficiency and prioritization. There are enough resources to continue providing exceptional higher education for decades to come, so long as those resources are stewarded effectively. ACTA's Institute for Effective Governance® stands ready to assist any governing board that wishes to take on this great challenge and responsibility. ●

Endnotes

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