

Frequently Asked Questions

COVE – Certifying Online Virginia Educators

What is VCU COVE?

The VCU COVE Program is a combined effort of the Department of Special Education and Disability Policy at VCU, the Virginia Department of Education, and school divisions in the entire state of Virginia. Program participants will receive coursework and other activities leading to endorsement in Special Education, General Curriculum. All courses will be web-based and taught by an instructor who is a faculty member in the Department of Special Education and Disability Policy at VCU.

How long will it take me to finish the program?

The VCU COVE program is a 27-credit hour sequence consisting of 9 graduate courses and two 1-credit hour on the job seminars. The COVE program is designed to be completed in six consecutive semesters of instruction.

How will we receive class instruction?

Web-based instruction will be the primary vehicle for delivering instructional content through Blackboard. Web-based content may be supplemented through audio teleconferences and resource materials provided to all students. An orientation to Blackboard is available through online modules. A COVE orientation will take place for new students the week before classes begin. Prior to the orientation, participants are requested to establish their eID accounts and password. [Click Here](#) for information on setting your eID and password. Email communication will be through participant's VCU email address only after the orientation.

Will we have to be on the Internet at a certain time?

These courses are designed to be semi-flexible with time. You may be required to be on the Internet at a certain time during the semester. You will be required to review materials, complete assignments, and take tests and quizzes by a certain date. You may be required to participate in audio conferences and/or online discussions, which may have time specification.

Do I need any special type of computer technology?

You will need to have high speed internet access for your computer to be able to take full advantage of all of the COVE assignments and activities. In addition, you need to have access to a computer with a camera and microphone (headset microphone, preferred) for times when your class meets in real time. An iPhone or Smartphone may be able to be used for this purpose.

What happens if I register for a COVE course but do not start it or complete it?

To DROP a COVE course and not be responsible for payment of tuition, you drop yourself in VCU eServices by **midnight of the first day of class**. After that date, you are eligible to WITHDRAW up to a certain date, but **will still be responsible for payment of tuition**.

The Virginia Department of Education heavily subsidizes the COVE program, which is why the course cost is so low. If you Fail or Withdraw from a course, you will not be allowed to re-take that course through the COVE program. The state subsidy can only be used once. If the course is available, you may be able to re-take the course through at the regular VCU cost.

What is the difference between drop and withdrawal, and what are the COVE deadlines for each?

- Drop – A student may drop a class (excluding short courses) only during the first week of the fall or spring term. Charges are removed, and the student's transcript does not list the class.
- Withdraw – When a student withdraws from a class (excluding short courses) within the first four weeks of the fall or spring term, the transcript lists the class with a mark of "W" and charges are assessed and adjusted according to the University Refund Policy. The student also may withdraw from a class between the end of Week 4 and the end of Week 10 with a mark of "W" but no refund of tuition.

The deadline to drop a COVE course with a refund is the day after the start date. The deadline to withdraw from a COVE course with a "W" on your transcript and no refund is half way through the course.

*****Note: COVE courses are considered short courses.*****

It is at the discretion of a COVE instructor whether they will assign an Incomplete (I) grade for a course to allow for all coursework to be completed and submitted by a specified date. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor regarding incomplete assignments.

I would like to complete my Master's degree. Will the VCU COVE classes transfer?

You can transfer coursework taken through COVE towards an M.Ed. in special education or general education. If you want to pursue a Master's degree, contact Dr. LaRon Scott at scottla2@vcu.edu Lauren Mortensen at lcmortensen@vcu.edu.

I know what classes are being offered through the VCU COVE Program but I need more information about each class in the program.

Updated course descriptions are available in the VCU Graduate Bulletin.
<http://www.pubapps.vcu.edu/bulletins/>

Can I pay for the cost of the entire program?

Each semester you will need to register and pay for classes. Your cost for each course in the 2015-2016 Academic Year is expected to be \$720 per 3 credit course, or \$480 per 2 credit course, or \$240 per 1 credit Seminar.

Starting in Summer 2016, only those COVE students that enroll in six or more (maximum 8) graduate-course-hours will be eligible for tuition support through the COVE program. That is, the amount of each reimbursement shall be \$450 for a minimum of six semester hours of coursework during a single semester or summer session. If you enroll in few than six semester hours of coursework, you will not receive a credit towards reimbursement. Once you are registered, you will be able to review your tuition bill in eServices at <http://go.vcu.edu/eservices>

NOTE: COVE funds will not be applied to student accounts until after the start of courses. Please rely on [VCU eServices](#) to view your student information including your current bill.

I will need a receipt of payment. Will you send me a receipt?

You can print a receipt directly from your online student account in eServices. Log into [VCU eServices](#)

I won't be able to get my registration form in by the deadline due to the mail services. What should I do?

Contact Lauren Mortensen at lmortensen@vcu.edu

How do I confirm my registration, pay my tuition, get my final grade and get my unofficial transcript?

All enrolled students have access to eServices, the online student system at VCU. Go to [VCU eServices](#). Follow the instructions to log in and you will be able to view all information related to your enrollment, billing, final grades and unofficial transcripts. (You must have your eID and password to log in. This is something you can obtain online at <https://eidmanager.vcu.edu/>)

I am a student with a disability and will need accommodations for my classes. What is VCU's policy on this?

VCU provides services for students with disabilities on both the Academic and Medical Campus. Please contact the appropriate coordinator of the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office for additional information about eligibility of services and accommodations:

Academic Campus DSS Coordinator 109 North Harrison St. Room 102 A Voice/TDD:
(804) 828-2253 Fax: (804) 828-1944

If you are already a registered student with the VCU Disability Support Services Office (DSS), please contact your instructor as soon as possible (ideally within the first week of the semester). You will need to present each instructor with a letter of accommodations from the DSS Office.

I will also need to submit my grades to my school district.

Official transcripts can be requested from the [Office of Records and Registration](#) by going online for transcript information. You can obtain an unofficial transcript from VCU by using [VCU eServices](#). VCU eServices provides electronic access to your academic record (this system is how all VCU students retrieve their final grade).

I'm having technical/Blackboard problems in the class. What should I do?

Contact the [VCU HelpIT Center](#) at (804) 828-2227 or visit them on the web.

The HelpIT Center provides quick, courteous, and comprehensive computing support on the Academic and MCV campuses. Self-service support is available online 24 hours a day and walk-in and live phone support during posted hours.

How do I get Textbooks for the courses?

You can order your textbooks online from the [VCU Bookstore](#) or you can use any other online textbook resource. Before ordering and after you are registered for your course, verify which texts will be used by viewing your course's Blackboard site.

When I'm done with the COVE program, what is the process for me to receive my five year teaching license?

The VCU COVE program leads to full collegiate professional licensure for individuals completing the entire sequence of courses and who have at least one year of supervised teaching experience. When your final grades in the program are posted on your transcript, send an email to Dr. LaRon Scott at scottla2@vcu.edu requesting **Verification of COVE Completion**. Dr. Scott will reply to your email with directions as to what forms you must complete and fax in to the Student Services Center in the School of Education. Any graduate courses taken outside of the COVE program that are to be used as substitute courses must be on a transcript that is sent in with your request for verification. A signed copy of the verification will be sent to your School Division's HR Department which will assist you in obtaining your license and endorsement. **You must receive a grade of "C" or higher in every course in order for VCU to verify completion.**

I did not find the answer to my question. What do I do now?

Contact Lauren Mortensen at (804) 827-4309 or via email at lmortensen@vcu.edu with any questions concerning the VCU COVE Program.