Frequently Asked Advising Questions
Mathematics

Quicklinks - Websites

VT Advising Website  Math Department  Virginia Tech Calendars
College of Science Forms  Undergraduate Catalog  Math Tutoring Information
Career&Professional Development  Transfer Equivalency Database  Academic Recovery Programs

Spring 2019 Force Add Procedures by Department (scroll down to link on University Studies homepage)

Quicklinks - Documents

First Semester Course List  Study Tips  Pathways Planner Tutorial
CLE Science Sequences  Math Degree Options  Academic Standing Flowchart
VT Student Advising Handbook  Course Registration Tutorial  English Advanced Standing F18

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1 About the Math Major

1.1 How many credits do I need to graduate?

If math is your primary major and is not a part of a dual degree, you need 120 credits. If math is your primary major and is a part of a dual degree, you need 150 credits. If math is not your primary major, check the requirements with your primary major department. A Degree Audit Report should show the number of credits that still need to be completed. Click here to see a sample DARS for a student on CLE General Education.

1.2 What classes do I need to graduate?

Checksheets with graduation requirements for each of the four degree options can be found on the math department advising page. You should also run a Degree Audit Report through HokieSpa to check which degree requirements have/have not been satisfied. If you see any discrepancies or have questions about what is shown in the DARS report, consult with your advisor.

1.3 Do I need to earn a certain grade in my math classes?

Yes. Math majors are required to earn a C- or better in Math 1225, 1226, 2204, 2214, 2204, and 3034. Math 3034 requires a C or better in Math 2114 as a prerequisite. These requirements can be found in the Progress to Degree rules (Section VII) of your degree option checksheet. Prerequisites are listed in the course descriptions section of the Undergraduate Catalog and in the Timetable of Classes.

1.4 Is there a limit to the number of times I can take a math class?

Yes, some math courses have a limited number of attempts allowed. Consult the Progress to Degree rules (Section VII) of your degree option checksheet.

1.5 Is there a limit to the total number of MATH courses that I can take?

Students are allowed to use a maximum of 60 credit hours of MATH courses toward their required 120 credits for graduation. In order for MATH credit hours earned past 60 credits to count toward a degree, additional credit hours must be authorized by the Mathematics Department Chair.

1.6 What are math-related courses for the Traditional option and how do I declare my intended math-related course plan?

Details are outlined beginning on page 4 of the Math Major / Traditional Option Handbook found on the math department advising page. The Math-Related Course Plan form can also be found on the math department advising page. Fill out the form, discuss it with your Traditional option advisor, and submit a finalized plan to the Undergraduate Coordinator in 460F McBryde during your junior year.

1.7 What are applied areas courses for the Applied Computational Math (ACM) option and how do I declare my intended applied areas course plan?

Details are outlined beginning on page 4 of the ACM Option Handbook found on the math department advising page. The Applied Areas Course Plan form can also be found on the math department advising page. Fill out the form, discuss it with your ACM option advisor, and submit a finalized plan to the Undergraduate Coordinator in 460F McBryde during your junior year.
1.8 I’m not sure which of the four math degree options is right for me. Where can I find more information?

Handbooks for each of the four degree options can be found on the math department advising page. Read the handbook and discuss with your advisor. First-year students will also explore these options in MATH 1004. Click to view an infographic about the four math degree options.

1.9 Who can I talk to about careers in mathematics?

Dr. Lizette Zietsman is the Career Advisor for students in the math department. To see a list of jobs and employers reported by recent VT math graduates, see Career and Professional Development’s First-Destination Post-Graduation Report. Some more general information reported by recent VT math graduates can be found here. You can also click here to read more about employment opportunities for math majors.

1.10 I am interested in undergraduate research. Who can I talk to about this?

First, do some research of your own. Undergraduate research information can be found on the math department homepage by clicking the Undergraduate Program tab, then Undergraduate Research in the left-hand menu. There, you will find general information, contact information, and a list of past undergraduate research projects. Also from the math department homepage, click the Research tab, and you will see information about faculty research organized by faculty member and by research area.

Students are strongly encouraged to talk about undergraduate research with one of their previous or current math professors in the list of research-active faculty described above. Ideally, talk to a faculty member whose research interests align with yours. Dr. Serkan Gugercin is the Undergraduate Research Facilitator for the mathematics department.

2 Adding or Dropping a Math Major or Minor

2.1 I am a new first-year or transfer student. How do I change my major before beginning my first semester at Virginia Tech?

Follow the process outlined by admissions.

2.2 Math is my primary major and I do not have any other majors. How do I change my math major (primary major) from math to something else?

This must be done through the HokieCOM system in HokieSpa. Click for step-by-step instructions on how to apply for a new primary major through HokieCOM. Questions/problems related to HokieCOM can be directed to registrar@vt.edu. Change of major dates are posted here. Be sure to check requirements if you are trying to switch into a restricted major. Always check procedures for other majors.

2.3 Math is my secondary major. How do I change math to be my primary major and drop my other major?

This cannot be done through the HokieCOM system. During open change of major dates, go to 460F McBryde to complete a COS Change of Major form and obtain a signature. You can print the form directly from the College of Science forms page or pick up a copy in 460F McBryde. Once completed and signed, take the form to the COS Dean’s Office, located in Suite 4300 of the North End Center Building, for processing.
2.4 Math is my secondary major. How do I change math to be my primary major and change my other major to be my secondary major?

This cannot be done through the HokieCOM system. During open change of major dates, go to 460F McBryde to complete a COS Change of Major form and obtain a signature. You can print the form directly from the College of Science forms page or pick up a copy in 460F McBryde. If the major you want to move from primary to secondary is in the College of Science, bring the COS Change of Major form, which has been filled out to move math to your primary major, to that department. Once completed, take the form to the COS Dean’s Office, located in Suite 4300 of the North End Center Building, for processing. If the major you want to move from primary to secondary is not in the COS, bring the completed COS Change of major form to the COS Dean’s Office. Once math has officially been changed to your primary major, see the department of the major you want to be your secondary major.

2.5 I am not a math major. How do I change my primary major to math?

This must be done through the HokieCOM system in HokieSpa. Click for step-by-step instructions on how to apply for a new primary major through HokieCOM. Questions/problems related to HokieCOM can be directed to registrar@vt.edu. Change of major dates are posted here. Once math is officially your primary major, the math department will assign a math advisor and notify you via email.

2.6 I am not a math major. How do I add math as a second (double) major?

During open change of major dates, go to 460F McBryde to complete a COS Change of Major form, found on the College of Science forms page. Once complete, take the form to the COS Dean’s Office, located in Suite 4300 of the North End Center Building, for processing. Once math is officially your secondary major, the math department will assign a math advisor and notify you via email.

2.7 I am not a math major. How do I add math as a second (dual) degree?

First, add math as a second (double) major – see previous questions. You must complete all the degree requirements and an additional 30 credit hours. Before graduation, when applying for your degree through HokieSpa, choose to add math as a second (dual) degree.

2.8 How do I change my math degree option?

During open change of major dates, go to 460F McBryde to complete a COS Change of Major form and obtain a signature. You can print the form directly from the College of Science forms page or pick up a copy in 460F McBryde. Once completed and signed, take the form to the COS Dean’s Office, located in Suite 4300 of the North End Center Building, for processing. Once the math option has been updated on your record, the math department will assign a new option advisor (if applicable) and you will be notified via email.

2.9 How do I add or drop a math minor?

During open change of major dates, complete a COS Change of Major form. You can print the form directly from the College of Science forms page or pick up a copy in 460F McBryde. (Although the link says Change of Major, this form is used for a change of major or minor.) Fill out the add/drop minor section. Once completed, take the form to the COS Dean’s Office, located in Suite 4300 of the North End Center Building, for processing. Signatures from the Math Department are not needed for adding or dropping a minor.
2.10 I'm considering changing my major. Where can I learn about other majors and who can I contact for information about the majors I am considering?

Go to the VT advising website, click Advising Resources, then Majors:Explore@VT. Here, you can choose to explore majors alphabetically, by interest, or by college. Also from the Explore@VT page, under Additional Resources, click the Major Info Sessions link to see contact information and possible information sessions held for other majors. Important: If looking at Pamplin College of Business or College of Engineering info sessions, be sure to click the tabs for non-majors if you are not currently a Pamplin or Engineering student.

3 HokieSpa Advising Tools

3.1 Who is my academic advisor?

To find the name of your academic advisor for your primary major, log in to HokieSpa and click the HokieSpa link or tab. Then click View your General Student Information and select the current term. Your advisor is listed next to Primary Advisor. If you have more than one major and a secondary advisor is not listed for other majors, contact the department and ask who your advisor is. Dr. Tao Lin is a secondary advisor for all international math majors.

3.2 Where is my academic advisor’s office and what are his/her office hours?

All of the academic advisors in the math department are also faculty members. To find your advisor’s information, go to the math department homepage and click People then Faculty in the left-hand menu. Navigate to your advisor’s names and click on it to be directed to his/her math department page, where you will find office location and office hour information.

3.3 How and when do I apply for my degree for graduation?

You should apply for your degree no later than the beginning of sophomore year by filling out an Application for Degree, available on HokieSpa. Log in to HokieSpa and click the HokieSpa link or tab. Then click Degree Menu, Undergraduate Student Degree Menu, Application for Degree, and follow the prompts to submit your intended graduation term. This can be updated anytime. If you have more than one major, you must apply for each degree separately.

3.4 I forget which degree option I am in, how do I find out?

Log in to HokieSpa and click the HokieSpa link or tab. Click View your General Student Information and select the current term. Your degree option is listed next to Primary Major Concentration(s) in the Primary Major Information section at the bottom of the page. If you do not have Primary Major Concentration(s) information listed, then you are in the Traditional option. Otherwise, it will show Applied Discrete (ADM), Applied Computational (ACM), or Math Ed (MSTR).

3.5 What is the Pathways Planner and how do I set up a plan?

The Pathways Planner is an online tool to help plan the courses you will take each semester. It is strongly recommended that you outline all of your degree requirements in a four-year plan through the Pathways Planner by the end of your freshman year. Of course, plans change, but having an initial outline can help ensure timely graduation. Click here for a Pathways Planner tutorial.

3.6 How do I use the drop/add registration system?

Click here for a registration system tutorial.
4 Other - General Advising

4.1 How do I schedule an appointment with my advisor?

Some advisors require appointment scheduling through the online advising tool called Navigate (previously called EAB or SSC). To see if your mathematics advisor schedules appointments this way, go to the Navigate homepage and follow these directions. If you see appointment time options for your advisor, choose the one you’d like to schedule and follow the rest of the prompts on the screen. If you don’t see appointment options, then your advisor schedules appointments through email.

4.2 I’m not doing so well in one of my classes, what should I do?

Schedule an appointment with your academic advisor ASAP! Depending on the reasons for difficulty in the course, you may also want to consider attending one of the Student Success Center’s Seminars on Academic Success.

4.3 I’m having a personal problem and I’m not sure who to talk to, what should I do?

Schedule an appointment with your academic advisor ASAP! You do not need to share details in a meeting request. During the meeting, your advisor can help determine what the next steps might be to help with the problem, even if you don’t necessarily want to talk about any details. Note that academic advisors may be required to report certain information discussed, so talk to your advisor about this reporting requirement to help decide exactly what information you feel comfortable sharing.

4.4 I have questions about the AlcoholEdu module, who can I ask?

Click here for information on AlcoholEdu.

4.5 I have questions about the DiversityEdu module, who can I ask?

Click here for information on DiversityEdu.

4.6 Can I take a class for a grade as many times as I want?

No. Consult both the Repeat Course Policy and the Repeated Courses information in the Grades and Grade Points section of the Undergraduate Catalog. Also consult the Progress to Degree rules in the checksheet for your math degree option, found on the math department advising page.

4.7 When can I add or drop a class?

The dates for adding and dropping classes are outlined in each semester’s calendar found in left-hand menu of the Timetable of Classes. Full-time students must take at least 12 credit hours in fall and spring semesters. If you are considering whether to drop a class, it is strongly recommended that you discuss it with your advisor before dropping the class.

4.8 How do I drop a class?

Classes can be dropped using the HokieSpa drop/add menu anytime during the drop/add period. Students must have at least 12 credit hours to be a full time student. It is strongly recommended that you discuss the decision with your advisor before dropping a class. Click here for a registration system tutorial.
4.9 What is course withdrawal? How do I withdraw from a class?

To withdraw from a class, students must follow the requirements of their primary major. If your primary major falls in the College of Science you will complete a COS Course Withdrawal form, found on the College of Science forms page. If you are an international student, check with an advisor from the Cranwell International Center before submitting a course withdrawal form.

4.10 Where can I find information about other majors or minors that I might be interested in?

Go to the VT advising website, click Advising Resources, then Majors:Explore@VT. Here, you can choose to explore majors alphabetically, by interest, or by college. Also from the Explore@VT page, under Additional Resources, click the Major Info Sessions link to see contact information and possible information sessions held for other majors. Important: If looking at Pamplin College of Business or College of Engineering info sessions, be sure to click the tabs for non-majors if you are not currently a Pamplin or Engineering student.

4.11 What do I do if I took Math in Computational Context (Math 2984H or Math 2405-2406H) and cannot register for a MATH course for which Math in a Computational Context satisfies the prerequisites?

Complete the drop/add survey available on the math department homepage.

4.12 I didn’t get the math class I requested during course request, what do I do?

Force-Add is for students who correctly course requested and tried to add an undergraduate math course and received an honors restriction, major or level restriction, or a prerequisite error. There are only a few exceptions for students who did not course request but must add an undergraduate math course. Typical exceptions are:

- Must repeat a course failed last semester
- Not enrolled at Virginia Tech last semester
- Changed majors and have new requirements for the degree

Students who meet the above requirements should be advised to complete the drop/add survey available on the math department homepage. Students should not come to the math department in addition to completing the survey. If a student fills out the survey and we encounter a question or problem, or if we are unable to add the course to the student’s schedule, we will send an email directly to student with instructions.

Students who tried to add an undergraduate math course and received a closed section error should continue to try to add themselves to a section of the course. We will open seats, as sections fill up, periodically until the start of the semester.

Students will not be forced-added to a course if they received it at registration and dropped it later.

Students who do not meet the above requirements to validate a force-add request should be advised that all available seats will open on the third day of class during the fall and spring semester.

More information may be found here.
4.13 I got my course request results back, but I didn’t get all of the courses I requested, what do I do?

Is the course a math course? See previous question. Otherwise, you can check the force-add procedure for the department that the course is in. If this course satisfies a CLE or Pathways Gen Ed requirement, you can also try to wait for another semester or find another course in that Area or Concept.

4.14 How do I force-add a class?

To force-add a MATH course, see question 4.12. Otherwise, follow the force-add procedure linked from the University Studies homepage for the department that the course is in.

4.15 I took a course at another institution, but the transfer credit is not yet appearing on my transcript in Hokie Spa. The transfer credit will satisfy a prerequisite for a math course I want to take. How can I request to force-add the math course?

Complete the drop/add survey available on the math department homepage and upload an unofficial transcript from the other institution showing the final grade you received in the prerequisite course.

4.16 I’m on Academic Warning, Academic Probation, or Academic Suspension. What does that mean?

Here is a flowchart outlining how to get back into Good Academic Standing. You should also consult the Academic Eligibility section of the Undergraduate Catalog and schedule an appointment to discuss all of this with your advisor.

If you are a math major and on Academic Warning, fill out the COS Academic Warning Assessment found on the College of Science forms page and discuss it with your advisor before submitting to the Dean’s Office. If your overall GPA is 2.5 or below, strongly consider taking UNIV 1004: College Success Strategies during the semester following your academic warning.

If you are a math major and on Academic Probation or returning from suspension, fill out the COS Academic Assessment Form found on the College of Science forms page and discuss it with your advisor before submitting to the Dean’s Office. Strongly consider taking LAHS 1014: Academic Recovery. NOTE: Students on Academic Probation or coming off Academic Suspension cannot take more than 16 credits per semester.

Other resources for academic recovery include the Student Success Center’s Seminar Series on Academic Success, Peer Academic Coaching, and Student Success Center Academic Coaching.

4.17 What is a math credit by exam and how do I sign up?

General information on credit by exam can be found here. For information on August credit by exam, click here.

4.18 Are there tutoring resources available for math courses?

Yes, consult the Tutoring Information Page.
4.19 I thought I satisfied the foreign language requirement, but my DARS does not show this. What should I do?

Make sure your official high school transcript has been submitted to the Registrar’s office. The Office of the University Registrar runs a foreign language program in mid-October for students admitted in the fall semester, and mid-February for students admitted in the spring semester. If you still have questions, fill out this College of Science Foreign Language form. If further follow-up is needed, contact your academic advisor.

4.20 I want to take a course at another school and transfer credit to VT. What is the procedure for this?

If you are a student in the College of Science, fill out the Authorization to Take Courses Elsewhere form on the College of Science forms page. (If you are in another college, fill out the form for your college.) This form requires a signature from your advisor and approval from the COS Dean’s Office. Transfer credit evaluations can take up to six weeks. Start this process early so that you will know how your credits could transfer before leaving campus at the end of a semester. If you have questions about MATH transfer credit outside of this authorization process, contact mathtransfercredit@math.vt.edu.

Once you have completed a course at another institution, an official transcript must be sent from the other college/university to the VT Registrar’s Office. You can monitor the status on the transfer credit screen in HokieSpa.

Office of the University Registrar (MC 0134)
Student Services Building
Suite 250, Virginia Tech
800 Washington St. SW
Blacksburg, VA 24061

More information can be found on the Registrar’s FAQ page for transfer credit.

4.21 I’m a math major and I have questions about my math transfer credit in HokieSpa. Who can I talk to about this?

Contact mathtransfercredit@math.vt.edu

4.22 What is the Trigonometry Module?

Information on the Trigonometry Module can be found at http://www.emporium.vt.edu/trigmodule.

4.23 Don’t see your question here?

Contact your academic advisor.