



## Virginia Tech Graduate Student Newsletter Washington, DC Metro Region March 18, 2022

### ***Important Academic Dates and Deadlines***

This information only applies to students completing **ALL required coursework for their program and students eligible to graduate in Spring 2022**. The dates and deadlines listed below are to keep you on track for degree completion and graduation this semester.

#### **Spring 2022 Masters/EDS Deadlines**

**May 11** Final Exam Defense (**Submit request 2 weeks prior to defense date**)  
**May 27** Electronic Thesis/Dissertation

#### **Spring 2022 PhD/EDD Deadlines**

PhD/EDD Students planning to participate in Commencement for 2022 follow dates below, if not follow the dates above for Masters/EDS.

**Mar 24** Final Exam Defense (**Submit request 2 weeks prior to defense date**)  
**Apr 7** Electronic Thesis/Dissertation

**Non-Thesis ONLY Programs (MNR, MIT, MBA, MEng...)****May 16 Non-Thesis Final Exam/Evaluation**

Each respective program will send out an email with detailed instructions for Final Exam/Evaluation scheduling towards the end of the semester to ensure you are on track for degree completion and exam scheduling.

**Important:** An approved Plan of Study is required to Apply for Degree Conferral and to Schedule your Final Exam! You can check to see if you have an approved Plan of Study in Hokie Spa. **If you do not have an approved Plan of Study, please reach out to your department for assistance!** Your department will work to complete your Plan of Study and ensure that it is received with the Graduate School for Final Approval. [Link to Schedule Final Exam](#)

**All students graduating are required to have a Final Exam scheduled with the Graduate School for degree awarding.**

***Save the Date! Events, Info Sessions, Workshops, etc***

Mar	21-25	Graduate Education Week
Mar	22	PDW: Building Your Personal Brand (CANCELLED)
Mar	23	FREE Professional Photo Shoot at the NVC
Mar	23	Teach-In Day "Pandemic Pedagogy"
Mar	25	Celebrating Graduate Students Happy Hour
Mar	29	First Generation Affinity Group (more info to come)
Mar	30	Women in Transportation 2022
Apr	8-10	ACCelerate Festival
Apr	20-21	Hokie Pop-Up Shop

***Need a Mask? Pickup Points in the DC Metro Region***

KN95 masks for individuals are available at these two pickup points in the DC Metro Region campus locations:

- **Northern Virginia Center, Falls Church**, in the Lobby at the Guard's desk.
- **VT Arlington Research Center**, Ballston, at the second floor Reception.

These masks are free to the campus community. Individuals should continue to use these resources in a responsible manner.

## VT COVID Testing Program in the DC Region

The university's COVID testing program in the DC Region is through a mail-in testing program. The test kits are distributed in the library. An overview of instructions is shown below. Please be patient as we bring this new program online, and remember that the program is for people without symptoms. If you are experiencing COVID symptoms, please contact your health care provider.

1. Register online to pick up a test. The scheduling website is <https://app.acuityscheduling.com/schedule.php?owner=20170330&appointmentType=29318318>
2. Select Falls Church or Arlington on the website to see available pickup times.
3. Pick up your test from the NVC Library (1st floor) or Arlington Main Desk (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor) as scheduled. You will need to show ID. Hokie Passport is preferred, but another government-issued ID such as a driver's license or passport is acceptable.
4. **DO NOT ADMINISTER THE SELF-TEST IN THE LIBRARY.** Preferred locations are your private office, home, or car. You can also administer the self-test outside, or in some part of the building where you can be far away from other people.
5. Carefully follow the sampling and shipping instructions included with the test kit. On Mondays and Tuesdays between noon and 4 pm, the NVC library will have a collection box at the service desk. The regular UPS driver will pick up completed test kits from this box. Outside of these hours, you must ship your test through UPS from a nearby office or public collection box.
6. Tests are processed by the testing company, and the results will be communicated to the university by Friday. Negative test results will be communicated by email only. Positive
7. results will be communicated by either EH&S (for employees) or Schiffert Health (for students) using a combination of email and phone.

## International Students Important Information

Virtual CPT workshop, Wednesday **04/27/22**, 5-6 pm

Eligible F-1 students may apply for Co-Op/CPT by completing the following at least 30 days before the internship's start date in **Summer 2022**:



**Step 1:** Apply for Co-Op with [the graduate school](#). The CPT course (GRAD 5944 or 7944) is a 1 credit course that should be added to your POS for the Summer 22 term **before** submitting this step.

**Step 2:** After grad school approval, [apply for CPT](#) with an immigration advisor using IntlHokies > F-1 Curricular Practical Training > **CPT request**.

## For International Students Graduating in Spring 2022

Please take a moment to look at the **program end date** listed on page 1 of your **most recent I-20**.

If the end date is not listed as **05/15/2022** – please send Jessica Mullins a message this month. Your program end date in SEVIS will need to be shortened. This date edit is needed in order to be eligible to apply for [post-completion OPT](#).

**Jessica Mullins**, [mullins1@vt.edu](mailto:mullins1@vt.edu)

Assistant Director for DC International Student Services ([DC ISS](#))

Virginia Tech Graduate School in the Greater Washington DC metro area

Virtual zoom advising appointments can be booked [here](#).

## **VT Graduate Student Commencement in the DC Metro Region, Spring 2022, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1pm at the GMU CFA**

The [Commencement website](#) for the DC Area is live. Please bookmark this page as it will be updated frequently during the semester. Here are the summary details:

### **Date:**

Sunday May 15th, 2022

### **Venue:**

GMU Center for the Arts

4373 Mason Pond Drive

Fairfax, VA 22030-4444

### **Schedule:**

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 11:30 am | Student Check-in begins on Main Level<br><b><i>All participating students should be checked in by 12:30 pm.</i></b> |
| 12:15 pm | Doors open to the Auditorium for Guests to be seated  |
| 12:30 pm | Faculty, Students and their Hooders Line-up   |
| 1:00 pm  | Processional  |
| 3:00 pm  | Light reception for graduates and their guests in the Main Lobby immediately following the Commencement.            |

### **Degree Conferring Dates**

In order to participate in Commencement, please make sure you have completed the necessary work by the [Degree Conferring Dates](#). If you have any questions, please contact the Graduate Student Services Office (GSSO) at 703-538-8327 or see [here](#) for more information or to make an appointment. **Please note the important Dates and Deadlines Workshop offered by the GSSO on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30pm for those who plan on graduating in Spring 2022.**

### **Regalia**

Regalia is required for attending Commencement, and celebrating your academic achievements! Order by April 30<sup>th</sup> to ensure you will receive the regalia in time for the ceremony.

PhD

- Hoods are edged with dark blue

- Doctoral gowns are faced with black velvet with three bars across the sleeves.
- Tassels are gold

#### Masters

- The colors for the edging of hoods for master's students are determined by the college and discipline granting the degree. You can find the proper hood color [here](#)
- Tassels of caps are black

***Both Master's and PhD regalia can be ordered from the VT Bookstore through the following link: <https://colleges.herffjones.com/college/vt/>.***

- Click on "Keeper Cap and Gown" (Order Now),
- From the drop down, choose "Graduate School"
- "Washington, DC Ceremony"
- "Degree Type" (You can select Masters or Doctors)



#### Graduate Student Speaker Competition

Each year we invite students to submit a speech for the Graduate Student Speaker Competition. If selected, the graduating student will have the opportunity to attend the Faculty/VIP Reception prior to the Commencement, and give remarks in front of family, friends and graduates! Speeches should be no longer than 10 minutes. The deadline for submission is March 22, 2022 and the applicants will be notified by April 1, 2022.

To participate please fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/j7Tgz8HRXibxfSbR6>

#### Images and Reflections Photo Slideshow

We welcome submissions of photos or short videos that tell the story of your student experience at Virginia Tech. Submit them using this [Google Form](#) or email them to Susan Merten at [smerten@vt.edu](mailto:smerten@vt.edu).

#### VT Commencement Pop Up Flower Shop



As with previous years, there will be a pop up flower shop selling VT flowers and some swag outside the Commencement venue. If you would like to review the bouquets and/or pre-order, see [here](#).

## ***Events, Workshops, etc.***

### ***Virginia Tech's 22nd Graduate Education Week, March 21-25***

Virginia Tech's 22nd Graduate Education Week, March 21-25, celebrates what the university and its graduate community have accomplished and considers what they can create next. The week's theme, "Beyond the Legacy," honors the university's sesquicentennial, looking back at the history of graduate education and looking forward to what the next decades may hold.

Graduate Education Week highlights the importance of graduate education and increases the university community's awareness of the contributions of graduate students to teaching, research, and service. The Graduate School hosts a broad array of events and activities throughout the week, some of which are virtual or hybrid. The week culminates on Friday, March 25, with the annual barbecue on the Graduate Life Center lawn on the Blacksburg campus and with a happy hour for students in the greater Washington, D.C., metro area at the Virginia Tech Research Center — Arlington campus.

"We are excited to offer a week full of events celebrating graduate education and graduate student achievements. The mixture of in-person and virtual events will allow us to reach a wide audience both in Blacksburg and at our extended campuses," said interim Graduate Student Services Director Lauren Surface. Free T-shirts will be available at all in-person events on the Blacksburg campus.

Surface said the week begins with a Zoom panel discussion featuring award-winning alumni on Monday, March 21, at noon. They will discuss their graduate school journey at Virginia Tech and how that experience contributed to their successful careers. The panelists include Laura Levi Altstaedter, associate professor at East Carolina University; Andrew Coggins, clinical professor of management at Pace University; Anurag Mantha, district engineer with the Virginia Department of Health; and Amanda Rumore, associate professor at Randolph College.

On Wednesday, March 23, the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) will hold its annual research symposium with the theme of interdisciplinary research and communication. This year, the event will take place on Canvas. Those interested in attending can register via [this link](#). For additional details, visit the [GPSS website](#).

The complete list of events and activities can be found on the [Graduate Education Week website](#).

### **Teach-In Day "Pandemic Pedagogy", March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1-4pm, Virtual**

Virginia Tech Graduate Academy for Teaching Excellence (GrATE) <http://vtgrate.org/> organizes the teach-in day for the Spring 2022 semester. Join us on March 23, 1-4 pm GLC room F/in **Zoom** in a series of workshops, such as 1-teaching post-pandemic in a hybrid modality, 2-teaching skills 101, 3-student motivation, and 4-teaching stories and tips from graduate teaching students. The teach-in day will continue with Spring social event from 5-7pm where members of the organization and faculty fellows will join us. Please, RSVP by

emailing [jonildab@vt.edu](mailto:jonildab@vt.edu) to receive the detailed event agenda and the respective zoom links for the sessions that you plan to attend virtually. See you there!

### **FREE Professional Photo Shoot, March 23rd, 3-7pm, **ADDITIONAL HOUR ADDED!****



A professional photographer will be at the Northern Virginia Center, Room 200 on March 23rd from 3-7pm. Sign up for a free professional headshot (business attire) or formal Graduate Portrait (regalia)! If you are working on your LinkedIn or want to celebrate your graduate accomplishments, our professional photographer will have both Virginia Tech and business backdrops to showcase your formal photo!

All participants must wear a mask before and after the

shoot. Registration is required.

**An additional hour has been added! Sign up for your FREE photo shoot [here](#)**

### **Celebrating Graduate Students**

#### **Happy Hour**

**March 25<sup>th</sup>, 4-6pm**

*Ballston Local, VTRC-Arlington* Come celebrate the outstanding work of the Virginia Tech graduate community in teaching, research and service in the DC Metro Area! All students, faculty, advisors, and staff welcome. Free appetizers and giveaways. Sponsored by the Innovation Campus, and the Departments of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering.

**March 25**  
**CELEBRATING GRADUATE STUDENTS**  
**HAPPY HOUR**

All students, faculty, and staff welcome!

**Special Guest Dr. Lance Collins, Vice President and Executive Director of Virginia Tech's Innovation Campus**

**Ballston Local**

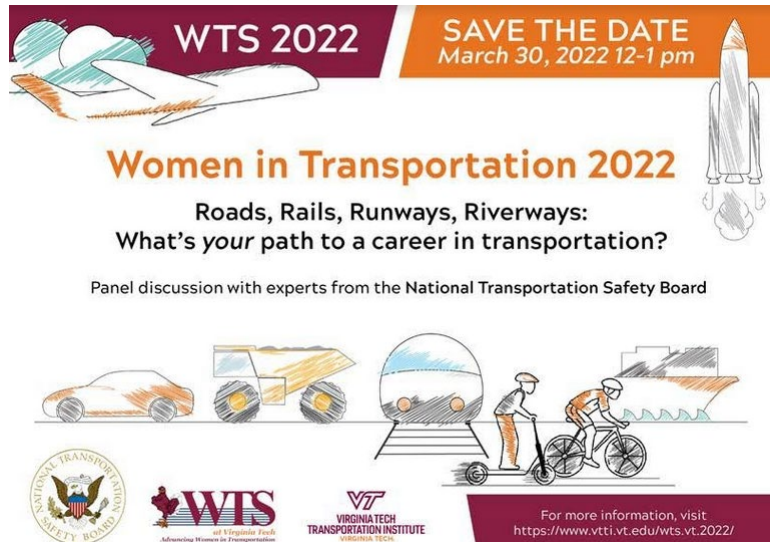
900 N Glebe Rd, Arlington, 22203

**4 p.m. to 6 p.m.**

Sponsored by the Innovation Campus, Department of Computer Science, and the Bradley Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

**Free appetizers, giveaways & more!**

## Women in Transportation 2022 Panel Discussion, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 12-1pm



Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTI) and the Virginia Tech chapter of WTS International (previously Women's Transportation Seminar) are co-hosting a **free** Women's History Month panel event in conjunction with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) on **March 30<sup>th</sup> 12-1pm**, via zoom.

The event: *"Roads, Rails, Runways, Riverways: What's your path to a career in transportation?"* will

feature expert women leaders from NTSB who will share the paths that led them to their current roles and answer questions from attendees.

[Women in Transportation 2022 | Virginia Tech Transportation Institute \(vt.edu\)](https://www.vtti.vt.edu/wts.vt.2022/)

## ACCElerate Festival, April 8-10

The [Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology \(ICAT\)](#), in partnership with the Smithsonian's Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, will host [ACCElerate: the ACC and Smithsonian Creativity and Innovation Festival](#) from April 8-10 at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

ICAT invites all members of the Virginia Tech community to come and experience the multi-day festival, **including three Virginia Tech exhibitions**. Admission is free and open to the public.

View the [campus notice](#) for details.



## ***Graduate Student Climate Survey Launching, March 15th***

On Tuesday March 15th, graduate students across all campuses will receive an invitation in their Virginia Tech email to participate in the Graduate School's triannual climate survey measuring students' attitudes toward campus climate, department climate, advising, mentoring and inclusion and diversity. Virginia Tech is committed to creating and supporting a climate that fosters inclusion and diversity where all students can be productive and engaged members of our campus communities. This survey will allow Virginia Tech's leaders to receive valuable input from students about their campus climate. For additional information please review to the [FAQs](#) or reach out to Kacy Lawrence at [klawr5@vt.edu](mailto:klawr5@vt.edu)

## ***MetroLab Student Cup Competition, March 25<sup>th</sup>***

MetroLab Network is a non-profit organization supporting the effort of cities and universities working in partnership on innovation projects. Your university is a member of this network, and we wanted to make you aware of a competition event for students working on innovation with local partners. The [MetroLab Student Cup](#) is an opportunity for students to showcase their work, with the finalists presenting at our summit where local government and university leaders will attend.

**We would greatly appreciate your help in sharing this opportunity with your students.**

Students can submit completed civic research projects for awards of \$1000 and the chance to be featured as the MetroLab Network Innovation of the Month through our partnership with [GovTech](#).

### ***What types of projects are eligible?***

We are looking for projects that provide new analysis, policy, or technical insights to civic challenges. Civic challenges include improving government, community services, social services; creating new mobility options; rethinking urban spaces; improving public health, and more. Preference will be given to projects that can demonstrate that research responded to a community-identified issue, was done in partnership with a civic partner (i.e. a state or local government or agency, a regional or neighborhood civic association, or a non-profit focused on community engagement or service delivery), and has produced or will have measurable impact for the community.

### ***What does the competition process look like?***

Interested students should complete the [online application](#) by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on Friday March 25th, 2022. The application asks for a project description as well as a few other key details about partnership with civic organizations. Finalists will be selected in April and will present their projects to a team of judges from government and civic organizations. Up to 5 winners will be selected in a final pitch competition during [MetroLab Network's Annual Summit](#) in June, with one grand prize winner who will be featured in the MetroLab Network Innovation of the Month series.

***Where should I direct questions?***

If you have question about the application process please direct questions to [elias.gbadamosi@metrolabnetwork.org](mailto:elias.gbadamosi@metrolabnetwork.org)

***Hokie Shop to visit DC area, April 20-21***

The Virginia Tech Hokie Shop, Virginia Tech's official bookstore, will host a two day pop-up shop on April 20-21 at the Northern Virginia Center (next to the West Falls Church metro station) in the greater Washington, DC region. Virginia Tech students, employees, alumni and community members in the DC area are invited to share their preferred times to shop and give feedback on the types of items to have in stock for this pop-up Hokie Shop in this [D.C. area Hokie Shop survey](#). Survey closes March 18.

Questions about the survey or the event may be directed to [robin.jones@vt.edu](mailto:robin.jones@vt.edu).

***International Food Markets***

Northern Virginia boasts an international array of grocery stores and markets. This section highlights some of them in our area. Many of these places are small mom and pop stores, while others are big supermarkets. Can't find fresh garam masala for your red lentil dal? Searching for soursop for a fresh morning fruit shake? Stop by some of these special markets from around the world to freshen up your dishes with spices, produce and desserts from all corners of the globe.

**Assal Market, 112 Glyndon St., NE, Vienna**

Assal Market is just off of Maple Avenue in Vienna. It is well stocked with Persian (Iranian) food items along with Arabic and other Mediterranean products. It has a Persian Bakery and Halal butcher shop. It's a good source of wonderful pastries, saffron spice, and creamy rose/saffron flavored ice cream. Sunday is Nowruz or Persian New Year so stop by to purchase some traditional treats!



## Escape to DC!

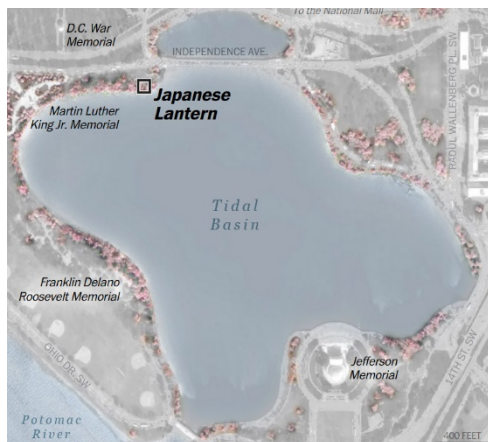
### The National Cherry Blossom Festival,

March 20<sup>th</sup> to April 17<sup>th</sup>



The National Cherry Blossom Festival is one of the most popular events in the DC Region. For so many of the locals, this blooming of the Cherry Trees around the Tidal Basin, is among the first harbingers of the spring season. Suddenly, after months of cold weather and greyness, the earth begins to revive with colorful spring flowers and tree blossoms. These beautiful, old trees were [gifts of friendship given to the United States from Japan in 1912](#). For over a hundred years, our region has celebrated their blooms.

The Tidal Basin, run by the National Park Service, is always a nice walk but take time to see the cultural sights such as the [Japanese Stone Lantern](#) – when it is lit, the Festival is officially open. There is also the Japanese Pagoda which was gifted in 1958. You can read about it in this excellent interactive piece by the [Washington Post](#) from last year. As you go around the [Tidal Basin Loop Trail](#), there are several important memorials to Martin Luther King, Jr, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Thomas Jefferson and other treasures to see.



This year the peak bloom is predicted for March 22-25<sup>th</sup>. Its only a few weeks away so start planning to visit the Tidal Basin. In the past, I've gone just before or just after the peak bloom and it has always been amazing, and less crowded! If you go really early in the morning, you can nab a parking space nearby. Otherwise, take the Metro, the Smithsonian Metro Station is probably the closest depending on where you are coming from. Or reserve a parking spot in advance. The Cherry Blossom Festival website recommends "convenient and affordable parking in advance through [SpotHero](#), the nation's leading parking reservations app. To reserve your parking spot, visit the [National Cherry Blossom Festival SpotHero Parking Page](#) and book a spot with rates up to 50% off drive-up."

***Welcome to the Virginia Tech Graduate School  
in the DC Metro Region***

***The Newsletter is compiled, written and/edited by Susan Merten. It is circulated every Friday.  
Please send information of interest for graduate students by COB Wednesday to***

***[smerten@vt.edu](mailto:smerten@vt.edu)***

**Connect with the VT Graduate School through the following sites**



[Graduate Student Assembly-  
VT-National Capital Region](#)



[VTGradSchDC](#)



[NVC Website](#)

**VT Graduate School in the DC Metro Region**



**Kenneth H. Wong**

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And Director of the Northern Virginia Center (NVC)  
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**Susan Merten**

Assistant to the Associate Dean and Director of the NVC  
Room 410, [smerten@vt.edu](mailto:smerten@vt.edu) or (703) 538-8310

**GRADUATE STUDENT SERVICES Office (GSSO)**

**Contact: [gssoncr@vt.edu](mailto:gssoncr@vt.edu) or (703) 538-8327. To schedule appointments, click [here](#)**



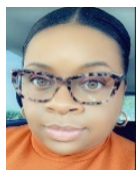
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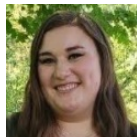
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