Admissions Requirements

Do you think the VT Principal Preparation Program may be right for you? To be admitted as an M.A. or Ed.S. student, you must:

• Hold a bachelor’s (or, for the Ed.S., master’s) degree from an accredited institution

• Have earned at least a 3.2 GPA on your most recent two years of university coursework

• Have K-12 teaching experience, with at least three years of experience preferred

Applicants are evaluated based on their written and oral communication skills; technological competence; leadership potential; letters of recommendation; and commitment both to completing the program and becoming school leaders.

For application instructions, please visit our website, or e-mail one of the program contacts listed on the back of this brochure. We accept applications on a rolling admissions basis for students to join an existing or new cohort.

Contacts

Please send any questions or requests for further information to:

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Know another educator who would make an outstanding principal or supervisor?

Pass along this brochure!
History and Purpose

Since 1989, the Virginia Tech Program for the Preparation of School Principals and Supervisors has taught students to face the challenges of contemporary K-12 school leadership. Designed to fit the needs of working educational professionals, the program is conducted on a part-time basis, with coursework that balances modern academic theory with real-life practice. Principal Preparation graduates leave with the skills they need to lead ethically, work confidently with diverse populations, and initiate programs to improve the learning and prospects of K-12 students. Many alumni have gone on to serve as assistant principals, principals, or central office administrators, or to pursue doctoral work.

Locations and Cohorts

We offer our Principal Preparation Program online and at five Virginia Tech extension sites: Hampton Roads Center (in Virginia Beach), Northern Virginia Center (in Falls Church), Richmond Center, the Roanoke Center, and Southwest Virginia Center (in Abingdon). The program operates on a modified cohort model. In other words, each site admits students to the cohort on a rolling admission basis allowing students to complete the Principal Preparation program in four semesters. Members of the cohort, M.A. and Ed.S. students alike, attend all of the same classes in the same sequence and pursue common plans of study.

Degrees Offered

The Principal Preparation Program awards two degrees: an M.A. and an Ed.S. (Educational Specialist), both in the subject of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. The M.A. is intended for students who have not already earned a master’s degree, while the Ed.S. is intended for students who have already earned a master’s in an education-related subject. M.A. and Ed.S. students complete all of the same coursework. However, Ed.S. students graduate with more credits than their M.A. counterparts, because some of their previous graduate credits transfer over to the Ed.S. In this respect, the Ed.S. may be thought of as an extension of one’s earlier master’s.

Both the M.A. and Ed.S. degree tracks prepare students to meet the requirements of the School Leadership Licensure Assessment. After graduating, students must pass the SLLA to receive licensure as a Virginia school leader.

Coursework

Principal Preparation students complete 30 hours of coursework on a part-time basis, over a period of approximately four semesters. Generally, students attend two classes – totaling 6 credit hours – per semester. Most courses are conducted in the evening to fit the schedules of full-time educators, and the majority of courses are taught in-person or via blended learning, except the virtual (on-line) classes are all online, either synchronous or asynchronous.

Internship Component

The 30 hours of coursework include 6-credits of internship, focused on building-level school leadership and on division-level, agency, or special school leadership. Students conduct the internship on-site at a local educational institution, under the mentorship of a practicing principal or supervisor. To pass, students must demonstrate competency in a range of standards-based skills.

Course Topics

Course topics include school law, budgeting, instructional supervision, special education administration, leadership and change, research and evaluation, and personnel administration. The curriculum meets the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), the National Educational Leadership Preparation Standards (NELP), Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparations (CAEP), and knowledge- and skill-based objectives identified by practicing school administrators.

Tuition

As full-time Virginia K-12 school employees, our students qualify for a 25% reduced tuition rate. Please see the Bursar’s Office website, bursar.vt.edu, for current rates and more information on the VA School Personnel Discount.