

Accessibility, Wheelchairs, and Disability Accommodations

This is a comprehensive website designed to address access and accommodation topics for individuals with disabilities and/or impaired mobility attending the Spring Commencement Ceremony (graduate and/or undergraduate). Please note that the weather in Blacksburg can be unpredictable. The stadium can be very windy and cold; please dress appropriately for the evening ceremony and bring a jacket.

ARRIVAL TIME

It is important to note that arriving at least one hour before the ceremony will help with your selection of parking and seating. Please make transportation and other arrangements with this in mind.

PARKING (Undergraduate and Graduate)

Two (2) weeks before the date of the Commencement Ceremony, students can pick up a “special needs” parking pass for family and/or friends who need accommodations due to a disability or impaired mobility. **(Location: Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 250 S. Main Street, Suite 300)**

For the Spring 2009 Commencement Ceremony, “special needs” parking passes will be available starting Friday, May 1, 2009 and continue weekdays through Friday, May 15, 2009 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

**** NOTE**:** Individuals do not need a “special needs” parking pass if they already have an official DMV handicap license plate or hang tag. Only those vehicles with DMV tags are eligible to park in designated handicap parking spaces. For individuals with impaired mobility (without a DMV tag) additional parking spaces have been allocated at the university ceremony. These vehicles must display the “special needs parking pass” on the dashboard of the car. Parking passes are good for Friday and Saturday only.

Handicap parking is available at the south end of the stadium. A large area in the center of the lot will be roped off for this purpose. It is recommended that wheelchair users park at the south end of the stadium that is accessible from Southgate Drive and Spring Road. A section of the lot nearest Cassell Coliseum (lot on Spring Road) will be reserved for handicap and “special needs” parking. Overflow parking, if needed, will be in the Litton Reeves lot (see http://www.vt.edu/where_we_are/maps/campus-map-highres.pdf).

Main University Ceremony (Lane Stadium)

- **Ambulatory Seating** (Accessible seating for non-wheelchair users)

Individuals who can transfer from their wheelchairs or who have limited mobility have several choices for seating:

1. Park in the ***south end zone lot or be dropped off at the south end zone gate 2 or use BT Access (Para transit) vans.*** Enter gate 2, proceed to the elevator, go to level 2, and enter the stands between sections 203-204. Three rows of seating are roped off for ambulatory seating. People who wish to remain in their wheelchairs can sit closer to the stage by using the east or

west side stands' wheelchair seating areas; please see the third paragraph below (under *Non-Ambulatory Seating*) for directions.

2. Park in the Coliseum lot accessible area and cross Spring Road to enter the West Stands at gates 4 or 5 (see map link below). Ambulatory seating is available from portals 6 – 20.

**A note on ambulatory seating – please have one family member sit with you on the accessible seats. We request additional family members sit on the rows in front or behind the access seats to allow space for all patrons needing the accessible seats.

- **Non-Ambulatory Seating** (Wheelchair users)

Wheelchair accessible seating is located in the south end zone area and in the east and west side of the stadium. Individuals who cannot, or prefer not to transfer out of their wheelchairs, can use any of these areas. Parking for both south and east areas is best in the south stadium lot. Parking for the west sides is best in the Coliseum lot.

For seating in the south end of the stadium, enter the elevator located near the parking area in the south end zone stand. Exit on the fourth floor; enter portals 401 – 409 for wheelchair seating which has companion-seating in-between the wheelchair areas. Limited wheelchair seating without interspersed companion seating is located in the corners of the second level of the south end zone stand.

For seating on the east side of the stadium, enter through Gate 1 in the south east corner of the stadium then enter the odd-numbered portals (1,3,5,7,9,11,13) from under the east stands. Companion seating is on the benches located behind or in front of the wheelchair seating.

For seating on the west side, enter at the north towers through the glass doors leading into the Athletics Office lobby; these doors are about 50 feet to the right of gate five (Athletic Office entry). Take the elevator to level four. Proceed down the corridor to the double doors to enter the covered deck where wheelchairs can be placed with a companion alongside in a folding chair. Wheelchair seating is also available in the south tower; enter at the Ticket Office door, proceed to elevator and level four. Follow the signs to the south tower platform seating for wheelchair users.

USHERS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO HELP DIRECT YOU TO SEATING IN ALL AREAS.

- **Restrooms**

Accessible restrooms are available in the west or south stands and on the north east side between section 1 and 3. Standard restrooms are located along the portals on the south, west and east sides.

Graduate School Ceremony (Cassell Coliseum)

- **Ambulatory Seating** (Accessible seating for non-wheelchair users)

Individuals who **can transfer from wheelchairs** or who are **ambulatory** can enter through the main lobby from the **Washington Street entrance** (front of the Coliseum) and proceed to any aisle. Accessible seating will be reserved in the first two rows as you enter the portals. Ushers are available to direct you to these areas. Wheelchairs and walkers must be folded and stored

along the walkways to the portals. **Individuals MAY NOT remain in their wheelchairs in the portal areas.**

The band platform area **is not accessible** for wheelchairs (between Aisles 11 and 13).

- **Non-Ambulatory Seating** (Wheelchair users)

Ushers will be available to direct individuals to the appropriate entrance, seats and parking as listed below:

Spring Road Route:

Individuals who cannot or prefer not to transfer out of their wheelchairs can enter the Coliseum through the Merryman Center, which is directly across from the Coliseum Parking lot on Spring Road. Signs will be posted. Enter the Merryman Center front doors, go through the lobby and bear left down the long ramp. This will take you into the Jamerson Center. Follow the blue access signs down the hall and turn left into the Coliseum. Proceed straight ahead onto the floor of the Coliseum. Wheelchair users are seated behind the graduates. Folding chairs are available for a guest to sit with the person in the wheelchair. Additional seats are available on the rows directly beside or behind the wheelchair seating and are accessed from a small gate at the floor level. *Ushers are available to assist guests along this route.*

Washington Street Route:

Individuals who **cannot or prefer not to transfer** out of their wheelchairs may enter the Coliseum through the **Washington Street entrance** (front of the Coliseum) and proceed with fellow guests to the elevator opposite Aisle 18. Individuals remaining in their wheelchair must be seated in the handicap seating area located on the gymnasium floor.

Directions to the elevator: Enter Cassell Coliseum from **Washington Street** then veer to the left and the elevator will be on the left across from Aisle 18. Take the elevator down to the second floor of the Coliseum. Proceed through the adjacent hallway and the Coliseum entrance will be in front of you. Ushers are available to assist guests along this route.

Wheelchair seating is behind the graduates and directly opposite the stage. One person may accompany and sit with the individual with impaired mobility. Other family members can sit in the first rows behind them in the stands, which can be accessed from the floor of the Coliseum. When graduates begin to line up for the procession, the hallways on this level will be extremely congested and inaccessible until after all graduates are seated.

- **RESTROOMS**

Floor of the Coliseum

An accessible restroom is located in the hallway as you exit the elevator to the right on level two.

Ambulatory Level

The accessible restrooms are located near entries 14 and 17 and in the hallway in Jamerson Center across from Aisle 18. Other non-accessible restrooms are located around the ambulatory level.

231-0853 (TTY)) for this request at least **2 weeks prior** to graduation. Every effort will be made to arrange for these services. Accessible seating in **Lane Stadium** for persons who use sign language interpreting services will be located in the vicinity just below ramps 7 and 9 near the 20 yard line on the east side of the stadium. In **Cassell Coliseum**, seating will be located in Section 8 near the floor of the coliseum. Due to limited seating, an early arrival time would be advised. For individual college ceremonies, see section below.

- **Individual College Ceremonies**

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing: Sign language interpreters and/or assistive listening devices are provided for the individual college ceremonies **only upon request**. This request should be made by contacting Services for Students with Disabilities (540-231-0858 (V) or 540-231-0853 (TTY)) at least **2 weeks prior** to graduation. Every effort will be made to arrange for these services. Seating for access to the interpreter will be determined by the individual venue.

Who to Contact for Additional Questions

- **Main Ceremony**

If you are a person with a disability and need additional accommodations to participate in this event, please contact the SSD office at 540-231-0858 (V) or 540-231-0853 (TTY), e-mail: ssd@vt.edu; or University ADA Services at 540-231-4638 (V) or 540-231-7227 (TTY), e-mail: adainfo@vt.edu.

- **Individual College Ceremonies**

Visitors can drive near college ceremony locations, let out members in your party, then park in appropriate spaces. Blacksburg Transit can provide Para transit services (BT Access) with advance notice by calling 540-961-1803. (Please see the VT Parking Services Map pdf (http://www.facilities.vt.edu/documents/parking/parking_map_06.pdf) and/or the VT Universal Access Campus Map (www.maps.vt.edu) for building locations, access routes, and parking information.)

For additional questions about accessibility to individual college ceremonies, people needing accommodations should contact the individual colleges listed below:

Agriculture and Life Sciences	540-231-6503
Architecture and Urban Studies	540-231-6415
Engineering	540-231-6641
Liberal Arts and Human Sciences	540-231-6770
Natural Resources	540-231-5482
Pamplin College of Business	540-231-9608
Science	540-231-5144
Veterinary School	540-231-3490

Accessibility Maps

Lane Stadium Accessibility Maps

[Color Version](#)

[Black & White Version](#)

VT Universal Access Campus Map

www.maps.vt.edu