Fall Graduation Access Information

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 Fall Commencement Ceremony (graduate and/or undergraduate).

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 AND IMPAIRED MOBILITY SEATING

- Parking
Two (2) weeks before the date of the Commencement Ceremony, students can pick up an “accessible” parking pass for family and/or friends who need accommodations due to a disability or impaired mobility. (Location: Services for Students with Disabilities Office, 310 Lavery Hall, Blacksburg, VA)

For the Fall 2015 Commencement Ceremony, “accessible” parking passes will be available starting Friday, December 4, 2015 and continue weekdays through Friday, December 18, 2015 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

**NOTE** Individuals do not need a “accessible” 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.

The first two parking bays in the lot nearest Cassell Coliseum (lot on Spring Road) will be reserved for handicapped and “accessible” parking.

- 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, walkers, and baby strollers 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.

For individuals who cannot or prefer not to transfer out of their wheelchairs. Accessible seating is located off the main concourse at portals 16, 17, and 18. There are two accessible entrances that individuals can use. The first is on Washington St. and will put the individual on the same floor as the accessible seating. The second is located next to the Cassell Coliseum at the Merryman Center. If using this entrance, individuals will be required to take an elevator to the 4th floor of the arena to reach the accessible seating sections.

Wheelchair seating is behind the graduates and directly opposite the stage. 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.

The band platform area located on the main seating level is not accessible for wheelchairs (between Aisles 11 and 13).

Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing: American Sign Language interpreters will be provided for the Fall Undergraduate and Graduate university commencement ceremonies. Should a person who is deaf or hard of hearing prefer a different mode of communication or the use of an assistive listening device, Services for Students with Disabilities should be contacted (540-231-3788 (V) or 540-231-1740 (TTY)) for this request at least 2 weeks prior to graduation. Every effort will be made to arrange for these services. 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.

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/unisex restrooms are located between entries 13 and 15. Men and women’s restrooms are located near the elevators on the second floor of the Jamerson Center. Other non-accessible restrooms are located around the ambulatory level.
BUS TRANSPORTATION
Regular Blacksburg Transit (BT) routes will be running during graduation. If you need BT ACCESS/Paratransit (handicap accessible bus), please contact the BT ACCESS/Paratransit at least one week in advance to arrange fare free wheelchair or other special needs transportation. Schedules and accessibility information are available by contacting www.btransit.org or by calling 540-961-1803 or 540-961-1185.

WHEELCHAIR PROVISIONS / RENTAL

Individuals needing wheelchair assistance will be required to bring their own personal chairs. Wheelchairs may be obtained from the following sources: (1) bring your own personal chair; (2) obtain a rental wheelchair from your local hometown area; (3) contact the Blacksburg wheelchair rental agencies listed below. Please make your arrangements for a wheelchair rental EARLY.

Local Wheelchair Rental Agencies

New River Valley Rent-All
(540) 639-1619 / 1530 West Main St., Radford, VA

Medi Home Care
(540) 951-1786 / 3607 South Main St., Blacksburg, VA
Toll Free: 888-317-6334

Advanced Home Care
(540) 633-2223 / 48 W. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA

Who to Contact for Additional Questions

University ADA Services at 540-231-2010; or Services for Students with Disabilities at 540-231-3788 (V) or 540-231-1740 (TTY), e-mail: ssd@vt.edu.

VT Universal Access Campus Map
http://www.maps.vt.edu/