



BATTEN
HONORS COLLEGE
of VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2025-26



VISION

The Batten Honors College of Virginia Wesleyan inspires, engages, and prepares academically talented students to become leaders, environmental stewards, and impactful citizens in the global community.

MISSION

The Batten Honors College of Virginia Wesleyan provides a transformative experience for high-achieving students and equips them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of an ethical, thoughtful, and influential global citizen who understands the interdependence of society, culture, and the environment.



OVERVIEW

The Batten Honors College prepares academically advanced and socially engaged students to lead society's professions and institutions with innovative approaches and ethical values that steward an environment threatened by global degradation and climate change.

Grounded in the three pillars of Environmental Stewardship, Global Citizenship, and Leadership, the Batten Honors College curriculum builds skills in critical thinking, research, collaboration, and communication. Successful students demonstrate independent thinking, social responsibility, and self-discovery while challenging students to view the world from a variety of perspectives grounded in the Liberal Arts and Sciences. Student experiences in the Honors curriculum will include seminar-style courses, faculty mentored research, and a global residency experience. Regardless of a student's major, they will gain a broader perspective on the connection between themselves, their academic discipline, the environment, and the world.

Student experiences in the BHC curriculum will range from small seminar-style courses to an immersive, semester-long, global experience. The interdisciplinary seminars will include lectures and group discussions led by faculty from two or more disciplines. Students will develop analytic, leadership, collaboration, and communication skills through the Honors courses. Honors students learn by doing - the BHC requires experiential learning opportunities beyond the classroom, including research and/or internships and extended service projects at home or around the globe.

Each year, 40 students are accepted into the program. Twenty Batten Fellows receive a scholarship covering the full cost of tuition. An additional twenty students receive a scholarship that is nearly three-quarters of their annual tuition. No matter the student's major, all Batten Scholarships are renewable for the fall and spring semesters for four consecutive years. Scholarships are awarded based on the student's performance during the competition. VWU may offer additional financial aid or financial incentives in conjunction with the honors college scholarship.

Students who do not remain in good standing, including for reasons regarding student conduct, may be subject to forfeiture of their scholarship. In the event a BHC student loses their scholarship, their financial aid package will be readjusted to their initial VWU merit scholarship.

Batten Honors College policies are in addition to and do not supersede Virginia Wesleyan University policies. BHC students are expected to adhere to both the Batten Honors College policies as well as all VWU policies. VWU policies can be found in the most recent editions of the Academic Catalog and the Student Handbook.



PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

After participation in and graduation from the Batten Honors College, students will have demonstrated the ability to:

1. Develop a solutions and innovative approaches to address the complexities of environmental sustainability issues through research and development of a senior capstone research project.
2. Demonstrate the connections between leadership styles and their own personal values.
3. Understand global cultures through the fulfillment of a global study away experience.
4. Articulate ideas in all forms of communication to a variety of audiences.

BATTEN HONORS COLLEGE ACADEMIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

| COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE | SEMESTER HOURS |
|--|----------------|
| HON 110: Contemporary Environmental Issues | 4 |
| HON 210: Seminar in Global Citizenship | 4 |
| HON 310: Seminar in Leadership | 4 |
| HON 480: Senior Seminar | 4 |
| Two Honors Electives at 300/400 Level | 8 |
| Global Residency Requirement | |
| Immersive Educational Experience Requirement | |
| TOTAL HOURS REQUIRED: | 24 |

HONORS ELECTIVE COURSES

Students will be required to register for and complete two courses for Honors Elective credit, totaling 8 credit hours. Honors courses allow the student an opportunity to study content in more depth utilizing a higher level research and critical thinking skills. Typically honors work involves independent scholarly research or creative activity that results in a final assessable artifact. It can also involve exploratory learning and practical applications of concepts and skills - so long as those applications and exploration are meant to provide significant insight or innovative advancement of the course content. It is not sufficient to simply increase the workload in



comparison to the regular course requirements. Special attention should be paid to create deliberate connections between the course content and the mission of the Batten Honors College

to equip the student with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of an ethical, thoughtful, and influential global citizen who understands the interdependence of society, culture, and the environment. Honors elective credit can only be attached to traditional disciplinary courses at the 300 level and above (WES 300 courses are ineligible).

To receive the HNRS course credit designation for the elective course, students must:

- 1.) Work with the instructor to craft an approach to meeting the honors elective credit and the goals of the course. Most faculty have offered honors elective credit, so they have ideas or may have projects in mind from previous honors courses.
- 2.) Submit your written request to take the course and the approval from the faculty member offering the course credit to the Dean at least one week prior to the beginning of classes.
- 3.) Submit a syllabus for the honors section to the Dean by the end of the second week of classes.

GLOBAL RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

Contemporary American Higher Education promotes a mode of acquiring knowledge primarily by learning through distinct and sometimes disparate courses. The Batten Honors College and Virginia Wesleyan push back on this by providing holistic learning experiences where students are required to unite courses through cultural immersion and the promotion of intellectual curiosity and cultural humility. The liberal arts and sciences are a distinctively western contribution to society. Global understanding is one of the three pillars of the BHC experience. Scholars need to be able to examine knowledge and global problems holistically rather than seeking a single approach through one mode of thinking or a course-based approach.

The BHC Global Residency program is built upon the Eastern principles of cultural humility and immersion, which lead to a true understanding of global communities. intentionally comparative. For example, many students will pursue this comparative approach to learning through VWU Global and our collaborative campus in Tokyo, Japan. Where better to explore this holistic experience than immersed in a Pan-Asian Pacific region that values harmony, aesthetics, and sustainability. The holistic experience helps build the skills necessary to effectively collaborate and communicate with people from around the world by bridging academic, cultural, political, and ethnic divides.

BHC students are eligible for a one-time grant to aid them in their studies. Grants are applied directly to the student's account. The student may also use portions of the grant money to pay for university-approved airline travel booked through university travel partners. These travel expenses are charged against the grant total. Surplus grant funds will be applied, with the balance being applied to the student's account. If the grant does not cover the full cost of the experience,



students will be charged for additional costs. Grant values vary by program and experience (see below).

Depending on the global program, students will have to pay for visa fees, program application/placement fees, housing costs, and international health insurance fees. Students must apply in advance for all programs and will work with the Office of Global Engagement for program application, placement, and preparation for the study away experience. Students are required to submit their plans to complete the requirement in their first year of study. Additionally, students are required to complete the Global Residency Questionnaire on a yearly basis until they have completed the requirement. Students can apply to study abroad as soon as the second semester of study.

All Global Residency experiences must be approved by the Dean and coordinated through the Office of Global Engagement.

Jane P. Batten and David R. Black School for International Studies in Tokyo, Japan

VWU's unique program and international study abroad opportunity in Tokyo, Japan. As a global leader in sustainability and the hub of Southeast Asian finance and trade, Tokyo presents an incredible opportunity to better understand the challenges facing the world. The Batten & Black School is built on the experience of cultural immersion. The Batten & Black School features a diverse faculty and student body working together to build knowledge and understanding through English-based coursework. While taking courses, students live in a thriving global city that provides a wealth of additional learning and internship opportunities with companies and the Japanese government. Additionally, BHC students may also earn credit towards the designation of Batten & Black School of International Studies Fellow.

BHC students are eligible for a one-time grant totaling \$5,000. Students may choose to use university-approved airline travel for roundtrip travel between their home airport and Tokyo. The airline cost is deducted from the total grant amount. The remaining balance will be credited directly to the student's account. Students are responsible for their regular VWU semester tuition. Students pay room fees directly to our collaborative campus. Summer studies at the Batten & Black School are also eligible for the grant funding.

International Partner Programs

BHC students who cannot complete their global experience requirement through the Batten & Black School for International Studies must seek approval to complete their requirement through other partner programs. Students will work with the Office of Global Engagement to find a program that can align with their education and professional goals. While students are studying in one of our partner programs, they continue to pay their semester tuition through VWU. Students are not eligible to use BHC scholarships or grants towards program fees or international university tuition. Our partner programs are exchanges, so students do not have to pay tuition to the international institution.



BHC students are eligible for grant aid to assist with international airfare and a one-time study away grant of \$1500. Students undertaking partner programs are required to pay for their own application/placement fees, visa fees (various by country), and any other fees required by the host institution or program.

Global Residency Exemption Application Process

In the event that a student is unable to complete the Global Residency Requirement through one of our traditional programs, students may submit an application to the Dean for exemption or substitution for the requirement. Appeals should be submitted in the second year of study and no later than 2 semesters prior to graduation. Applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Grant funding amounts vary by substitute course.

Applications must be submitted in writing (email is appropriate) to the Dean. Applications must address the following:

1. A full statement that outlines all reasons why you will not be able to fulfill the traditional fall or spring semester away experience. Also, include a proposal to fulfill the requirement.
2. A current Four-Year Plan.
3. In the case of academic appeal, please include a statement from your advisor that outlines any academic hardships that will hinder your ability to complete the global studies requirement and your degree requirements within four years (i.e. - the length of your scholarship/financial aid).
4. Any documentation that supports your request. This may include doctor or health provider documentation (doctor, physician, psychiatrist) and/or demonstrated financial need (FAFSA, financial aid statement).

NOTE - Financial assistance for exemptions is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. BHC scholarships cannot be applied to coursework and travel exemptions completed outside of the fall and spring semesters. Additional VWU Summer or J-term tuition and course fees may also apply. BHC Study Away Grant will be awarded based on the program, course, and fees of the substitution.

IMMERSIVE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT

Students will be required to complete one immersive experience that serves to put their honors education in practice towards the bettering of society. Students can choose from the following opportunities to complete the requirement: Undergraduate Research, Internship, or Extended Service Learning. Students will apply to the office to receive credit for their experience. Undergraduate Research should include the presentation of the research at conferences or the VWU Undergraduate Research Symposium (projects for the HON 480 capstone course are ineligible to apply for this requirement). Internships can be through a major, paid or unpaid, or



accomplished outside of credit bearing courses. Service Learning projects should meet the demands of service learning as established by the Wesleyan Engaged Office. Many BHC students have and often will undertake all three, but only one is required to graduate.

THE BATTEN HONORS COLLEGE DEGREE

Graduates of the Batten Honors College receive a diploma recognizing their accomplishment. In order to graduate, students must complete the academic requirements and be in good standing as a member of the honors community. Graduates must have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher and at least a B average (3.00) in all honors courses (HON and HNRS). In addition to the academic component, graduates must be active members of the honors residential community by participating and attending important university events as representatives of the Honors College. Events include mandatory attendance at BHC Founders Day Convocation, Founder's Day events, BHC Matriculation, BHC Capstone Ceremony, The Ryan Research Symposium, other institutional ceremonies and events. Students who do not remain in good standing with the BHC are subject to the rights and penalties outlined by the university. If the student completes all requirements for graduation but are below the GPA or course requirements, the student can still graduate with a degree from VWU.

UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE

The Virginia Wesleyan University Honor Code guides our approach to academic integrity. A Batten Scholar who is found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty by the Honor Council may be subject to immediate dismissal from the Batten Honors College.

PUBLIC, CAMPUS, & SOCIAL MEDIA CONDUCT

Batten Honors College students are expected to maintain a high standard of behavior by adhering to Virginia Wesleyan's Standards of Student Conduct and respecting the rights of others. Any member of the Batten Honors College who is found to have committed an act of behavioral misconduct by the Community Arbitration Board and/or the Community Review Board may be subject to immediate dismissal from the Batten Honors College.

By association, students are representatives of the Honors College in virtually all aspects, even on social media. As community members and potential leaders, students are strongly encouraged to model civil discourse and aspire to the highest standards not only face-to-face but also virtually. Behavioral misconduct includes online and social media communications.



BATTEN HONORS ACADEMIC AND GOOD STANDING POLICY

Students must meet these requirements to remain in good standing in the Batten Honors College:

- Uphold and adhere to University-wide standards of student conduct policies as outlined in VWU Student Handbook, VWU Mission Statement, Wesleyan Creed, and VWU Honor Code.
- Being active members in the campus community by participating in and attending important university events as representatives of the Honors College. Events include mandatory BHC Founders Day Convocation, Founder's Day events, BHC Matriculation, BHC Capstone Ceremony, and other institutional ceremonies and events.
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (please note that a minimum GPA of 3.50 is required to graduate with Latin Honors).
- Minimum B average (3.00) in all honors courses (HON and HNRS)
- Complete BHC requirements in a timely fashion including completing all 100 and 200 level HON courses within the first two years, unless granted a waiver by the BHC Dean.
- Maintain full-time enrollment status (at least 12 credit hours per semester)
- Meet Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress, as determined by the Office of Financial Aid.
- Must maintain good financial status with no financial holds on their student receivable account.
- Meet VWU thresholds for the Selective Retention Policy as outlined in the Student Handbook.

BATTEN HONORS COLLEGE HOUSING POLICY

The Batten Honors College is a residential, living learning community housed in the Honors Village. All Honors College students, even those who live within any Coastal Virginia community, are required to live on campus. Honors students are housed as part of a living learning community in the Honors Village. This inclusive student community provides a learning experience that goes beyond the classroom, strengthens student engagement in campus life, and develops meaningful social connections.

Students receiving the Presidential Scholarship are required to live in the Honors Village for all four years. Dean's Scholarship recipients are required to live in the Honors Village for the first two years, and will be housed in Honors Village, as space is available. Those not in the Honors Village will be assigned housing elsewhere on campus.

The Office of Residence Life oversees all residence placements and policies. Batten Honors College policies may impact residency and scholarship availability. Students must abide by both the Honors College and Residence Life policies. If a student loses campus housing privileges for any reason, then the student may be subject to a loss of scholarship as well.

Students who are participating in their Global Residency Experience or pursuing internships,



short-term study abroad may file a request with Residence Life and the Dean's Office for a reprieve from the housing policy for those experiences. Meal Plans are based on year (first year, sophomore, etc.) and housing placement. Students can contact Residence Life and the Finance Office with questions regarding housing and meal plans.

ACADEMIC WARNING, PROBATION, DISMISSAL, AND WITHDRAWAL

The Batten Honors College expects all members of our community to uphold and support high academic and ethical standards. Although BHC advisors will monitor student progress at midterm and after each semester, formal review of each student by the BHC office will occur at the end of each academic year to ascertain the status of each fellow and scholar. Students determined to be in good standing will maintain their status within the Batten Honors College through the following academic year. Students who are not in good standing are considered for Honors warning, Honors probation, or dismissal from the BHC. Typically, a student will be placed on Honors warning if they are close to, but not meeting the requirements for good standing (i.e. GPA is slightly below 3.0).

A student will typically be placed on honors probation when more than one of the requirements are not met or the student has failed a course. A status of warning or probation triggers the Honors support program.

The Honors Support Program is designed to communicate BHC expectations, provide resources and services, assist students in developing an improvement plan, and provide a period of time for students to make adjustments. In the Honors Support Program, students will receive assistance through regular meetings with an Honors advisor, as well as the resources or services needed, such as administrative support, career counseling, tutoring, study groups, and other professional services. Students, in consultation with an honors advisor, will develop an Academic Improvement Plan that is an individualized action plan with specific goals set for the semester. Students placed on Honors warning will remain active participants in the Honors College curriculum and residential community, but will be required to participate in the Honors support program for that semester and develop an Academic Improvement Plan. At the end of the semester on Honors warning, a student meeting the requirements will return to good standing in the Honors College. If at the end of the semester, the student does not meet the goals in the Academic Improvement Plan and/or the good standing requirements, the student will be placed on Honors probation.

Students on Honors probation are required to participate in the Honors support program and develop a revised Academic Improvement Plan. Those on Honors probation may remain in Honors courses and in Honors housing, but they will lose some privileges, such as priority registration and access to Honors College-funded events, programs or opportunities. At the end of the Honors probation semester, the Honors advisor and BHC Dean will evaluate student progress based upon the student's individualized academic improvement plan. Based on the



progress made, a student may return to good standing, be extended another semester on probation, or be dismissed from the Honors College.

Students who have failed under University policy to meet satisfactory academic progress at the end of the academic year or the GPA thresholds that trigger automatic probation, suspension or dismissal as outlined in the VWU selective retention policy may be subject to immediate dismissal from the Batten Honors College.

DISMISSAL FROM THE HONORS COLLEGE

If, in accordance with campus policies and procedures, a student is found to not be in good standing with the Batten Honors College, the student will be dismissed. A student may be dismissed from the honors college and still remain a student at VWU. Penalties, including dismissal, are developed in accordance with all university policies, both academic and community conduct. When a student is dismissed from the honors college, the student loses their scholarship, honors housing status, and is ineligible to receive benefits afforded by the honors college. If the student remains at VWU, the student's financial aid package will be adjusted for the loss of scholarship. Depending on the penalties for dismissal, students may also be eligible to move elsewhere on campus.

VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE HONORS COLLEGE

Students may voluntarily withdraw from the Batten Honors College and remain students at VWU. Students must meet with the BHC Dean and submit a signed withdrawal form to the Dean. Withdrawal from the Honors College will result in the removal of all Batten Honors College notations from the student's transcript. However, honors notations for individual courses will remain and count towards the total degree credits and any general education credits awarded.

Students who voluntarily withdraw from the Batten Honors College are subject to the loss of their Batten scholarship and a repackaging of their financial aid. Students who voluntarily withdraw from the honors college will also lose all benefits afforded by their honors status, including housing, schedule status, honors travel grants, etc.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT / LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Batten Honors College students are expected to register for courses each semester on a continuous basis (excluding summer) to maintain the degree requirements in effect at the time of their initial enrollment and to be eligible for scholarship renewal.



The Honors College recognizes, however, that a student may encounter circumstances that require a temporary interruption of studies. Under such circumstances, the student must receive an approved leave of absence to maintain continuous enrollment and to be eligible for scholarship renewal. To be considered for a leave of absence, a student must make a written request to the Dean of the Batten Honors College in advance of the semester's absence. Upon reviewing the reasons for the request, the Dean may recommend that the Provost and Vice President approve a leave of absence.

BATTEN HONORS COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP RENEWAL

Batten Scholars are awarded a merit scholarship applicable to undergraduate tuition with a value of full annual tuition or two-thirds annual tuition, respectively. The scholarship is renewable annually, not to exceed four consecutive years, assuming full-time enrollment and satisfactory academic progress.

Scholarships are reviewed for continuation or termination at the end of each semester and for renewal at the end of each academic year by the Office of Financial Aid. Generally, Honors College scholarships are renewed when students are in good standing (see specific requirements above) and terminated when a student fails to meet the requirement for good standing or make Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Students who graduate with their undergrad degree before the end of their four years are eligible to apply their scholarship to graduate coursework. Students must apply and receive approval from the BHC Dean. The scholarship can be applied to graduate courses taken in Fall or Spring, only. BHC scholarships cannot be applied towards summer tuition. Students taking graduate courses in the BHC must still reside on campus.

Students who have been dismissed or withdrawn from the Batten Honors College will have their honors scholarship terminated, but may be offered an alternative merit scholarship congruent with their VWU academic record. Appeals following a loss of scholarship should be directed to the Office of Financial Aid and copied to the Dean of the Batten Honors College.

BATTEN HONORS COLLEGE GRADUATE DEGREE ASSISTANCE

The BHC scholarship packages (Presidential & Dean scholarships) are in effect for 8 consecutive, traditional semesters (Fall & Spring). Students that complete their degree in less than four years



are eligible to apply remaining scholarship aid towards graduate studies with VWU. The following requirements apply:

- BHC Aid recipients are eligible for tuition coverage *only* (up to the cost of a master's degree program coursework).
- Coverage period: Summer/Fall/Spring - 1 year OR 3 semesters following undergraduate graduation (example - Student graduating in May, will be eligible for tuition in the subsequent summer, fall, and spring semesters leading up to graduating in May of the next year.) Students cannot receive additional aid four years after their initial enrollment in VWU.
- Students must live on campus according to their scholarship expectations (all housing assignments will continue to be made by the Office of Residence Life according to BHC scholarship policies and within the housing availability on campus).

As a part of the BHC students are expected to continue to be active campus leaders. Students seeking to utilize their scholarship for VWU graduate programs must also complete the following requirements:

- Students must continue to live on campus and pay for their own room and board.
- Students must work a minimum of 10 hours per week for an on-campus office.
 - Hours must be logged in ADP for tracking purposes
 - Students will work with the BHC Dean, their Enrollment Counselor, and VWU Online for job placement/options.
 - Jason Seward, Associate Vice President for Campus Life will formalize work agreements once placement is made.
 - Approved work locations include: Learning Center, Student Success Program, BHC Office, VWU Global, Campus Co-op Positions. Other placements will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - Students are also permitted to apply to work as a Village Coordinator or Residential Assistant to help pay for housing. Those positions may be in addition to the 10 hour/week scholarship requirement.
- Students must remain in good academic standing (maintaining at least a 3.0 GPA) to keep the scholarship. GPA is calculated on a semester basis.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This policy manual is published by Virginia Wesleyan University and contains information concerning academic policies, program, and course offerings for the Batten Honors College. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the academic policies contained in this manual. Failure to do so does not excuse students from the requirements and regulations described in this manual.

BHC students are expected to adhere to both the Batten Honors College policies and all VWU policies, with VWU policy superseding BHC policy in all cases, except that BHC students are required to live on campus as a part of the residential program (see page 4 for details), and must



pay all applicable room and board fees for this residential portion of the program.

ADDITIONAL POLICY DOCUMENTS

Disclaimer: This handbook is not intended to and does not contain all policies and regulations that relate to BHC or VWU students. The University reserves the right to make alterations in programs, course offerings, policies, and fees without prior notice

BHC Admission www.vwu.edu/academics/batten-honors-college/admission-process.php

VWU Student Handbook www.vwu.edu/campus-life/student-affairs/student-handbook.php

VWU Honor Code www.vwu.edu/about/campus-offices/human-resources/pdfs/honor-code/honor-code.pdf

Undergraduate Catalog www.vwu.edu/academics/catalog.php

Batten Honors College www.vwu.edu/academics/batten-honors-college/