

# Parent Student Handbook

2020-2021 School Year

# Table of Contents

[Introduction to Veritas Scholars Academy](#)

[Veritas Websites](#)

[General VSA Information](#)

[Academic Year Calendar](#)

[Terms and Conditions](#)

[VSA Pricing](#)

[VSA Communities](#)

[End of Year Gathering](#)

[VSA Systems](#)

[Logging On](#)

[Best Practices for Students](#)

[Etiquette and Behavior Standards](#)

[Chat Box Guidelines](#)

[Academic Policies and Procedures](#)

[Orientation/Start of Classes](#)

[Late Enrollments](#)

[Classroom Discipline](#)

[Academic Dishonesty and Other Disciplinary Challenges](#)

[Grading Scale](#)

[Late Work](#)

[Exam/Test Retakes](#)

[Attendance and Participation](#)

[Class Attendance and Relevant Class Participation Grading Rubric](#)

[Educational Accommodations](#)

[Course Waiver and Archive Viewing Report](#)

[Course Assignments Sheet](#)

[“Save Your Grade” Day](#)

[Quarterly Grading and Comments](#)

[Full-Time Diploma Program](#)

[Additional Options for taking VSA Courses](#)

[Full-Time Diploma Course Registration](#)

[Full-Time Diploma Admissions and Enrollment](#)

[Annual Consultation](#)

[Transcript Grade Information](#)

[Contract Amendment](#)

[Appendix A - 2020-2021 Academic Year Calendar](#)

# **Introduction to Veritas Scholars Academy**

## **Mission Statement**

Restoring our culture for Christ...one young heart and mind at a time.

## **Statement of Faith**

We believe that the sixty-six books of the Holy Bible are the only authoritative, inerrant Word of God. Further, we believe that these Scriptures are our final rule in all matters of faith and practice.

We believe that there is but one God, eternally existent in three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We believe that Adam, the first man, sinned in his disobedience toward God and that through his disobedience sin extended to all his posterity. Consequently, all are born sinners, spiritually dead and relationally separated from God.

We believe that because of the ineffable love of God for the world, Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, perfect Man and truly God, came to earth to fulfill the divine Law through perfect obedience.

Having lived a sinless life in obedience to His Father, He gave His life on the Cross as the perfect, complete sacrifice for sin. On the third day, God raised Him from the dead, after He had provided a full redemption for His chosen people—those for whom He died. We believe that God will regenerate all for whom Christ died through the invincible power of the Holy Spirit. We believe that we sinners appropriate this work of God's salvation by His grace alone through our faith alone, not as a result of any of our works.

We believe that a true church may be known by its engaging in the pure preaching of the Gospel, the right administration of the sacraments, and the faithful exercising of church discipline. We believe that all Christians will seek to unite in fellowship with such a church.

We believe in the resurrection both of the believer and of the unbeliever—the believer unto the resurrection of everlasting life and the unbeliever unto the resurrection of everlasting damnation.

We believe and embrace the system of doctrine expressed in the early ecumenical creeds of the Church (the Apostles', the Nicene, the Chalcedonian and the Athanasian) and the confessions of faith issuing from the Protestant Reformation, including the Belgic Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism, The Philadelphia Confession, the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and the Westminster Confession of Faith. Where these documents are in conflict we submit to the Westminster Confession of Faith with the understanding that such conflicts should be articulated carefully as if they are secondary doctrines and taught with balance and integrity recognizing that these differences should not cause a breach in fellowship.

We believe our role as educators to be in loco parentis, (in the place of the parent). We believe that parents are responsible to educate their children in the Lord. We believe that educators must be the delegates of the parents, assisting them in the education of their children, but never usurping their God-given parental prerogative and responsibility.

We believe that biblical discipline, the encouragement of an obedient child and the correction of a disobedient child, is a critical and necessary part of education. Under no circumstances will the misbehavior of one child be permitted continually to hinder the education of other children.

We believe that fathers are the God-ordained heads of their households. Wherever possible, we desire that each father assume leadership in the education of his children.

We believe that conflict resolution should be accomplished as quickly and as simply as possible. Concerns and grievances should first be addressed directly to the party involved, in order that justice and charity be duly served.

## **Our History**

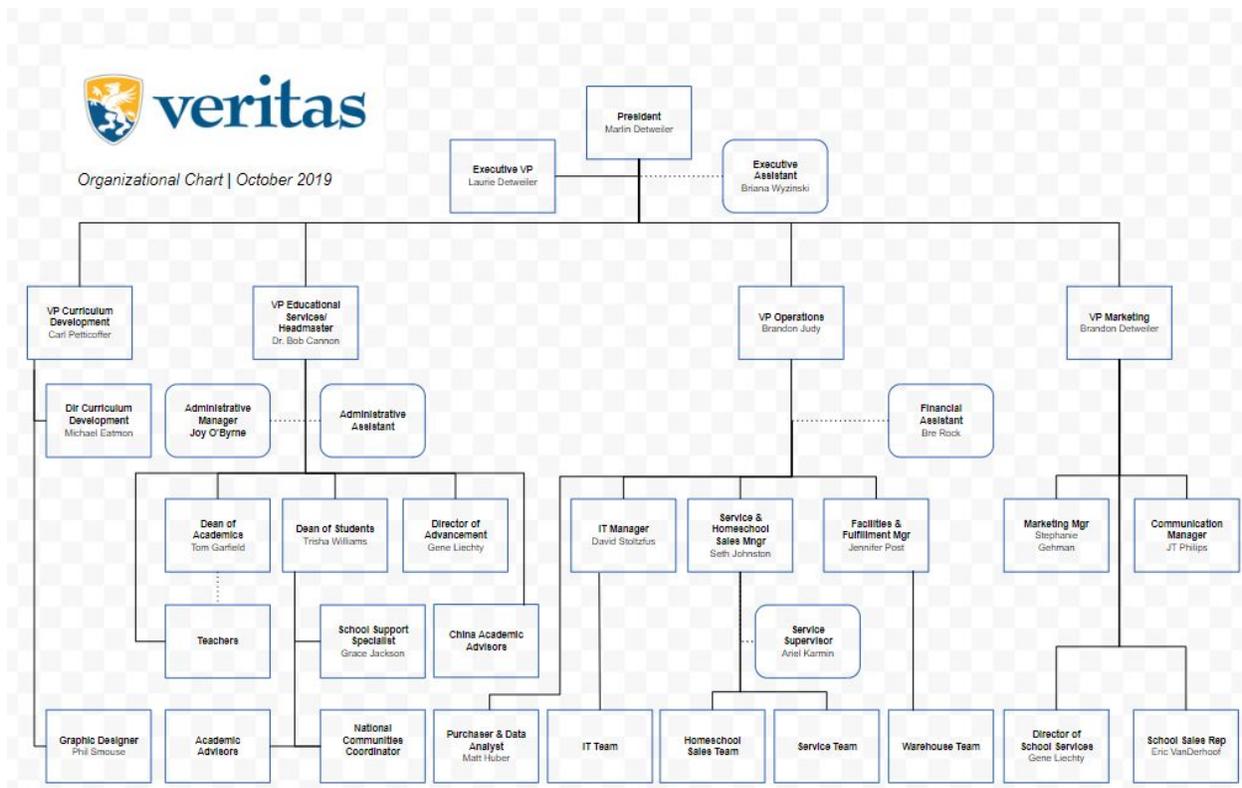
In 2006, Veritas Scholars Academy (VSA) was started with the goal of offering educational services beyond merely selling curricula. In 2007 the first live online classes were offered. At the beginning, there were approximately 32 students in two Live classes. Over the years, VSA has continued to add course offerings which now include over 10,000 students taking courses each year. In 2009, VSA went from simply offering single-enrollment courses to welcoming full-time students working toward a diploma. The K-12 school enrolled students who were accountable to academic standards in line with Veritas's high classical Christian academic standards. While VSA had been accredited for some time, in 2014 it was accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the same prestigious accreditation earned by the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton University along with many private Christian and preparatory high schools. VSA students take their courses exclusively online, or supplement with home study courses. These home study courses, now called "You Teach" courses, receive evaluation throughout the year to ensure that they meet our academic objectives. When VSA began offering diplomas in 2009, there were 90 participating students. Currently, there are many, many more from all 50 states and many countries throughout the world.

## **Educational Philosophy**

We employ the time-proven method of the Trivium in the education of the student. This method includes three stages. The Grammar stage studies the fundamentals of disciplines in order to build a framework of knowledge on which later information can be hung. Questions of who, what, where, and when are the focus. The Dialectic stage brings the grammar of disciplines into ordered relationships. The goal is to equip students with the thinking skills necessary to recognize sound arguments and ideas and

to detect and correct fallacious ones. This stage addresses the questions of “how” and “why”. The Rhetoric stage seeks to produce students who can use language, both written and spoken, to express their thoughts eloquently and persuasively. The goal of the Trivium is to educate students not in what to think, primarily, but in how to think,

## Veritas Press Organizational Chart



### Affiliations/Accreditations

We are accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. We are a member of the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS) and an approved curriculum for future NCAA athletes.

### Classical Education

In *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning*, Douglas Wilson describes a Christian Liberal Arts education for students in Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Much of the education of our American forefathers was based on this model, and over time our educational system has strayed far from it—primarily influenced by *pragmatism* and the idea that education is more about helping someone get a job rather than educating them to be free and able to do anything they want. We will provide a short overview of this paradigm, but we encourage you to read *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* for yourself to get a full and detailed account of what we are trying to achieve.

A Christian Liberal Arts education uses the Trivium, which is a Latin word that literally means “three roads” or “three ways.” It refers to the first three subjects or disciplines of the seven Liberal Arts. These three subjects are Grammar, Dialectic or Logic, and Rhetoric, and they each coincide with three stages of child development and learning ability.

The Grammar stage coincides with the elementary or “grammar” school years. The Logic stage generally corresponds with grades 7 to 9, commonly called Junior High, and the Rhetoric stage with the high school years. Each of the stages fits well with how we believe God has wired children to learn and forms the basis for our teaching methodology.

For example, Grammar School children love to memorize, and it comes easily for them. Think about how many nursery rhymes you remember from your childhood. Young children memorize better than we do as adults, and if that is the case, we have a golden opportunity to fix important information in their memory. And of course there is a wealth of knowledge that fits this description: Books of the Bible, math facts, states and capitals, countries, English grammar facts—the list is endless. We call it “filling the hard drive.”

When students reach Junior High, they are not as good at memorizing, but they develop another skill—they become very able and very willing to argue. They like challenging what they hear. They like to understand how one thing relates to another. For example, how does the War Between the States relate to the War for Independence? Rather than fight back, we embrace this God-given Logic stage and equip them with the tools to argue well.

The final stage, Rhetoric, matches up with high school. These young men and women care about their appearance and how they are perceived by others. During this stage we teach them how to communicate winsomely and persuasively. We want them to take the facts they’ve learned in the Grammar stage, organize them using Logic, and persuade their audience in such a way that they enjoy the process of being convinced of something—even possibly something they didn’t believe previously.

With these skills under their belt, we have seen kids do remarkable things at comparatively young ages. We have students that are able to think clearly, interact with arguments posed by others, and disagree and formulate responses to other worldviews.

## **Options for Taking VSA Courses**

### **Live Online Courses**

Students enrolled in Live courses meet twice per week in real time for an interactive learning experience. Students complete assignments outside of class throughout the

week in preparation for live class meetings. Live classes cap at 20 students per section. Live classes are available for all courses required for graduation as are many additional courses on topics of interest to our students.

### **Self-Paced (SP)**

There is no class limit for self-paced courses. Student work through material on their computers at their own pace. Courses are initiated when payment is made or shortly thereafter. Part-time students are given one year (12 months) to complete the material but full-time diploma students must complete the work by May 31.

### **Audit**

A student auditing a class will be enrolled in a separate Audit section of the course. They will have access to archives and course assignment sheet but not any assessments. They will have no teacher contact.

See Full-Time Diploma Program section for more options.

## **Veritas Websites**

### [Veritas Press Website](#)

- <http://www.veritaspress.com/vp-login>
- Click to navigate to the Live Online Courses (Schoolology), Course Registration and Management, Self-Paced Courses and Diploma (full-time) Program Website.
- Catalog of our curriculum offerings. Orders can be placed here.

### Live Online Courses ([Schoolology](#))

- <https://resource3.veritaspress.com/theHub/remoteLogin/login.php>
- Access to Live, Independent Study and You Teach Diploma Courses

### Course Registration and Management

- [https://vpsa.veritaspress.com/person/sign\\_in](https://vpsa.veritaspress.com/person/sign_in)
- Registering and paying for classes
- Self-Paced courses login

### Online Classroom (Adobe Connect)

- Where Live classes meet
- Students enter the online classroom in Schoolology

### Diploma Program Website

- <https://resource3.veritaspress.com/diploma/index.php/site/login>

For a full explanation of Schoolology and Adobe Connect refer to the [VSA Technology Handbook](#). This can be found in the VSA Parent Group in Schoolology or on the Veritas website.

# General VSA Information

## Academic Year Calendar

The academic year calendar is available on the Veritas Press website and in the Parent Group in Schoology.

## Terms and Conditions

The Terms and Conditions is available on the Veritas Press website and in the Parent Group in Schoology.

## VSA Pricing

See Appendix A for a full explanation of VSA Pricing.

## VSA Communities

VSA Communities is an initiative with locations throughout the United States, with interest spreading nationally and internationally. VSA Communities are designed to facilitate fellowship and extra-curricular activities and events to provide a holistic, well-rounded experience for our students.

If you are interested in learning more about Veritas Communities, including starting one in your area, please email [communities@veritaspress.com](mailto:communities@veritaspress.com).

## End of Year Gathering - EOYG

The end of the Academic Year culminates with the End of Year Gathering. This event takes place in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the week after the end of the Academic Year. Wednesday is the first day of fun, educational, and community-building activities for VSA families. Events are different every year. We hope you will join us, as we hear from families and students that the EOYG is a highlight of students' VSA experience. It's a place to meet - sometimes for the very first time - other students, parents, and VSA teachers. It's truly an event like no other for the VSA student. Check the Academic Year calendar for dates.

## VSA Systems

### Best Practices for Students

There are practices that set teachers and students up for the best possible experience in the classroom. When even one aspect is ignored the experience is often compromised.

- Headset – Students should use a headset connected directly to the computer via USB. This eliminates background sounds and noises, recycled audio and computer-generated boost, which can make the sound come through as “metallic” for the students.

- Wired to router – All computers used in classrooms should be wired directly to the router. Connecting directly to the router ensures a consistent connection. Routers have several Ethernet ports on the back so multiple students can be wired simultaneously.

For a full list of system requirements please see [Technology Handbook](#) for VSA System Requirements.

## **Etiquette and Behavior Standards**

Below are guidelines for student behavior.

- Biblical behavior standards will be followed at all times.
- Talking (including instant messaging in any chat box or otherwise) will not be permitted except:
  - when the teacher asks for a response.
  - when it can be inferred that it is permitted by the Teacher when it is on topic.
- Background noise or music is not permitted.
- Parents are not permitted to log in to a live course session.
- Use the “raise hand” option to request permission to speak in the classroom
- Always use appropriate language.
- Ask questions via text chat.
- Avoid excessive use of emoticons. (Students tend to be distracted by them).
- Avoid excessive internet slang.
- Please do not text chat with others during class.

## **Chat Box Guidelines**

Veritas Scholars Academy uses an online classroom that includes a Chat Box. This is a box visible to the students and the teacher. The Chat Box enables all students and the teacher to send and read short comments/questions. It is managed by the teacher and may be removed or have its chat history cleared to start a new comments thread.

For students, it is a privilege and responsibility to use the Chat Box. Therefore, use it wisely and courteously. The guidelines below are not exhaustive, but should give you a good idea of the basic manner in which the Chat Box is to be used.

DO's:

1. Use the Chat Box for constructive interactions between your classmates and your teacher. Follow the teacher's instructions for the specific interaction desired for the lesson at hand.
2. Your teacher may allow you to participate in a short time of casual conversation in the Chat Box at the beginning of a class session.
3. Refrain from typing comments during prayer times and during teacher, guest, or student presentations, unless directed otherwise by your teacher.
4. Be prepared to be called upon regularly to give comments/answers in the Chat Box, even if you are reluctant to contribute. Communicating well is a significant part of your development as a student, and as an individual.

5. When you write a comment or answer, use as full and thorough a thought as possible and stick to the topic at hand.
6. As with all communication, be kind, considerate and respectful towards others. Honor the Lord with your choice of words (Ephesians 4:29).

#### DON'TS:

1. Do not dominate use of the Chat Box (see #6 above).
2. Please don't initiate or encourage comments that are inappropriate or off topic.
3. Please don't use acronyms (e.g. 'omg') or emojis (see #5 above), even though it may take more time to write out your thoughts.

For a full explanation of VSA technology refer to the [VSA Technology Handbook](#) found on the Veritas website.

## Academic Policies and Procedures

### Orientation/Start of Classes

Two weeks prior to the start of classes course pages will be available in the Learning Management System (Schoology). It is the responsibility of the student to carefully review course pages and determine what is needed before the first day of each class. The teacher will post a Welcome Update that students should watch before the first day of class. The Course Assignment Sheet for the first quarter will be posted in the Course Documents folder. It is *imperative* that students look at the Course Assignment Sheet and read any messages posted by the teacher to be fully prepared for class. The Technology Handbook is available in the VSA Parent Group, with a full overview of VSA systems.

The week prior to classes each class section will hold a 60 minute orientation to build community, cover course expectations, and become familiar with classroom technology. Attendance is not mandatory, but is *strongly* encouraged. An Orientation session will be held for each class section at the regular class time. Monday/Wednesday classes will meet on Wednesday, September 2 and Tuesday/Thursday classes will meet on Thursday, September 3. See Academic Calendar for dates. *Note: Teachers will not review the same information on the first day of class that is covered during Orientation. Students are responsible for all information covered in Orientation.*

### Late Enrollments

Any student enrolling in a class after the class has met for two weeks will be considered a Late Enrollee. Students are expected to be fully prepared for the material being covered at the time of their admission into the course or shortly thereafter. Regardless of when a student enters the course, they are responsible for and will be tested on all material from the start of the school year. Late enrollees will work with teachers to determine any necessary makeup work.

## **Classroom Discipline**

While parents are primarily responsible for the discipline / discipling of their children, teachers also play a role. Please keep in mind as corrections and consequences for behavior are considered and administered, it is the first priority of VSA to shepherd children's hearts (Proverbs 4:23).

A teacher may restrict a student in any way the teacher deems advisable to minimize any adverse effect on others. If a student has been addressed by his teacher and continues to act inappropriately, a message will be sent to the student's parents to explain the behavior and to express a teacher's concern for the student and his peers. If the student continues to act inappropriately, a Disciplinary Action Form will be submitted. A copy will be sent to the parent for signature.

## **Academic Dishonesty and Other Disciplinary Challenges**

There are various potential forms of disciplinary challenges in the classroom. While specific examples will not be given here, a general rule of thumb to follow is this: Any instance of a student causing a disruption to the educational environment - the learning that ought to be taking place for that student or others - is grounds for disciplinary action.

Cheating on any assignment is considered academic dishonesty. This includes plagiarism in any form, which may be simply defined as one using another's work as though it were one's own, and without proper attribution to the author. Visit the link below for more information. This also includes student use of solutions manuals or teacher CDs in instances in which curricular support materials have been provided to aid parents in the instruction of their children.

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/using\\_research/avoiding\\_plagiarism/is\\_it\\_plagiarism.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/avoiding_plagiarism/is_it_plagiarism.html)

Cheating will be dealt with in the following manner:

- If a student is caught cheating, he will receive a zero on the assignment and will be placed on academic probation for the remainder of the school year.
- If the same student is caught cheating again, he will likely be expelled.
- No refunds will be granted for students who are expelled due to cheating.
- A Disciplinary Action Form will be submitted by the student's teacher for any instance of academic dishonesty.

## **Grading Scale**

The following grading scale will apply for all assignments and final grades.  
100% – 90% = A; 89% - 80% = B; 79% - 70% = C; 69% - 60% = D; 59% - 50% = E; 49% - 40% = F. All grades are rounded to the nearest whole number.

## Late Work

If a student fails to submit any assessment by the due date, it is considered “late.”

- Assignments submitted 0-24 hours late will result in a 10 point reduction off earned grade.
- Assignments submitted 24-48 hours late will result in a 20 point reduction off earned grade.
- Assignments submitted 48-72 hours late will result in a 30 point reduction off earned grade.
- Assignments over 72 hours late will not be accepted and the student will receive a zero.
- Parent may request an extension from their child’s teacher *prior to the due date* or in the case of an emergency.

VSA staff loves grace and the opportunity to exercise it, but also desires to instill a sound sense of responsibility in students, hence these expectations pertaining to late work.

## Exam/Test Retakes

Any student may retake a failed assessment (except quizzes), but can score no higher than 70% on the retake. Retakes must be submitted within one week of the returned, failed assessment. If the retake is not submitted within one week, the original failing grade will stand. Assessments given a failing grade due to academic dishonesty are ineligible for a retake. Assessments given a failing grade due to failure to submit within three days of the due date are ineligible for a retake.

## Attendance and Participation

Both attendance and participation are vital parts of this course; therefore, students are required to attend class sessions and participate actively in discussions. Students are expected to view archives of any missed classes, and are responsible for obtaining any notes or assignments.

Students will be given quarterly grades for both participation and attendance:

- Fifteen percent of the final grade will be attributed to *relevant class participation*. This includes raising one's hand, commenting regularly via microphone / webcam, and using the chat box regularly to contribute to the academic conversation.
- Five percent of the final grade will be attributed to *class attendance*. Being present, being on time, and readiness for class are all factors to be considered in the class attendance grade. *Excused* absences will not detrimentally impact attendance grades.

## Class Attendance and Relevant Class Participation Grading Rubric

**Class Attendance Grade** (100 Possible Points)

- Students are not marked absent if a Course Waiver Form is submitted.

100	0–1 absences
-----	--------------

75	2 absences
60	3 absences
0	4 or more absences
<b>Every 3 instances of being late to class and/or leaving class early = 1 absence</b>	

**Relevant Class Participation Grade (100 Possible Points)**

- Rubric for students attending Live class
- Students are not penalized if an Archive Viewing Report is submitted.

100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates very actively and appropriately on a daily basis, raises their hand often to offer answers, comments regularly via microphone, and uses the chat box regularly in constructive ways AND</li> <li>• Submits ALL the required Archive Viewing Reports for missed classes.</li> </ul>
95	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates actively and appropriately, raises the hand to offer answers and comments somewhat regularly via microphone, and uses the chat box somewhat regularly AND/OR</li> <li>• Submits MOST* of the required Archive Viewing Reports for missed classes.</li> </ul>
90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates appropriately every once in awhile, raises the hand to offer answers and comments via microphone, and uses the chat box in constructive ways somewhat regularly AND/OR</li> <li>• Submits MOST* of the required Archive Viewing Reports for missed classes.</li> </ul>
85	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates sometimes via microphone, comments somewhat regularly using the chat box AND/OR</li> <li>• Submits SOME* of the required Archive Viewing Reports for missed classes.</li> </ul>
80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rarely raises the hand to offer comments via microphone and comments sometimes in the chat box AND/OR</li> <li>• Submits SOME* of the required Archive Viewing Reports for missed classes.</li> </ul>
75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Never comments via microphone, and uses the chat box infrequently AND/OR</li> <li>• Submits SOME* of the required Archive Viewing Reports for missed classes.</li> </ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Never contributes to class discussions AND/OR</li> <li>• Submits NONE of the required Archive Viewing Reports for missed classes.</li> </ul>

\* "MOST" and "SOME" are intentionally left to the subject discernment of the teacher, who has a more comprehensive understanding of the student.

**Relevant Class Participation - Archive Viewing Report Total (100 Possible Points)**

- Rubric for students not attending Live class

100	61-64 Archive Viewing Report Submissions - Academic Year 23-24 Archive Viewing Report Submission - Summer Terms
70	41-60 Archive Viewing Report Submissions - Academic Year 15-22 Archive Viewing Report Submission - Summer Terms
0	0-40 Archive Viewing Report Submissions - Academic Year 0-14 Archive Viewing Report Submission - Summer Terms

Grading rubrics are also located on each course page.

**Educational Accommodations**

All requests for student accommodations must come through Administration. If a child has a learning disability or other documented medical need that impacts his education,

VSA would like to be as supportive as possible and provide the parent with reasonable accommodations. If the student has particular needs, the parent must complete the Educational Accommodation Request Form so that administration might consider how to best support the parent, and the child's learning.

If indeed it is determined that special accommodations are warranted, a fee of \$50 per course will be assessed in an effort to recuperate a portion of the costs VSA administrative and teaching staff incur in the process. The minimum charge for any accommodations is \$150 per student. The form can be found in the VSA Parent Group in Schoology or on the Veritas Press website.

### **Course Waiver and Archive Viewing Report**

Students are strongly encouraged to be present for all live, online classes. Today's technologies make it feasible to attend classes from practically anywhere in the world, and it is expected that students will make every reasonable effort to be present for class. Attendance in class significantly correlates with academic success!

The Course Waiver Form and Archive Viewing Report are closely related and are factors in Class Attendance and Relevant Class Participation when a student misses a scheduled class. Class Attendance is 5% of the final grade and Relevant Class Participation is 15% of the final grade for all live VSA courses.

The **Course Waiver Form** (found in the Materials folder) is to be completed when a student anticipates missing a series of classes. This may occur as a result of illness, vacation, schedule conflicts, time zone restrictions, or other reasons. All students are expected to attend classes, but it is understandable that particular circumstances may make it very difficult to do so. When a student completes the Course Waiver Form, he is marked excused for that day.

When classes are missed, **Archive Viewing Reports** are a factor in students' Relevant Class Participation grades. For each class missed, students are expected to watch the class archive. For each archive viewed, students complete the Archive Viewing Report and give a two – three sentence summary of the material covered in the archive as a measure of accountability. Submitting the Archive Viewing Report for missed classes contributes to a student's Relevant Class Participation grade. Quarterly Relevant Class Participation grades will be determined based upon students' participation when present in class, as well as successful submission of Archive Viewing Reports. *Archive Viewing Reports are only accepted in the quarter of the absence because they are attached to quarterly Relevant Class Participation grades.*

For students who will regularly miss class due to schedule conflicts or time zone restrictions, both Class Attendance and Relevant Class Participation grades will be based on Course Waiver Forms and Archive Viewing Reports, respectively. The Archive Viewing Report Total Rubric will be used for grading. Grading rubrics are below.

Assignments/assessments missed due to an absence are due as follows:

- If a student misses one day of class, all missed assignments/assessments are due within two calendar days (excluding Sunday).
- If a student misses two consecutive classes, all missed assignments/assessments are due the following week, on the same day of the week, as the original assignments/assessments were due.
- If a student misses more than two consecutive classes, the student's parent is expected to communicate circumstances of the absence. Arrangements should be made with the student's teacher.

Assignments/assessments submitted after these respective time allowances will not be accepted.

The Course Waiver Form can be found in the VSA Parent Group in Schoology, as well as on each course page.

### **Homework Philosophy and Guidelines**

Fulfilling the goals of a classical education does not necessitate assigning several hours of homework each night, nor is this practice desirable. Teachers should have a specific purpose in mind when homework is assigned. In the online environment that meets only twice per week there are expectations for reading and work to be done outside of class, but within a reasonable time for each course. Please refer to the online course listing for anticipated homework hours.

### **Extra Credit**

Consistent with classical pedagogy, VSA does not permit extra credit in any of its courses.

### **Written Assignment Standards**

- Written document uploads will be submitted in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or Adobe .pdf format. Submissions in Apple Pages will not be accepted.
- Acceptable formats may vary by course and teacher. An exception to this is when a teacher *requests or allows* hand-written work.
- The body of uploaded written assignments shall be double-spaced, 12 point font.

### **Course Assignments Sheet**

Each course will have a quarterly Course Assignment Sheet that will be shared among all sections of the course. Students should always refer to the Course Assignment Sheet for homework and assessment due dates.

Prior to the first day of class, students are expected to review the Course Assignment Sheet for each course to ensure they are prepared for the first day of class.

## **“Save Your Grade” Day**

While it is an expectation that teachers will continually monitor student grades and have regular contact with students and parents when problems are noticed, one day each quarter will be designated as “Save Your Grade” Day. It will normally fall two to three weeks before the end of the quarter. The purpose of the Day is to notify parents of any student in danger of receiving an *F* at the quarter’s end.

## **Quarterly Grading and Comments**

VSA has dynamic grading; the grade displayed is the current grade and parents can print a report of student progress at any time. Teachers will provide scheduled comments on student progress four times per year at the quarter points. An official Report Card can be printed at the end of the academic year and the end of Summer B term which covers both Summer A and Summer B terms. Report Cards will not be emailed to parents of part-time students. Full-time Diploma students will receive a report card at the end of each academic year.

The dates can be found in the VSA Calendar and on the Veritas Press website.

Teachers are expected to grade and return all assignments to students within 48 hours, except for papers roughly 500 words in length (one page, single-spaced, or two pages, double-spaced) or longer. Papers roughly 500 words in length or longer must be graded and returned within seven days of the due date.

Upper level math and science courses, such as Physics and Calculus, may require additional time than the usual 48 hours to grade, depending on the assignment. At no time should an assignment be graded more than seven days following the due date.

## **Full-Time Diploma Program**

### **Additional Options for taking VSA Courses (For Full-time students only)**

#### **Independent Study Courses (IS)**

Independent Study courses are available when a student needs to meet specific graduation requirements and cannot take the class during normal course parameters. These classes are also considered for students in different time zones and/or with other schedule constraints. Independent Studies are requested by Academic Advisors and approved by the Dean of Students.

A student taking an Independent Study agrees to complete all coursework on the Course Assignment Sheet within the quarter assigned and understands all work not submitted during the quarter scheduled is subject to late penalties. All work must be

completed by May 31. The teacher will grade work, answer questions, and provide feedback.

An Independent Study Agreement Form must be signed before the course begins. See Information Sheet found in Diploma Resources in Schoology for more information.

### **You Teach Diploma Courses (YTD)**

In a You Teach Diploma course a parent teaches the student at home. Courses must use VSA-approved curriculum and lesson plans (Grammar only). Students are encouraged to use all the teaching support materials available with the curriculum, such as DVDs and Teacher's Manuals. A parent may choose to hire someone, for example a tutor or co-op, to assist in the teaching of the course. However, the responsibility of the course lies entirely with the parent.

You Teach Diploma courses are in the Learning Management System (Schoology). Grades are recorded in the VSA grade book and included in the yearly GPA on the transcript. A You Teach Diploma Agreement Form must be signed before the course begins. See Information Sheet found in Diploma Resources in Schoology for more information.

- **Grammar You Teach Diploma Course**

You Teach Grammar courses have a quarterly review of representative work. The representative work includes worksheets, tests and quizzes from the curriculum. Courses completed satisfactorily will be shown on the yearly report card with a grade of *Pass* or *Fail*.

- **Secondary You Teach Diploma Course**

A You Teach Diploma (YTD) course is a course completed principally under the supervision of a parent. The course must be completed during the regular school year – September to May. Requirements for YTD courses are the same as requirements for Live courses. Quizzes and exams will be taken online and assignments submitted online. Courses are not marked as Honors courses on student transcripts. All courses use the approved VSA curriculum.

### **External Courses**

Students may take a course at an approved institution for elective credit. External courses will have a grade listed on the VSA transcript, but will not be factored into the student's GPA. No more than three academic electives may be studied with an external institution. Neither core nor elective courses that VSA offers may be taken as an External Course.

All external courses must be submitted for approval by the Headmaster. External courses need to meet the following requirements:

- from an accredited educational institution
- high school or collegiate

- official transcript documenting course

All external courses are to be completed by May 31 and will be listed in the academic year in which they were attended. See Information Sheet found in Diploma Resources in Schoology for more information.

### Honors Courses

Many Secondary (grades 9 through 12) courses are given the Honors designation.

Participating in Honors courses further substantiates VSA students' academic ability. Because Honors classes are more difficult than non-Honors classes, the grades earned in honors courses are on a five-point scale. The honors scale is: A = 5 points, B = 4 points, and C = 3 points.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Honor Courses</b>
<b>English</b>	Composition II, Creative Writing, Fiction Writing Workshop, Novels of Jane Austen, Poetry, Shakespearean Literature, Science Fiction-A Christian Perspective
<b>History</b>	World Ancient History I & II; World Medieval History I & II; U.S., British & Modern History I & II, U.S. History, Western Civilizations
<b>Language</b>	French I-IV, German I-III, Greek I-II, Hebrew, Latin II-III, Latin Readings, Mandarin Chinese I-II, Spanish I-III
<b>Literature</b>	World Ancient Literature I & II; World Medieval Literature I & II; U.S., British & Modern Literature I & II
<b>Math*</b>	Algebra II, Business Math, Calculus I, Calculus II, Pre-Calculus, Statistics
<b>Religion</b>	Doctrine & Theology I, II, III, IV, V, VI
<b>Rhetoric</b>	Logic II, Rhetoric I, Rhetoric II, Senior Thesis
<b>Science</b>	Anatomy and Physiology, Biology, Chemistry, Marine Biology, Organic Chemistry, Physics I, Physics II
<b>Electives</b>	Apologetics, Economics, Film and Worldview, Journalism, Philosophy, Psychology, U.S. Government, World Religions

*\*When both Primary and Secondary Omnibus courses are taken in the same year, 3 credits in History, Literature and Theology are shown on the transcript. Omnibus I, II, III, IV, V or VI may be taken in grades 9 through 12.*

## Dual Enrollment

In a Dual Enrollment course, VSA students are enrolled simultaneously in a Live course and a Cairn University ([www.Cairn.edu](http://www.Cairn.edu)) course. After successful completion of the course, the student will receive credit from both VSA and Cairn University. There are no additional outside academic requirements for students to receive dual enrollment credit. VSA curriculum and instructor pedagogy and credentials have been evaluated and approved by Cairn University administration. Dual Enrollment fees apply.

Current Dual Enrollment courses are:

- Advanced Chemistry/Organic Chemistry
- Calculus I & II
- Economics
- Fiction Writing
- Film & Worldview
- French III
- Greek I & II
- Latin Readings
- Marine Biology
- Novels of Jane Austen
- Omnibus IV
- Omnibus V
- Omnibus VI
- Physics II
- Psychology
- Rhetoric II
- Senior Thesis
- Spanish III
- Statistics
- US Government

Students who complete the course with a grade of 70% or above will receive an official transcript from Cairn University documenting college course credit. Students must submit dual enrollment forms by May 15 for summer courses and by October 31 for full year courses. See Information Sheet found in Diploma Resources in Schoology for more information.

## Advanced Placement Courses (AP)

VSA's AP courses are Latin Readings-Virgil, Calculus I, and Calculus II. The VSA transcript designates these as AP courses. Additionally, students can take any of the AP tests and AP test scores will be recorded on the transcript. AP tests are not offered at VSA. Students can also have their scores sent to selected colleges. Students should check with the colleges to which they are applying to determine how the AP test might benefit them. See Information Sheet found in Diploma Resources in Schoology for more information.

## Full-Time Diploma Course Registration

When registering for courses online, take advantage of pinning courses. Pinning courses is like 'pinning' them to a board to get an idea of what the student's schedule would look like. Pinning courses allows a parent to choose all of the student's courses and then register them all at once so the registrations do not "time out". Pinned courses are NOT registered courses, nor do they save the student a seat in the class.

Academic Advisors register Premium Diploma students for all their courses. Parents of Classic Diploma students will register for Live and Self-Paced courses on their

own. Independent Study, You Teach or External courses will be registered by the Advisor for both Premium and Classic students. Confirmation of registration will be provided to the parent following the consultation. In the case of an External course, the parent will be given a form to complete to provide the information needed for course approval.

**Book Orders**

Advisors for Premium families will send a book quote. If the family does not want to purchase the items right away, the quote will be put on hold for 30 days. Prices are subject to change after the 30 days.

Classic families are responsible for purchasing books for their children’s courses, and may contact Service for support if needed.

**Full-Time Diploma Admissions and Enrollment**

**Admissions**

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. Annual consultations for an upcoming school year begin in December.

1. Prospective parent completes an online application.
2. Sales Consultant reviews information in the application and calls the family within 48 hours to answer questions and inform them of the next step(s). This may include placement tests and/or additional documentation.
3. Parent reviews Terms and Conditions, which includes Parent/Student Handbook and Pricing Summary.
4. Student takes placement tests and parent submits any additional documentation.
5. Advisor reviews placement test results and documentation. Decision is made on grade placement and for secondary students, transfer of course credits.
6. Advisor meets with parent(s) to discuss placement of student and course transfers, and answers any questions.

**Enrollment**

Students pay an annual fee for the upcoming school year. Each student is assigned an Academic Advisor to guide them. The enrollment period is from November through October of the following year.

**Consultation Scheduling and Course Registrations Timeline**

Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar - Oct
Enrollment opens.	Course Listing viewable.	Course registration begins for	Course registration	Registration remains open.

Schedule consultation and pay annual Diploma fee.	Consultations begin.	Premium students.	begins for Classic students.	
---	----------------------	-------------------	------------------------------	--

Existing full-time students must pay the annual Diploma fee no later than January 31 for the upcoming academic year to have access to early registration. Students who do not pay by this date will not have access to early registration and potentially forfeit otherwise available seats in their desired courses and sections. Existing full-time students ultimately have until July 31 to pay the annual Diploma fee, after which reapplication to VSA’s full-time program is required.

**Annual Consultation**

During consultations, the consultant assists parents in the development of their student’s Course Plan. A Course Plan is the list of courses for the upcoming academic year that meets VSA requirements and parents’ academic goals for the student. The Course Plan also lays out future courses looking towards graduation.

**Standardized Testing**

All full-time Diploma students are required to take the standardized tests on an annual basis in grades 3-9. Dates are specified on the school calendar.

Standardized test results are an indicator of a child’s academic progress. These results are considered in tandem with report cards, teachers’ assessments of their students, and parental observations. Standardized testing is also considered an external evaluation of a school’s performance and assessment of its own instructional effectiveness.

**State Requirements**

Diploma students are enrolled in an accredited private school. State requirements vary, so parents should be aware of the specific requirements of their respective states. If a state does not recognize VSA as a private school, the family will need to register as a homeschooler with its home state. Students registered as homeschoolers submit their report cards as documentation to their respective states, where required. Although VSA is an accredited school, the burden of each student complying with their state's homeschool laws rests on each particular family.

**Transcript Grade Information**

*Only Full-Time Diploma Students receive transcripts.*

%	Grade	Grade Point (Not Honors)	Grade Point Honors	Meaning
100-90	A	4.0	5.0	Excellent
89-80	B	3.0	4.0	Above average
79-70	C	2.0	3.0	Satisfactory
69-0	F	0.0	0.0	Unsatisfactory, no credit given
	P			Satisfactory; met requirements of the course

Courses dropped by students within the first four weeks will not be recorded on a student's transcript. Beyond the first four weeks of school, withdrawn courses will be recorded as either "Withdrawn/Passing" or "Withdrawn/Failing" on the transcript. No partial academic credit will be given to withdrawn courses.

### Course Distinctions on Transcripts

H - Honors

DE - Dual Enrollment

AP - Advanced Placement

T - Transfer

### Grade Point Average (GPA) Calculation for Transcripts

- Grade point are weighted and then multiplied by the number of credit(s) for that course.
- The total grade point sum is divided by the total attempted credits to calculate GPA.

Note: External course grades are not included in GPA calculation.

### Omnibus Calculation for Transcript

Course Taken	Grade
Primary <i>and</i> Secondary courses, same Omnibus level, taken in the same calendar year.	A Grade is calculated using the following algorithm:  (Grade earned in the Primary course multiplied by .6) + (Grade earned in the Secondary course multiplied by .4)

	The number received is the grade used for the History, Literature and Theology courses shown on the transcript. Both courses must be 70% or above to receive a passing grade for all three credits
<i>Either Primary or Secondary course in the same calendar year.</i>	One Literature credit.

Omnibus courses will be reflected on the Transcript as follows when both Primary and Secondary courses are taken within twelve months:

	<b>History</b>	<b>Religion</b>	<b>Literature</b>
Omnibus I	World Ancient History I	Doctrine & Theology I	World Ancient Literature I
Omnibus II	World Medieval History I	Doctrine and Theology II	World Medieval Literature I
Omnibus III	U.S., British & Modern History I	Doctrine & Theology III	U.S., British & Modern Literature I
Omnibus IV	World Ancient History II	Doctrine & Theology IV	World Ancient Literature II
Omnibus V	World Medieval History II	Doctrine and Theology V	World Medieval Literature II
Omnibus VI	U.S., British & Modern History II	Doctrine & Theology VI	U.S., British & Modern Literature II

### **Contract Amendment**

VSA reserves the right to make practical changes to the Parent/Student Handbook throughout the year, and any such changes will be notated in this section of the Handbook.

# Appendix A - 2020-2021 Academic Year Calendar

## 2020-2021 Academic Year Calendar



June 2020							December 2020									
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa			
1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5					
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	25	26			
28	29	30					27	28	29	30	31					
July 2020							January 2021									
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa			
		1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	5	6				
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	15	16	17	18	19	20	21			
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	29	30	31							
26	27	28	29	30	31											
August 2020							February 2021									
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa			
						1	1	2	3	4	5	6				
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27			
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28									
30	31															
September 2020							March 2021									
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa			
		1	2	3	4	5	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	28	29	30	31						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19										
20	21	22	23	24	25	26										
27	28	29	30													
October 2020							April 2021									
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa			
						1	1	2	3	4	5	6				
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	14	15	16	17	18	19	20			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	21	22	23	24	25	26	27			
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	28	29	30	31						
November 2020							May 2021									
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	16	17	18	19	20	21	22			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
29	30						30	31	1	2	3	4	5			
							6	7	8	9	10	11	12			

June		July		August		September		October		November	
Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date
1st	First Day - Summer A	10th	Summer A - Final Day	21st	Summer B - Final Day	2nd	Orientation for Mon/Wed Courses	30th	First Quarter - Final Day	2nd	Second Quarter - First Day
		13th	Summer B - First Day			3rd	Orientation for Tues/Thur Courses			13th	First Quarter Grading & Comments Available
		24th	Summer A - Grading & Comments Available			4th	Summer B - Grading & Comments Available			23-27th	Thanksgiving Break - No Classes
						8th	First Quarter - First Day				
						11th	Mon/Wed Classes Meet on Friday (this week only)				

December		January		February		March		April		May		June			
Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date
21-31st	Christmas Break - No Classes	1st	Christmas Break - No Classes	1st	Registration Opens - Full Time, Diploma Students	19th	Third Quarter - Final Day	1st-2nd	Holy Week - No Classes	1st-2nd	Holy Week - No Classes	21st	Fourth Quarter - Final Day	2-6th	End of Year Gathering
		15th	Second Quarter - Final Day	3rd	Registration Opens - Returning Students	22nd	Fourth Quarter - First Day	9th	Third Quarter Grading & Comments Available	21-28th	Final Exams - No Classes	26th	Graduation		
		15-22nd	Midterm Exams - No Classes	8th	Registration Opens - New Students	29-31st	Holy Week - No Classes								
		25th	Third Quarter - First Day												
		29th	Second Quarter - Grading & Comments Available												