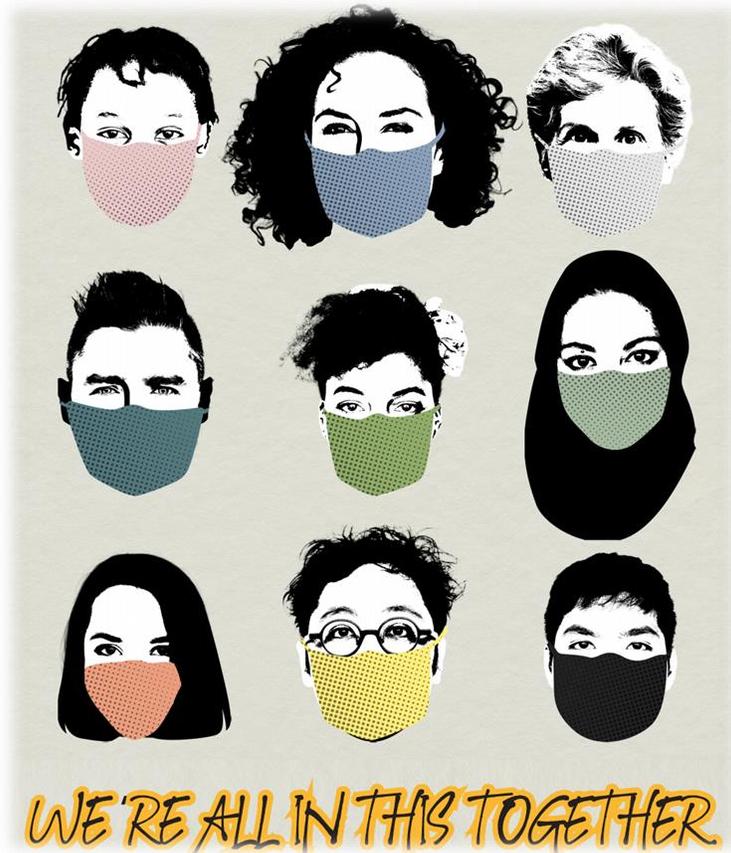


# Fall 2020 Semester Guide

## Navigating COVID-19



**VCU**

School of Pharmacy

WELCOME to  
the **FUTURE**



**VCU**

School of Pharmacy

Office of Admissions & Student Services

410 North 12th Street, Suite 500

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Table of Contents

**OVERVIEW.....3**

**EXPECTATIONS & BEST PRACTICES.....3**

*My Responsibilities.....3*

*SoP Messaging & Safety Measures.....4*

**IN-PERSON VS. REMOTE LEARNING DESIGNATIONS .....6**

*In-person Experience & Expectations.....7*

*What does this look like?.....8*

**SANITATION & HOUSEKEEPING .....8**

**DESIGNATED EATING AREAS.....9**

**ROOM RESERVATIONS & OCCUPANCY LIMITS.....9**

*Fall 2020 Room Reservation Process.....9*

*Room Occupancy Listing.....10*

**HEALTH & WELLNESS .....11**

*Student Health Services.....11*

*Counseling Services.....11*

*Mental Health Emergency.....12*

*COVID-19 Support Groups .....12*

*The Health Promotion and Well-Being Center .....12*

*Rams in Recovery .....12*

*VCU Rec Sports.....13*

**ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES.....13**

*Tutor Request Process .....14*

*Division for Academic Success.....14*

*Office of Student Experience.....14*

*VCU Libraries.....14*

**COCURRICULAR ACTIVITIES .....15**

**COVID-19 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE .....15**

*VCU Federal Emergency Relief Fund .....15*

*Pharmacy Student Success Emergency Fund.....15*



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## Overview

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As you know, COVID-19 has posed unprecedented challenges for higher education. It has also created a unique opportunity to think critically about models of educational delivery that are best tailored for our students. To that end, the Fall 2020 semester will use a multi-modal approach for content delivery and skill-building — all with the aim of promoting student success with safety as our primary priority.

This guide is intended to provide additional insight into the School of Pharmacy's approach to navigating the pandemic while providing guidance and helpful resources to you, the student. This document is not intended to replace or supersede CDC or VDH guidance and recommendations. For the latest information pertaining to COVID-19, please refer to the following resources:

- Federal guidance: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- Commonwealth guidance: [Virginia Department of Health](#)
- Virginia Commonwealth University: [together.vcu.edu](http://together.vcu.edu)
- VCU School of Pharmacy: [pharmacy.vcu.edu/covid](http://pharmacy.vcu.edu/covid)

## Expectations & Best Practices

---

When we return, things will look and feel different as we take necessary steps to protect the well-being of our community. Before returning, you will need to complete the university's Return to Campus training and acknowledge its requirements and consequences. Students will sign attestations indicating training completion and personal compliance with safety protocols.

### ***My Responsibilities***

---

What is expected of me as a health professional student?

- Monitor your health daily. Complete a daily health survey at [dailyhealth.vcu.edu](http://dailyhealth.vcu.edu). Testing will occur according to protocols.
- Wear a face covering or mask in common areas. If you are not wearing a mask you will be asked to leave the building.
- Apply physical distance guidelines to all settings.
- Clean and disinfect personal and shared spaces before and after use. Cleaning supplies will be available in numerous locations.
- Report symptoms and/or exposures associated with COVID-19 to VCU Student Health Services. Call 1-804-MYCOVID or 1-804-692-6843.
- VCU Student Expectations and Safety Video – [Click Here](#)



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- You are required to follow rules regarding face coverings or masks; cleaning and disinfecting; and physical distancing. Students will receive reminders for daily health monitoring. The dean of student affairs will be notified after repeated noncompliance. Refusal to comply with rules can include progressive disciplinary action up to and including suspension, based on the [VCU Student Code of Conduct](#).

### SoP Messaging & Safety Measures

The School of Pharmacy has taken several safety precautions based on state, federal and university guidance. When you arrive on campus, you will find additional signage indicating the mandatory mask requirement, directional flow throughout the building, room occupancy limitations, and reminders for proper sanitation. These messages are not suggestions — they are the expectations of the entire School of Pharmacy community. Examples of signage that you can expect to see throughout our buildings are provided below.

<p><b>Best practices</b> sign promoting ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as handwashing, wearing a face covering, disinfecting shared items and practicing physical distancing.</p>	
<p><b>Elevator capacity</b> sign stating that no more than two people are permitted at a time in an elevator to maintain physical distancing. Floor markers in elevators indicate where individuals should stand.</p>	



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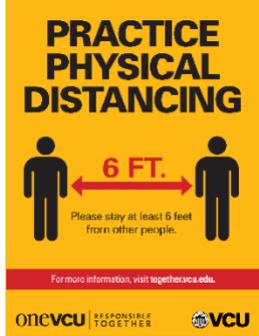
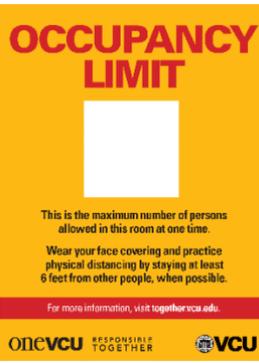
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<p><b>Physical distancing</b> signs remind individuals to stay at least 6 feet from other people.</p>	
<p><b>Building entrance</b> signs instruct individuals to wear their face coverings, not enter if they are sick, and practice physical distancing. You must wear a face covering in any VCU School of Pharmacy space.</p>	
<p><b>Occupancy limit</b> signs indicate the maximum number of individuals allowed in a space. These are determined by university distancing guidelines and best practices.</p>	
<p><b>Area closed</b> signs communicate that an area is closed due to physical distancing or is being cleaned and disinfected.</p>	



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<p><b>No exit and no entry</b> signs assign doors as entry-only or exit-only to maintain physical distancing.</p>	
<p><b>Water-bottle refilling station only</b> signs (for display at combined water-bottle refill and water fountain) instruct individuals to only use the water-bottle refill station — not the fountain — to maintain hygiene best practices.</p>	
<p><b>Do not sit here</b> signs instruct individuals where not to sit, primarily to maintain physical distancing.</p>	

## In-person vs. Remote Learning Designations

The Governor's Executive Order related to COVID-19 requires a phased reopening across Virginia. While we will begin classes on Monday, Aug. 17, our on-campus presence will be curtailed significantly. All students will have mandatory in-person activities (i.e. labs and simulations) and we will ensure proper social distancing, sanitation and PPE availability. For other activities and didactic portions of the curriculum, students will have a choice to take classes in-person or remotely.



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Some of you may prefer to take courses here on campus due to poor internet connectivity at home or an individual preference to interact directly with a lecturer. Others may find their home environment to be more conducive. No matter your circumstance, we will do what we can to accommodate your learning style to promote academic progression with safety as our primary concern. It is important to note that some lectures will need to be delivered from a remote location; opting for an on-campus designation does not guarantee that every course session will be delivered with the faculty member on-site.

Once your Campus Designation has been confirmed, you are expected to abide by that designation to ensure we do not exceed room occupancy rates and so we can manage the on-campus designation waitlist. If you find your needs change or your academic progression is being adversely impacted by your current designation, please notify the Office of Admissions & Student Services immediately. You can request a change to your designation by utilizing the Electronic Absence Request System (EARS). In addition to managing excused absences, this system will be utilized to manage designation requests.

You can access the system by clicking here ([EARS](#)). Please ensure you are logged in via VPN if off campus.

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### ***In-person Experience & Expectations***

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The following information provides additional insight into the expectations for students opting-in for an in-person didactic experience:

- Masks must be worn for the duration of time in the classroom (and building).
- Lecture engagement will take place via personal laptop regardless of faculty location.
- Student seating will be spaced for proper social distancing.
- Students will need to supply and wear a headset/iPods (i.e., headsets with microphone functionality) while in the classroom.
- Questions will be posed via Zoom chat instead of aloud to ensure equitable delivery.



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### What does this look like?

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**Above left:** Dr. Gravatt tests out the student experience for "in-person" designation (i.e. mask, laptop, headset, and questions via Zoom Chat).

**Right:** Signs indicate where students can and cannot sit in Smith 103.

## Sanitation & Housekeeping

---

Students, faculty and staff are expected to disinfect the areas they use before and after every use. Disinfectant spray bottles are available at two designated stations on every floor for personal use. In addition, disinfectant wipe dispensers have been placed in every classroom. It is crucial that we all protect each other by cleaning the spaces we use (including classroom desks, study areas and common areas) on an ongoing basis. For supply replenishment a PPE vending machine is available in the Smith lobby that you can access with your VCU ID card.

As a reminder, please **do not move furniture**. Furniture has been placed to reinforce physical distancing parameters.

Housekeeping services will continue the usual upkeep of each building with a separate and specialized periodic cleaning plan for high-touch surfaces (e.g., elevator buttons and door handles). If you are concerned about the cleanliness of a particular area or have questions about sanitation resources, please contact the VCU SoP building manager (Mr. Scott Crenshaw) at (804) 828-0335.



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## Designated Eating Areas

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Eating areas have been designated throughout the Smith Building and across the MCV Campus. Due to the need to remove masks in order to eat, it is crucial that these spaces allow for adequate physical distancing, ventilation and sanitation. To that end, the following areas should be the only spaces where eating occurs:

### Smith Building

- Smith 129 (anytime)
- Smith 130 (anytime)

### MCV Campus

- Outdoor Benches and Seating Areas
- VCU Health Cafeteria
- Hunton Student Center, First Floor (anytime)
- Larrick Student Center, General Eating Area (anytime)
- Larrick Student Center Ballroom (11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.)
- Molecular Medicine Research Building (MMRB) Room 1009/1011 (11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.)
- Kontos Room 104/105 (11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.)
- George Ben Johnson Auditorium (11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.)

## Room Reservations & Occupancy Limits

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### ***Fall 2020 Room Reservation Process***

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Beginning Monday, Aug. 10, the Office of Admissions and Student Services will begin taking room reservation requests for events and student organization meetings, with some caveats. While the policy of submitting requests no later than three business days prior to when a room is needed has not changed, we ask students to abide by Smith Building guidelines regarding social distancing and mask wearing at all times. Moreover, student gatherings cannot include food due to the need to wear a mask at all times.

When able, we encourage student groups to explore virtual options (e.g. Zoom and Google Hangouts) as a means of meeting and socializing to promote physical distancing while maintaining socialization and networking.

Please use this link ([School of Pharmacy Room Request Form](#)) to schedule a room and direct any questions to Tonto Duncan ([oduncan@vcu.edu](mailto:oduncan@vcu.edu)).



### Room Occupancy Listing

To abide by state and university mandates, room occupancy has been significantly curtailed. Room occupancy has been reduced by as much as 70% to ensure physical distancing. To that end, you will find a listing of room occupancies below. Please note that these numbers are subject to change. Official signage in each room designates room occupancy.

Smith & McGuire Building	Max Occupancy
Smith lobby	15
Smith 103	38
Smith 129	Designated Eating Area
Smith 130	Designated Eating Area
Smith 203	25
Smith 216	8
Smith 221	25
Smith 224	8
Smith 225	19
Smith 232 [Sim-man]	2
Smith 332	4
Smith 362	4
Smith 350 [Computer lab]	6
Smith 432	4
446 Conference room	6
Smith 466	4
Smith 545	12
Smith 632	4
Smith 646	6
Smith 666	4
Smith 732	4
Smith 766	4
McGuire 200	9
McGuire 204	11



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## Health & Wellness

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Navigating the anticipated stressors of daily life can often be challenging enough. When unexpected stressors emerge or when we are faced with uncertainty, it can be tough to know how to cope. Try out some of these [tips and resources for health and wellness](#) to see if they are a right fit for you.

### ***Student Health Services***

---

Medical providers offer primary care services related to allergy shots, blood and/or body fluid exposures, immunizations, mental health and ADHD, nutrition consults, sexual health and wellness, and travel health care. All services are by appointment only due to COVID-19. Student Health is providing telehealth appointments for students if their medical issue does not require an in-person visit.

COVID-19 testing is not available at University Student Health Services. You can visit the Virginia Department of Health [COVID-19 Testing Site Locator](#) to identify a location.

**Location:** 1000 E. Marshall St., Room 305

**Telephone:** (804) 828-9220

**Website:** [health.students.vcu.edu/](http://health.students.vcu.edu/)

### ***Counseling Services***

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Clinicians offer brief individual therapy, group therapy, case management services and crisis services for students. Students often seek counseling for support related to symptoms of depression, anxiety, relationship/family concerns, trauma experiences, ADHD, eating disorders, substance use, grief and loss, or suicidality, among other concerns. Self-help resources are also available via the web sites and links below.

University Counseling Services is no longer scheduling in-person appointments to help contain the spread of COVID-19. Instead, the office is offering telehealth appointments for students. Students who are initiating services are required to be in the Commonwealth of Virginia at the time of service. To schedule a Referral and Assessment Meeting contact the office (804) 828-6200, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Students who are interested in video teletherapy should have access to a private space with a strong internet connection.

UCS Advocacy Services remains committed to providing students with the support they need. To speak with advocate about sexual violence, intimate partner violence or stalking, please contact (804) 828-6200 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

**Location:** VMI Building, Room 412 | 1000 E. Marshall St.

**Telephone:** (804) 828-3964

**Website:** [counseling.vcu.edu/](http://counseling.vcu.edu/)



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## ***Mental Health Emergency***

Students who are experiencing a mental health emergency can speak with a crisis clinician by calling (804) 828-6200 day or night.

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## ***COVID-19 Support Groups***

Students can sign up to participate in COVID-19 Support Groups and there is a support group specifically designed for health professional students. You can sign up [here](#).

### **Additional resources:**

- Students can click [here](#) for additional resources and support.
- Anxiety & Stress Management: [counseling.vcu.edu/self-help/anxiety-and-stress-management/](https://counseling.vcu.edu/self-help/anxiety-and-stress-management/)

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## ***The Health Promotion and Well-Being Center***

Students can participate in programming related to building resilience, improving mental health, overall wellness, and sexual health. Online resources are available [via this link](#).

**Location:** 815 S. Cathedral Place

**Phone:** (804) 828- 9355

**Website:** <https://thewell.vcu.edu/>

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## ***Rams in Recovery***

Rams in Recovery is VCU's Collegiate Recovery Program which works to ensure that students do not have to choose between their recovery and their education. Collegiate Recovery Programs are structured supports for students in recovery from substance use disorders who are seeking a degree in higher education.

The Recovery Clubhouse is closed for visitors and meetings due to COVID-19. Feel free to come to the [virtual clubhouse](#) for student to use for recovery support. The Virtual Clubhouse is open from noon to 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday and noon to p.m. Friday, except for 15 minutes before and after a meeting (meeting times below).

- [Digital Recovery Resources](#)
- [Meeting List](#)

**Location:** 815 S. Cathedral Place

**Phone:** Tom Bannard (804) 366- 8027

**Email:** [recovery@vcu.edu](mailto:recovery@vcu.edu)

**Website:** <https://students.vcu.edu/programs/recovery-support/>



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### VCU Rec Sports

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VCU Rec Sports offers diverse programs and informal recreational, fitness, and sports activities for the VCU community. Rec Sports is open during the pandemic. Please use this [link](#) for guidelines pertaining to safe use of recreational facilities.

**Location:** 900 Turpin St.

**Phone:** (804) 827-1100

**Website:** <https://recsports.vcu.edu/>

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### Academic Support Services

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The school provides a tutoring program without charge. The academic performance of all students is monitored by the School of Pharmacy's associate dean for admissions and student services and the assistant director for student affairs. Tutors are assigned when needed or requested by students with academic performance concerns. Also, study groups are common within classes. Additionally, student academic support services, counseling services and services for students with disabilities are available for all students on the MCV Campus.

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### Resources Promoting Academic Success

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Students can receive assistance related to concerns pertaining to enrollment and scholastic progression. Dr. Kelechi Ogbonna and Dr. Tori Keel are available to provide support and assistance related to academic and professional concerns and personal stressors that may negatively impact academic performance.

#### The Basics

**Location:** Smith Building, fifth floor    **Telephone:** (804) 828-3000



**Dr. Ogbonna:** [kcunegbuogbo@vcu.edu](mailto:kcunegbuogbo@vcu.edu)  
Associate Dean for Admission & Student Services



**Dr. Keel:** [vakeel@vcu.edu](mailto:vakeel@vcu.edu)  
Assistant Director for Student Affairs



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### ***Tutor Request Process***

Students can request complimentary tutoring through the Rho Chi Honor Society by submitting a tutor request here: <https://goo.gl/forms/mZJFS0Skv4U3Gy0w2>

Tutors are assigned in a timely fashion. Tutors can assist in reviewing material for exams, providing an additional perspective to help understand concepts or equations, and sharing insight into effective ways to study for or prepare for exams. If you have difficulty accessing the Tutor Request System, please contact Dr. Keel at [vakeel@vcu.edu](mailto:vakeel@vcu.edu).

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### ***Division for Academic Success***

Students can receive assistance related to improving study skills or note taking skills, test taking strategies, tutoring, and time management. Additionally, students can receive accommodations for documented disabilities. Appointments to discuss accommodations, study skills, and the like can be scheduled by contacting the office. The Division for Academic Success is offering virtual appointments due to COVID-19.

**Location:** VMI Building, Room 231 | 1000 E. Marshall St.

**Phone:** (804) 828- 9782

**Website:** [das.vcu.edu/](http://das.vcu.edu/)

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### ***Office of Student Experience***

Dr. Kevin Harris serves as an advocate for health sciences students and can provide assistance resolving concerns pertaining to issues of customer service, miscommunication, or inability of timely access to student services. He can provide linkage to necessary resources and investigate without judgment.

**Phone:** (804) 827-2087

**Email:** [kaharris@vcu.edu](mailto:kaharris@vcu.edu)

**Website:** [rampages.us/studentexp2/](http://rampages.us/studentexp2/)

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### ***VCU Libraries***

The Tomkins-McCaw and Cabell libraries are open online and in person. Click [here](#) to learn about how VCU libraries are responding to COVID-19. Policies and procedures for safe use of the library can be found [here](#).

**Phone:** (804) 828-0636

**Email:** [library@vcu.edu](mailto:library@vcu.edu)

**Website:** <https://www.library.vcu.edu/>



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## Cocurricular Activities

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Due to the impact of COVID-19, we expect that most cocurricular activities will be offered and completed remotely. We will take this into consideration when approving events for selected categories. We look forward to student organizations being creative with offering events to students that qualify for cocurricular credit. The school and university offices also contribute virtual events for our students to earn credit. We may also use approved online webinars, LinkedIn Learning modules, and recorded sessions from previous years to fulfill requirements. The list of approved events will be released to all students after Labor Day. New events for approval can be submitted throughout the year using the Google Form.

The categories of cocurriculars have been limited to only those which are required for one cohort or another. These categories are *cultural sensitivity*, *education/communication*, *leadership*, *professionalism* and *self-awareness*. Students may complete electives in any of these categories. This will help streamline both the submission and approval process for students and faculty.

## COVID-19 Financial Assistance

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### ***VCU Federal Emergency Relief Fund***

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If you have experienced COVID-19-related disruptions or other educational costs due to the disruption of VCU on-campus operations, you may be eligible for emergency relief funds. The [VCU Federal Emergency Relief Fund](#) is available for students to apply for aid under the CARES Act. In addition, the Virtual Student Services Center is now available 24/7 for students to ask questions and get information. Students who are not eligible for CARES Act funding may be eligible for emergency funding that is being offered through [Student Affairs](#).

### ***Pharmacy Student Success Emergency Fund***

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The Pharmacy Student Success Emergency Fund (SSEF) was created to assist VCU School of Pharmacy students (i.e. pharmacy and graduate students) who encounter an unforeseen financial emergency that would otherwise prevent them from continuing their education here at VCU.

More specifically, this emergency fund provides our students with financial support when faced with an unexpected, unforeseen and unavoidable emergency expense that may be related to an accident, illness, death of a family member, fire damage or need for temporary housing. We acknowledge that students are often faced with life-altering circumstances that have the potential to derail successful academic progression. Our goal is to ensure our students have access to emergency resources during times of need — enabling them to stay in school and make progress towards their doctoral or master's degrees.



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Currently enrolled pharmacy and graduate students may apply for funds when they have exhausted all other resources (credit card, payment plans, additional student aid, assistance from family/friends, other personal resources). This funding is not intended to reimburse expenses that have already been paid or to replace or supplement existing financial aid. Payments from this fund are generally limited and may not cover a student's entire financial need.

### Emergency Fund Utilization:

- Medications and other costs related to emergency medical care
- Books and other essential academic expenses
- Safety needs (i.e. changing a lock)
- Replacement of essential personal belongings or temporary housing needs, due to fire, theft, or natural disaster
- Travel costs related to a death or illness in the immediate family

NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list; other circumstances may apply.

### Expenses Not Covered:

- Tuition, fees, health insurance and study-abroad costs
- Nonessential utilities (e.g., cable), household or furniture costs not related to damage or theft
- Regularly anticipated fixed expenses (e.g., rent)
- Parking tickets
- Costs for entertainment, recreation, non-emergency travel or other nonessential expenses
- Other anticipated expenses

### Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicants must have an immediate financial hardship resulting from an emergency, accident or other unexpected critical incident.
- The expense must be unexpected and unforeseen and the urgent nature unavoidable.
- Applicants must be currently enrolled students.
- All other university-related resources — including emergency loans through scholarships and student aid — must have been considered and are insufficient, unavailable or not available in a timely manner.
- Applicants must complete all questions in full and submit supporting documentation.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate current financial need with supporting documentation.

### Application Process:

Students who need emergency financial assistance may submit an [application](#) and supporting documentation to the Office of Admissions & Student Services (OASS). Documentation can be sent via email to the Office of Admissions & Student Services (OASS) at [kcunegbuogo@vcu.edu](mailto:kcunegbuogo@vcu.edu) or placed



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in the forms slot located in the Welcome Desk as you exit the elevators on the fifth floor of the Smith Building. The Emergency Fund Committee, made up of faculty and staff members, reviews the submitted application materials and determines the appropriate funding amount.

Funds distributed generally do not exceed \$500. The committee will review applications requesting in excess of \$500 for unique and unusual circumstances of emergency financial need. Applicants may be required to meet with the associate dean for admissions and student services or the assistant director for student affairs to discuss their applications. If you are currently receiving financial aid, please be aware that receiving funding from the Emergency Fund may affect your future aid packages and funds received will be taxed as income. For information on the application please contact our office at (804) 828-3000.

**Award Procedures:**

- Students will be presented with a check in the award amount designated by the Emergency Fund Committee.
- A photocopy of the check will be signed and dated by the student and retained by OASS as proof of receipt.
- Students must provide receipts and/or documentation reflecting payment towards identified emergency or return awarded funding no later than 10 days after funds have been dispersed.
- While students do not need to repay this financial assistance, it may be considered as taxable income and subject to federal tax regulations.

Students can submit a request for funding by accessing a Google form via the school's [Resources web page](#) on the VCU School of Pharmacy website — it is in the Student Information section.