

STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA
Program Announcement Form

I. Basic Program Information.

Institution (official name)	Virginia Commonwealth University
Degree Program Designation	Master of Science (MS)
Degree Program Name	Chaplaincy
CIP code	51.1506
Anticipated Initiation Date	Fall 2025
Governing Board Approval Date (actual or anticipated)	December 2024 (anticipated)

II. Curriculum Requirements.

Core Coursework: 61 credit hours

- PATC 525 – Study of Chaplaincy Across the World Religions (3)*
- PATC 600 – Theology and Philosophy in Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care (3)*
- PATC 601 – Chaplaincy Formation (3)*
- PATC 602 – Spiritual Assessment (3)*
- PATC 609 – Introduction to Spiritual Care Practice (3)*
- PATC 610 – Basic Spiritual Care Theory (3)*
- PATC 611 – Theory and Practice of Spiritual Care I (3)
- PATC 612 – Theory and Practice of Spiritual Care II (3)
- PATC 613 – Group Process I (1)
- PATC 614 – Group Process II (1)
- PATC 615 – Group Process III (1)
- PATC 616 – Group Process Interdisciplinary Collaboration (2)*
- PATC 617 – Theory and Practice of Spiritual Care III (3)
- PATC 620 – Social Factors in Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy (3)*
- PATC 621 – Bereavement, Grief, Loss and Spiritual Care (3)
- PATC 625 – Spiritual Care and Wellbeing (3)*
- PATC 635 – Clinical Ethics (3)
- PATC 642 – Developing & Presenting Spiritual Care & Chaplaincy Research (3)
- PATC 646 - Clinical Practicum I (2)
- PATC 647 – Clinical Practicum II (2)
- PATC 648 – Clinical Practicum III (2)
- PATC 649 – Clinical Practicum IV (2)*
- PATC 655 – Preparation for Professional Chaplaincy Practice (2)*
- PATC 660 – Capstone Project (4)*

Required Courses: 15 credit hours

- PATC 520 – History of Chaplaincy (1)*
- PATC 592 – Independent Study in Spiritual Care (2)
- PATC 639 – Spiritual Care Management (3)
- PATC 643 – Advanced Spiritual Care Practice in Healthcare Settings (3)*
- PATC 644 – Advanced Spiritual Care Practice in Non-Healthcare Settings (3)*
- PATC 645 – Spiritual Care Over the Lifespan (3)*

Total credit hours: 76

II. Description of Educational Outcomes.

Students of the proposed program will be able to *(based upon Chaplaincy Core Competencies)*:

- Identify and integrate one's professional strengths and limitations in the provision of spiritual care.
- Practice in a manner that respects the physical, emotional, cultural, and spiritual boundaries of others.
- Apply theories to effectively offer spiritual support that contributes to well-being of the care recipients, their families, and staff.
- Apply theories to effectively offer spiritual care that respects diversity and differences including, but not limited to culture, gender, sexual orientation and spiritual/religious practices.
- Formulate and utilize spiritual assessments, interventions, outcomes, and care plans in order to contribute effectively to the well-being of the person receiving care.
- Understand and function within the chaplain's institutional culture and systems, including utilizing business best practices appropriate to one's role in the organization.
- Integrate the spiritual and emotional dimensions of human development into one's practice of care.
- Integrate a working knowledge of different ethical theories appropriate to one's professional context.
- Articulate how primary research and research literature inform the profession of chaplaincy and one's spiritual care practice.
- Articulate an approach to spiritual care, rooted in one's faith/spiritual tradition that is integrated with a theory of professional practice.
- Articulate a conceptual understanding of group dynamics and organizational behavior.
- Articulate ways in which one's feelings, values, assumptions, culture, and social location affect professional practice.

IV. Description of Workplace Competencies/Skills *(Chaplaincy Core Competencies)*.

- Promote, facilitate, and support ethical decision-making in one's workplace. [OL4]
- Advocate for and facilitate ethical decision-making in one's workplace. [OL3]
- Use appropriately one's professional authority as a chaplain. [PIC5]
- Provide effective spiritual support that contributes to the wellbeing of care recipients, including patients (or the relevant analogue in a non-healthcare setting), their families/friends, and staff. [PPS2]
- Facilitate care recipients' own theological/spiritual/ philosophical reflection. [PPS8]
- Document one's spiritual care accurately, cautiously, and usefully and in the appropriate records. [PPS11]
- Provide spiritual care that incorporates a working knowledge of an academic discipline that is not explicitly religious/ spiritual (e.g., psychology, sociology, anthropology, history). [ITP2]

V. Duplication. Provide information for each existing degree program at a Virginia public institution at the same degree level. Use SCHEV's degree/certificate inventory and institutions' websites.

Institution	Program degree designation, name, and CIP code	Degrees granted (most recent 5-yr average)
None	Not applicable	Not applicable

VI. Labor Market Information.

Labor Market Information: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022 -2032(10-Yr)

Occupation	Base Year Employment	Projected Employment	Total % Change and #s	Typical Entry Level Education
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	388,200	459,600	18% 71,400	Master's degree

Labor Market Information: Virginia Employment Commission, 2022 -2032 (10-Yr)

Occupation	Base Year Employment	Projected Employment	Total % Change and #s	Annual Change #	Education
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	14,170	16,930	20% 2,760	276	Master's degree

VII. Projected Resource Needs

Cost and Funding Sources to Initiate and Operate the Program			
Informational Category		Program Initiation Year 2025 - 2026	Program Full Enrollment Year ¹ 2027 - 2028
1	Projected Enrollment (Headcount)	7	14
2	Projected Enrollment (FTE)	7	14
3	Estimated Tuition and E&G Fees	\$17,673 (in-state); \$40,766 (out-state)	\$17,673 (in-state); \$40,766 (out-state)
4	Projected Revenue from Tuition and E&G Fees	\$ 285,362	\$ 570,724
5	Other Funding Sources Dedicated to the Proposed Program (e.g., grant, business entity, private sources)	0	0

¹ For the "Full Enrollment Year" use: for associate degrees, initiation year plus 1; for baccalaureate degrees, initiation plus 3; for masters degrees, initiation plus 2; for doctoral degrees, initiation plus 3.

VIII. Virginia Needs.

The necessity for this program is accentuated by the evolving landscape of healthcare delivery models, where chaplains are increasingly recognized as vital members of interdisciplinary care teams. Notably, nine of the ten largest hospitals in Virginia already incorporate chaplains into their care delivery model. Additionally, the National Consensus Project for Quality Palliative Care mandates the inclusion of chaplains within interdisciplinary teams and Medicare hospice providers are required to offer spiritual care, by trained chaplains, to their patients. Research recommends the integration of spiritual care into the care plan of those with serious illness, the integration of specific training in the area of spirituality for members of the interdisciplinary team caring for patients with serious illness, and to consistently have chaplains (spiritual care provider specialists) as part of the team caring for patients with serious illness. With the demographic trends indicating an aging among professional chaplains' workforce (45% of active professional chaplains being between the ages of 45-64 and 19.1% being 65+), there is an urgency to streamline and broaden educational pathways to ensure an adequate supply of qualified professionals in the field.

In response to findings from our Academic Program Review (APR) Self-Study, which revealed a significant desire among chaplaincy trainees for a centralized and comprehensive educational site, we propose the establishment of a degree program tailored to meet this demand. Our survey, conducted during our APR self-study, indicated that approximately 40% of individuals pursuing chaplaincy expressed a preference for a single location where they could attain their academic degree, clinical training, and clinical practice experience.

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I. Basic Program Information

Institution (official name)	Virginia Commonwealth University
Degree Program Designation	Bachelor of Science (BS) in Health Research
Degree Program Name	Health Research
CIP code	51.0719
Anticipated Initiation Date	Fall 2025
Governing Board Approval Date (actual or anticipated)	September 13, 2024 (anticipated)

II. Curriculum Requirements.

General Education Requirement: 30 credit hours

Core Coursework: 36 credits

EXPH 250: Medical Terminology (1 credit)
HRES 251: Making Research Matter (1 credit) *
HRES 300: Healthcare Delivery in the United States (3 credits)
HRES 302: Biobehavioral Sciences (3 credits) *
HRES 350: Principles of Research Ethics (3 credits) *
HRES 351: Introduction to Regulatory Compliance (3 credits) *
HRES 353: Disease Trends, Prevention, and Control (3 credits)
HRES 358: Introduction to Epidemiology (3 credits)
HRES 400: Research Administration (3 credits) *
HRES 401: Research Design and Data Analysis (4 credits) *
HRES 435: Health and Healthcare Disparities (3 credits)
EXPH 476: Pathophysiology and Pharmacology (3 credits)

Experiential Learning

HRES 395: Health Research Internship (3 credits)

Other Required Courses 19-27 Credits

BIOL 101 Biology Concepts (3 credits)
or BIOL 151 Introduction to Biological Sciences (3 credits)
CHEM 101/CHEZ 101 General Chemistry I and Laboratory (4 credits)
Fine Art (1-3 credits)
Foreign Language (0- 6 credits)
HUMS 202 Choices in a Consumer Society (1 credit)
PHIS 206 Human Physiology and Laboratory (4 credits)
STAT 210 Basic Practice of Statistics (3 credits)
SPCH 221 Oral Communication and Presentation (3 credits)

Open electives: 40-48 credits

Total credit hours: 120

II. Description of Educational Outcomes.

Upon completing the proposed degree program, students will be able to:

- Describe basic concepts, methods, and best practices in health-related research.
- Apply health related theoretical models and frameworks to develop, implement, assess, and communicate research that addresses critical knowledge gaps necessary to enrich the human experience and optimize health for all.
- Identify and interpret compliance reporting requirements in accordance with federal regulations and/or sponsoring agency policies and procedures.
- Describe various research designs, and apply basic statistical techniques to address health-related research questions and hypotheses.
- Describe various research designs, and apply basic statistical techniques to address health-related research questions and hypotheses.
- Recognize and describe the associations between social and lifestyle factors and pharmacological interventions on health and disease.

IV. Description of Workplace Competencies/Skills.

Graduates of the proposed BS in Health Research degree program will be able to:

- Prepare and maintain Institutional Review Board protocols and other regulatory documents.
- Create and review standard operating procedures.
- Recruit, screen, and enroll study participants for health-related research studies
- Collect study data and prepare preliminary reports.
- Administer standard study questionnaires and tests, score test measurements and questionnaires, and code data for computer entry.
- Maintain appropriate study documentation and records.
- Communicate study-related activities with research team members, the institutional review board, and study sponsor representatives.

V. Duplication. Provide information for each existing degree program at a Virginia public institution at the same degree level. Use SCHEV’s degree/certificate inventory and institutions’ websites.

Institution	Program degree designation, name, and CIP code	Degrees granted (most recent 5-yr average)
None	Not applicable	Not applicable

VI. Labor Market Information.

Labor Market Information: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022 -2032(10-Yr)

Occupation	Base Year Employment	Projected Employment	Total % Change and #s	Typical Entry Level Education
Medical and Health Services Managers	509,500	654,200	28% 144,700	Bachelor’s degree

Labor Market Information: Virginia Employment Commission, 2020 -2030 (10-Yr)

Occupation	Base Year Employment	Projected Employment	Total % Change and #s	Annual Change #	Education
Health Educators	8,010	10,620	33% 2,610	261	Bachelor’s degree

VII. Projected Resource Needs

Cost and Funding Sources to Initiate and Operate the Program			
Informational Category		Program Initiation Year 2025 – 2026	Program Full Enrollment Year¹ 2028 - 2029
1	Projected Enrollment (Headcount)	250	450
2	Projected Enrollment (FTE)	240	430
3	Estimated Tuition and E&G Fees	\$9,989 (in-state); \$35,853 (out-state)	\$9,989 (in-state); \$35,853 (out-state)
4	Projected Revenue from Tuition and E&G Fees	\$ 2,656,000	\$ 4,195,380
5	Other Funding Sources Dedicated to the Proposed Program (e.g., grant, business entity, private sources)	0	0

VIII. Virginia Needs. Briefly indicate state needs for the degree program. (max. 250 words)

The need for this proposed degree program is highlighted by the State’s continuous and increased investment in health research. This is demonstrated by the Governor’s support of the Commonwealth Health Research Board, an entity tasked with providing financial support for research that “maximizes the human health benefits of the Commonwealth.” Additionally, the most recent 2024-2026 biennium budget bills from the State House and Senate include an investment totaling \$7,500,000.00 toward the Virginia Biosciences Health Research Corporation, which comprises many of the state academic institutions, including Virginia Commonwealth University. These funds may be used to perform research in biosciences. In 2023, VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center reported an increase of \$5,000,000.00 from the Governor and General Assembly to a record amount of \$25,000,000.00. A large percentage of these funds have and will continue to go to research. Similar patterns have been reported at other institutions that conduct health research. Given the State’s growing investment in health research, there will be a critical need for personnel to facilitate research activities.

Given that this is the first bachelor’s degree program of its kind for the institution and for the state, it is difficult to determine a student need. However, all state institutions have focused on undergraduate research, whether through focused centers or training programs. All of the current efforts are ancillary to degree programs. The proposed BS in Health Research will afford students the opportunity to increase their knowledge about research and research practices while conducting health-related research.

¹ For the “Full Enrollment Year” use: for associate degrees, initiation year plus 1; for baccalaureate degrees, initiation plus 3; for masters degrees, initiation plus 2; for doctoral degrees, initiation plus 3.