



VISIONS: A SNAP SHOT OF
POTENTIAL OBSTACLES, INDICES
FOR THINKING DIFFERENTLY, AND
OPPORTUNITIES FOR GETTING
AHEAD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dean's letter served as a note of welcome to the University. In that note the importance of establishing sustained relationships with Deans and faculty was foregrounded. In these few pages we have a snapshot of student decisions that have in the past delayed the success of some students. We want to overcommunicate these indices or challenges because of their potentially costly consequences. A glimpse of the source of student behavioral errors is identified and circumscribed. Then a brief reading list that signals hot topics in various concentrations and majors is provided for current summer reading and for future use. We will update these in the course of your four years and in conversations with us at the University of Virginia.

The Office of African-American Affairs
University of Virginia, Fall 2021 Edition

Degree Major/Concentration Tips, Mistakes for Entering Students, & Recommendations for Summer Reading

Office of African-American Affairs

1 Transfer Students

Transfer students must be aware that they are only granted **5 semesters to complete their education** if they enter UVA in their third year. Please ensure that this is understood when meeting with your Association Dean. Please work with the Office of African American Affairs & Association Deans ahead of time in order to get the advising needed to begin your academic career successfully.

Caution: Pre-Med Transfers & STEM Students require careful advising because 5 semesters are not enough to fulfill both Pre-Med Preparation & STEM major requirements.

2 Art History Majors

In this major, students must understand the intersectionality of Economics, Politics, Philosophy, Culture, & Psychology. Students looking to enter into this major must not assume that this is an easy major to complete. It is a highly conceptual field of study.

3 Frank Batten School of Leadership & Public Policy/ McIntire School of Commerce

One of the common mistakes our students make is assuming they can successfully pass any Economics class simply by working hard or by working with a professor whose teaching makes it easier to understand the basic conceptual understanding of economics.

A high school course in economics does not guarantee success in a college Economics course. Why?

A College course in Economics assumes prior understanding of quantity and **change** (Calculus), quantity and **chance** (Probability & Statistics), before making **predictions** in Economics. Students who have not followed this sequence have regretted it.

4 Engineering Majors

It is important for you to take the Calculus placement test seriously to ensure that you have the **mastery** and rigorous preparation to succeed.

Given the shift in orientation scheduling, the Engineering School anticipates piloting a pre-enrollment system. All incoming students will be pre-registered for several core courses: Calculus, Chemistry, and Intro to Engineering.

The placement for Calculus will be based on the recommendation from the algorithm developed by professors in the E-school. Inputs will include AP Scores, Grades, and previous coursework.

Students will have an opportunity to discuss math placement with an advisor after enrolling. In the past, students who have followed the recommendation based on inputs have fared better than students who enrolled against the recommendation of the algorithm.

5 Pre-Health

Do not take Calculus and Chemistry together, especially in the first year, first semester. For medical school, C- is not an acceptable grade and the course must be repeated.

Consider taking a required course by itself first before attempting to stack. In order to fulfill your course requirements, it will be helpful to take some classes in the summer.

Seek the advice of the OAAA Deans before starting with your Pre-Med course

6 Nursing Majors

It is important to pass the Pharmacology course the 1st time.

7 Global Studies Majors

There are two Economics classes required with this major in Global Studies. We recommend that students take Statistics before enrolling in Economics courses for Global Studies.

Three Unhelpful Behavioral Errors

1. ***“I want to finish my required courses early”***. Please use ***all 8 semesters*** to prepare for a pre-professional career and take a bridge year if you need to. Discuss individual differences and needs with OAAA Deans.

2. ***“I want to challenge myself”*** leading to taking such impossible course combinations like Arabic, Calculus and Chemistry.

Also, it is important to remember that what is challenging to you might not be challenging to someone else. Your classmates are not always able to give you accurate information about their performance. Because of pride, privacy, and other constraints, they are not able to share their specific grades.

3. ***“I have to have a STEM major to be pre-med.”*** No you do not. Choose a major that best fits your aspirations, interests, and/or ability to take an appropriate combination of courses at a given time.

Suggested Readings

8 Architecture, Engineering, and Youth & Social Innovation Majors

1. ***Poetics of Space*** (Gaston Bachelard);
2. ***The Idea of Design*** (Victor Margolin and Richard Buchanan);
3. ***Discovering Design*** (Richard Buchanan)

#1 will give you the staple architects use to spark their imagination;

#2 and #3 will show you how ideas are both generated and operationalized.

9 Political & Social Thought Majors

1. *The Clash of Civilizations* (Samuel Huntington);
2. *The End of History* (Francis Fukuyama);
3. “The End of Innocence” (Edward Said);
4. *From Cold War to Hot Peace* (Michael McFaul).

#1 presents a thesis about cultures. #2 extends and modifies a view about the end of monarchies, etc. Then Edward Said, rips apart much of accepted Western ideas explicit in #1, and implicit in #2.

10 Pre-Law Track

1. *The Pig Farmer's Daughter and Other Tales of American Justice: Episodes of Racism and Sexism in the Courts from 1865 to the Present* - April 11, 2000 (Mary Frances Berry).
2. *Just Mercy* (Bryan Stevenson).
3. *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime* (Elizabeth Hinton).

#1 and #2 dive into legal perspectives of two generations of African-American legal scholars. #3 gives us a glimpse of *how jurisprudence and public policy intersect*.

11 Development Economics & Global Studies

These books are highly recommended:

1. *Development as Freedom* (Amartya Sen).
2. *Globalization and its Discontents* (Joseph Stiglitz).
3. *The Price of Inequality* (Joseph Stiglitz).
4. *The Elusive Quest for Growth* (William Easterly).

These 4 books help to answer *why a European heads the IMF and an American heads the World Bank*, etc.

12 History, African-American Studies and English Majors (with a concentration on Cultural Studies)

1. *The Peace Treaties of Westphalia 1618-1648* by Various Authors (Wallachia Publishers, New York);
2. *The Scramble for Africa 1876-1912* (Thomas Pakenham)

#1 addresses the creation of the concepts of nationhood, sovereignty, and national borders for Western Europeans. #2 tells us how these same Western European countries could not, would not, extend the same concepts of sovereignty to the continent of Africa but instead carved up the continent of Africa into colonies.

Knowledge of these two treaties can frame scholarly arguments about white supremacy, justifications for slavery, etc.