

Bridge Experience Program Overview

What is the Bridge Experience Program?
The Bridge Experience Program connects students' academic experiences to career goals through experiential learning. Students in participating majors must complete a bridge experience to graduate. These experiences include internships, undergraduate research, service learning, study abroad, or other approved activities. Faculty pre-approve bridge experiences, which meet specific learning outcomes and appear on transcripts.

FAQs

IS A BRIDGE EXPERIENCE JUST ANOTHER NAME FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

No. While experiential learning is essential, bridge experiences are unique because they are career-related and required for certain majors.

DO ALL STUDENTS NEED TO COMPLETE A BRIDGE EXPERIENCE?

No. Only students in select majors must complete a bridge experience to graduate.

WHEN WAS THE PROGRAM ESTABLISHED?

The Board of Visitors approved the program in 2017, aiming for 50% of academic degrees to include required experiential learning by the 2026–27 academic year.

HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE PARTICIPATING?

By 2027, an estimated 4,000 students annually will complete a bridge experience. In 2024, 146 students from 11 programs graduated with a bridge experience on their transcripts.

WHAT IS A QEP AND ITS CONNECTION TO THE PROGRAM?

Virginia Tech's Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) is a ten-year academic initiative tied to university reaccreditation. The Bridge Experience Program serves as the current QEP, enhancing learning outcomes and supporting student success.

Tips for Communicating the Bridge Program

UNIVERSITY STYLE GUIDE

- First reference: “Bridge Experience Program.”
- Later references: “bridge program” or “bridge experience.”
- Avoid using “BEP” or “the bridge.”

VT News Stories

When featuring students who completed internships, undergraduate research, or study abroad, ask if the experience counted as a bridge experience. Include explanatory language, such as:

“As part of Virginia Tech’s commitment to experiential learning, many academic majors require students to complete a bridge experience before graduation. These immersive, career-building opportunities connect classroom learning to real-world environments. By 2027, 4,000 students will complete a bridge experience each year.”