Commit to unwavering CURIOSITY
Virginia Tech students will be inspired to lead lives of curiosity, embracing a life-long commitment to intellectual development.

Pursue SELF-UNDERSTANDING AND INTEGRITY
Virginia Tech students will form a set of affirmative values and develop the self-understanding to integrate these values into their decision-making.

Practice CIVILITY
Virginia Tech students will understand and commit to civility as a way of life in their interactions with others.

Prepare for a life of COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP
Virginia Tech students will be courageous leaders who serve as change agents and make the world more humane and just.

Embrace UT PROSIM as a way of life
Virginia Tech students will enrich their lives through service to others.
The Aspirations for Student Learning represent our greatest hopes for Virginia Tech students, and the Keystone Experience helps you understand what living a life marked by these Aspirations looks like.

The Keystone Experience allows you to make your time at Virginia Tech really matter, connecting all of your different experiences, from internships, career fairs, and student organizations, to intramural sports, Gobblerfest, and everything in between, in a meaningful way that prepares you for your future.

By discovering opportunities for involvement in GobblerConnect and intentionally reflecting on your experiences in this Field Guide with a small group or member of your Success Network, you’ll be able to make the most of your time as a Hokie.
WHY KEYSSTONE?

Five Aspirations for Student Learning
Your Keystone Experience is built from and toward the Aspirations.

Unlocking your potential and the potential of those around you.

KEYSTONE EXPERIENCE

What you learn both inside and outside the classroom supports and strengthens everything about your time at Virginia Tech. The keystone in an arch is the final and most important piece of the structure. It’s what holds all of the other pieces together and binds them into a unified shape.

You are part of a community of learners, diverse in membership, but creating your unique, self-authored path at Virginia Tech. This is your Keystone Experience.
The Practice phase of the Keystone Experience is meant to help you delve deeper into what you’ve encountered in Explore. Hopefully, you’ve identified areas of growth and interests you would like to pursue and discovered communities where you can flourish as a Hokie. If you haven’t identified areas of growth and interests you would like to pursue, the Explore Field Guide is a great tool to guide you. You can find it at www.dsa.vt.edu/keystone.

The Practice Field Guide is meant to support you as you commit to your chosen communities, furthering your personal growth. Speaking of community, you will find a page in the back of the book dedicated to your “Success Network.” We want you to think about the individuals, resources, and communities who can contribute most to your success and list them there. Although it may not always be obvious, usually the most successful people have a team of supporters rallying around them, encouraging them, and challenging them to grow. We’ve included a few ideas for whom you might include in your Success Network, and we hope that you’ll add people who matter to you and who share your interest in furthering your Keystone Experience.

Flip through the pages of this guide and find an Aspiration that you want to commit to practice. Engage in campus life, ponder the strengths questions and challenges, connect with others, go to a Keystone Happening, and take stock of what’s going on in your life. This book is designed to help you engage with your own Success Network, however you define that, in diving deeper into the Aspirations for Student Learning and reflecting on your experience.

This guide is meant for use with a small group or someone in your Success Network. There is no prescribed timeline for working through this guide, so choose the pace that works best for you! Choose the pace that works best for you! By using the Practice Field Guide with a small group or member of your Success Network, as well as utilizing other tools of the Keystone Experience, you’ll continue to define yourself as a Hokie and a person.
If you haven’t already, visit vt.gallup.com and complete StrengthsQuest to learn more about your unique strengths. Record your top 5 on the inside back cover of this field guide!

To find Keystone Happenings, visit gobblerconnect.vt.edu. Search “Keystone,” and look for any event with “Keystone” in the title! To see which of the Aspirations the Happening will highlight, look for the Aspiration icons on the event page.
CONTINUING WITH KEYSTONE
Practice Keystone

What have been the biggest challenges of your time at Virginia Tech thus far?

How have you navigated those challenges?

What are you learning from those challenges?

What have been the biggest successes of your time at Virginia Tech thus far?

How do you define success? What caused you to define these experiences or milestones as successes?
What are you learning from those successes?

What kinds of support do you need to be successful here at Virginia Tech?

What qualities do you look for in people who support you?

How do you ask for support? How can you help people understand or recognize when you need support?
Commit to unwavering Curiosity

Virginia Tech students will be inspired to lead lives of curiosity, embracing a life-long commitment to intellectual development.

How do you approach uncertainty and the unknown?

Delve deeper with the Aspirations for Student Learning at www.dsa.vt.edu/aspirations.
How do you challenge yourself to explore what you are naturally curious about?

How does curiosity impact your day-to-day living?
Engage with the following websites and consider the reflection questions below.

GobblerConnect - Find organizations and events that can help you understand, practice, and discover more about your interests.

Curiosity.com - Learn about a diverse array of subjects, and apply that information to your various involvements.

Pinterest - Check out what other people are interested in and collect your own interests to display and pursue further.

When browsing these websites, what makes you curious?

What kinds of things do you search for?

What holds your interest?
Identify an area of curiosity and create a plan of how you’ll nurture and engage that curiosity. Chronicle how this plan unfolds and what you’re learning.
Have a conversation with someone whom you’d describe as curious.

Why do you view them as a curious person?

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Talk to this person about your own journey and experience with curiosity.

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How has nurturing your curiosity given way to growth and learning?
Pursue
Self-Understanding and Integrity

Virginia Tech students will form a set of affirmative values and develop the self-understanding to integrate these values into their decision-making.

Which of your personal values have remained consistent for you over time? Why?

Delve deeper with the Aspirations for Student Learning at www.dsa.vt.edu/aspirations.
Which values have been challenged? How so?

How are you challenging yourself to grow as a person?

What aspects of your story are you working on re-writing? Why?
Log in to the Virginia Tech strengths portal at vt.gallup.com where you originally took the StrengthsFinder assessment. Print out the “Strengths Insight and Action-Planning Guide. Create a personalized action plan based on the suggestions and ideas for action provided for each of your strengths in the report.

Share the plan you create with a member of your Success Network or small group.
Take any of the following assessments and compare your results with your strengths:

**Personality Assessment:** [www.16personalities.com](http://www.16personalities.com)

**Life Values Inventory:** [www.lifevaluesinventory.org](http://www.lifevaluesinventory.org)

**Values in Action:** [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)
Talk to a member of your Success Network about ways in which you can grow—as a student, student leader, friend, employee, etc.
Look back on a defining moment and reflect on how it changed you.
Virginia Tech students will understand and commit to civility as a way of life in their interactions with others.

What do you perceive to be constructive and positive interactions? What makes for a “good” or “comfortable” interaction?

What do you perceive to be negative and destructive interactions? What makes for a “bad” or “uncomfortable” interaction?

Delve deeper with the Aspirations for Student Learning at www.dsa.vt.edu/aspirations.
What role, if any, do you play when a conflict arises?

How might you take responsibility for your actions and reactions, becoming more comfortable in difficult situations or conversations?

What role, if any, does civil disobedience play in practicing civility?
Tools

With your small group or members of your Success Network, create a StrengthsQuest Team Talent Map utilizing the Virginia Tech strengths portal. You can do this by logging in to vt.gallup.com and using the “Groups” tab to create a group for your Success Network or small group members. Once each member has accepted the invite they will receive via email, select “View Team Strengths Report” and discuss the following questions together.

If you haven’t already, share about yourself and your strengths.

How do you see your strengths connecting to the ways you interact with others?

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How might you navigate your small group experience using your strengths? Your Virginia Tech experience? Your involvement on campus?

Which of the strengths leadership domains are represented within the group?

Continued to the next page
What strengths are missing, if any? What strengths leadership domains are missing, if any?

How can this inform the ways you understand your role on a team or within a group of people? (e.g., communication processes, projects, outreach, etc.)
ISidewith.com - Go deeper into learning where you stand on a number of political and social issues. Reflect on the life experiences that have shaped your perspective and why your perspective is important to you.
Identify someone with different views than you. Without trying to change their mind, engage in a conversation that allows you to learn how it is they came to have the views they hold.

Ask, if they are willing to share, what life experiences have shaped their perspectives and why those perspectives are important to them.
Based on your previous experiences with civility, where is there room for you to grow?
Prepare for a life of **Courageous Leadership**

*Virginia Tech students will be courageous leaders who serve as change agents and make the world more humane and just.*

Who are you as a leader? What messages are others receiving from how you lead about what is acceptable behavior, thinking, and ways of treating others?

Describe attributes you think a leader should possess.

[Delve deeper with the Aspirations for Student Learning at www.dsa.vt.edu/aspirations.](http://www.dsa.vt.edu/aspirations)
Has this changed at all since the beginning of your time at Virginia Tech? If yes, how? What caused your thoughts to change?

What is your informal power in different environments (i.e., network, influence, expertise)? How can you use your informal power for the greater good?

How can you identify action to be taken, a relationship to be mended, someone or something that needs to be recognized?
Spend some time at the Pylons or reading about the Pylons (www.vt.edu/about/buildings/war-memorial-chapel). Consider the eight values represented by the Pylons and identify one or two that you identify with most closely.

How would you define the value(s) you selected?

What experiences or perspectives caused you to select the Pylon value(s) you selected?

How does this value impact how you lead?
Identify a community need. Identify issues of ethics, power, and authority. When strategizing for action, consider issues of access and service as well as the many roles individuals can serve in this project. To guide this process, consider:

How do we define community? How do we identify a need?

How could you demonstrate courageous leadership to remedy this community need?
Volunteer time with a student/campus/community organization to learn from leaders doing things you are passionate about.

Reflect on your experience by sharing and discussing with a member of your Success Network or your small group.
What makes leadership an act of courage? How has your experience practicing courageous leadership changed your identity as a leader?
Embrace *Ut Prosim* as a way of life

**Virginia Tech students will enrich their lives through service to others.**

Has your understanding of service changed or expanded during the course of your time as a student at Virginia Tech? If yes, how?

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*Delve deeper with the Aspirations for Student Learning at [www.dsa.vt.edu/aspirations](http://www.dsa.vt.edu/aspirations).*
What relationships, conversations, or barriers exist that detract from community? What role can you play in changing that?

Does service look different across various situations, roles, or environments? If yes, reflect on a couple of examples that allow for comparing and contrasting how “service” might vary.

How do your new notions of service conflict and/or align with your previous understanding of service?
In what ways could you practice Ut Prosim by using your unique strengths?
With your small group, commit to an experience that will allow you to practice *Ut Prosim* through existing opportunities or one you create and/or identify together.
Reflect on your experience practicing *Ut Prosim* with your small group. What did you learn about yourself?

How did you utilize your strengths in your service?

What did you learn from working with your group?
Ask someone in your Success Network to explain how they embody Ut Prosim by using their unique strengths.
Spend a couple of minutes envisioning your next year. What have you learned from reflecting on your experiences in this Field Guide? How will what you’ve learned through reflection influence how you approach your next year at Virginia Tech?

Now that you’ve completed the Practice Field Guide, your next step is to Live Keystone! The Live phase is all about taking what you’ve learned thus far in your Keystone Experience and using that knowledge to support others in navigating their Keystone Experiences. Hopefully, from practicing the ASLs with your Success Network and/or small group, you’ve gained a deeper understanding of yourself, your interests, and the ways you can influence your community.
We hope that you will join us in the Live phase, influencing future generations of Hokies as they design and create their own paths. This could be through coaching students with tools such as StrengthsFinder and GobblerConnect, which are designed to help students make the most of their time at Virginia Tech, or using your experience to be an ambassador for other students’ Keystone Experiences and their understanding of the Aspirations for Student Learning. Or, you could serve as a Keystone Fellow. Applications for Keystone Fellows are available in the spring, and selected Fellows are recognized in a special ceremony that shares their story with the Virginia Tech community and celebrates their contributions to student life at Virginia Tech.

Think about what you need to transition to this next phase of your Virginia Tech experience. Do you need to talk to someone about your next steps? What are you looking forward to as you move to the next phase of your Keystone Experience?
Examples could include: Orientation Leader, Resident Advisor, Academic Advisor, etc.
REFLECTIONS ON SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS
This Keystone Experience belongs to:

My Top Five Strengths

1. ...........................................................................................................................................

2. ...........................................................................................................................................

3. ...........................................................................................................................................

4. ...........................................................................................................................................

5. ...........................................................................................................................................

Discover your strengths at www.dsa.vt.edu/aspirations/strengths.

If found, please contact:

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