

# Rockbridge Teacher Education Consortium

A Partnership of Washington and Lee University, Virginia Military Institute, and Southern Virginia University

ROCKBRIDGE TEACHER  
**RTEC**  
EDUCATION CONSORTIUM



# Mary Baldwin College or MBC Staunton, Virginia



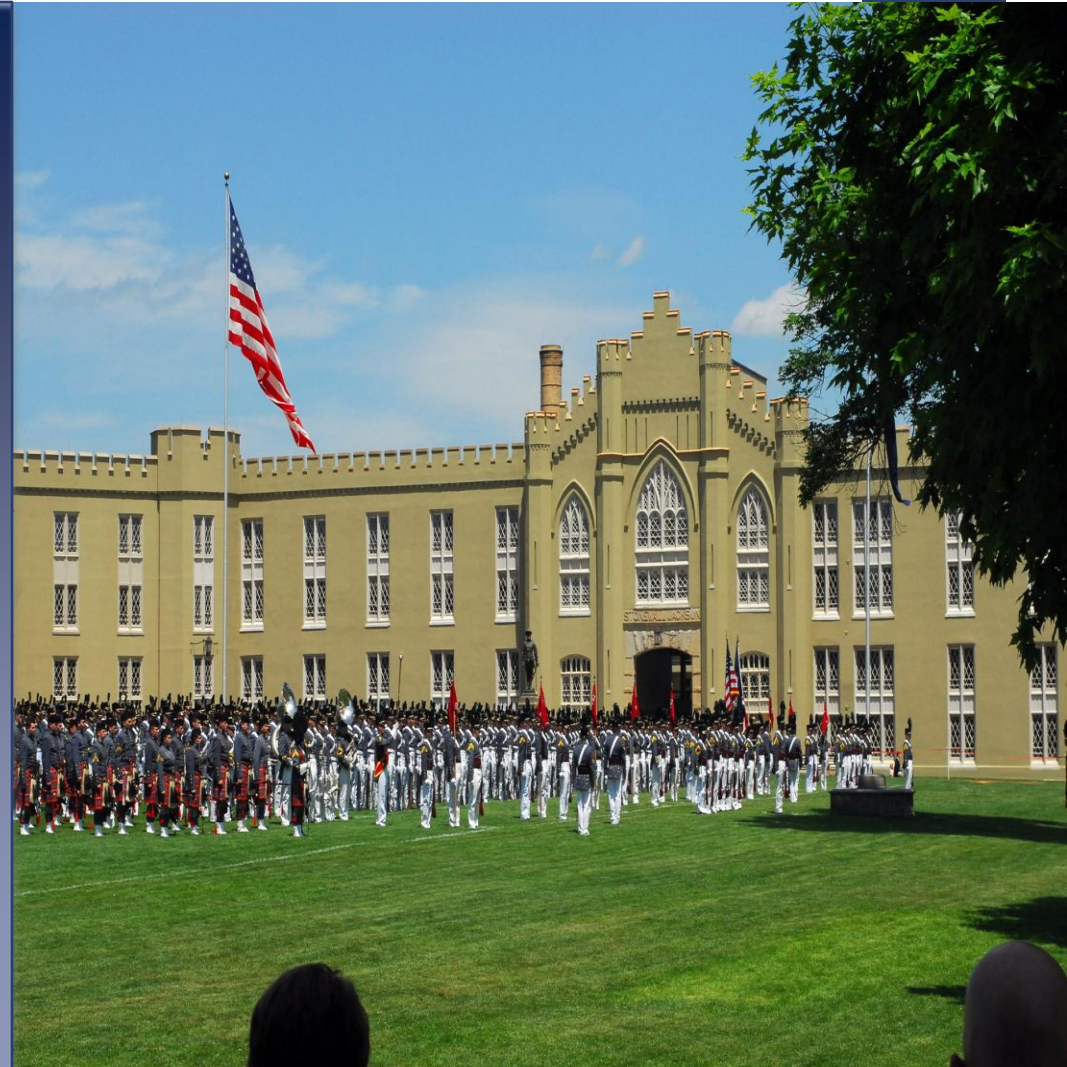


# Washington and Lee University or W&L Lexington, Virginia





# Virginia Military Institute or VMI Lexington, Virginia





# Southern Virginia University or SVU Buena Vista, Virginia



# + Rationale for RTEC



The value and advantages of the consortium rest on several factors:

- proximity and program identity;
- opportunities for a richer program through institutional collaboration; and
- professional development and collaboration with local schools.



## History of Partnerships MBC, W&L, VMI, and SVU Teacher Education



- W&L and VMI have a longstanding exchange arrangement in teacher education with Mary Baldwin College.
- VMI and W&L established a local exchange in 2005.
- VMI, W&L, and SVU initiated consortium meetings in 2006.
- SVU dropped out of the consortium temporarily because SACS application was delayed.



# RTEC Proposed Endorsement Areas



- ***Elementary Education: PreK-6***
- ***Middle Education: Math, Language Arts, Social Science, and Science: 6-8***
- ***Secondary Education Endorsement Areas: 6-12***
  - Algebra I, add-on
  - Computer Science and Computer Science, Add-on
  - English
  - History and Social Sciences
  - Journalism, Add-on
  - Mathematics
  - Science – Biology
  - Science – Chemistry
  - Science – Earth Science
  - Science – Physics
- ***PreK-12 Endorsement Areas***
  - Latin
  - Music Education: Instrumental and Choral
  - Theater Arts and Theater Arts Add-on
  - Visual Arts
  - Foreign Language: French, German, and Spanish

# + Program Design



- Based on:
  - TEAC and VDOE guidelines
  - INTASC Standards
  - Needs of local schools
  - Arthur Levine's 2006 report, *Educating School Teachers*.
  - Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*
  - Experience and training of faculty involved in RTEC.

# + Mission Statement



The mission of the Rockbridge Teacher Education Consortium or RTEC is to capitalize on the strengths of its three member institutions to prepare students to become teachers who are intelligent, compassionate, honorable, and dynamic leaders in their classrooms, schools, and communities.

Our program rests on the four core components of **leadership, rigor, service, and diversity**.

# + Leadership

Upon graduation, we expect our teachers to be effective leaders who are capable of helping others reach high levels of achievement. Our teachers will:

- Collaborate with others
- Motivate students and fellow teachers
- Make thoughtful decisions
- Serve as agents of change and excellence in schools and communities



# + Rigor

Academic excellence is central to all three institutions. Our institutions have a reputation for outstanding and demanding academics. We expect our students to do the following:

- Engage in critical thinking, analysis, and communication
- Integrate theory into practice in their teaching
- Teach with intention
- Use a variety of instructional techniques
- Use technology for instructional purposes and for research;
- Draw on research and practice when planning
- Engage in self-reflection and self-assessment
- Perform with strong sense of honor and ethical standards
- Actively pursue opportunities for professional growth and development

# + Service

Upon graduation, we expect each of our students to have a strong commitment to service, which is an integral part of leadership.

- We believe that a commitment to service is evident in teachers who are capable of:
  - effective involvement in community-based activities and a wide range of volunteer activities; and
  - teaching in a student-centered manner attuned to the needs and learning styles of all students.



# + Diversity

RTEC expects each of its graduates to enter the profession as teachers who are prepared to work in school environments characterized by diversity.

Therefore, RTEC will prepare teachers who are capable of using a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs and to accommodate a variety of learning styles of diverse students.

- The differences among our student bodies will contribute to this understanding.
- The colleges within the consortium draw from somewhat different student populations.
- Classroom and collaborative work will create opportunities for interaction.
- This goal will be supported through a variety of fieldwork placements.



# + Partners in Professional Courses

- Each participating college will offer unique courses required for licensure that will:
  - draw upon the unique strengths of faculty at each school.
  - be open to students at each college
  - result in an efficiency of effort and greater expertise within the courses offered in RTEC's program.
- RTEC will coordinate the scheduling of course offerings at each college so all education courses are available every semester at one of the colleges.
- Courses will be taught by faculty on their home campus, but open to the students from each school.
- The content and requirements for each professional course will be standardized across the schools in the consortium, ensuring that students will have an equivalent experience on each campus.
- Faculty at each university will work with their own students during student teaching and fieldwork.



# Coordination and Quality Control



- Washington and Lee will serve as the lead campus through its Department of Teacher Education.
- The teacher education faculty at W&L will provide the leadership needed to develop and implement these cooperative systems and ensure standardized quality control.
- They will work with program leaders from the other colleges to hold regular, on-going faculty meetings that ensure faculty continue to plan, learn, and work together towards continuous improvement.
- An internal assessment will be established to support these activities.
  - W&L will also develop and maintain a central, consortium-wide database with searchable data on students, faculty, courses and other critical data points.
  - The three colleges will cooperate in organizing, sharing, and coordinating course numbers, pertinent records, enrollment data, and financial arrangements.

# + Assessment

- W&L will develop and implement an ongoing assessment component that provides continuous feedback to program leaders.
- In addition to reviewing outcomes from student testing, field experience, and course evaluations, students will be asked to maintain a portfolio that captures their experiences in the program.
- Each year a focus group will meet with graduating students.

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# Program Admission Requirements

- Foundations of Education is the first education course students at VMI, W&L, and SVU take if they plan to teach.
- Students who wish to continue in Teacher Education must submit an application form.
- Each college will allow students to enroll in upper-level teacher education courses, using the following common admission standards:
  - completion of the Foundations of Education course and practicum (EDUC 200 and 201) with a grade of at least a 2.0;
  - a cumulative GPA of 2.500;
  - an interview with teacher education faculty from the student's home college;
  - two letters of reference from liberal arts faculty members not in the teacher education program and one reference from an education faculty member.



# Requirements for Student Teaching



- Before students enroll in student teaching, they must meet the following criteria:
  - a passing score on the Praxis I or earned SAT or ACT scores that are sufficient to replace the Praxis I, according to the standards set by the Virginia Board of Education; currently a total of 1060 with math and reading scores above 530.
  - a 3.0 or better in all upper-level teacher education courses;
  - a passing score on the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA)

# + Requirements for Licensure

- To become eligible for licensure RTEC students must:
  - complete all required education courses with a 3.0 average or higher and no course below 2.0;
  - complete a portfolio or capstone project that demonstrates their identity as teachers and how they might uniquely contribute to the profession and help students learn;
  - provide documented evidence of required leadership and service involvement beyond what occurs in their education courses; and
  - pass the Praxis II in their instructional area, pass the Virginia Communications and Literacy Assessment (VCLA), the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA), for elementary licensure, and complete child- abuse training.

# + Profile of Cooperating Schools

Diverse in terms of:

- SES
- Poverty
- Minority populations
- ELL



# + Collaboration with Local Schools

- Over the last three years, W&L Teacher Education and VMI have been very active in a number of collaborative efforts with the schools.
  - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grants
  - Elementary Spanish Program
  - Professional development in science instruction
  - Recertification points for mentoring practicum students and student teachers.
  - Afterschool tutoring programs,
  - W&L: Burish Service leadership intern
  - VMI: big Brother /Big Sister Club, and Character Counts



# Conclusion



- Our work with MBC has helped us develop infrastructure that strengthens our program. We will build on what has worked for us in the past as we create our unique program for future teachers.
  - We already have a good working relationship with our local schools.
  - We already have student interest.
  - We already have faculty and administrative support within our institutions.
  - We already have qualified teacher education faculty.