THE SCHOOL FOR PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Mission: The School for Professional Studies at Vanguard University serve life-long learners throughout their educational journey. The structure and format of the degree programs make it possible and manageable for working adults to finish their educational goals without sacrificing their careers and important responsibilities while still accomplishing their educational aspirations.

General Information

In addition to graduate degrees, the School for Professional Studies (SPS) offers programs of study leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business, with an emphasis in Organizational Management; Psychology with an emphasis in Human Development; and Religion, with an emphasis in Ministry and Leadership. A Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood and a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood with an emphasis in Special Education are offered online, as well as a Certificate in Early Childhood, and a Certificate in Transitional Kindergarten. The Department of Sociology also offers a Certificate in Anti-Human Trafficking through Professional Studies. All courses are offered either one night per week (6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) or online. Each course meets in accelerated 5 to 8-week formats and the on-campus courses generally meet once each week throughout the year. Small, dynamic classroom settings allow students the opportunity to share their personal and professional experiences in an academically stimulating environment of mutual respect, learning, and support whether on campus or online. Accomplished faculty bring both practical and academic acumen to the classroom. Moreover, the program’s Student Success Coordinators help each student navigate through the various aspects of the university as well as assist each student in individual academic planning.

Academic Calendar

The School for Professional Studies programs operate on a year-round, semester basis. Courses begin at various intervals throughout the year. Upper division cohort groups are given a schedule which indicates the dates the group will meet over a given period of enrollment. The Department of Sociology also offers a Certificate in Anti-Human Trafficking through Professional Studies. All courses are offered either one night per week (6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) or online. Each course meets in accelerated 5 to 8-week formats and the on-campus courses generally meet once each week throughout the year. Small, dynamic classroom settings allow students the opportunity to share their personal and professional experiences in an academically stimulating environment of mutual respect, learning, and support whether on campus or online. Accomplished faculty bring both practical and academic acumen to the classroom. Moreover, the program’s Student Success Coordinators help each student navigate through the various aspects of the university as well as assist each student in individual academic planning.

Degree Program Registration and Orientation Date

Orientations are held on the Thursday prior to the beginning of the first and second modules of each semester. New Student Orientations are structured to help begin the process of acclimation to the university and develop an understanding of available university resources.

Academic Policies

Please refer to the University Policy and Academic Information sections of the catalog for additional information in institutional policies.

Admissions Information

Admission Requirements

- Proof of High School graduation/GED
- Cumulative grade point average of 2.0 (on 4.0 scale) or better on all prior college work

- Completion of Application Process including forms, fees, assessments, references, transcripts (official transcripts are sealed by the Registrar at the requested university and must be received from each institution attended, regardless of academic performance or granting of credit) and official entrance interview

Students wishing to take courses must meet the 57 unit prerequisite. Exceptions for starting upper division coursework with fewer than 57 units must be approved by the Chair of the desired degree program.

All applicants meeting the above-stated admission requirements will be considered by the Admission Committee. During the admission process, students will be informed of remaining requirements accompanied by a recommendation as to how these requirements can be completed.

Application Process

The application process is as follows:

1. Complete and submit the Application for Admission, along with the non-refundable application fee of $45.00
2. Request Official Transcripts from each college or university previously attended, regardless of credit granted or academic performance. Check with the Registrar’s Office from each institution for the appropriate transcript fee.
3. High School Completion. Final official high school transcript or diploma, GED certificate or transcript, transcript stating 2-year program completion and specifically Associate of Arts or Associate of Science, home school credential or transcript, or proof of passing both sections – English-language Arts and Mathematics – of the California Proficiency Examination (CHSPE).
4. Submit Reference/s as required by program.
5. Submit the required admissions essay(s) and/or petitions.
6. Complete any required assessments.
7. After all required documents are received, an admissions interview will be scheduled with the appropriate Admissions Counselor.

Application, Transcript Request, and Reference forms are available at the SPS page of the University’s website at http://www.vanguard.edu

Completed application files are forwarded to the Admissions Committee for review. Students accepted into Vanguard will be notified of their acceptance status via letter. The Admission Deadline for each cohort/group is two (2) weeks prior to the orientation date.

Individualized Appointments

Prospective students are invited to meet with an Admissions Counselor to discuss their academic needs and develop educational plans. These appointments cover:

- An unofficial transcript evaluation
- The nature of the academic programs
- Beginning dates for groups
- Meeting the needs of the working professional
- Application procedures
- Questions and answers
- Financial matters, such as:
Distant Learning/Online Students

- Employer reimbursement
- Loans and grants
- Payment schedules

Office hours are Monday-Thursday: 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m. and F: 8 a.m.–5 p.m. (Pacific Time).

International Students

International students must complete the same admission process as other students and must submit:

On-Campus Students

- Financial Certification. Vanguard University does not offer financial aid to international students. Therefore, applicants must provide satisfactory evidence that adequate funds are available to meet the financial obligations required at the time of enrollment. A Financial Statement and Affidavit form must be filled out and must include bank statements that show sufficient funds available to cover one year of tuition and expenses. The bank statement must be in U.S. dollars. Forms related to this process are available in the Admissions Office.
- Deposit: 70% of annual direct cost for the first year of attendance is required before registering for classes.
- English Proficiency: TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) – all international students whose native language is other than English are required to present scores for the TOEFL, a minimum of 60 college units (taught in English) or SAT/ACT scores.
- Appropriate Visa documentation: International student applying within the U.S. must submit copies of their visa, I-94, and if on a student visa, copies of their I-20 A-B Form.
- Transferring from another institution within the U.S.: To become eligible for transfer to VU from another American college, approval must be obtained from the previous school attended and the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.
- Transferring from another institution outside of the U.S.: Transferring any units from a university or seminary overseas, all transcripts must be submitted to an agency that evaluates transcripts. All transcripts should be an English translation, and must be notarized by the U.S. Consul or notary, or another authority.
- Student Visa: F-1 International students must sustain full-time student status, maintaining a minimum of twelve (12) units each semester.
- Non Student Visa: Those currently in the U.S. on a visa other than an F-1 student visa (M-1, J-1, R-1, etc.) may take a maximum of eleven (11) per semester, attending classes only part-time.

Distant Learning/Online Students

- Financial Certification. Vanguard University does not offer financial aid to international students. Therefore, applicants must provide satisfactory evidence that adequate funds are available to meet the financial obligations required at the time of enrollment. A Financial Statement and Affidavit form must be filled out and must include bank statements that show sufficient funds available to cover one year of tuition and expenses. The bank statement must be in U.S. dollars. Forms related to this process are available in the Admissions Office.
- English Proficiency: TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) – all international students whose native language is other than English are required to present scores for the TOEFL, a minimum of 60 college units (taught in English) or SAT/ACT scores.
- Deposit: 70% of annual direct cost for the first year of attendance is required before registering for classes.

Re-Admitting Students

Students wishing to return to a Professional Studies program after withdrawing, being academically disqualified, or taking a leave of absence of one semester or more must submit a Re-Admit Application and the $20.00 re-admit fee, along with official transcripts (sealed by the requested university) for any course work completed since leaving Vanguard. Students who apply for readmission will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee and the appropriate Chair. The decision to readmit a student is based upon their standing with the academic, financial, and student life centers of the university. Upon notice of approval, the student may proceed with academic and financial registrations. Readmitted students may be subject to new degree requirements. Should a student be denied re-admission, the respective department Chair in conjunction with the Dean may place conditions on possible readmission.

Admission Status

Auditors

Students may attend class with no obligation to participate actively in the work. For such students, no examinations are given, no assignments are requested or marked; however, no credit may be obtained for such attendance. Auditors pay the auditing fee. A student must attend at least 50% of the class sessions in order to have the audited course recorded on the transcript.

Provisional Students

A limited number of students who have not met the admission requirements may be admitted as “Provisional” students. Students admitted provisionally are required to limit their course load to 9 units per term. In order to receive regular standing classification and continue enrollment, provisional students must attain a 2.0 grade point average in their first term of no less than part-time (at least 6 units) enrollment. If the Provisional student fails to do so, they will be subject to Academic Disqualification. Provisional students will be eligible for limited financial aid (no institutional aid). Select provisional students may be accepted under specific circumstances set forth by the respective department Chair. These provisions are at the discretion of the Chair in conjunction with the Dean.

Regular-Standing Students

Students who have fully met all the requirements for admission and have been accepted are considered regular-standing students. Students may not exceed an enrollment maximum of 18 units per semester.

Non-Degree Students

Students who are allowed to attend Vanguard University without submitting the credentials required for admission with regular status. Abbreviated application forms are available online at https://www.vanguard.edu/admissions/professional-studies/ (https://www.vanguard.edu/admissions/professional-studies/). Types of non-degree students include:
Students-at-Large. Students-at-Large earn academic credit for work completed successfully, but they are not considered degree-seeking students at Vanguard University. The Student-at-Large classification is possible only for those taking nine (9) units or less during any term. Students accepted as a Student-at-Large are not eligible for financial aid unless they are enrolled in prerequisite courses for graduate school (except tuition remission) and have applied to a graduate program.

University Selection and Community Participation

The School for Professional Studies at Vanguard University selects students based on academic record, the admissions interview, work experience, references, and willingness to comply with the standards and values of the university. It is expected that each individual who joins the academic community of Vanguard University will deepen his or her ethical commitment and understanding, strengthen his or her intellectual and creative abilities, and participate constructively in the life of the University community.

Furthermore, Vanguard University community members are expected to commit to mutual respect for one another and will:

1. Treat all members of the community with the utmost regard, supporting and upholding the rights of others to a safe, collaborative, and collegial learning environment;
2. Foster collegial learning by participating in class as a supportive and cooperative community member;
3. Refrain from derogatory, disrespectful, or inflammatory comments regarding any member of the academic community;
4. Resolve any personal conflicts by first approaching the other party privately in accordance with professional protocol and the principles that are outlined in Matthew 18:15-17.

Academic Credits

Credit is granted in semester units and each course is normally three to five units of credit. Refer to University Policies (https://catalog.vanguard.edu/university-policies/jes for more information.

Credit Hour Policy

Professional Studies programs are delivered in an accelerated format. Accelerated means that each course contains the equivalency of forty hours of instruction; but compressed into five to eight weeks instead of the traditional fifteen weeks. This means that students essentially triple the pace of coursework, completing the same amount of work in one third of the time. This schedule is not for everyone. It is however, ideal for students who are highly motivated, self-directed, and extremely disciplined with their own time management. It is also expected that students will invest four hours outside of class for every contact hour. (See Credit Hour Policy under University Policies (https://catalog.vanguard.edu/university-policies/))

Evaluation of Previous College Transcripts and Degree Progress

The amount of credit, the courses to be accepted, and the method of evaluation will be determined by the nature of the courses and the type of institution. An applicant who has attended any college or university must submit an official transcript from each institution, regardless of credit granted. The Office of the Registrar will produce all official degree evaluations. Evaluations are completed as new transcripts are received. Once students have received an updated official evaluation or viewed it on their MyVU portal, they may review and request clarification on anything they may find unclear or questionable. Official academic evaluations are provided by the Office of the Registrar.

Credit by Examination (maximum: 24 units)

The University offers several means by which you might earn credit. These include:

- College Level Examination Program (CLEP)—a national set of exams on selected topics offered on a regular schedule.
- Advanced Placement (AP) Examinations—a national set of exams to substitute for specified VU courses.
- Defense Activity for Traditional Educational Support (DANTES)—introductory college-level courses in more than 50 disciplines designed to help military personnel complete college credits.

Straighterline (maximum: 30 units)

Straighterline offers self-paced computer guided courses that can transfer to the University to satisfy select lower division general education and elective requirements.

Degree Completion

Students are allowed twelve months after the end of their final upper division course to complete any outstanding general education or elective coursework needed to become a degree candidate. Students taking longer than 12 months will be required to complete any new upper division requirements in effect for their degree program. Students must complete the re-admission process after a withdrawal or a one term leave of absence.

Diplomas

Students completing the requirements will receive the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science Degree. Diplomas will not be issued to any student whose Vanguard account is not paid in full or whom Federal Perkins Loan is delinquent.

Prior Learning Assessment

The School for Professional Studies will only consider a maximum of 30 units of university undergraduate credit for non-traditional schooling, work or other experiential learning. Neither SPS nor any of its representatives has authority to grant or promise university credit for “prior learning.” Credit for prior learning may not duplicate credit already awarded. Contact the SPS Office for information on the process for applying for prior learning assessment.