

# Adjunct Faculty Guidelines



**VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
Supplemental Resource Guide for Adjunct Faculty 2023-2024



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## Foreword

Adjunct faculty members are a vital part of the Virginia Highlands Community College (VHCC) team. This document is provided as a supplemental resource to highlight a portion of the extensive information available to all employees in the [VHCC Academic Calendar](#), the [VHCC Policy and Procedure Manual](#), and the [VHCC Catalog and Student Handbook](#). Each adjunct faculty member should be familiar with the full details of these important documents prior to and during service at VHCC.

## VHCC Mission, Vision, and Values

### Mission

Virginia Highlands Community College provides exceptional educational pathways to enrich lives and strengthen our communities.

### Vision

Virginia Highlands Community College will be an educational institution of choice, empowering students, employees and community members to reach their fullest potential.

### Core Values

At Virginia Highlands Community College, we value excellence, individual worth, a welcoming environment, accountability and achievement.

- Educational excellence that furthers intellectual, creative, ethical and social development through a broad range of programs, professionally delivered and continuously evaluated with a focus on improvement.
- Individual worth, focusing on the strengths, experiences, and perspectives of all people. We set aside personal preferences and focus on the best interest of our campus and local communities, which are strengthened in an environment of mutual respect and learning.
- A safe, secure, and welcoming environment that cultivates a student-centered approach to service.
- Accountability, accepting responsibility for our actions and accepting ownership for the results. We uphold the values of honesty, transparency, and integrity while remaining good stewards of the resources entrusted to us.
- Achievement, recognizing that life-long learning provides individual empowerment, resulting in success and personal satisfaction. We are proud to be a life-changing institution that encourages a passionate pursuit of excellence.

## General Procedures and Regulations

*The policies and guidelines in this handbook are subject to change dependent upon any unforeseen emergency situations. In the event of an emergency situation, you will be provided with any applicable alternate instructions.*

### Absence of an Instructor

Procedure for cancelling classes due to personal emergency/sickness

- Call or email office manager and/or division dean
- Keep trying until a human response is received
- Inform students of cancellation and assignment to be completed

If an adjunct instructor must be absent, the instructor must be diligent to communicate with students and provide alternate assignments for the class contact time missed.

### Academic Divisions

Virginia Highlands Community College has four academic divisions each with a dean, assistant dean(s), and an office manager who collectively support the work of the adjunct. Additionally, each discipline has a lead faculty member, and each program has a program coordinator both of whom will provide direction and support for adjuncts. Adjuncts will find a list of the discipline lead faculty and program coordinators at the link provided [here](#).

- **Arts and Sciences Division, OTC 108**
  - Barbara Manuel, Dean, 276-739-2432, [bmanuel@vhcc.edu](mailto:bmanuel@vhcc.edu)
  - Karin Widener, Office Manager, 276-739-2433, [kwidener@vhcc.edu](mailto:kwidener@vhcc.edu)
  - Sandy Davis, Assistant to the Dean, 276-739-2464, [sdavis@vhcc.edu](mailto:sdavis@vhcc.edu)
- **Nursing Division, NEB 144**
  - Dr. Elizabeth Wright, Interim Dean, 276-739-2440, [ewright@vhcc.edu](mailto:ewright@vhcc.edu)
  - Debbie Aylor, Administrative Assistant, 276-739-2439, [daylor@vhcc.edu](mailto:daylor@vhcc.edu)
- **Professional and Technical Studies, LRC 221**
  - Lee Hunt, 276-739-2401, [lhunt@vhcc.edu](mailto:lhunt@vhcc.edu)
  - Sharon Rowe, Office Manager, 276-739-2457, [srowe@vhcc.edu](mailto:srowe@vhcc.edu)
  - Donnie Melvin, Assistant to the Dean, 276-739-2453, [dmelvin@vhcc.edu](mailto:dmelvin@vhcc.edu)
- **Workforce and Continuing Education, ADM 101**
  - Robert Phillips, Workforce Development Dean, 276-739-2496, [rphillips@vhcc.edu](mailto:rphillips@vhcc.edu)
  - Vota Thomas, Office Manager, 276-739-2430, [vthomas@vhcc.edu](mailto:vthomas@vhcc.edu)

### Academic Calendar

The [Academic Calendar](#) is available on the VHCC Website and provides vital details relevant to academic success. It is important that each adjunct faculty member must be familiar with it and observe its guidelines. Specifically, each semester session has a “Last day to pay tuition or receive a refund.” This is the census date also known as the 15% date, also known as a “drop.” This date is

vitaly important as faculty are required to identify students who have “never attended” to the admissions office by this date. Currently, faculty are to use Navigate to identify students who have “never attended” on or before the posted 15% date for any specific session. Complete directions for doing so can be found in emails sent from student services.

Also, each semester session has a “Last day to withdraw from class without academic penalty.” This is the withdrawal date or the 60% date. Rules for student-initiated withdrawals and faculty-initiated withdrawals can be found in the [VHCC Catalog and Student Handbook](#).

It is important to reference these two important academic calendar dates in syllabi and remind students of their significance as they approach.

## **Academic Freedom and Responsibility**

VHCC Policy 3.6.5 states the following:

To ensure an instructional program marked by excellence, the College supports the concept of academic freedom. In the development of knowledge, research endeavors, and creative activities, College faculty and students must be free to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism.

Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subjects but should be careful not to introduce teaching matters that have no relationship to their fields. Faculty and students must be able to examine ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence and to participate as responsible citizens in community affairs.

The College also recognizes that commitment to every freedom carries with it attendant responsibilities. Faculty members must fulfill their responsibilities to society and to their profession by manifesting academic competence, professional discretion, and good citizenship. When they speak or write as citizens, they will be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As professional educators, they must remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate that they are not an institutional spokesman.

## **Academic Support Services**

Virginia Highlands Community College has many services available to support the academic success of students. Just a few of those resources are listed as follows:

- [Admissions and Records](#) is located in the Instructional Student Center (ISC 128). Paige Kelly, Coordinator of Admissions and Records, can be contacted by phone at 276-739-2461 or by email at [pkelly@vhcc.edu](mailto:pkelly@vhcc.edu)
- Campus Connection Center, the CCC, is located in the Instructional Student Center (ISC 133). Academic counselors and advisors as well as financial aid advisors are located in this center. This is intended to be a one-stop spot for VHCC students.

- [Career Connection](#), the Career Development Center, is located in the Instructional Student Center (ISC 101). Traci Mitchell is the Coordinator of Recruitment and Career Services and can be contacted by phone at 276-739-2547 or by email at [tmitchell@vhcc.edu](mailto:tmitchell@vhcc.edu).
- [Disability Services](#) are available to VHCC students who qualify. Karen Copenhaver, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator, is located in the Instructional Student Center (ISC 124). Ms. Copenhaver can be reached by email at [kcopenhaver@vhcc.edu](mailto:kcopenhaver@vhcc.edu). If a student qualifies for ADA accommodations, the professor will be notified of the student's accommodations in writing by Ms. Copenhaver.
- [Excel Center](#) is located in the Instructional Student Center (ISC 122). Karen Cheers is the Director of the Excel Program, and may be reached by email at [kcheers@vhcc.edu](mailto:kcheers@vhcc.edu). This center is specifically equipped to support the academic success of students who are eligible to participate in its services. In order to participate in Excel, students at VHCC must demonstrate an academic need for services and meet at least one of the following eligibility criteria:
  - Be a first-generation college student. This means that neither parent earned a four-year college degree.
  - Be classified as low income. To qualify, annual taxable income must not exceed 150% of the poverty level as defined by the U.S. Department of Education.
  - Have a documented physical or learning disability.
  - Students who qualify for the program receive free tutoring, counseling, mentoring and transfer counseling. See Excel Services for more details.
- Great Expectations ([GE](#)) at VHCC reaches out to foster care students who are taking classes at VHCC. The program is setup to help meet students' educational needs with the ultimate goal of achieving a career. The GE students at VHCC are monitored closely by the GE Coach, Amanda Bishop, who meets with the students individually each week and stays in contact with their professors for academic accountability purposes. The GE Coach is located in the Instructional Student Center (ISC 100C), and can be contacted by phone at 276-739-2434.
- The [Library](#) is located on the first floor of the Learning Resource Center (LRC). The primary mission of the VHCC Library and Instructional Support Division is to support the teaching, learning, and research needs of the VHCC community.
- Moose Academic Resource Center ([MARC](#)) is located in the Learning Resource Center (LRC) room 133 near the Library and Testing Center. The MARC is the support center for the VHCC Required Remediation initiative. Effective Spring 2019, all students taking ENG 111 and ENG 112 are required to participate in remediation as needed. Beginning Fall 2019, all math students will be required to participate in remediation as needed. Moving forward, biology students will be included in this student success plan as well. More details on this initiative can be obtained by discussing it with the lead faculty, division dean, or assistant dean. Additionally, Dillon Scott, director of the MARC, can assist faculty with making referrals to the MARC and can be contacted by phone at 276-739-2535 or by email at [dscott@vhcc.edu](mailto:dscott@vhcc.edu).
- The Single Stop platform is used to help students get connected with federal, state, and local resources that will support them through their education. The Single Stop Screener is available to all faculty, staff, and students virtually to quickly determine which state and federal benefits students may qualify for. Along with the screener, students can also find a



list of local resources on [VHCC's Single Stop site](#). Once an individual screens for benefits, they will be contacted by the Connections Coach. The Coach can also assist them in utilizing local resources as well. Throughout the process, the Connections Coach will assist the student in applying for benefits and provide wrap around support. Click to access your [Single Stop](#) in finding benefits & resources, or set up an appointment with Connections Coach, Shasta Sowers, at [ssowers@vhcc.edu](mailto:ssowers@vhcc.edu) or by telephone at 276-739-2553.

## Adjunct Appointment

Each adjunct appointment is made in accordance with VHCC and VCCS policy and is assigned on a semester-by-semester basis by the designated division dean. Additionally, Laura McClellan, [Human Resource Manager](#), supports adjunct faculty with the on-boarding process. Ms. McClellan can be reached by phone at 276-739-2425 or by email at [lmcclellan@vhcc.edu](mailto:lmcclellan@vhcc.edu). A complete and official personnel file must be maintained on all adjunct faculty in order to comply with the policies of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). A portion of this on-boarding process is completed in person by meeting with the division deans, office managers, and HR manager. The remaining steps are completed online through a link provided by HR. Faculty will not be placed on the payroll and checks will not be issued until all information has been provided. Please check to ensure all forms have been submitted and all blanks have been completed. It is the responsibility of each adjunct employee to provide the following information:

- State on-line application with electronic signature and date
- Name and contact information for three current references
- Official transcripts for all colleges attended
- Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate (W-4)
- Employee's Virginia Income Tax Withholding Exemption Certificate (VA-4)
- Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9)
- Alcohol and Drug Policy Form
- Child Support Enforcement Form
- Notification and Release Form
- Employee Direct Deposit Authorization Form
- Employment Certification and Notice of Part-time Hours Forms
- Copy of Social Security card (for payroll purposes only)
- IT Computer Access Request Form (CARF)
- Request for New or Changed Access Key Card
- Policy Acknowledgment

## Adjunct Teaching Load

The normal teaching load for an adjunct faculty member shall be no more than 12 credit hours each fall or spring semester and no more than 8 credit hours during the summer semester. Additionally, the adjunct faculty member will be available to advise students and provide individual instruction as needed.

Adjunct office space is available in OTC 229 and LRC 202. For contact information, the adjunct office phone number can be listed as the division office phone number if desired. The VHCC email should be the primary contact. The VHCC email account should be checked on a daily basis to ensure efficient communication.

## Adjunct Pay Schedule

Each adjunct faculty member will be paid by direct deposit. The Administrative Assistant to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services is the primary contact for all payroll questions. This person can be reached by phone at 276-739-2428. All contractual instruction responsibilities must be completed by the established deadline in order for an adjunct to be added to the payroll. [Pay schedules](#) can be found on a semester-by-semester basis on the VHCC website. Pay statements can be viewed using [Payline](#).

## Canvas

[Online Learning](#) at VHCC is made possible through the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS). Ken Fairbanks, Director of the Learning Resources Division, is available to support adjunct faculty with all Canvas training opportunities.

## Catalog and Student Handbook

The VHCC [Catalog and Student Handbook](#) is a vital reference tool with which each adjunct should be familiar. It contains details relevant to admissions practices, academic policies, and student services.

## Course Records

Each semester adjunct faculty members must submit the following items to the office manager:

- Course syllabus filed on or before the first day of class
- Comprehensive final exam or all major tests if a comprehensive final exam is not given to be filed before the final faculty research/workday of the semester

## Exams

Classes should be held every scheduled day throughout the entire semester and through the last day of class. Regular classes do not meet during the final exam week. Instead, an [exam week schedule](#) is followed and can be accessed on the VHCC Website or by request of the division office manager. The scheduled exam period must occur at the time scheduled on the official exam schedule.

Final Examinations Students will be expected to take final examinations at the regularly scheduled times. No exceptions will be made without the permission of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services or another appropriate academic administrator and the instructor of the course. The semester examination schedule is available online.

## Grade Appeals

**Final Grade Appeal Procedure Level I: Final Grade Appeal to Faculty** For instances in which a student chooses to challenge a final grade, the student will communicate in writing with the faculty member to appeal the final grade. This communication will be submitted to the faculty member within five (5) College business days of receiving the grade. The faculty member will discuss the final grade appeal details with the student and will render a decision within five (5) College business days of receiving the student's appeal communication. The faculty member will retain documentation of this final grade appeal discussion and decision. If a resolution is not reached between the student and faculty member and the student chooses to appeal beyond the faculty member's decision, the student will review the two criteria below. If one of the two criteria below are met and the student chooses to appeal the faculty member's decision, the student will complete a Final Grade Appeal form, to be submitted to the appropriate dean and copied to the faculty member within 48 hours of receiving the faculty member's decision, or by 9 a.m. on the next College business day if the deadline falls on a weekend or after 5 p.m. on a weekday. \*A student may request a Level II final grade appeal for one of the following reasons: 1. A procedural or substantive error occurred that significantly impacted the academic grade (e.g. substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures); or 2. To consider new information unavailable during the original meeting that could substantially impact the original academic grade. A summary of this new information and its potential impact must be included in the forwarded appeal.

**Level II: Academic Dean's Review** The appropriate Academic Dean will conduct a review of the information provided by both the student and the faculty member no later than ten (10) College business days following the student request for the review. The appropriate Academic Dean shall make a decision and communicate findings in writing to the student and the faculty member within five (5) business days after the review is completed. After review, the appropriate Academic Dean may: • Uphold the original decision • Request a final grade change (may not be lower than original grade) If the student chooses to appeal the appropriate Academic Dean's decision, the next step is a Level III final grade appeal.

**Level III: Vice President's Review** An appeal of the appropriate Academic Dean's decision must be submitted by the student to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services within 48 hours of the student receiving the appropriate Academic Dean's decision in writing, or by 9 a.m. on the next College business day if the deadline falls on a weekend or after 5 p.m. on a weekday. The Vice President of Instruction and Student Services may either: • Uphold the appropriate Academic Dean's decision; • Request a final grade change (may not be lower than original grade) For the Final Grade Appeal procedure, the decision of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services is the final decision for the College. \* Regarding sequential courses that require successful completion of a pre-requisite course taught in consecutive terms within semesters, the procedure described above will be expedited to reasonably accommodate all parties involved.

## Field Trips

Experiential learning is encouraged at VHCC, especially as part of the LearningPLUS+ initiative. When planning and implementing experiential learning opportunities, discuss all off-campus events with the division dean well in advance. All students must complete an [Assumption of Risk](#) form prior to participating in a VHCC sponsored off-campus event. Please see the division office manager or division dean to obtain the forms.

## General Safety Policies

Procedures for handling emergency situations are detailed in a hard copy document that will be given to each adjunct at the beginning of his or her service. When an additional hard copy is needed, please obtain it from the division office manager.

All VHCC classrooms have a teacher podium with a phone system that also operates as a loudspeaker in the case of emergencies. Depending on the seriousness of the event, contact 911 or Campus Police for assistance when necessary. If a person is accidentally injured under the supervision of the adjunct, an [Incident Report](#) must be completed. Contact Campus Police with any specific safety concerns as follows:

- Location – ISC 151
- Cell – 276-614-8282
- Office – 276-739-2448

Additionally, a general safety concern can arise when students bring children to class. Classrooms are not designed for the safety or care of children, and the presence of children in the classroom may be disruptive to the academic environment. For guidance on this topic, adjuncts should discuss any questions regarding children in the classroom with the division deans.

## IOTA Course Evaluation

VHCC uses the IOTA online course evaluation system to receive feedback from students for improving courses. Evaluations are available to students who remain enrolled after the last day to withdraw (60% date). Online evaluations will open and close when the course is approximately 85% and 95% complete, respectively. If the course is less than 4 weeks in length, paper forms of student evaluation are used. To access the evaluation, students will be provided a link via their college email address. Each semester after grades are submitted, faculty are provided access to review the student evaluations. Faculty are encouraged to review the student evaluation reports. Additionally, assistant deans and/or deans review the student evaluations each semester.

## Keys

Adjunct faculty are issued an employee ID card. This card acts as a key to allow the adjunct faculty member to enter buildings and areas as authorized. When necessary, classroom and lab keys may be assigned to adjunct faculty.

## Mail

Individual mailboxes are provided for all adjunct faculty in the mailrooms located in each division office. Each adjunct faculty member is also provided an electronic mail (email) address to be used for all official college communication. All faculty and staff are expected to pick up physical mail upon each campus visit and check email daily to ensure efficient communication.

## MyVHCC

[MyVHCC](#) allows access to student information, real-time course roster information, the Canvas Learning Management system, Navigate, and other vital resources for adjunct faculty.

## Navigate

VHCC is utilizing the new Navigate system to make the process of reporting the academic progress of our students as easy and efficient as possible. This report will occur each semester prior to or on the census date (15%). Through a Progress Report, faculty have a quick way to inform us of students' progress in class. Faculty responses will help us know which students to reach out to and offer help.

To complete the Progress Report for students who have never attended, please follow these instructions:

- Login into [MyVHCC](#) account, click on Navigate Campus
- Change the setting from “(staff)” to “(professor)”
- Click on the “Classes this Term” tab
- Find the course and click on “Progress Reports”
- Choose the students who have never attended by clicking the box next to their name
- Click on “Actions” “Create a New Progress Report” at the top
- Complete the report. Absences can be left blank, Grade can be set to N/A.
- Click “Submit Report”

## Observation Schedules

Classroom observations and distance education course evaluations are conducted by division deans, assistant deans, or lead faculty on a regular basis as follows:

- One time during the first semester of adjunct teaching
- One time during the second semester of adjunct teaching
- One time during the next academic year
- One time during the academic year every second year thereafter

Most often, faculty are informed in advance of a scheduled classroom observation. Additionally, deans, assistant deans, or lead faculty may visit the classroom to observe instruction without notice.

## Policy and Procedures Manual

The [VHCC Policy and Procedures Manual](#) is a vital resource with which each adjunct faculty member should be familiar. It contains relevant information pertaining to administrative regulations, educational programs, and personnel matters.

## Security Awareness Training

All VHCC employees are required to complete security awareness training on a regular and scheduled basis. Failure to complete training as scheduled results in loss of access to VHCC email and MyVHCC accounts. Leigh Anne Dunn, the Information Security Officer, can be contacted by phone at 276-739-2443 and by email at [ldunn@vhcc.edu](mailto:ldunn@vhcc.edu).

## Student Conduct

[Student conduct](#) policies and procedures are defined in the College and Student Handbook and on the VHCC Website at the link provided. Communicate with the division dean right away when assistance is needed to resolve a student conduct concern.

## Student Services Forms

[Student Services Forms](#) can be accessed at the link provided and found on the VHCC Website at Current Students, Students Services, Student Services Forms. This link provides access to the Drop/Add form and the Petition to Repeat a Course form as well as other forms an adjunct may need to access while working with students. Additional forms, such as a Change of Grade form, may be obtained in the division offices or by electronic request of the division office manager.

## Syllabi

Adjunct faculty are required to use the [VHCC Syllabus Template](#) and a common course syllabus provided by the lead faculty for the discipline. All course syllabi must be uploaded in the z-drive course record folder prior to the first day of class. Faculty must be on campus to access the z-drive, so the syllabi may be sent to the division office manager prior to the first day of classes to be uploaded to the z-drive.

## Testing Center

The [VHCC Testing Center](#) offers individualized testing services to meet the needs of faculty, students, and the community. The Testing Center is located in the library (LRC 121) on the lower level of the LRC Building. Reva Russell is the Testing Center Specialist and can be reached at 276-739-2475. Ms. Russell's email address is [russell@vhcc.edu](mailto:russell@vhcc.edu). Additionally, the center can be contacted at 276-739-2476 and [TestingCenter@vhcc.edu](mailto:TestingCenter@vhcc.edu)

## Title IX Resources and Reporting Procedures

[Title IX](#) policies and procedures are available for review at the link provided. Additionally, these important resources can be accessed on the VHCC Website by searching Current Students, Student Policies, Title IX. The VHCC Title IX Campus Resource officers are identified as follows:

<b>Title IX Campus Resources Title IX Coordinator</b>	Karen Cheers ISC 120 276-739-2561 <a href="mailto:kcheers@vhcc.edu">kcheers@vhcc.edu</a>
<b>Deputy Title IX Coordinator</b>	Kevin Widener ISC 151C 276-739-2582 <a href="mailto:kwidener2@vhcc.edu">kwidener2@vhcc.edu</a>
<b>Deputy Title IX Coordinator</b>	Karen Copenhaver ISC 124 276-739-2404 <a href="mailto:kcopenhaver@vhcc.edu">kcopenhaver@vhcc.edu</a>

## VHCC Alert System

The [Alert System](#) information is fully explained at the link provided. This information can also be accessed on the VHCC Website by searching MY VHCC, Campus Police, Alert System. The Emergency Statement is required to be on all VHCC syllabi. It contains the following information:

In the event of a College-wide emergency, course requirements, classes, deadlines, and grading schemes are subject to changes that may include alternative delivery methods; alternative methods of interaction with the instructor, class materials, and/or classmates; a revised attendance policy; and a revised semester calendar and/or grading scheme.

For more general information about College-wide emergency situations, please refer to:

- College Website ([www.vhcc.edu](http://www.vhcc.edu))
- VHCC Alert System (<http://alert.vhcc.edu>)

# RESOURCES

## School Contacts

### Abingdon High School

Counselors: Trina Gross – 276-739-3206 [trinag@wcs.k12.va.us](mailto:trinag@wcs.k12.va.us)  
Kristy Noe – 276-739-3207 [knoe@wcs.k12.va.us](mailto:knoe@wcs.k12.va.us)  
Chelsea Campbell – 276-739-3208 [ccampbell@wcs.k12.va.us](mailto:ccampbell@wcs.k12.va.us)

### Chilhowie High School

Counselor: Kristie Comer – 276-646-8966 [kristiecomer@scsb.org](mailto:kristiecomer@scsb.org)

### Holston High School

Counselor: Cassidy Burks – 276-739-4006 [cburks@wcs.12.va.us](mailto:cburks@wcs.12.va.us)

### John Battle High School

Counselors: Diana Smith – 276-642-5307 [dsmith@wcs.k12.va.us](mailto:dsmith@wcs.k12.va.us)  
Susan King – 276-642-5306 [susan@wcs.k12.va.us](mailto:susan@wcs.k12.va.us)

### Northwood High School

Counselor: Kim Ratliff – 276-496-7751 [kimratliff@scsb.org](mailto:kimratliff@scsb.org)

### Patrick Henry High School

Counselor: Catherine Baker – 276-739-3707 [cbaker@wcs.k12.va.us](mailto:cbaker@wcs.k12.va.us)

### Virginia High School

Counselors: Lisa Dean – 276-821-5862 [ldean@bvps.org](mailto:ldean@bvps.org)  
Kristi Snyder – 276-821-5863 [ksnyder@bvps.org](mailto:ksnyder@bvps.org)







