



2021 OUTSTANDING SENIOR AWARDS

This document is intended to outline the nomination and application process for both the faculty and students involved in the CALS Overall Outstanding Senior selection process.

Information is also located at <https://www.cals.vt.edu/academic-programs/current/outstanding-seniors.html>

Each year, The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences honors one outstanding senior from each academic unit in the college. These students are celebrated at a reception in their honor and process into commencement wearing a special graduation stole.

The CALS Outstanding Senior reception (format TBD) will be held May 13, 2021.

In addition, the CALS Office of Academic Programs coordinates the selection of one overall outstanding senior from the group of unit outstanding seniors already selected. The CALS overall outstanding senior will receive recognition at the CALS reception and college commencement (carrying the college banner), and will be honored at the university's student recognition banquet on May 2, 2021, co-sponsored by the Virginia Tech Alumni Association and the Class of 2021.

Each department will go through its own selection process to determine their outstanding senior. Once all units have selected their outstanding seniors, the college Outstanding Senior Selection Committee will choose one overall outstanding senior from that group.

The selection criteria are as follows:

1. All candidates must be seniors scheduled to graduate next May, summer, or December (a minimum of 96 hours must be completed).
2. All candidates must have a GPA of 3.4 or higher based on all work through Fall 2020.
3. No student currently (at the time of nomination or subsequent violation in future terms) on probation as a result of University Honor Code violations is eligible.
4. Applications will be evaluated in the following areas: Service, Leadership, Engagement, Personal Growth and Development, and Academic Achievement.
 - a) Service: Nominees should provide outstanding contributions and service to the Virginia Tech community, Blacksburg community, and beyond
 - b) Leadership: Nominees should empower others to grow personally and professionally, are focused on providing growth opportunities to peers, and/or may hold a leadership position at work, in school, or in a club/organization
 - c) Engagement: Nominees should be involved in organizations both on and off campus. Through engagement in these activities, nominees should have contributed to the growth and development of those organizations during their participation.

- d) Personal growth and development: Recognizing that challenges often produce a platform for personal growth and change, nominees should show resilience and courage in the face of challenges, and demonstrate growth and improvement due to challenges or setbacks faced.
- e) Academic Achievement: Nominees must have a minimum 3.4 GPA, should help facilitate peers' learning, may be in honor societies or academically based organizations, and/or involved in undergraduate research

Once the departmental outstanding senior has been determined, a nomination packet (or online [form](#) plus recommendation letter) must be submitted by the department to the Office of Academic Programs by Jan. 29, 2021. Materials can be emailed to lisaracek@vt.edu.

1. Biographical form- to be completed by the student. (Page 3 of this document, or submit through online [form](#)).
2. Student essay- 500 words or less that describes the student's career goals and aspirations, reflections on their experiences and the impact of the college, university, and community. (please attach, or submit through [form](#))
3. List of achievements- highlight of student achievements in the following areas, describing student's responsibility for each activity. Three-page maximum (no resumes):
 - a) SERVICE: How have you demonstrated the spirit of "Ut Prosim" in service to the Virginia Tech community, local community, and beyond?
 - b) LEADERSHIP: What does leadership mean to you? What leadership positions have you held, perhaps in clubs you joined, a job you held, etc? Or how have you empowered others to grow personally and professionally?
 - c) ENGAGEMENT: How have you used your time at Virginia Tech to get involved with activities, causes, and people around you? How have you contributed to the growth and development of activities you've been involved in?
 - d) PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT: How have you grown personally since coming to Virginia Tech? Have you faced any challenges? What have you learned? Have you uplifted and helped others to grow?
 - e) ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: Tell us about your academic achievement while at Virginia Tech. Your GPA, your membership in any academic honor societies or clubs, involvement in experiential learning, etc. Have you helped others to succeed academically?
4. Recommendation Letter- completed by department (can be student's advisor, research or teaching faculty, other VT staff, etc).

One nomination per academic unit. The selection committee will be comprised of 5-7 members from CALS, and at least one member from the VT community (outside CALS).

Please contact Dr. Susan Sumner or Lisa Racek with any questions regarding this exciting process for our college.

2021 Outstanding Senior Award Application
Biographical Form
(to be completed by student)

Name _____

Preferred gender pronouns _____

Local Address _____

Home Address _____

Telephone _____ email _____

Major(s) _____

Minors(s) _____

Overall Grade Point Average _____ Number of Hours Completed _____

Expected Graduation Date _____

I _____ understand that the information submitted with this nomination will be shared with the selection committee and that information may be used in publicity releases by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Dated _____

Complete the biographical form, essay, and highlight of achievements and return to your department. The department will submit the nomination. Three to four finalists will be selected for an interview to determine the CALS Overall Outstanding Senior.