



# THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA'S COLLEGE AT WISE

## A BRIEF HISTORY

The University of Virginia's College at Wise, formerly Clinch Valley College of the University of Virginia, is the only four-year, state-supported college in far southwestern Virginia and the only branch of the University of Virginia.

Situated on 396 acres in Wise County, UVa-Wise is an incredible example of the determination and perseverance of southwestern Virginia citizens. Before the College was created, there were no public colleges in Virginia west of Radford. Higher education was simply out of reach for most residents of Virginia's Appalachian Mountains.

When local residents Fred B. Greear, William A. Thompson, Kenneth P. Asbury, affectionately known as "the Three Wise Men," and others made their case to University of Virginia President Colgate Darden for establishing a college in Wise, the Commonwealth of Virginia supported the cause by offering \$5,000 to open, staff, and operate the two-year school for the first year.

Local supporters donated over \$6,000 to furnish and equip the classrooms. Wise County donated property and two sandstone buildings, remnants of the county poor farm, to house the first classes. All of these

## UVA-WISE

events happened in the winter of 1954. In September of that same year, Clinch Valley College opened its doors to 100 freshmen.

Many of the first classes of graduates went on to the University and other senior institutions and became some of the region's most successful professionals. As more graduates of the two-year college expressed their preference to stay closer to home to complete their baccalaureate degrees, the College began the process to become a senior institution. The College first granted Bachelor of Arts degrees in June 1970. Bachelor of Science degrees were first awarded in 1973. Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees were first awarded in 1996. Approximately 8,000 students have received baccalaureates in one or more of the College's academic disciplines.

Perhaps the most significant event in the College's recent history was the adoption of a new name. On July 1, 1999, following passage of legislation by the Virginia General Assembly, Clinch Valley College became The University of Virginia's College at Wise.

The small college - once nicknamed "Poor Farm University" - is now a vibrant senior institution ranked by U.S. News and World Report as one of the nation's top ten public liberal arts colleges. UVa-Wise is a member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) and recognized as a College of Distinction. In recent years, the College has experienced an expansive building program, the creation of new academic majors, and the recruitment of the next generation of talented faculty and staff.

## A PROFILE

The liberal arts foundation emphasized at UVa-Wise prepares students for professional careers, graduate study, and lifelong learning. The College's liberal arts foundation promotes the thoughtful development of the ideas, insights, values, competencies and behavior of an educated person. Its student-centered learning environment is characterized by small classes taught by faculty who focus on teaching excellence, creative and scholarly activities, and community service. Campus life provides a rich variety of cultural activities that broaden students' perspectives on the world and its evolving global society.

UVa-Wise offers undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences as well as undergraduate professional programs in business, software engineering, nursing, teacher education and other fields, all characterized by a strong liberal arts experience.

UVa-Wise is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award baccalaureate degrees. The

## A PROFILE

College's Department of Nursing is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

The ten leaders who have guided the institution are:

Samuel R. Crockett	1954–1957 (Director)
Joseph C. Smiddy	1957–1968 (Director)
Joseph C. Smiddy	1968–1985 (Chancellor)
Edmund Moomaw	1985–1986 (Chancellor)
Jerry D. Cardwell	1987–1988 ( <i>Acting Chancellor</i> )
Jimmy A. Knight	1988–1992 (Chancellor)
L. Jay Lemons	1992–2001 (Chancellor)
George E. Culbertson	2001 ( <i>Ad Interim Chancellor</i> )
Steven H. Kaplan	2001-2004 (Chancellor)
Ernest H. Ern	2004-2005 (Chancellor)
David J. Prior	2005-Present (Chancellor)

Concurrently, five presidents have guided the University of Virginia:

Colgate W. Darden, Jr.	1947–1959
Edgar F. Shannon, Jr.	1959–1974
Frank L. Hereford, Jr.	1974–1985
Robert M. O'Neil	1985–1990
John T. Casteen, III	1990–Present

UVa-Wise is committed to expanding the academic and co-curricular programs available for the residents of the region and beyond. A four-year degree program in nursing was added in 2004 and new majors in computer science, management information systems, software engineering, music, and biochemistry are enriching the UVa-Wise educational experience. Since 1998, the College has forged sister institution agreements with Istanbul University (Turkey), Dumlupinar University (Turkey), Cardinal Spinola University College CEU (Spain), Pädagogische Akademie Baden (Austria), Glamorgan University (United Kingdom), and El Tec de Monterrey (Mexico). These partnerships promote faculty and student exchanges and, along with the College's new international education office, travel programs that expand students' global understanding and appreciation.

UVa-Wise offers programming at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon; operates the Southwest Virginia Technology Development Center in Lebanon; and has forged substantive partnerships with several corporate partners, such as Northrop

Grumman and Sykes.

## MISSION AND GOALS

### Mission Statement

The University of Virginia's College at Wise, a public liberal arts institution, provides students with learning experiences that offer opportunities to develop the insight, competence, sensitivity, and integrity necessary for living enriched lives and for enriching the lives of others. Established in 1954 as a college of The University of Virginia, it is guided by the values of citizenship and altruism. Proud of its Appalachian heritage, the College continues to honor its commitment of service to Southwest Virginia, the nation, and the world. The College is guided by a legacy of teaching and scholarly excellence and by a dedication to quality in both the arts and sciences and professional programs. Above all, The University of Virginia's College at Wise is a diverse community of people who believe that information can be transformed into knowledge and that teaching and learning create a foundation for wisdom.

### Desired Accomplishments and Goals

**Teaching and learning at The University of Virginia's College at Wise are transformational experiences.**

- Students gain the skills necessary to continue to educate themselves.
- Students are prepared to assume responsibility of citizenship.
- Students learn to appreciate and respect diverse cultures.
- Students discover the importance of being involved in the community.
- Students understand the value of education.
- Students acquire an international perspective.
- Students value honor and integrity.
- Students develop leadership skills.

**The University of Virginia's College at Wise is nationally recognized for academic excellence in the liberal arts and specialized programs of study and is the college of choice for Southwest Virginia students.**

- The College is a community of learners supported by all constituents, faculty, staff and students.
- The College attracts and retains a talented faculty.
- The College provides resources necessary for the continued professional growth and development of the faculty.