



Department of Athletics  
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## Athletics

Athletics has a robust tradition at Vermont Technical College. The value of our Athletics program is evident in the revenue generated through the SHAPE facility, the history and traditions of our competitive varsity athletics, high level of student engagement in the intramural and club program as well as the increasing diversification of the student body through active recruitment of student athletes.

Intercollegiate athletics promotes character traits for excellent personal development leading to success both during their academic career and later in life. Currently Vermont Tech competes in seven varsity sports including: Men's and Women's Soccer, Men's and Women's Cross Country, Men's and Women's Basketball, and Dressage, which is a co-ed sport. We are members of the Yankee Small College Conference (YSCC), as well as the United States Collegiate Athletic Association (USCAA).

In addition to our varsity sports, we have a robust Bowling Club and Track Club. We also have several popular Intramural programs, including Indoor Soccer, Dodgeball, Volleyball/Wallyball, Bowling, 5v5 basketball as well as skiing and snowboarding at the rope tow. Our Athletic, Intramural and Club Sports Programs combined account for participation includes 150 different students. This represents more than 20% of the Randolph campus population who engage in athletics while pursuing their degree at Vermont Tech.

Comparable Colleges within the YSCC and USCAA are similar in size and budgets. Athletes are often recruited, comprise between 15-20% of the student population, and most have the same sports we offer, in addition to women's volleyball, baseball and softball. Many are starting to offer Track and the conference is hoping to have a Conference Invitational for Track & Field starting in the next 2 years. Many of our counterpart schools also have a second staff person within the athletic department, who may also be a coach, and an athletic trainer on staff.

The Athletic Department has two full time staff, and six part-time coaches. The Director of Athletics oversees all aspects of the Varsity Sports, and is the direct supervisor for all coaches and the SHAPE Manager/Intramurals Coordinator. The SHAPE Facility Manger/Intramural Coordinator oversees most aspects of operating the SHAPE Facility, and also coordinates and schedules all Intramural Programming. Coaches manage their team in season, and are responsible for recruiting and maintaining training plans for off season athletes.

Athletics plays a vital role in the student experience on campus in Randolph. These traits that student athletes develop include:

- Being independent and self-disciplined in order to manage time between studies and athletic pursuits and reach the highest level of each;



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- Communicating well and learning to work with teammates in pursuit of a common goal;
- Adherence to and personal responsibility for conduct codes of sportsmanship and respect;
- Developing team-building and goal setting skills that are highly sought after by employers;

Athletics also plays a vital role in school pride and culture of our community through student, faculty, staff and local community fan support of our athletic programs. Statistics about our 2017-2018 season include:

- 70 different students participated in varsity athletics;
- 42 (65%) were living in the Residence Halls in at least one semester;
- 30% of these student-athletes were recruited into the college specifically to play athletics while attending VTC;
- Of those not recruited, an unofficial survey indicates over 30% may not have attended VTC if they would not have been able to participate in varsity athletics;
- More than 90% of student-athletes are traditional age students;
- 12% are considered non-white;
- Over 29% are from out of state/International;

Nationally small colleges have shifted from solely using admissions staff to recruit new students to utilizing coaches to recruit student-athletes to their programs. This has bolstered enrollment in general and increased diversity across campuses. This increase in enrollment is evidenced through our steady increase in varsity sport rosters:

Sport	AY14	AY15	AY16	AY17	AY18	AY19*
Women's Soccer	14	13	13	7	14	14
Men's Soccer	18	17	18	18	18	18
W Cross Country	2	2	1	2	5	5
M Cross Country	5	6	5	5	7	9
W Basketball	9	8	8	9	10	12
M Basketball	9	10	16	13	13	13
Dressage					6	6
Total	57	56	61	54	73	77

\*expected

To mitigate local and regional enrollment declines, student-athletes can and are being recruited from across the country into Vermont Tech. This recruitment strategy has significantly supported Enrollment Management and the enrollment of diverse students and counters the regional trend of declining population and enrollment. Given these trends, best practices and history, we suggest the following 5 year goals:

1. Increase student athlete retention, graduation, diversity and gender equity by enhancing the student-athlete experience through supporting existing sports. (Years 1-5)



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- Roster Management – Fill current sport rosters through recruiting assistance/trips
    - We currently have room for 88 student-athletes total on existing rosters.
    - More out-of-state athletes will likely mean more students on campus, from more diverse backgrounds and filling female sport rosters will increase gender equity. As a result, we will seek to fully implement the Athletics, Diversity, Inclusion and Collaboration Program. This program provides mandatory systems and supports for varsity athletes to support college adjustment, academic support, social supports and maintain academic eligibility for athletes.
  - Budgetary support – improvements in roster management may require full time coaches, higher travel and gear costs; ideally coaches could be of use in other areas of the college in the off season.
    - Fund regular maintenance of ropes course for athletics and all-campus use
2. Provide an adequate level of athletic training support to athletes. (Years 1-3)
    - Preventative care to keep athletes healthy
    - Oversight and management of injuries between games & concussion management
    - Partnership with Gifford is established for game days for the upcoming season, we can build on this with additional time on campus during practices, or have a full time trainer that can also take on other duties
  3. Formally determine the appropriate number and type of athletic teams for the college and formulate a plan for adding and/or removing sports. (Year 1)
  4. As part of college master planning process, explore the use of fields and feasibility of structures such as an Indoor field house facility (athletic, intramural, conference, community) which might be funded apart from the VTC budget by a separate, or combined capital campaign. (Year 1)



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## SHAPE/Intramurals Overview

SHAPE is managed by the Facility Manager, who hires and supervises students who work at the front desk and as lifeguards. The cleaning staff and maintenance techs who work in SHAPE have direct oversight through the facilities department. SHAPE is a valuable community resource, both for the on-campus student population, commuter students and the broader community. SHAPE earns revenue for the college, and most years is budget neutral.

The hours for SHAPE have been relatively consistent over the past 5 years, with the primary issues in the building being limited staffing interest and certification, access to the gym during the school year, and cleanliness of the facility. Goals for SHAPE include:

- Work on LG certifications and budgetary considerations to increase effective staffing levels and interest – offer LG or WSI a higher hourly rate
- Indoor track facility would alleviate many space concerns, and be a new revenue stream
- Working with facilities on a scheduled work plan for the cleaning staff in the building
- Working on follow up by that direct supervisor to ensure work is adequate
- Working to schedule a 2<sup>nd</sup> shift cleaner or weekend staff;

Intramurals are valued by on-campus students. It provides a respite from studying, and also fun for the resident student population. Primary issues with Intramurals include the availability of Judd, limited space in SHAPE and the lack of availability of rails and jumps on the ski hill.

Goals include:

- Increase # of students partaking by having diverse offerings, including funding for new equipment. (Years 1-5)
- As part of college master planning process, examine space utilization and outside resources such as the ropes course, trails system, and ski hill. (Year 1)
- Utilize ropes course as part of student Intramurals and/or Clubs to promote inclusion and build relationships. (Years 1-5)



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#### Resources:

“Kim Fierke, director of athletics at Salem College, said that most of the athletes recruited to Division III institutions would never have considered them if it were not for the influence of their coaches. Fierke, who conducted a study of Division III basketball recruits in the Southeast, also discovered that most of their institutional knowledge came from athletics officials rather than from those in admissions. Though some of the recruits in Fierke’s study applied to Division I institutions who offered them full scholarships, most were pleased to find that the Division III colleges for which they were considered wanted them for more than their athletic ability. Ultimately, she said these close relationships with athletics officials did more to attract these students to smaller colleges than did traditional admissions tactics.”

“Some institutions that still have an aversion to football, however, are nonetheless reaping the rewards of their athletics department’s recruiting. Mike Geller, director of admissions at Wheaton College, in Massachusetts, said very frankly that if it were not for his athletics department, his institution would not be able to meet its annual enrollment numbers. Twenty-three percent of Wheaton’s more than 1,500 students are varsity athletes.

Also, for a campus that has only about 16 percent minority students, Geller said athletics recruiting has attracted a more diverse population of applicants. He attributed most of this success to Paul Souza, the college’s track and field coach, who works with many urban programs like [Philadelphia Futures](#) to attract minority athletes to the program. This echoes [recent trends](#) that suggest many first-generation students are being attracted to and enrolled in greater numbers at small, liberal arts institutions instead of state public institutions.”

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/01/21/ncaa>