

VIP Program – FAQ's

For Prospective students

Are there any prerequisites for the VIP course?

No! All sophomores-seniors are eligible to participate in VIP. Freshman who are in the University Honors Program are also eligible. We only request that you are willing to learn, work collaboratively, and commit to supporting your research team.

The VIP course is scheduled for a 3-hour time block each week. What happens during these class sessions?

The class meetings are an opportunity for you to learn research techniques and to collaborate with members of your team on research activities. In general, the first hour of the 3-hour class session each week focuses on research guidance from the faculty member leading the project or the graduate mentor, while the rest of the time is spent with your peers and graduate students working on research activities.

What projects are available to choose from this semester?

Please see our website for descriptions of the projects we have available this semester:

<https://www.memphis.edu/vip/teams/index.php>. More teams will be added in future semesters.

What if I'm super interested in the VIP program, but I can't make the scheduled meeting times? What if I can make the scheduled group meeting times one semester but, due to conflicting class schedule, cannot make it the following semester? Is there any way to work around it?

We know that scheduling conflicts will occur. If you are interested in joining (or continuing with) a VIP team, please let us know if the day/time in the course schedule does not work for you. We are flexible and will try to arrange a time slot that works well for all members of the team. This may not always be possible, but we do our best to accommodate schedules. Students are encouraged to schedule sub-team meeting times outside the scheduled course time.

Is the research all done in-class, or would we be performing research/study outside of the weekly meetings?

Most of the research is done in the 3-hour class session each week. However, there are times when VIP members work outside of this timeslot (and some team members are so interested in the research project they prefer to work additional hours, which is also fine). Because you only earn 1.0 hour of course credit each semester, we try to ensure the expectations reflect this and the workload, while enough to be meaningful, is not overwhelming.

Is there a deadline to apply for the VIP program?

We need to have applications in at least two weeks before classes start each semester so that we can work with each team to find a time that works well for everyone if the scheduled course time is not viable. Each student will also need to register (permit required) for the class by the registration deadline. ***Civil engineering students: Please contact Dr. Ivey for information on the course section in which civil students must enroll so that the course counts toward your degree.

For Current VIP students

Can I switch VIP teams?

The VIP Program does not allow students to freely switch from team to team. As a disincentive, students are typically asked to take a one-semester break between participation on one team and another (although exceptions are typically made for freshmen). Students seeking an exception to this rule should provide a detailed explanation in an email to Dr. Preza, VIP Program Director, cpreza@memphis.edu.