



# Student Handbook

## 2011-2012

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## Non-Discrimination Policy

The University of North America is an academic community built on respect for all persons. The university adheres to a strict policy of dignity, equality, and nondiscrimination regarding the treatment of individual faculty, staff, and students. In accord with federal law and applicable Commonwealth of Virginia statutes, the university does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, or veteran status in employment or in any program or activity offered or sponsored by the university.

*The University of North America is authorized by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to operate campuses in the Commonwealth of Virginia.*

## Welcome!

To Our Students –

You've made the choice to attend the University of North America, and a fine choice it is. Here in one group you will find committed, caring faculty members, staff members, and administrators whose sole task is to help you to be successful in your academic career now and in your professional career in the future. We very much look forward to working along side you as you accomplish your educational goals and earn your degree.

This *Student Handbook* serves as a supplement to your *Catalog* and should tell you everything you need to know not only to survive but to thrive at UoNA. You should find all of your questions answered in one of the two booklets. If you don't, if you have *any* unanswered questions now or as you go through your program, please ask. Don't let a question remain unanswered; give us a chance to resolve it with you.

And so, good luck! I wish you well as you build toward earning that door-opening degree.

Sincerely,

*Ben*

Benjamin G. Davis, Ph.D., D.Min.  
Chancellor

## University Calendar

### Fall 2011 Term

|                |                 |                                   |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| October 8      | Saturday        | Classes begin                     |
| November 11    | Thursday        | Veteran's Day                     |
| November 24-27 | Thursday-Sunday | Thanksgiving holiday – no classes |
| December 17    | Saturday        | Last day of classes for the term  |

**Graduation                      Sunday                      December 12**

### Winter 2012 Term

|           |          |                                  |
|-----------|----------|----------------------------------|
| January 7 | Saturday | Classes begin                    |
| March 24  | Saturday | Last day of classes for the term |

### Spring 2012 Term

|          |          |                                   |
|----------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| April 14 | Saturday | Classes begin                     |
| May 26   | Saturday | Memorial Day weekend – no classes |
| June 30  | Saturday | Last day of classes for the term  |

## **Your University**

The University of North America (UoNA) was founded to provide you with an outstanding, integrated education that links the latest in academic theory with the latest in real-world applications. The university has built a curriculum based on contemporary issues faced by leaders in the international workplace, and courses and programs have been specifically designed for this process.

Your faculty members have served in high-level positions in academia, government, and industry and know what it takes to be a success in today's world. They have extensive experience with on-ground, on-line, and blended education both in the United States and abroad. Class size is kept intentionally small so you can benefit from one-on-one interaction with these internationally-recognized experts.

The university is a founding member of the Global Education Network Alliance (GENA), an organization of universities around the world. GENA's charter is to provide a forum for internationalization, innovation, quality assurance, and program coordination. UoNA is preparing the curriculum for implementation by GENA members.

The university is a partner with Girne American University (GAU), one of Europe's leading comprehensive universities. GAU is accredited by the European Council for Business Education (ECBE) and the International Association of Colleges for Business Education (IACBE). IACBE is an accreditation agency recognized by CHEA, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. GAU has entered into a partnership with the University of North America to award dual degrees. The curriculum of UoNA underwent a rigorous assessment by the Girne American University academic leadership team in this process. The result of this partnership is that when a student graduates from UoNA, he or she may also be awarded an equivalent accredited degree by Girne American University. A fee to cover the additional costs of this option is assessed for this service.

The university has entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S.-based American College of Commerce and Technology that allows students to move between the two institutions seamlessly and that provides for a sharing of intellectual and physical resources.

## Keeping Track and On Track

**Grades and the Grading System** – The university awards grades on a four point scale with an “A” representing superior work.

|    |     |                |
|----|-----|----------------|
| A  | 4.0 | Superior       |
| A– | 3.7 | Excellent      |
| B+ | 3.3 | Very Good      |
| B  | 3.0 | Good           |
| B– | 2.7 | Acceptable     |
| C+ | 2.3 | Marginal       |
| C  | 2.0 | Poor           |
| F  | 0   | Failure        |
| I  |     | Incomplete     |
| S  |     | Satisfactory   |
| U  |     | Unsatisfactory |
| W  |     | Withdrawal     |

**Distribution of Grades** – Semester grades are distributed within two weeks after the last day of the semester. Grades are mailed to the address on file with the Registrar, so students are encouraged to maintain their records in correct form.

**Satisfactory Progress** – In order to graduate, you must have an overall grade point average (GPA) of at least a 3.0 in all work completed while in attendance. If you repeat a course, only the last grade received is used in making this calculation. Grades earned at another university are not included in the calculation of your overall GPA.

In order to help make certain that you graduate, you must make reasonable progress toward the achievement of the required 3.0 GPA. In order to demonstrate satisfactory progress toward this requirement, the following grade point average must be achieved during the student’s program:

| Degree Level | Percent of Coursework Completed                                 | Minimum GPA |
|--------------|---|-------------|
| Master’s     | 25% (11 credit hours)   | 2.50        |
| Master’s     | 50% (21 credit hours)   | 2.75        |
| Master’s     | 75% (33 credit hours)   | 2.90        |
| Master’s     | 100% (42 credit hours)  | 3.00        |
| Doctoral     | 25% (15 credit hours)   | 2.60        |
| Doctoral     | 50% (30 credit hours)   | 2.80        |
| Doctoral     | 80% (all coursework with the exception of dissertation courses) | 3.00        |

If you don't maintain the minimum GPA required for satisfactory academic progress, you will be placed on probation for the following term. You must meet with your advisor to determine what has prevented you from achieving the required grades and to help you develop a plan for meeting the requirements. If at the end of the probationary semester you have made progress but have not met the minimum standard, you will be continued on probation for one more term. By the end of the second semester on probation, you must have achieved the minimum GPA required or you will be suspension and will be required to take one semester away from the university. At the end of a semester away, you may apply for re-admittance and, unless there are extenuating circumstances, you will be permitted to re-enroll.

## **Student Records**

**Maintenance of Student Records** – Your transcript will be maintained in perpetuity. Other student information is maintained for a five year period following your last semester of attendance after which the records are destroyed.

**Confidentiality Policy** – The university is committed to the maintenance of confidentiality of all student information. Except as required by law, no student records or information other than dates of attendance will be released to any person or entity without your express, written consent.

**Release of Transcripts** – A copy of your transcript will be released within three days of a written request accompanied by the appropriate fee. Requests are to be submitted to the Registrar. Transcripts will not be released when you are in arrears in your financial affairs with the university.

**Student Right to Know** – The Student Right to Know Act requires that institutions that receive federal Title IV funds provide information regarding institutional graduation rates, athlete graduates, financial assistance awarded, and crime statistics. While the university does not award Title IV financial assistance, it will none-the-less provide such information to students and to the public. As a new institution, the university has yet to have had a graduating class, so data are not available at the time of the publication of this Handbook.

## **Student Rights, Privileges, and Responsibilities**

**Academic Courtesy** – The university is a community. As such, normal rules of respectful behavior on the part of students, faculty, and staff are expected. Should your conduct fall beyond the bounds of respectful behavior, you will be counseled and, depending upon the severity of the situation, you may be suspended from the university for a minimum of one semester. In order to be re-admitted to the university, you will have to demonstrate that the behavior that led to your suspension will not recur.

**Rights and Responsibilities** – Students have all the rights normally accorded to members of a community of scholars – the right to free inquiry, the right to the free expression of ideas, and the right to be free of intimidation and harassment. In exchange for these rights, you are expected to respect these rights of your fellow community members.

It is the responsibility of all students to know and comply with the academic and community life policies of the university. Among these responsibilities are:

- registering for classes in a timely manner
- paying tuition and fees on time
- completing all admission requirements including any conditions that have been applied
- attending and being on time for classes
- submitting required class work on time
- abstaining from the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, and tobacco products while on campus
- keeping a copy of all submitted work in any medium
- maintaining up-to-date address, telephone, and e-mail information with the Registrar
- regularly meeting with an advisor
- dressing appropriately (business casual attire) for classes
- exhibiting complete academic honesty, and
- displaying civil behavior and attitudes to other community members

**Expected Conduct of Students** – As noted above, students are expected to behave and treat others on campus as professional scholars. Students attend the university from all parts of the world and from many varied backgrounds. This diversity provides a rich environment for the free exploration and expression of ideas, and students are expected to participate fully and to uphold the right of others to do the same. Breaches of this scholarly ethic will be taken seriously by the university. Students who violate the canons of appropriate behavior will be counseled by a member of the administration. Should repeated violations of civil conduct occur, the student may be suspended or expelled from the university. The suspended student may make application for re-admission after one term away from the university. Extreme violations may result in an immediate suspension or expulsion.

**Campus Security Act Information** – The university is located in a safe, suburban environment. None-the-less, students are urged to take reasonable precautions to remain safe and to avoid potential problematic situations. Students are to report to the Vice President for Information Services all known or suspected crimes that occur on campus. In a written report, students are asked to include the following information: the name of the person reporting the crime, the nature of the crime, the time and place of its occurrence, and the victim(s), if any of the crime. Information regarding crimes in the area surrounding the university's campus is available through the Vice President for Information Services. All crimes involving university students are to be reported to the Vice President as well as to Fairfax County police.

### **Attendance in Classes**

**Attendance** – Complete attendance in all classes is considered to be essential by the university. Without attendance and participation in classes, the student not only loses out on the benefits of interacting with other students as well as the faculty member but denies other students his or her insights.

**Absence Policy** – Students are expected to attend all classes or participate fully in the electronic classroom. There is no such thing as an “excused absence;” either the student is present or the student is not. Education is a communal activity, and a high degree of student-to-student and student-to-faculty interaction is a part of the UoNA educational model. Should a student be required to miss class because of an emergency, all work missed should be made up by the next class session. A student will be withdrawn after missing three (3) instructional days and/or a maximum of 25 percent of the class sessions.

**Leaves of Absence** – Should a student wish to take a semester away from the university, he or she must request a leave of absence. This leave must be requested in writing. Without a written request, a student who fails to return to the university will be considered to have withdrawn and will be required to reapply should he or she wish to seek readmission. International students are strongly urged to meet with the Designated School Officer (DSO) regarding their immigration status prior to planning any leave of absence.

**Tardiness to Class** – Students who miss more than 25% of any class session whether through late arrival or early departure or a combination thereof are considered to be absent for that day.

**On-Line Courses and Attendance** – All of the university's degree and academic certificate programs are available in both on-ground and on-line modalities. Students may move from on-ground to on-line courses as their needs dictate. On-line courses follow the same schedule as classroom-based courses.

In accordance with SEVP rules, international students may take one on-line course each semester provided they are enrolled in at least one on-ground, classroom-based course. This option is available to UoNA students. International students electing this option must be aware that they must maintain attendance and academic progress in the on-ground course in order to remain in status for SEVP purposes. International students who exceed the maximum number of absences in an on-ground course will be dropped from that course in accordance with UoNA attendance policy. Once dropped from the on-ground course, students will be in violation of SEVP requirements and will be dropped from the university. The standard university refund policy will apply in such cases.

### **The Importance of Maintaining Your Status**

It is important for international students to understand the concept of immigration status and the consequences of violating that status. Awareness of the requirements and possible consequences will make it more likely that you can avoid problems with maintaining your status.

Failure to maintain status can result in arrest, and violators may be required to leave the United States. Violation of status also can affect the prospect of readmission to the United States for a period of time: most people who violate the terms of their status are barred from lawfully returning to the United States for years. Be sure to check with your Designated School Officer (DSO) about any questions or concerns about your immigration status.

## **Helps Along the Way**

### **Student Services**

A university is more than classes. In addition to academics, a university consists of activities and field trips and commuting and housing and many other things. Each of these components needs to work together to make the university experience a good one. Throughout the year you will find activities and field trips planned to help introduce you to other students and to the many resources in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Information on these will be available through your Student Services Office. This office is also available to provide information and assistance on things to do and places to see, help with housing issues, information on access to outside library resources and much, much more. Check with the Student Services Office regularly to get the latest information on what is available to you.

### **Career Advising and Placement Services**

The purpose of the university is to prepare graduates for productive professional careers. As such, assistance with career guidance and job placement is available to all students. Students seeking employment while enrolled are directed to meet with the Director of the Co-operative Education. Placement assistance for graduates is provided through the offices of the Deans of both colleges of the university. You are encouraged to meet with your Dean to discuss your career plans and to maintain on file in the Dean's office a copy of your latest resume.

### **Library and Information Services**

Consonant with its mission as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century educator, the university has established a comprehensive electronic Library and Information Service for students and faculty members alike. Through the University Library (the electronic Library and Information Resource Network [LIRN]), you may access periodicals and books in electronic format from anywhere in the world. In addition, you have access to a 24 hour per day, seven day per week Reference Librarian to assist with your information search needs. Access to the Library and the Reference Librarian is through your student access code provided by the university. The university maintains a small reference collection on site for access during class periods.

### **English Language Help**

If you need extra help with the English language, the university's English Language Program is available to provide non-native speakers high-quality English as a Second Language instruction. Through these programs, you will have the opportunity not only to excel in language skills but also to improve your cultural awareness in a multi-cultural educational environment. The university offers a set of Intensive English Electives for students who want to take advantage of the personalized, flexible and more interactive courses and build their skills in Pronunciation, American Culture, Vocabulary Development, Listening Development, and Communication Strategies. The university also offers a set of Business English Electives to help with General Business English, Business Communications, Meetings and Presentations, Business Vocabulary, and Business Letter Writing. Finally, the university offers a Bridge Program to help students meet the TOEFL-IBT score requirement for full admission.

## Who to Call

Have a problem? We're here to help!

Got a question? We've got some answers!

When you have any questions or just need to be reassured that everything is OK, contact us. We will respond to your question by the end of the day you call us. All of us can be reached through the same e-mail address and phone number:

**571.633.9651**  
**info@uona.us**

### **Academic Advising**

Suresh Sonkavelly  
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Thakur Pudasaini  
Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs

### **Academic Records**

Markel Gall  
Registrar

### **Computer Lab and Wireless Access**

Paul de Bruin  
Director of Information Technology Services

### **Co-operative Education**

Sean C. Farrell  
Director of Co-operative Education

### **English Language Assistance**

Elzbieta Vigneault  
ESL Programs

### **Financial Questions**

Padmanjali Pokharel  
Student Finance Coordinator

Jacob H. de Bruin  
Chief Financial Officer

### **International Student Advisor (PDSO)**

Kathryn Teachout, J.D.  
Deputy General Counsel

## If Things Don't Work Out

We are going to do our best to make your time at the university a spectacular success. If we fall short of your expectations, give us a chance to make it better. Contact one of the people whose names appear on the previous page and let us try to work things out for you. If we can't do it, here is what you can do.

### Refund Policy

Should you withdraw from an academic course of the university, the following refund policies prevail:

1. If you cancel your enrollment following the three day cancellation period but prior to the first day of the semester for which application was made, all tuition monies paid will be refunded less a \$100.00 withdrawal fee.
2. If you enter school but withdraw during the first 1/4 (25%) of the period, you are entitled to receive as a refund a minimum of 50% of the cost of the course or program for the period.
3. If you withdraw after completing 1/4 (25%), but less than 1/2 (50%) of the period, you will receive as a refund a minimum of 25% of the stated cost of the course or program for the period.
4. If you withdraw after completing 1/2 (50%) or more of the period, you are not entitled to a refund.

### Grievance Policy

It is the intent of the university to provide and maintain a collegial atmosphere in which the search for knowledge and the free expression of ideas is respected by all members of the community. Should differences or grievances arise, we will try to resolve them as quickly, openly, and fairly as possible. The university encourages that, whenever possible, grievances are resolved directly by the individuals involved in the dispute.

The university is committed to the resolution of all complaints as it seeks to improve its services to students. There will be no retaliation in any form taken against a student who files a grievance at any level concerning the university.

If you have a concern regarding an academic issue, the procedure is:

1. Meet with the faculty member involved and attempt to resolve the issue.
2. If the issue remains unresolved after an attempt by you and the faculty member, the concern should be taken to the Dean of the college in which the course resides. The Dean will not intervene in any case or meet with a disputant regarding the situation until you and the faculty member have met and reached an impasse.
3. If the you or the faculty member is dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting with the Dean, the issue may be taken to the Director of Academic Affairs. The Director of Academic Affairs will not intervene in any case or meet with a disputant regarding the situation until you have met with the Dean and reached an impasse.

If you have a concern regarding a non-academic issue, the procedure is:

1. Meet with the staff member involved and attempt to resolve the issue.

2. If the issue remains unresolved after an attempt by you and the staff member, the concern should be taken to the supervisor of the staff member. The supervisor will not intervene in any case or meet with a disputant regarding the situation until you and the staff member have met and reached an impasse.

Should a complaint or grievance remain unresolved, it may be referred to the Director of Student Services who will appoint a three person committee to review the case and make a recommendation to the Chancellor. The decision of the Chancellor in such cases is final.

If your complaint cannot be resolved after exhausting the university's grievance procedure, the student may file a complaint with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. The student should submit written complaints to:

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia  
Private and Out-of State Postsecondary Education  
101 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
James Monroe Building  
Richmond, VA 23219

## My Graduation Plan

**Planned Graduation Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**People I Will Invite to My Graduation:**

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**Elective Courses of Interest:**

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**Potential Capstone or Dissertation Topics:**

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**People I May Need to Contact**

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**Things I Should Probably Remember**

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**University of North America**

**1980 Gallows Road  
Suite 200  
Vienna, Virginia 22182 USA  
571.633.9651  
703.229.8265 (FAX)**

**[www.uona.us](http://www.uona.us)  
[info@uona.us](mailto:info@uona.us)**