

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Lexington, Virginia

GENERAL ORDER)
NUMBER 81)

28 September 2023

VMI Class Ring and Ring Figure Eligibility Policy

1. Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to establish the criteria and rules for wearing of the VMI ring and participation in Ring Figure events as a cadet. These actions are significant to the Corps and our alumni, and it is important that definitive rules be established and followed.
2. Scope: This policy applies not only to the Corps of Cadets but also to our alumni as well. Class agents and class officers are frequently asked questions in this area and having uniform criteria and guidance will assist them when these matters are raised. The Commandant of Cadets considers all appeals to receive a ring from members of classes that have yet to graduate. Likewise, the Alumni Agency considers requests from individuals who matriculated and graduated with classes that have graduated from the Institute.
3. Cadet Eligibility to Participate in Ring Figure and Wear a Class Ring: The criteria to be allowed to wear a class ring as a cadet and to participate in the fall Ring Figure Ball are as follows:
 - a. Must complete four full semesters at VMI and must be a registered, currently enrolled cadet. Study abroad or military service may count as a semester in attendance.
 - b. During the first semester of the second-class year, the cadet must be enrolled at VMI, or studying abroad on a VMI-sponsored program, or called to active duty during that semester;
 - c. Appeals or Requests for Exception: Cadets not meeting the above criteria may request an exception. Appeals may be granted in extraordinary situations such as cadets missing time from the Institute due to medical furlough or who were participating in religious mission trips. This must be presented to their Class General Committee, who will forward the request along with their recommendation to the Commandant of Cadets who will make the decision.
 - d. Dismissals: Cadets who have met the criteria and have been awarded a ring will receive the ring with the express understanding that a subsequent dismissal from VMI will result in their having to return the ring to VMI. The ring will be provided to the Superintendent's Representative to the Honor Court if the dismissal was the result of an Honor Code Violation. The Commandant will make a recommendation to the Superintendent for all other dismissals. That cadet will receive a refund for the purchase price of the ring if they have not already had that ring replaced by warranty.
4. Alumni Eligibility to Receive a Class Ring: In some occasions, alumni who did not receive a ring may be entitled to purchase a class ring. They must make such a request to their class agent who will consult with the VMI Alumni Association. The normal criteria for an alumnus to receive a class ring are as follows:
 - a. Must have matriculated with that class and spent an entire Rat and fourth class year;
 - b. Must have completed a total of four semesters enrolled as a cadet at VMI;

- c. Must have departed VMI as a cadet in good standing; and,
 - d. Must be of requisite moral character, professional ethics, and possess a record of achievement in their chosen profession.
 - e. Must have graduated from VMI and can appeal to the class agent to get permission to get a ring.
5. Memorial Class Rings: There will be occasions where a class will want to present a class ring to a parent(s) in a memorial tribute to a deceased cadet who died while a cadet enrolled at VMI. A class may elect to do so. Approval authority for such an action is the Commandant of Cadets. A memorial class ring does not bestow alumni status or associated privileges upon the recipient.
6. Attached is a summary of the rules outlined in this General Order. This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Superintendent in consultation with the VMI Alumni Association. Questions may be directed to the Executive Vice President of the VMIAA or the Superintendent's Office as appropriate.

FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT:

John M. Young
Colonel, Virginia Militia
Chief of Staff

OPR: COS

■ Cadet Eligibility to Participate in Ring Figure and to Wear the VMI Ring

- Must complete four full semesters at VMI; study abroad or military service away from VMI may count as one of the semesters.
- Must be at VMI, studying abroad, or called to active-duty 1st semester, 2nd Class Year to walk through the ring.
- Special cases, such as military deployment, medical, or financial absences, will be reviewed by the Class General Committee, with recommendation to the Commandant for decision.
- Cadets agree in advance to return his/her ring to the Superintendent's Representative to the Honor Court if a Cadet is dismissed for an Honor Code violation. A refund for the purchase price will be sent to the cadet.
- The Commandant will make a recommendation to the Superintendent for all other dismissals.

■ Ring Award Policy

- The criteria listed above must be fulfilled in order to be entitled as a cadet to wear a VMI ring.
- Alumni who did not receive a ring must have been a cadet in good standing for four full semesters, include the entire Rat/Fourth Class year.

■ Class Memorial Rings

- Can be presented to parent(s) of a deceased cadet Brother Rat, who died while a cadet at VMI. The Commandant approves for classes currently at VMI

■ Uniform and Dress Policy for Participates

- Male Cadets attending the Ring Figure Ball will wear coatee and white ducks. Female Cadets will wear coatee and either ducks or long white skirt. Uniform standards and appearance must be a highest order.
- Female dates (non-VMI Cadets) will wear a white floor-length dress with formal white shoes and elbow length white gloves; active and retired military personnel may wear service mess dress if so desired.
- Male dates (non-VMI Cadets) will wear a white tuxedo with a black bow tie; black cummerbund or vest, and black shoes; active and retired military personnel may wear service mess dress if so desired.
- Failure to meet these criteria **will result** in the cadet and/or date not being allowed to walk through the Ring at the Ball.