



## OFFICE OF THE ADA COORDINATOR

Disability Services, Zehmer Hall 152

One College Avenue

Wise, Virginia 24293

email: n\_porter@uvawise.edu • tel: 276-328-0177 • fax: 276-376-1076 • tty: 276-328-0265

Narda Porter, ADA Coordinator

UVa-Wise

One College Avenue

Wise, Virginia 25293

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Division of Legislative Automated Systems (DLAS)

910 Capitol Square

General Assembly Building, Suite 660

Richmond, Virginia 23219

To the Governor and General Assembly:

The University of Virginia's College at Wise is dedicated to providing a quality education to all citizens in the Commonwealth interested in going to college and is supportive of the intentions of HB 110 (2006 Session) amended Va. Code § 2.2-5510. In addition, we are committed to supporting senior citizens who choose to attend our institution. This is most prominently evidenced by the College's policy that specifically targets and invites senior citizens to take advantage of special privileges for enrolling in courses at UVa-Wise.

It is the mission of the College to continue 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. Our commitment to the region is evident in our response to the needs of the surrounding communities. As the impact of aging on these individuals is realized, no doubt the college community will do all it can to respond to the higher education needs of these seniors.

Sincerely,

Narda Porter

ADA Coordinator

UVa-Wise

## **Preface**

In cooperation with the Office of Institutional Research as well as other divisions on campus (Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Development), the ADA Coordinator, Narda Porter is the official agency designee directing the management and response to the Governor's request for information regarding the aging population in our region. In compliance with HB 110 (2006 Session) amended Va. Code § 2.2-5510, the following areas have been assessed for fiscal year 2005-2006: number of persons served over the age of 65, services utilized by this group, specific programs designed for senior citizens, agency sponsorship of "consumer-oriented" publications, and plans for future program implementation. Staff in the Office of the ADA Coordinator helped locate data.

Since the typical consumer for higher education is aged 18-24, with non-traditional students (those over the age of 24) generally comprising a small proportion of the population, the majority of the college marketing strategies are geared toward the traditional age-group. The College, however, is committed to providing quality higher education to all students who enroll and provides opportunities and programs specifically for our senior citizens. Currently, a very small portion of UVa-Wise students over the age of 65 are enrolled but programs continue to be reviewed and revised to meet the needs of the students in the region and elsewhere.

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## **Executive Summary**

HB 110 (2006 Session) amended Va. Code § 2.2-5510 directs state agencies to develop and maintain strategic plans of operations. Within that plan, it is expected that an analysis of the impact that the aging of the population will have on its ability to deliver services and a description of how the agency is responding to these changes. The University of Virginia's College at Wise is dedicated to providing a quality education to all citizens in the Commonwealth interested in going to college and is supportive of the intentions of HB 110. In addition, we are committed to supporting senior citizens who choose to attend our institution. This is most prominently evidenced by the College's policy that specifically targets and invites senior citizens to take advantage of special privileges for enrolling in courses at UVa-Wise.

This document is the report for the assessment of services and data relating to the aging population served by The University of Virginia's College at Wise. It provides information regarding programs, numbers served, and future plans for serving this population. While the number of citizens in surrounding counties over 65 is expected to increase, the numbers of students (over 65) served by UVa-Wise is projected to remain fairly stable. The College currently serves a very small portion of students over the age of 65 – only one student this past fiscal year. However, the College will maintain current services for seniors with an eye toward watching the aging population growth. As those demographics change, it may be in the College and their best interest to provide more consumer-based materials for that age-group informing them of services provided.

**HB110 – Va. Code § 2.2-5510**  
**Report on Aging**  
**The University of Virginia’s College at Wise**

The following data and information was obtained to assess the impact that the aging of the population will have on the College’s ability to deliver services and a description of how the agency is responding to these changes.

The number of persons who received services in the past fiscal year:

1. Although the services provided by The University of Virginia’s College at Wise, are, by their very nature, geared toward the younger population in the region, the College has always welcomed and provided services to the senior population. During the past fiscal year, UVa-Wise served one (1) student in the 65-74 years of age range, no (0) students who were 75-84 years of age, and no (0) students over 85 years old.

While all Virginia counties are served by UVa-Wise, the following have higher proportions of students attending the college:

|            |              |
|------------|--------------|
| Wise       | Smyth        |
| Dickenson  | Tazewell     |
| Lee        | Wythe        |
| Scott      | Patrick      |
| Russell    | Fluvanna     |
| Washington | Chesterfield |

The median percentage for people over 65 years of age for these counties is 15.9 (Cai, 2005). While a recent study conducted by the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service indicates “significant population aging in [this area] because [the] young population leave in search of better economic opportunities” (“Study”, 2006, para.6), records from the Registrar’s Office as well as the Office of Institutional Research indicate that a very small number of senior citizens have been served in the past five years and those numbers have remained relatively consistent.

Agency services that are utilized by senior citizens 65 and older:

2. Currently, UVa-Wise does not serve a significant population of students 65 and older and the numbers of seniors served appears to have remained consistent for the past five years.

3. The following programs and services are available specifically for seniors:

- The Senior Citizens Higher Education Program permits residents of Virginia who are 60 years of age or older to register for courses and pay no tuition if their taxable income for the previous year did not exceed \$10,000. Regardless of income, senior citizens may audit courses or enroll in non-credit courses without paying regular fees (College Catalog, 2006-2007). This program attempts to address both education for seniors as well as financial constraints. It provides opportunities for learning and development of any area of interest in which the college provides classes.
- The College also works to support the local Senior Citizens Center in Wise, Virginia by supplying resources during the annual Fall Fling for honoring our seniors on a special Senior Citizens Day.
- Academic Support Services houses Disability Services, The Tutor Connection, and Student Support Services. All of these programs are geared specifically toward working with students that are at-risk or potentially disenfranchised. Senior students at UVa-Wise may often find the prospect of coming back to college or going to college the first time an overwhelming or daunting task. Academic Support Services provides resources and supports for those students in the form of one-on-one tutoring, accessibility resources for those seniors who are disabled, as well as other forms of support.
- All other campus resources are available for seniors as well – from educational to recreational.

4. Information on the UVa-Wise website is accessible in both regular and text-only versions that may be enlarged or read by a screen-reader. Currently, UVa-Wise has no “consumer-oriented” publications for seniors.

5. Currently, the College is working with the Graduate Medical Education Consortium to enhance health care delivery for all citizens. The GMEC mission is to improve access to high quality primary care for citizens of Southwest Virginia

by forming educational partnerships between communities, local physicians, and primary care residency programs in Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky, and West Virginia.

In addition, the College is examining the possibility of adjusting our programs to deliver scheduling that will make courses more accessible to all citizens.

## References

Cai, O. (2005). 2005 Population Rankings for the 65+ Age Group (July 1, 2005). Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. Retrieved September 18, 2006 from University of Virginia, <http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics>

Study of Age and Gender. (2006). Press Release. UVA's Weldon Cooper Center Releases its First-Ever Study of Age and Gender Estimates for Virginia. Retrieved September 18, 2006 from <http://www.virginia.edu/topnews/releases2006/20060815CooperAgeGender.html>