

# Virtual Scholars FAQ's

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## **Access**

Q: I am a student and I don't have a login password. How do I get my password?

A: If you are a returning PPS student then your password is the same as your password for your district login. If you are new to PPS, you will need to contact your counselor to obtain your district login credentials. You can update your password at [password.pps.net](http://password.pps.net)

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Q: What is the recommended browser for PPS Virtual Scholars?

A: The latest version of Firefox and Chrome. Internet Explorer cannot be used for

your online course on Canvas.

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Q: How do I log into my Virtual Scholars course?

A: Portland Virtual Scholars courses can be found at vs.pps.net. Look for the link that says “VS Main Campus” and click on it. The site will ask you for your PPS username and password. Please remember, your PPS username and password is identical to the credentials you use to log into the computers at your school.

If you didn't receive a PPS username and/or password please contact your counselor to obtain that information.

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Q: The “Main Campus” is giving me an error message when I try to login. What should I do? Try the following options. If the first one does not work, try the next.

A: **Option 1:** Ensure that you are entering the correct username and password.

**Option 2:** Switch to a different internet browser (Firefox, Safari, Chrome).

**Option 3:** Alert and troubleshoot with your VS Mentor.

**Option 4:** If **Option 1- 3** do not work. Contact the Virtual Scholars office at (503) 916-6120 or email: [vs\\_information@pps.net](mailto:vs_information@pps.net). Be sure to include the error message.

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## Courses

Q: What is the difference between an online class and a blended online class?

A: In an **online class**, students work independently on the computer to complete courses; sometimes there is no teacher contact.

In a Virtual Scholars **blended online** class, students work in class with mentors and with PPS teachers to complete their online course.

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Q: Who will my teacher be in a Virtual Scholars blended online class?

A: Our 2020-21 highly qualified teachers are listed below by the subject they teach. Find our [staff websites here](#).

TEACHER	COURSES
Bloom, Lisa	Modern World History 1-2 US History 2
Colby, Trask	US History 1 Government Economics
Ellis, Elizabeth	English 1, 3, 4, 7, 8
Hartel, Nick	Physics 1, Physics 2 Foundations of Physics and Chemistry 1 Foundations of Physics and Chemistry 2 Biology 1, Biology 2 Chemistry 1, Chemistry 2
Myers, Carolyn	Health 1-2
Zizzo, Charlie	English 2, 5, 6

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Q: What courses do you offer?

A: Our current course offerings include the following courses.

- Biology 1, Biology 2
- Chemistry 1, Chemistry 2
- English 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- FPC 1-2 (Foundations of Physics and Chemistry 1-2)
- Physics 1-2 (Freshman NGSS)
- Modern World History 1-2
- Government
- Economics
- Health 1- 2
- US History 1-2

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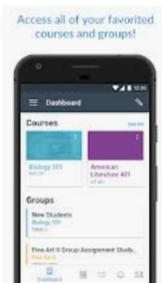
Q: How does a Virtual Scholars online course work?

A: Once your counselor has completed the registration process, you will be able to login and start the “Student Orientation”. When you have completed the orientation, you will have access to your course. Make sure you read all instructions and complete each task carefully.

Your VS Teacher and Mentor will check in with you every session of VS, and will be there to support you throughout your course.

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Q: How long do I have to complete a course?



A: Virtual Scholars courses are designed to take 16-18 weeks, but you may choose to finish sooner if you work outside of your scheduled class time. You can download the CANVAS STUDENT APP on any mobile device, work from home or library outside scheduled class. Students who are not on pace to complete the course within the 18 weeks may be placed on an academic contract in order to remain enrolled in the course.

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Q: What textbooks and materials will I need to take my course and where do I get them?

A: All Virtual Scholars curriculum and activities are provided online. It's always a good idea to keep a highlighter, pencil, USB drive, and paper with you in all classes. You may be asked to use resources from your school, such as poster paper and novels from the library. Ask your VS Teacher where you can find these materials.

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Q: How are courses graded?

A: Courses are graded by proficiency. A student must demonstrate that they are proficient in the standards that the course is aligned to. If a student does not demonstrate that they are proficient in a standard, they may revise the task to demonstrate understanding.

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## **Registration**

Q: When can I sign up for a Virtual Scholars blended online class?

A: Virtual Scholars continuously enrolls students until early second semester of each school year. Please check in with your counselor for the exact date. If you do not go to a school that participates in Virtual Scholars or there are other circumstances where your counselor is unable to enroll you, please contact the administrator of Learning and Credit Options/Virtual Scholars at (503) 916-6120 or by email: [dianepbh@pps.net](mailto:dianepbh@pps.net)

Virtual Scholars registration is done through the school, so you should also check back with your school to find out specific processes and policies your school follows for registration, as they may have additional scheduling calendars.

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Q: How do I register for Virtual Scholar courses?

A: Because we are a supplemental program to the school system, registration into a Virtual Scholars class is done through your counselor/school. You will need to contact your counselor or administrator to get more information about Virtual Scholars registration. If your school does not participate in Virtual Scholars and you would like to take a Virtual Scholars course, please contact the administrator for Learning and Credit Options/Virtual Scholars at (503) 916-6120 or by email: [dianepbh@pps.net](mailto:dianepbh@pps.net)

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Q: How do I drop or add a course?

A: If you need to add/drop a VS course contact your VS teacher first. Then, if you and your teacher decide that a drop or add is the next step, contact your counselor. If you do not log in within the first seven days of enrollment, are inactive for 14 or more days, or fail to make continuous progress in the course, Virtual Scholars may withdraw you from VS. You may have the option to re-enroll after a meeting with the VS Administrator.

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## Grades

Q: How do I check my progress in the course?

A: There are three ways to check your progress in a Virtual Scholars course.

**1. COURSE CALENDAR-** (Located in the left column navigation of your course menu) The course calendar will show you what has been completed, when assignments are due, what needs to be done.

**2. GRADEBOOK-** (Located in the left column navigation of your course menu) The gradebook will show you a list of all assignments in your course, your grades, and what assignments remain for you to complete your course. Note that the gradebook will also be where you will find instructor feedback on specific assignments.

**3. PROGRESS BAR -** (Located in the upper right corner of the course page) The progress bar indicates the percentage of the course that is completed. This percentage is subject to change based on grades received from your VS Teacher.

Please make sure that you check in with them to ensure that your percentage complete is accurate. The progress bar is also color coded based on your pace in your course. If a student is 20% or more off pace the bar will be **RED**, 10%-19% off pace the bar will be **YELLOW**, and if a student is on pace or less than 9% off pace the bar will be **GREEN**. If the progress bar is **BLUE** you are ahead of pace!

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Q: How will I get my final grade?

A: Your final grade will be transcribed by the Virtual Scholars office. A notification with the grade transcribed will be sent to your counselor and VS mentor.

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Q: If the “Main Campus” is down, will this affect my grade?

A: No, you will not be penalized for the system's downtime. Teachers are aware of the downtime and will take that into consideration when grading. Teachers are being notified by the technology team on the outage situation, and they will work with students submitting assignments and taking tests during this time. Please let your teacher know by email (or any other trackable means of communication) that you were directly impacted by the outage, so they are aware of your specific situation.

Also, note: It is the student's responsibility to continue refreshing your page to see when the system is back up and running, and to continue working after the problem has been resolved.

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Q: What is a “DBA” and why do teachers do DBAs?

A: Also known as a Discussion Based Assessment (DBA), teachers use DBAs as an assessment tool for you to demonstrate your knowledge. You are required to completed up to 4 DBAs per semester-long course.

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## Technical Course Questions

Q: Do I have to have a computer and Internet Access at home?

A: No, you should be able to complete your course in the VS HUB period. You may also work outside of your HUB period to finish sooner. If you don't have computer

access at home, you may consider using the library, your mobile device, school computer lab, cafes, etc. Check out the CANVAS STUDENT APP for a smart device.

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Q: I am locked out of my assignment/test. What should I do?

A: Contact your Teacher or ask your On-Site Mentor for assistance.

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Q: I cannot access an assignment/test. What should I do?

A: Contact your Teacher or ask your On-Site Mentor for assistance.

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## **Communication**

Q: Where is my teacher's contact information?

A: All of your teacher's contact information is located on your course page. Please see the link below to see how to contact your teacher:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otje9Ih6GfI>

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Q: What are my options for communicating with my Virtual Scholars teacher?

A: Communication with your instructor is available via email, telephone, online messaging, video conferencing, and in person (also known as "face-to-face").

Please see the link below to see how to contact your teacher:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otje9Ih6GfI>

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Q: How do I chat with my teacher in the Main Campus?

A: Click the chat icon located on the bottom right hand corner. A box will appear. Fill out the box with your information and select your teacher's name. Scroll down in the chat window and click on connect and your chat will begin.

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Q: Will Virtual Scholars issue me an email account?

A: Virtual Scholars will not provide you with an email account. Most of the time you will use the messaging system in your course to communicate with your instructor. PPS high school students have access to a free email account using their [username@student.pps.net](mailto:username@student.pps.net). To set up/activate your district email go to <https://www.pps.net/Page/1915>.

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## General Knowledge

Q: What should be the first thing that I do as a Virtual Scholars student?

A: Make sure you attend your scheduled class with your On-Site Mentor. Go to the “Main Campus” and complete “Student Orientation”. We also recommend downloading the CANVAS STUDENT APP if you have a mobile device.

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Q: Do you have a code of conduct for students?

A: Yes, we do! It’s important that you are familiar with our conduct policies that cover everything from online behavior to cheating and plagiarism. To see our code of conduct and academic integrity guidelines, go to <http://vs.pps.net/Page/108> Students at Virtual Scholars are expected to follow the same rules and regulations as all other PPS students.

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**Q: What is expected of me as a student enrolled in a Virtual Scholars course?**

A: We expect that you have basic computer skills: navigating websites, sending emails and attaching files to emails.

To be successful taking an online course, you need to log in consistently, communicate with your teacher at least twice a week, attend every VS HUB assigned, and turn in assignments as listed in your calendar. You are expected to attend every VS period until you have been excused by your VS Teacher and your school counselor.

You will need to know the requirements of the course(s) you are taking. Review the course syllabus. Use your weekends to make up missed time or to get ahead of pace. Submit your assignments on time or early.

If you are struggling with an assignment, contact your teacher via the messaging system in your course. If your teacher is unavailable, please move on to the next assignment until they are able to respond. Some of you may have to get a tutor (or a

friend) to help you. We expect you to do **your own work**.

We expect you to read and adhere to the PPS Virtual Scholars policies and procedures.

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Q: What do I do if I can't get an answer to my question?

A: Make sure you understand who is responsible for answering which questions

Your counselor can help with the following:

- Register you to take a Virtual Scholars online course(s)
- Drop or withdraw you from a course(s)
- Help you contact your instructor

Your teacher/ instructor can help with the following:

- Answer questions about the content in the course
- Reset tests and quizzes
- Fix dead links
- Answer questions about grades
- Make progress in your course
- Technical issues
- Set weekly and daily goals

Your On-Site Mentor in the VS Hub can help you with the following:

- Make progress in your course
- Technical issues
- Set weekly and daily goals
- Contact your instructor
- Provide a safe and inclusive learning environment

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## **Parents**

Q: I have not received a grade for my student. What should I do?

A: At this time, grades are processed when students complete their course. To receive final grade information please contact your student's counselor, the VS Teacher, or the Virtual Scholars Office (503) 916-6120. Grades are posted directly to student transcripts, so you may also request from the school a copy of your student's transcript to see their final grade. For ORVED grades please contact the program administrator Diane Berthoin-Hernandez at (503) 916-6120 ext 71730.

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Q: I don't think my student's grade is correct. Who do I contact?

A: Please contact your student's counselor or the Virtual Scholars Office at (503) 916-6120.

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Q: When do your classes begin and how do I register my student?

A: Students are enrolled on a "rolling" basis until early second semester of the school year. Please contact your student's counselor for the exact date. If you think your student would be successful in the Virtual Scholars program and are not already enrolled in a course with us, contact your student's counselor. Students will be enrolled in the VS Hub (class period) where they will work with a VS mentor to get started and their VS teacher who provides all feedback and academic support.

Virtual Scholars is primarily for credit recovery. Schools are required to prioritize VS for onsite credit recovery. A very limited number of initial credit slots are available. **All credit recovery students must enroll in the VS HUB.** A limited number of students taking a course for initial credit may qualify for a home enrollment. This decision is made by the school counselor and is based on attendance, GPA and overall academic standing.

Registration is done through the school, so you should also check back with your school to find out specific processes and policies your school follows for registration, as they may have additional scheduling requirements.

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Q: Can my home-school or private school student take your courses?

A: Students not enrolled with PPS can not take courses with VS. For more information, contact Diane Berthoin-Hernandez, VS Principal at (503) 916-6120 ext 71730.

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