



Virtual Virginia Students Share Their Thoughts About Online Education

“Virtual Virginia has helped my education by providing me the resources to take courses that are not offered at my school. I feel that Virtual Virginia has given me the opportunity to take the same classes that are offered to the rest of the students in the state. When asked by friends and teachers what my senior schedule is, they are often shocked to find out that I am taking four classes with Virtual Virginia. When they ask me why, my response is that these are things that I'm going to have to study in college, so why not get ahead and go in with a basis for what I'm getting ready to spend at least four years studying?”

Holly J., AP Microeconomics Student

“Distance learning has allowed me to take a class that would not have fit on my schedule. I am taking this class outside school hours, and it has really helped me manage time and improve my writing skills. It has also given me a quality understanding of the topic and will be worth college credit.”

Madonna Y., AP European History Student

“The distance learning program has allowed me to take classes that are not normally taught at my school. It opens a wider range of possibilities and allows me to prepare better for my college goals. Virtual Virginia has also allowed me to become friends with students of all ages across the state. It certainly shows me how different we all are. I am glad I am involved with the program and plan to stay with it.”

Glenna D., Latin I Student

“Online learning with Virtual Virginia has greatly helped me in school. It not only offers more classes that my high school doesn't, but it also has taught me to be a more independent learner. Next year when I go to college, I believe I will be okay because of the study habits I have learned while taking AP Psychology and Mythology. Thanks Virtual Virginia!”

Alisha G., AP Psychology and World Mythology Student

“It (distance learning) has helped my education because I can do it wherever and whenever I want to, without being limited or restricted in what I do. I can be flexible and stress-free. Because I am stress-free in my Chinese II virtual class on Virtual Virginia, I do better in my other classes as well as enjoy this class very much.”

Elizabeth E., Chinese II Student

I live on a farm with my parents and grandparents where I learned to enjoy the little things in life. I do pretty well in school, but we don't have much where I come from. When I was offered to take a government class online, I decided to try it. I have learned a lot from this class: how to study, how to manage my time, and how to do homework. This class has introduced me to people that I have never met before, and I have learned that there are other ways of life besides the country way. Thanks to this class, I am more educated in the ways of our government and I feel that I will be able to make a well-educated decision when I go to the polls and vote.

Ethan W., AP U.S. Government Student

"Taking an AP class through the Virtual Virginia online program has allowed me to expand the learning boundaries of my high school. I'd taken a couple of AP courses in my junior year that my high school offered; and I am taking two AP classes this year through the school, but I was disappointed that my school did not offer AP European History as a class. However, through the Virtual Virginia program, I'm now enrolled in that class and am satisfied that I can now enjoy the class and will be capable to take the exam in May. It also has exposed me to how an online class works, and I am now familiar with its structure and the requirements, and it encourages me to enroll in future online classes if given the opportunity again."

Brooke A., AP European History Student

"Virtual Virginia has helped me do things I never thought I could do. Thanks to VVa, I'm excelling in a subject I love with all my heart. With the help of my classmates and loving teacher, I'm really enjoying this year. Thank you Virtual Virginia, for helping me be the best I can."

Sarah C., Chinese II Student

"I've always loved to learn, and wanted to take as many opportunities as possible. When signing up for classes for my junior year, I realized that my schedule could not fit in a Spanish IV class without bumping a class I did not want to lose! Trying to figure out a solution, my guidance counselor recommended that I take Spanish IV through Virtual Virginia online courses. At first, I was overwhelmed. There was NO English at all in the program. It was several levels above anything offered at my school! I was almost worried that I wouldn't make it in this difficult course, but thanks to hard work, practice, an easily accessible online classroom, and a very supportive instructor, I have become one of the most capable Spanish students in my school. I can write and read and even speak Spanish easily, and Virtual Virginia offers me the chance to practice every day! Because of this year, I am eligible to take the AP Spanish course next year. Thank you, Virtual Virginia!"

Mallory T., Spanish IV Student

"This class has helped my education because I've learned things that I did not know before, and I also take this class in the Distance Learning Lab in my school."

Sade H., AP Psychology Student

"I have always loved learning, especially languages. My school did not offer Chinese. I started a Mandarin Chinese course online with my friend through Virtual Virginia. Both of us are very happy with the results. We have a wonderful teacher and I feel like I know my classmates even though I have never seen them. This is my second year of online Chinese, and I know that I have learned a lot. This has been a great experience for me, and I would like to say 谢谢 (thank you) to Virtual Virginia and to my teacher."

Rachel D., Chinese II Student

"Many interesting classes are not taught at my high school, and it is so great to be able to access them through Virtual Virginia. Not only am I able to see videos, listen to podcasts, and discuss issues with classmates from all over the world, I am also able to see through technology how the things I am being taught apply to life outside the class."

Valerie G., AP Environmental Science Student

"Virtual Virginia has offered me so many different courses that our school did not offer. Our school is small in a rural community with about 120, give or take a few, in the high school. We offer only one foreign language, Spanish; and just basic English, math, science, agriculture and history classes. When I started foreign languages in eighth grade, I looked at the option in our school, Spanish, and was disappointed. It wasn't until my school counselor let me know that Virtual Virginia was an online school that offered regular and AP classes to schools all over Virginia. Unfortunately, nobody in the school had taken the online language classes, so I was their first "guinea pig." It was an interesting experience, but one that I loved! Virtual Virginia has helped gain more confidence on the computer, and now four out of my seven classes are on the computer -- two of them with Virtual Virginia. I feel more comfortable working at my own pace and independently than in "real" (face-to-face) classes. Last year I took my first AP class and was so impressed with how the course was laid and how my teacher really helped me prepare for the AP Exam. I was well rewarded when the letter came telling me I had gotten a four! This is my fourth year taking online classes through Virtual Virginia, and it will not be my last!"

Amanda B., Creative Writing and AP English Language and Composition Student

"By taking the online AP Environmental Science course, I was able to fit it into my schedule easier. Taking the class in an online format allows me to be in control more of how well I do in the class, because the materials and assignments are easily accessible. Being able to communicate with people from different areas also provides a different opinion from the majority that is found in my "real" classes. This helps me to look at issues with a new perspective, especially those involving the environment."

Rachel L., AP Environmental Science Student

"Taking this distance learning class has allowed me to more effectively use the "FLEX" period at my school as a class, so that I can take other electives not offered as an online class."

Tracey A., AP U.S. Government Student

“Distance education is really one of the best things to come out of the age of computers, I think. I am a student at a tiny rural high school in southwest Virginia, and our school system just is not equipped to provide advanced or non-traditional courses for students. See, over summer 2009, I attended the Governor's Foreign Language Academies and STARTALK programs and began to study Chinese. I fell in love almost instantaneously, but the only language courses my school offers are in Spanish. This is where distance education programs come in. I am able to continue my studies in Chinese, and have plans to expand my language learning by taking Latin next year in addition to Chinese II and Spanish IV. Through these programs, such as Virtual Virginia, students are able to take the advanced or non-traditional courses that they like. And the class materials are not the only thing one can learn from a distance education course. Responsibility, time management, and computer skills are just a few of the skills students can learn from taking DE courses. These courses also can help students gain college credit while still in high school through AP and dual-credit classes, which will help students cut down on the overall cost of a college education, which is not by any means inexpensive. I am currently taking US History through my local community college and love the course. I feel like I am being challenged in ways that I would not have been in a regular US History class. It's these kinds of benefits, I feel, that can help the students of today succeed tomorrow, and I'm so glad that there are programs out there like Virtual Virginia to help. Thank you!”

Cali L., Chinese I Student

“Virtual Virginia has helped me by giving me classes that would not be offered at my school. Not only has it given me the class that is not offered, but it gave me an AP class which my school has none of.”

Laurel, AP Human Geography Student

“It's helped me because we have to research and learn things a regular English class wouldn't ask. It is more advanced and makes us think harder than a regular class. An average English course class is just teaching students the basics; when taking a distance learning course, you learn things that older students should be learning. This prepares us for college; it shows we have responsibility and teaches us about other things besides English, too. It's a wonderful class to take. You have to pay attention and do everything expected of you, and you'll go very far.”

Kirstine P., AP English Language and Composition Student

“Distance learning via Virtual Virginia has given me the opportunity to not only take classes that were unavailable at my school and to meet many new friends, but also to attain a higher level of academic confidence. Distance learning offers students a unique opportunity to work at their personal pace... we have the opportunity to share ideas and personal inference without fear of judgment or marginalization. I absolutely love the online program, and believe that it is an excellent tool and application that all Virginia schools should use!”

Thomas A., AP English Literature and Composition, AP Psychology, and AP U.S. Government Student

“Virtual Virginia has helped my education because it is a great experience. It gives me a chance to be more responsible.”

Regginae F., Chinese I Student

"In taking three Virtual Virginia courses at my high school, I have been able to hone skills that I would not have learned otherwise, such as analytical thinking, frequent discussions, and most of all, being very prompt on assignments (i.e., doing them three days before they are due!)."

I have been able to learn material in an entirely new way, and thus I have begun to think entirely different too, while working at my own pace. I've also met people online that share my same interests and love of learning, so I am not alone in my education. All in all, Virtual Va. has been a great opportunity for me, and I hope to continue to succeed."

Quinton A., AP English Literature and Composition, AP Psychology, and AP U.S. Government Student

"Virtual Virginia has helped me because it's easier to learn through [the program]. I am able to go at my own pace and learn, which is what I need. The only downfall is that a teacher being present is easier to understand, but with the Elluminate, I am able to communicate with them face to face if I wanted."

Brittany A., Latin I Student

"Virtual Virginia has opened up more opportunities to me because it offers me courses that aren't offered at our school. I am taking Latin online with Virtual Virginia. I now know what it is like to be able to exceed my learning ability by taking a harder course."

Natasha B., Latin I Student

"The Virtual Virginia program has allowed me to take a range of advanced classes that my school doesn't offer. I am taking physics, which my school has been unable to find a teacher for; and AP European History, which is something I am very interested in, but my school doesn't offer very many AP courses. I am also applying to take the VASTS online course that is run by NASA Langley, which will be a great opportunity to learn things that I couldn't otherwise learn. Online courses are a great thing that let you do a lot more in a small community."

Ryan O., AP Physics and AP European History Student

"Latin is a dead Language, and it is not like French or Spanish that if you don't know how to say a word or a grammar law you could just ask someone from that place and your problem is solved. But to do this with Latin you would need a Time Machine, but at this point in time there is no such device. There is one more solution, Elluminate! It is a very helpful tool, especially if you are 100 percent lost in what is going on in the class, you can get your microphone or headset and be basically in the same room as your teacher then you can talk to them. They can talk to you and go over exactly what it is that you don't understand and fix the problem. To anyone that is planning to take an online course I recommend it, in the end it will teach you to be independent, whether you want to or not..."

Trask P., Latin II Student

"Distance Learning (Virtual Virginia) has helped my education by allowing me to take Chinese I online, which would never be possible at my school..."

Austin K., Chinese I Student

"I think the Virtual Virginia program gave me a new experience and another approach to education in this world of technology. The ability to express myself in words and to people I cannot see in person made it easy for me to express ideas outwardly without fear of being judged by appearance and age. I feel that in an educational environment set up by my Virtual Virginia class, people have more confidence to speak their thoughts out loud and be professional as well."

Joo Hyun P., AP Human Geography Student

"The online course allowed for me to take advanced classes that weren't normally offered at my high school. I go to a very small school, consisting only of about 300 people, and it is very difficult for us to keep teachers here...so my only opportunity for higher learning at this junction was Virtual Virginia. I was, at first, very apprehensive about completing an online course, as I usually appreciate a close personal relationship with my instructors, but I was pleasantly surprised. The instructors at Virtual Virginia are extremely involved and helpful--usually responding promptly to any of my e-mails or calls. Though the work is more complex and faster-paced, it has been an enjoyable experience..."

Alexandra R., AP Psychology, AP U.S. Government, and AP English Literature and Composition Student

"The distance learning program of Virtual Virginia has greatly enhanced my education because it has presented the opportunity to choose from a wider variety of more challenging classes than my school could supply beforehand. Better yet, it is preparing me for the chance to earn college credit. Due to our high school's modest size and prior commitments, such as the IB program, it is limited in traditional Advanced Placement course offerings. Therefore, when Virtual Virginia courses were introduced, many of our students were excited to take advantage of them, including myself. This is my first experience in an online course, and I have been continually impressed with the productivity, organization, and communication of the class. Many of the factors people are weary of when virtual classes are discussed have ceased to be concerns for me during my experience. For example, I have been pleasantly surprised how my teacher is as, if not more, available and personal than my other teachers from the traditional classroom setting. One of my favorite aspects of this learning environment is the independence the class allows. While it is structured, challenging, and time consuming, the class allows for the student to learn in and out of school with all the resources of a classroom. I believe any student with a little self-discipline, time management skills, and a desire to challenge themselves will love the virtual classes!"

Jama R., AP Psychology student

"I am taking my first year of Virtual Virginia, and so far I am very impressed. I love that I can complete assignments on my own time (within a time limit of course) and that I can view my grades any time I need to. I also find it easier to talk to my teacher by sending her a message. She usually can get it back to me in a timely manner. I find that I am doing a little better in an AP class than I have done in my regular English class that I took last year."

Seth A., AP English Language and Composition student

“Distance learning has proved very valuable in my education. My school's access to the Virtual Virginia program has allowed me to take two classes that would not, otherwise, be offered, and I have found my online teachers to be easily accessible and helpful resources for other classes I am taking through my school.”

Kelly V., AP European History and Latin I student

“Virtual Virginia has definitely helped to widen my knowledge scope and has provided me with a chance to learn about an interesting subject that is not offered at my school. It is like a regular class but with great advantages such as flexibility. There are deadlines for assignments due, but I am able to learn information at my own pace and go back to it for review anytime I need to; the instructional videos can be paused and replayed as much as necessary. It has also helped me to keep in touch with my friends and make new ones. The teachers have been so friendly and helpful, and they are always online so help is always available. I love the lessons accompanied by easy to understand explanations and the fact that I can always get help when I need it; online courses are great sources for education.”

Yunzhe Z., AP Microeconomics and AP Macroeconomics Student