

BOARD OF VISITORS INFORMATION SESSION MINUTES
August 27, 2024

An information session (open session) for the Board of Visitors was held on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Latham Ballroom AB at The Inn at Virginia Tech, in Blacksburg, Virginia. The meeting was livestreamed via YouTube for the public. There was no public comment period.

Board Members Present

Sandy C. Davis (via Zoom)*
Nancy Dye
William Holtzman
Donald Horsley
Anna L. James
Starlette Johnson
Letitia A. Long
Ryan D. McCarthy
Jim Miller
J. Pearson
John Rocovich
Jeanne Stosser

Absent

Edward H. Baine (Rector)
David Calhoun (Vice Rector)

Constituent Representatives Present:

Leslie Orellana, Undergraduate Representative
William Poland, Graduate/Professional Representative
LaTawnya Burleson, Staff Representative
Janice Austin, Administrative/Professional Faculty Representative
Rachel Miles, Faculty Representative

*One Board member participated remotely from her home for medical reasons in accordance with Code of Virginia §2.2-3708.3(B). A quorum was physically present.

Also present at the meeting were: President Timothy Sands, Kim O'Rourke (Secretary to the Board), Sally Allain, Simon Allen, Lynsay Belshe, Eric Brooks, Brock Burroughs, Cyril Clarke, Al Cooper, Deborah Day, Corey Earles, Juan Espinoza, Ron Fricker, Michael Friedlander, Rachel Gabriele, Emily Gibson, Ellington Graves, Chelsea Haines, Jill Harrison, Kay Heidbreder, Tim Hodge, Elizabeth Hooper, Cyndi Hutchison, Whitley Johnson, Abigail Jordan, Frances Keene, Sharon Kurek, Evan Lavender-Smith, Hud McClanahan, Elizabeth McClanahan, Nancy Meacham, Joseph Merola, Laurel Miner, Bryanna Meredith, Mike Mulhare, Mark Owczarski, Luiz Pereira Da Silva, Sharon Pitt, Ellen Plummer, Lauren Pollard, Paul Richter, Julia Ross, Lisa Royal, Amy Sebring, Brennan Shepard, Steven Sikes, Daniel Sui, Aimee Surprenant, Kiera Schneiderman, John Tarter, Don Taylor, Dwyn Taylor, Mollie Taylor, Rob Viers, Isabella Vilardo, Michael Walsh, Melinda West, Lisa Wilkes, Chris Wise, and Chris Yianilos.

The meeting was livestreamed for the public via YouTube; there were 36 concurrent viewers on YouTube and a total of 31 views.

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In the Rector's absence, Tish Long convened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Information Session. Simon Allen provided the financial overview. (Copy filed with the permanent minutes and marked Attachment A.)

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Financial Overview – Amy Sebring, EVP&COO, gave the board an overview of the Restructuring Act of 2005 and the authorities delegated to the university. Simon Allen, Vice President for Finance and University Treasurer, then gave an overview of the financial position of the university, which included budgeting process and timeline, sources and uses of funds, the capital projects plan, debt service and credit rating.

Constituent Reports - Each of the five representatives to the board – Leslie Orellana, William Poland, LaTawnya Burleson, Janice Austin, and Rachel Miles -- presented a report of their constituency.

(Copies filed with the permanent minutes of the full board meeting held August 28, 2024.)

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The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

(Copies of the presentations are filed with the permanent minutes and attached.)

Virginia Tech Board of Visitors Meeting

Information Session

**Tuesday, August 27, 2024
9:00 a.m.**

**The Inn – Latham Ballroom
Virginia Tech Campus**

Financial Overview

- Mr. Simon Allen, Vice President for Finance and University Treasurer

Constituent Reports

- Ms. Leslie Orellana, Undergraduate Student Representative to the Board
- Mr. William Poland, Graduate/Professional Student Representative to the Board
- Ms. LaTawnya Burleson, Staff Representative to the Board
- Dr. Janice Austin, Administrative and Professional Faculty Representative to the Board
- Ms. Rachel Miles, Faculty Representative to the Board

Financial Overview

Simon Allen,

Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer

August 27, 2024

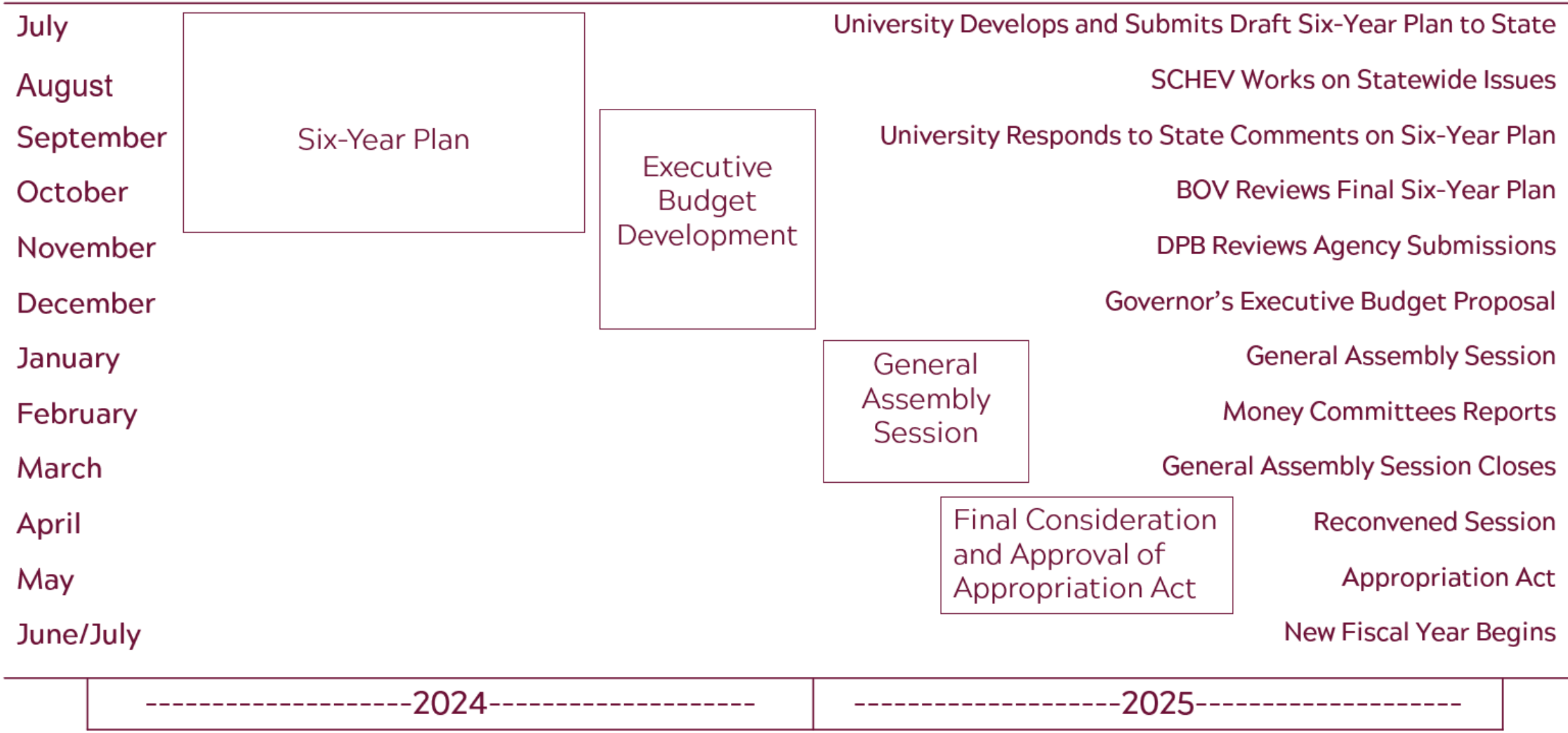
Virginia's Restructuring Act

- **2005 General Assembly passed The Restructured Higher Education Financial and Operations Act**
- **Purpose:**
 - ❑ Provide varying levels of operational autonomy to public higher education institutions
 - ❑ Reaffirm that tuition and fee responsibility resides with the institutions' Board of Visitors, and
 - ❑ Require higher education institutions to commit to 12 state goals including:
 - ✓ Access for Virginia residents
 - ✓ Affordability
 - ✓ Academic programs that meet the commonwealth's workforce needs
 - ✓ Improved retention and timely completion
 - ✓ Regional economic development
 - ✓ Maintain financial and administrative standards
 - ✓ Campus safety and security
- **The 2005 Act covered authorities in these operational areas:**
 1. Finance and Accounting
 2. Human Resources
 3. Capital Outlay and Construction
 4. Information Technology
 5. Procurement and Surplus Property
 6. Leasing and Real Estate Management
- **2006 "Management Agreement" formalized relationship between VT and the commonwealth**

Virginia's Restructuring Act

- Allows for varying levels of autonomy (Tier 1 – 3) based on administrative expertise and management
 - **Virginia Tech is a Tier III institution**, the highest level of autonomy, with delegated authority in all six areas
- Authorities granted in key areas:
 - ***Finance and Accounting***
 - Authority to implement own financial management policies and system
 - Operation of independent university accounting system
 - Ability to control and manage moneys generated by the university and to retain resulting interest earnings
 - ***Procurement***
 - Authority to implement procurement policies related to the purchase of goods, services, insurance and construction
 - ***Capital Outlay and Construction***
 - For general fund projects, use state process for pre-appropriation but institutional process for post-appropriation project management
 - Board of Visitors may establish and initiate nongeneral fund projects
 - May designate a Building Official and establish internal review unit
- Provides for financial incentives including earned interest on tuition and fees and all other nongeneral fund E&G revenues and automatic re-appropriation of year-end balances
- Requires periodic assessment of institutional performance standards against benchmarks

Commonwealth Financial Planning Timelines



VT Board Review & Oversight

August / September

- **Annual Comprehensive Report on Advancement #+**
- **Financial Performance Report ***
- Report on Higher Ed Institutional Performance Measures (even years)
- Report on Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act Compliance and IT Security[°]
- Financial Summary of Faculty and Staff Merit Programs
- Ratification of Personnel Changes Report *^

November

- **Six-Year Plan (odd years)*+**
- **Annual Report on Research Finances and Resources #**
- **Annual Report on University Debt Ratio & Debt Capacity #+[°]**
- **Annual Report on the University's Student Financial Aid Resources #+**
- **Annual Report on Investments and Quasi-Endowments +**
- Annual Report on Write-off of Delinquent Accounts
- Update on Advancement #
- Financial Performance Report *
- Ratification of Personnel Changes Report *^

March / April

- **Tuition and Fee Rates *#+**
- **Six-Year Capital Outlay Plan (odd years)**
- **University's Annual Financial Report**
- Update on Athletics – Financial Aspects (NCAA Report)
- Update on Advancement #
- Financial Performance Report *
- Ratification of Personnel Changes Report *^

June

- **University Operating & Capital Budgets *#+**
- **Update on Development of Six-Year Plan & Approval of Related Strategies (odd years) +**
- Faculty Compensation Plan *
- Compensation for Graduate Assistants *
- Hotel Roanoke Conference Center Commission Budget *
- Promotion, Tenure, & Continued Appointment *^
- Update on Advancement #
- Financial Performance Report *
- Ratification of Personnel Changes Report *^

* Requires full Board approval

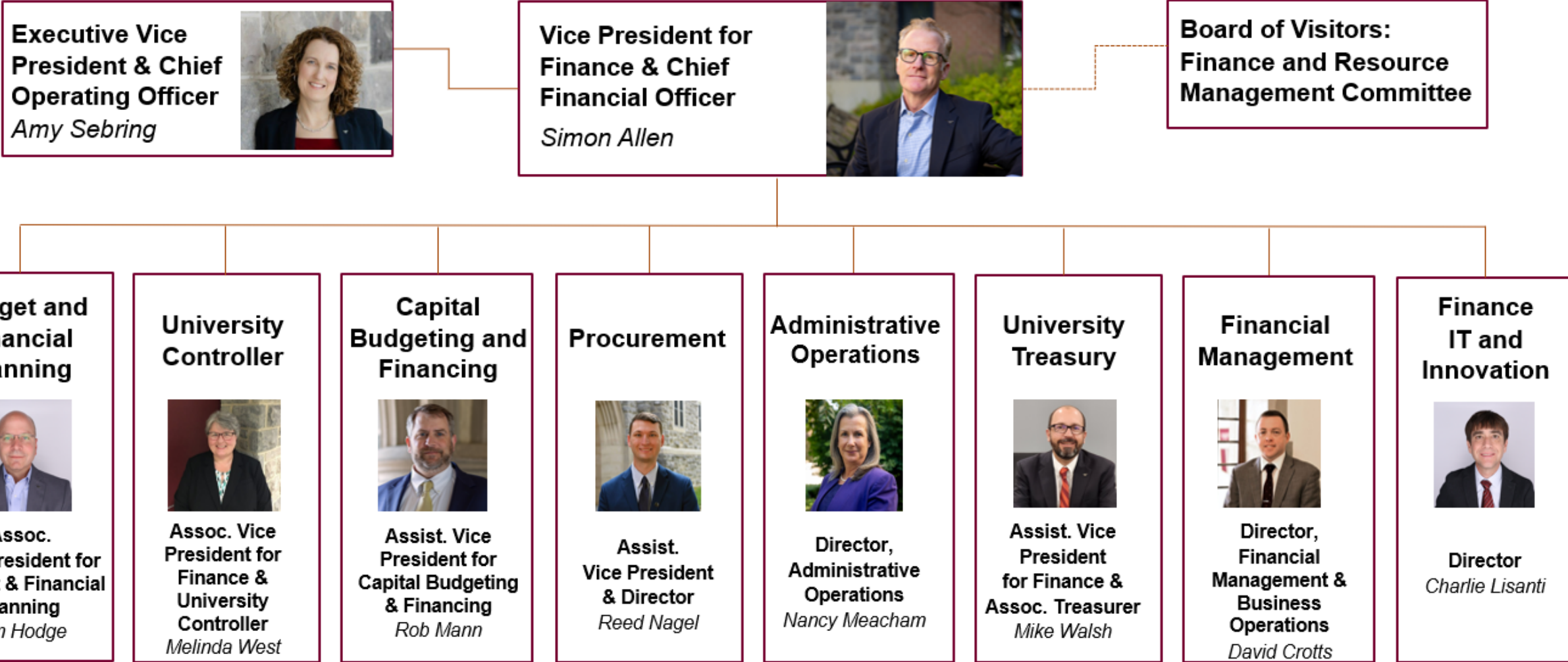
Discusses Enterprise Risk Management topic

+ Discusses Strategic Investment Priorities topic

° Acceptance item

^ Closed Session item

Vice President For Finance and Chief Financial Officer Organizational Chart



Virginia Tech - Related Corporations

Virginia Tech Foundation,
Inc.

Virginia Tech Athletic Fund,
Inc.

Virginia Tech Applied
Research Corporation

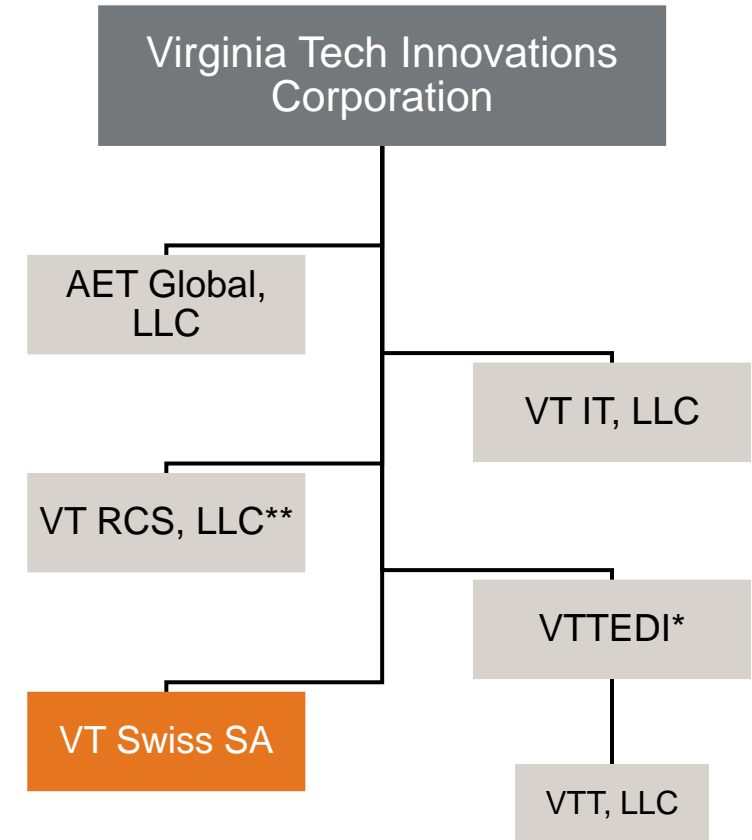
Virginia Tech Alumni
Association




Virginia Tech Intellectual
Properties, Inc.

Virginia Tech Corps of
Cadets Alumni, Inc.

Virginia Tech India Research
and Education Forum



Virginia Tech Services, Inc.



-  Independent corporations
-  Non-US entities
-  VTIC subsidiaries

* Virginia Tech Transportation Economic Development, Inc.
 ** VT Research Contracting Services, LLC

Funding Classifications

 General Funds	 Nongeneral Funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent state taxpayer funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenues generated by state entities from operating activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriated to Virginia Tech for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational and General Programs Support for Resident Students Equipment Trust Fund Maintenance Reserve Capital Outlay Projects Student Financial Aid (Research Activities – limited) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition and Fees Sponsored Programs – external support Sales and Services (AKA 'Auxiliary Enterprises') Private donations/support Miscellaneous charges and fees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary source of state support and subject to state budget amendment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All non-general fund sources except for private resources are considered “public funds”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY25: \$0.44bn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY25: \$1.8bn

State Funding Accounts for 18% of Operating Sources

FY25 Budget (\$ in millions)

	General Funds*	In-State T&F	Out-of-State T&F	All Other Income	Private	Total
University Division (208) E&G	\$ 288.5	\$ 295.7	\$ 440.5	\$ 59.9	\$ -	\$ 1,084.6
CE/AES (229) E&G	92.9	-	-	17.1	-	110.0
Student Financial Aid	39.3	-	-	24.2	-	63.5
Auxiliary Enterprises		-	-	482.6	-	482.6
Sponsored Programs	20.4	-	-	489.7	-	510.1
All Other Programs (UMA)	3.6	-	-	14.5	-	18.2
Subtotal Public Resources	444.7	295.7	440.5	1,088.0	-	2,269.0
Virginia Tech Foundation	-	-	-	-	240.6	240.6
Other University-Related Entities	-	-	-	-	4.4	4.4
Total	\$ 444.7	\$ 295.7	\$ 440.5	\$ 1,088.0	\$ 245.0	\$ 2,514.0
<i>% of total</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>43%</i>	<i>10%</i>	

* State General Fund support is 18% of all activities (after including private entities), 20% of the total university budget, but 27% of the University Division (208) E&G budget.

Operating Sources & Uses | University Consolidated

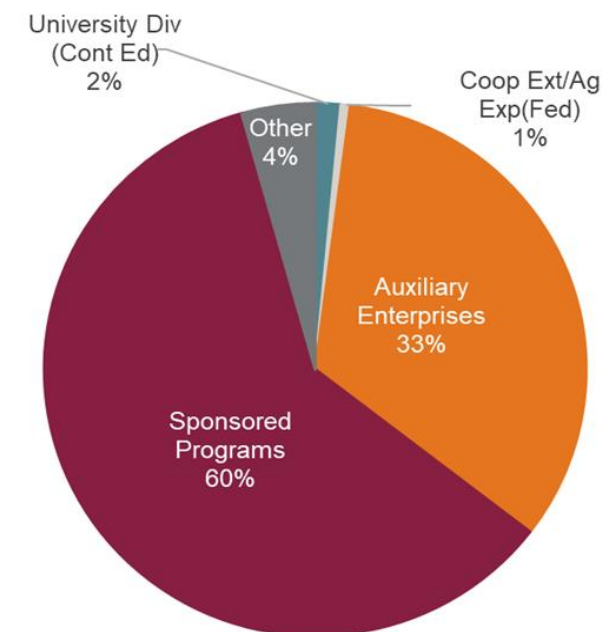
Cash Basis - \$ in Thousands

Sources	FY22	FY23	FY24	
	Actual	Actual	FY24 Budget	FY24 Actual
Tuition & E&G Fees (net)	644,217	682,647	723,334	724,391
State Appropriations	317,986	351,646	392,310	392,299
Federal (VCE/AES)	15,912	13,605	17,261	17,258
Federal, not sponsored(pandemic)	61,385	-	-	-
Sponsored Programs(Direct & Indirect)	360,908	412,866	436,453	500,208
Auxiliary Enterprise Revenue & Fees	388,506	430,535	461,541	471,049
Other	65,632	66,204	84,762	82,783
Total Operating Revenue	1,854,546	1,957,503	2,115,661	2,187,988
Uses				
Personnel Costs				
Salaries, Stipends & Wages	860,380	933,668	1,024,129	1,023,248
Fringe Benefits	259,910	274,582	313,540	301,066
Financial Aid, Appropriated (a)	36,295	49,749	61,695	60,809
General Expense & Services (Operating)	441,193	482,028	516,972	494,003
Continuous Charges (utilities, leases, insurance)	119,322	136,612	160,585	154,105
Debt Service	31,816	34,611	48,456	48,436
Total Operating Expenses	1,748,915	1,911,250	2,125,376	2,081,667
Net from Operations	105,630	46,254	(9,715)	106,321

- Rating agencies expect 3-5% net
- VT's FY24 net is generated by several different business activities / timing:

Millions	
\$ 20.7	Auxiliary Enterprise Carryover (estimate)
15.0	Repayment of Loans & Bond Covenant Requirements
2.1	Continuing Education & 229 Federal Timing
4.6	Committed Yet Unexpended Capital Funding
63.9	External Grants & Contracts Revenue

\$ 106.3 Total



(a) In the Commonwealth of Virginia, appropriated student financial aid is a subset of the entire student financial aid program.

(b) While the University Division and Cooperative Extension/Agricultural Experiment Station Division E&G programs are balanced in accordance with state requirements, net from operations are possible with auxiliary enterprises (due to commitments, loan repayments), timing of external grant and contract activities, and certain capital activities. Obligations will be carried over and completed in the next fiscal year.

Summary of Net Position

Accrual Basis of Accounting
(\$ in Millions)

	Virginia Tech			Virginia Tech Foundation*		
	2021 (restated)	2022 (restated)	2023	2021	2022	2023
Assets	\$ 3,291.9	\$ 3,578.1	\$4,168.5	\$2,687.6	\$2,667.8	\$2,838.3
Deferred outflows	142.8	108.6	94.3	-	-	-
Liabilities	(1,533.5)	(1,299.3)	(1,630.3)	(957.8)	(952.5)	(1,001.3)
Deferred inflows	(86.1)	(262.1)	(130.6)			
Net position	<u>\$ 1,815.1</u>	<u>\$ 2,125.3</u>	<u>\$2,501.9</u>	<u>\$1,729.8</u>	<u>\$1,715.3</u>	<u>\$1,837.0</u>
Investment in capital assets	\$ 1,521.3	\$ 1,705.6	\$1,891.2	\$ 198.8	\$ 235.3	\$ 280.4
Restricted, nonexpendable	14.9	13.6	14.2	736.6	782.4	824.9
Restricted, expendable						
Scholarships, research, instruction and other	150.4	150.0	168.9	634.7	525.1	553.6
Capital projects	7.2	10.2	42.4	-	-	-
Debt service and auxiliary operations	79.2	85.3	97.1	-	-	-
Unrestricted	42.1	160.6	288.1	159.7	172.5	178.1
Net position	<u>\$ 1,815.1</u>	<u>\$ 2,125.3</u>	<u>\$2,501.9</u>	<u>\$1,729.8</u>	<u>\$1,715.3</u>	<u>\$1,837.0</u>

*Transactions between the university and the foundation have not been eliminated in the financial statements.

The Foundation's 'Balance Sheet' is shown as a component within VT's audited financials

Deep Dive: Annual Capital Plan

FY25 (\$ in millions)

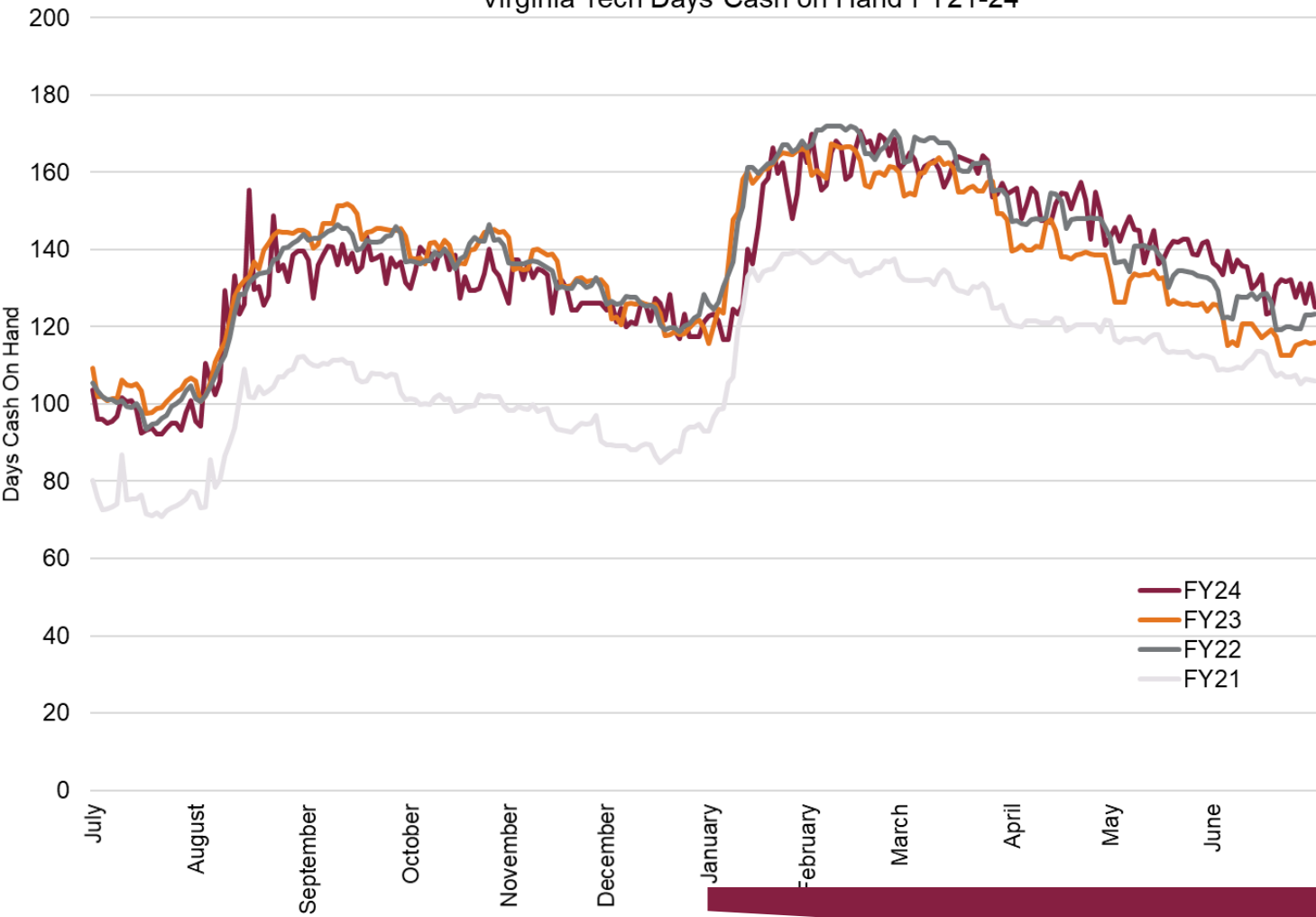
	Projects	Total Project Budget	Annual Capital Plan Spend Target
Design	7	\$ 59.3	\$ 18.4
Construction	10	887.5	150.0
Equipment	2	60.6	3.2
Closeout	3	179.0	11.7
Total	22	\$ 1,186.4	\$ 183.3

- The Board approves the University's capital plans
- FY25 includes three new state planning projects:
 - Improve Campus Accessibility
 - Derring Hall Building Envelope
 - Improvements to Eastern Shore AREC
- Projects currently in construction with large spend rates:
 - Maintenance Reserve projects
 - Innovation Campus Academic Building
 - Mitchell Hall



Deep Dive: Working Capital

Virginia Tech Days Cash on Hand FY21-24



Total Liquidity Summary

as of June 30, 2024

Internal Liquidity	\$ 685,704,587
Internal Liquidity (Days)	122
External Liquidity	\$ 198,000,000
Total Liquidity	\$ 883,704,587
Encumbered Cash	
VTF Endowment	-
Capital Projects	\$ 79,404,321
Total Liquidity Net of Encumbered Cash	\$ 804,300,266

Working capital is highly seasonal, but robust and trending higher

Deep Dive: Credit Rating

Moody's Key Comments:

- April 2024 – affirmed Aa1 and “stable” outlook
- Credit Strengths – excellent strategic positioning and strong brand and reputation demonstrated by growing enrollment, net tuition per student and research activity
- Credit Challenges – moderate liquidity relative to similarly rated peers with 158 monthly days cash on hand

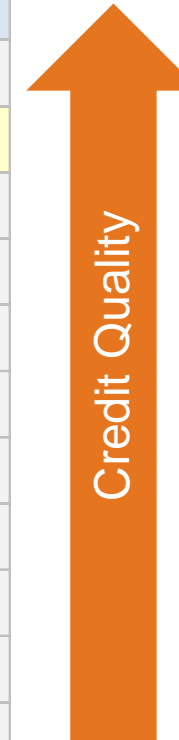
S&P Key Comments:

- June 2023 - affirmed Aa1 and “stable” outlook
- Credit Strengths – experienced and capable senior management team
- Credit Challenges – additional debt and capital plans in the future that may result in a higher debt burden or weaker financial resources relative to debt

Importance of Ratings

- Impacts borrowing costs
 - The difference between Aa1 and Aa2 is approximately 10 bps
- Alumni and donors pay attention; viewed as a measurement of ability to manage university

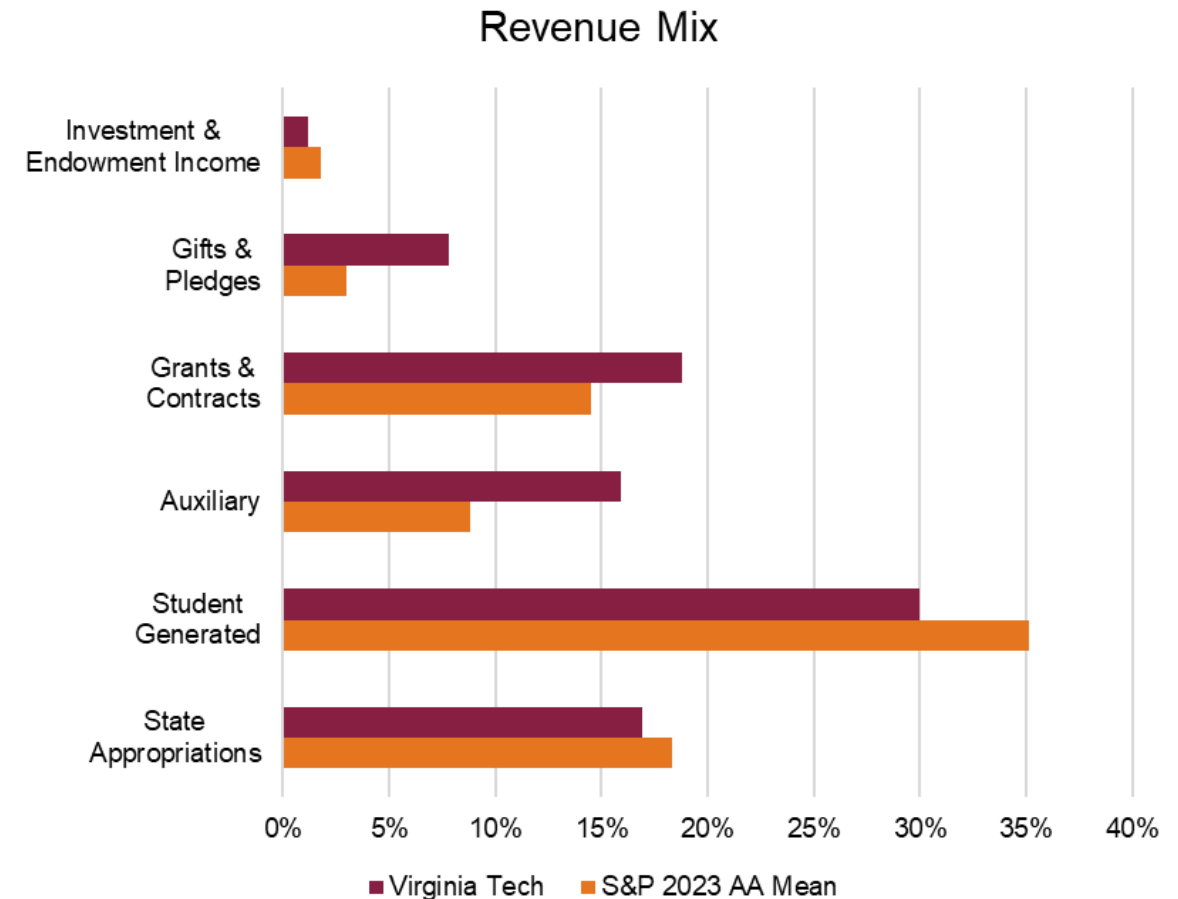
Moody's		Standard and Poor's
Aaa		AAA
Aa1		AA+
Aa2		AA
Aa3		AA-
A1		A+
A2		A
A3		A-
Baa1		BBB+
Baa2		BBB
Baa3		BBB-
Below Investment Grade		Below Investment Grade



Relative Financial Comparison (1 of 2)

Fiscal Year 2023	Virginia Tech	S&P: AA Mean*
Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment (persons)	36,931	64,595
Adjusted Operating Revenue (\$000)	2,156,715	4,443,248
Adjusted Operating Expense (\$000)	2,099,289	4,546,633
Net Adjusted Operating Margin (%)	2.74	2.70
Tuition Discount Rate	19.9	26.9
Endowment Market Value (\$000)	1,792,100	1,947,682
Cash and Investments (\$000)	3,319,592	1,561,177
Outstanding Debt (\$000)	925,763	2,253,344

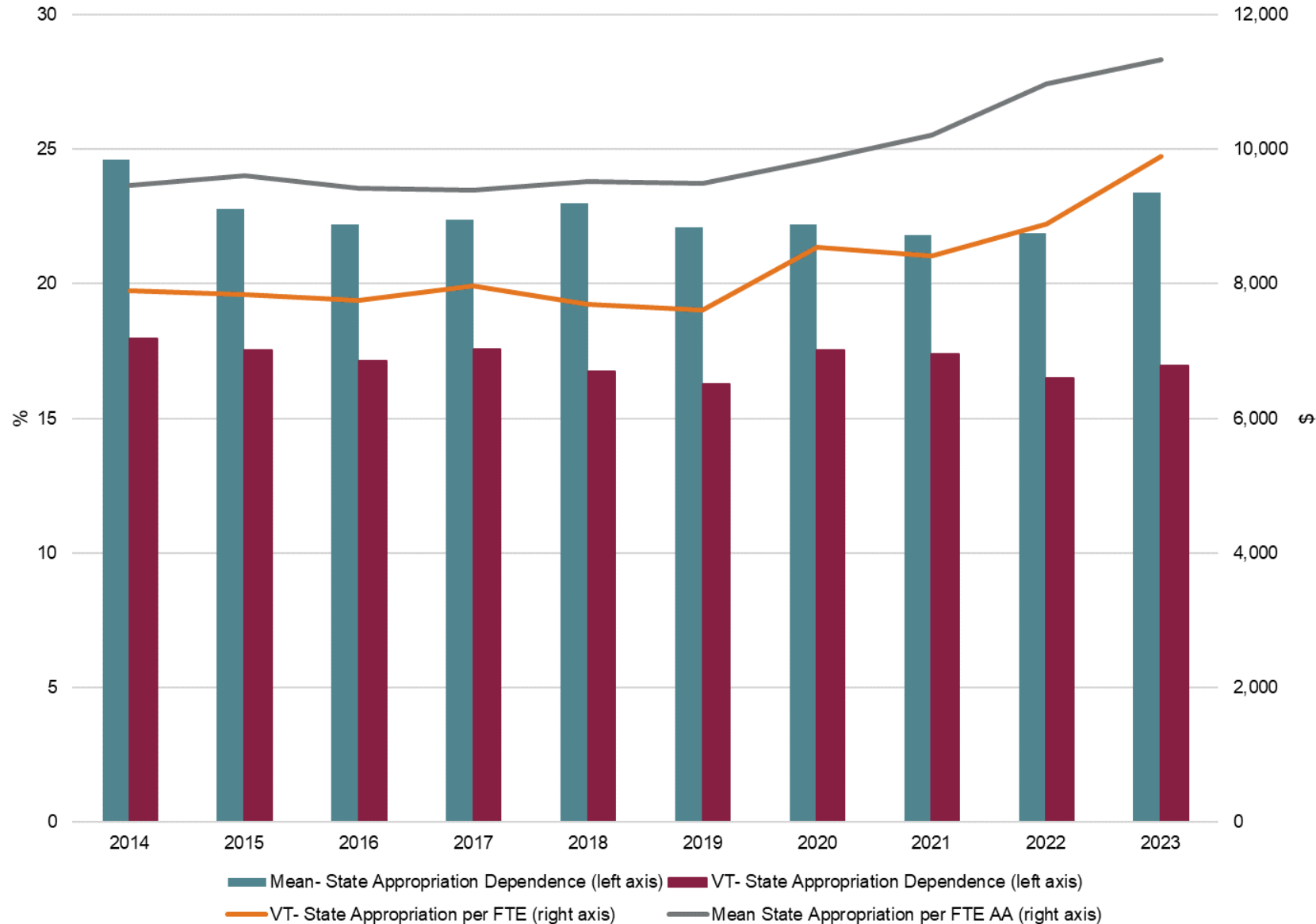
*S&P Global: U.S. Not-For-Profit Public College and University Fiscal Medians 2023 Report'



The financial position of the university is relatively strong, with diverse revenue sources

Relative Financial Comparison (2 of 2)

State Operating Appropriations, VT vs. AA Peers



- At less than 20%, Virginia Tech's reliance on direct state appropriation for funding is less than its peer averages
- Growing state appropriation per student in very recent years has helped somewhat mitigate inflation in expenditures
- However, healthy state funding is required to advance & support our mission

Good afternoon, Rector Baine, members of the board, President Sands, administration, and guests. First, I want to thank you all for this opportunity to share my own experiences but also to speak to you all regarding a wide variety of student perspectives. Your continuous efforts to make Virginia Tech a place where students can excel is very appreciated by every single student.

I am excited and grateful to be able to collaborate with you all to continue this mission together as the undergraduate student representative this year. To introduce myself, my name is Leslie Orellana, and I am going into my fifth year at Virginia Tech. I recently received a bachelor's degree in real estate last year and will be continuing aiming to receive another bachelor's degree in building construction this year. My dual degrees and time here have given me the opportunity to challenge myself not only academically but also within my own personal growth, especially in leadership. I joined Hokie Ambassadors my first year to find a group of passionate students and share our excitement of Virginia Tech with others. Serving as president of Hokie Ambassadors allowed me to recognize the difficult decisions students must make each day to pursue their education. One instance of this was when I was approached by a prospective student after a campus tour and she shared that she, like myself, was a first-generation college student. She was lit up with excitement as the tour ended but her excitement was clouded with the difficult question of if Virginia Tech was worth the financial stress it would bring. It was an impossible question that no one prepares for. I told her of course and shared my experience of working jobs during the semester, the financial aid process, and her options for financing— but this is a difficult choice every student must make for themselves. Her story and many others inspired me to continue the work to make Virginia Tech accessible and affordable for all students.

This year I hope to not just magnify my own experiences and perspectives but to also shed light on the issues that are prevalent in the student body and share their successes. The issues that will be in my focus will be accessibility to experiential learning experiences, affordability, the rising cost of living, and food insecurity. While these topics are broad, diving deeper will demonstrate the immense positive impact we can implement to help students.

In my role as the undergraduate representative, I have met with all the deans of the colleges to collaborate on different issues and brainstorm ideas. An issue I brought up with every dean was

the idea of experiential learning. While experiential learning looks different for every student and can mean conducting research in a lab, an internship, volunteering at Virginia Tech's farms or clinics, or even getting involved in a student organization's leadership – every single person spoke to the importance of this experience. The issue lies in the accessibility of it. Not only are students striving to find the perfect opportunity to advance the skills taught in the classroom but also are tasked to finding and funding temporary housing, transportation, groceries, necessities, and even some students saving of their earnings for tuition or other semester expenses. This makes the experiential learning experience difficult to consider for students which may hinder some students from pursuing it, despite the colleges emphasis on the benefits to their students. I hope to use this year to work with various campus resources, organizations, and colleges to ensure every student has the opportunity to obtain these experiences despite their socioeconomic status or other constraints.

This year, we have also witnessed the cost-of-living rise as groceries, daily necessities, and interest rates continue to increase as a result of the national rise of inflation. While I, as well as all the students, appreciate the Board of Visitor's continuous efforts to keep tuition increases conservative at only 2.9% for this school year, the financial burden of attendance continues to grow. Off-campus housing in Blacksburg can easily be at minimum \$700 and upward of \$1500, with luxury apartments being the newest and most popular ones to be marketed. I hope that the Board of Visitors can explore additional solutions to housing for students that are beyond the first year guaranteed on-campus housing. We are also witnessing an increase in the cost of groceries and items that may leave a student struggling to find affordable options for daily necessities. Food accessibility has previously been tackled by my predecessors, but I hope to continue this mission as no student should have to worry about their accessibility to food or other essentials.

Overall, I am excited for this school year to work with a variety of students, administration, resources, and organizations to understand the student body and their needs. Virginia Tech is the place where so many people find their friends, dream careers, and the support to always call this place home and I am excited to continue that for generations to come. I thank you all for your continued support and for all you do for the advancement of Virginia Tech and Go Hokies!

Rector Baine, members of the Board of Visitors, President Sands, Provost Clarke, administrators, and guests. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you all about the graduate and professional students today.

I am so excited to be delivering my first report as the Graduate and Professional Student Representative to the Board. A bit about me: I am a second year master's student studying electrical engineering and working as a graduate research assistant at the Virginia Tech National Security Institute. I am a lifelong Hokie as I grew up in Blacksburg and received my undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from Virginia Tech as well. Having much love and passion for Virginia Tech, I am eager to step into this role and advocate for our students.

The graduate and professional students are an integral part of the university, particularly in supporting our faculty's research efforts, which help distinguish Virginia Tech as an excellent university. By cultivating a desirable student experience, we can attract talented students that will enable the university's research goals and advance our work as a land-grant university. However, the graduate and professional student population is very diverse and there is rarely a one-size-fits-all answer to support all our students. This means that we must be deliberate and thoughtful in looking at our student population and understanding how to best support them.

In my role this year, I look forward to engaging with students and administrators across the university to work to improve the student experience for our graduate and professional student population. Some aspects of the student experience that are of interest to me include: graduate student well-being, access to and awareness of resources, international student experience, and supporting students across our multiple campuses. I have already begun to work with others on some of these issues, which I will now detail.

Following, conversations from the previous board meeting in June on the complexity of the pay table for graduate student stipends, I was asked to join a working group on simplifying the graduate student stipend pay steps. Alongside administrators from the graduate school and finance department, I have already had two meetings with this working group, and I am very encouraged by the ideas and progress we have made. Currently, the group is finalizing a set of simplifications to the stipend pay table and will be reaching out to relevant stakeholders across university departments that manage graduate student contracts to receive feedback on the proposed changes.

I have also received an invitation to and am very excited to be a part of the steering committee for the Local Visioning Initiative. This group is composed of members from the university, as well as officials from the towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, Montgomery County, and other New River Valley Stakeholders. The goal of this initiative is to explore further partnerships between Virginia Tech and the surrounding region and develop a shared vision for prosperity in our local community. As both a representative to the Board of Visitors and as a Blacksburg native, this is an effort that I am extremely interested in and look forward to supporting.

This past week, I also spoke at the Graduate School Orientation and introduced myself to new graduate and professional students who are beginning their time at Virginia Tech. This opportunity allowed me to increase the new students' awareness of what the Board of Visitors is and how I can support and advocate for them.

The orientation also gave me a chance to promote an event that I have been working very hard to plan, which is the Graduate Student Fall Resource Fair. This is an event that my predecessor began last spring which I wanted to continue in the fall as an opportunity to expose new, incoming students to all the resources and services that Virginia Tech has to offer. This event will take place on September 12th outside on the Graduate Life Center Lawn and is in collaboration with the Graduate School and the Graduate and Professional Student Senate. The resources represented at the fair will be diverse, ranging from student well-being to transportation services to professional development and more. I'm very pleased to say that there are over 30 groups planning to attend this event, which is an increase compared to the previous event in the spring, meaning that we will be giving more visibility to additional resources.

In the coming months, I look forward to continuing this work, as well as beginning to meet with other student groups such as the Order of the Gavel and the entire Graduate and Professional Student Senate to hear what is on the minds of our graduate and professional students. I am also planning to connect with the Deans of the Graduate School, Medical School, and Veterinary School, as well as representatives for our other campus so that I may gain a broader understanding of how to best serve our graduate and professional students for the coming year.

Overall, I am very excited for the work to come this year and I pledge to do my best to collaborate with you all in support of our students. On behalf of the graduate and professional students, thank you for listening today.

Staff Senate Constituency Report

Virginia Tech Board of Visitors

August 26-28, 2024 Presented by LaTawnya Burleson, Staff Senate President

Rector Baine, members of the Board of Visitors, President Sands, Provost Clarke, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Office, Amy Sebring, administrators, and guests. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about staff and non-student wage at Virginia Tech.

I am honored to serve as the Staff Representative to the Board for my second-year term and I welcome all new Board members and representatives and wish you all a successful year.

I want to provide you with some of the goals for Staff Senate for this academic year and give some context of the Virginia Tech employees that we represent. Currently Virginia Tech employees 4717 staff and non-student wage employees. Our roles vary from advisors, administrative, fiscal and lab support, grounds, dining services and housekeeping in support of students, faculty and administration at Virginia Tech. Our constituents have shared hardships faced by the high cost of living in this and other campus locations and compensation is not keeping pace with inflation. Merit raises while appreciated do not seem significant when parking and insurance fees also increase.

Compensation issues will be a main focus this year. While some issues with lower pay band staff are currently being addressed in a coordinated effort between the university and Staff Senate, a deeper dive into the compensation process involving transparency around market value and data sources is an ongoing effort.

I want to thank Amy Sebring and Bryan Garey who have shown great willingness to be more communicative and transparent in regard to this issue and are facilitating important conversations with leaders in the Division of Human Resources.

Parking, everyone's favorite topic! Currently the payroll deduction process for purchasing parking passes only occurs once a year. This creates a hardship for new employees who are hired at a time when this is not an option and have to pay up front. Staff Senate suggests investigating this to make it become a year-round option for employees. We will also work with administration on other parking and transportation issues that are negatively impacting non-student wage and staff.

Staff Senate will roll out our Governance School Cohort this fall. Programming will run for a full academic year, and include efficacy strategies and paths for staff advocacy, along with how to share opportunities for participating in governance with fellow staff and non-student wage members. Also, in the spirit of UT Prosim we are engaging with community leaders to identify ways to participate in service projects.

As I close today, I want to thank you for listening and again wish you the best for the upcoming Academic Year. I look forward to updating you on our progress and celebrating our successes in the upcoming year. Go Hokies!

LaTawnya Burleson

Administrative and Professional Faculty Constituent Report

August 26-28, 2024

Presented by Janice Austin, A/P Faculty Senate President

Good morning, Rector Baine, board members, President Sands, Provost Clarke, Executive Vice President Sebring, administrators, and guests. It is a pleasure to be with you all for the August board retreat and meeting. I am looking forward to representing the administrative and professional faculty at Virginia Tech again this year.

Since the board meeting in June, the A/P Faculty Senate has installed new officers and senators for this academic year. We received a presentation at our July meeting from Lynsay Belshe, Carrie Cox, and Nick Quint from Auxiliary and Business Services regarding the transportation changes for the Blacksburg campus including the new transit center and Blacksburg Transit route changes on campus as well as sustainable transportation options. We continue to receive regular updates from the Job Architecture Project in Human Resources and look forward to the implementation of the new structure this fall.

The AP Faculty employee group is comprised of over 2,400 individuals doing a great diversity of work in support of the university's strategic initiatives. In June, I shared about members in Academic Support, one of our seven constituent areas. Today I would like to highlight some of the work done by AP faculty members in Extension. The Commonwealth of Virginia maintains a combined Extension system where Virginia Tech works collaboratively with Virginia State University, the 1890 Land-Grant institution. While all Extension Agents and most Extension Specialists are employees of Virginia Tech, Virginia State employs Extension Specialists and has a research farm. AP faculty members in Extension at Virginia Tech work on campus, at the six 4-H Educational Centers, the eleven Agricultural Research and Extension Centers (ARECs), the five district offices, and in extension offices in each county and most independent cities within the Commonwealth. Virginia is the only state that has the independent city structure like we do, therefore Virginia's Extension system is the only one that has truly city-based offices. When looking at the system as a whole with the other land-grant institutions, the Cooperative Extension System is the largest non-formal education system in the world. As an integral part of that system, 4-H is the largest youth development program in the nation and the only one that forms its educational mission from a research base. The work of AP faculty in Extension directly supports Virginia Tech's tripartite land-grant mission of education, research, and engagement. These A/P faculty work with 4-H youth development and support the annual 4-H Congress held in June here on the Blacksburg campus. Others work with farmers, gardeners, families, and in communities across the

commonwealth sharing information and resources, strengthening relationships and partnerships, as well as providing trainings and certifications. I will continue share more about our other constituent areas during our future meetings this coming year.

This year the A/P Faculty senate will continue our work to provide professional networking opportunities to AP faculty, collaborate with other Senates on shared concerns, as well as reviewing our constituent group representation and formation. Thank you for the opportunity to share with you today and I look forward to updating you on the work of the A/P Faculty Senate at the November meeting.

Faculty Constituency Report

Rachel Miles, President, Faculty Senate

August 28, 2024

Over the past nine years, I have served as an academic librarian, professional, and faculty member at two universities. During my career as a junior faculty member and now as an associate professor, I have dedicated my livelihood to service. Libraries and librarians can only thrive through service to others, and that is only possible through intentional engagement, outreach, communication, and community building. None of these are possible without effort, strategy, and planning; in other words, they do not transpire on their own. As the newly elected Faculty Senate President at Virginia Tech, I believe my passion and dedication towards service will and can be utilized in purposeful and guiding ways during the upcoming academic year.

The faculty at Virginia Tech are energized and ready to begin the new academic year, and I am always impressed with their fervor and commitment to their students, research, and service to the university. There are challenges that we will face in the upcoming academic year, and faculty members' enthusiasm can be directed in innovative ways to face these challenges. Engaging with the faculty and students will be critical as we move forward during the academic year as challenges unfold. For example, I expect that the student anti-war protests will likely continue, and I believe engagement between and with the different groups will be crucial to ensuring peaceful freedom of expression activities on campus. Faculty members can act as mediators, but they must be invited to the table to act as mediators and communicators between different groups. Therefore, I must stress the importance of *engagement* with faculty, which, again, takes effort, strategy, and work to achieve. Service to the university goes both ways; faculty serve the university just as other actors do, such as students, administrators, and staff. In many ways, we serve one another to create a cohesive, functioning campus community in which we can rely upon one another. As we move into the new academic year, it is imperative that we strengthen these engagement opportunities with one another. There will be times when our communication channels break down or when we disappoint one another, but we can learn from our mistakes and move forward again.

One of the major initiatives at Virginia Tech is the Global Distinction Initiative, of which I serve on its Steering Committee. This is an ambitious initiative meant to bring international recognition of scholarship to Virginia Tech and attract top talent. However, we have seen a lack of buy-in and adoption of the initiative from faculty members at large. Many are asking: what is in it for me? Why should I care? Again, I cannot stress enough the power and importance of *communication* and *engagement* with the faculty. There are benefits of this initiative to the faculty members, but as of now, that has not (yet) been communicated to them. We need more opportunities for feedback, engagement, and strategic communications around the initiative. In addition, the initiative likely needs to be strengthened to be more inclusive of faculty members from backgrounds in the arts, humanities, and trans-, inter-, and multidisciplinary backgrounds. For example, the Destinations 2.0 Initiative is one incentive for transdisciplinary research, and it brings together disciplines to solve real-world problems in innovative ways. The grants associated with this initiative are impressive and commendable but there are still concerns from the faculty with incentivizing trans-, inter-, and multidisciplinary research across the university in broader contexts. Current short-term

incentives and metrics tend to project and incentivize productivity (e.g., through publications) and impact (e.g., through citations) through short-term windows, usually two to three years. TDR/IDR typically takes longer (more like 5-10 years rather than 3-5 years), but when it is successful, it is *much* more impactful and even considered “breakthrough” research. Faculty members believe that long-term strategies and goals should be adjusted to incentivize and include TDR/IDR or those interested in TDR/IDR in our goals and metrics. Traditional citation metrics typically incentivize short-term impact and specialized research, rather than TDR/IDR. These short-term goals *can* and *should* still be pursued; specialized research is still critical to the growth of research and scholarship. Long-term goals should *also* be pursued simultaneously. I implore you to also read and digest the university-adopted [Statement on the Responsible Use of Research Metrics](#), which was approved by the President and University Council last May. It does not explicitly tell us to move away from our goals, such as to be a Top 100 Times Higher Education (THE)-Ranked University, but it says, “Yes, you can do this, *and* also include other metrics and scholarship in the process, especially and specifically for assessment of the individual.” A “yes, and” approach helps to bring inclusivity to ambitious university goals and drive intentional engagement with faculty who may *feel* excluded. In other words, we believe the university should pursue these goals, such as Global Distinction (GD), and that the metrics of GD act as mere proxies for scholarly impact. What faculty want to know is that their research, scholarship, and creative activities are still valued, incentivized, and encouraged by the university, regardless of the metrics used as proxies to measure and benchmark impact and success, especially at an *individual* level, such as during annual evaluations and in the promotion and tenure process. Large, bibliometric analytics can and *should* still be applied for benchmarking and macro-level assessment purposes, but we ask that the individual faculty member be protected from any potential inadvertent harm. In other words, when we are designing metrics-based assessments, we should ask ourselves: what are the unintended consequences? Who does this discriminate against (potentially)? And how can the metrics be gamed? For more in-depth reading, please refer to the [SCOPE Model for Research Evaluation](#).

The world of Higher Education (HE) is rapidly shifting and evolving. Service is often overlooked or perceived as “lesser than” compared to its counterparts, scholarship and teaching. However, without service to one another, the others do not thrive as much. Service is as much about trust in one another and in the institution as it is about functionality and ambitious goals. Sometimes our goals are too lofty, and sometimes we are too grounded in probabilities, but finding a middle ground is critical. The expectations of service in HE have evolved; traditionally, service activities are committee work or administrative duties, but now we see contemporary expectations shifting towards a more integrated approach that includes supporting the institutional goals in a broader context. How can faculty help support the institutional goals, especially through service, one of the most undervalued aspects of their work? I hope you will reflect on this question and others that I’ve posed throughout this report, and I hope we can work more closely together over this academic year, regardless of the challenges we face. I’m optimistic about the upcoming year, and I hope all of you are as well. In the spirit of *Ut Prosim*, I hope that this report will inspire you to engage with the faculty, such as those of us who have decided to serve in university governance. We are dedicated to service just as you are, and I believe that we can find common ground, commonalities, alignment in goals, and collaboration opportunities. I look forward to working with you in the coming academic year.