

MINUTES**BOARD OF VISITORS PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION
FOR PROPOSED 2025-26 TUITION AND FEES**

March 5, 2025

In accordance with *Code of Virginia* §23.1-307(E), requiring boards of visitors to hold public comment sessions prior to acting on any proposed increase in undergraduate tuition or mandatory fees, an ad hoc committee of Virginia Tech's Board of Visitors met in open session on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, in a virtual meeting that was livestreamed for the public on YouTube.

Present

Edward H. Baine (Rector)
Sandy C. Davis
Nancy Dye
William Holtzman
Donald Horsley
Anna L. James
Starlette Johnson
Letitia A. Long
Ryan D. McCarthy
John Rocovich
Jeanne Stosser

Also present were the following: President Timothy Sands, Kim O'Rourke (Secretary to the Board), Simon Allen, Al Cooper, Corey Earles, Kay Heidbreder, Tim Hodge, April Myers, Mark Owczarski, Lori Rose, Lisa Royal, Amy Sebring, Brennan Shepard, and Dee Dee Somervell.

During the public comment session, there were 42 concurrent viewers on YouTube and a total of 52 views.

Speakers: Ronnie Mondal (President of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate) and Alexander Efird (President of the Undergraduate Student Senate).

Rector Baine called the virtual meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. In accordance with *Code of Virginia* §23.1-307(D), a public notice of the proposed range of increase in tuition and fees was issued on February 21, 2025; the public notice included information about the public comment period. (Copy filed with permanent minutes and marked Attachment A.)

TUITION WORKSHOP

The meeting began with a 15-minute tuition workshop presented by Amy Sebring, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. Ms. Sebring's PowerPoint presentation covered affordability and financial aid to Virginia Tech students, student success rates, the level of state support, how state support and tuition revenue are used, and factors influencing tuition development, as well as proposed ranges for 2025-26 tuition and fee increases. (Copy filed with the permanent minutes and marked Attachment B.)

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

Following the presentation, Rector Baine called on Ms. O'Rourke to review the guidelines for the 30-minute public comment period. Each speaker was allotted three minutes to speak and were to limit their comments to the topic of tuition and fees.

Two individuals from the Virginia Tech community pre-registered to speak: the president of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate and the president of the Undergraduate Student Senate. During the meeting, no additional individuals signed up to speak. In total, two individuals gave public comments, and those speakers submitted typed versions of their comments to be entered into the public record. (Copy filed with the permanent minutes and marked Attachment C.)

The public comment session ended at 4:45 p.m.

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The public was also given the opportunity to submit written comments through March 17, 2025. The Board of Visitors is scheduled to take action on the proposed tuition and fees for 2025-26 at its next regular meeting on March 25, 2025. All public comments will be provided to the Board in preparation for that meeting and will become part of the public record.

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Edward H. Baine, Rector

Kim O'Rourke, Secretary

Board of Visitors to consider 2025-26 tuition and fees at March 25 meeting; virtual public comment opportunity scheduled for March 5

The Virginia Tech Board of Visitors will meet on Tuesday, March 25, at 1:15 p.m. in 2100 Torgersen Hall (620 Drillfield Drive, Blacksburg) to consider tuition and mandatory fees for the 2025-26 (FY26) academic year.

In advance of the March board meeting, Virginia Tech will provide a virtual public comment opportunity on Wednesday, March 5, at 4:00 pm. The link to observe this event or to pre-register to speak will be posted on the [Board of Visitors website](#). Several members of the Board of Visitors will participate virtually as university officials provide an overview of proposed tuition and fees ranges and to receive public comment consistent with [guidelines](#) posted to the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors website.

Tuition and fees support the university's major strategic initiatives - Virginia Tech Global Distinction and the Virginia Tech Advantage - and serve as the primary source of operating revenue for delivering programs to our students. Tuition and fees are set in the context of university cost drivers and available state funding. Over the last several years, the board has prioritized the affordability of a Virginia Tech degree while making targeted investments that enhance the value of a Virginia Tech education to both students and the Commonwealth and continue to position the university as a leader in teaching, research, and outreach.

With a heightened focus on student affordability, the university launched the Virginia Tech Advantage program which leverages state, philanthropic, and university resources to reduce unmet financial need and increase support for students' basic needs, career preparation, and transformational learning experiences. In addition to the Virginia Tech Advantage, the university continues to mitigate tuition increases through the strategic alignment of incremental state funding, cost containment strategies, administrative efficiencies, and internal reallocations to maximize available resources.

As a result of these continued efforts, the Board has been able to limit the cumulative in-state undergraduate tuition increase to just 14% over the last five years while inflation has increased 23%. This was achieved while making a sustained commitment to advancing first-generation and low-income student enrollment, increasing institutional support for student financial aid, and advancing critical initiatives that enhance Virginia Tech's mission as a leading global land-grant institution.

For FY26, the university administration is modeling increases in tuition and Educational and General (E&G) fees from 0 to 2.9 percent, which is below the 4.9 percent increase included in the university's six-year plan approved by the Board of Visitors in November. Through Funds for the Future, Virginia Tech will provide incremental aid to undergraduate families with incomes below \$115,000, sheltering them from tuition and fee increases in FY26. The university administration will also recommend increases between \$0 and \$186 for mandatory non-E&G fees to support mandated cost increases including employee compensation and benefits, support for Intercollegiate Athletics, and sustaining and enhancing student services including the transit system and student health/counseling services.

Virginia Tech maintains the lowest mandatory non-E&G fees among public four-year institutions in the Commonwealth.

March 5 public comment guidelines

Following an overview of proposed tuition and fees ranges at the March 5 virtual event, there will be an opportunity for public comment. Those interested in participating in the virtual public comment event must pre-register at the [Board of Visitors website](#) on a first-come, first-served basis **no later than Wednesday, February 26**. Speakers will be asked to specify their affiliation with the university (current student, parent, alumnus, faculty or staff, member of the public).

The public comment period will be held for 30 minutes with the option to increase up to a total of 60 minutes if there is sufficient demand. If time remains during the half-hour public comment period after the pre-registered speakers offer their comments, additional speakers may be offered the opportunity to speak during the remaining time. For those wishing to speak who did not pre-register, requests may be submitted via email to yppg@vt.edu between 4:00 and 4:45 p.m. on March 5.

In addition, there will be dedicated time slots for a representative from the Undergraduate Student Senate and from the Graduate and Professional Student Senate to provide a statement on behalf of their respective constituency. This does not preclude individual students from registering to speak during the public comment period or from providing written comments.

Each speaker will be limited to three minutes and must restrict their comments to tuition and fees only. Speakers wishing to have their comments entered in the public record must submit a typed copy via email to bov@vt.edu by March 17.

If you are an individual with a disability and desire an accommodation, please send an email to vppg@vt.edu or call 540-231-6232 during regular business hours at least 10 days prior to the event.

The March 5 virtual budget workshop and public comment session will also be live streamed for those who wish to observe (without offering comment). The link will be provided at the [Board of Visitors website](#). However, those wishing to make comments must register in accordance with the instructions above.

Guidelines for written comments

In lieu of oral comments, written comments may be entered online at the [Board of Visitors website](#) or mailed to:

Kim O'Rourke
Secretary to the Board of Visitors
Virginia Tech (MC 0125)
800 Drillfield Drive
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Written comments must be received by Monday, March 17.

TUITION & FEE PUBLIC HEARING

AMY SEBRING,
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

March 5, 2025





VIRGINIA TECH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Virginia Tech Advantage

Embodies our land-grant mission by bridging financial gaps for students, ensuring steady degree progress, and fostering holistic student success

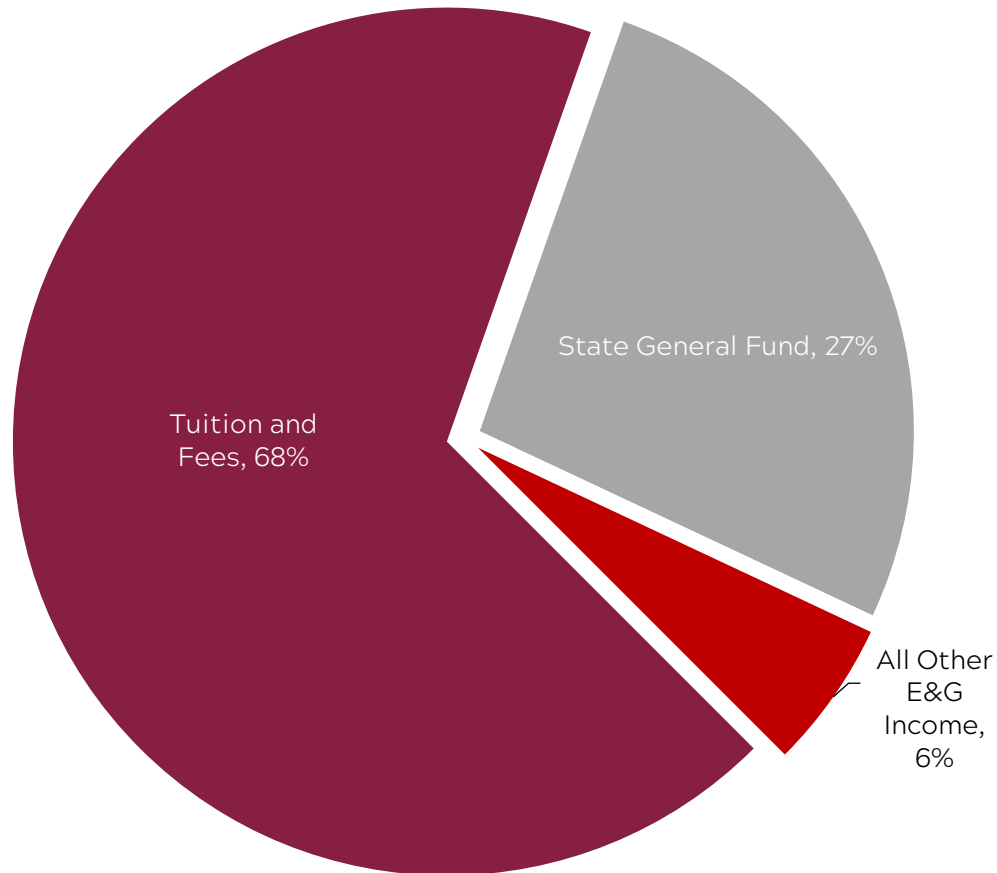
Global Distinction

A commitment to institutional excellence across research, teaching, and engagement that makes Virginia Tech a destination for the best faculty, students, and partners from Virginia, the nation, and the world

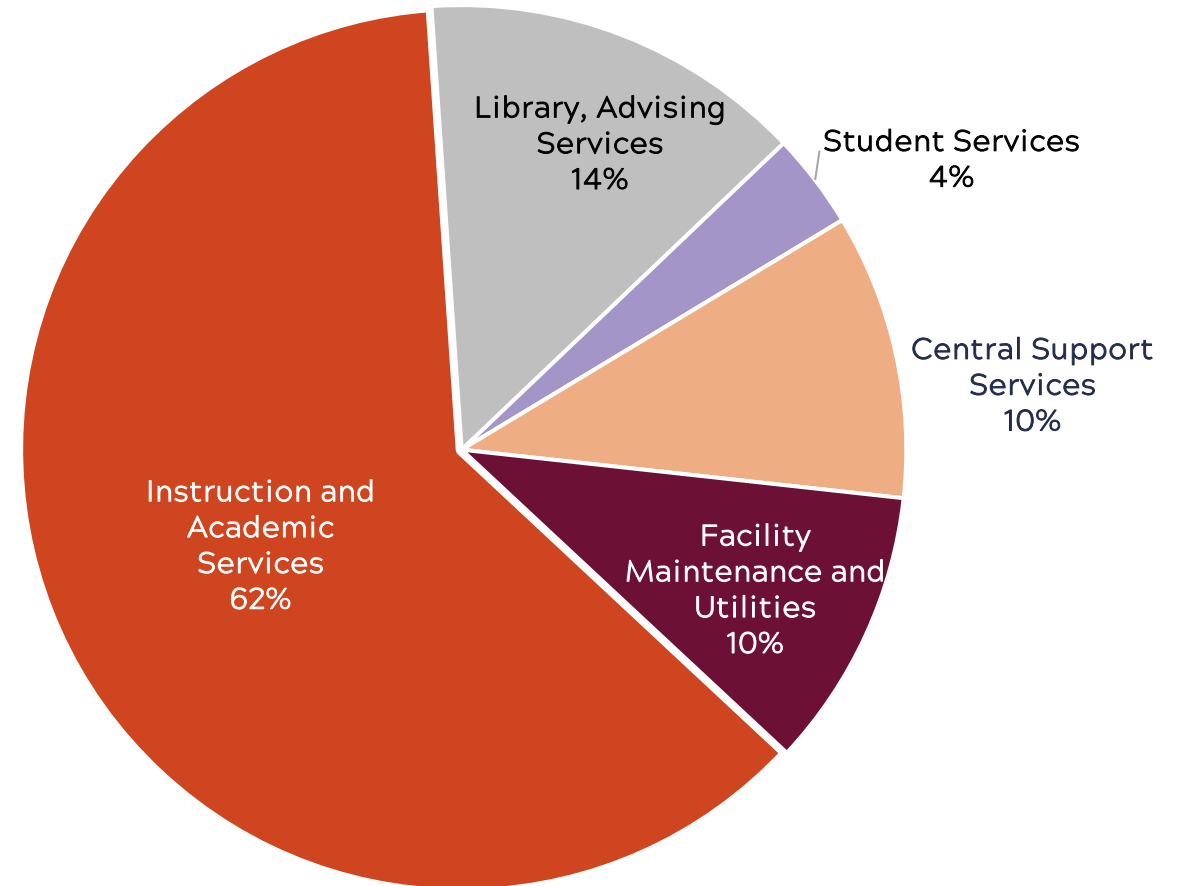
Tuition Drives Our Ability to Deliver Educational Programs

Educational & General Program

Revenue (sources)

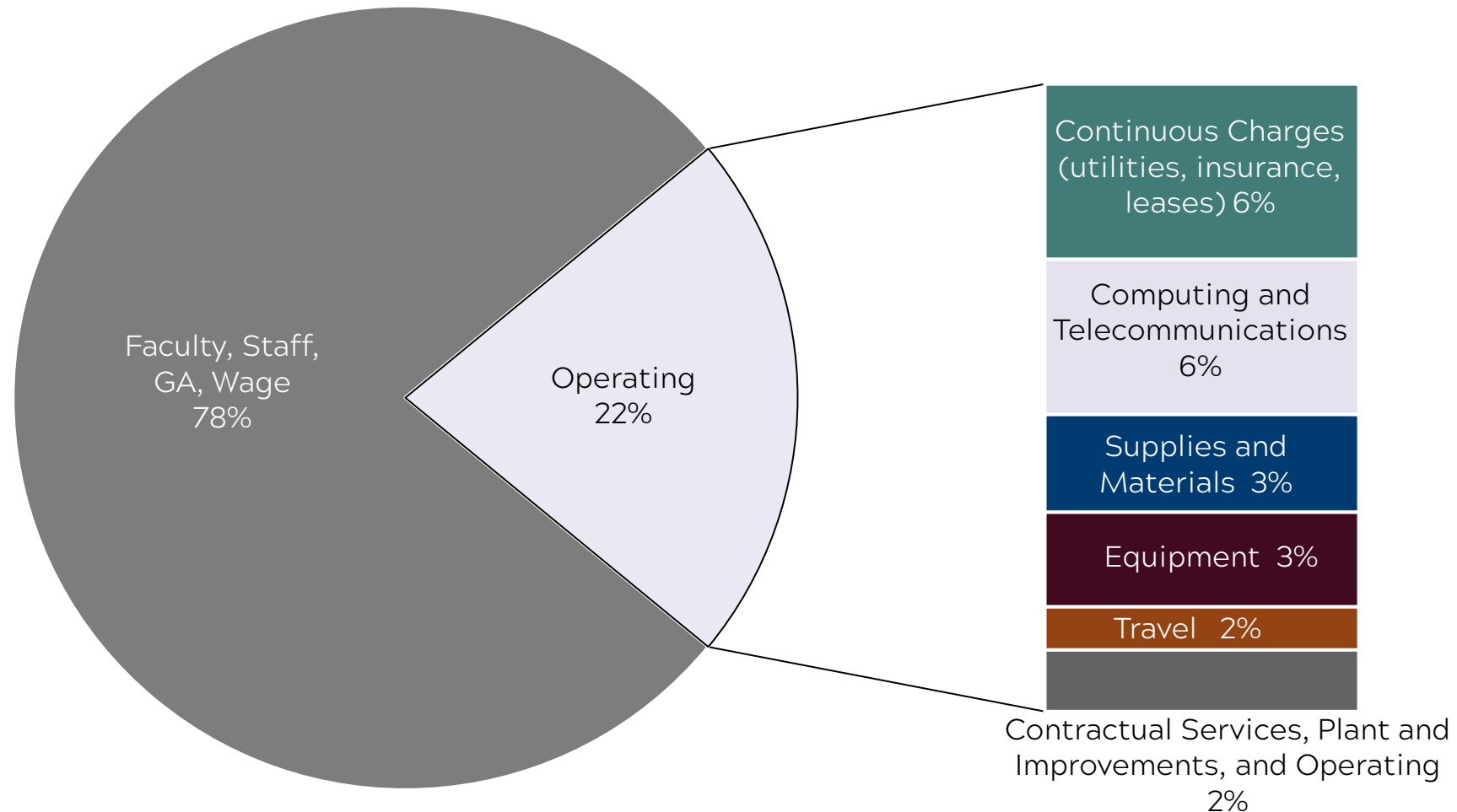


Expenditure by Function (uses)



Higher Education is People-intensive

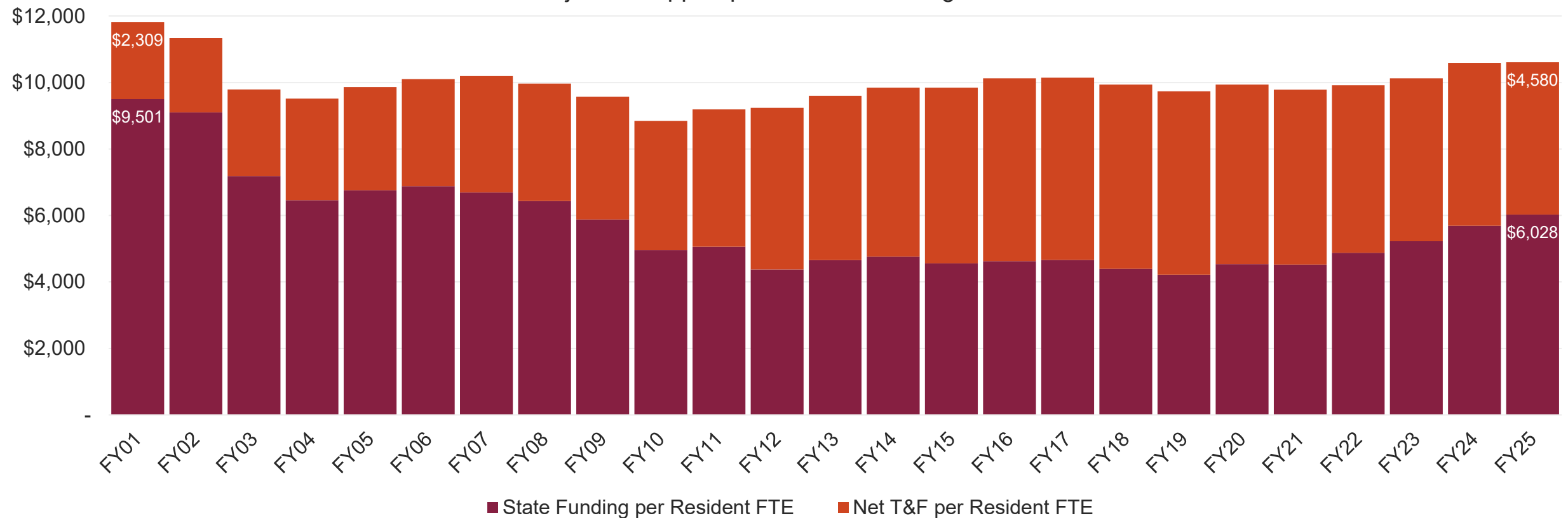
Personnel account for 78% of E&G costs



State Funding is a Critical Partner

- The Commonwealth subsidizes the cost of Virginia resident undergraduate education
- State support has evolved over time, shifting the burden to students/families
- Despite recent state investments, adjusted for inflation, the university receives \$3,473 less state support per resident student than in 2000

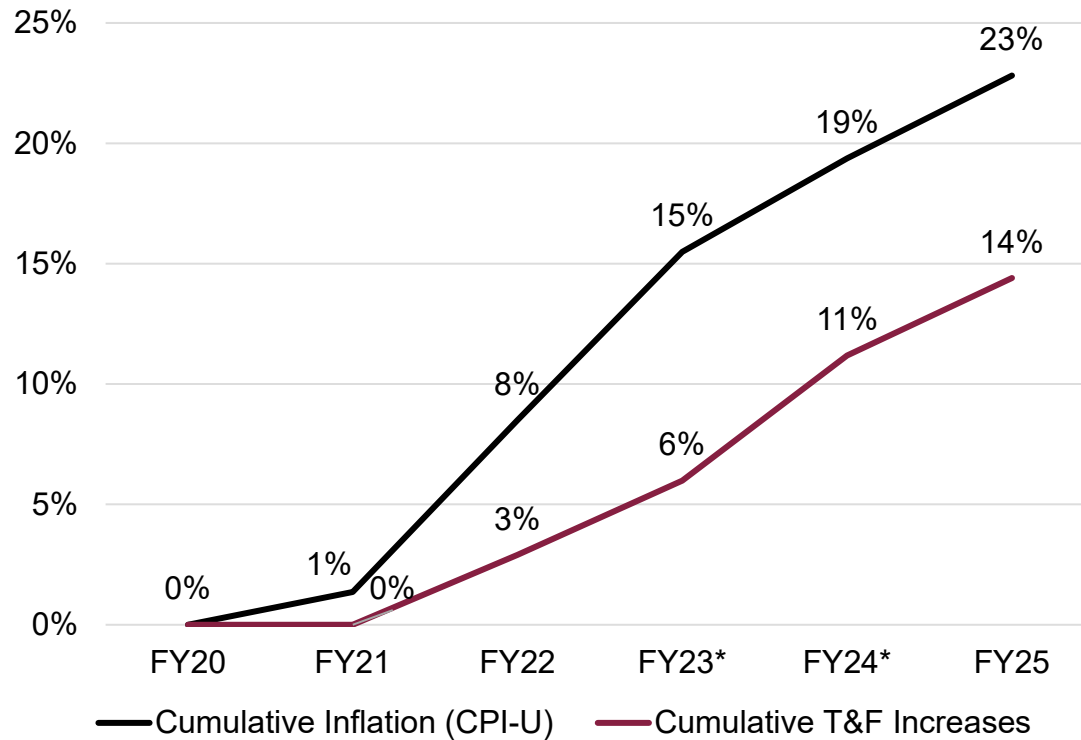
Inflation Adjusted Support per Resident Undergraduate Student



Since FY20 Cumulative Tuition Increases Have Been Below Inflation

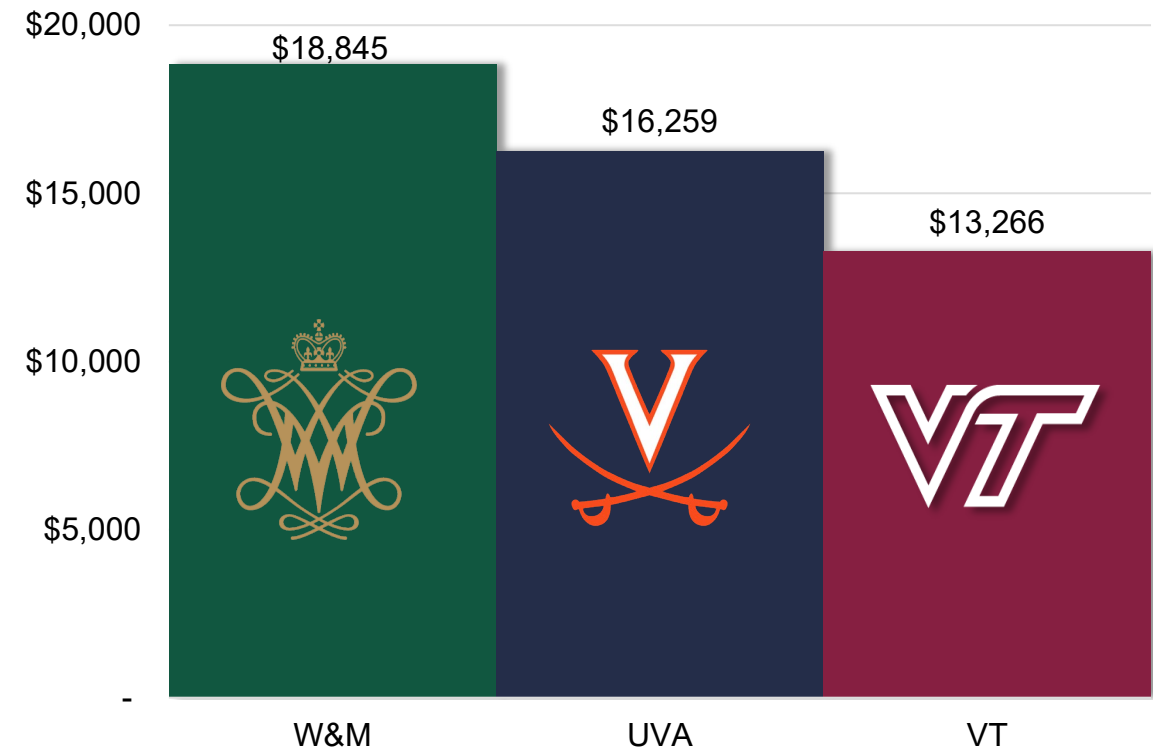
- Over the past five years:
 - Consumer Price Index (inflation) has increased **23%**
 - In-State undergraduate tuition has increased just **14%**

Virginia Tech In-State Tuition vs. Inflation
FY20-FY25



* FY23 and FY24 In-state increase offset by one-time tuition mitigation scholarships.

Virginia Public Four-Year Institutions
FY25 In-State Undergraduate Tuition & E&G Fees



Excludes program fees.

Virginia Tech Advantage Expands Commitment to Affordability

Virginia Tech Advantage

- At scale, Virginia Tech Advantage will add \$51.5 million annually in need-based gift aid.
- The 10-year fundraising goal of \$500 million goal
 - \$400 million in endowed scholarships
 - \$50 million in current-use scholarships
 - \$25 million in endowed funds and another \$25 million in current-use funds to meet:
 - basic needs such as food insecurity and emergency funds
 - support internships and enhance career preparation
 - offer transformational learning experiences including study abroad and undergraduate research
- Private funds will leverage institutional and governmental support

Undergraduate Scholarships and Aid

- Virginia Tech provided \$196 million in FY24, of which \$91 million was need-based aid

Funds for the Future

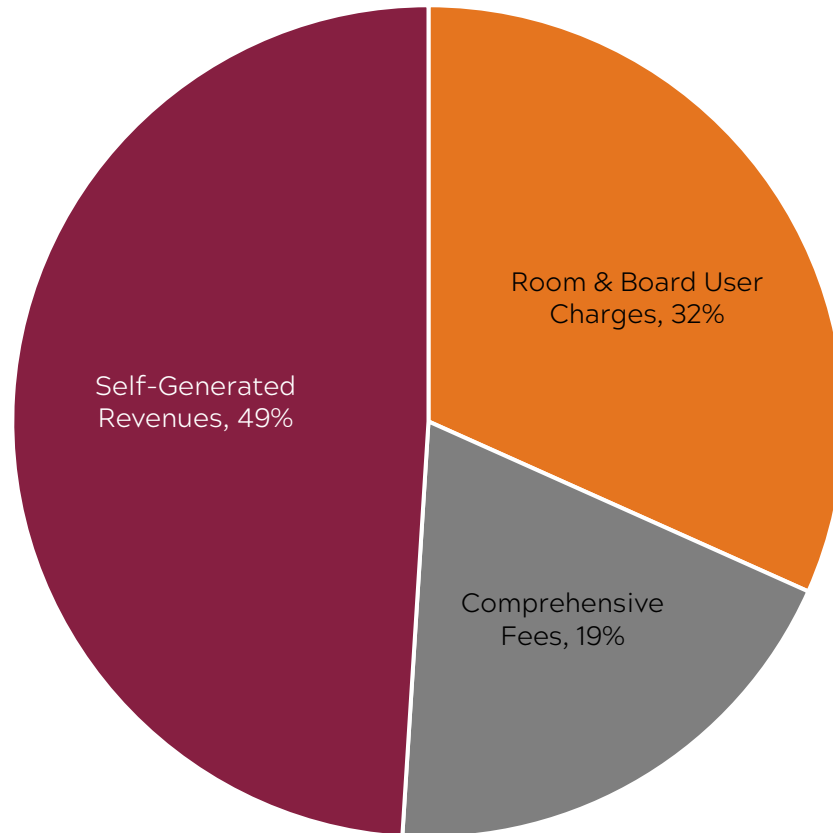
- Offsets tuition and fee increases for continuing undergraduates whose family income is \$115,000 or less, ensuring they do not experience a net price increase over four years

Factors in Setting Tuition

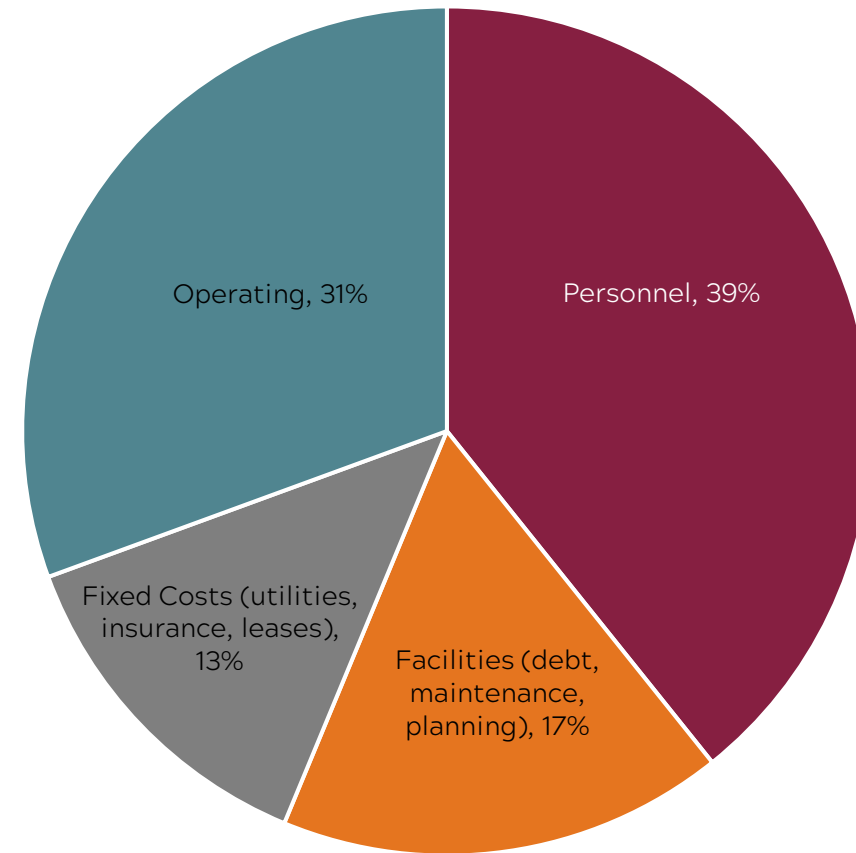
- Compensation (State requires the university to cover 62% of the cost of state-mandated compensation programs for E&G programs)
 - 78% of E&G expenses are personnel
 - Faculty, staff, graduate assistants, and wage employees
 - Competition for talent is increasing, raising labor costs
- State mandated costs including health care, retirement, property insurance, and codified waivers
- Level of recurring base funding from the state
- Unavoidable inflationary costs including utilities, insurance, leases, facility maintenance, and subscriptions
- Maintenance of academic quality
- Internal strategic reinvestments and efficiency gains

Comprehensive Fee is an Important Source of Auxiliary Enterprise Funding

Revenue (sources)



Expenditures (uses)



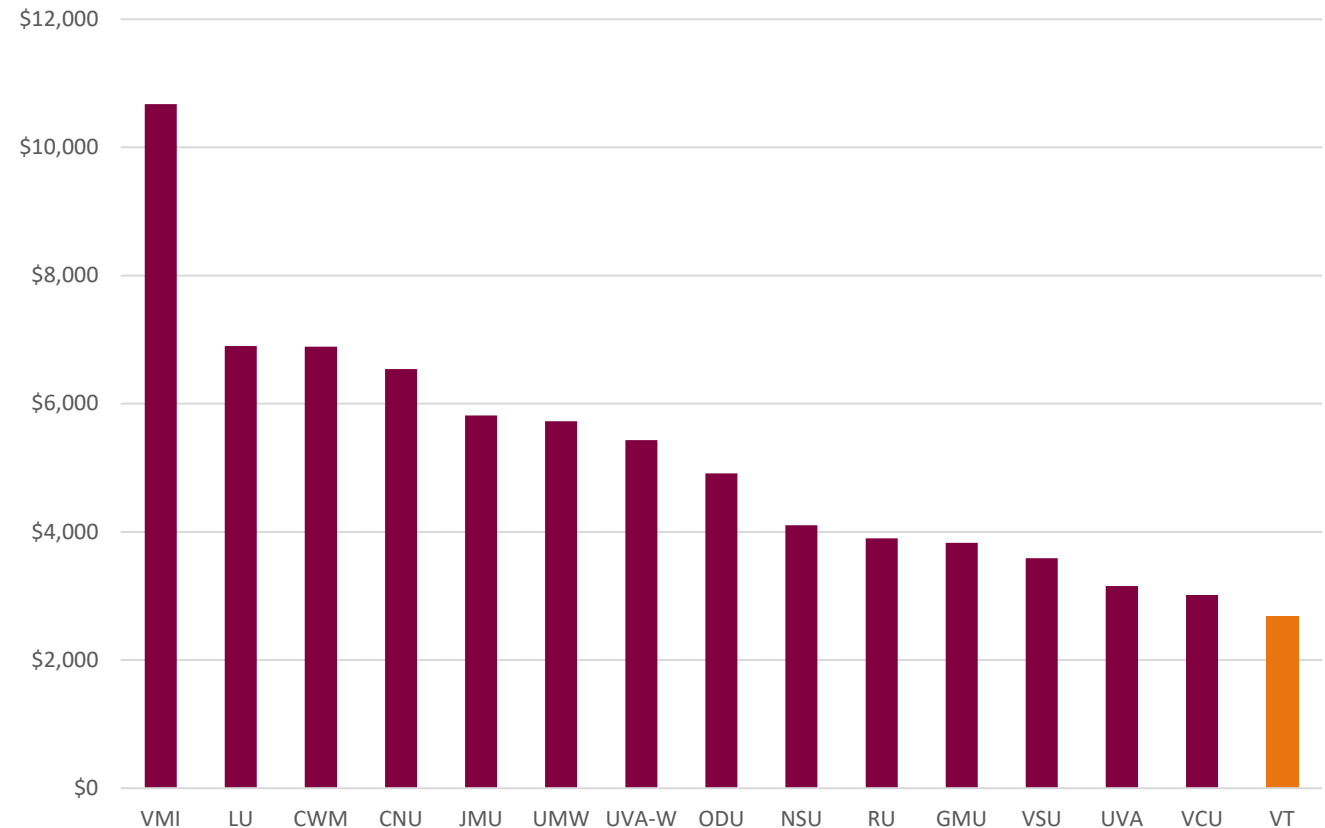
Auxiliary Programs Provide Key Support Services

The Comprehensive Fee supports:

- **Student Health**
 - Student health & counseling services
- **Student Activities**
 - Student activities, centers, & organizations
- **Student Services**
 - Transportation programs
 - Wireless service
- **Athletics**
 - Intercollegiate athletics
- **Recreational Sports**
 - Recreational programs, sports clubs, & facilities

Factors influencing fee development include state compensation and benefits, inflationary costs, health and counseling, transit operations, and facility maintenance.

VT has the lowest Comprehensive Fee of Virginia's public four-year institutions.



Ranges for 2025-26 Tuition and Fee Increases

	2025-26
Virginia Undergraduate Tuition	0% - 2.9%
Nonresident Undergraduate Tuition	0% - 2.9%
Virginia Graduate Tuition	0% - 2.9%
Nonresident Graduate Tuition	0% - 2.9%
Comprehensive Fee	\$0 - 186

Student Success is Key to Return on Investment

Strong Undergraduate Graduation Rate

- 4-year: 70%
- 6-year: 86%

3.9 years average time-to-degree

- Shorter time lowers student cost
- Seven of eight colleges below 4 years



\$70,000 - Median starting salary of 2023 graduates

VIRGINIA TECH: VALUE AND QUALITY

Attachment B

Top 20

Best Colleges in U.S. - *Wall Street Journal/Pulse*

Top 25

Best Public Schools - *U.S. News & World Report*

Top 150

Best Value Schools - *U.S. News & World Report*

Top 300

World University Ranking - *Times Higher Education*



- Written comments will continue to be accepted through March 17
- All comments will be made available to the Board of Visitors prior to consideration of undergraduate and graduate tuition and fees

PUBLIC COMMENT

Honorable Members of the Board of Visitors,

Thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Ronnie Mondal, and I serve as the President of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate. I am here to voice the urgent concerns of Virginia Tech's graduate students regarding student fees and tuition.

Graduate students conduct research, teach courses, and support the university's mission of innovation and excellence. Yet, we continue to struggle financially. Our stipends remain below a living wage, and increasing tuition and fees will only worsen this crisis.

Our comprehensive fees have already increased. Most of our assistantships do not cover these fees—we must pay them out of pocket from our already stretched stipends. A further increase would amount to an effective **pay cut**, making graduate education more inaccessible.

This comes at a time of immense financial uncertainty. Inflation continues to rise, with costs for housing, healthcare, groceries, and childcare outpacing our stipends. Many of us have families and dependents to take care of. A fee increase will push many to take on additional jobs or even debt.

Coupled with shifts in research funding priorities, visa policies, and economic conditions, many students, especially international students, are unsure about their financial stability and future career prospects. A financial burden will make Virginia Tech a less attractive option for top talent and directly impact our reputation and ability to remain a leading research institution.

I urge you to consider alternative funding sources rather than placing the burden on graduate students who are already struggling to make ends meet. We ask that you **freeze student fees and tuition**, at least for this coming year, to prevent further hardship. Instead of increasing financial strain, let's work together to create long-term solutions that support students and strengthen Virginia Tech's research and educational mission.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Good afternoon, everyone,

My name is Alexander Efird, and I am here representing the 31,035 undergraduate students here on campus as President of the Undergraduate Student Senate, our undergraduate student body government.

You have most likely heard, and will continue to hear from, many students on their own perspectives, but I wanted to provide you all some quick thoughts on what I've gathered from speaking with many of my fellow students.

First, I want to commend the Board for their efforts in past years to limit tuition and fee increases for students. While we've seen peer institutions in the Commonwealth and beyond heavily increase the financial burden that students face year-after-year, we've been fortunate here at Virginia Tech to see little to no increases in the cost of our educations.

In conversations I have with my fellow students, tuition and fees are always front-of-mind. As you would expect, the vast majority of students support keeping the current tuition and fees levels for the next academic year. One of the major concerns I hear from students every day is the financial burden they face because of tuition and fee costs. When students have to face these challenges, it can affect their social lives and their ability to join some of the over 800 clubs that we have here on campus. In some instances, students are so stressed that they cannot devote the attention needed to their schoolwork, leading to missed assignments and poor grades.

However, many of us understand that with the rising costs of living and operations expenses we all face, small increases may be inevitable. Yet, when the cost of education becomes less affordable, we all suffer. Students who are not privileged or who don't come from affluent backgrounds may be more inclined to reduce their involvement here on campus or may even take a step back from college entirely. That can deprive our Virginia Tech community from some incredible knowledge and perspectives that make us stronger as a whole.

That is why I also emphasize the financial aid programs that are at the disposal of students. These programs give students who lack the resources to achieve a full college education with the opportunity to do so. I've spoken with numerous students here on campus who have taken advantage of these programs, and they are all doing incredible things in their respective fields and will go on to represent the Virginia Tech name with pride and distinction. Continuing to expand these programs, including the Virginia Tech Advantage, will only enhance the quality of our community here at Virginia Tech and will provide students with the resources they need to be successful and accomplish great things.

Thank you all so much for your time.