

GUIDELINES FOR VIRGINIA TECH PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON TUITION/FEE INCREASES

Code of Virginia, §23.1-307(D) – No governing board of any public institution of higher education shall approve an increase in undergraduate tuition or mandatory fees without providing students and the public a projected range of the planned increase, an explanation of the need for the increase, and notice of (i) the date, time, and location of the meeting at which public comment is permitted on the institution’s website and through any other standard means of communication utilized by the institution with students at least 10 days prior to such meeting and (ii) the date and location of any vote on such increase at least 30 days prior to such vote.

Code of Virginia, §23.1-307(E) – Prior to any vote referenced in subsection D, the governing board of each public institution of higher education shall permit public comment on the proposed increase at a meeting, as that term is defined in §2.2-3701, of the governing board. Each such governing board shall establish policies for such public comment, which may include reasonable time limitations.

- Virginia Tech will hold a budget workshop for the public followed by a public comment period whenever any type of tuition increase is proposed, including but not limited to in-state, out-of-state, undergraduate, graduate, and differential tuition rates for specific programs. This workshop/public comment period will be held at least 10 days after the date that the public notice is given of the range of the tuition/mandatory fee increase and during the 30-day window between the public notice and the Board’s vote on tuition and fees. Public notice for these meetings will be given as required by law.
- At least three BOV members will be present for the public comment period, including at a minimum the Rector or Vice Rector and members of the Finance and Resource Management Committee.
- The workshop will begin with a presentation delivered by the university administration that gives the background and history of the university’s tuition and fees and factors considered in developing the proposed percentage change and will be followed by a public comment period.
- Speakers must pre-register on a first-come, first-served basis for the public comment period with the Board Secretary at least 7 days in advance. Speakers will be asked to specify their affiliation with the university, e.g, current student, parent, alum, faculty/staff, member of the public.
- Following the public presentation, the public comment period would be held for 60 minutes. If time remains during the one-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.
- 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 is limited to 3 minutes and must restrict their comments to tuition and fees only. Speakers wishing to have their comments entered in the public record must bring a typed copy.
- In lieu of oral comments, written comments will be accepted from the date that the public notice is issued until 7 days prior to the meeting at which the BOV considers tuition and fee increases and may be submitted in hard copy, via mail, or online. Instructions for doing so will be included in the public notice.
- The BOV will not respond to oral or written comments.
- The BOV periodically will review these public comment guidelines, re-evaluate the time allotted for public comment based on demand, and modify the guidelines as appropriate.