

# Tuition and Fee Public Comment

**Policy Type:** Local - Board of Visitors  
**Responsible Office:** Office of the President  
**Initial Policy Approved:** NEW  
**Current Revision Approved:** 12/13/2019

## Policy Statement and Purpose

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Investment in the learning experience of students and the future of education is the most important issue facing Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and all American institutions of higher education. The costs associated with earning a college degree remains a critical component requiring further examination and inclusion of all voices, in particular, the student voice. This issue is important to the governing Board and university senior leadership members; to that end, it is a priority to maintain the highest levels of transparency and integrity in the setting of tuition and fees. As an accountability measure, notice of a public comment period at the Board of Visitors' budget workshop meeting will be provided. This will be utilized as an opportunity for the leadership and governance functions of VCU to make the most informed decisions concerning the budget and tuition and fee increases.

This policy codifies the university's commitment and provides detailed information as to what can be expected related to notice of meetings and opportunities for public comment in the procedures section. Specifically,

- No approval for an increase in undergraduate tuition or mandatory fees shall be brought to a vote without providing students and the public a projected range of the planned increase, an explanation of the need for the increase, and notice of the date and location of any vote on such increase at least 30 days prior to such vote.

The Virginia Commonwealth University Board of Visitors (BOV) holds a budget workshop each fiscal year to discuss the upcoming fiscal year's budget, including any proposed / needed tuition and fee increases. The workshop is an informational meeting designed to review and explain the upcoming budget and any changes to tuition and fees. No final decisions are made nor actions taken at this meeting. Typically a vote to

approve the budget, including any tuition and fee increases, occurs at the next sequential BOV meeting which is usually at the May BOV meeting.

The BOV has determined that public comment will be permitted at the end of the budget workshop or other Board informational meeting designed to review and explain any tuition and fee increases. The parameters for making public comments for consideration whether in person or submitted in advance are included in the procedures section.

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## **Who Should Know This Policy**

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All members of the VCU Board of Visitors are responsible for knowing the contents of this policy. The President and staff of the Office of the President must be familiar with its contents and provisions as well as any other individual.

## **Definitions**

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Undergraduate tuition refers to the base undergraduate tuition applicable to the majority of students. Rates for both resident and non-resident students will be included. Mandatory fees refers to those fees required of all students such as the library fee, technology fee, university fee, student health fee, and activity fee. Fees relating to specific programs or courses are excluded here.

## **Contacts**

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The BOV, by and through its Governance and Compensation Committee, officially

interprets this policy. The Office of the President is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions and questions regarding this policy should be directed to this Office.

## **Policy Specifics and Procedures**

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The informational meeting, designed for discussion, (typically the budget workshop) will include a one (1) hour public comment session at the end of the meeting wherein the BOV will receive comments from any individual on matters pertaining to Virginia Commonwealth University's budget and any potential tuition and fee increases.

Specifics:

Each speaker will be allotted three (3) minutes to comment.

Priority is given to speakers who register on, or before noon, the day before the meeting by providing the following information via email sent to [bov@vcu.edu](mailto:bov@vcu.edu):

- a. name,
- b. email or phone number,
- c. VCU affiliation, (e.g. student, faculty, employee, alumni, parent, or member of the public)
- d. and request for reasonable accommodation.

This information is needed in the event a meeting is canceled or re-scheduled for an unanticipated or unavoidable reason. An in-person sign-up sheet will also be available at the meeting should time remain after registrants provide their comments.

Due to concerns for capacity, technical limitations or difficulties and information security, audio/visual presentations are not permitted. However, speakers may bring and disseminate written materials during their respective time and are requested to provide two (2) copies of any written materials to the Assistant Board Secretary. Speakers are encouraged to also bring a sufficient number of copies to provide to each member of the BOV.

Individuals unable to attend the public comment period in person, or provide comment during the allotted 1 hour period are permitted to provide written comment via an Open Comment Portal from the date of the budget workshop until two weeks prior to the sequential meeting (typically the May BOV meeting) at which tuition and fees will be voted upon.

The portal can be found at: <https://president.vcu.edu/board/open-comment-portal/>

## **Forms**

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Public Comment Portal: <https://president.vcu.edu/board/open-comment-portal/>

## **Related Documents**

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[Code of Virginia, §2.2-3701](#)  
[Code of Virginia, §23.1-307\(D\) - \(E\)](#)

## **Revision History**

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None - This is a new policy.

## **FAQ**

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### **1. Why do I have to register to participate in the public comment period?**

Registering is not required, however in the interest of planning and maximizing the time within the meeting, preference will be given on a first come first serve basis to those who have registered, allotting the maximum amount of permitted time for each registrant. After all registrants have been given their time opportunity, the individuals who signed up the day of the meeting will be given opportunity in the order of first come, first serve. In addition should it be necessary to postpone the meeting it will provide a means to advise the registrant of same.

### **2. Who can I contact if I have problems registering?**

Contact the VCU Board Liaison. Please see <https://president.vcu.edu/board/> for the contact information for the Board Liaison.