



# Agenda Book

## May 11-12, 2026

Location:

Hampden-Sydney College



## May 11-12, 2026, Council Meeting Schedule of Events

Hampden-Sydney College  
Farmville, VA 23943

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### May 11, 2026

**11:00 – 2:45**

**Academic Affairs Committee**

**Bortz Library, The Cabell Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor**

(Working lunch provided for Council and staff)

[Section I on the agenda](#)

Committee members: Steven Taylor (Chair), Jason El Koubi, Lindsay Fryer, Raymond Haynes, Cheryl Oldham, Doug Straley

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**1:00 – 2:45**

**Resources and Planning Committee**

**Bortz Library, Room 200, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor**

[Section II on the agenda](#)

Committee members: John Olsen (Chair), Walter Curt, William Harvey, Thaddeus Holloman, Charlie King, Delceno Miles

**3:00 – 5:00**

**Joint SCHEV, Private College Advisory Board (PCAB) Meeting**

[Section III on the agenda](#)

**Bortz Library, 4<sup>th</sup> floor Lecture Area**

**5:15 – 6:00**

**Reception**

**Bortz Library Outdoor Space** (weather permitting)

**6:00 – 7:30**

**Dinner**

**Pannill Commons** (short walk from Bortz Library, transportation available for those who require assistance)

### May 12, 2026

**8:00 – 9:00**

**Breakfast available**

**Bortz Library, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Lecture Area**

**9:00 – 12:00**

**Council Meeting**

**Bortz Library, 4<sup>th</sup> floor Lecture Area**

[Section IV on the agenda](#)

**12:00 – 2:00**

**Closed Session to Discussion Personnel Matters**

**Bortz Library, The Cabell Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor**

(Boxed lunches available for Council and staff)

**NEXT MEETING:** July 21, 2026  
Blue Ridge Community College



<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Schedule of Events</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>I. Academic Affairs Committee, Monday, May 11, 11 am, Walter Bortz Library, The Cabell Room, 4th Floor</b>	
<b>A. Call to Order, 11:00 am.</b> Presenter: Dr. Taylor	
<b>B. Action on Proposals for New Degree Programs at Public Institutions (working lunch included), 11:05 am.</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>C. Action to Reconsider a Prior Action: Whether to Remove Conditions on an Approved Degree Program at a Public Institution, 2:05 pm.</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>D. Discussion of Council's Duty for Assessment of Student Learning, 2:15 pm.</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>E. Receipt of Report of the Staff Liaison to the Academic Affairs Committee, 2:40 pm.</b> Presenter: Dr. Edwards	<b>72</b>
<b>F. Motion to Adjourn, 2:45 pm.</b> Presenter: Dr. Taylor	
<b>II. Resources &amp; Planning Committee, Monday, May 11, 1pm., Walter Bortz Library, Room 200, 2nd Floor</b>	
<b>A. Call to Order, 1:00 pm.</b> Presenter: Ms. Miles	
<b>B. Update on Designated Institutions' Progress Regarding Institutional Performance Standards, 1:05 pm.</b> Presenter: Ms. Minnis-McClain	<b>79</b>
<b>C. Update on Six-Year Planning Process, 1:30 pm.</b> Presenter: Dr. Khattar	<b>82</b>
<b>D. Update on Major Projects Impacting the Resources &amp; Planning Committee in 2026, 1:45 pm.</b> Presenter: Mr. Andes	<b>85</b>
<b>E. Update on Pell Initiative, 2:10 pm.</b> Presenters: Mr. Andes, Ms. Dreis	<b>91</b>
<b>F. Update on Council Workgroup Process, 2:30 pm.</b> Presenters: Ms. Miles, Mr. King	<b>96</b>
<b>G. Motion to Adjourn, 2:45 pm.</b> Presenter: Ms. Miles	
<b>III. Private College Advisory Board Meeting, May 11, 3pm., Walter Bortz Library, 4th Floor Lecture Area, 3:00 pm.</b>	<b>100</b>



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<b>IV. Council Meeting. May 12, 9 am., Walter Bortz Library, 4th Floor Lecture Area</b>	
<b>A. Call to Order, 9:00 am.</b> Presenter: Ms. Miles	
<b>B. Approval of Minutes from the March 17 Committee of the Whole and the March 17 Council Meeting, 9:05 am.</b> Presenter: Ms. Miles	<b>101</b>
<b>C. Remarks from Hampden-Sydney College President, Larry Stimpert, 9:10 am.</b> Presenter: Dr. Stimpert	<b>115</b>
<b>D. Action on Proposed Priority Initiatives in Support of the Statewide Strategic Plan, 9:30 am.</b> Presenter: Ms. Salmon	<b>116</b>
<b>E. Action on Program Productivity Policy, 10:00 am.</b> Presenter: Dr. Taylor	<b>120</b>
<b>F. Discussion/ Possible Action on Federal Workforce Pell, 10:20 am.</b> Presenter: Mr. Andes	<b>141</b>
<b>G. Update on 2026 Legislative Session, 10:40 am.</b> Presenter: Mr. Andes	<b>144</b>
<b>H. Report from the Agency Director, 10:55 am.</b> Presenter: Mr. Fleming	<b>147</b>
<b>I. Report of the Academic Affairs Committee, 11:05 am.</b> Presenter: Dr. Taylor	
<b>J. Report of the Resources &amp; Planning Committee, 11:25 am.</b> Presenter: Ms. Miles	
<b>K. Receipt of Items Delegated to Staff, 11:40 am.</b> Presenter: Mr. Fleming	<b>150</b>
<b>L. Old Business, 11:45 am.</b> Presenter: Ms. Miles	
<b>M. New Business, Nominating Committee Recommendations, 11:50 am.</b> Presenter: Ms. Miles	
<b>N. Receipt of Public Comment, 12:00 pm.</b>	
<b>V. Closed Session to Discuss Personnel (The Cabell Room, 4th Floor), 12:05 pm.</b> Presenter: Ms. Miles	
<b>VI. Motion to Adjourn, 2:00 pm.</b> Presenter: Ms. Miles	

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** I.B – Academic Affairs Committee – Action on Proposals for New Degree Programs at Public Institutions

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2026

**Presenter:** Dr. Alan Edwards  
Director of Academic Affairs and Strategic Planning  
[alanedwards@schev.edu](mailto:alanedwards@schev.edu)

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

- No previous Council review/action  
 Previous review/action

**Date:** N/A

**Action:** N/A

**Purpose of the Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item is to present for Council consideration and action information regarding six degree programs proposed by five public institutions, in accord with Council's duty to "review and approve or disapprove all new undergraduate or graduate academic programs that any public institution of higher education proposes" (*Code of Virginia* § 23.1-203.5).

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

The following proposed degree programs are presented for Council action. Program Summaries are presented separately behind these cover pages.

- Longwood University, Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science (CIP: 30.7001)
- Longwood University, Master of Science (MS) in Information Technology (CIP: 11.1005)
- Virginia Commonwealth University, Bachelor of Science (BS) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering (CIP: 14.4201)
- University of Mary Washington, Master of Science (MS) in Artificial Intelligence in Business (CIP: 52.1399)
- College of William & Mary in Virginia, Master of Science (MS) in Nonprofit Management (CIP: 52.0206)
- George Mason University, Master of Science (MS) in Quantum Science and Engineering (CIP: 40.0810)

**Financial Impact:** See Program Summaries below.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** N/A

**Relationship to the Goals of *The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*:**

Council's consideration of this agenda item supports all three goals – student readiness; institutional responsiveness; and postsecondary relevance – as outlined in *Developing Tomorrow's Talent: The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*.

**Resolutions:** Resolutions for Council action on the proposals appear at the end of each of the six Program Summaries below.

**Longwood University**  
**Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science**  
**(CIP: 30.7001)**

**Degree Program Description**

Longwood University is proposing the creation of a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree program in Data Science to be initiated fall 2026. The proposed degree program would be located in the Cook-Cole College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science.

The proposed BS in Data Science would require 120 credit hours: 46 credit hours of core coursework including four credits for a capstone requirement; 39-40 credit hours for the Civitae core (general education); three to four credits in natural science or social science coursework; nine to 12 credit hours of restricted electives; and 18-23 credits of elective coursework.

LU provided information for the degree program description. According to LU's proposal:

The purpose of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Data Science degree program is to educate students to transform raw data into actionable, intelligible insights. The proposed degree program will provide students with an understanding of the algorithms and mathematical models relevant to data science. Students will learn about testing algorithms and models for validity and accuracy. Students will learn how to use machine learning to classify data and use models to predict trends. Students will learn the importance of clear and accurate communication of analytical results to technical and non-technical audiences. The proposed degree program will provide students with knowledge and skills that address a human-centered approach to data science, grounded in mathematical reasoning, computational techniques, and ethical data practices. Students will learn about technological approaches to modeling and displaying data while also learning about verifying processes and results, as well as communicating accurately to clients. The proposed program will produce graduates who possess the appropriate foundational knowledge and skills to apply principles and concepts of data science to visualize and coherently explain results and trends to industry clients.

The degree does not prepare students for a specific licensure or certification examination.

To address the “rapid growth and critical importance of data science occupations,”<sup>1</sup> the proposed degree program will equip students with the ability to handle all stages of the data lifecycle, from data acquisition and cleaning to advanced modeling, visualization, and interpretation. As such, graduates of the proposed degree program will be prepared for the “evolving nature of data science.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Virginia Office of Education Economics. (2026, March 27). *An Analysis of Data Science Occupations, Skills Demand, and Graduate Outcomes in Virginia*, p. 2. <https://voee.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Data-science-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Gunklach, J., Nadj, M., Michalczyk, S. *et al.* Beyond the Unicorn? Job Roles in Data Science. *Bus Inf Syst Eng* (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12599-025-00954-2>

## **Justification for the Proposed Degree Program**

### **Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand)**

LU provided information for justification. According to LU's proposal:

Data-driven decision-making is central to modern life, influencing everything from personal work schedules to state and national policies. Understanding how and why data is used, and ensuring its ethical application, is increasingly important. Data science combines mathematics, computer science, and statistics to extract insights from data of all sizes. As data generation grows rapidly across industries, demand for professionals with strong data science skills continues to rise. In response, the Virginia Department of Education adopted Data Science Standards of Learning in 2022.<sup>3</sup> However, a gap remains between high school coursework and industry expectations. A recent Gallup poll showed that “[f]inancial math and data science are two of the most-desired skills that managers have for their direct reports,”<sup>4</sup> while studies suggest well-aligned undergraduate data science programs can help bridge this gap and prepare students for workforce demands.<sup>5</sup>

The proposed BS in Data Science addresses workforce needs in the Commonwealth of Virginia and across the nation by expanding the pipeline of data science graduates. Capacity is built by educating and training future data science professionals through a comprehensive curriculum that integrates technical knowledge, applied learning, and industry-relevant skills. Industry professionals recognize that “data scientists will need more than technical skills, and they recommend that foundational skills, which include abstract thinking, problem-solving, human-centered design, and liberal arts education, be infused into the Data Science curriculum.”<sup>6</sup> By emphasizing hands-on experiences, interdisciplinary applications, and engagement with real-world data, the proposed degree program produces graduates who are equipped with the necessary technical skills and ethical boundaries to leverage the machinery of data science, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning.

### **Labor Market Considerations**

Virginia is an ideal location to start a career in data science. A recent Virginia Office of Education Economics report supports this assertion:

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<sup>3</sup> DataScience4everyone. (2024, January 18). *Virginia Levels Up in Data Science Education*.

<https://www.datascience4everyone.org/post/virginia-levels-up-in-data-science-education#:~:text=Data%20Science%20course%20development%20team%20to%20write.for%20a%20high%20school%20Data%20Science%20course>

<sup>4</sup> Gallup (2025) *Math Matters Study - The Value of Math in Work and Life*.

<https://www.gallup.com/analytics/658517/math-matters-research.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> Moghaddam, Y., Kwan, S., Freund, L., Russell, M.G. (2021). A Proposed Roadmap to Close the Gap Between Undergraduate Education and STEM Employment Across Industry Sectors. In: Leitner, C., Ganz, W., Satterfield, D., Bassano, C. (eds) *Advances in the Human Side of Service Engineering. AHFE 2021. Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems, vol 266*. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-80840-2\\_42](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-80840-2_42);

Gottipati, S., Shim, K., & Sahoo, S. (2021). Glassdoor Job Description Analytics – Analyzing Data Science Professional Roles and Skills. *2021 IEEE Global Engineering Education Conference (EDUCON)*. 1329-1336.

<https://doi.org/10.1109/EDUCON46332.2021.9453931>

<sup>6</sup> Li, D., & Milonas, E., & Zhang, Q. (2024, June), *Preparing Undergraduate Data Scientists for Success in the Workplace: Aligning Competencies with Job Requirements*. Paper presented at 2024 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition, Portland, Oregon. doi: 10.18260/1-2--47871

“This research underscores the rapid growth and critical importance of data science occupations, the diverse educational and career trajectories of professionals in the field, and the increasing prominence of AI-related skills. These findings can guide policymakers, educators, and workforce development leaders in aligning academic programs and training initiatives with labor market demands, ensuring Virginia remains a hub for data science talent.”<sup>7</sup>

Recommendations from the Virginia Chamber of Commerce’s (VCC) Blueprint Virginia 2030 highlight the growing demand for data-driven skills across industries, making a Bachelor of Science in Data Science increasingly essential. Input from over 7,000 leaders emphasizes that sectors such as technology, cybersecurity, manufacturing, transportation, and healthcare rely on data science, machine learning, and AI to drive innovation and efficiency. The plan also calls for stronger alignment between education and workforce needs.<sup>8</sup>

These needs are also part of the national conversation. The National Science Foundation’s Data Science Corps program is one such effort. The program “seeks to engage data science students in real-world data science implementation projects.”<sup>9</sup> The need for more data scientists is echoed by the National Institutes of Health Office of Data Science Strategy, whose most recent strategic plan for data science includes an objective to “Develop and Advance Initiatives to Expand the Data Science Workforce.”<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Ted Hallum of IBM shared, “If we talk about keeping the US competitive, for every one machine learning or data scientist the US produces, China produces nine...If we want to remain competitive over the next five, ten, 15, 20 years, we need to radically optimize our pipeline for people to learn these skills.”<sup>11</sup>

The proposed degree program develops theoretical understanding and computational skills in mathematics, statistics, and computer science necessary for data science work and research, in line with a recommendation to “cherish data science as an interdisciplinary field.”<sup>12</sup> The interdisciplinarity of an undergraduate degree program should be coupled with a recognition of dynamic technological changes in the field. Recognizing the increasing prevalence of artificial intelligence, the need for data scientists will continue. A Virginia Academy of

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<sup>7</sup> Virginia Office of Education Economics. (2025, March 11). *An analysis of data science occupations, skills demand, and graduate outcomes in Virginia*. <https://voee.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Data-science-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> The Virginia Chamber of Commerce. (2021). *Blueprint Virginia 2030: A Business Plan for the Commonwealth*. <https://vachamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/20211110-VACOC-BPVA2030-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> U.S. National Science Foundation. (2026, April 1). *Data Science Corps*. <https://www.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/dsc-data-science-corps>

<sup>10</sup> National Institutes of Health Office of Data Science Strategy. (2025, June 4). *NIH Strategic Plan For Data Science 2025 – 2030*. <https://datascience.nih.gov/sites/g/files/mnhszr336/files/2025-05/NIH%20Strategic%20Plan%20for%20Data%20Science%202025-2030.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> DataScience4everyone. (2024, January 18). *Virginia Levels Up in Data Science Education*. <https://www.datascience4everyone.org/post/virginia-levels-up-in-data-science-education#:~:text=Data%20Science%20course%20development%20team%20to%20write,for%20a%20high%20school%20Data%20Science%20course>

<sup>12</sup> Dogucu, M., Demirci, S., Bendekgey, H., Ricci, F. Z., & Medina, C. M. (2025). A systematic literature review of undergraduate data science education research. *Journal of Statistics and Data Science Education*, 33(4), 459-471. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/26939169.2025.2486656>

Science, Engineering, and Medicine report highlights this continued need for skilled humans in the world of AI:

“... AI still falls short, for instance, in its ability to adapt to new and unforeseen situations by transferring knowledge and skills learned in one domain to another...”<sup>13</sup>

Data science is deeply interconnected with AI. The proposed BS in Data Science provides analytical and interpretive capabilities to enhance AI as well as a human-centered approach to ensure that analysis and presentation of data can be communicated coherently and ethically. The increase in the need for workers skilled with AI is concurrent with “a substantial increase in the demand for skills seen as complementary to AI,”<sup>14</sup> which include analytical thinking, technical proficiency, and ethics. The interdependence between AI and data science, as well as the needs for both a strong foundation of statistical methods and data analysis for AI applications and an individual with both technical and ethical training in the field, makes it “clear that AI talent in statistics is increasingly leaning towards computer related capabilities like machine learning, data science, and data visualization.”<sup>15</sup>

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Data Science will provide students with a strong foundation in mathematical analysis, data interpretation and communication, and computing, ensuring that graduates can effectively support increasing organizational needs for data scientists.

## Employment Demand

Information about employment demand for occupations aligned to the proposed degree program is provided by the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) “Degree Program Labor Market Profile” report.

Tables A and B below provide five-year workforce projections for the occupations most closely aligned to the proposed Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science degree program. In both tables, the first column indicates the aligned occupations. The second column indicates the number of individuals employed in the occupation in 2024. The third column indicates the number of individuals projected to be employed in the occupation in 2029. The fourth column indicates the number of individuals projected to be added to the workforce by 2029 in comparison to the 2024 workforce.

Table B is specific to the institution’s Growth and Opportunity (GO) Virginia region. The localities in the GO Virginia region include the cities of Danville and Martinsville and the counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Patrick, Pittsylvania, and Prince Edward.

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<sup>13</sup> Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. (2024, October 8). *Technologies for powering Virginia’s data centers*. <https://vasem.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/White-Paper-Technologies-for-Powering-Virginias-Data-Centers.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Mäkelä, E., & Stephany, F. (2025). Complement or substitute? How AI increases the demand for human skills. *SSRN*, p. 2 <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5153230>

<sup>15</sup> Liu, J., Chen, K., & Lyu, W. (2024). Embracing artificial intelligence in the labour market: the case of statistics. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1-14.p.7 <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03557-6>

A) State Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Computer and Information Systems Managers	19,832	21,587	1,756	8.9%
Natural Sciences Managers	1,822	1,901	79	4.4%
Database Architects	6,865	7,076	211	3.1%
Software Developers	85,617	91,604	5,988	7.0%
Data Scientists	6,784	8,002	1,218	17.9%

B) Regional (GO Virginia) Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Computer and Information Systems Managers	139	160	21	14.9%
Natural Sciences Managers	25	26	2	6.2%
Database Architects	21	23	2	10.3%
Software Developers	379	443	64	16.8%
Data Scientists	57	72	15	26.0%

**Return on Investment**

Return on investment (ROI) information is provided by a calculation of ROI for graduate degree programs conducted by The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity. The data used in the ROI calculation classified degree programs at the four-digit CIP code level (for the proposed degree program, CIP code: 11.01). The ROI analysis was originally published in October 2021, and the data has not been updated.

No return on investment data were available for the proposed BS in Data Science.

## **Student Demand**

The summary of projected student enrollments for the proposed degree program predicts a headcount (HDCT) of five (5) in the program's first year (2026-2027), rising to a HDCT of 54 by the target year, 2030-2031. Enrollment projections predict a full-time equated student enrollment (FTES) of five (5) in the degree program's first year. The projections continue as follows: FTES 2027-28, 19; 2028-29, 32; and 2029-30, 45. LU anticipates 13 graduates per year beginning in 2030-31. If projections are met, then the proposed degree program will meet Council's existing productivity/viability standards within five years, as required.

LU indicates the assumptions for the projected student enrollment are: Retention rate: 80%; Full-time students: 100%. Part-time students: 0%. Full-time students graduate in four (4) years. Summer enrollment will not be required.

LU provided information to demonstrate student demand for the proposed degree program. According to LU's proposal:

Faculty in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science evaluated student demand for the proposed BS in Data Science from two sources of data: 1) a student survey of existing students without a declared major and 2) a student survey of prospective students.

### Student Survey of Existing Students

In September 2025, the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science sent an online survey to current Longwood freshmen or sophomore students who had not declared a major but were interested in STEM. The online survey remained open for three (3) weeks. Of the 18 students surveyed, three were received. One survey question is most relevant to student interest in the proposed data science degree program.

*Question: If Longwood University offered a Bachelor of Science degree in Data Science, I would be interested in majoring in Data Science.*

Undeclared students: 1 respondents "agreed"

### Student Survey of Prospective Students

In September 2025, the Office of Admissions sent an online survey to junior and senior high school students in the Commonwealth of Virginia with names drawn from Longwood's database of students who had expressed an interest in attending Longwood. The online survey remained open for three (3) weeks. Of the 2,324 students surveyed, 4 responses were from juniors and 26 responses were from seniors. Two of the survey questions are most relevant to student interest in the proposed data science degree program.

*Question: I am interested in majoring in Data Science.*

Juniors: 1 respondents "strongly agreed"

Seniors: 1 respondents "strongly agreed", 4 "agreed"

*Question: If Longwood University offered a Bachelor of Science degree in Data Science, I would be interested in attending Longwood and majoring in Data Science.*

Juniors: 1 respondents "strongly agreed"

Seniors: 2 respondents "strongly agreed", 5 "agreed"

### Duplication

Four (4) public institutions in Virginia offer a similar or a related degree program: Old Dominion University (ODU), the University of Virginia (UVA), Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), and The College of William & Mary in Virginia (William & Mary).

ODU offers a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science.

UVA offers a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science.

Virginia Tech offers a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Computational Modeling and Data Analytics.

William & Mary offers a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science.

LU provided student enrollment and completion data for public institutions in Virginia that currently offer degree programs with the same CIP code, or program names and/or curriculum requirements that are similar or related to the proposed degree program.

### Enrollments and Degrees Awarded at Comparable Degree Programs in Virginia

<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>	<b>Fall 2021</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>Fall 2023</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>
Old Dominion University	0	0	0	0	1
University of Virginia	0	0	0	0	75
Virginia Tech	0	577	607	596	691
William & Mary	38	93	124	140	179
<b>Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Old Dominion University	0	0	0	0	0
University of Virginia	0	0	0	0	0
Virginia Tech	0	174	173	158	138
William & Mary	8	35	49	52	72

### Projected Resources Needs for the Proposed Degree Program

Projected revenue from tuition and educational and general fees (E&G) would support the proposed degree program. LU's provost affirms the institution will not seek additional state resources to initiate and sustain the degree program.

## **Board Approval**

The LU Board of Visitors approved the proposed degree program on December 5, 2025.

## **Staff Feedback**

In the final proposal, LU did not fully address all feedback provided by staff regarding the original submission.

- In LU's final proposal, the total number of credit hours required for the proposed degree program does not align with the total credit hours for the course categories that comprise the program requirements.
- For LU's initial submission, staff feedback on the Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand) section indicated none of the sources quoted or cited provided information justifying the need for the proposed degree program at the level or in the discipline. In the final proposal, LU added information and sources. However, only one of the added sources indicates a need for more bachelor's degree programs in data science or more graduates with a bachelor's degree in data science.
  1. LU quoted two sources, a report from Gallup<sup>16</sup> and an article from DataScience4everyone,<sup>17</sup> both of which are about data science in K-12 education. The information is not relevant to the need for a bachelors-level degree program.
  2. LU quoted two sources about existing undergraduate data-science degree programs; however, neither source is relevant to the need for the proposed degree program. The conference paper by Li et al. (2024) is a justification of the curriculum design of an undergraduate data-science degree program.<sup>18</sup> The article by Dogucu et al. (2025) is a literature review of research about undergraduate data-science education.<sup>19</sup> Neither article identifies or demonstrates a need for additional bachelors-level degree programs in data science.
  3. Two sources quoted by LU are about disciplines other than the discipline of the proposed degree program and, therefore, do not justify the need for the proposed degree program. The article by Mäkelä & Stephany (2025) is about artificial intelligence.<sup>20</sup> The article by Liu et al. (2024) is about

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<sup>16</sup> Gallup (2025) *Math Matters Study - The Value of Math in Work and Life*.

<https://www.gallup.com/analytics/658517/math-matters-research.aspx>

<sup>17</sup> DataScience4everyone. (2024, January 18). *Virginia Levels Up in Data Science Education*.

<https://www.datascience4everyone.org/post/virginia-levels-up-in-data-science-education#:~:text=Data%20Science%20course%20development%20team%20to%20write,for%20a%20high%20school%20Data%20Science%20course>

<sup>18</sup> Li, D., & Milonas, E., & Zhang, Q. (2024, June), *Preparing Undergraduate Data Scientists for Success in the Workplace: Aligning Competencies with Job Requirements*. Paper presented at 2024 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition, Portland, Oregon. doi: 10.18260/1-2--47871

<sup>19</sup> Dogucu, M., Demirci, S., Bendekgey, H., Ricci, F. Z., & Medina, C. M. (2025). A systematic literature review of undergraduate data science education research. *Journal of Statistics and Data Science Education*, 33(4), 459-471. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/26939169.2025.2486656>

<sup>20</sup> Mäkelä, E., & Stephany, F. (2025). Complement or substitute? How AI increases the demand for human skills. *SSRN*. p. 2 <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5153230>

statistics.<sup>21</sup> Neither source identifies or demonstrates a need for a bachelors-level degree program in data science.

4. LU provided a quote from a report from the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine: "... AI still falls short, for instance, in its ability to adapt to new and unforeseen situations by transferring knowledge and skills learned in one domain to another..."<sup>22</sup> Staff could not locate the indicated quote in the referenced article. Further, the quote appears to be about artificial intelligence, which is not the discipline or a central focus of the curriculum of the proposed data-science degree program.
- The student demand survey is not valid for demonstrating student demand for the proposed degree program. One of the key survey questions was not phrased accurately. The survey asked students whether they "would ... be interested in majoring in data science." Prospective students should have been asked whether they "would enroll" in the proposed degree program if LU offered the degree program rather than, whether they "would ... be interested in majoring in data science," which is a statement of preference inconsequential to a plan to act. Being interested in a degree program is not synonymous with the intention to actually enroll in the degree program if the degree program is available.
  - LU provided data for student demand from two surveys. Of the 48 total responses, only three (3) prospective high school students indicated "strongly agree" to their interest in attending LU and majoring in data science. The number is low. This information does not indicate that students are demanding the proposed degree program. The lack of student demand also raises a question about the legitimacy of LU's projected student enrollments for the proposed degree program in the first five years.

### **Committee Action/Resolution**

Regarding the proposed degree program, the Committee possesses four (4) options: (i) act to approve, (ii) act to approve with condition(s), (iii) act to disapprove, or (iv) defer for action at a future meeting.

*If approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to Longwood University to initiate a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree program in Data Science (CIP code: 30.7001), effective fall 2026.**

*If approved with condition(s), amend the resolution above to include the condition(s), adopt the amended resolution and transmit it to Council.*

*If not approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

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<sup>21</sup> Liu, J., Chen, K., & Lyu, W. (2024). Embracing artificial intelligence in the labour market: the case of statistics. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1-14.p.7 <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03557-6>

<sup>22</sup> Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. (2024, October 8). *Technologies for powering Virginia's data centers*. <https://vasem.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/White-Paper-Technologies-for-Powering-Virginias-Data-Centers.pdf>

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia does not grant approval to Longwood University to initiate a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree program in Data Science (CIP code: 30.7001).

*If deferred for future action, instruct that the Minutes reflect the Committee's invoking of its prerogative/option to take no action at this meeting and to defer action until a future meeting.*

**Longwood University**  
**Master of Science (MS) in Information Technology**  
**(CIP: 11.1005)**

**Degree Program Description**

Longwood University is proposing the creation of a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Information Technology to be initiated fall 2026. The proposed degree program would be located in the College of Business and Economics, Department of Accounting, Economics, Finance, and Information Systems.

The proposed MS in Information Technology would require 30 credit hours: 18 credit hours of core coursework; six (6) credit hours in a track area; and six (6) credit hours of restricted electives.

LU provided information for the degree program description. According to LU's proposal:

The purpose of the proposed Master of Science in Information Technology degree program is to educate students to develop and communicate strategies to solve business problems in information technology. The proposed degree program will provide students with an understanding of information technology and information security in relation to organizational goals and challenges in those areas. Students will learn how to apply knowledge of cloud computing and business process redesign to improve business operations. Students will learn how to evaluate current and emerging technologies for risk and organizational advantage. The proposed degree program will provide students with knowledge and skills that address information technology challenges (e.g., governance and strategic planning, data privacy). The proposed program will produce graduates who possess the appropriate foundational knowledge and skills to apply principles and concepts of information technology to analysis, evaluation, and integration of information technology strategies. The degree does not prepare students for a specific licensure or certification examination.

[The proposed degree program will offer three (3) track areas.] Students in the Cyber Security track will obtain knowledge and skills in seeking and addressing cyber security threats by analyzing vulnerabilities, implementing security controls, and responding to cyber incidents. Students will be able to identify and quantify cyber risks based on threats, probabilities, and impacts. Graduates will be prepared to contribute to IT infrastructure security. Students in the IT Project Management track will obtain knowledge and skills in project management methodologies, risk assessment, and utilization of modern project management tools. Students will gain skills in communication strategies and management of technology team members. Graduates will be prepared to lead teams to execute organizational technology projects. Students in the Software Development track will obtain knowledge and skills in designing, building, testing, and maintaining software applications. Students will learn secure coding practices and software design methodologies. Graduates will be prepared to use the Python programming language to create software systems.

Information technology (IT) opportunities and concerns are growing more quickly, whether they be the prevalence of cloud computing or increasing sophisticated cyber threats to data.

The proposed degree program will help to address “a persistent shortage of skilled tech and IT talent.”<sup>23</sup>

## **Justification for the Proposed Degree Program**

### **Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand)**

LU provided information for justification. According to LU’s proposal:

Every aspect of modern business is undergoing change since the introduction of machine learning and AI tools, requiring public and private entities to change their business models. Digital transformation involves rethinking business models, improving customer experiences, and increasing efficiency through tools like cloud computing, cybersecurity, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, and automation. The field of information technology is the foundation for economic growth for how businesses operate from the creation of products to consumption.

The proposed MS in Information Technology responds to current needs within the Commonwealth of Virginia and prepares students to work within areas that need professionals with a master’s degree in information technology. The current needs include: 1) a market demand for highly trained technologists due to the increase in technology-related roles caused by the digital transformation, and 2) fulfilling workforce gaps in the technology workforce to include technology education around cybersecurity, cloud computing, and technology business processes.

### **Market Demand**

Digital transformation is reshaping industries by fundamentally changing how organizations operate, compete, and deliver value. Gartner identifies key roles essential in the best practices information technology roadmap for digital transformation, including application leaders who guide strategy and adoption of enterprise technologies; enterprise architecture leaders who enable innovation and align technology with business goals; infrastructure and operations leaders who plan and manage IT operations and services; sourcing and vendor management leaders who oversee procurement and vendor innovation; and technical professionals who implement and integrate new technologies to transform business processes.<sup>24</sup> The proposed MS in Information Technology will prepare students to assist organizations to address information technology strategies and concerns, as well as digital transformations to their industry.

Students in undergraduate programs, as well as individuals working in roles that are declining in market relevance, are watching digital transformation and the resulting workforce disruption taking place around them. Occupations such as computer and information research scientists are appealing as they are well aligned with industry demand, highly paid, and offer

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<sup>23</sup> Robert Half Talent Solutions. (2026, April 1). *Building Future-Forward Tech Teams: Technology Skills and Solutions to Drive Business and IT Transformation*.  
<https://www.roberthalf.com/content/dam/roberthalf/documents/us/en/indexed/insights/futureforwardtech-report-0425-us-en-secured.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Gartner, Inc. (2020). *The IT roadmap for digital business transformation: Excerpt* [PDF]. Gartner.  
<https://emt.gartnerweb.com/ngw/globalassets/en/information-technology/documents/insights/the-gartner-it-roadmap-for-digital-buisness-transformation-excerpt.pdf>

significant opportunities for career growth. The proposed MS in Information Technology offers coursework related to systems automation, cloud computing, and cybersecurity roles.

Workforce challenges related to the field of information technology, and in particular cybersecurity, include an aging workforce, a growing demand, and highly experienced and skilled workforce requirements.<sup>25</sup>

Industry requires employees who can adapt technological systems to meet an organization's changing needs. According to the World Economic Forum Jobs Report (2025), 86% of employers are anticipating AI and information processing technologies driving business transformation between 2025 and 2035. Additionally, “[u]pskilling the workforce emerges as the most common workforce strategy in response to macro trends, over the 2025-2030 period, with 85% of surveyed employers anticipating adopting this approach.”<sup>26</sup> The proposed MS in Information Technology program will prepare students for roles where a skilled workforce can adapt to business transformation.

### **Filling the skills gap in information technology**

Thirty percent of organizations responding to a CompTIA research release reported that “availability of skilled workers” was an economic factor weighing on corporate forecasts.<sup>27</sup> According to key findings from the 2024 ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study, “[a]most 60% of respondents agree that skills gaps have significantly impacted their ability to secure the organization, with 58% stating it puts their organizations at a significant risk.”<sup>28</sup> The proposed MS in Information Technology program directly addresses the growing skills gap by equipping students with the technical expertise and leadership skills involved with evolving information technology needs.

The proposed degree program aligns with SCHEV's plan, *Developing Tomorrow's Talent: The Virginia Plan for Higher Education* by addressing “the needs of ... industry” and “labor markets.” The proposed degree program addresses a workforce demand with skills to address “technological innovation and disruption,” one of the areas in the plan.<sup>29</sup> The proposed degree program is also in alignment with the previous version of the plan, *Pathways to Opportunity*, in that it furthers “the alignment between post-secondary academic programs and labor market outcomes.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Wetzel, Karen. (2024, January). *Developing the Cybersecurity Workforce: An Introduction to the NICE Framework*. The Cybersecurity & Information Systems Information Analysis Center. [https://csiac.dtic.mil/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/wetzel25jan2024\\_final.pdf](https://csiac.dtic.mil/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/wetzel25jan2024_final.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> World Economic Forum. (2025, January 7). *The future of jobs report 2025*. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/the-future-of-jobs-report-2025/digest/>

<sup>27</sup> CompTIA. (2026, January). *IT Industry Outlook 2026*. <https://lecbyo.files.cmp.optimizely.com/download/51da29f8d69d11f0bca6a2397ce07418>

<sup>28</sup> ISC2. (2024, October 31). *2024 ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study*. <https://www.isc2.org/Insights/2024/10/ISC2-2024-Cybersecurity-Workforce-Study#KeyFindings>

<sup>29</sup> State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. (2025, December 15). *Developing Tomorrow's Talent: The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*. <https://www.schev.edu/home/showdocument?id=4830&t=639013927252864891>

<sup>30</sup> State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. (2021, January). *Pathways to Opportunity: The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*. <https://www.schev.edu/home/showpublisheddocument/1044/637811987952970000>

At the 2026 Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo, Gartner emphasized that this year’s top strategic technology trends include preemptive cybersecurity, AI security platforms, domain-specific language models, and confidential computing.<sup>31</sup> Each of these trends is addressed by the proposed MS in Information Technology degree program. Relatedly, “[s]even out of 10 US organizations are struggling to find skilled workers to fill roles in an ever-evolving digital transformation landscape...the skills gap is growing to include IT, cybersecurity, automation, and more...”<sup>32</sup> The proposed degree program will assist in closing the skills gap among information technology professionals by preparing graduates with much needed knowledge and skills in information technology.

### Employment Demand

Information about employment demand for occupations aligned to the proposed degree program is provided by the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) “Degree Program Labor Market Profile” report.

Tables A and B below provide five-year workforce projections for the occupations most closely aligned to the proposed Master of Science (MS) in Information Technology degree program. In both tables, the first column indicates the aligned occupations. The second column indicates the number of individuals employed in the occupation in 2024. The third column indicates the number of individuals projected to be employed in the occupation in 2029. The fourth column indicates the number of individuals projected to be added to the workforce by 2029 in comparison to the 2024 workforce.

Table B is specific to the institution’s Growth and Opportunity (GO) Virginia region. The localities in the GO Virginia region include the cities of Danville and Martinsville and the counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Patrick, Pittsylvania, and Prince Edward.

#### A) State Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Computer and Information Research Scientists	3,408	3,670	263	7.7%
Computer and Information Systems Managers	19,832	21,587	1,756	8.9%

<sup>31</sup> Gartner, Inc. (2025). *Top technology trends for 2026*. Gartner. <https://www.gartner.com/en/articles/top-technology-trends-2026>

<sup>32</sup> Mearian, L. (2025, February 3). *Technology skills gap plagues industries, and upskilling is a moving target*. *Computerworld*. <https://www.computerworld.com/article/3814707/technology-skills-gap-plagues-industries-and-upskilling-is-a-moving-target.html>

Computer Systems Analysts	23,338	24,406	1,068	4.6%
Information Security Analysts	19,958	22,092	2,134	10.7%
Computer Network Architects	9,489	9,946	457	4.8%
Database Architects	6,865	7,076	211	3.1%
Software Developers	85,617	91,604	5,988	7.0%
Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	9,712	10,518	446	4.6%
Data Scientists	6,784	8,002	1,218	17.9%

B) Regional (GO Virginia) Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Computer and Information Research Scientists	4	4	0	-0.8%
Computer and Information Systems Managers	139	160	21	14.9%
Computer Systems Analysts	138	148	9	6.8%
Information Security Analysts	69	78	9	12.6%
Computer Network Architects	42	47	5	11.7%
Database Architects	21	23	2	10.3%
Software Developers	379	443	64	16.8%

Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	41	47	7	16.9%
Data Scientists	57	72	15	26.0%

### Return on Investment

Return on investment (ROI) information is provided by a calculation of ROI for graduate degree programs conducted by The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity. The data used in the ROI calculation classified degree programs at the four-digit CIP code level (for the proposed degree program, CIP code: 11.10). The ROI analysis was originally published in October 2021, and the data has not been updated.

LU provided return on investment data for degree programs at Virginia public institutions.

#### Return on Investment for Master's Degree Programs with CIP: 11.10

Institution	Field of Study	Earnings (1 year)	Earnings (10 years)	ROI (on time completion)	ROI (non-completion)
George Mason University	Computer and Information Sciences, General	132,142	213,336	1,826,941	1,490,763

### Student Demand

The summary of projected student enrollments for the proposed degree program predicts a headcount (HDCT) of 30 in the program's first year (2026-2027), rising to a HDCT of 88 by the target year, 2030-2031. Enrollment projections predict a full-time equated student enrollment (FTES) of 23 in the degree program's first year. The projections continue as follows: FTES 2027-28, 46; 2028-29, 53; and 2029-30, 61. LU anticipates 36 graduates per year beginning in 2030-31. If projections are met, then the proposed degree program will meet Council's existing productivity/viability standards within five years, as required.

LU indicates the assumptions for the projected student enrollment are: Retention rate: 80%; Full-time students: 30%. Part-time students: 70%. Full-time students graduate in two (2) years. Part-time students graduate in two (2) years. Summer enrollment will be required.

LU provided information to demonstrate student demand for the proposed degree program. According to LU's proposal:

Faculty in the Department of Accounting, Economics, Finance, and Information Systems evaluated student demand for the proposed MS in Information Technology from two sources of data: 1) a student survey of existing students with majors in either Computer Science or in the College of Business and Economics and 2) a survey of prospective master's degree students.

### Student Survey of Existing Students

In April 2025, the College of Business and Economics sent an online survey to current Longwood juniors and seniors in one of the following majors: Computer Science, Business Administration, or Economics. The online survey remained open for three (3) weeks. Of the 403 students surveyed, 12 responses were received. One survey question is most relevant to student interest in the proposed degree program.

Question: *If Longwood University offered a Master of Science degree in Information Technology (MSIT), would you enroll?*

Juniors: 1 respondents “strongly agreed”, 1 respondent said “very likely”, 1 respondent said “likely”

Seniors: 1 respondents “strongly agreed”, 1 respondent said “very likely”, 1 respondent said “likely”

### Student Survey of Prospective Students

In September 2025, the College of Business and Economics conducted an online survey to LinkedIn social media users who were connected with college faculty, which includes college alumni and interested industry employees, an audience of potential students. The online survey remained open for three (3) weeks. Of the 867 participants surveyed, 15 responses were received. One survey question is most relevant to student interest in the proposed degree program.

Question: *If Longwood University offered a Master of Science degree in Information Technology (MSIT), would you enroll?*

Respondents: 4 respondents indicated “definitely”, 5 indicated “very likely”, 5 indicated “likely”.

### **Duplication**

One (1) public institution in Virginia offers a related degree program: George Mason University (GMU).

GMU offers a Master of Science (MS) in Applied Information Technology.

LU provided student enrollment and completion data for public institutions in Virginia that currently offer degree programs with the same CIP code, or program names, and/or curriculum requirements that are similar or related to the proposed degree program.

### Enrollments and Degrees Awarded at Comparable Degree Programs in Virginia

<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>	<b>Fall 2021</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>Fall 2023</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>
George Mason University	138	127	135	164	168
<b>Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
George Mason University	56	44	48	51	75

## **Projected Resources Needs for the Proposed Degree Program**

Projected revenue from tuition and educational and general fees (E&G) would support the proposed degree program. LU's provost affirms the institution will not seek additional state resources to initiate and sustain the degree program.

## **Board Approval**

The LU Board of Visitors approved the proposed degree program on December 5, 2025.

## **Staff Feedback**

In the final proposal, LU did not fully address all feedback provided by staff regarding the original submission.

- In the initial proposal, LU did not cite any sources in the Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand) section. Staff feedback noted the lack of objective cited evidence justifying the need for masters-level graduates trained in information technology. In the final proposal, LU quoted and cited six sources. None of the six sources indicate a need for the proposed degree program or for more graduates trained at the degree level and in the discipline proposed.
  1. Information provided as justification was not relevant to the proposed degree program. One of the quoted sources was a cybersecurity workforce study by the International Information System Security Certification Consortium.<sup>33</sup> The proposed degree program is not in cybersecurity.
  2. LU quoted a report from the World Economic Forum indicating, “[u]pskilling the workforce emerges as the most common workforce strategy in response to macrotrends.”<sup>34</sup> However, the report was about upskilling the workforce broadly, not upskilling the information-technology workforce, specifically. Further, the report did not indicate that upskilling referred to increasing the number of graduates with master’s degrees.
  3. LU quoted an article from Computerworld as justification for the proposed degree program, indicating “[s]even out of 10 US organizations are struggling to find skilled workers to fill roles in an ever-evolving digital transformation landscape.”<sup>35</sup> The article does not indicate that graduates with master’s degrees are the skilled workers that are needed. Further, the article indicates that “80% of executives prioritize skills over degrees when hiring.” The article does not justify the need for the proposed degree program.
- In the initial proposal, the information provided for faculty teaching effort (FTE) based on projected full time equated student enrollment (FTES) for the proposed degree program was not calculated correctly. Staff’s feedback noted such. In the final proposal LU corrected the miscalculation. However, the information provided in the final proposal created a new issue. The combined full-time and part-time FTE for faculty teaching core courses does not indicate that a sufficient amount of FTE will be available to teach core courses and required courses in

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<sup>33</sup> ISC2. (2024, October 31). *2024 ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study*.

<https://www.isc2.org/Insights/2024/10/ISC2-2024-Cybersecurity-Workforce-Study#KeyFindings>

<sup>34</sup> World Economic Forum. (2025, January 7). *The future of jobs report 2025*.

<https://www.weforum.org/publications/the-future-of-jobs-report-2025/digest/>

<sup>35</sup> Mearian, L. (2025, February 3). *Technology skills gap plagues industries, and upskilling is a moving target*.

*Computerworld*. <https://www.computerworld.com/article/3814707/technology-skills-gap-plagues-industries-and-upskilling-is-a-moving-target.html>

the proposed degree program. Evidence is necessary that a sufficient number of faculty and sufficient amount of faculty teaching effort will be provided to support the proposed degree program.

- In the proposals, LU provided data for student demand from two surveys. Of the 27 total responses, four (4) LinkedIn respondents indicated they would “definitely” enroll and two (2) current undergraduate students indicated “strongly agree” for enrollment in the proposed degree program. The numbers are low. This information does not indicate that students are demanding the proposed degree program. The lack of student demand also raises a question about the legitimacy of LU’s projected student enrollments for the proposed degree program in the first five years.

### **Committee Action/Resolution**

Regarding the proposed degree program, the Committee possesses four (4) options: (i) act to approve, (ii) act to approve with condition(s), (iii) act to disapprove, or (iv) defer for action at a future meeting.

*If approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to Longwood University to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Information Technology (CIP code: 11.1005), effective fall 2026.**

*If approved with condition(s), amend the resolution above to include the condition(s), adopt the amended resolution and transmit it to Council.*

*If not approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia does not grant approval to Longwood University to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Information Technology (CIP code: 11.1005).**

*If deferred for future action, instruct that the Minutes reflect the Committee’s invoking of its prerogative/option to take no action at this meeting and to defer action until a future meeting.*

**Virginia Commonwealth University**  
**Bachelor of Science (BS) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering**  
**(CIP: 14.4201)**

**Degree Program Description**

Virginia Commonwealth University is proposing the creation of a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree program in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering to be initiated fall 2026. The proposed degree program would be located in the College of Engineering, Office of the Dean.

The proposed BS in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering would require 121 credit hours. The degree program would require 25 credit hours of core coursework; 30 credit hours of general education requirements; 60 credit hours of additional required courses in mathematics, computer science, and engineering; and six credit hours of restricted electives. Students would be required to complete two, two-credit-hour capstone courses.

VCU provided the following information for the degree program description. According to VCU's proposal:

The purpose of the proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems (RAS) Engineering is to educate students to design, implement, and test modern robotic and autonomous systems. The proposed degree program will provide students with an understanding of the mechanical, electrical, and embedded control subsystems that comprise robotic and autonomous systems. Students will gain foundational knowledge in electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, computer science, and artificial intelligence. Students will learn to apply systems thinking in order to integrate knowledge across disciplines in the development of robotic and autonomous solutions. Students will obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to analyze complex real-world requirements and develop effective engineering solutions for using robotic and autonomous system applications. Students will explore ethical considerations related to autonomy, preparing them to contribute to the responsible design and deployment of robotic and autonomous systems. Graduates will be prepared to design and develop robotic systems, including humanoid and collaborative robots, prosthetic and assistive devices, as well as autonomous systems such as self-driving vehicles, unmanned aerial platforms, and autonomous spacecraft.

**SCHEV Requirement**

The total number of credit hours for the proposed degree program exceeds the Council's maximum of 120 credit hours for baccalaureate degree programs.

VCU provided an explanation for the excess credits. According to VCU's proposal:

The proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering exceeds the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia's (SCHEV) requirement of 120 credit hours for a baccalaureate degree. The proposed degree program will require 121 credit hours. The degree program exceeds the 120-credit hour requirement by one (1) credit hour.

Faculty members with doctoral degrees in the disciplines and professional expertise in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and computer science designed the curriculum requirements for the degree program. The curriculum requirement of one (1) credit hour that

exceeds the 120-credit hour requirement allows students to choose credit-bearing elective courses that reinforce the application of core knowledge in an advanced or specialized context. Students will integrate the fundamental knowledge from the required core curriculum into elective courses in select areas of engineering. The one (1) additional credit hour is sufficient to prepare students to serve as competent professionals in the field of robotics and autonomous systems. The additional credit hour will not negatively affect students' time-to-degree. Students can complete all degree program requirements within four (4) years (eight [8] semesters) by taking 16–18 credits during one (1) or two (2) semesters, a workload comparable to other engineering programs in Virginia. The course load will not be overly burdensome for students enrolled in the degree program.

## **Justification for the Proposed Degree Program**

### **Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand)**

VCU provided information for justification. According to VCU's proposal:

The field of robotics and autonomous systems engineering involves the design, development, and implementation of intelligent machines. These machines are capable of performing tasks across industrial, commercial, defense, health, and service sectors. This field integrates mechanical and electrical systems, algorithms, and artificial intelligence to create fully autonomous platforms such as industrial robots, drones, and self-driving vehicles. Professionals in the field develop and deploy robotic and autonomous systems across key national and regional economic sectors.

The proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering responds to workforce and technological needs in Virginia and the United States. The degree program addresses two primary needs: (1) meeting the market demand for robotics and autonomous systems engineers, and (2) closing workforce skills gaps in the technical and professional competencies required to design and develop robotics and autonomous systems.

### **Market Demand for Robotics and Autonomous Systems Expertise**

Robotics, artificial intelligence, and autonomous systems are reshaping industries worldwide. According to Grand View Horizon, “the global autonomous systems & robotics segment generated a revenue of USD 11,461.1 million in 2025 and is expected to reach USD 78,773.6 million by 2033. The market is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) (2026–2033) of 27.4% by 2033. North America was the largest revenue-generating market in 2025.”<sup>36</sup> Such growth is contributing to an increasing supply–demand gap for engineers with interdisciplinary training in robotics, controls, software, and autonomous systems. Several national reports identify a growing need for academic programs in robotics to prepare a workforce capable of meeting this demand. Ryalat et al. (2025) state that:

“The escalating global demand for skilled roboticists has led to a surge in educational initiatives aimed at cultivating expertise in this rapidly evolving field. As robotics has become increasingly integrated into industries such as healthcare, manufacturing,

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<sup>36</sup> Autonomous Systems & Robotics - AI Data Center Market Outlook. Autonomous Systems & Robotics - Ai data center market outlook. (2026, February 5). <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/horizon/statistics/ai-data-center-market/ai-application/autonomous-systems-robotics/global>.

agriculture, and autonomous systems, the need for professionals with interdisciplinary knowledge has never become more critical.”<sup>37</sup>

In the same article, the Ryalat et al. (2025) emphasize that:

“Robotics is revolutionizing industries, from manufacturing and healthcare to autonomous systems and AI. This field has witnessed exponential growth, necessitating an advanced workforce capable of innovating and implementing robotic systems. Higher education institutions play a pivotal role in the development of skilled professionals through structured undergraduate ... [degree] programs.”<sup>38</sup>

The proposed B.S. in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering is designed to address these trends by providing students with the knowledge and competencies most urgently needed in the workforce.

### Virginia Demand

In Virginia, the demand is both immediate and strategically significant. Robotics, automation, and unmanned systems are critical to Virginia’s defense, aerospace, advanced manufacturing, logistics, and maritime sectors. The Hampton Roads Workforce Council (HRWC) projects that the Aerospace and Unmanned Systems cluster will add more than 10,200 jobs over the next decade in Hampton Roads, reflecting the state’s emphasis on autonomous and unmanned systems. However, the region is not currently producing graduates to meet this need. The HRWC reports:

“The Hampton Roads region did not produce any awards in 2023 unique to the aerospace and unmanned systems industry skill-sets. There were 229 job ads placed over the last year with no local degree awards to support talent growth...higher education programs could help support this industry cluster. A college degree that falls under the “unmanned systems” umbrella could be a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in fields such as...Robotics Engineering”<sup>39</sup>

Virginia’s economic development agencies also recognize the need to expand technical talent pipelines. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership highlights statewide efforts to “fill that supply-side gap ... by increasing and roughly doubling its tech-talent pipeline by aligning resources at all levels.”<sup>40</sup> Recent GO Virginia investments confirm that robotics is a high-

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<sup>37</sup> Mutaz Ryalat, Natheer Almtireen, Ghaith Al-refai, Hisham Elmoaqet, & Nathir Rawashdeh. (2025). Research and Education in Robotics: A Comprehensive Review, Trends, Challenges, and Future Directions. *Journal of Sensor and Actuator Networks*, 14(4),76. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jsan14040076>.

<sup>38</sup> Mutaz Ryalat, Natheer Almtireen, Ghaith Al-refai, Hisham Elmoaqet, & Nathir Rawashdeh. (2025). Research and Education in Robotics: A Comprehensive Review, Trends, Challenges, and Future Directions. *Journal of Sensor and Actuator Networks*, 14(4),76. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jsan14040076>.

<sup>39</sup> Hampton Roads Workforce Council (HRWC). (2024). *Talent pathways report: Workforce needs in advanced manufacturing and unmanned systems*. HRWC. <https://www.chmura.com/hubfs/Consulting%20Example%20Report/HRWC%20Talent%20Pathways%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> On Target for Tech Talent | Virginia Economic Development Partnership. (2019). VEDP. [https://www.vedp.org/news/target-tech-talent?utm\\_source](https://www.vedp.org/news/target-tech-talent?utm_source).

demand workforce field, with new initiatives aimed at expanding training to meet critical employer needs.<sup>41</sup>

Virginia lacks the undergraduate programs needed to meet its supply-side gaps in talent demands. The proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering degree directly supports Virginia’s talent needs by providing a structured pathway for students to develop the expertise needed.

### **Closing the Skills Gaps**

The rapid growth of robotics and autonomous systems engineering highlights the growing supply-demand gap for engineers capable of designing, programming, and integrating robotic systems. One study identifies the shortage of qualified professionals as a “critical issue,” noting that graduates “often lack professional knowledge as well as soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, and leadership.”<sup>42</sup> Liu, Gaudiot, and Kasahara (2020) state that:

“To bridge this supply-demand gap, we advocate to create a cross-disciplinary [degree] program to expose students with technical background in computer science, computer engineering, electrical engineering, as well as mechanical engineering.”<sup>43</sup>

Regional industries consistently report persistent skills gaps in both technical and professional competencies needed to support robotics and autonomous systems. Within Virginia, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council report emphasized that employers struggle to find candidates who possess both strong technical skills and systems-level understanding, particularly for positions requiring the integration of mechanical, electrical, and computing technologies.<sup>44</sup> Randy Sadler, President and Chief Executive Officer of Weidmuller USA, states:

“Traditional engineering programs do not adequately prepare students for the complexity of modern autonomous systems.”<sup>45</sup>

Similarly, Chung-Chee Tai, Vice President of Engineering at BluePrint Automation, highlights that:

“The industry is experiencing a talent gap in engineers who can bridge hardware, software and intelligent systems...the education system in the US has not produced graduates with the advanced knowledge to keep up with our competition in Europe and Asia.”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Governor Glenn Youngkin announces \$2.8 million in Growth and Opportunity Virginia Grants | DHCD. (2025, September 25). <https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/governor-glenn-youngkin-announces-28-million-growth-and-opportunity-virginia-grants>.

<sup>42</sup> Shmatko, M., & Volkova, L. (2020). *Bridging the skill gap in robotics: Global and national environment*. International Journal of Engineering Education, 36(2), 1–15. (p. 5) <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020958736>.

<sup>43</sup> Liu, J., Gaudiot, J.-L., & Kasahara, H. (2020). Engineering education in the age of autonomous machines. IEEE Transactions on Education, 63(3). <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2102.07900>.

<sup>44</sup> Hampton Roads Workforce Council. (2024). *Talent pathways report: Workforce needs in advanced manufacturing and unmanned systems*. Hampton Roads Workforce Council. <https://www.chmura.com/hubfs/Consulting%20Example%20Report/HRWC%20Talent%20Pathways%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>45</sup> Sadler, Randy, personal communication, August 29, 2025.

<sup>46</sup> Tai, Chung-Chee, personal communication, April 2, 2025.

Josh May, CEO of Autonomous Flight Technologies, observes that:

“Traditional single-discipline degrees often fall short in preparing graduates for the realities of our projects.”<sup>47</sup>

The proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering responds directly to these challenges by preparing graduates capable of working across disciplinary boundaries and meeting employer expectations for both technical and professional competencies.

#### The Need for an Interdisciplinary Degree Program

While several Virginia universities offer degrees in mechanical engineering, electrical and computer engineering, and computer science, none provide an undergraduate program that fully integrates these disciplines into a coordinated undergraduate degree focused on robotics and autonomous systems engineering. Engineering education research supports this need. As one analysis notes:

“Autonomous driving is not one single technology but rather a complex system integrating many technologies, and no one single academic department can provide comprehensive education in this field.”<sup>48</sup>

Traditional undergraduate programs often remain siloed, focusing on a single discipline without offering the systems-level preparation essential for autonomous systems engineering. As a result, employers must invest significant time and resources in retraining engineers, slowing innovation and reducing productivity. State initiatives such as GO Virginia and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership<sup>49</sup> emphasize that aligning higher education with industry and government is needed to strengthen the talent pipeline. Engineering education researchers also advocate a “Foundation–Pillars–Capstone” structure, where students master core principles, advance across technical domains, and complete integrative projects<sup>50</sup>—an approach that aligns directly with the interdisciplinary nature of robotics and autonomous systems.

The proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering directly addresses the documented national, state, and regional workforce gaps. The degree program develops student expertise in programming, controls, and systems integration while strengthening communication, collaboration, and adaptability. In doing so, the program fills a critical gap in Virginia’s higher-education landscape and meets employer demand for multidisciplinary engineering talent.

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<sup>47</sup> May, Joshua, personal communication, August 11, 2025.

<sup>48</sup> Liu, J., Gaudiot, J.-L., & Kasahara, H. (2020). *Engineering education in the age of autonomous machines*. IEEE Transactions on Education, 63(3), 1–12. (p.1). <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2102.07900>.

<sup>49</sup> On Target for Tech Talent | Virginia Economic Development Partnership. (2019). VEDP. [https://www.vedp.org/news/target-tech-talent?utm\\_source](https://www.vedp.org/news/target-tech-talent?utm_source).

<sup>50</sup> Liu, J., Gaudiot, J.-L., & Kasahara, H. (2020). *Engineering education in the age of autonomous machines*. IEEE Transactions on Education, 63(3), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2102.07900>.

## Employment Demand

Information about employment demand for occupations aligned to the proposed degree program is provided by the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) “Degree Program Labor Market Profile” report.

Tables A and B provide five-year workforce projections for all occupations most closely aligned to the proposed Bachelor of Science (BS) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering degree program. In Table A, the first column indicates the aligned occupations. The second column indicates the number of individuals employed in the occupation in 2024. The third column indicates the number of individuals projected to be employed in the occupation in 2029. The fourth column indicates the number of individuals projected to be added to the workforce by 2029 in comparison to the 2024 workforce.

Table B is specific to the institution’s Growth and Opportunity (GO) Virginia region. The localities in the GO Virginia region include the cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell, Petersburg, and Richmond and the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Goochland, Greensville, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan, Prince George, Surry, and Sussex.

### A) State Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Architectural & Engineering Managers	4,311	4,575	264	6.1%
Engineers, all others	6,842	7,071	229	3.4%
Data Scientists	5,144	6,128	984	19.1%
Software Developers	88,113	96,437	8,324	9.4%

### B) Regional (GO Virginia) Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Architectural & Engineering Managers	569	633	37	6.1%
Engineers, all others	375	401	26	6.8%
Data Scientists	736	847	111	15.1%

Software Developers	7,779	9,177	662	7.8%
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### Return on Investment

Return on investment (ROI) information is provided by a calculation of ROI for graduate degree programs conducted by The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity (FREOPP). The data used in the ROI calculation classified degree programs at the four-digit Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code level (for the proposed degree program, CIP code: 14.42). The ROI analysis was originally published in October 2021, and the data has not been updated.

No return on investment data were available for degree programs at Virginia public institutions. VCU provided information from the only bachelors-level degree program in the FREOPP dataset with the same four-digit CIP code as the proposed degree program.

### Return on Investment for Bachelor's Degree Programs with CIP: 52.13

Institution	Field of Study	Earnings (1 year)	Earnings (10 years)	ROI (on time completion)	ROI (non-completion)
University of Washington-Seattle Campus	Mechatronics, Robotics, and Automation Engineering	\$73,518	\$114,872	\$1,188,982	\$956,218

### Student Demand

The summary of projected student enrollments for the proposed degree program predicts a headcount (HDCT) of 30 in the program's first year (2026-2027), rising to a HDCT of 100 by the target year, 2030-2031. Enrollment projections predict a full-time equated student enrollment (FTES) of 30 in the degree program's first year. The projections continue as follows: FTES 2027-28, 51; 2028-29, 82; and 2029-30, 100. VCU anticipates 21 graduates per year beginning in 2030-31. If projections are met, then the proposed degree program will meet Council's existing productivity/viability standards within five years, as required.

VCU indicates the assumptions for the projected student enrollment are: Retention rate: 70%; Full-time students: 100%. Part-time students: 0%. Full-time students graduate in four (4) years. Summer enrollment would not be required.

VCU provided information to demonstrate student demand for the proposed degree program. According to VCU's proposal:

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) will market the proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering to high school and community college students who are interested in pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in this field. Virginia Commonwealth University evaluated student demand for the proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering by surveying three populations: (1) high school students and (2) VCU undergraduate engineering students who have not declared a major.

### Survey I

In April 2025, the College of Engineering, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, conducted an online survey of high school students in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The electronic survey was deployed using the QuestionPro application and remained open for three (3) weeks. The students surveyed were drawn from VCU's database of students who had expressed an interest in attending VCU.

A total of 112 high school students responded to the survey. Of those, 41 were high school juniors, and 25 were high school seniors. The most relevant prompt demonstrating student interest in the proposed degree program is included below.

Question 1: *If VCU offered a Bachelor of Science in Robotics and Autonomous Systems, would you enroll?*

- HS Juniors (41 respondents) – four (4) respondents answered “definitely”
- HS Seniors (25 respondents) – four (4) respondents answered “definitely”
  
- HS Juniors (41 respondents) – eight (8) respondents answered “very likely”
- HS Seniors (25 respondents) – three (3) respondents answered “very likely”
  
- HS Juniors (41 respondents) – eighteen (18) respondents answered “likely”
- HS Seniors (25 respondents) – eight (8) respondents answered “likely”

### Survey II

To assess student demand for the proposed degree program, students who have accepted the offer to enroll in a degree program within the College of Engineering and have not declared a major, and undergraduate students in the College of Engineering who have not declared a major were surveyed. The electronic survey was deployed using the QuestionPro application and remained open for three (3) weeks.

A total of 24 students responded to the survey. The most relevant prompt demonstrating student interest in the proposed degree program is included below.

- Question 1: *If VCU offered a Bachelor of Science in Robotics and Autonomous Systems, would you enroll?*
  - Four (4) respondents answered “definitely”
  - Seven (7) respondents answered “very likely”
  - Seven (7) respondents answered “likely”

## **Duplication**

No public institutions in Virginia offer similar or related degree programs.

## **Projected Resources Needs for the Proposed Degree Program**

Projected revenue from tuition and educational and general fees (E&G) would support the proposed degree program. VCU's provost affirms the institution will not seek additional state resources to initiate and sustain the degree program.

## **Board Approval**

The VCU Board of Visitors approved the proposed degree program on May 9, 2025.

## **Staff Feedback**

In the final proposal, VCU addressed feedback provided by staff regarding the original submission.

## **Committee Action/Resolution**

Regarding the proposed degree program, the Committee possesses four (4) options: (i) act to approve, (ii) act to approve with condition(s), (iii) act to disapprove, or (iv) defer for action at a future meeting.

*If approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to Virginia Commonwealth University to initiate a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree program in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering (CIP code: 14.4201), effective fall 2026.**

*If approved with condition(s), amend the resolution above to include the condition(s), adopt the amended resolution and transmit it to Council.*

*If not approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia does not grant approval to Virginia Commonwealth University to initiate a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree program in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Engineering (CIP code: 14.4201).**

*If deferred for future action, instruct that the Minutes reflect the Committee's invoking of its prerogative/option to take no action at this meeting and to defer action until a future meeting.*

**The University of Mary Washington  
Master of Science (MS) in Artificial Intelligence in Business  
(CIP: 52.1399)**

**Degree Program Description**

The University of Mary Washington is proposing the creation of a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Artificial Intelligence in Business to be initiated fall 2026. The proposed degree program would be located in the College of Business, Department of Business Administration.

The proposed MS in Artificial Intelligence in Business would require 30 credit hours. The degree program would require 18 credit hours of core coursework and nine credit hours of electives. Students would be required to complete a three-credit-hour capstone course.

UMW provided the following information for the degree program description. According to UMW's proposal:

The purpose of the Master of Science (MS) in Artificial Intelligence in Business degree program at University of Mary Washington is to provide individuals with undergraduate degrees the additional theoretical and practical skills at the intersection of management and artificial intelligence (AI). The program is a highly technical, analytics-intensive program in which AI tools, methods, and strategic deployment form the core of the curriculum, with managerial content serving to operationalize advanced AI capabilities within organizations. The graduate-level program is designed to integrate AI technologies--machine learning, generative AI, and predictive analytics--with business leadership, strategic thinking, and ethics. Students gain proficiency in AI-powered analytics, data visualization, and predictive modeling as well as the business acumen needed to translate AI insights into strategic action.

The degree program prepares graduates to lead and manage AI initiatives. Graduates will be prepared to work in business environments – corporate strategy and innovation, business intelligence and analytics, technology driven startups, consulting, and operations and supply chains analytics. Graduates will connect advancements in AI with data-driven management decision-making, bridging the gap between cutting-edge AI technologies and strategic business applications.

The degree will prepare graduates for a wide range of **strategic, analytical, and technology-driven occupations** including Data Scientist, Business Intelligence Manager, Strategic Business Analyst, Applied AI Analyst, Management Analyst, AI Strategy Consultant, and AI Product Manager. The proposed degree program aligns with the competencies developed in the emerging Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence in Business graduates at other universities . Students with these degrees find employment in the same fields: Data Scientist, Business Intelligence Manager, Strategic Business Analyst, Applied AI Analyst, Management Analyst, AI Strategy Consultant, and AI Product Manager.

**Justification for the Proposed Degree Program**

**Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand)**

UMW provided the following information for justification. According to UMW's proposal:

Nationally, employers are looking for workers with artificial intelligence skills married to master’s degrees in business. In their 2024 corporate recruiters survey, the Graduate Management Admission Council found that employer desire for graduate degrees is strong.<sup>51</sup> While “only 26 percent considering AI to be an important skill for graduates to leverage in their organizations, when asked which skills will be most important in five years, AI ranked high across regions and industries.”<sup>52</sup> “To achieve success, future business leaders will need to harness technological advancements and possess the knowledge and experience to manage the change brought on by these [generative AI] evolutions,” said Joy Jones, CEO of GMAC.<sup>53</sup>

AI-enabled positions are not purely technical but require hybrid expertise. An example is the management-level “Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer” (CAIO). Over thirty-three percent of organizations report having filled the CAIO position.<sup>54</sup> The CAIO is an executive-level role that “combines data science knowledge with business acumen.”<sup>55</sup> A CAIO typically holds an advanced degree in business, artificial intelligence, or machine learning.<sup>56</sup> Because the Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence in Business is a new degree, it is not subject to a lot of attention in the media, in employment statistics, or in formal declarations from the university’s regional and local stakeholders. The CIAO position is one example of and will be in high demand, fills a clear need for a degree that bridges that gap between advanced education in business and artificial intelligence, and is thus closely aligned with the proposed degree level and degree discipline.

Industries (healthcare, cybersecurity, consulting, defense contracting, logistics) increasingly highlight that organizations need **AI-fluent business leaders**, not just data scientists. Many AI-enabled business roles require the **integration of advanced decision-making, leadership, and organizational change management**, and these are graduate, not undergraduate, level skills. Harvard Business recently framed the current business landscape as “the future is fluent,” emphasizing that leaders must be able to guide the cultural, ethical, and strategic dimensions of AI adoption, not just the technical side.<sup>57</sup>

The Commonwealth of Virginia continues to position itself as a hub for technology, data, and federal contracting. Virginia’s economy includes **federal contracting, consulting firms, defense, and large-scale technology integration**, which need leaders who can **translate AI adoption into organizational strategy**.<sup>58</sup> The federal workforce and its contractors are rapidly

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<sup>51</sup> Graduate Management Admission Council. (2024, July 1). In Rapid Rise of AI, Employers Turn to Business School Graduates for Human Skills. GMAC Press Releases. <https://www.gmac.com/why-gmac/gmac-news/gmac-press-releases/gmac-2024-annual-corporate-recruiters-survey>

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Roberts, A. (2025, January 10). 2025. AI and Data Leadership – Executive Benchmark Survey Leadership, Transformation, and Innovation in an AI Future. DataIQ. <https://www.dataiq.global/articles/2025-ai-and-data-leadership/>

<sup>55</sup> JRG Partners Editorial Staff. (2025, July 2). The Rise of the Chief AI Officer in the US. <https://www.jrgpartners.com/chief-ai-officer-us-rise-corporate-leadership/>

<sup>56</sup> Umbrex. N.D. “Chief AI Officer.” <https://umbrex.com/resources/guide-to-corporate-titles/what-is-a-chief-ai-officer/>

<sup>57</sup> Harvard Business. N.d. The future is fluent: Why ai demands a new kind of leader. (n.d.). <https://www.harvardbusiness.org/insight/the-future-is-fluent-why-ai-demands-a-new-kind-of-leader/>

<sup>58</sup> Virginia Chamber of Commerce. (2026, January 6). 2026. Virginia Chamber Foundation Releases Statewide AI Landscape Assessment. <https://vachamber.com/2026/01/06/virginia-chamber-foundation-releases-statewide-ai-landscape-assessment%E2%80%AF/>

integrating AI into areas such as cybersecurity, defense contracting, logistics, and decision support.<sup>59</sup> The occupations require a mature understanding of business functions such as finance, operations, marketing, strategy, and governance that one acquires in a master’s program and also technical AI skills. Cybersecurity, logistics, defense contracting, and decision support demand **professional experience and leadership capacity** – skills students with graduate degrees be more able to demonstrate.

The Fredericksburg region is emerging as a major data center,<sup>60</sup> and Go Virginia Region 6 also includes the naval base at Dahlgren. Both are seeing surges in occupational roles requiring AI paired with advanced analytics and business skills across the public and private sectors, based on listings on Zip Recruiter, LinkedIn and Indeed.

**An MS in AI in Business is needed to fill emerging roles (CAIO, AI project manager, Business Analysis Manager) that require both AI capability and business decision making. There is no other degree program like it in Virginia. The proposed degree program would** directly address the need for business leaders who possess sufficient technical literacy in artificial intelligence and advanced analytics to evaluate AI applications, interpret model outputs, assess risk and value, and guide strategic implementation within their organizations.

### **Employment Demand**

Information about employment demand for occupations aligned to the proposed degree program is provided by the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) “Degree Program Labor Market Profile” report.

No employment demand data were available because no occupations are aligned to the CIP code of the proposed degree program.

### **Return on Investment**

Return on investment (ROI) information is provided by a calculation of ROI for graduate degree programs conducted by The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity. The data used in the ROI calculation classified degree programs at the four-digit CIP code level (for the proposed degree program, CIP code: 52.13). The ROI analysis was originally published in October 2021, and the data has not been updated.

No return on investment data were available for degree programs at Virginia public institutions.

UMW provided information for return on investment. According to UMW’s proposal: “Given the newness of the degree program, there are no Virginia schools on the ROI list, so schools from nearby states were included.”

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Stafford: The Big Data Destination. <https://www.gostaffordva.com/data-centers/>

Return on Investment for Master's Degree Programs with CIP: 52.13

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Field of Study</b>	<b>Earnings (1 year)</b>	<b>Earnings (10 years)</b>	<b>ROI (on time completion)</b>	<b>ROI (non-completion)</b>
University of Connecticut	Management Sciences and Quantitative Methods	97,626	122,913	346,584	267,534
Georgia State University	Management Sciences and Quantitative Methods	69,998	90,347	-207,479	-184,588
University of Maryland Global Campus	Management Sciences and Quantitative Methods	94,576	125,077	217,219	162,770
Pennsylvania State University- Main Campus	Management Sciences and Quantitative Methods	107,037	144,739	1,322,061	1,071,621
The University of Tennessee- Knoxville	Management Sciences and Quantitative Methods	104,996	142,224	1,043,550	843,274

**Student Demand**

The summary of projected student enrollments for the proposed degree program predicts a headcount (HDCT) of 11 in the program's first year (2026-2027), rising to a HDCT of 22 by the target year, 2030-2031. Enrollment projections predict a full-time equated student enrollment (FTES) of 7 in the degree program's first year. The projections continue as follows: FTES 2027-28, 14; 2028-29, 14; and 2029-30, 14. UMW anticipates 20 graduates per year beginning in 2030-31. If projections are met, then the proposed degree program will meet Council's existing productivity/viability standards within five years, as required.

UMW indicates the Assumptions for the projected student enrollment are: Retention rate: 95%; Full-time students: 40%. Part-time students: 60%. Full-time students will graduate in one (1) year. Part-time students will graduate in 2.5 years. Summer enrollment will be required for full-time students. Summer enrollment will not be required for part-time students.

UMW provided the following information to demonstrate student demand for the proposed degree program. According to UMW's proposal:

The program will be marketed to students with an undergraduate degree. Evidence of student demand comes from two sources: 1) a survey of interest among current UMW students, 2) a survey of recent UMW graduates.

Student Survey

In April 2025, the Office of Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness conducted a survey of 453 senior undergraduate students at the University of Mary Washington. A total of 26 undergraduate students completed the survey. Of these, four (4) responded “definitely” and two (2) responded “very likely” when asked, “if UMW offered a Masters in Science in Artificial Intelligence in Business, would you enroll?” Four (4) students responded with “likely.” Students came from a wide array of majors, as indicated in the Appendix. All students were seniors. Qualitative comments: “The Masters of Science in Business AI is a compelling option in the current environment.”

Student Demand Survey II (Alumni)

In June 2025, the Office of Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness conducted a survey of 374 alumni of UMW’s Bachelor of Science in Business Administration program, as well as the Bachelor of Liberal Studies program. A total of eleven (11) students of the programs who graduated between 2023 to 2025 completed the survey. Of these, three (3) responded “definitely” and two (2) responded “very likely” when asked, “if UMW offered a Masters in Science in Artificial Intelligence in Business, would you enroll?” Three (3) students responded with “likely.” Four students were from the class of 2023, three students from 2024, and five from 2025. There were two students with accounting degrees, five with business administration, three with marketing, and one with leadership and management.

**Duplication**

Two (2) public institutions in Virginia offer related degree programs: the University of Virginia (UVA) and The College of William & Mary in Virginia (William & Mary).

UVA offers a Master of Science (MS) in Commerce.

UVA offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

William & Mary offers a Master of Science (MS) in Business Analytics.

UMW provided student enrollment and completion data for public institutions in Virginia that currently offer degree programs with the same CIP code, or names and/or curriculum requirements that are similar or related to the proposed degree program.

**Enrollments and Degrees Awarded at Comparable Degree Programs in Virginia**

<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>	<b>Fall 2021</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>Fall 2023</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>
University of Virginia	130	152	121	127	130
University of Virginia (management science)	72	51	126	1,139	1,151

William & Mary (management science)	139	167	126	125	118
<b>Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
University of Virginia	106	130	148	119	125
University of Virginia (management science)	61	69	50	56	594
William & Mary (management science)	108	142	116	104	110

**\*Staff note.** In UMW’s original New Degree Program Form, information was not included to indicate a degree program under the institution’s name in the table. In the final proposal, UMW added the parenthetical words under the institution’s name. However, none of the degree programs are named “management science.” It is not known what “management science” is intended to indicate.

### **Projected Resources Needs for the Proposed Degree Program**

Projected revenue from tuition and educational and general fees (E&G) would support the proposed degree program. UMW’s provost indicates the institution will seek additional state resources to initiate and sustain the degree program.

### **Board Approval**

The UMW Board of Visitors approved the proposed degree program on July 26, 2025.

### **Staff Feedback**

In the final proposal, UMW did not fully address all feedback provided by staff regarding the original submission.

- Staff feedback on the original submission indicated that the proposal did not include objective, cited evidence of the need in Virginia or in industry, specifically for a master’s-level degree in the proposed discipline. Evidence of the need specifically for a master’s level degree was not provided by UMW in the final proposal.
- In the Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand) section of the final proposal, UMW wrote: “Many AI-enabled business roles require the integration of advanced decision-making, leadership, and organizational change management, and these are graduate, not undergraduate, level skills” as justification for the proposed degree program at the master’s degree level. Staff feedback on the initial proposal indicated that while advanced decision-making, leadership, and organizational change management may be graduate level skills, the skills are not taught in the core curriculum of the proposed degree program. Therefore, the text does not provide justification for the need for degree program as proposed.

- UMW indicated in the Program Background that the proposed degree program will prepare graduates for occupations including, “Data Scientist, Business Intelligence Manager, Strategic Business Analyst, Applied AI Analyst, Management Analyst, AI Strategy Consultant, and AI Product Manager.” Staff feedback on the original submission indicated a lack of clear evidence in the curriculum that core coursework would prepare students to be data scientists, strategic business analysts, management analysts, or business intelligence managers. In the final proposal, UMW did not provide information to address the issue of whether and how the degree program’s core courses would educate or prepare students for the occupations indicated. Thus, the information about the occupations is not supported by the final submission.
- The Program Background indicates core courses in the proposed degree program include “managerial content,” and students will be equipped with “skills at the intersection of management and artificial intelligence (AI).” Staff feedback on the initial submission noted that none of the core course descriptions indicate any explicit instruction will be provided on business or management concepts. Further, per the admission criteria in the proposal, students would not be required to possess any prior experience in business or management. The final proposal does not make clear how the proposed degree program will provide students who possess no background in business or management with “the business acumen needed to translate AI insights into strategic action,” as asserted by UMW.
- In the initial submission, UMW referenced the emergence of the “chief artificial intelligence officer” job position as an example of the need for the proposed degree program. Staff feedback included a request for evidence that a master’s degree in the proposed degree program’s discipline is needed to become a chief artificial intelligence officer. In the final proposal, UMW referenced information from Umbrex’s webpage indicating that a chief artificial intelligence officer “typically holds an advanced degree in business, artificial intelligence, or machine learning.” Umbrex is a consulting firm and the information on the webpage describing the chief artificial intelligence officer position does not state that chief artificial intelligence officers typically hold advanced degrees. The educational background information indicates: “Bachelor’s degree: Most CAIOs hold a degree in Computer Science, Data Science, Artificial Intelligence, or a related field. Master’s or PhD: An advanced degree in AI, Machine Learning, or Business Administration (MBA with a focus on technology) is highly advantageous.”<sup>61</sup> The webpage also includes information for a sample job position description. The qualifications indicate that a  
 Bachelor’s degree in Computer Science, Data Science, or related field (Master’s or PhD preferred); 10+ years of experience in AI, data science, or machine learning, with at least 5 years in a leadership role; strong understanding of AI technologies, algorithms, and data governance practices; proven experience managing large-scale AI projects and driving business outcomes; certifications such as AWS Machine Learning, TensorFlow, or Azure AI Engineer are a plus.  
 Further, the source classifies the chief artificial intelligence officer as a “late career role.”<sup>62</sup> The admission criteria in UMW’s degree-program proposal does

<sup>61</sup> Umbrex Consulting | Connect to the future of consulting. (n.d.). *Chief AI officer*. <https://umbrex.com/resources/guide-to-corporate-titles/what-is-a-chief-ai-officer/>

<sup>62</sup> Umbrex Consulting | Connect to the future of consulting. (n.d.). *Chief AI officer*. <https://umbrex.com/resources/guide-to-corporate-titles/what-is-a-chief-ai-officer/>

- not include a requirement that an applicant possess any professional experience in business. The final proposal does not make clear how a graduate of the proposed degree program would possess the knowledge, depth of experience, or skills to serve immediately as a chief artificial intelligence officer.
- UMW's provost certified that UMW will submit a request to the Virginia General Assembly for funds to initiate and/or maintain the proposed degree program. Staff feedback indicated UMW must provide a detailed explanation of the request, as required in the New Degree Program Proposal Form and the Certification Statements form to include information describing when the request will be made, how much funding will be requested, the intended use of the funds, and what will be done if the request is not fulfilled. UMW did not provide the information in the final proposal. Thus, it is not clear for what purpose UMW intends to pursue state resources to support the proposed degree program. Further, the absence of information related to request(s) for state resources raises questions regarding the extent of resources UMW currently possesses to initiate and sustain the proposed degree program.
  - In the initial proposal, UMW indicated in the Projected Resources section that \$400,000 was requested from the Virginia General Assembly. UMW did not provide a detailed explanation of how the funding would be used. Staff feedback noted the use of the funds should be itemized to show what the state funding would support for the proposed degree program. In the final proposal, in the SCHEV Budget Form line item for "other funding sources," UMW indicates \$400,000 would be available in the initiation year, 2026-2027, of the proposed degree program. UMW did not name the source of the \$400,000. No detailed explanation is provided itemizing the use of the funds to support the proposed degree program. Further, it is not clear what resources UMW currently possesses to initiate the proposed degree program.
  - UMW projects 20 students will graduate from the proposed degree program each year after the target year. The projected annual number of graduates does not align with the projected student enrollment numbers and the assumptions. The assumptions indicate 40% of students would enroll full time and graduate in one (1) year, and 60% of students would enroll part time and graduate in 2.5 years. The projected headcount student enrollment in the target year and each year thereafter is 22 students. It is not clear how 20 students would graduate from the proposed degree program each year if the majority of the students will complete the degree program in 2.5 years. The accuracy of the student projected enrollment information is not clear; therefore, the likelihood that the proposed degree program will meet degree program productivity and viability standards cannot be reliably assessed.

### **Committee Action/Resolution**

Regarding the proposed degree program, the Committee possesses four (4) options: (i) act to approve, (ii) act to approve with condition(s), (iii) act to disapprove, or (iv) defer for action at a future meeting.

*If approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to the University of Mary Washington to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Artificial Intelligence in Business (CIP code: 52.1399), effective fall 2026.**

*If approved with condition(s), amend the resolution above to include the condition(s), adopt the amended resolution and transmit it to Council.*

*If not approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia does not grant approval to the University of Mary Washington to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Artificial Intelligence in Business (CIP code: 52.1399).

*If deferred for future action, instruct that the Minutes reflect the Committee's invoking of its prerogative/option to take no action at this meeting and to defer action until a future meeting.*

**The College of William & Mary in Virginia  
Master of Science (MS) in Nonprofit Management  
(CIP: 52.0206)**

**Degree Program Description**

The College of William & Mary in Virginia is proposing the creation of a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Nonprofit Management to be initiated fall 2026. The proposed degree program would be located in the Raymond A. Mason School of Business, Office of the Dean.

The proposed MS in Nonprofit Management would require 30 credit hours. The degree program would require 15 credit hours of core coursework and nine credit hours of electives. Students would be required to complete a three-credit-hour nonprofit management internship and a three-credit-hour capstone course.

William & Mary provided information for the degree program description. According to William & Mary's proposal:

The purpose of the proposed MS degree program in Nonprofit Management is to equip students with the knowledge and skills required to effectively manage and sustain nonprofit organizations. The proposed program will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the role nonprofit organizations play in communities and local economies, as well as the skills and knowledge to respond to financial, stakeholder, and programmatic challenges unique to the nonprofit sector. Through required coursework that combines multiple business management competencies with leadership skills and contextual understanding of the nonprofit sector, students will develop the business acumen and change management capabilities needed to successfully manage nonprofit operations. Through a required internship, practicum, and capstone, students will learn to apply theory to practice in real nonprofit environments. Graduates of the proposed program will be prepared to manage daily nonprofit operations, including supporting and managing fundraising campaigns, coordinating stakeholder engagement initiatives, developing projects to respond to community needs, and conducting reviews of program effectiveness. Graduates of the proposed program will be prepared to serve as effective managers across a diverse range of nonprofit organizations.

Nonprofit management education can be defined as “the broad range of academic-based educational programs building the capacity of nonprofit organizations and philanthropic institutions.”<sup>63</sup> Additionally:

This broad umbrella of degree programs prepares current and prospective nonprofit professionals for the distinctive managerial and leadership tasks of nonprofit organizations, highlighting areas such as social impact, multiple stakeholders, and a diverse revenue system as the distinctive features of nonprofit management. Traditionally, NME focuses on graduate education because it responds to the demand to

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<sup>63</sup> Weber, P.C. (2024). Nonprofit Management Education. In: List, R.A., Anheier, H.K., Toepfer, S. (eds) International Encyclopedia of Civil Society. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-99675-2\\_9596-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-99675-2_9596-1).

professionalize the staff, leadership, and managerial practices of nonprofit organizations...<sup>64</sup>

Nonprofit management balances an organization’s mission with resource acquisition and financial sustainability. It involves navigating stakeholder relationships to address social problems, which distinguishes it from business or government management.<sup>65</sup> The proposed MS degree program in Nonprofit Management responds to a need for graduate-trained professionals who can address the diverse business and operational needs of nonprofit organizations in Virginia and the region. Graduates will be prepared to apply management principles to multiple areas of nonprofit organizations’ operations while also prioritizing and communicating the mission and service focus of these institutions.

### **Time to Degree**

The proposed degree program would be offered in a non-standard format. William & Mary provided information about the design of the degree program. According to William & Mary’s proposal:

Students in the proposed MS in Nonprofit Management may attend full-time or part-time. Students will be expected to complete at least 18 credit hours in person at the William & Mary Washington Center, in Washington DC. Students may complete the remaining 12 credit hours on the main campus in Williamsburg, in person at the William & Mary Washington Center, or online. Summer enrollment will be required.

Students attending the program full-time will be expected to complete 6 credits in one summer term and 12 credits per semester during two (2) academic semesters. For full-time students, the program will take one (1) year (2 academic semesters and 1 summer term) to complete.

Students attending the program part-time will be expected to complete 6 credits in one summer term and 6 credits per semester during four (4) academic semesters. For part-time students, the program will take two (2) years (4 semesters and 1 summer term) to complete.

All requirements for the MS in Nonprofit Management degree must be completed within three (3) years from the date of admission to the degree program.

### **Justification for the Proposed Degree Program**

#### **Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand)**

William & Mary provided information for justification. According to William & Mary’s proposal:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Nonprofit organizations are an integral part of the U.S. economy. These organizations—from museums and social advocacy groups to healthcare providers and universities—can be found across all segments of the economy.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Weber, P.C. (2024). Nonprofit Management Education. In: List, R.A., Anheier, H.K., Toepler, S. (eds) International Encyclopedia of Civil Society. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-99675-2\\_9596-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-99675-2_9596-1). [https://link.springer.com/rwe/10.1007/978-3-319-99675-2\\_9596-1#citeas](https://link.springer.com/rwe/10.1007/978-3-319-99675-2_9596-1#citeas).

<sup>65</sup> Worth, M. J. (2024). *Nonprofit management: Principles and practice* (7th ed.). CQ Press.

<sup>66</sup> Friesenhahn, E (Jan 2024). Nonprofits: A look at national trends in establishment size and employment. Bureau of Labor Statistics Monthly Labor Review. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2024/article/nonprofits-a-look-at-national-trends-in-establishment-size-and-employment.htm>

Nationally, nonprofit organizations contribute more than \$1.5 trillion annually to the economy and employ over 12.5 million people, making the nonprofit sector workforce the third largest workforce in the country, behind only retail and manufacturing.<sup>67</sup> In Virginia and Washington DC, nonprofit organizations are essential service providers in areas such as healthcare, education, social services, and the arts, sustaining community well-being and civic engagement across the region. Nonprofit employment as a percentage of total private employment is 25% in Washington, DC, and 8.7% in Virginia according to the most recent available figures.<sup>68</sup>

As the nonprofit sector continues to evolve, its organizations face increasing demands for skilled leaders capable of addressing complex operational, budgetary, and regulatory challenges.<sup>69</sup> The development of specialized graduate programs in nonprofit management represents universities' response to a need for professionals who combine business management and nonprofit leadership skills. While nonprofit management education programs have existed for several decades and nonprofit management education has become more professionalized,<sup>70</sup> there remains an unmet need for nonprofit management education at the graduate level in Virginia that combines business management skills and principles with mission-focused nonprofit service delivery. While several private universities offer nonprofit management educational programs, there are currently no public universities in Virginia that offer a standalone master's degree focused specifically on nonprofit management education. The proposed degree program responds to an unmet need for nonprofit management education that combines business, community- and capacity-building, and leadership skills to address contemporary challenges in the nonprofit sector.

The proposed MS in Nonprofit Management aims to address current needs in Virginia and the nation by preparing professionally trained nonprofit managers who understand the intricate relationships among management, philanthropy, and community in a mission-based organizational context. The current needs in Virginia and nationally include a need for professionals who (1) are trained to identify and respond to contemporary challenges in the nonprofit sector, and (2) have specialized leadership skills in order to pursue leadership positions in nonprofit organizations.

### Addressing Contemporary Challenges in the Nonprofit Sector

Nonprofit organizations face contemporary challenges to conducting their work and fulfilling their missions. Unlike for-profit businesses, nonprofit organizations prioritize serving their publics and fulfilling their missions over efficient and profitable delivery of goods and services. In recent years, rising inflation and increased demand for services place stress on nonprofit budgets even as major sources of funding, such as donor giving and federal support, remain

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<sup>67</sup> Independent Sector (2023). The health of the U.S. nonprofit sector: 2023 annual review. Independent Sector. <https://independentsector.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023-Health-of-the-U.S.-Nonprofit-Sector-Annual-Review.pdf>, p. 4.

<sup>68</sup> Nonprofits accounted for 12.8 million jobs, 9.9 percent of private-sector employment, in 2022 (Aug 2024). Bureau of Labor Statistics The Economics Daily. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2024/nonprofits-accounted-for-12-8-million-jobs-9-9-percent-of-private-sector-employment-in-2022.htm>

<sup>69</sup> What do nonprofits need to make leadership development a priority? (July 18, 2014). Grantmakers of Effective Organizations. <https://www.geofunders.org/resource/what-do-nonprofits-need-to-make-leadership-development-a-priority/>

<sup>70</sup> Mirabella, R., Hoffman, T., Teo, T. K., & McDonald, M. (2019). The evolution of nonprofit management and philanthropic studies in the united states: Are we now a disciplinary field? *The Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*, 9(1) doi: <https://doi.org/10.18666/JNEL-2019-V9-I1-9598>

unpredictable. One national survey found that 73% of surveyed nonprofit leaders saw demand for their programs and services rise in the past 12 months, while at the same time 81% reported higher operating costs.<sup>71</sup> However, government funding for such programs and services has become difficult to predict. A 2025 nationally representative survey conducted by the Urban Institute, American University, and George Mason University found that one-third of nonprofits experienced government funding disruptions in the first half of 2025, including canceled funding agreements, payment freezes, and stop-work orders.<sup>72</sup> Among disrupted organizations, 23% reported decreasing their programs and 21% reduced the number of people they serve. Even nonprofits that do not receive government funding reported that these disruptions altered the broader philanthropic landscape, creating additional fundraising challenges. At the same time, two-thirds of all surveyed nonprofits anticipated that demand for their programs would increase over the following twelve months. The result is what the Urban Institute described as a widening gap between increasing demand for nonprofit services and organizations' ability to meet it.<sup>73</sup>

At the same time, organizations face heightened pressure to measure and communicate their impact. One recent survey of nonprofit organizations reported that 80% of respondents indicated the need was urgent for support in clarifying, measuring, and evaluating the results of their work.<sup>74</sup> An emphasis on measurable outcomes not only strengthens credibility but also helps organizations refine their strategies, allocate resources more efficiently, and demonstrate the broader value they provide to society.

The proposed program responds to current needs in Virginia and the nation for nonprofit managers who can respond to contemporary challenges unique to the nonprofit sector. Core and required courses will train students who are interested in pursuing careers in nonprofit organizations with the financial, data analytics, marketing, and fundraising skills necessary to manage complex business challenges in a mission-oriented nonprofit context. The proposed program provides specific business management knowledge and skills related to responding to increasing demand for services, budgeting in conditions of unpredictable funding sources, and business analytics to better track and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services. Students will learn how to respond to the contemporary challenges in the nonprofit sector while balancing the mission and community focus of nonprofits with solid business management skills. Through a combination of required coursework that responds to specific competencies identified by nonprofit professionals as critical to successful leadership,<sup>75</sup> and multiple

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<sup>71</sup> Nonprofit Leadership Survey Report 2024/2025 (Oct. 2024). Grassi. <https://www.grassiadvisors.com/premium-tools/2024-nonprofit-survey-resilience-in-the-face-of-rising-demands-and-costs/>

<sup>72</sup> Urban Institute, American University, and George Mason University, "How Government Funding Disruptions Affected Nonprofits in Early 2025," 2025 National Survey of Nonprofit Trends and Impacts, October 2025, <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/how-government-funding-disruptions-affected-nonprofits-early-2025>

<sup>73</sup> Urban Institute, American University, and George Mason University, "How Government Funding Disruptions Affected Nonprofits in Early 2025," 2025 National Survey of Nonprofit Trends and Impacts, October 2025, <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/how-government-funding-disruptions-affected-nonprofits-early-2025>

<sup>74</sup> Virginia Nonprofit Sector Report: 2023 Snapshot (2023). Charlottesville, VA: The Center for Nonprofit Excellence (CNE). <https://thecne.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-Virginia-Nonprofit-Sector-Report.pdf>, p. 23.

<sup>75</sup> Melville-Holder, J., Lawrence, K., Leight, M. D., Johnson, B. A., & Stewart, A. J. (2022). Preparing nonprofit professionals: An educational needs assessment from a worker perspective. *The Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*, 12(4) doi: <https://doi.org/10.18666/JNEL-2022-11450>, p 9.

experiential learning opportunities through an internship, practicum, and capstone, graduates will be equipped to respond to emerging and complex nonprofit management challenges.

### Specialized Leadership Skills

The nonprofit sector requires leadership skills that differ significantly from those in the private sector. In a recent survey of Virginia nonprofit leaders, 78% of respondents indicated there was an urgent need for growing leaders across their organization, citing lack of leadership pipelines as a primary reason that nonprofit organizations have difficulty recruiting and retaining talented staff.<sup>76</sup> The challenges that occur among Virginia’s nonprofit leaders also occur at the national level. A recent national survey of 500 nonprofit leaders found that 75% indicated having difficulty filling staff positions in the last year. As one respondent explained: “Meeting our challenges boils down to one thing: talent. We need leaders who can...run their part of the organization in a productive, efficient and financially stable way.”<sup>77</sup> However, many current nonprofit professionals lack formal training in the unique leadership skills required to lead in mission-driven organizations. A recent study surveying nonprofit professionals indicated that they felt that “on average nonprofit governance and leadership, ethics and values, nonprofit finance, finance management and accountability, and fundraising and resource development were the most important competencies”<sup>78</sup> The same study found that nonprofit professionals with at least a bachelor’s degree and those who were interested in pursuing a leadership position considered a graduate degree to be an important component to developing the competencies necessary to succeed in the nonprofit industry.<sup>79</sup> However, the study found that, among survey respondents in their sample, the percentage of nonprofit professionals who actually held a graduate degree was small. The authors indicated that interest in specialized graduate education exists, especially for those who seek leadership positions, even as barriers to earning a graduate degree remain.<sup>80</sup>

The proposed degree program will respond to the need for specialized leadership skills by preparing nonprofit professionals with the appropriate leadership skills and competencies to manage and lead in nonprofit organizations. The proposed program will prepare graduates who can communicate effectively, apply marketing principles to nonprofit contexts, and deploy information systems and data analytics to better manage staff and volunteer retention and satisfaction, to engage boards, and to identify new sources of funding and stakeholder support. The proposed program will add a new option for securing a graduate degree focused on nonprofit management skills among Virginians interested in pursuing management and leadership positions in the nonprofit sector.

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<sup>76</sup> Virginia Nonprofit Sector Report: 2023 Snapshot (2023). Charlottesville, VA: The Center for Nonprofit Excellence (CNE). <https://theene.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-Virginia-Nonprofit-Sector-Report.pdf>, p. 12.

<sup>77</sup> Buchanan, L., Broder, L., & Im, C. (2023). State of nonprofits 2023: What funders need to know. Center for Effective Philanthropy. [https://cep.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/NVP\\_State-of-Nonprofits\\_2023.pdf](https://cep.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/NVP_State-of-Nonprofits_2023.pdf)

<sup>78</sup> Melville-Holder, J., Lawrence, K., Leight, M. D., Johnson, B. A., & Stewart, A. J. (2022). Preparing nonprofit professionals: An educational needs assessment from a worker perspective. *The Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*, 12(4) doi:<https://doi.org/10.18666/JNEL-2022-11450>, p 9.

<sup>79</sup> Melville-Holder, J., Lawrence, K., Leight, M. D., Johnson, B. A., & Stewart, A. J. (2022). Preparing nonprofit professionals: An educational needs assessment from a worker perspective. *The Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*, 12(4) doi:<https://doi.org/10.18666/JNEL-2022-11450>, p. 12.

<sup>80</sup> Melville-Holder, J., Lawrence, K., Leight, M. D., Johnson, B. A., & Stewart, A. J. (2022). Preparing nonprofit professionals: An educational needs assessment from a worker perspective. *The Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*, 12(4) doi:<https://doi.org/10.18666/JNEL-2022-11450>, p. 14.

The proposed program is needed to prepare the next generation of nonprofit managers and leaders in diverse sectors of the nonprofit industry with the identified competencies and leadership skills necessary to manage the complex challenges that contemporary nonprofit organizations face in Virginia, the region, and the nation.

### Employment Demand

Information about employment demand for occupations aligned to the proposed degree program is provided by the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) “Degree Program Labor Market Profile” report.

Tables A and B below provide five-year workforce projections for the occupations most closely aligned to the proposed Master of Science (MS) in Nonprofit Management degree program. In both tables, the first column indicates the aligned occupations. The second column indicates the number of individuals employed in the occupation in 2024. The third column indicates the number of individuals projected to be employed in the occupation in 2029. The fourth column indicates the number of individuals projected to be added to the workforce by 2029 in comparison to the 2024 workforce.

Table B is specific to the institution’s Growth and Opportunity (GO) Virginia region. The localities in the GO Virginia region include the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg, and the counties of Accomack, Isle of Wight, James City, Northampton, Southampton, and York.

#### A) State Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Chief Executives	6,726	6,825	99	1.5%
General and Operations Managers	104,431	108,995	4,565	4.4%
Fundraising Managers	1,155	1,231	76	6.6%
Education Administrators, All Other	1,875	1,963	89	4.7%
Medical and Health Services Managers	10,895	12,798	1,903	17.5%
Social and Community Service Managers	4,044	4,371	327	8.1%

Managers, All Other	35,558	36,965	1,408	4.0%
Financial Specialists, All Other	6,048	6,264	215	3.6%

B) Regional (GO Virginia) Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Chief Executives	981	969	-12	-1.2%
General and Operations Managers	17,244	17,528	283	1.6%
Fundraising Managers	118	122	4	3.4%
Education Administrators, All Other	213	222	9	4.2%
Medical and Health Services Managers	2,222	2,537	315	14.2%
Social and Community Service Managers	785	829	44	5.6%
Managers, All Other	4,652	4,742	90	1.9%
Financial Specialists, All Other	1,224	1,235	11	0.9%

**Return on Investment**

Return on investment (ROI) information is provided by a calculation of ROI for graduate degree programs conducted by The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity. The data used in the ROI calculation classified degree programs at the four-digit CIP code level (for the proposed degree program, CIP code: 52.02). The ROI analysis was originally published in October 2021, and the data has not been updated.

William & Mary did not provide return-on-investment data for degree programs under the proposed CIP code for the MS in Nonprofit Management.

**Student Demand**

The summary of projected student enrollments for the proposed degree program predicts a headcount (HDCT) of five (5) in the program's first year (2026-2027), rising to a HDCT of 35 by the target year, 2030-2031. Enrollment projections predict a full-

time equated student enrollment (FTES) of five (5) in the degree program's first year. The projections continue as follows: FTES 2027-28, 11; 2028-29, 22; and 2029-30, 33. William & Mary anticipates 27 graduates per year beginning in 2030-31. If projections are met, then the proposed degree program will meet Council's existing productivity/viability standards within five years, as required.

William & Mary indicates the assumptions for the projected student enrollment are: Retention rate: 95%; Full-time students: 90%. Part-time students: 10%. Full-time students graduate in one (1) year. Part-time students graduate in two (2) years. Summer enrollment will be required.

William & Mary provided information to demonstrate student demand for the proposed degree program. According to William & Mary's proposal:

William & Mary prepared a survey to evaluate interest among current undergraduate students in the proposed degree program. On February 17, 2025, the Raymond A. Mason School of Business invited all 7,024 William & Mary undergraduate students to participate in the survey. The survey remained open for 11 days and was closed on February 28, 2025. 2,234 students completed the survey. Among the respondents, 896 were identified as college seniors and 623 were identified as college juniors by the William & Mary Office of Institutional Research by the name and university email address they provided in their survey responses. The proposed degree program would recruit from current William & Mary undergraduate juniors and seniors.

The survey asked respondents to rank how interested they were in enrolling in the proposed degree program on a scale of 1 (not interested) to 7 (extremely interested). 67 of survey respondents indicated that they were extremely interested, 112 of survey respondents indicated that they were very interested, and 216 of survey respondents indicated that they were interested in enrolling in the proposed degree program.

### **Duplication**

Eleven (11) public institutions in Virginia offer a related degree program: the College of William & Mary in Virginia (William & Mary), George Mason University (GMU), James Madison University (JMU), Longwood University (LU), Old Dominion University (ODU), Radford University (Radford), the University of Mary Washington (UMW), the University of Virginia (UVA), Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), Virginia State University (VSU), and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech).

William & Mary offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

William & Mary offers a Master of Public Policy (MPP) in Public Policy.

GMU offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

GMU offers a Master of Public Policy (MPP) in Public Policy.

JMU offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

LU offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

ODU offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

Radford offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

UMW offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

UVA offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

UVA offers a Master of Public Policy (MPP) in Public Policy.

VCU offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

VSU offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

Virginia Tech offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration.

William & Mary provided student enrollment and completion data for public institutions in Virginia that currently offer degree programs with the same CIP code, or names and/or curriculum requirements that are similar or related to the proposed degree program.

#### Enrollments and Degrees Awarded at Comparable Degree Programs in Virginia

<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Fall 2021</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>Fall 2023</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>	<b>Fall 2025</b>
College of William & Mary in Virginia (Master of Business Administration)	782	682	599	538	507
George Mason University (Master of Business Administration)	405	407	354	336	364
James Madison University (Master of Business Administration)	202	200	184	174	194
Longwood University (Master of Business Administration)	539	618	585	549	523

Old Dominion University (Master of Business Administration)	176	153	145	152	192
Radford University (Master of Business Administration)	55	74	116	154	133
University of Mary Washington (Master of Business Administration)	109	103	104	98	83
University of Virginia (Master of Business Administration)	1,024	954	1		
Virginia Commonwealth University Virginia State University (Master of Business Administration)	277	237	241	247	257
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Master of Business Administration)	287	258	260	242	226
College of William & Mary in Virginia (Master of Public Policy)	10	18	14	22	16
George Mason University (Master of Public Policy)	219	194	155	150	173
University of Virginia (Master of Public Policy)	157	133	151	140	166

<b>Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
College of William & Mary in Virginia (Master of Business Administration)	329	296	411	301	276
George Mason University (Master of Business Administration)	97	125	135	151	134
James Madison University (Master of Business Administration)	33	62	81	81	60
Longwood University (Master of Business Administration)	30	193	296	356	325
Old Dominion University (Master of Business Administration)	42	38	49	48	42
Radford University (Master of Business Administration)	16	29	29	35	68
University of Mary Washington (Master of Business Administration)	20	35	34	49	59
University of Virginia (Master of Business Administration)	468	537	483	471	

Virginia Commonwealth University					
Virginia State University (Master of Business Administration)	111	105	103	92	97
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Master of Business Administration)	126	120	146	131	159
College of William & Mary in Virginia (Master of Public Policy)	3	1	16	6	18
George Mason University (Master of Public Policy)	71	84	74	80	62
University of Virginia (Master of Public Policy)	89	94	78	91	78
College of William & Mary in Virginia (Master of Business Administration)	329	296	411	301	276
George Mason University (Master of Business Administration)	97	125	135	151	134

**\*Staff note.** In William & Mary’s original New Degree Program Proposal Form, no duplication information was provided. In the final proposal, William & Mary added duplication information. William & Mary erroneously identified VCU and VSU in the same row of both the enrollment section and the degree-awards section. The data provided in both sections are for VCU’s Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration and not VSU’s Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration. The information missing from the table is student enrollment data for VSU’s Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Business Administration which are: **Fall 2024, 64 and Fall 2025, 91**. Information regarding degree awards from VSU’s MBA in Business Administration is not yet available.

### **Projected Resources Needs for the Proposed Degree Program**

Projected revenue from tuition and educational and general fees (E&G) would support the proposed degree program. William & Mary's provost affirms the institution will not seek additional state resources to initiate and sustain the degree program.

### **Board Approval**

The William & Mary Board of Visitors approved the proposed degree program on September 21, 2025.

### **Staff Feedback**

In the final proposal, William & Mary did not fully address all feedback provided by staff regarding the original submission.

- In the initial submission, staff feedback noted that justification was not provided for the need in Virginia or the nonprofit sector for masters-level graduates with degrees in nonprofit management. The final proposal did not include any objective, cited evidence indicating the need for the proposed degree program.
- In the Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand) section of the final proposal, William & Mary wrote: "In a recent survey of Virginia nonprofit leaders, 78% of respondents indicated there was an urgent need for growing leaders across their organization, citing lack of leadership pipelines as a primary reason that nonprofit organizations have difficulty recruiting and retaining talented staff."<sup>81</sup> Staff feedback on the initial proposal indicated the cited report by The Center for Nonprofit Excellence did not appear to include evidence that nonprofit organizations have difficulty recruiting and retaining staff due to a lack of leadership pipelines. Further, staff indicated that it is not apparent how the information William & Mary provided or the cited report is relevant to the need for a master's degree in nonprofit management. The information was retained in the final submission and still could not be verified by staff, because the report does not reference leadership pipelines. The information also did not address or indicate a need for master's-level trained professionals for positions at nonprofit organizations.
- William & Mary wrote in the Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand) section: "However, many current nonprofit professionals lack formal training in the unique leadership skills required to lead in mission-driven organizations." Staff feedback on the initial proposal noted a source was not provided as evidence of the assertion. In the final proposal, William & Mary added text referencing a study and provided a quote: "A recent study surveying nonprofit professionals indicated that they felt that 'on average nonprofit governance and leadership, ethics and values, nonprofit finance, finance management and accountability, and fundraising and resource development were the most important competencies.'"<sup>82</sup> Staff cannot verify the accuracy of the quote or determine the relevancy to specific demand for the proposed degree program. The source of the quote is behind a paywall. William & Mary did not provide the

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<sup>81</sup> Virginia Nonprofit Sector Report: 2023 Snapshot (2023). Charlottesville, VA: The Center for Nonprofit Excellence (CNE). <https://thecne.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-Virginia-Nonprofit-Sector-Report.pdf>, p. 12.

<sup>82</sup> Melville-Holder, J., Lawrence, K., Leight, M. D., Johnson, B. A., & Stewart, A. J. (2022). Preparing nonprofit professionals: An educational needs assessment from a worker perspective. *The Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*, 12(4) doi: <https://doi.org/10.18666/JNEL-2022-11450>, p 9.

- publication as an appendix item as required by the New Degree Program Proposal Form.
- Staff feedback on the initial submission identified four issues with the student demand survey. William & Mary did not conduct a new survey for the final proposal. The survey is not valid for demonstrating student demand for the proposed degree program.
    1. One of the key survey questions was not phrased accurately. Prospective students should have been asked if they “would enroll” in the proposed degree program if William & Mary offered the degree program rather than, if they “would be interested in enrolling” which is a statement of preference inconsequential to a plan to act. Being interested in a degree program is not synonymous with the intention to actually enroll in the degree program if the degree program is available.
    2. The survey was not specific to the proposed degree program. Survey respondents were asked to indicate their interest in the proposed degree program, as well as a Master of Science (MS) in Cybersecurity and a Master of Science (MS) in Human Resource Management. Survey respondents had the option/ability to indicate interest in all three degree programs, despite the fact that ultimately they would be able to enroll in only one of the degree programs.
    3. The survey did not ask a demographic question to identify the class rank of respondents. Thus, it is not known whether the respondents who indicated they were “extremely interested,” “very interested,” or “interested” in enrolling in the proposed degree program are juniors or seniors and, therefore, represent valid respondents for demonstrating student demand for the proposed master’s degree program.
    4. The survey description of the proposed degree program did not include specific information about the proposed degree program that may have impacted participants’ responses, such as the total credit hours for the degree program, the length of time for students to complete the degree program, or the types of jobs for which graduates of the degree program would be qualified as a result of the proposed degree program.

### **Committee Action/Resolution**

Regarding the proposed degree program, the Committee possesses four (4) options: (i) act to approve, (ii) act to approve with condition(s), (iii) act to disapprove, or (iv) defer for action at a future meeting.

*If approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to The College of William & Mary in Virginia to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Nonprofit Management (CIP code: 52.0206), effective fall 2026.

*If approved with condition(s), amend the resolution above to include the condition(s), adopt the amended resolution and transmit it to Council.*

*If not approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia does not grant approval to The College of William & Mary in Virginia to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Nonprofit Management (CIP code: 52.0206).

*If deferred for future action, instruct that the Minutes reflect the Committee's invoking of its prerogative/option to take no action at this meeting and to defer action until a future meeting.*

**George Mason University**  
**Master of Science (MS) in Quantum Science and Engineering**  
**(CIP: 40.0810)**

**Degree Program Description**

George Mason University is proposing the creation of a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Quantum Science and Engineering to be initiated fall 2026. The proposed degree program would be jointly located in the College of Science, Office of the Dean and the College of Engineering and Computing, Office of the Dean.

The proposed MS in Quantum Science and Engineering would require 30-33 credit hours: 12 credit hours of core coursework; zero to six credit hours for foundational electives; 12-15 credits of restricted elective coursework; and a three-credit-hour capstone course.

GMU provided information for the degree program description. According to GMU's proposal:

The purpose of the proposed MS degree program in Quantum Science and Engineering is to prepare students with knowledge and skills in quantum technologies. Quantum technologies fall into three categories, 1) quantum communications (e.g., secure transmission of data with the detection of eavesdropping attempts, encryption systems), 2) quantum sensing (e.g., atomic clocks, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanners for medical imaging), and 3) quantum computing (e.g., next-generation computers that can solve complex problems currently intractable for classical computers).

Students will learn how quantum systems (e.g., quantum computers) process information, how quantum systems communicate with each other, and how ultra-precise quantum sensors work. Students will learn to translate abstract theory into an understanding of its implementation in working devices. Students will learn how to design, test, deploy, and maintain the next generation of quantum systems for communication, sensing, and computing. Graduates will be able to develop software tools for quantum computers, create standards and system-testing protocols, and determine which problems (e.g., within drug discovery) could be solved through the use of quantum computers.

Through the capstone course, students will gain experience working in professional research and development settings.

**Definition of Discipline**

GMU provided a definition for the discipline of the proposed degree program. According to GMU's proposal:

Quantum science and engineering is an emerging field at the intersection of mathematics, physics, computer science, and engineering. The field evolved from the study of quantum phenomena (physical behaviors that occur at the scale of atoms, electrons, and photons) into the current intersectional field which applies these phenomena to the creation of technologies for communications, sensing, and computing. Key examples of quantum phenomena include 1) superposition: a quantum system can exist in multiple states at the same time until it is measured, 2) entanglement: the properties of two or more quantum systems can be linked so that measuring one instantly determines the state of the other even if they are far apart, and 3)

quantization: certain physical properties, such as energy, can only take on specific discrete values rather than any value.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) defines quantum science and engineering as a field that “combine[s] an understanding of the unusual ways the universe works at the molecular, atomic and subatomic scales with ideas for applying that understanding to new technologies.” Quantum science and engineering is “exploring the nature of quantum phenomena, like entanglement, superposition and quantization, and applying that understanding to develop powerful computers, secure communications, better sensors and other technologies.”<sup>83</sup>

The proposed MS degree program is designed to prepare students to meet the demand for professionals with knowledge and skills in this emerging field.

## **Justification for the Proposed Degree Program**

### **Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand)**

GMU provided information for justification. According to GMU’s proposal:

Quantum technologies are advancing rapidly and are poised to reshape how people sense the world, communicate securely, and use computation to solve complex problems. As quantum technologies transform an increasing number of economic sectors, there is a growing demand for professionals who can determine the utility of quantum solutions to technical problems as well as professionals who can implement those quantum solutions.

The field of quantum science and engineering makes use of three key quantum technologies: communications, sensing, and computing. These three technologies are used to address a broad range of societal challenges. First, quantum communications is important for the secure transmission of information (e.g., banking information) across electronic networks. Current encryption, which uses classical computing to keep everything from credit card transactions to national security information secure, will eventually be at risk security breaches by quantum computers. The solution to this security challenge is quantum communications, which cannot be broken by a quantum computer.

The second technology, quantum sensing, aims to make more accurate measurements of the world with quantum sensors. Quantum sensors provide better measurements of magnetic fields, gravity, and time. Improving these measurements with quantum sensors will, for example, improve the ability to navigate without global positioning systems (GPS) which can be disrupted in war environments. Another example of a quantum sensor is magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), an important non-invasive medical imaging technology used, for example, in detecting tumors, identifying joint or spinal issues, and diagnosing diseases.

The third technology, quantum computing, is a new approach to computing that makes tractable previously infeasible problems in a wide range of fields, from drug discovery to weather forecasting. Quantum computing enables these problems to be solved through the quantum computer’s ability to process vastly larger amounts of data than a classical computer.

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<sup>83</sup> U.S. National Science Foundation, “Unlocking Big Technologies with Quantum-scale Science.” Accessed at <https://www.nsf.gov/impacts/quantum>

The proposed MS in Quantum Science and Engineering responds to the need in the Commonwealth of Virginia and nationally for professionals with advanced degrees in quantum science and engineering to work both with the industries developing these new technologies and with the industries that will use them. This need is driven by: 1) an acceleration in the development of these new quantum technologies, and 2) the knowledge gaps between quantum science (the conceptual understanding of how the world works at the smallest scales), engineering (an understanding of the methods used to develop and use new technologies), and the application areas (e.g., sensing for navigation, transmission of information over networks, or drug discovery).

### Market Demand for Quantum Technologies

The quantum technology sector is one of the fastest-growing advanced technology markets in the world, spanning the three core application areas: quantum communications, quantum sensing, and quantum computing. Growth is fueled by the rapid progress in the development of these technologies which are moving toward marketability. Quantum communications testbeds (small-scale quantum networks designed to prove the utility of the technology) have been developed and are growing toward marketability. Quantum sensors are being used in a variety of fields, such as biomedical, defense, and geophysics, and more field applications are being developed and deployed. Finally, quantum computing, still the furthest from marketable technology, has been meeting its benchmarks as it moves toward quantum advantage, the milestone where a quantum computer performs a practical, real-world task faster, more efficiently, or cheaper than the best-known classical supercomputer.

The Commonwealth of Virginia in general and Northern Virginia in particular are exceptionally well-positioned to benefit from the quantum technology economy as it expands. Virginia is home to more than 50 aerospace and defense companies in Fairfax County alone, including Northrop Grumman, General Dynamics, Booz Allen Hamilton, and Leidos. All of these companies are pursuing quantum technologies at their local offices, driving a need for professional expertise in this area. Northern Virginia is also an important area in terms of the diversification of the Virginia economy, which is noted in the Go Virginia Region 7 (Northern Virginia) Growth and Diversification Plan 2025 that identifies quantum as a priority industry for growth:

Northern Virginia must lean into its core advantage: its unmatched position at the intersection of national security and technological innovation. The region's proximity to federal agencies, research universities, and private-sector innovators creates a platform for global leadership in next-generation industries such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, quantum computing, energy tech, semiconductors, and life sciences. By leveraging these strengths while addressing critical gaps in capital, talent, and ecosystem connectivity, Northern Virginia can evolve from a government-driven economy into a global hub for next-generation technologies.<sup>84</sup>

The demand for quantum technologies in the marketplace, referred to as a “quantum economy,” has created a gap between the need for trained professionals in this field and the number of graduates who are trained to enter the workforce. “Without intervention, the nation

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<sup>84</sup> GO Virginia, Virginia Initiative for Growth & Opportunity. GOVA Region 7 Growth and Diversification Plan 2025. Accessed at [https://98b83404-fd93-4534-8830-d6a44c06bbdf.filesusr.com/ugd/668933\\_ca253b2c92c04b29897cff6a2eabb010.pdf](https://98b83404-fd93-4534-8830-d6a44c06bbdf.filesusr.com/ugd/668933_ca253b2c92c04b29897cff6a2eabb010.pdf)

risks developing useful quantum computing alongside a scarcity of practitioners who are capable of using quantum computers.” One of the aspects of what is needed is, “...a larger workforce capable of orchestrating quantum and classical computational resources in order to address domain-specific problems.” The workforce tackling the application of classical and quantum computing (as well as the application of sensing and communications technologies) needs knowledge and skills that extend beyond the bachelor’s level. “Because of the complexity of the subject area, learning pathways need to be established for learners to continue developing critical skills.”<sup>85</sup> The proposed degree program will produce graduates able to apply quantum technologies (quantum communications, sensing, and computing) to address domain specific problems in fields like finance or medical imaging.

### Bridging the Knowledge Gaps

Historically, quantum science has been taught within the physics curriculum and has focused on a theoretical understanding of the nature of the universe at the smallest scales. The development of this knowledge has been independent of the creation of new technologies based on these ideas. As the field of quantum science and engineering develops, quantum technologies are coming to the market. To be prepared to accelerate the development of quantum technologies and their application to a variety of use cases, a new interdisciplinary training model is needed. Students need more than just courses in mathematics, computer science, physics, and engineering, they need courses that pull together these topics with the quantum concepts that drive quantum technologies. For professionals working in the field of quantum science and engineering, “cross-disciplinary expertise is ideal. Quantum roles span physics, engineering and programming.”<sup>86</sup>

According to the National Science and Technology Council workforce development plan, “[m]uch of the workforce moving into QIST [quantum information science and technology, an alternative name for quantum science and engineering] employment is likely to come from computer science and engineering, electrical engineering, materials engineering, and other closely related fields. [...] the opportunity to retool for QIST via a QIST-focused master’s degree will be important.”<sup>87</sup>

To develop professionals who are able to learn complex quantum concepts and then to apply those concepts to solving a problem in drug discovery, navigation, or cybersecurity, a blend of knowledge and skills from mathematics, physics, engineering, and computing is required. To close the knowledge gap, the proposed MS degree program in Quantum Science and Engineering will produce graduates with skills integrating the physics, mathematics, engineering, and computing disciplines.

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<sup>85</sup>Issues in Science and Technology (2024). “Building the Quantum Workforce.” Accessed at <https://issues.org/building-quantum-workforce-education-dudley-brazil-forum/>. p. 4.

<sup>86</sup> Thompson, V. Forbes, “The Next High-Growth Tech Sector: Quantum Careers.” 2025. <https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesbusinesscouncil/2025/11/18/the-next-high-growth-tech-sector-quantum-careers/>. P 2.

<sup>87</sup> Subcommittee on Quantum Information Science of the Committee of Science of the National Science and Technology Council “Quantum Information Science and Technology Workforce Development National Strategic Plan,” (2022). Accessed at: <https://www.quantum.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/QIST-Natl-Workforce-Plan.pdf>, p 21.

## Employment Demand

Information about employment demand for occupations aligned to the proposed degree program is provided by the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) “Degree Program Labor Market Profile” report.

Tables A and B below provide five-year workforce projections for the occupations most closely aligned to the proposed Master of Science (MS) in Quantum Science and Engineering degree program. In both tables, the first column indicates the aligned occupations. The second column indicates the number of individuals employed in the occupation in 2024. The third column indicates the number of individuals projected to be employed in the occupation in 2029. The fourth column indicates the number of individuals projected to be added to the workforce by 2029 in comparison to the 2024 workforce.

Table B is specific to the institution’s Growth and Opportunity (GO) Virginia region. The localities in the GO Virginia region include the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park, and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William.

### A) State Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Natural Sciences Managers	1719	1826	107	6.2%

### B) Regional (GO Virginia) Labor Market Information for Aligned Occupations

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Workforce (2024)</b>	<b>Workforce (2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>	<b>Workforce % Change (2024 to 2029 projection)</b>
Natural Sciences Managers	818	841	23	2.8%

## Return on Investment

Return on investment (ROI) information is provided by a calculation of ROI for graduate degree programs conducted by The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity. The data used in the ROI calculation classified degree programs at the four-digit CIP code level (for the proposed degree program, CIP code: 40.08). The ROI analysis was originally published in October 2021, and the data has not been updated.

No return on investment data were available for the proposed MS in Quantum Science and Engineering.

## **Student Demand**

The summary of projected student enrollments for the proposed degree program predicts a headcount (HDCT) of nine (9) in the program's first year (2026-2027), rising to a HDCT of 37 by the target year, 2030-2031. Enrollment projections predict a full-time equated student enrollment (FTES) of six (6) in the degree program's first year. The projections continue as follows: FTES 2027-28, 11; 2028-29, 16; and 2029-30, 22. GMU anticipates eight (8) graduates per year beginning in 2030-31. If projections are met, then the proposed degree program will meet Council's existing productivity/viability standards within five years, as required.

GMU indicates the assumptions for the projected student enrollment are: Retention rate: 80%; Full-time students: 60%. Part-time students: 40%. Full-time students graduate in two (2) years. Part-time students graduate in three (3) years. Summer enrollment will not be required.

GMU provided information to demonstrate student demand for the proposed degree program. According to GMU's proposal:

Student demand for the proposed degree program is evidenced by a survey of George Mason University undergraduate students.

In October 2025, the College of Science Office of the Dean conducted a survey of undergraduate students currently enrolled in the following undergraduate degree programs in the College of Science and the College of Engineering and Computing: Applied Computer Science, BS; Astronomy, BS; Atmospheric Sciences, BS; Biology, BS; Chemistry, BS; Computational and Data Sciences, BS; Computer Engineering, BS; Computer Science, BS; Cyber Security Engineering, BS; Earth Science, BS; Environmental Science, BS; Forensic Science, BS; Geography, BS; Geology, BS; Mathematics, BS; Medical Laboratory Science, BS; Neuroscience, BS; and Statistics, BS. The survey was sent to students with "junior" or "senior" standing based on credit hour completion. The survey was sent to a total of 4,460 students. There were 2,357 verified opened emails. A total of 105 students completed the survey. Respondents were then confirmed as juniors or seniors based on their self-reported graduation date. Thirty-nine (39) respondents were determined to have "junior" status, and 23 respondents were determined to have "senior" status, for a total of 62 eligible respondents.

Of the 39 juniors who responded to the survey, four (4) students indicated they would "definitely" enroll in the MS in Quantum Science and Engineering degree program if it were offered. Seven (7) students indicated that they were "very likely" to enroll, nine (9) students indicated they were "likely" to enroll, and 10 students indicated they were "somewhat likely" to enroll.

Of the 23 seniors who responded to the survey, eight (8) students indicated they would "definitely" enroll in the MS in Quantum Science and Engineering degree program if it were offered. Three (3) students indicated that they were "very likely" to enroll, three (3) students indicated they were "likely" to enroll, and 3 students indicated they were "somewhat likely" to enroll in the degree program if it were offered at George Mason University.

### **Duplication**

One (1) public institution in Virginia offers a related degree program: Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

VCU offers a Master of Science (MS) in Physics and Applied Physics.

GMU provided student enrollment and completion data for public institutions in Virginia that currently offer degree programs with the same CIP code, or program names and/or curriculum requirements that are similar or related to the proposed degree program.

### **Enrollments and Degrees Awarded at Comparable Degree Programs in Virginia**

<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Fall 2021</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>Fall 2023</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>	<b>Fall 2025</b>
Virginia Commonwealth University	5	4	3	2	2
<b>Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Virginia Commonwealth University	2	1	1	0	1

### **Projected Resources Needs for the Proposed Degree Program**

Projected revenue from tuition and educational and general fees (E&G) would support the proposed degree program. GMU’s provost affirms the institution will not seek additional state resources to initiate and sustain the degree program.

### **Board Approval**

The GMU Board of Visitors approved the proposed degree program on December 4, 2025.

### **Staff Feedback**

In the final proposal, GMU did not fully address all feedback provided by staff regarding the original submission.

- Staff feedback on the initial submission indicated that GMU did not provide objective, cited evidence in the Response to Current Needs (Specific Demand) section to justify the need for the degree program at the degree level and in the discipline proposed. In the final proposal, GMU quoted and cited four publications. The information in one of the sources indicates a need for more graduates with a master’s degree in quantum science and engineering. The information in the other three sources does not indicate or demonstrate that a need exists for a master-level degree program in quantum science engineering. Further, neither of the three latter sources provides information that supports GMU’s assertions that a need exists for graduates with master’s degrees in quantum science engineering. For example, GMU asserts:

Virginia is home to more than 50 aerospace and defense companies in Fairfax County alone, including Northrop Grumman, General Dynamics, Booz Allen Hamilton, and Leidos. All of these companies are pursuing quantum technologies at their local offices, driving a need for professional expertise in this area.

Objective, cited evidence was not provided to support the claim. Staff could not verify that the indicated aerospace and defense companies are pursuing quantum technologies, nor that the companies are in need of master-level graduates with degrees in quantum science and engineering. In addition, GMU did not provide citations for all quoted statements. In particular, the source was not provided for the quote, "Without intervention, the nation risks developing useful quantum computing alongside a scarcity of practitioners who are capable of using quantum computers." Staff could not verify the quote or whether the information justifies the need for the proposed degree program.

### **Committee Action/Resolution**

Regarding the proposed degree program, the Committee possesses four (4) options: (i) act to approve, (ii) act to approve with condition(s), (iii) act to disapprove, or (iv) defer for action at a future meeting.

*If approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to George Mason University to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Quantum Science and Engineering (CIP code: 40.0810), effective fall 2026.**

*If approved with condition(s), amend the resolution above to include the condition(s), adopt the amended resolution and transmit it to Council.*

*If not approved, adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia does not grant approval to George Mason University to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Quantum Science and Engineering (CIP code: 40.0810).**

*If deferred for future action, instruct that the Minutes reflect the Committee's invoking of its prerogative/option to take no action at this meeting and to defer action until a future meeting.*

## State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** I.C – Academic Affairs Committee – Action to Reconsider a Prior Action:  
Whether to Remove Conditions on an Approved Degree Program at a Public  
Institution

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2026

**Presenter:** Dr. Alan Edwards  
Director of Academic Affairs and Strategic Planning  
[alanedwards@schev.edu](mailto:alanedwards@schev.edu)

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

- No previous Council review/action  
 Previous review/action

**Date:** March 16-17, 2026

**Action:** The Committee of the Whole (March 16) and the Council (March 17) approved, with conditions, a new Master’s degree program at The College of William and Mary in Virginia (William & Mary).

**Purpose of this Agenda Item:**

The purposes of this agenda item are: (i) to inform Council of recent developments and new information regarding a degree program at a public institution that Council approved with conditions; and (ii) afford an opportunity for Council to act to remove, amend/continue, or add conditions on the approved degree program.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

**Background:** On March 17, 2026, Council approved, with conditions, a new degree program proposed by William and Mary. Council’s resolution to conditionally approve the degree program reads:

*Be it resolved that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants conditional approval to The College of William and Mary in Virginia to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Computational Operations Research (CIP code 27.0304), effective Fall 2026. This approval is conditional upon the institution working with SCHEV staff to resolve the issues of appropriate degree program name, CIP code, purpose of the degree program, and labor market/employment demand.*

**New Information:** Since the March meeting, SCHEV staff and W&M staff have worked to address and resolve the four issues on which Council conditioned its approval of the degree program.

Issue 1: Appropriate Degree-Program Name. At its meeting on April 24, 2026, the William & Mary Board of Visitors approved a new name for this Master of Science (MS) degree program – Computational and Applied Mathematics. This new program name is articulated in the updated, final proposal document in SCHEV files. The program name, “Computational and Applied Mathematics,” accurately and appropriately reflects the degree program’s curriculum, which has been revised to offer two (2) concentration areas: Operations Research and Student Designed. The Operations Research concentration would allow the faculty to offer coursework focused on this field, and the Student Designed concentration would allow students to select specific courses to design a focus area to support career aspirations.

Issue 2: CIP Code. Because the degree program’s new name aligns appropriately with the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code initially selected by William & Mary and conditionally approved by Council, no change to the degree program’s approved CIP code is warranted. The CIP code for the degree program would remain 27.0304.

Issue 3: Purpose of the Degree Program. Given the curricular revisions and the program-name change, the updated, final proposal’s stated purpose for the degree program is reasonable and reasonably clear; specifically, the degree program’s name and curriculum now align with the articulated purpose “to prepare students to identify, analyze, and solve real-world problems through an interdisciplinary approach combining computational methods with mathematical modeling, applied statistics, and domain knowledge.” As such, Council’s condition related to the degree program’s purpose has been reasonably addressed and resolved.

Issue 4: Labor Market/Employment Demand. Information regarding employment demand for holders of Master’s degrees in computational and applied mathematicians is not readily available. Information available from the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) is limited to mathematicians and statisticians generally. For the GO (Growth and Opportunity) Virginia region in which William & Mary is located, the five-year projections for mathematicians and statisticians is -2.9% and 4.5%, respectively. However, for the state labor market, the five-year projection for mathematicians is 2.7% and for statisticians is 6.0%. This information projects that jobs should be available in Virginia for graduates of the degree program. As such, Council’s condition related to labor-market demand for graduates of the degree program has been reasonably resolved.

Conclusion: Since Council’s conditional approval in March, William and Mary has worked with SCHEV staff to resolve Council’s concerns regarding the degree program’s name, CIP code, purpose, and labor market/employment demand. Based on the information above, all four of the issues identified in Council’s conditional approval have been reasonably addressed and resolved.

**Board Approval:**

The William & Mary Board of Visitors approved the degree program under the initial name on September 26, 2025. The Board approved the new name for the degree program on April 24, 2026.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

At this meeting, if Council reconsiders its prior action by removing the conditional approval and affirming an unconditional approval, then no further review or action will be required. However, if Council either retains the conditional approval or affirms a new conditional approval, then SCHEV staff will bring forward another conditional-approval reconsideration item for Council discussion and potential action at a future meeting, following work with W&M staff to address and resolve any new and/or remaining issues.

**Committee Action/Resolutions:**

Regarding the conditionally-approved degree program, the Committee possesses three options: (i) act to reconsider the conditional approval and adopt an unconditional approval; (ii) act to reconsider the conditional approval and adopt a new conditional approval; or (iii) defer action on the conditional approval until the Committee is satisfied that all of the conditions have been resolved.

*If reconsidering the conditional approval and adopting an unconditional approval, then members will need to move and second a motion to reconsider the conditional approval and, if a reconsideration for full approval is decided, then adopt the following resolution and transmit it to Council:*

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia removes the conditions of its approval of March 17, 2026, and grants approval to The College of William and Mary in Virginia to offer a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Computational and Applied Mathematics (CIP code: 27.0304), effective fall 2026.

*If reconsidering the conditional approval and adopting a new conditional approval, then members will need to move and second a motion to reconsider the conditional approval and, if a reconsideration for additional conditional approval is decided, then adopt a resolution that articulates the new, amended, and/or remaining conditions and transmit that resolution to Council.*

*If deferring action at this time, instruct that the Minutes reflect the Committee's invoking of its option to take no action at this meeting and to defer action until a future meeting.*

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** I.D. – Academic Affairs Committee – Discussion of Council’s Duty regarding the Assessment of Student Learning at Public Institutions

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2026

**Presenter:** Dr. Alan Edwards  
Director of Academic Affairs and Strategic Planning  
[alanedwards@schev.edu](mailto:alanedwards@schev.edu)

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

- No previous Council review/action
- Previous review/action

**Date:** July 18, 2017

**Action:** Council adopted the current policy, “Policy on Student Learning Assessment and Quality in Undergraduate Education.”

**Purpose of this Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item is to review Council’s statutory duty and existing policy related to student-learning assessment as the first step toward development of a new policy and associated “core competencies.”

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

As articulated in § 23.1-203 of the *Code of Virginia*, Council’s tenth statutory duty is:

*In cooperation with public institutions of higher education, develop guidelines for the assessment of student achievement. Each such institution shall use an approved program that complies with the guidelines of the Council and is consistent with the institution's mission and educational objectives in the development of such assessment. The Council shall report each institution's assessment of student achievement in the revisions to the Commonwealth's statewide strategic plan for higher education.*

In July 2017, Council adopted its current policy, [Policy on Student Learning Assessment and Quality in Undergraduate Education](#), in fulfillment of its statutory responsibility. This policy requires that public institutions assess six core competencies, four of which – critical thinking; written communication; quantitative reasoning; and civic engagement – are required, and two of which are additional competencies that each institution selects for itself and that must “reflect ongoing institutional priorities for student learning and development, and ... [must] be broadly applicable across an institution’s student population.”

Following Council's adoption of a new program-approval policy in 2025 and its adoption of a new program-productivity policy in 2026, a logistical next consideration for review and updating is Council's learning-assessment/student-achievement policy.

Staff held an initial discussion of these matters with public institutions' chief academic officers during the May 1 meeting of the Instructional Programs Advisory Committee. A summary of that discussion will be provided on May 11 (because the IPAC meeting occurred after creation of this Agenda Book).

On May 11, staff welcome Council members' input regarding student learning, competencies, the assessment thereof, and how best to work "[i]n cooperation with public institutions of higher education," as required in the statute. This discussion is intended as the first of many, and Council's initial input will shape how staff proceeds and frames these issues.

**Materials Provided:** N/A

**Financial Impact:** N/A

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Staff anticipates discussion and activity throughout 2026, culminating in Council action on a new policy in either late 2026 or early 2027.

**Resolution:** N/A

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** I.E. – Academic Affairs Committee – Report of the Staff Liaison to the Academic Affairs Committee

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2026

**Presenter:** Dr. Alan Edwards  
Director of Academic Affairs & Strategic Planning  
[alanedwards@schev.edu](mailto:alanedwards@schev.edu)

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

- No previous Council review/action  
 Previous review/action

**Date:**

**Action:**

**Purpose of Agenda Item:**

Staff activities report.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

N/A

**Materials Provided:**

“Report of the Staff Liaison to the Academic Affairs Committee,” by Dr. Alan Edwards.

**Financial Impact:**

N/A

**Relationship to Goals of *The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*:**

N/A

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

N/A

**Resolution:**

N/A

Dr. Alan Edwards  
Director of Academic Affairs & Strategic Planning

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**Instructional Programs Advisory Committee**

The Instructional Programs Advisory Committee (IPAC), convened by Dr. Edwards, met on January 16, March 6, and May 1. The committee consists of the chief academic officers of the public institutions. Chairperson Taylor participated in the January meeting. The agendas included discussion of the program-productivity policy, student-learning assessment, and six-year-plan-update process. Staff provided updates on various topics, including the new statewide strategic plan and the 2026 legislative session.

**Orientation Session for Schools Seeking Certification**

Staff of the Private Postsecondary Education (PPE) unit conducted orientations for two groups of prospective school owners (October 7 and April 7). These sessions are the first step in the application process for entities seeking certification to operate a postsecondary school in Virginia. Staff presented participants with an overview of the laws and regulations pertaining to the operation of a private postsecondary school and a summary of the certification process. The orientation sessions also included detailed instructions on completing the certification application. In October, six representatives from degree-granting institutions participated, as did representatives of 14 vocational schools. In April, attendees included eight participants from degree-granting institutions and 17 representatives of vocational schools.

**Open Virginia Advisory Committee**

The Open Virginia Advisory Committee (OVAC), coordinated by Dr. Pantazis, met January 16, March 20, and April 17. The committee includes representatives from public two- and four- year institutions. The agendas included discussion of how to increase institution engagement, aligning committee work with the new statewide strategic plan, and the second annual Open Education Resource Impact Award funded by the Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA).

**State Committee on Transfer**

The State Committee on Transfer (SCT), convened by Dr. Smith, met on February 19 and May 1. The SCT includes representatives from all public two- and four-year institutions as well as several representatives from private four-year institutions. Topics included the Passport and Uniform Certificate of General Studies, SCHEV legislative updates, and changes to the Transfer Virginia Portal.

**Virginia-SARA Advisory Committee**

The annual meeting of the Virginia SARA (State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements) Advisory Committee, organized by Ms. Derricott and Ms. Hills, was held on November 6. As mandated in statute, the committee consists of representatives from each Virginia SARA institution (78 in total). This year’s program included a presentation on federal

regulatory actions in higher education, as well as presentations from staff of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the State Authorization Network (SAN). Topics included best practices for 2026 policy changes, federal regulations, automating the disclosure process and completing the renewal application process.

### **Disabilities Access to Higher Education Advisory Committee**

The Disabilities Access to Higher Education Advisory Committee, coordinated by Ms. Salmon, met January 16 and April 16. The committee is composed of student representatives as well as a variety of professionals from higher education, state agencies and organizations involved in supporting individuals with disabilities. Topics included pertinent legislation, the development of a best practices index of supports for students with disabilities, and agreement on an action plan to focus the committee's work for a two-year period.

### **Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership**

The Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP) issued calls for proposals for three grant opportunities: Student Support and Access Grants; Work-Based Learning (WBL) Comprehensive Data Collection Grants; and Transforming Federal Work-Study (FWS) and On-Campus Jobs Grants. Awardees in the first two competitions will have been announced between the publication of this document and the meeting on May 11. Staff also provided training for the institution-led partners, participated in stakeholder meetings in several regions, and presented at the conference of the Virginia Association of Colleges and Employers (VACE), during which Ms. Sutphin received the gavel as incoming VACE president, effective July 1.

### **Staff Activities and Recognition**

#### **Alisha Bazemore**

- Serves as Co-Chair and Co-Facilitator of the VA Works Work-Based Learning (WBL) Moonshot Working Group (February-March and ongoing).
- Served as a panelist at: (i) the Cooperative Education and Internship Association (CEIA) Conference (April 14, Alexandria) on Virginia's regional work-based learning (WBL) approach; and (ii) SHEEO's Inaugural Economic and Workforce Development Convening (April 15, Chicago) on expanding WBL and state goals, alongside the Washington Student Achievement Council and the State University of New York (SUNY).
- Appointed and serves as Co-Chair of the Experiential Education Knowledge Group for the Southern Association of Colleges and Employers (SoACE), representing SCHEV in ongoing meetings.

#### **Taylor Clark**

- Attended the National Conference for Higher Education in Prisons (NCHEP): Beyond Access (April 7-11, Cleveland). The conference offered a variety of sessions to include building student voice groups in prisons, funding options beyond federal Pell, and expanding access for incarcerated learners.

- Coordinated with prison-education practitioners in Virginia to develop a webinar series targeting four-year institutions and to increase awareness of prison education programs.
- Served as a reviewer for the Virginia Department of Education's 2026 Adult Education grant competition.

#### Darlene Derricott

- Attended the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) S-SARA Regional Steering Committee Meeting (October 28-30, Atlanta). Attendees discussed the policy modification process, received an update from national SARA leadership, and voted to approve SREB member state's continued membership in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

#### Darlene Derricott and Emily Hils

- Attended the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Academic Common Market State (ACM) Coordinators Meeting (April 8, Atlanta). State Coordinators discussed annual reporting, best practices for reviewing programs, policy updates, and statewide program awareness. Coordinators received training on the new ACM database and discussed best practices.

#### Alan Edwards

- Convened three meetings of the Instructional Programs Advisory Committee (IPAC; January 16, March 6, and May 1).
- Represented SCHEV at: (i) the Business-Higher Education Forum's (BHEF's) Roundtable on Work-Integrated Learning at Scale (January 29); and (ii) the Virginia Sea Grant's (VSG's) meeting of its Research and Education Advisory Committee (February 11, Richmond).
- Provided opening remarks at: (i) V-TOP's kick-off training with its new institution-led (regional) partnerships (January); and (ii) the February 19 meeting of the State Committee on Transfer (SCT).

#### Sandra Freeman

- Served as a panelist at the National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools (NASASPS) Fall Workshop (Chicago) in a session on how various states are approaching site visits in today's regulatory environment, highlighting the use of tools, transparency, and flexibility.
- Attended the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) Conference (March 19-20, New Orleans) to gain insights into how PPE/SCHEV can better monitor and support health education programs.
- Attended the NASASPS Annual Meeting (April 19–22, Dallas), which included collaboration with peers on regulatory practices, oversight, and policy trends.
  - Was elected to the NASASPS Board, expanding SCHEV's national engagement and leadership role.

- Was joined by Ms. Welch and Ms. Kincheloe, supporting broader staff development and participation.

#### Lauren Jackson

- Presented at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) annual conference (April 15) on Embedding Career Readiness into Research.
- Co-presented at: (i) the Virginia Micro-Internship Experience launch webinar (April 2); (ii) the CEIA Conference on Innovative Statewide Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) Initiatives in Virginia (April 13); and (iii) the Virginia Association of Colleges and Employers (VACE) Conference (April 24) on transforming WIL experiences in higher education.
- Facilitated the Virginia Intern Day Student Ambassador Orientation (April 28).

#### Emily Muniz

- Attended and presented at: (i) the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) 2025 annual conference (September 18-20, Columbus, OH) on transfer pathways and the Transfer Virginia initiative; (ii) the Virginia Tribal Education Consortium (VTEC) annual conference (October 2-3, Richmond) on college preparation, including elements of Transfer Virginia, and career readiness; and (iii) the Virginia Community College System's (VCCS) New Horizons conference (April 15-17, Roanoke) on Transfer Virginia with a focus on faculty engagement and the Transfer Virginia portal.
- Attended the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Higher Education Transforming the Transfer Experience Workshop (April 13-14, Asheville).

#### Paul Smith

- Participated in meetings of a VCCS committee on the development of a practical nursing common curriculum (January 29-30 and February 26-27) as required in legislation from 2025, which must be implemented by July 1.
- Attended the Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) Dual Enrollment Advisory Panel (DEAP) (December 12, virtual). Topics from the meeting included a presentation on the North Carolina Career and College Promise initiative and a discussion of leading dual enrollment practices across SREB states.
- Presented at the National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Programs (NACEP) winter summit (February 15-17, South Padre Island) using a case study of SCHEV's approach to the development, implementation, and evaluation of transfer and dual enrollment policy.

#### Emily Salmon

- Represented SCHEV at: (i) the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Community of Practice on Work-Based Learning (March); (ii) the Virginia Space Grant Consortium (VSGC) Advisory Council regular meetings and the student research conference (April 7); and (iii) the Virginia STEM Education Advisory Board quarterly meeting (February 20).
- Presented at the Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (VASFAA) conference (April) on the statewide strategic plan.

#### Carolyn Sutphin

- Presented at: (i) the National Mentoring Summit (February 4-6, Washington) on boosting the impact of mentoring through observation and elevation; (ii) Virginia Tech's 16th Annual Academic Advising Conference (March 6) on the importance of academic advisors integrating mentorship at their institutions; and (iii) the VACE Conference (April 22) on being a successful mentor.
  - Co-presented at the VACE Conference (April 23) on transforming WIL experiences in higher education.
  - Was recognized at the VACE Conference with the passing of the gavel as incoming VACE president, effective July 1.
- Participated in The Future of Talent Summit (March 5, Roanoke College).

## **Academic Affairs and Strategic Planning Staff (Alan Edwards, Director)**

### *Innovative Work-Based Learning Initiatives*

Dr. Alisha Bazemore, Assistant Director for Innovative WBL Initiatives  
 Ms. Jessica Castle, Work-Based Learning Analyst Assistant  
 Ms. Stacey Garnett, V-TOP Financial Services Specialist  
 Ms. Courtney Hagan, Work-Based Learning Analyst  
 Dr. Lauren Jackson, Associate for Innovative Work-Based Learning Initiatives  
 Ms. Miracline Jeyaraj, Work-based Learning Analyst Assistant  
 Ms. Geneda Kearney, Innovative Work-based Learning Assistant  
 Mr. Sam Ratcliffe, V-TOP Work-Based Learning Specialist  
 Ms. Carolyn Sutphin, Associate for Innovative Work-Based Learning Initiatives

### *Public Sector Academic Affairs*

Ms. Karen Banks, Academic Affairs Support Specialist  
 Ms. Darlene Derricott, Senior Coordinator, Academic Services  
 Ms. Alexis Gravely, Associate for Academic Affairs  
 Ms. Emily Hils, Academic Programs and Services Specialist  
 Ms. Emily Muniz, Associate for Transfer and Talent Pathways  
 Dr. Monica Osei, Associate Director for Academic Programs & Instructional Sites  
 Dr. Kirstin Pantazis, Associate for Academic Affairs  
 Dr. Paul Smith, Senior Associate for Student Mobility Policy & Research  
 Ms. Jaime Whitt, Academic Program Assistant

### *Private Postsecondary Education*

Mr. Richard Cole, Compliance Specialist  
 Dr. Joe DeFilippo, Special Assistant for Postsecondary Ed. and Regulation  
 Ms. Sandra Freeman, Director, Private Postsecondary Education  
 Mr. Ryan Hannifin, Associate for Academic Quality and Student Protections  
 Ms. Elizabeth Howard, Associate for Academic Quality and Student Protections  
 Ms. Kathleen Kincheloe, Certification Specialist  
 Ms. Monica Lewis, Fiscal Specialist  
 Ms. Sylvia Rosa-Casanova, Senior Associate for Private Postsecondary Education  
 Ms. Stephanie Shelton, Administrative Assistant  
 Ms. Lindsay Welch, Associate for Academic Quality and Student Protections  
 Mr. Alfonso Wells, Compliance Investigator

*Strategic Planning & Policy Studies*

Ms. Taylor Clark, Associate for Strategic Planning & Policy Studies

Ms. Emily Salmon, Assistant Director of Strategic Planning & Policy Studies

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** II.B.- Resources and Planning Committee – Update on Institutional Performance Standards

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2026

**Presenters:** Jessica Minnis-McClain  
Associate, Finance Policy & Innovation  
Jessicaminnis-mcclain@schev.edu

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

- No previous Council review/action  
 Previous review/action

**Date:** May 12, 2025

**Action:** Council certified for FY2026 that Longwood University, Old Dominion University, and University of Virginia's College at Wise, have satisfactorily met the performance standards of the Virginia Higher Education Opportunity Act and the Appropriation Act. This action completed the 2024 evaluation process.

**Purpose of Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item is to provide background information in preparation for the 2026 biennial assessment of institutional performance to be presented to Council at the July meeting.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

The following information provides background regarding the institutional performance standards process.

**Assessment of Institutional Performance Standards (IPS)**

SCHEV began assessing the performance of public institutions through the Institutional Performance Standards (IPS) beginning in 2005 as part of the Higher Education Restructuring Act and later through the Virginia Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2011 (Top Jobs Act or TJ21).

The [Appropriation Act of 2024-26](#) (Chapter 1, under General Provisions) outlines the IPS assessment process. The assessment includes six education-related measures and a review of financial and administrative standards.

The following text relates to SCHEV's responsibilities:

*In general, institutions are expected to achieve all performance measures in order to be certified by SCHEV, but it is understood that there can be*

*circumstances beyond an institution's control that may prevent achieving one or more performance measures. The Council shall consider, in consultation with each institution, such factors in its review: (1) institutions meeting all performance measures will be certified by the Council and recommended to receive the financial benefits, (2) institutions that do not meet all performance measures will be evaluated by the Council and the Council may take one or more of the following actions: (a) request the institution provide a remediation plan and recommend that the Governor withhold release of financial benefits until Council review of the remediation plan or (b) recommend that the Governor withhold all or part of financial benefits.*

*Further, the State Council shall have broad authority to certify institutions as having met the standards on education-related measures. The State Council shall likewise have the authority to exempt institutions from certification on education-related measures that the State Council deems unrelated to an institution's mission or unnecessary given the institution's level of performance.*

*The State Council may develop, adopt and publish standards for granting exemptions and ongoing modifications to the certification process.*

Four of the education-related measure the institutions' ability to provide reliable enrollment, degree, and retention projections. The emphasis is on the accuracy of **projections** for future years and not on the actual outcomes.

- 1. HEADCOUNT – Institution meets at least 95 percent of its State Council approved biennial projections for in-state undergraduate headcount enrollment.*
- 2. DEGREE AWARDS – Institution meets at least 95 percent of its State Council approved biennial projections for the number of in-state associate and bachelor degree awards.*
- 3. STEM-H DEGREE AWARDS – Institution meets at least 95 percent of its State Council-approved biennial projections for the number of in-state STEM-H (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Health professions) associate and bachelor degree awards.*
- 4. PROGRESSION AND RETENTION – Institution meets at least 95 percent of its State Council-approved biennial projections for the number of in-state, upper level – sophomore level for two-year institutions and junior and senior level for four-year institutions – program-placed, full-time equivalent students.*

The remaining two education measures are on narrowly focused outcomes rather than overall institutional performance.

- 5. DEGREES FOR UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS – Maintain or increase the number of in-state associate and bachelor degrees awarded to students from underrepresented populations.*
- 6. TWO-YEAR TRANSFERS – Maintain or increase the number of in-state two year transfers to four-year institutions. Special Note: Virginia Military*

*Institute (VMI) has an alternative measure, commissioning rate, for this performance measure.*

Institutions that meet certification criteria are eligible to receive financial benefits from the state. The appropriate amount for 2025 is \$21.5 million and \$12.1 million for 2026. The years under review for the 2026 Biennial Assessment are 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Next Steps: At Council's July meeting, staff will present the preliminary results for the six general education-related performance measures. The Financial and Administrative Standards reviews are underway by the Department of Planning and Budget. Staff anticipate receiving this information from the Office of the Secretary of Finance in late August. At Council's September meeting, staff will present the financial and administrative standards along with recommendations for certification of both academic and financial measures.

**Materials Provided:** None.

**Financial Impact:** Certified institutions are eligible to receive financial benefits.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** Council action is scheduled for September, 2026.

**Resolution:** None.

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** II.C. – Resources and Planning Committee – Update on Six-Year Plan Process for 2026

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2026

**Presenters:** Grace Khattar  
Assistant Director of Finance Policy and Government  
Relations GraceKhattar@schev.edu

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

No previous Council review/action

Previous review/action

**Date:** September 15, 2025

**Action:** Council reviewed the 2025 Six-Year Plan submissions including overall themes and trends.

**Purpose of Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item is to provide Council with background information in advance of the 2026 six-year plan process. The formal two-year plan is submitted in odd numbered years, this year's process permits updates to the institutions' plans submitted in 2025.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

The following information provides background related to institutional performance and planning.

**Six-Year Plan Process**

SCHEV is responsible for facilitating the six-year planning process as outlined in [§ 23.1-306](#). Public institutions develop the plans "in a manner and method prescribed by the Council." These plans are reviewed by a six-member group delineated in statute – Director of the Department of Planning and Budget; Secretary of Finance; Secretary of Education; Staff Director of the House Committee on Appropriations; Staff Director of the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee; and the Executive Director of SCHEV -- referred to colloquially as Op-Six, as the plans are operating plans.

Institutions develop, and board approve, six-year plans in odd-numbered years, to inform the preparation of the next biennial budget. In even-

numbered years, such as this year, plans may be updated, if necessary, and (re)affirmed by boards.

The templates provided by the state for institutions' plans contain two parts: an Excel workbook (Part I); and a narrative Word document (Part II). In even-numbered years, institutions are required only to update Part I, but may update Part II if desired. Part I includes eight sections (spreadsheets) to capture the following data:

1. ***In-state Undergraduate Tuition and Fee Plan.*** Institution provides any planned annual increases in in-state undergraduate tuition and mandatory Educational and General (E&G) fees and mandatory non-E&G fees for the biennium.
2. ***Tuition and Other Nongeneral Fund (NGF) Revenue.*** Based on assumptions of no new general fund, enrollment changes and other institution-specific conditions, the institution provides total collected or projected-to-collect revenues (after discounts and waivers) by student level and domicile (including tuition revenue used for financial aid), and other NGF revenue for E&G programs; and mandatory non-E&G fee revenues from in-state undergraduates and other students, as well as the total auxiliary revenue.
3. ***Financial Aid.*** Institution provides a breakdown of the projected source and distribution of tuition and fee revenue redirected to financial aid.
4. ***Academic-Financial Plan.*** Institution specifies the academic, financial and support-service strategies it intends to employ in meeting state needs/goals in the statewide strategic plan. Traditionally, Op-Six has advised institutions to use a planning assumption of no new general fund to support the strategies.
5. ***Six-Year Pro Forma.*** Spreadsheet populated by the revenue and financial sheets to calculate a pro forma budget surplus/deficit for six years.
6. ***General Fund (GF) Request.*** Institution provides information on items for which it anticipates making a request for state general-fund support in the upcoming biennium. An item can be a supplement to a planned strategy; an item from the Academic-financial plan; or a free-standing request for which no tuition revenue would be used.
7. ***Capital Request.*** This section indicates E&G capital projects for which the institution anticipates making a request for state general fund in the upcoming biennium to complete a project. Projects should include planning costs and then funding for construction.
8. ***Degree Programs.*** Each institution is required to indicate which degree and/or certificate programs the institution plans to establish, grow, and close in the upcoming biennium to be included in the Six-Year Plan table.

Part II contains more-detailed information about Part I data, as well as additional topics such as enrollment projections, new academic programs,

major capital outlay projects, status updates of previous plans' strategies, suggestions for improving efficiencies and economic development efforts.

The traditional even-year schedule for the six-year plan process has been:

- **May 1** – Templates and instructions are sent to institutions.
- **July 1** – Institutions submit updated plans.
- **Late August** – Op-Six holds a one-day meeting to discuss any updates to the plans and to draft comments to institutions on their updated plans.
- **September 1** – Op Six sends its comments to the institutions.
- **October 1** – Institutions submit their responses and final copies of the plans.
- **December 1** – SCHEV staff post the final plans on the SCHEV website. Institutions submit their final plans to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems (DLAS).

(Note: This schedule is largely the same in odd-numbered years, except, instead of a one-day meeting in August, Op-Six holds two-hour individual-institution meetings from mid-July through late August to discuss each institution's new six-year plan.

Next steps: SCHEV staff consulted with staff of Op-Six members in April, and agreement was reached that only minimal changes to the templates would be made this year given its update-year status. As a result, the plan templates and instructions have been released to institutions as of May 1.

The online fact packs or college outcomes page - visualizations of data on each institution's academics, outcomes and finances - is also being reviewed by institution staff between May 1 and July 1.

**Materials Provided:** None beyond the Background/Summary section above.

**Financial Impact:** NA

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

At Council's July meeting, staff will update Council as the six-year-planning process progresses.

**Resolution:**NA

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** II.D. – Resources and Planning Committee – Update on Major Projects Impacting the Resources and Planning Committee in 2026

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2026

**Presenters:** Lee Andes  
Director of Finance Policy & Innovation  
[leeandes@schev.edu](mailto:leeandes@schev.edu)

## **Most Recent Review/Action:**

No previous Council review/action

Previous review/action

**Date:** May 12, 2025

**Update:** Council was updated on 2025 projects and responsibilities impacting the Resources & Planning Committee.

## **Purpose of the Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item to provide the committee with an overview of various reports scheduled to be made to Council over the next year. Staff also informs Council of other ad hoc workgroups and projects, as appropriate.

## **Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

Below is a summary of scheduled reports and projects that are routinely slated for Council consideration or update.

### **Annual/Biennial Projects**

- Statewide strategic plan
  - Development of staff activities supporting the strategic plan
  
- Institutions' six-year plans – updated plans submitted on even-numbered years
  - For details and schedule, please see Item II.C. of this Agenda Book.
  - July 1 – Institution submission of updated six-year plans.
  - August – OpSix meets to review submissions. (OpSix refers to an informal committee consisting of the Secretary of Education, Secretary of Finance, House Appropriations Committee, Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee, Department of Planning & Budget, and SCHEV).
  
- Institutional Performance Standards (IPS) – reviewed on even-numbered years
  - May 2026 Council prepared for the upcoming review of IPS
  - July 2026 – Council review of IPS educational results
  - September 2026 – Financial measures from DPB available, Council action.

- Budget and policy recommendations – 2026-28 biennial budget
  - Spring through summer: staff research and planning
  - July 2026 Council meeting: Discussion of Council priorities
  - September 2026 Council meeting: Adoption of Council recommendations to the governor and legislature on budgetary and/or policy matters in preparation for the 2027 legislative session.
- Staff participation in statewide studies: Agency staff are routinely called upon to staff, support, or otherwise assist various executive- and legislative-branch committees and studies:

### **Ad-hoc Council projects**

- Development and implementation of Council institutional performance standards and full cost measures.

### **The following will impact various sections of SCHEV, pending project assignments.**

- External Workgroups and/or Studies
  - SHEEO - Multi-state learning community to support state-level implementation of prison education programs (PEPs)
  - ESG – Future Ready States: Multi-state Credentials of Value, Return on Investment Community of Practice organized by Arnold Ventures & ESG.
  - NGA – Data and Non-degree Credentials Learning Community
  - Workforce Pell project – the Governor’s office is leading an effort to develop Virginia’s preparation for the upcoming availability of the Pell grant for certain educational programs.

### **New and/or Expanded SCHEV Responsibilities from the 2026 Legislative Session**

Table containing new tasks arising from changes in statute is attached. Potential new responsibilities due to budget language are pending completion of the budget.

### **Periodic Updates:**

In addition to the above responsibilities, the R&P Committee may receive periodic updates, as necessary, on the following activities over the next year (sample non comprehensive list):

- Virginia Higher Education Executive Advisory Committee (VHEEAC) – monthly meetings with public institutions’ chief executive officers
- Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) – four to six times per year with public institutions’ primary finance officers
- Private Colleges’ Advisory Board (PCAB) – annual meeting with the private colleges held during the May Council meeting.
- Student Advisory Committee (SAC) – at least twice per year with current student leaders nominated by their institutions.
- Tuition and Fee Report – annual (August release).
  - Report on tuition and fees charges at public institutions.
- Full cost requirement for out-of-state students – annual (July – updated based on 2026-27 tuition and fees).

- Report on whether the public institutions are charging out-of-state students at least 100% of the cost of education, per budget item 4 2.01.b.2.b.
- STEM-H annual report
- Sexual Assault Compliance report
- Pell Initiative for Virginia report

**Materials Provided:** None.

**Financial Impact:** NA

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Updates will be provided to Council as needed

**Resolution:** NA

**New and/or Expanded SCHEV Responsibilities from the 2026 Legislative Session, Statutory Changes**

Task	Passed or Awaiting Action	Bill #	Description	Deadline	SCHEV Unit Lead
Enslaved Ancestors College Access Scholarship and Memorial Program	Passed	HB404	<p>SCHEV shall establish a <b>work group</b> that meets at least semiannually to discuss Program administration, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sharing best practices on administration and research,</li> <li>• coordinating funding and fundraising strategies,</li> <li>• developing outreach and marketing plans,</li> <li>• collaborating on historical and genealogical research efforts, and</li> <li>• aligning government and community engagement initiatives; and</li> </ul> <p>develop and maintain a <b>single statewide online portal</b> that describes each institution's program, criteria, and investments in scholarship students or the community, lists designated points of contact at each institution, shares application timelines and processes, and offers historical context and ongoing memorial updates</p>	Effective July 1, 2026	Finance Policy/Student Success
Data Collection Self-Identified Students who are Parents	Passed	HB427	SCHEV requires the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to include in its uniform, comprehensive data information system information on self-identified students who are parents.	Effective July 1, 2026	Data Analytics
Guidelines for Developing a Model Transition IEP Report	Passed	HB468	SCHEV in consultation with the Department of Education and representatives of public institutions of higher education and public secondary schools in the Commonwealth, to develop and submit to the Department of Education for public posting and access by the individualized education program (IEP) team of any student with a disability guidelines for developing a transition IEP to help facilitate the timely provision of transition services and accommodations for students with disabilities by public institutions of higher education across the Commonwealth	Report due November 1, 2026	Finance Policy/Student Success

Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority; administration of scholarships	Passed	HB815/ SB405	SCHEV shall submit data relevant to the health workforce and shall be required to submit such information to the Authority on an annual basis.	Effective July 1, 2026	Data Analytics
Financial Aid Simplification	Passed	HB1221/ SB167	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCHEV shall adopt <b>emergency regulations</b> for the administration of financial aid in accordance with the provisions of the first enactment of this act by April 1, 2027.</li> <li>• That the Secretary of Education shall establish a <b>work group</b>, consisting of the Director of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia or his designee, representatives from public and private baccalaureate institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth, representatives from associate-degree-granting public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth, one representative from the Strada Education Network, and other relevant stakeholders, for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive review of higher education financial aid systems and processes in the Commonwealth.</li> </ul> <p>In conducting its review, the work group shall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) examine and evaluate the Commonwealth's current higher education financial aid model and processes;</li> <li>(ii) identify best practices for student financial aid administration utilized by other states; and</li> <li>(iii) develop recommendations on strategies for maximizing the efficacy and impact of state financial aid appropriations on accessibility and affordability of higher education in the Commonwealth and on student outcomes in higher education in the Commonwealth.</li> </ul>	Report due July 1, 2027	Finance Policy
Data Reporting Student Enrollment at Public Institutions	Passed	HB955	SCHEV shall annually report on the enrollment of Virginia students, non-Virginia students, and international students at each public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth.	Report due February 1, 2026	Data Analytics

SCRUM Exemption - SCHEV	Passed	HB383	Exempt from the requirement to be certified by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, any course or program of instruction on Scrum, Kanban, or other Agile-based methods or frameworks, provided that no such exempted course or program of instruction exceeds the number of hours required by the certifying body.	Effective July 1, 2026	Academic Affairs
Prison Education Taskforce	Passed	HB1041	SCHEV to serve on task force coordinated by the Secretary of Finance	Effective July 1, 2026	Student Success
SWAM Procurement	Passed	HB61	SCHEV to serve on workgroup coordinated by Dept. of Small Business and Supplier Diversity	Effective July 1, 2026	Budget
NCI Board of Directors	Passed	HB430	SCHEV to serve on New College Institute Board	Effective July 1, 2026	Agency Head/designee
HS Application for FA	Passed	HB1095	DOE in collaboration with SCHEV shall provide each school board with the website containing federally available data on the rates of completion of student financial aid applications	Beginning of each school year – expires 2031	Finance Policy/Student Success
CTE Pathways Credential	Passed	SB592	SCHEV to serve on the task force to provide a biannual report led by the Board of Education and Board of Workforce Development	Report Due October 1 (each odd year)	Academic Affairs
Men and Boys Advisory Committee	Passed	HB1188	SCHEV to serve on the committee	Effective July 1, 2026	Agency Head/Designee
Governing Boards; Public Institutions of Higher Education	<b>Awaiting Action</b>	SB494/ HB1385	SCHEV is tasked with two responsibilities, (1) convene a workgroup to develop modeled shared governance policies, and (2) convene a workgroup to study and make recommendations on several components related to legal counsel of public institutions of higher education	Reports due November 1, 2026, and January 1, 2027	Board and Exec Operations

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** II.E. – Resources and Planning Committee – Update on the Pell Initiative for Virginia

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2026

**Presenters:** Mr. Lee Andes: Director Finance Policy & Innovation – [leeandes@schev.edu](mailto:leeandes@schev.edu)  
Sarahbeth Dreis: Associate for Finance Policy & Innovation  
[sarahbethdreis@schev.edu](mailto:sarahbethdreis@schev.edu)

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

No previous Council review/action

Previous review/action

**Date:** December 15, 2025

**Update:** Council was provided a summary report on the institution-wide barrier reviews completed by each of the public institutions.

**Purpose of Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item is to provide Council with information on the Pell Initiative for Virginia (PIV), which is completing its third year of operation. Through the PIV, the state financially partners with public institutions in developing strategies to improve overall success rates for Pell-eligible students with an emphasis on enrollment and retention/completion rates.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

**Funding Levels**

The PIV has been funded at \$37.5 million annually since FY2024. Over the course of the three-year period there have been four cohorts of institution proposals submitted to address the barriers to success for Pell-eligible students.

Total disbursed funds across Series I, II, III, and IV: \$104.2 million

**Institution-wide Barrier Review Report (IwBR)**

In fall 2025, institutions completed the required whole of institution IwBR to identify barriers to success experienced by low-income and Pell-eligible students. Consequently, IwBR findings played a role in structuring the Series V proposals for FY2027 with efforts and state dollars being put into programs that address the barriers.

SCHEV staff identified major themes across all institutions. These major themes include:

- **Academic and Administrative Silos:** Institutional silos present at the academic and/or administrative level can lead to breakdowns in communication and monitoring of vulnerable students resulting in their withdrawal or academic probation.

- **Inadequate Data Systems and Subsequent Analysis:** Data systems vary widely across institutions in the Commonwealth. Institutions with more robust data tracking systems and analysis can better support students; other institutions struggle to retain Pell eligible students or implement timely retention strategies.
- **Faculty Engagement – Pedagogy:** The institutions have determined that faculty struggle to engage Pell eligible students and need training on how to support and teach to low-income, first-generation students.
- **Ancillary Financial Demands:** Holds on registration because of unpaid balances and financial emergencies like lack of food or transportation are just two examples of demands that may arise and prevent Pell eligible students from enrolling or persisting in higher education.

### **Institution Designation**

Institution proposals and reports are based upon their designation established in FY2024. Their funding proposals are centered around improving these metrics; however, it should be noted that enrollment and completion are interdependent. While an institution’s proposal should be focused on one metric, it may include programs to support the other.

<b>PIV Focus</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>% of Fall Undergraduates who Received PELL in 2022-23</b>	<b>Pell Attainment Within 6yrs 2022-23 from 2017-18 Cohort</b>
	<i>Public Four-Year Institutions</i>	26.4%	71.4%
ENRL	Christopher Newport University	15.0%	75.0%
COMP	George Mason University	31.7%	68.1%
ENRL	James Madison University	14.2%	80.6%
COMP	Longwood University	26.8%	60.7%
COMP	Norfolk State University	65.5%	32.3%
COMP	Old Dominion University	39.7%	42.3%
COMP	Radford University	37.6%	48.9%
BOTH	University of Mary Washington	22.1%	67.4%
ENRL	University of Virginia	14.3%	94.3%
COMP	University of Virginia's College at Wise	36.0%	49.0%
COMP	Virginia Commonwealth University	30.6%	65.2%
ENRL	Virginia Military Institute	16.0%	81.6%

<b>COMP</b>	<b>Virginia State University</b>	<b>70.8%</b>	<b>39.4%</b>
<b>ENRL</b>	<b>Virginia Tech</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>85.4%</b>
<b>ENRL</b>	<b>William &amp; Mary</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	<b>90.6%</b>
	<b>Public Two -Year Institutions</b>	<b>30.1%</b>	<b>26.3%</b>
<b>ENRL</b>	<b>Richard Bland College of William &amp; Mary</b>	<b>17.3%</b>	<b>28.2%*</b>
<b>NEITHER</b>	<b>Virginia Community College System</b>	<b>30.3%</b>	<b>26.3%*</b>

Beginning with FY2026, institutions are no longer required to submit specific proposal requests. Rather, the institutions have each signed a Memorandum of Understanding identifying the PIV areas of focus and annually provide their planned activities and budget.

In the FY2027 submission, institutions were asked to evaluate previous programming for effectiveness based upon the available data. They were then asked to either sunset, continue, or expand previous series programming according to their internal analysis. The proposals also asked them to incorporate the IwBR findings into the program proposals and to think about institutional dollars that could be used to support programming.

Institutions are sunsetting programs. A few are being sunset from PIV funding because institution dollars are taking on the expense and others because the initiative was not found to be successful.

SCHEV PIV administration support: 2 SCHEV staff, Newsletter, Lunch and Learn series, on-campus visits, and one Fall 2026 and one Spring 2027 in-person meeting

### Academic Year 2026-2027

#### **Fiscal Year 2027, Series V**

<b>INST</b>	<b>Program(s) Proposed</b>	<b>FY27 Institution Requests</b>
<b>CNU</b>	Admission Application Fee Waivers and Deposit Fee Grants, Gap grants, Hampton Roads grants, PIV grant administrator, Emergency aid, Recruitment event funding	\$1,237,085
<b>GMU</b>	Expanding personnel and continued support of direct expenditures for: Access to Excellence, Math Bootcamp, Early Intervention Program, and Student Success	\$6,013,515
<b>JMU</b>	Opportunity Grants, Emergency Funds, High Impact Services	\$2,877,000
<b>LWD</b>	Supplemental Instruction, First-gen, PE programming, one-time emergency grants, one-time completion grants, faculty working group, career services assistant, reading strategies intervention, student career mentors, FootPath partnership, MarketView, internship grants	\$625,000

<b>NSU</b>	Spartan Pathfinders United: Spartan Pathfinders, Spartan Student Parent Network, Spartan Transfer Academic and Mentorship Program	\$728,000
<b>ODU</b>	Campus ESP Family Engagement Platform, Emergency Retention grants, Sophomore Summer Bridge	\$3,569,730
<b>RU</b>	COMPASS Camp, Technology and Assessment Assistant Director	\$899,160
<b>UMW</b>	Continuation of Eagles in Flight (materials and supplies, transportation, travel, and director/assistant director salaries), Peer Assisted Study Sessions, Summer Gap program	\$580,000
<b>UVA</b>	Maintain All Virginia and AdviseVA high school partnerships, VCCS outreach and partnerships, expand UVA OneStop, Transportation costs, Emergency grants, Enrollment restructure	\$2,400,000
<b>UVA-Wise</b>	Improved advising, Gateway course redesign, Peer-mentorship program, Emergency grants	\$608,167
<b>VCU</b>	Richmond Talent Pathways support: Scholarships for Summer Scholars, staff; Financial assistance: Unmet need grants, Rambucks; Career Builders: On-campus employment, Major Exploration programming, High impact professional experiences, Student programming, Professional development for Career Builders staff.	\$2,335,278
<b>VMI</b>	Salary for Assistant Superintendent for Strategic Enrollment Management, Scholarships for early intervention, Enrollment grant, Application fee waiver	\$500,000
<b>VSU</b>	Director and Enrollment advisors' salary, Academic support through restart classes, 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> year experience programming, One-time grants, Student teaching assistant stipends, Professional development for faculty, Travel and supplies for PIV activities	\$2,335,278
<b>VT</b>	Continuation of VT GPS activities, STEM support for current PE students and prospective student outreach, Continuation of eleVaTed activities, Support food pantry, Marketing supplies, STEM supplies for PE students, College access initiatives, Grants and emergency funding, Operational support	\$5,135,253
<b>W&amp;M</b>	Senior Admissions counselor and graduate fellow salary, Financial Aid counselor salary, Campus visit travel vouchers, Marketing materials, Outreach events, Financial aid for transfer students, WMSURE Program expenditures, First generation student engagement support (programming and peer mentors), Graduation fee and expense waivers, One-time emergency grants	\$1,412,034
<b>RBC</b>	Continue Reach4Higher recruitment, RBC Networking- professional development, networking, and peer mentorship for students	\$775,000
<b>VCCS</b>	Expand Pell BOOST Academy (professional development costs), PIV Program Managers salary	\$1,357,865.58

<b>Institution Total</b>		\$33,388,366
<b>SCHEV Administrative Budget</b>		\$375,000.00
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$33,763,366</b>

**FY2026 Annual report due November 1, 2026**

**Materials Provided:** None.

**Financial Impact:** NA

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

The annual report is due this fall and staff will continue to keep Council informed.

**Resolution:**NA

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** II.F. – Council – Update from the Council Workgroup on IPS and Full Cost

**Date of Meeting:** May 11, 2026

**Presenter:** Delceno Miles  
Member, Council Workgroup on IPS and Full Cost  
Vice Chair, SCHEV Council

Charlie King  
Member, Council Workgroup on IPS and Full Cost  
SCHEV Council

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

No previous Council review/action

Previous review/action

**Date:** March 17, 2026

**Update:** Provided update on progress towards potential new institutional performance standards.

**Purpose of the Agenda Item:**

In September 2025, Council approved a work group consisting of two Council members to consider alternatives to the current requirements for institutions to charge full cost to out-of-state students and to meet institution performance standards. The purpose of this item is to discuss the draft set of measures under consideration.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

The Code of Virginia and the annual Act of Appropriation (state budget) tasks SCHEV with oversight of various institutional requirements. The measures used for these requirements should be reviewed periodically to ensure adherence to the Commonwealth's higher education policy goals amid a shifting landscape.

In recent years, institutions have struggled to comply with two of these requirements – Institutional Performance Standards and the Full Cost Tuition calculation for out-of-state students – while facing enrollment challenges during a decline in high school graduates and increasing competition from institutions in other states (for more detailed information, including a list of the IPS and full cost requirements, see II.B. of this agenda as well as the March 2026 agenda item on this topic).

## **Institutional Performance Standards**

The work group's draft proposals are attached.

### **Full Cost Measure**

The House has proposed budget language that, if passed, would resolve the compliance status of the seven institutions currently not in compliance. If it does not pass, staff will draft language to propose for the upcoming legislative session.

### **Item 4-2.01 #2h**

#### **Out of State Tuition Flexibility**

"e) The requirements for § 4-2.01 b.2.b, as it pertains to nonresident undergraduate students, are waived for new nonresident undergraduate students enrolled at NSU, VSU, UVA-Wise and institutions of higher education with a current proportion of nonresident undergraduate enrollment of less than 20 percent, measured in terms of full-time equivalent.

#### **The work group proceeds with the following goals:**

- Review Virginia Code, budget language, SCHEV policy, history, available best practices, and any other relevant information on the Institutional Performance Standards and full cost measures.
- Provide a draft set of measures consistent with Council concerns. The work group can consider legislative action and/or steps that Council can undertake unilaterally.
- Consider intermediate steps to bring a sharper focus on institutional performance standards that can be utilized by Council without legislation.
- Review and recommend options to address the full cost requirement.

#### **Discussion:**

Does the draft set of recommendations satisfy the Council's interest in improving institutional review and accountability?

**Materials Provided:** Attached

**Financial Impact:** N/A

**Relationship to the Goals of the Strategic Plan:** These recommendations are directly in line with fulfilling the goals of the strategic plan.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** Committee final recommendations are scheduled for the July meeting.

**Resolution:** N/A

**Preliminary Proposals for Institutional Performance Standards/Measures**

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Target</b>
<b>Enrollment Measure #1</b>	Annual and Trend data for Enrollment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FTIC</li> <li>• In-state/out of state</li> <li>• Underrepresented populations*</li> </ul>	Contextual institution stability & growth  Decreasing enrollment gaps particularly among underrepresented groups.
<b>Retention Measure #2</b>	Annual and Trend data for Retention of students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FTIC from Fall to Fall - FT&amp;PT</li> <li>• In-state/out of state</li> <li>• Underrepresented populations</li> </ul>	Contextual institution stability & growth  Decreasing enrollment gaps particularly among underrepresented groups.
<b>Graduation – Measure #3</b>	Cohorts time to degree by 4 and 6 years for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-state/out of state Transfers</li> <li>• Underrepresented populations</li> <li>• Economic cohorts</li> </ul> <i>(This measure is for 4-year institutions only)</i>	Contextual institution stability & growth  Reduce time to degree and close gaps between economic cohorts, underrepresented populations.
<b>Graduation – Measure #4</b>	<a href="#">Student success index:</a> FTIC, FT, PT, and Transfer students** <i>(See notes for the source and methodology of this index.)</i>	Improvement relative to the student success index.
<b>Community Colleges Measure #5</b>	Full time & Part time – FTIC enrollment in degree/certificate/ workforce credential: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Associate’s degree</li> <li>2. Transfer- transfer to 4-year institution without award, transfer award rate, transfers out bachelor rate</li> <li>3. Persistence- Term to term persistence</li> <li>4. Workforce credential</li> <li>5. Certificate/diploma</li> </ol> <i>This measure is for community colleges only)</i>	49.% aggregate Student Success Rate*** across all five factors  Growth for underrepresented populations  Contextual institution stability & growth
<b>Workforce Alignment – Measure #6</b>	Graduates from programs aligned in high growth occupations. Note: Excludes high growth occupations that typically do not require any college education for entry level positions.	Graduates from programs aligned to high-growth occupations: 42%- baseline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduates from institutions meet or exceed baseline</li> </ul>
<b>Workforce Alignment – Measure #7</b>	Work Integrated Learning <i>(This measure is pending due to the need to complete a dashboard measuring student participation at each institution. Once SCHEV staff completes the dashboard this measure can be refined)</i>	Level of student participation  <i>(SCHEV is developing a dashboard to measure institutional compliance)</i>
<b>Mission-Specific by Institution Measure #8</b>	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speed of Job Market placement Space utilization</li> <li>• Credit momentum</li> <li>• Recruitment/retention /advising program</li> </ul>	Institutions may, with the approval of SCHEV, select a metric specific to their mission.  Allow a one or two paragraph narrative for institutions to highlight strengths and weaknesses.

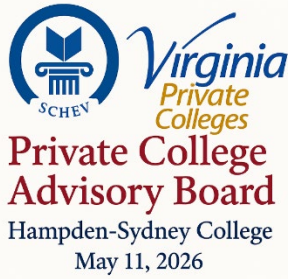
\*Under-Represented Populations of Students are defined with the following characteristics:

- **Race:** Non-white US citizen and permanent residents
- **Pell:** Students receiving Pell grants at any time during the last five-years
- **Age:** Non-traditional students: age 25 or older at entry
- **VA Localities:** Students from Virginia localities in the lowest quintile of associate and baccalaureate attainment rates

\*\* The Student Success Index (SSI) provides a wholistic view of student success that goes beyond the narrow definition of the IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey (GRS) which is based on students entering as first-time in college with full-time enrollment at entry. The SSI includes part-time and transfer students and provides varying amounts of time to complete a degree or continue enrollment to be counted as success. This is a SCHEV developed metric. [Student Success Index](#)

\*\*\*Student Success Rate- Measure is an aggregate of five factors and changes annually.

Measures/Performance Indicators/Targets derived from the Virginia Strategic Plan for Higher Education - [Developing Tomorrow's Talent: The Virginia Plan for Higher Education | Virginia State Council Of Higher Education, VA](#)



## **AGENDA**

### **3:00 1. Call to Order**

PCAB Chair Introductions & Remarks

- General John Jumper, Chair, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
- Dr. Frank Shushok, Vice Chair, Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia; President, Roanoke College
- PCAB Member Presidents

### **3:10 2. Welcoming Remarks**

- Mr. Christopher K. Peace, Esq., President, Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia
- Mr. Scott Fleming, Executive Director, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

### **3:20 3. Review of SCHEV's Statewide Strategic Plan and Role of Independent Colleges and Universities**

- Dr. Alan Edwards, SCHEV
- Ms. Emily Salmon, SCHEV

### **3:35 3. Virginia's Innovative Internship Program**

- Dr. Alisha Bazemore, SCHEV

### **3:50 4. 2026 General Assembly Overview, State Budget and TAG Update**

- Mr. Lee Andes, Director of Finance Policy and Innovation; Assistant Director for Financial Aid, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
- Dr. Grace Khattar, SCHEV

### **4:15 5. Graduate Financial Aid: The Importance of Graduate TAG in the Wake of Reconciliation**

- Ms. Sabena Moretz, Director of Government Relations & Member Services, Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia

### **4:30 6. Leadership Reflections: Responses or Observations from Presidents and Council**

### **5:00 7. Adjourn to Reception**

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
March 16, 2026**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

General Jumper called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in Room 300 in the Student Center of Norfolk State University in Norfolk, Virginia.

Council members present: Walter Curt, William Harvey, Delceno Miles, Charlie King, Jason El Koubi, Lindsay Fryer, John Jumper, Cheryl Oldham, Douglas Straley and Steven Taylor.

Council members participating virtually: Lindsay Fryer and John Olsen.

Council members absent: William Harvey.

Staff members present: Lee Andes, Melissa Benavidez, Taylor Clark, Sarahbeth Dreis, Grace Covello Khattar, Alan Edwards, Scott Fleming, Alexis Gravely, Anne Lowe, Jennifer Mayton, Tod Massa, Todd McDonald, Jessica Minnis-McCann, Laura Osberger, Monica Osei, Kirstin Pantazis, Paula Robinson, Emily Salmon, Juanita Sherman, Barry Simmons, Paul Smith, Bob Spieldenner, Kristin Whelan and Yan Zheng.

**ACTION ON REMOTE PARTICIPATION OF COUNCIL MEMBER**

General Jumper read a resolution allowing remote participation by Council members Lindsay Fryer and John Olsen. On motion by Mr. Straley and seconded by Ms. Miles, a resolution to allow remote participation of Lindsay Fryer and John Olsen was approved unanimously (7-0).

**ACTION ON PROPOSALS FOR NEW DEGREE PROGRAMS AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

Dr. Edwards introduced the four proposals for new degree programs. He noted that the first proposal was the final one submitted under Council's prior approval policy, while the other three followed Council's current approval policy. Dr. Edwards yielded the floor to Dr. Taylor, as chair of Council's Academic Affairs Committee.

Old Dominion University proposed a new Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Cybersecurity (CIP: 11.1003) to initiate in fall 2026. Dr. Edwards noted that the external reviewers recommended data collection to ensure the degree program maintains alignment with workforce needs. Gen. Jumper requested that staff amend the approval resolution to produce a conditional-approval resolution, with the aforementioned tracking added as a stipulated condition for the Council's approval. Dr. Edwards noted that this degree program will be the first doctoral program in cybersecurity at a Virginia public university.

On motion by Dr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. El Koubi, the Committee of the Whole unanimously (8-0) approved the ODU proposal on condition and directed staff to

develop a formal conditional-approval resolution for action by the full Council on the next day.

The College of William and Mary in Virginia (William and Mary) proposed a new Master of Science (MS) in Data Science (CIP: 30.7001) to initiate in fall 2026. Dr. Edwards noted that the summary information in the materials included substantive quotes and quantitative data extracted directly from William and Mary's proposal, in accord with the Council's current approval policy. In response to Dr. Taylor's concerns, Gen. Jumper agreed to defer the proposal for future action.

The College of William and Mary in Virginia also proposed a new Master of Science (MS) in Computational Operations Research (CIP: 27.0304) to initiate in fall 2026. In response to a query from Dr. Taylor, Dr. Kincaid, Chancellor Professor of Mathematics and Program Director of Computational Operations Research at William and Mary, stated that a new degree program is necessary to align internal oversight of the existing concentration within a different university organizational unit. In response to a query by Gen. Jumper, Dr. Taylor requested that the approval resolution be amended to produce a conditional-approval resolution, with the addition of a requirement that W&M continue to work with staff on better aligning the program name, purpose, Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code and evidence of student and labor market demand.

On motion by Mr. El Koubi and seconded by Ms. Miles, the Committee of the Whole unanimously approved (8-0) the William and Mary proposal on condition and directed staff to develop a formal conditional-approval resolution for action by the full Council on the next day.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VA Tech) proposed a new Master of Science (MS) in Water Resources (CIP 40.0605) to initiate in fall 2026. In response to a query by Mr. Curt, Dr. McGuire, Director of the Virginia Water Resources Research Center and Professor of the Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation at VA Tech, noted that the degree program would combine hydrology with managing water resources and would include the use of artificial intelligence in data science analysis of water resources.

On motion by Dr. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Miles, the following resolution was approved unanimously (8-0) for transmittal to the full Council:

***BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University to initiate a Master of Science (MS) degree program in Water Resources (CIP code: 40.0605), effective fall 2026.***

### **ACTION ON DEGREE-PROGRAM PRODUCTIVITY POLICY**

Dr. Edwards presented for review and action a new policy for Council's assessment of the productivity of degree programs at public institutions, replacing the existing policy, which has been in place since 2019. He reminded the Committee of the Whole of discussions by the Academic Affairs Committee on this topic since July 2025 and summarized how the proposed policy differed from the existing policy, including at

Council's direction, the addition of a return-on-investment (ROI) measure. He deferred to Mr. Massa to respond to members' questions about the ROI measure.

In response to queries by Mr. Curt and Gen. Jumper, Mr. Massa said he would provide the ROI model's underlying formulas, which he concluded would allow staff to monitor degree-program productivity reasonably and efficiently, given the limitations of currently available data.

On motion by Dr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. El Koubi, the following resolution was approved unanimously (8-0) for transmittal to the full Council:

***BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia approves its revised "Degree-Program Productivity and Viability at Public Institutions: Policy and Procedures," as agreed to on March 17, 2026, and effective on that date; and***

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council delegates authority to the Executive Director to modify and update the policy's procedures (processes and forms) as future circumstances necessitate, as long as such updates do not materially alter the effect of the policy itself.***

## **UPDATE ON THE 2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Mr. Andes and Dr. Khattar provided the Council with an update on the 2026 General Assembly Legislative Session. The presentation was organized into three segments. Mr. Andes reported that the General Assembly completed most of its work during the session that ended on March 14. The conference budget, however, was not finalized. The General Assembly will reconvene on April 22, and he anticipates that the budget will be considered then.

Dr. Khattar noted that more than 100 bills related to higher education were introduced during the session, with fewer than 60 remaining at the end and now awaiting gubernatorial action. In response to General Jumper's question regarding legislation with significant implications for SCHEV, Dr. Khattar highlighted the BOV governance bills concerning board membership composition and term lengths. She then presented a list of bills that, if enacted, would assign new responsibilities to SCHEV. These include convening workgroups for the Enslaved Ancestors Scholarship Program, collecting self-reported data from student parents, collecting Workforce Pell data, supporting IEP development, participating in a VMI workgroup and implementing financial aid simplification requirements.

Dr. Taylor asked about SCHEV's capacity to manage these new responsibilities. Mr. Fleming stated that the list of duties had been streamlined and that the agency hopes for additional support from the General Assembly. However, without an approved budget, determining capacity remains difficult. Dr. Khattar added that the Governor may veto or amend some bills, which could decrease SCHEV's workload.

Dr. Khattar also explained that the legislature will reconvene on April 22 to consider vetoes and amendments from Governor Spanberger. Approved legislation becomes

law upon the Governor's signature—or after seven days without signature following adjournment of the Reconvened Session. The biennial budget and new statutes will take effect July 1 unless otherwise specified.

Mr. Andes provided a timeline for the 2026–2028 biennium budget process. The General Assembly reviewed the budget introduced by Governor Youngkin on December 17, 2025. Committee budget amendments were released on February 22, 2026, followed by the appointment of budget conferees. A unified conference report was expected by the end of the session on March 14; however, the General Assembly adjourned without adopting a budget. Although the legislature will reconvene on April 22, it remains unclear when the conference budget will be completed.

Mr. Andes then summarized major committee-approved changes relative to the introductory budget. Both chambers increased funding for affordable access above the introduced level of \$27.5 million over the biennium, with the House recommending \$82.5 million and the Senate \$72.5 million. Need-based financial aid, funded at \$15 million in the introductory budget, received a Senate recommendation of \$50 million. The introductory budget included a 2% salary increase for state employees, which the House supported; the Senate recommended a 3% increase.

Mr. Andes reported on other budget recommendations including the Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) program did not receive new funding in the introductory budget. The House proposed \$6 million in new funding, along with technical adjustments that would increase total funding by \$17 million. Funding for the TAG bonus program for Hispanic-serving institutions was also proposed for continuation. A unique House proposal would provide funding for student grants at Virginia University of Lynchburg, which is ineligible for TAG under program restrictions.

Funding for the New Economy Workforce Credential Program includes \$13.5 million GF in the first year and \$13.5 million NGF in the second year. The House proposes an additional \$18.9 million, and the Senate proposes \$12 million.

The Transfer Grant program will continue under revised language recommended by the Council Chair and members. No new funding was added; funds are reappropriated. The VMDSEP waiver program was funded in the introduced budget at \$85 million GF with an additional \$75 million NGF. Neither chamber recommended continuing the NGF component.

Dr. Khattar provided an update on SB378, which would exempt all employees at public institutions of higher education from collective bargaining except for service employees. The bill includes two enactment clauses: one requiring each institution's BOV to assess impacts on tuition and fees through the SYP process, and one requiring the Secretary of Education, in collaboration with other Secretariats, to evaluate options for administering collective bargaining.

Council will receive an updated report at the May meeting. Director Fleming will notify members of any significant developments in the interim.

## **UPDATE ON WORKFORCE CREDENTIAL GRANT**

Ms. Thompson presented an update on the New Economy Workforce Credential Grant (WCG). She explained that WCG operates as a pay-for-performance model offered through community colleges, the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center, and New College Institute. Students pay one-third of program costs—up to 2,000—upon completion of training. Institutions are reimbursed for up to two-thirds of the cost upon student completion and credential attainment. Only public two-year institutions and higher education centers are eligible.

According to Ms. Thompson, program funding and enrollment have grown significantly since the program's launch in 2016. After several years of surplus, enrollment expanded rapidly beginning in 2022, increasing 150%. Ms. Thompson reported that 94% of students complete training; however, some students are hired before completing credential requirements. Because credential attainment is self-reported, institutions do not receive full reimbursement unless students report earning the credential. Enrollment growth is notable among students aged 18–24. Males enroll at higher rates, particularly in construction, while females are more heavily represented in nursing and health-related programs. Many students also use the program for mid-career reskilling.

Ms. Thompson described continued challenges with wage-match data due to participants working as independent contractors, self-employed workers, out-of-state employees, or in federal/military systems not captured in VEC and VDLS. In response to Mr. Curt's request, she will provide data on ages associated with pre- and post-wages.

Ms. Thompson reported that the median wages of credential earners increased by \$11,936, or 49%. Wage gains occurred across all industries. The average student cost is \$997, with financial aid available. She emphasized the importance of maintaining low program costs and noted VCCS's efforts to remain competitive.

Ms. Thompson discussed Workforce Pell, which becomes effective July 1, 2026. Because most WCG programs are not eligible due to time-based requirements, there will be little overlap. Workforce Pell will expand federal aid eligibility and may establish pathways from WCG to Workforce Pell programs and ultimately to degree programs. Workforce Pell cannot be combined with state grants. The first year of Workforce Pell implementation is expected to identify key challenges. The full WCG report, including disaggregated data, is posted on the SCHEV website.

### **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 2:36 p.m.

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**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA  
COUNCIL MEETING  
MARCH 17, 2026**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

General Jumper called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in Room 300 in the Student Center of Norfolk State University in Norfolk, Virginia.

Council members present: Walter Curt, William Harvey, Delceno Miles, Charlie King, Jason El Koubi, Lindsay Fryer, John Jumper, Cheryl Oldham, Douglas Straley and Steven Taylor.

Council members participating virtually: Lindsay Fryer and John Olsen.

Council members absent: William Harvey.

Staff members present: Lee Andes, Melissa Benavidez, Taylor Clark, Sarahbeth Dreis, Grace Covello Khattar, Alan Edwards, Scott Fleming, Alexis Gravely, Anne Lowe, Jennifer Mayton, Tod Massa, Todd McDonald, Jessica Minnis-McCann, Laura Osberger, Monica Osei, Kirstin Pantazis, Paula Robinson, Emily Salmon, Juanita Sherman, Barry Simmons, Paul Smith, Bob Spieldenner, Kristin Whelan and Yan Zheng.

Student Advisory Committee members present: Charlotte Bronaugh, JMU; Daryl Davis, The Apprentice School; Jonathan Dubois; GMU; Sydney Fleming, UVA Wise; Ashley Glover, RU; Zayd Hamid (co-Chair), GMU; Isabella Malave Norman, NSU; Adam McAninley, UMW; Emily McKenna, CNU; Abdul Nazary, PVCC; Tobi Ojo(co-Chair), VCU; Ana Gabriela Otalora Reyes, GVCC; Christopher Sheler, GVCC; Shaana Thomas, The Apprentice School.

Notable Guests: Jeffery Smith, Secretary of Education; Connor Andrews, Deputy Secretary of Education; and Ambria Wood from the Office of the Attorney General.

**ACTION ON REMOTE PARTICIPATION OF COUNCIL MEMBER**

General Jumper read a resolution allowing remote participation by Council members Lindsay Fryer and John Olsen. The motion passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

General Jumper asked for approval of the minutes. Ms. Miles noted a few edits to the minutes.

On a motion by Mr. El Koubi, seconded by Ms. Miles, the amended minutes from the January 13, 2026, Council meeting were approved unanimously.

**REMARKS FROM PRESIDENT OF NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY, JAVAUNE ADAMS-GASTON**

Dr. Adams-Gaston thanked the SCHEV Council and staff for their work and support of Norfolk State University (NSU).

Dr. Adams-Gaston spoke about the transformational possibilities of higher education. She noted that NSU is not experiencing the enrollment cliff and is celebrating increases in enrollment and student participation.

Dr. Adams- Gaston shared the history of NSU. The school was founded during the Great Depression on September 18, 1935. She stated that at that time, the opening was an expression of optimism and a way for students to express their hopes and dreams. She spoke about the supportive academic environment at NSU that encourages students to do their best. She noted that 73% of NSU students are Pell-eligible. She thanked SCHEV for the impact grants and the innovative internship grants, among others. She noted the growth in NSU's endowment.

Dr. Adams-Gaston shared the success of NSU students and how NSU has removed barriers to success. She stated that NSU requires students to live on campus for the first two years and to have a job on campus that provides learning outcomes to increase students' exposure to the work world. She discussed the creation of a living and learning experience, including a cafeteria, to help students learn about their health and distinguish between natural and processed foods. The institute also teaches students about the history of food in Black farming communities.

Dr. Adams-Gaston also spoke about the importance of institutions like NSU remaining in Division I of the NCAA. General Jumper noted that while NCAA issues are not typically part of the scope of SCHEV's work, the tuition and fee increases at institutions mean that SCHEV has an interest in some of these issues. He offered support for Dr. Adams-Gaston's efforts to support students through athletics. General Jumper thanked her for her comments and for the hospitality of the NSU team.

### **REMARKS FROM VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, JEFFERY SMITH**

General Jumper welcomed Secretary Smith and shared some of his background.

Dr. Smith shared his past experiences as a member of the SCHEV Council and chair of the Academic Affairs committee. He thanked the current members of Council for their time and expertise and for respecting the staff for their experience and time.

He spoke about the new Governor, her historic accomplishment as the first woman elected Governor of the Commonwealth, and her interest in education. He noted the Virginia Strengthening Schools plan and the Secretariat's implementation plans.

Dr. Smith noted that access and affordability for early childcare and higher education are a priority for the administration. The administration is seeking new partnerships to address these priorities.

Dr. Smith also noted the administration's goal to improve K-12 achievement in reading and mathematics through building a curriculum framework and necessary resources at the schools.

Dr. Smith discussed career pathways in K-12. From creating career awareness at the elementary level to exploration in the middle grade and experience in high school, the goal is to create upward mobility. Improving dual enrollment will be a big factor in working towards these goals by leveraging it as an affordability tool to increase access for students. The administration will concentrate on upward mobility and a return on investment, creating support through a feedback loop for students entering the workforce.

Dr. Smith offered his and his deputy's support for the agency's efforts. He reiterated the administration's desire to create a better future for all.

### **CONVERSATION WITH STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE: CRITICAL ISSUES IMPACTING STUDENTS**

Ms. Robinson introduced the Council to the Student Advisory Committee (SAC) and to her new unit, Student Success Opportunities and Engagement. She discussed how her unit works with all departments and connects with all activities at SCHEV.

Ms. Lowe introduced the 2026 SAC and shared the group's focus. The SAC is composed of three subcommittees focused on finance, workforce readiness, and student engagement.

Mr. Zayid addressed the Council and stated that it is an honor to follow Dr. Adams-Gaston and Secretary Smith. He touched on the inspirations he drew from his remarks. Mr. Zayid promised the Council that a full report would be available shortly.

The SAC summarized the recommendations developed by each subcommittee.

#### Finance Committee Recommendations

- Establish statewide standards and targeted funding for on-campus pantries, food diversion frameworks and meal plan subsidies to ensure flexible, barrier-free food access as essential educational infrastructure.
- Encourage targeted state investment and foster institutional coordination to expand transit access, increase shuttle frequency and reduce commuter-related time costs that limit academic participation.
- Support statewide expansion of flexible academic and administrative service models that recognize employment, caregiving and geographic constraints as structural components of student time.

#### Workforce Readiness Recommendations

- Establish and ensure maintenance of a statewide classroom guest speakers portal connecting employers, thought leaders and experienced professionals to professors for guest speaking in classes.
- Adopt or incorporate NACE's Career + Self Development competency within SCHEV's Student Learning Assessment policy as a mandatory, assessable component for institutions of higher education.
- Advocate for increased appropriations to the Commonwealth Innovative Internship Fund and Program and expand the Student Support and Access Grant and the Transforming Federal Work-Study Grant.

### Student Engagement Recommendations

- Modify eligibility requirements for Pell-in-Virginia awards to require grant-seeking institutions to assess space-related barriers in their institutional self-studies and to offer third space-related remedial proposals.
- Facilitate institutions of higher education in fostering self-advocacy, self-determination and independent living skills for students, including dedicated initiatives for students with disabilities.
- Convene a working group, including students and other qualified higher education professionals, to evaluate which classified/professional staff and student staff roles at institutions of higher education should receive credentialed mental health training and how that should be implemented.
- Provide guidance and grants to institutions of higher education to support student-athlete mental health and reach appropriate staffing levels to sports psychologists relative to student-athletes.

Mr. El Koubi asked for clarification on the workforce readiness recommendations. He also commended the students on their comprehensive proposals and asked for their priorities.

### **DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES IN SUPPORT OF THE STATEWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN**

Ms. Salmon briefly described the work and timeline undertaken to pass the Statewide Plan for Higher Education, which the Council approved in December of 2025. She stated that the discussion today is to explore implementation plans for the Council.

Ms. Salmon presented proposed priority initiatives for the three goals of the statewide strategic plan. Council members provided feedback and suggestions.

Ms. Salmon will present an update incorporating the Council members' suggestions for further discussion, refinement, and possible endorsement at the May Council meeting.

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Dr. Taylor read the three resolutions from the previous day's committee of the whole for Council to consider.

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to Old Dominion University to initiate a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree program in Cybersecurity (CIP code: 11.1003), effective fall 2026.**

Dr. Taylor noted that W&M's M.S. in Data Science was deferred to a later date.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Program is conditionally approved pending the university collecting and providing to SCHEV staff three years of graduate data for both post-bachelor's and post-master's graduates on (i) whether graduates' jobs require a Ph.D. in Cybersecurity; (ii) the amount of time between graduation and employment; and (iii) for those graduates employed in faculty positions, whether the positions are with Research 1 (R1) universities.**

On a motion by Ms. Miles and seconded by Mr. Straley, the resolution passed unanimously.

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants conditional approval to the College of William and Mary in Virginia to initiate a Master of Science degree program in Computational Operations Research (CIP code 27.0304), effective fall 2026. This approval is conditional upon the institution working with SCHEV staff to resolve the issues of the appropriate degree program name, CIP code, purpose of the degree program and labor market/employment demand.**

On a motion by Ms. Oldham and seconded by Ms. Miles, the resolution passed unanimously.

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University to initiate a Master of Science degree program in Water Resources (CIP code: 40.0605), effective fall 2026.**

On a motion by Ms. Miles and seconded by Ms. Oldham, the resolution was passed unanimously.

### **UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL WORK GROUP ON IPS AND FULL COST**

Ms. Miles provided an update on the work she and Mr. King have been doing to update the institutional performance standards and the full cost requirement. She shared that in January and February, staff began drafting updated performance measures and amendments to the full cost requirement. The House has proposed language that will alter the full cost calculation. This language is pending Senate approval.

The full options will be presented in May after input from OpSix and the FAC. Mr. King added that the House legislation will help seven schools meet the requirement that the institutions charge out-of-state tuition at 100%.

### **RECEIPT OF REPORT FROM AGENCY DIRECTOR**

The full report is available on page 127 of the agenda book.

Mr. Fleming introduced the new Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, Jennifer Mayton. General Jumper welcomed Ms. Mayton.

Mr. Fleming thanked NSU for a successful visit and acknowledged NSU's important and unique contributions to higher education.

Mr. Fleming noted that SCHEV is using their outdoor voices and widely impacting the field.

### **RECEIPT OF ITEMS DELEGATED TO STAFF**

Included at the end of this document.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

No old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Dr. Taylor suggested that staff create a policy for Council approval, empowering the Executive Director to provide conditional approval to allow the institution to advertise and accept applications for a program that is in the approval process but not yet fully approved. The program would need to be advertised as conditionally approved.

Mr. Curt expressed disagreement. Ms. Fryer stated that she needs more information on how this would be fairly implemented. Council members further discussed the process. Dr. Taylor asked staff to further study and make recommendations in May.

Mr. Curt suggested that colleges should be required to eliminate programs as they add new ones. SCHEV would only need to determine whether the discarded program is similar to the one open for approval. Colleges would, in effect, clean up their own programs. Dr. Taylor promised to confer with Mr. Fleming and Dr. Osei.

## **RECEIPT OF PUBLIC COMMENT**

No comment reported.

## **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

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John Jumper  
Council Chair

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Kristin Whelan  
SCHEV Staff

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, § 23.1-203 and Council’s “*Policies and Procedures for Program Approval and Changes*,” the following items approved/not approved as delegated to staff:

### Academic Program Actions

Institution	Degree/Program/CIP	Effective Date
Mountain Empire Community College	<b>Program Name Change Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change the name of the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Police Science (43.0103) to Criminal Justice (43.0103)</li> </ul>	Spring 2026
Norfolk State University	<b>Graduate Certificate Programs Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cybersecurity (11.1003)</li> <li>Game Design and Development (11.0204)</li> </ul>	Summer 2026
Paul D. Camp Community College	<b>Program Name Change Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change the name of the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Administration of Justice (43.0103) to Criminal Justice (43.0103)</li> </ul>	Spring 2026
University of Mary Washington	<b>Degree Designation Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add the degree designation Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) to the existing Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree program in Performing Arts to create a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Fine Arts (BA/BFA) degree program in Performing Arts (50.0101)</li> </ul>	Fall 2026
Virginia Commonwealth University	<b>Graduate Certificate Program Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing (52.1401)</li> </ul>	Fall 2026

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, § 23.1-203 and Council’s “*Policies and Procedures for Program Approval and Changes*,” the following items approved and reported:

### Programs Discontinued

Institution	Degree/Program/CIP	Effective Date
George Mason University	<b>Program Discontinuance Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Master of Science (MS) degree program in Taxation (52.1601) [Council Approval Date: April 3, 1991]</li> </ul>	Spring 2026
James Madison University	<b>Program Discontinuances Approved:</b> <u>Undergraduate</u>	Summer 2026

Institution	Degree/Program/CIP	Effective Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bachelor of Science (BS) degree program in Athletic Training (51.0913) [Council Approval Date: December 23, 2003]</li> </ul> <u>Graduate:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Master of Science in Education (MSEd) degree program in Health Education (13.1307) [Council Approval Date: June 9, 1977]</li> </ul>	
University of Virginia	<b>Graduate Certificate Program Discontinuance Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applied Behavioral Analysis (42.2814)</li> </ul>	Summer 2026
Virginia Commonwealth University	<b>Program Discontinuances Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree program in Religious Studies (38.0201) [Council Approval Date: May 2, 1978]</li> <li>Bachelor of Science (BS) degree program in Financial Technology (52.0899) [Council Approval Date: November 15, 2022]</li> </ul>	Fall 2026

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, Section § 23.1-211 and Council’s “*Commonwealth of Virginia Policy on the Reciprocal Authorization of Distance Education and Related Activities*,” the following items approved as delegated to staff:

**National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) Approvals**

Institution	Effective Date
Virginia University of Science & Technology	January 7, 2026

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, § 23.1-203 and Council’s “*Policies and Procedures for Internal and Off-Campus Organizational Changes*,” the following item approved as delegated to staff:

**Internal and Off-Campus Organizational Changes**

Institution	Change/Site	Effective Date
Norfolk State University	Close the off-campus instructional site located at: <b>Naval Station Norfolk</b> , 9079 Hampton Boulevard, Norfolk, VA 23511	February 1, 2026

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia § 23.1-213 to 230 and 8VAC-40-31-90 of the Virginia Administrative Code, the following items were approved as delegated to staff:

**Postsecondary, Non-Degree Institutions Certified to Operate in  
the Commonwealth of Virginia**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Back to Life Massage School	Virginia Beach, VA	February 6, 2026
Renovelle Institute of Esthetics	Winchester, VA	February 11, 2026
Roanoke Dental Assistant School	Roanoke, VA	February 11, 2026
TechCenture Academy	Fairfax, VA	January 15, 2026

**COIA-Exception Policy Approvals**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Virginia Commonwealth University	Research and Development Exception for the <i>Conflict of Interests Act</i>	November 3, 2025



Larry Stimpert has served as the 25th president of Hampden-Sydney College since 2016. Reflecting his deep commitment to the liberal arts and the College's distinctive mission, "to form good men and good citizens," his presidency is focused on providing students with an extraordinary

educational experience and outcomes. Under his leadership, the College has implemented curricular and co-curricular enhancements, including new majors and minors, an experiential learning initiative, a four-year leadership program, and new programs in entrepreneurship and outdoor education. The College has broadened the racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and geographic reach of its recruiting efforts and significantly improved retention. The College has set fundraising records in each of the last four years and it has pursued a vigorous building and renovation agenda that has culminated most recently in the construction of the Pauley Science Center and many other construction and renovation efforts.

While serving as Hampden-Sydney's president, Dr. Stimpert has chaired the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia and the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges. He is currently chairing the Old Dominion Athletic Conference.

Before coming to Hampden-Sydney, Dr. Stimpert served as Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of Economics and Management at DePauw University. Earlier, he served for many years as a professor in the Economics and Business Department at Colorado College. Dr. Stimpert received his B.A. in economics from Illinois Wesleyan University, his M.B.A. from Columbia University, and his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois.

Before starting his academic career, Dr. Stimpert worked for the Norfolk Southern Corporation and the Chicago and North Western Transportation Company. Dr. Stimpert and his wife, Lesley, have two children.

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** IV.D – Action on Proposed Priority Initiatives in Support of the Statewide Strategic Plan

**Date of Meeting:** May 12, 2026

**Presenters:** Scott Fleming  
Executive Director  
[scottfleming@schev.edu](mailto:scottfleming@schev.edu)

Emily Salmon  
Assistant Director of Strategic Planning and Policy Studies  
[emilysalmon@schev.edu](mailto:emilysalmon@schev.edu)

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

No previous Council review/action

Previous review/action:

**Date:** March 17, 2026

**Action:** Council reviewed and provided feedback on potential priority initiatives in support of *Developing Tomorrow's Talent*.

**Purpose of the Agenda Item:**

This item represents the second phase of a two-meeting process to develop a slate of Council-endorsed priority initiatives that SCHEV will undertake over the next two years in support of the statewide strategic plan for higher education. It outlines revisions made in response to Council feedback from the March meeting and seeks Council's consideration to act to adopt the proposed initiatives.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

On December 15, 2025, after a year-long planning process, Council approved *Developing Tomorrow's Talent: The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*, effective January 1, 2026. As the strategic plan for all higher education in the Commonwealth, it provides Virginia with a framework for state postsecondary policy, planning, and action for the next six years.

## Developing Tomorrow's Talent



### *Top state for talent – learning to leading*

The Plan articulates a vision - **Virginia as the top state for talent - learning to leading** - along with three goals (Ready, Responsive, Relevant) and associated objectives, as well as 13 supporting strategies to guide state-level/statewide efforts. While these strategies outline broad approaches to achieving the plan's goals, their generalized nature means that the strategies are not inherently actionable.

To operationalize the strategies so that SCHEV may lead by example, staff developed and revised, based on Council input, the enclosed slate of priority initiatives. These ten potential SCHEV initiatives represent focused, short-term (approximately two-year) efforts that staff would undertake, at the direction of Council, in addition to SCHEV's core responsibilities. The proposed initiatives are intended to translate the plan's strategies into concrete actions by SCHEV and impactful results for the Commonwealth.

The proposed initiatives were informed by extensive input from Council and stakeholders during the 2025 planning process. Following iterative feedback and formal Council endorsement (ideally, in May), staff will align approved initiatives with any necessary budget and/or policy recommendations to advance implementation.

Based on Council's feedback at the March meeting, changes were made specifically to priority initiatives One through Four, removal of the prior industry taskforce initiative, and addition of initiative Nine.

The 10 priority initiatives for Council consideration/action are:

1. Facilitate a comprehensive Career Awareness, Exploration and Industry Engagement Initiative that embeds career readiness competencies and short-term applied experiences into existing and new programs and scales work-integrated learning.
2. Collaborate with IHEs to strengthen existing efforts that promote civil discourse on campuses, reinforcing Virginia's position as a national leader in this area, and leverage activities associated with the US 250 celebration, such as Civics Bees along with public square debates to enhance civic knowledge with a focus on the constitution, judicial review and civil liberties.
3. Consider modifications to reflect an emphasis on civic knowledge competencies as part of Council's broader effort to review and update SCHEV's Student Learning Assessment Policy.
4. Conduct an impact study on how Virginia IHEs compete with surrounding states for students (VA and non-VA) and strategies used to successfully recruit/retain students with recommendations for Council's consideration. The study will include further examination of NC promise model and other programs.
5. Leverage resources such as workforce Pell and Virginia Pell as well as cross-sector collaboration to support access for specific non-traditional or specialized populations in Virginia to include indigenous nations, incarcerated learners, veterans, parents, and adult learners.
6. Develop and launch, in conjunction with other relevant state agencies, a student- and family-facing portal (My Virginia Pathway, or MVP) that facilitates academic and career exploration, self-reflection as well as direct admissions to Virginia's public and private institutions of higher education.
7. Coordinate with other state agencies to ensure defined benefit surplus funds are used to support access initiatives and My Virginia Pathway for Virginia students.
8. Through SCHEV's Level Up Virginia initiative, identify and publish avenues for students and families to explore scholarship opportunities, particularly for those opportunities that go unused.
9. Identify any substantial increases in auxiliary fees and their impact on tuition at specific institutions as part of SCHEV's annual tuition and fees report.
10. Produce an annual report on transfer outcomes and student mobility.

**Materials Provided:**

A table is provided behind the Resolution that depicts each of the proposed priority initiatives in relation to and alignment with its associated Council-approved goal, objectives, and strategies in *Developing Tomorrow's Talent*.

**Financial Impact:**

No estimated financial impact at this time

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

- If Council acts to endorse the priority initiatives on May 11, 2026, then staff will take steps to begin planning and implementation.

- If Council opts not to act to approve the priority initiatives on May 11, 2026, then staff will prepare a revised slate, reflective of further Council input, for Council review and action at its July 21, 2026, meeting.

**Relationship to the Goals of *The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*:**

Council's priority initiatives reflect broad themes from the strategic planning process and include specific (short-term) actions to implement the plan's 13 strategies and achieve its three goals.

**Resolution:**

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, in support of the statewide strategic plan for higher education, adopts the slate of priority initiatives as discussed and agreed upon by Council on May 11, 2026.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education directs agency staff to begin implementation of the initiatives and to report annually to Council on progress.**

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** IV.E – Action on the Degree-Program Productivity Policy

**Date of Meeting:** May 12, 2026

**Presenters:** Steve Taylor  
Chair, Academic Affairs Committee

Dr. Alan Edwards  
Director of Academic Affairs and Strategic Planning  
[alanedwards@schev.edu](mailto:alanedwards@schev.edu)

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

- No previous Council review/action  
 Previous review/action

**Date:** March 16-17, 2026

**Action:** On March 16, the Committee of the Whole acted to approve the draft, revised policy regarding Council’s review of the productivity of degree programs at public institutions. However, as reflected in the draft Minutes and the online video recording of Council’s March 17 meeting, the policy and the Committee’s approval were mentioned, but Council took no formal action on the policy.

**Purpose of the Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item is to provide Council the opportunity to formally and fully approve a new policy for assessing the productivity and viability of degree programs at public institutions, which the Committee of the Whole approved on March 16, 2026.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

On March 16, the Committee of the Whole acted to approve the draft, revised policy for assessing the productivity and viability of degree programs at public institutions.

On March 17, the full Council received the report of the Committee of the Whole, which included mention of the productivity policy and the Committee’s approval thereof. However, as reflected in the draft Minutes and the video recording of the March 17 meeting, Council took no formal action on the policy.

Action by the full Council during one of its regular business meetings is necessary for that action to constitute a formal decision made / action taken by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

**Materials Provided:**

Behind the next page’s Resolution appears the policy as approved by the Committee of the Whole on March 16, 2026.

**Financial Impact:**

For SCHEV (Council and agency), the policy entails no additional financial impacts. For institutions and the Commonwealth, discontinuances of degree programs contribute to improved efficiencies by reducing resources dedicated to low-productivity, low-need programs, and by reducing the number of degree programs assessed as unnecessarily duplicative of existing degree programs at public institutions.

**Relationship to Goals of The Virginia Plan for Higher Education:**

Council's consideration of this agenda item supports all three goals – student readiness; institutional responsiveness; and postsecondary relevance – as outlined in *Developing Tomorrow's Talent: The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*.

**Resolution:**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia approves its revised “Degree-Program Productivity and Viability at Public Institutions: Policy and Procedures,” as approved by the Committee of the Whole on March 16, 2026, and by the full Council on May 12, 2026, and effective on the latter date; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Council delegates authority to the Executive Director to modify and update the policy's procedures (processes and forms) as future circumstances necessitate, as long as such updates do not materially alter the effect of the policy itself.

*State Council of Higher Education for Virginia*  
**DEGREE PROGRAM PRODUCTIVITY AND VIABILITY AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS:  
POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**Effective: March 17, 2026**

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*State Council of Higher Education for Virginia*  
**DEGREE PROGRAM PRODUCTIVITY AND VIABILITY AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS:  
POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**Effective: March 17, 2026**

**I. Statutory Obligations Related to Degree-Program Productivity at Public Institutions**

**A. The Council of Higher Education’s Responsibility, Authority and Duty**

- “Review and require the discontinuance of any undergraduate or graduate academic program that is presently offered by any public institution of higher education when the Council determines that such academic program is (i) nonproductive in terms of the number of degrees granted, the number of students served by the program, the program’s effectiveness, and budgetary considerations or (ii) supported by state funds and unnecessarily duplicative of academic programs offered at other public institutions of higher education. The Council shall make a report to the Governor and the General Assembly with respect to the discontinuance of any such academic program. No such discontinuance shall become effective until 30 days after the adjournment of the session of the General Assembly next following the filing of such report.” (Code of Virginia, §23.1-203(6))
- “Adopt such policies and regulations as the Council deems necessary to implement its duties established by state law.” (Code of Virginia, §23.1-203(15))
- “Serve as the coordinating council for public institutions of higher education.” (Code of Virginia, §23.1-203(24))
- “Insofar as practicable, preserve the individuality, traditions, and sense of responsibility of each public institution of higher education in carrying out its duties.” (Code of Virginia, §23.1-203 (27))
- “Insofar as practicable, seek the assistance and advice of each public institution of higher education in fulfilling its duties and responsibilities.” (Code of Virginia, §23.1-203 (28))

The Council has established the following policies and procedures for degree program productivity and viability review at public institutions as part of its obligation “to promote the development and operation of an educationally and economically sound, vigorous, progressive, and coordinated system of higher education in the Commonwealth....” (Code of Virginia, §23.1-200)

**B. Public Institutions’ Responsibility and Duty**

[Upon the Council adopting “such policies and regulations as the Council deems necessary to implement its duties established by state law”]  
“Each public institution of higher education shall comply with such policies and regulations.” (Code of Virginia, §23.1-203(15))

## II. Policy Statements on Degree-Program Productivity and Viability (Four Goals)

Council executes its duty to review the productivity and viability of academic degree programs in furtherance of its general responsibility. Accordingly, via this policy and associated processes, the Council seeks to accomplish four goals.

1. Quantitative Standards
  - a. Establish minimal quantitative standards for degree program productivity and viability in terms of student enrollment and degrees granted.
  - b. Prompt the rigorous institutional review of degree program productivity and viability in terms of the SCHEV quantitative standard.
2. Resources  
Utilize the degree-program productivity and viability review to promote the efficient use of resources, including minimizing unnecessary duplication of academic degree programs at public institutions.
3. Return on Investment (ROI)  
Highlight, and when applicable, prioritize discontinuance of degree programs that do not provide a substantial return on investment – documented by objective labor market and/or employment data – for graduates; and
4. Degree Program Discontinuance – Other Factors  
Consider other relevant information related to degree program effectiveness and budgetary factors in deciding whether discontinuance of a degree program is warranted.

## III. Procedures for Degree-Program Productivity Review (Six Stages)

SCHEV will conduct a review of the productivity of academic degree programs at public institutions once every three years. The degree program productivity review will encompass all academic degree programs at all public institutions of higher education in Virginia. For purposes of the review, Certificates of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) and Educational Specialist (EdS) degrees will be treated as academic degree programs subject to review. Degree program “sub-areas” (such as: concentration, emphasis area, focus area, major, option, specialization, or track) will not be subject to review individually or separate from the flagged degree program.

The degree program productivity review process will be conducted in five stages.

**Stage 1** Following completion of the prior academic year’s enrollment data collection, SCHEV staff will provide official notice to four-year public institutions and Richard Bland College of academic degree programs that fail to meet quantitative standards for full-time equated student enrollment (FTES) and numbers of graduates (“flagged” degree programs).

**Note.** The specified Associate degree standards are also applicable to relevant degree programs at Richard Bland College.

**Stage 2** Institutions will notify SCHEV staff (by a specified deadline) of any data corrections. Once any corrections have been made, SCHEV staff will

acknowledge any resulting differences in the institution's list of flagged degree programs.

**Stage 3** Each four-year institution and Richard Bland College will submit completed degree program productivity documentation to include i) a signed cover letter; and ii) a SCHEV Degree Program Productivity Cover Sheet for each flagged degree program. The SCHEV Cover Sheet will indicate whether the institution (a) requests exemption of the degree program from the productivity review; (b) will discontinue the flagged degree program; or (c) seeks continuation of the degree program. If (a) is selected, information will be submitted in the "Exempt-from-Review Form." If (b) is selected, information will be submitted in the "Plan-to-Discontinue (Teach-Out Plan) Form." If (c) is selected, information will be submitted in the "Request-to-Continue Form," and this information will be used to evaluate the justification(s) for continuance.

**Note.** The Virginia Community College System will report, by a specified deadline, the results of the degree program productivity reviews since the last degree program productivity review. SCHEV staff will inform the VCCS staff of the deadline to submit the results. SCHEV staff will evaluate the report and request any supplemental information before making a report to Council.

**Stage 4** SCHEV staff evaluates information submitted via the degree program productivity and viability forms. Staff will request any additional information that may be necessary to arrive at a recommendation of discontinuance or continuance of the flagged degree program. Once the evaluation of an institution's information is complete, staff will inform the institutional representative of the recommendation. Staff will also inform the representative of the Council meeting at which the recommendation will be reported and discussed.

**Stage 5** SCHEV staff will give an informational report of the recommendations for discontinuance and continuance of flagged degree programs at a Council meeting. Degree-program discontinuances and continuances will be presented for final action at a subsequent Council meeting. An opportunity will be given for institutional representatives to present information at one or both of the meetings, as determined by the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee.

**Stage 6** Following the meeting at which the Council takes action, SCHEV staff will submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly, as per Code of Virginia §23.1-203 (6).

#### **IV. Quantitative Standards for Degree-Program Productivity Review**

The quantitative standards below utilize student-faculty ratios from the state's "base adequacy" funding formula, in conjunction with a presumed faculty staffing level of 2.0 for each degree program. Time-to-degree is related to the degree level (bachelor: 4 years; master: 3 years; doctoral: 4 years; professional degree in law: 3 years). Illustrative calculations are provided to show how the standards are established for each degree program. In general, the student-faculty ratio for a program in that discipline/level is multiplied by 2 (the presumed faculty staffing), then divided by time-to-degree. This calculation generates a minimal number of graduates per year for a viable degree program,

to which the actual graduates (as a five-year average) in each degree program are compared. The formula for full-time equated student (FTES) enrollment simply multiplies the student faculty ratio by 2.

A degree program that appears as a “flagged” degree program in the SCHEV productivity tool is one for which its numbers of both graduates and five-year enrollment averages are below the standards for that degree program.

#### **A. Formula for Graduates**

$([\text{Student/faculty ratio}] \times [\text{number of FTEF}=2]) \div (\text{number of years to complete the degree}) = \text{minimum \# of graduates per year.}$

##### ***Variables:***

Student/faculty ratio – derived from the base adequacy policy

Number of FTEF – two faculty FTE assumed per degree program

Number of years to complete the degree – baccalaureate (4); masters/professional (3); doctoral (5)

##### ***Illustrative Calculations:***

Bachelor’s degree in Business:  $24 \text{ Students/Faculty} \times 2 \text{ FTEF} \div 4 \text{ years} = 12$  graduates per year

Master’s degree in Business:  $11 \text{ Students/Faculty} \times 2 \text{ FTEF} \div 3 \text{ years} = 7$  graduates per year

Doctorate in Business:  $9 \text{ Students/Faculty} \times 2 \text{ FTEF} \div 5 \text{ years} = 4$  graduates per year

Professional degree in Law:  $17 \text{ Students/Faculty} \times 2 \text{ FTEF} \div 3 \text{ years} = 11$  graduates per year

#### **B. Formula for Full-time Equated (FTE) student enrollment**

$([\text{Student/faculty ratio}] \times [\text{number of FTEF}=2]) = \text{FTE enrollment.}$

*(REMAINDER OF PAGE LEFT BLANK FOR FORMATTING PURPOSES)*

### C. Four-Year Institution Quantitative Standards by Discipline and Level

Discipline Groupings (as per Base Adequacy)	Baccalaureate		Masters/Prof		Doctoral	
	FTE	Grads	FTE	Grads	FTE	Grads
<b>Group 1</b>						
Area Studies						
Business & Management						
Interdisciplinary Studies						
Library Science	48	12	22	7	18	4
Military Science						
Public Affairs						
Social Sciences						
Study Abroad						
<b>Group 2</b>						
Communications						
Education						
Home Economics	40	10	20	7	16	3
Letters						
Mathematics						
Psychology						
<b>Group 3a</b>						
Agriculture & Nat Resources						
Architecture & Env Design	36	9	18	6	14	3
Computer/Information Sys						
Fine & Applied Arts						
Foreign Languages						
<b>Group 3b</b>						
Biological Sciences	36	9	16	5	12	2
Engineering						
Physical Sciences						
<b>Group 4</b>						
Health Professions <sup>1</sup>	24	6	14	5	10	2
Pharmacy	-	-	12	4	-	-
<b>Other</b>						
Law	-	-	34	11	-	-

<sup>1</sup> Excludes medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine

### D. Two-Year Institution Quantitative Standards

#### 1. General Standards for Associate Degree Programs

Quantitative standards applicable to associate degree programs are provided in the table below. The specified associate degree standards are applicable to all degree programs at Richard Bland College and to certain degree programs offered by the Virginia Community College System, as explained in Subsection 2 below.

## Quantitative Standards for Associate Degree Programs

Institutional Size	Degree Program							
	Transfer (AA, AS, AA&S)		AAS Agriculture & Natural Resources, Business, Arts & Design, Public Service Technologies		AAS Engineering, Mechanical, and Industrial Technologies		AAS Health Technologies	
FTES <sup>1</sup>	FTES	Grads	FTES	Grads	FTES	Grads	FTES	Grads
Less than 1800	17	12	13	8	9	6	7	5
1800-4999	22	15	16	11	12	8	9	6
5000 or greater <sup>1</sup>	24	17	18	12	13	9	10	7

<sup>1</sup> To determine number of FTES and graduates, a factor of .7 was used for institutions under 1800 and .9 was used for institutions with 1800-4999 FTES (VCCS efficiency ratio).

### 2. Specific Standards for the Virginia Community College System

The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) systematically reviews degree programs for all 23 community colleges. The Council of Higher Education has delegated to the State Board for Community Colleges (SBCC) the functional responsibility to review and discontinue any nonproductive community college associate degree programs.

The following transfer associate degree programs, which were approved for all community colleges by Council action in January 2023, are not included in the SCHEV degree-program productivity and viability review process. All other VCCS-college associate degree programs are included in the SCHEV degree program productivity and viability review.

Associate of Arts (AA)

Liberal Arts (CIP 24.0103)

Associate of Science (AS)

General Studies (CIP 24.0102)

Business Administration (CIP 52.0201)

Computer Science (CIP 11.0701)

Education (CIP 13.0101)

Engineering (CIP 14.0101)

Health Sciences (CIP 51.000)

Information Technology (CIP 11.0103)

Science (CIP 30.0101)

Social Sciences (CIP 45.0101)

The SBCC will review and discontinue associate degree programs that are nonproductive based on selected criteria.

#### Review Process for Community Colleges

- a. Through existing campus-based processes, each community college will systematically review each degree program at least once every three years.
- b. Based on the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code and standards congruent with SCHEV's minimum standards for degree program productivity, the VCCS will systematically monitor full-time equated student enrollments (FTES) and numbers of graduates for all approved associate degree programs.
- c. For any degree program that does not meet degree program productivity standards, the community colleges will submit to the VCCS:
  - (i) a plan discontinue the degree program and to teach-out its students;
  - (ii) justification (defense) for continuing the degree program; or
  - (iii) strategies to enhance the degree program's productivity.
- d. Consistent with SCHEV's procedures for degree program productivity review, the VCCS will report to SCHEV at least once every three years the results of the degree program productivity review and describe any proposed changes to the VCCS policies and procedures.

### **E. Process for Utilization of Quantitative Standards**

#### **Notification and Institutional Review**

Stage 1 of the degree program productivity review consists of SCHEV staff notifying institutions as to which degree programs ("flagged" degree programs) have not satisfied both applicable standards for full-time equated students (FTE) and graduates (Grads) as specified in the tables above.

Upon receiving the SCHEV notice, each institution must promptly review the information for the flagged degree programs at <https://research.schev.edu/Productivity/>. If a data correction results in a degree program satisfying a previously failed quantitative standard, the degree program will be removed from the degree program productivity review.

#### **Discontinuance of Flagged Degree Programs**

Institutions may elect to discontinue a flagged degree program. The institutional representative must complete the "Plan-to-Discontinue (Teach-Out Plan) Form." The institution must inform all students of the impending discontinuance.

#### **Exemption from Review of Flagged Degree Programs**

Institutions may request exemptions for flagged degree programs to be removed from the productivity review. The institutional representative will complete an "Exempt-from-Review Form" to indicate the reason the flagged degree program should be exempt (removed) from further productivity review. An exemption may be granted for the following reasons:

- **Aggregating Data for Programs at Two Degree Levels.** For degree programs with the same CIP code that are offered at two degree levels (bachelor + master or master + doctoral or bachelor + doctoral), data on enrollment and graduates may be combined to meet the applicable productivity standards. In such cases, aggregated data for the combined degree programs must satisfy the *aggregated productivity standards* for the degree programs in question. Aggregation must be requested by the institution.
- **Five-Year Exemption.** Any degree program that has been in existence for five or fewer years (with the last year of data counting as the fifth year) may be exempt from productivity review, at request of the institution.

### **Continuance of Flagged Degree Programs**

If a flagged degree program is not eligible for an exemption, and the institution intends to request continuation of the degree program, the institutional representative must submit a completed “Request-to-Continue Form.”

Information provided in the “Request-to-Continue Form” must present objective data to support all three of the following conclusions:

- the flagged degree program is not unnecessarily duplicative;
- the flagged degree program fulfills a regional or state need; and
- the flagged degree program provides substantial employment value for graduates.

## **V. SCHEV Council Action**

Following evaluation of the institution’s submitted information for flagged degree programs, SCHEV staff will notify the institution of the Council meeting at which staff intends to report recommendations for discussion. Council action will occur at a subsequent meeting. Council action will generally be to continue or to discontinue any given flagged degree program. Council may also defer action on a given degree program to a future cycle of productivity review, or allow a flagged degree program to continue with restrictions or conditions, including (but not limited to) requiring the submission of additional information.

## **VI. Post-Discontinuance of Flagged Degree Programs**

Council hereby establishes two requirements for degree programs discontinued as a result of the degree-program productivity and viability review process. Once a degree program has been discontinued as a result of the SCHEV degree-program productivity review:

1. the discontinued degree program may not be incorporated as a sub-area (such as: concentration, emphasis area, focus area, major, option, specialization, or track) under another approved degree program unless such incorporation has been included in the “Plan-to-Teach-Out (Discontinue) Form;” and

2. the discontinued degree program may not be proposed again as a standalone degree program unless permission to do so has been conferred in writing by the Executive Director of SCHEV or his delegate.

DRAFT

## APPENDIX

### Procedures for Submission of Documentation for Degree-Program Productivity Review

#### A. General Guidelines

1. All documentation for degree program productivity review process must be submitted to SCHEV. All voluntary discontinuances of degree programs must have approval from the institution's governing board. Board approval should be secured within six months of submitting the discontinuance to SCHEV.
2. The termination date for reporting data on flagged degree programs to be discontinued should not exceed seven (7) years beyond the last date for reporting new student enrollment.
3. Documentation must be submitted via the SCHEV degree-program productivity and viability forms, which are provided below. Documentation to discontinue a flagged degree program must include the "Plan-to-Discontinue (Teach-Out Plan) Form;" documentation to continue a flagged degree program must include the "Request-to-Continue Form;" justification for documentation to exempt (remove from consideration) a flagged degree program must include the "Exempt-from-Review Form."
4. SCHEV staff reserves the right to request additional information in connection with any submission made to SCHEV as part of the degree-program productivity review.

#### B. Specific Guidelines

1. Documentation submitted by the institution must include three components:
  - (i) At least one cover letter signed by the chief academic officer. (see Section B.2 below)
  - (ii) For each flagged degree program, a completed Degree Program Productivity and Viability Cover Sheet. (See Part D below)
  - (iii) Based on each flagged-program Cover Sheet's "Institution Action" – discontinue/teach-out; continue/preserve; claim exemption/exempt from review, a completed form corresponding to that institutional action. (See Part D below)

When applicable, an appendix containing all support documentation (e.g., charts or cited documents) should be included as a fourth component.

2. Regarding the letter(s) referenced in Subsection 1(i) above, the chief academic officer should sign a letter or letters that:
  - identifies and lists the flagged degree program(s), either via one letter that addresses all of the institution's flagged degree programs, or one letter per each type of institution action (discontinue; request to continue; claim exemption); or one letter per flagged degree program;
  - summarizes the institution's action regarding each flagged program; and

- describes (in terms of resources – financial, personnel, etc) the impacts and implications of the institution’s action.
3. If a flagged degree program is offered jointly/collaboratively with one or more institutions, then the chief academic officer/s of this/these institution/s must also submit degree-program productivity documentation, including a cover letter on the institution’s letterhead, an original signature, and any associated contracts and/or Memoranda of Agreement/Understanding.

### **C. Instructions for Documents and Forms**

#### **1. Preparation of Documentation**

- Use only SCHEV official forms – edited SCHEV forms will not be accepted.
- Use Microsoft Word Times New Roman (TNR) 12 Font for all text including cover letters, and appendix pages and page numbers, if applicable. At minimum, footnotes should be in TNR 10 Font. All footnote citations must utilize current APA format.
- Use one-inch margins; single space, 0 pt “before and after” between narrative text.
- Include support documentation (e.g., quoted documents) in a labeled appendix; use page numbering separate from the main document (e.g., A-1, B-1).
  - All non-Word and original documents (e.g., reports, accreditor requirements, needs assessment) should be included behind a titled cover page and retain the original document’s pagination.
  - No edits or revisions should be made to original documents.
  - Documents should be sized-adjusted for readability, if needed.
  - No images/screenshots of original documents should be cut and pasted into Word documents.
  - For electronic submissions, original documents should be scanned for inclusion in the appendix of the PDF electronic copy.

#### **2. Submission of Documentation**

All documentation should be submitted to SCHEV’s Academic Affairs Support Specialist, Karen Banks ([karenbanks@schev.edu](mailto:karenbanks@schev.edu)). [A mailing address for hard-copy documentation will be provided after SCHEV’s offices have been relocated in Richmond.]

### **D. Cover Sheet and Applicable Forms**

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA**  
**Cover Sheet: Degree-Program Productivity and Viability**

1. Institution (complete legal name)	2. Degree program productivity review time frame (semester/year)
3. Institution action (select one) <input type="checkbox"/> Institution will discontinue the flagged degree program (complete the Plan-to-Discontinue (Teach-Out Plan form) <input type="checkbox"/> Institution seeks to continue the flagged degree program (complete the Request-to-Continue form) <input type="checkbox"/> Institution seeks an exemption for the flagged degree program (complete the Exempt-from-Review form)	
4. Degree designation (spell out designation, include parenthetical abbreviation for degree programs)	
5. Degree program name	6. CIP code
7. Degree program approval date by Council _____	
8. Semester and year beyond which no new enrollments will be accepted:	9. Teach-out time frame (semester/year) to (semester/year)
10. Termination time for reporting degrees (semester and year)	11. Date approved by Board of Visitors or State Board for Community Colleges (e.g., May 1, 2016)
12. <b>For Critical Shortage Area Only.</b> Check all that apply. <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of student demand <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of market demand <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of institutional resources <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
13. List of constituents impacted by action.	
14. If a collaborative or joint degree program, identify the collaborating institution(s). <b>Note:</b> Each collaborating institution must submit separate productivity and viability documentation.	
15. Location of academic program within the institution (complete for every level, as appropriate and <u>specify</u> the unit from the choices). Department(s) or division of _____ School(s) or college(s) of _____ Campus(es) or off-campus site(s) _____	
16. Name, title, telephone number(s), and email address of person(s) other than the institution's chief academic officer who may be contacted by or may be expected to contact Council staff regarding the program.	

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA**  
**Exempt-from-Review Form: Degree-Program Productivity and Viability**

Date:

1. Institution (complete legal name)	
2. Degree/certificate designation (spell out designation, include parenthetical abbreviation for degree programs)	
3. Degree program name	4. CIP code

An institution seeking to request an exemption for a flagged degree program must provide the reason for the degree program to be exempt from review. A separate form must be submitted for each flagged degree program.

- I. When was the flagged degree program approved by SCHEV? (e.g., July 9, 2022)
  
- II. When did the institution enroll the first students? (semester/year)
  
- III. What is the reason that the flagged degree program should be exempt (removed) from the degree-program productivity review? (100 words max)

INSERT TEXT
-------------

The reasons a flagged degree program may be considered for exemption include:

- **Aggregating Data for Degree Programs at Two Degree Designation Levels.** For degree programs with the same Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code that are offered at two degree designation levels (bachelor + master or master + doctoral or bachelor + doctoral), data on student enrollment and graduates may be combined to meet the applicable degree program productivity standards. In such cases, aggregated data for the combined degree programs must satisfy the *aggregated degree program productivity standards* for the degree programs in question. Aggregation of data must be requested by the institution.
  
- **Five-Year Exemption.** Any degree program that has been in existence for five or fewer years (with the last year of data counting as the fifth year) may be exempt from degree program productivity review, at request of the institution.

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA**  
**Request-to-Continue Form: Degree-Program Productivity and Viability**

Date:

1. Institution (complete legal name)	
2. Degree/certificate designation (spell out designation, include parenthetical abbreviation for degree programs)	
3. Degree program name	4. CIP code

An institution that requests that a flagged degree program not be discontinued must provide justification (a defense) for the degree program to continue. A separate form must be submitted for each flagged degree program.

**I. Duplication**

For each Virginia-public-institution degree program at the designation level and with the same CIP code as the flagged degree program, provide information for student enrollment and degrees awarded for the past five (5) years. If no degree programs are duplicative, then leave the table blank.

**Note.** Only data from SCHEV Policy Analytics may be used.

Student enrollment: [https://research.schev.edu/enrollment/E16\\_Report.asp](https://research.schev.edu/enrollment/E16_Report.asp)

Student completions: [https://research.schev.edu/Completions/C1Level2\\_Report.asp](https://research.schev.edu/Completions/C1Level2_Report.asp)

Institution	Student Enrollment				
	Fall 20__	Fall 20__	Fall 20__	Fall 20__	Fall 20__

(Expand the table as needed)

Institution	Degrees Awarded				
	Year 20__- 20__	Year 20__- 20__	Year 20__- 20__	Year 20__- 20__	Year 20__- 20__

(Expand the table as needed)

## II. Labor Market Information

Provide information from the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE). If VOEE employment data are not available, information from other reputable sources (such as but not necessarily, limited to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and Virginia Works, Labor Market Information Long-term Employment Projections may be provided.

Information should be related to occupations that are directly related to the subject and degree level of the flagged degree program. If no data exist for the occupations directly related to both the degree program designation level and discipline of the flagged degree program, then leave blank. (300 words max.)

INSERT TEXT

## III. Return on Investment (ROI)

Cite return-on-investment data on the flagged program from SCHEV's Return on Investment Tool. Explain whether the cited data support a conclusion that the underenrolled degree program provides substantial employment value for graduates. If data for the flagged degree program are not available on the SCHEV tool, then ROI data from other sources may be cited. (300 words max.)

INSERT TEXT

## IV. Outcomes Since Approval by Council

If the degree program was established in the last 20 years (with the last year of data counting as the twentieth year), cite specific factors from the original proposal submitted to SCHEV to establish state needs for the flagged degree program. Explain whether the flagged degree program has achieved attested outcomes. For example: if the original degree program proposal stated that the degree program was necessary for employment in a specific field in Virginia, provide data regarding the number and proportion of graduates who have been employed in that field in Virginia. If data are not available, then leave blank; do not substitute anecdotes for data. (300 words max.)

INSERT TEXT

## V. Institutional Justification

Provide information below as relevant to the flagged degree program. An institution's justification(s)/reasoning(s) for continuance of a given flagged degree program need not address all the following criteria. Any topics that are not applicable should be left blank.

- A. Access for an Underserved Geographical Area. *Cite data to demonstrate that without the flagged degree program a specific underserved region will be disadvantaged. (300 words max.)*

INSERT TEXT

- B. Access for an Underserved Population. *Cite data to demonstrate that without the flagged degree program a specific underserved population will be disadvantaged. (300 words max.)*

INSERT TEXT

C. Degree Program meets Unique Need(s) in Virginia. *Cite data to demonstrate that the flagged degree program is uniquely suited to fulfill one or more specific, urgent, or critical needs in the institution's region or at the state level. (300 words max.)*

INSERT TEXT

D. Essential for Research Funding or Intellectual Property Generation. *Cite data on research expenditures and/or intellectual property revenue directly associated with the flagged degree program in the last three years (with the last year of data counting as the third year). This criterion will normally be applicable to PhD degree programs only. (300 words max.)*

INSERT TEXT

E. Centrality to Institutional Mission. *Explain how the institution will not be able to fulfill its mission without the flagged degree program, including reference to the average number of graduates produced by the program over the last five years. (300 words max.)*

INSERT TEXT

F. Degree Program plays Important Role(s) Within the Institution. *Explain how the flagged degree program's coursework supports the institution's general-education curriculum and/or its mission-central/-critical degree programs. (300 words max.)*

INSERT TEXT

G. Actions Taken to Bolster the Degree Program. *Explain specific actions taken -- within the past five years for a flagged undergraduate program and within the past three years for a flagged graduate program -- to increase student enrollment, degree production, and/or return on investment for the degree program. Cite data to demonstrate how the actions are bolstering the flagged degree program. If such actions were taken more recently than the time frame specified above for the flagged program's degree level (i.e., actions were too recent for data to be available yet), then explain the rationale for the actions taken and validate the improvements expected. (300 words max.)*

INSERT TEXT

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA**

**Plan-to-Discontinue (Teach-Out Plan) Form: Degree-Program Productivity and Viability**

Institution (complete legal name)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Degree designation (spell out designation, include parenthetical abbreviation for degree programs)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Degree program name	Click or tap here to enter text.
Degree program productivity review time frame (semester/year)	Click or tap here to enter text.

**Teach-Out Plan**

Are any students currently enrolled in the degree program?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, indicate how many students are enrolled in the degree.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Indicate the expected graduation semester and year for all enrolled students Include a separate sentence for each semester/year and indicate the number of expected graduates.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	

When is the last semester and year a student will be able to complete the degree program? For example, Fall 2026.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Are any students currently enrolled in the degree program?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the discontinuation time frame (semester/year) been extended beyond the last semester expected for all students to graduate?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, indicate such and the time frame for the extension.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
If no, indicate such and why.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	

Describe the support services that will be provided to students through the teach-out timeframe. Include how currently enrolled students will be contacted about the degree program discontinuance, advising services available, and the availability of required coursework in the degree program.
Click or tap here to enter text.

Have all faculty teaching core and required coursework been notified of the impending degree program discontinuance?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will any faculty be terminated as a result of the degree program discontinuance?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If faculty position(s) would be terminated, will the institution maintain appropriate faculty resources until the end of the teach-out plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If no, explain how the institution plans to provide sufficient faculty resources until the end of the teach-out plan.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	

*“Stopped Out” Students*

Do institutional records show any “stopped out” students?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, how many students are “stopped-out”?	Enter Number.
Indicate how “stopped-out” students will be contacted about the degree-program discontinuance.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	

Indicate what will be done to ensure “stopped-out” students will be afforded opportunity to complete the degree program.
Click or tap here to enter text.

**Incorporating the Discontinued Degree Program as a Sub-area**

If the discontinued degree program will be incorporated as a sub-area (major, concentration, track, etc.) into another degree program, provide a detailed description of how this will be done.
Click or tap here to enter text.

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** IV.F. – Council – Discussion and Action on Workforce Pell

**Date of Meeting:** May 12, 2026

**Presenter:** Lee Andes  
Director of Finance Policy & Innovation  
leeandes@schev.edu

Theresa Thompson  
Senior Research Associate  
theresathompson@schev.edu

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

- No previous Council review/action  
 Previous review/action

**Date:**

**Update:**

**Purpose of the Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item is to update Council on recent progress in developing Virginia’s response to the federal Workforce Pell program. This program is scheduled to be active as of July 1, 2026.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

With the One Big Beautiful Bill signed into law in July 2025, the federal government created the Workforce Pell initiative. Workforce Pell is a federal initiative that expands Pell Grant eligibility to short-term, career-focused training programs that prepare people for in-demand jobs. Workforce Pell allows students to use Pell Grants for programs lasting 150–600 clock hours and 8–15 weeks, opening affordable pathways into fields like healthcare, IT, manufacturing, and skilled trades. The project aims to strengthen both worker opportunity and employer talent pipelines by funding programs that demonstrate strong completion, job placement, and earnings outcomes.

**Preparation**

- A Virginia Workforce Pell work group has been established consisting of SCHEV, VCCS, VA Works, and VOEE, following an introductory discussion meeting held on Monday, April 13, 2026.

- Five staff members from the work group are scheduled to attend a National Governor’s Association event - 2026 Workforce Pell Implementation Lab – scheduled for May 5-7.
- Following this event, the committee’s first task is to create the definitions for “high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand.”
- Federal negotiated rule making process is in its final stages - [Negotiated Rulemaking for Higher Education 2025 | U.S. Department of Education](#)

**Eligibility:**

The eligible program must:

- Be approved by the Governor
- Have final approval by US Department of Education
- Have at least 150 but fewer than 600 clock hours of instruction
- Last at least 8 and weeks but less than 15 weeks
- Be operating and meeting all criteria for at least 12 months before approval
- Be offered by an accredited Title IV eligible institution
- Prepare students for high-skill, high-wage in-demand industry sectors, as defined by the state
- Lead to academic credit toward a subsequent credential or degree
- Lead to industry recognized post-secondary credential.
- Have a verified 70% completion within 150% of normal completion time
- Have a verified 70% job placement within 180 days after program completion
- Pass a value-added earnings test where published tuition and fees do not exceed the difference between a graduate’s median earnings and 150% of federal poverty line.

As this process proceeds, there may be time sensitive sequences of events requiring a quick turnaround on the adoption of definitions for the program and the review and approval of any new programs modified or created to access Workforce Pell funds. Council may consider what elements can be delegated to staff to facilitate progress and ensure that Virginia remains at the forefront in participation within the federal program.

**Materials Provided:** None

**Financial Impact:** None

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** Staff will keep Council updated.

**Resolution:**

*Whereas the Workforce Pell program can provide an affordable path towards an in-demand career, the opportunity to be a national leader in creation of these needed*

*programs requires a nimble process, and creation of these programs involves a multi-agency effort,*

**WHEREAS** the federal Workforce Pell program can provide Virginia students with an affordable path toward an in-demand career; and

**WHEREAS** the opportunity for Virginia to be a national leader in creation of these needed programs will require a nimble process; and

**WHEREAS** the creation of these programs will involve a multi-agency effort; therefore, now,

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia hereby delegates to the agency Executive Director the responsibility for leading the Council's responsibilities with respect to the development, execution and implementation of required steps for Virginia institutions of higher education to participate in, and benefit from, changes in federal financial aid programs for the purpose of helping Virginia students participating in short-term credential and degree training programs; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the State Council directs the agency Executive Director to provide an update on the status of this responsibility at the subsequent meeting of Council, and thereafter if necessary.

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** IV.G. – Council – Update on 2026 Legislative Session

**Date of Meeting:** May 12, 2026

**Presenter:** Lee Andes  
Director of Finance Policy & Innovation  
leeandes@schev.edu

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

- No previous Council review/action  
 Previous review/action

**Date:** March 17, 2026

**Update:** Provided update on legislative session.

**Purpose of the Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item is to update the committee on the 2025 Virginia General Assembly's budget amendments regarding funding for higher education.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

The 2026 Virginia General Assembly completed its consideration of legislative proposals and submitted approved bills for Governor Spanberger's consideration. A summary list of higher education bills passed by the General Assembly can be found in the March 2026 Council agenda handout: [G.A. Bill List](#). Below is a list of actions taken on a sample of high interest bills since that time.

## Update on Action on Certain Bills

### Bill Number / Brief Description / Status

**HB61**      **Description:** Establishes the Small SWaM Business Procurement Enhancement Program with a statewide goal of 42 percent of certified small SWaM business.

**Status:** The General Assembly (GA) accepted Governor's amendments to add SCHEV to the workgroup to further the Commonwealth's efforts to meet the goals established under the Small SWaM Business Procurement Enhancement Program.

**HB650**      **Description:** Prohibits certain federal civil immigration enforcement activities in certain protected areas including a school or public institution of higher education, or an office of the attorney for the Commonwealth.

**Status:** The General Assembly passed by the Governor’s amendments to require institutions of higher education to notify campus students, faculty, and staff if federal immigration enforcement is present on campus.

**HB1377**      **Description:** An Act to direct the Virginia Military Institute's Board of Visitors to examine certain aspects of higher education at the Virginia Military Institute

**Status:** GA accepted Governor’s amendments to remove the task force (which included SCHEV) and instead have the VMI board do an internal audit

**HB1385**      **Description:** Amends Board of Visitors appointment process, six-year terms, SCHEV to lead two working groups on shared governance and legal counsel

**Status:** The General Assembly passed by on the Governor’s edits to the Board of Visitors bill, including changes to the workgroup make up for the legal counsel report.

**SB378**      **Description:** Collective bargaining; The bill creates the Public Employee Relations Board, which shall determine appropriate bargaining units and provide for certification and decertification elections for exclusive bargaining representatives of state employees and local government employees.

**Status:** The General Assembly passed by the Governor’s amendments to clarify the types of service employees and university health systems to the definition.

As of the preparation of this agenda item, the General Assembly had not completed a conference budget to be submitted to the Governor. A staff summary of proposals passed by the individual House and Senate chambers is provided in the [March, 2026 Council agenda](#), page 104-126. There has been no change to this list since that time. There has been reported speculation that the budget process could stretch into June, 2026.

**Materials Provided:** N/A

**Financial Impact:** N/A

**Relationship to the Goals of the Strategic Plan:**

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** Council will receive a final update as of the next meeting following completion of the budget.

**Resolution:** N/A

# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** IV.H – Report of the Agency Executive Director

**Date of Meeting:** May 12, 2026

**Presenter:** A. Scott Fleming  
Executive Director  
[scottfleming@schev.edu](mailto:scottfleming@schev.edu)

**Most Recent Review/Action:**

- No previous Council review/action  
 Previous review/action

Date:

Action:

**Purpose of the Agenda Item:**

The purpose of this item is to inform Council of recent and upcoming work in which staff is involved.

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:** N/A

**Materials Provided:** Director's Report.

**Financial Impact:** N/A

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** N/A

**Relationship to Goals of *The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*:** N/A

**Resolution:** N/A

Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority: On March 19, Dr. Edwards and Executive Director Fleming met with leadership from VHDWA regarding their support for the academic affairs unit with respect to academic programs intended to prepare students for employment in health professions, including nursing.

Southern Virginia Higher Education Center: On March 25, Executive Director Fleming attended the board meeting and student learning center ribbon cutting at

the SVHEC building in South Boston, Virginia. The student learning center leverages funding from several employers in the region.

Executive Leadership Retreat: On March 26-27, Executive Director Fleming and the executive leadership convened for a strategic planning session. Topics included agency operations, staffing needs and development plans, revising agency objectives and key results, and intra-agency communication and engagement strategies.

James Madison University Inauguration: On April 8, Executive Director Fleming attended the inauguration ceremony for President Schmidt at the Harrisonburg campus of JMU.

Virginia Tech Ph. D. Student Visit: On April 10, SCHEV hosted several Ph.D. students from Virginia Tech to describe SCHEV's role in state policy and provide insights into higher education generally.

ASU + GSV and National Higher Education Insights Board: On April 13-15, Executive Director Fleming attended the annual ASU+GSV conference and participated in the meeting of the combined Higher Education and Workforce Insights Board, hosted by the conference presenters.

Op-Six Meeting: On April 17, SCHEV hosted a convening of the Op-Six group (consisting of the Secretaries of Finance and Education, staff for the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees, the Department of Planning and Budget, and SCHEV) to consider the process for updating agency six-year plans pursuant to the Code of Virginia that requires institutions to update their plans in even years.

Work-integrated Learning Strategy Session: On April 20, staff met with facilitators from JFF to discuss the state's strategy for work-integrated learning under the Innovative Internship program and the possibility of a work-integrated degree program that would incorporate one year of work-study with 90-credit hour degrees.

Randolph-Macon Inauguration: On April 23-24, Executive Director Fleming attended the inauguration of Randolph-Macon College's new chief executive, President Hill, and related events.

Virginia Higher Education Executive Advisory Committee (VHEEAC): On April 27, Executive Director Fleming convened the public institutions' chief executives to discuss SCHEV's new Student Access, Success and Engagement unit; metrics and strategies for assessing work-based learning (WBL), and instruction and student fluency in artificial intelligence (AI).

**Executive Director's Report  
State Council of Higher Education  
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Finance Advisory Committee (FAC): On April 28, Lee Andes convened public institutions' chief financial officers to discuss the legislative session, the six-year-plan update process, space utilization, military waivers, full-cost reporting, and Council's work related to institutional performance standards (IPS).

Instructional Programs Advisory Committee (IPAC): On May 1, Dr. Edwards convened public institutions' chief academic officers to discuss development of the healthcare workforce, the six-year-planning update process, the assessment of student learning (including AI literacy), and three-year baccalaureate degrees.

Items Delegated to Director/Staff

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, § 23.1-203 and Council’s “*Policies and Procedures for Program Approval and Changes*,” the following items approved/disapproved as delegated to staff:

**Academic Program Actions**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Degree/Program/CIP</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Brightpoint Community College	<b>Program Name Change Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change the name of the Associate of Science (AS) degree program in Mass Communications (09.0102) to Communication (09.0102)</li> </ul>	Spring 2026
Brightpoint Community College	<b>Facilitated Staff Approval:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree program in Pharmaceutical Manufacturing (41.0303)</li> </ul>	Summer 2026
J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College	<b>Facilitated Staff Approval:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree program in Chemical Laboratory Technician (41.0301)</li> </ul>	Summer 2026
James Madison University	<b>Graduate Certificate Program Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Science for Society (30.7099)</li> </ul>	Summer 2026
New River Community College	<b>Facilitated Staff Approval:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree program in Early Childhood Education (19.0709)</li> </ul>	Summer 2026
Norfolk State University	<b>Graduate Certificate Program Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher Education Professional Studies (13.1206)</li> </ul>	Summer 2026
Northern Virginia Community College	<b>Facilitated Staff Approval:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree program in Surgical Technology (51.0909)</li> </ul>	Summer 2026
University of Mary Washington	<b>Degree Designation Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add the degree designation Bachelor of Science (BS) to the existing Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree program in Geography to create a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science (BA/BS) degree program in Geography (45.0701)</li> </ul>	Fall 2026
University of Mary Washington	<b>Graduate Certificate Program Disapproved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artificial Intelligence in Business (52.1399)</li> </ul>	March 11, 2026
University of Mary Washington	<b>Graduate Certificate Program Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrepreneurial Leadership (52.0701)</li> </ul>	Fall 2026

Institution	Degree/Program/CIP	Effective Date
Virginia Highlands Community College	<b>Facilitated Staff Approval:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree program in Hospitality and Tourism Management (52.0901)</li> </ul>	Summer 2026

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, § 23.1-203 and Council’s “*Policies and Procedures for Program Approval and Changes*,” the following items approved and reported:

#### Four-Year Publics Programs Discontinued

Institution	Degree/Program/CIP	Effective Date
George Mason University	<b>Undergraduate Certificate Program Discontinuances Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary Education – Biology (6-12) (13.1322)</li> <li>Secondary Education – Chemistry (6-12) (13.1323)</li> <li>Secondary Education – Computer Science (6-12) (13.1321)</li> <li>Secondary Education – Earth Science (6-12) (13.1337)</li> <li>Secondary Education – English (6-12) (13.1305)</li> <li>Secondary Education – Mathematics (6-12) (13.1311)</li> <li>Secondary Education – Physics (6-12) (13.1329)</li> </ul>	Fall 2026
University of Virginia	<b>Program Discontinuance Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bachelor of Professional Studies (BPS) degree program in Health Sciences Management (51.0701) [Council Approval Date: January 14, 2014]</li> </ul>	Summer 2026

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, § 23.1-203 and Council’s “*Policies and Procedures for Program Approval and Changes*,” the following items approved and reported:

#### VCCS Inventory of Discontinued Programs

Community College	CIP	Degree/Program	Effective Date
Blue Ridge	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Summer 2027
Paul D. Camp	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Summer 2028
Central Virginia	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Fall 2028
Central Virginia	15.0000	AAS, Engineering Technology	Spring 2029

Central Virginia	46.0302	Cert, Electrical Technology	Fall 2028
Central Virginia	47.0201	Cert. HVAC	Spring 2029
Central Virginia	15.0699	Cert, Industrial Maintenance Mechanic	Spring 2029
Central Virginia	48.0508	Cert, Welding	Spring 2029
Danville	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Fall 2027
Danville	15.9999	Cert, Residential Design and Estimating	Fall 2027
Germanna	43.0203	AAS, Fire Science Technology	Spring 2021
Germanna	19.0709	Cert, Child Care	Spring 2021
Germanna	43.0203	Cert, Fire Science Technology	Fall 2005
Laurel Ridge	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Fall 2026
Mountain Empire	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Summer 2031
Mountain Empire	52.0499	Cert, Clerical Assistant	Summer 2029
Mountain Empire	22.0302	Cert, Legal Office Assisting	Summer 2031
Mountain Gateway	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Summer 2027
New River	43.0406	AAS, Forensic Science	Summer 2028
Patrick & Henry	52.0299	Cert, General Business	Spring 2027
Piedmont	51.1004	AAS, Medical Laboratory Technology	Spring 2027
Piedmont	51.0799	Cert, Health Information Management	Spring 2027
Rappahannock	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Summer 2028
Reynolds	51.0904	AAS, Paramedic	Spring 2027
Southside Virginia	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Summer 2027
Southwest Virginia	52.0499	AAS, Business and Technology	Spring 2027
Southwest Virginia	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Spring 2026
Southwest Virginia	22.0302	Cert, Legal Studies	Summer 2027
Virginia Highlands	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Spring 2029
Virginia Highlands	51.1599	AAS, Human Services	Spring 2029
Virginia Highlands	11.0101	Cert, A+ Networking	Spring 2029
Virginia Highlands	52.0499	Cert, Clerical Studies	Fall 2026
Virginia Highlands	48.0599	Cert, Computer Numerical Controls Machining	Summer 2026
Virginia Highlands	15.0599	Cert, Engineering (Solar Energy)	Summer 2026
Virginia Highlands	51.0707	Cert, Health Information Technology	Spring 2028

Virginia Highlands	51.1599	Cert, Human Services Advocate	Spring 2028
Virginia Highlands	52.0299	Cert, Supervision and Management	Spring 2029
Virginia Highlands	11.0801	Cert, Web Programming and Design	Spring 2029
Virginia Western	51.0000	AS, Health Sciences	Summer 2028
Wytheville	24.0101	AA&S, Liberal Arts	Fall 2027
Wytheville	15.0699	Cert, Industrial Maintenance	Fall 2027
Wytheville	52.0299	Cert, Production Manufacturing	Summer 2013