

# IS THE PRICE RIGHT?

As a prospective college student, you need to consider many factors when deciding whether a college or university is a good fit for you. Price is only one. And while rising tuition and fees in Virginia (and the nation) are a growing concern, there are affordable pathways to obtaining your credential or degree. Options are listed below that may help lower the cost for you to attend college.

## PATHWAYS FOR LOWERING COLLEGE COSTS

- **Financial Aid:** Consider your eligibility for financial aid before determining if a college education is affordable. The U.S. Department of Education's **College Navigator** website provides information for students and parents to research institutions based on many factors, including net price (see below). It also includes general information for each college regarding admissions, enrollments, programs and majors, athletics, campus security, accreditation and loan default rates.
- **Associate Degree & Two-year College Transfer Grant:** If interested in pursuing a bachelor's degree an in-state student can save \$17,938 (31%) of tuition and fees by first obtaining an associate degree at a community college in two years and then transferring to a public four-year institution for the remaining years. Low- and middle-income students also can apply for the **Virginia Two-year College Transfer Grant**, which further reduces the cost for students meeting program criteria at a participating four-year institution.
- **Virginia 529 Prepaid Plan:** This plan encourages saving for future higher-education expenses. One feature of the **529 plan** allows families to prepay future tuition and mandatory fees at Virginia public colleges or universities for newborns through ninth graders.
- **Workforce Credential Grant Program:** Students can receive a discounted rate (up to 66%) toward the cost of an industry certification through noncredit training. The program focuses on training related to high-demand occupations that meet employer demand and provide greater opportunities for individuals to get a good paying job. The program is currently offered at community colleges across Virginia (known as **FastForward**) and through the **Southern Virginia Higher Education Center**.
  - **On-time Completion:** To complete a degree on time, students should take 30 credits each year (or 15 per semester). Although the federal financial aid definition of "full time" is only 12 credits or more per semester, 15 credits per semester are required to graduate within four years.



---

**In the end, you should always ask yourself, "Is the TOTAL price right for me...?"**

---

# WHAT WILL I PAY?

The table below provides a basis for comparing Virginia colleges/universities when only considering price, one factor in finding your college match. The table includes the actual tuition and fees and cost of living on campus for in-state full-time students in 2018-19. (Note: Some colleges require full-time freshmen students to live on campus.)

The Total Charges below isn't necessarily the amount you would pay. It is the **sticker price**. It is the total cost before subtracting scholarships, grants or work-study awards. (Scholarships and grants are forms of financial aid that a student does not have to pay back.) **Net Price** is the amount a student pays to attend a college/university after subtracting this aid. You can find a link to every college's Net Price Calculator, which estimates aid and costs, on the U.S. Department of Education website. Check out the brief videos there explaining how net price works. (Calculator estimates do not present a final determination of costs to attend, but do serve as a tool to help students better understand the college price tag for planning purposes.) Contact the college's financial aid office if you have questions and to confirm what you and/or your family will be expected to pay after receiving your financial aid award letter. In the end, you should always ask yourself, "Is the price right for me and my circumstances?"

Resource: U. S. Department of Education Net Price Calculator Center - <https://collegecost.ed.gov/netpricecenter.aspx>

## 2018-19 Full-Time Resident Undergraduate Student Charges (BEFORE financial aid, grants, scholarships, etc.)

Institution	Tuition and Total Mandatory Fees	Average Room and Board <sup>1</sup>	Total Charges
Christopher Newport University	\$14,754	\$11,460	\$26,214
College of William and Mary	\$23,400	\$12,236	\$35,636
George Mason University	\$12,462	\$11,460	\$23,922
James Madison University	\$12,016	\$10,512	\$22,528
Longwood University	\$13,340	\$11,026	\$24,366
Norfolk State University	\$9,490	\$10,360	\$19,850
Old Dominion University	\$10,872	\$10,462	\$23,334
Radford University	\$11,210	\$9,406	\$20,616
University of Mary Washington	\$12,654	\$10,730	\$23,384
University of Virginia	\$16,512	\$11,352	\$27,864
University of Virginia-Wise	\$10,119	\$10,438	\$20,557
Virginia Commonwealth University	\$14,490	\$10,428	\$24,918
Virginia Military Institute	\$18,862	\$9,482	\$28,344
Virginia State University	\$9,056	\$11,208	\$20,264
Virginia Tech	\$13,620	\$8,934	\$22,554
<b>2-Year Colleges</b>			
Richard Bland College	\$8,100	\$12,103	\$20,203
VA Community College System <sup>2</sup>	\$4,620	N/A	\$4,620
<b>Average for 4-year Institutions<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>\$13,370</b>	<b>\$10,633</b>	<b>\$24,003</b>
<b>Average for All Institutions<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>\$12,545</b>	<b>\$10,725</b>	<b>\$22,639</b>

(1) Charges listed here represent the weighted average double-occupancy room charge and the maximum weekly meal plan offered, not necessarily the plan used by most students.

(2) N/A in Average Room and Board is because VCCS does not have this charge.

(3) Increases for tuition and mandatory E&G fees and total are weighted to account for variable tuition charges at CWM, JMU and UVA.