



Graduate and Professional Student Senate
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**Graduate and Professional Student Senate
 GPSS Resolution 2021-22F
 Resolution to Increase University Staff Minimum Wage to \$15 an Hour**

First Reading by GPSS:	Sept. 9th, 2021
Second Reading by GPSS:	Sept 23rd, 2021
First Reading by Commission	date
Staff Senate Review:	date
Faculty Senate Review:	date
Undergraduate Student Senate Review:	date
Approved by Commission	date
First Reading by University Council:	date
Approved by University Council:	date
Approval by University President:	date
Approved by Board of Visitors:	date
Effective:	upon approval

WHEREAS, the minimum wage in Virginia did not increase for 12 years, was increased to only \$9.50 in May 2021, and will not reach \$15 until 2026 (see Appendix 1); and

WHEREAS, Virginia Tech’s growth has contributed to an increased cost of living in the Blacksburg community, as shown in Appendix 2; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Tech raised staff minimum wage to \$12 per hour in 2019, demonstrating a willingness to go above and beyond the state requirements in order to compensate staff fairly; and

WHEREAS, \$12 per hour at full-time hours comes to \$24,960 annually before taxes, assuming year-round work; therefore, despite paying more than statewide minimum wage, Virginia Tech does not pay full-time staff a living wage; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Tech estimated that the minimum wage increase to \$12, as well as raises for employees making \$13.50 or less and an annual \$500 supplement for employees paid \$35,500 or less per year, would cost \$1.5 million a year (see Appendix 3); and

WHEREAS, Virginia Tech pays its top five administrators over \$3 million dollars annually--an average of \$625,000 individually (see Appendix 4)--while staff are paid below a living wage for the area; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Virginia Tech enact a \$15 university wide minimum wage and raise low wages of current staff and contracted employees to meet this minimum wage. A task force will be convened, with a stakeholder portion of minimum wage employees, to both find the financial resources necessary to implement this change and identify all members of the university who need a wage increase by FY2022-2023. This task force will reconvene every 2 years following FY2022-2023 to reconsider staff wages in the context of cost of living increases and provide public recommendations on balancing staff wages with these increases; and

THEREFORE BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, if the budgetary proposal of the task force is voted down, then the raise will come directly from the President and Provost's office budgets until it can be found within the budget.

Appendix 1: Current Minimum Wage Law

Amended Virginia Code § 40.1-28.10 specifying the incremental increase of the minimum wage from 2021 to 2027.

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/40.1-28.10/>

Appendix 2: Blacksburg Housing Market

Virginia Tech's growth has contributed to a housing crisis in the Blacksburg community.

http://www.collegiatetimes.com/opinion/blacksburg-apartment-price-gouging-is-out-of-control/article_ef6b4b5e-749e-11eb-a855-37e485f44fd9.html

The median rent in Blacksburg is \$1,107, and the median mortgage is \$1,836.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/blacksburgtownvirginia/INC110219>

Given the dramatically increased class sizes for the last several years we expect this problem to increase as housing becomes increasingly scarce. In fact, while it is not reflected in the median figure yet, we have anecdotally seen housing prices rise by \$50-100 in the last year alone in response to larger class sizes.

Appendix 3: 2019 Increased Minimum Wage

<https://vtx.vt.edu/articles/2019/03/staff-pay-increase-article032019.html>

Appendix 4: Virginia Tech Salaries

<https://openpayrolls.com/rank/highest-paid-employees/virginia-polytechnic-institute-and-state-university-virginia-tech>

<https://www.hr.vt.edu/compensation-performance-management/compensation/pay-structure.htm>

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