VT VIRGINIA TECH

VIRGINIA TECH STUDENT SURVEY

Understanding students' experiences and perceptions of Virginia Tech

INTRODUCTION

Although alumni salaries and graduate placement rates have some merit for measuring the value of a college education, these factors do not holistically convey the experience and impact of a college education, nor do they reflect the primary reasons students attend college: to secure a career in which they are truly engaged and to prepare for meaningful and lifelong contribution to society.

Gallup's research in higher education has found that *where* you go to college matters far less than *how* you go to college — that is, students' experiences during their time in college shape their lives after graduation. Gallup finds that high-impact support and experiential learning opportunities are linked with long-term outcomes including lifelong well-being, workplace engagement and alumni's attachment to their alma mater.

Because experiences during college are so closely related to critical outcomes after college, assessing the experiences and attitudes of current students can help institutions better understand how they are promoting their students' success now and preparing them to succeed *after* college.

This study explores the experiences of Virginia Tech's undergraduate students (sophomores, juniors and seniors) and how those experiences relate to important outcomes and attitudes, such as student well-being, student engagement, views about campus climate, and perceptions about the value and quality of their education.

This study reports the results of a Gallup survey of Virginia Tech's sophomore, junior and senior students, administered via internet from Sept. 19-Oct. 24, 2017. A total of 2,041 students completed the survey, representing a participation rate of 10% of Virginia Tech's sophomore, junior and senior students.

Comparison Groups

Results of this study of Virginia Tech students are compared with college students who participated in the 2017 Strada-Gallup Student Survey. The Strada-Gallup Student Survey is representative of four-year, degree-granting U.S. institutions with respect to institutional control[1] (public vs. private institutions), enrollment size and region. In this report, Virginia Tech students are compared with the following groups:

› College students nationally (first-year students excluded): The results for this group were collected in the Strada-Gallup Student Survey and include 25,364 students from 43 institutions.

› Students from large higher education institutions (first-year students excluded): This comparison group — denoted in the report as "large IHEs" — is a subset of college students nationally and only includes students from institutions that enroll at least 20,000 undergraduate students. This group includes 8,259 students from the Strada-Gallup Student Survey.

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1   The study excludes private, for-profit institutions.
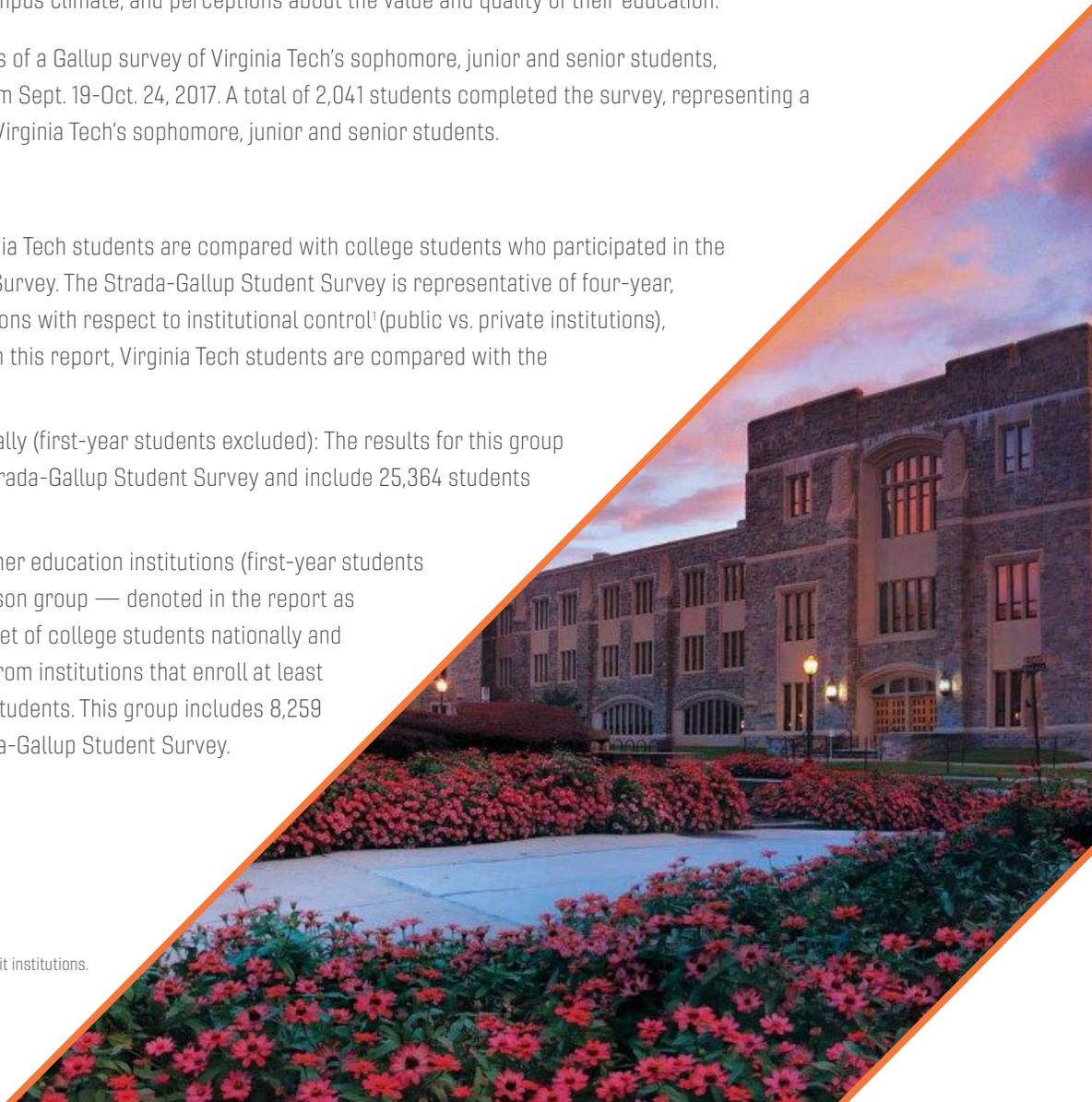
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2017, Virginia Tech partnered with Gallup to examine the experiences and perceptions of its sophomore, junior and senior undergraduate students — comparing them with the perceptions and experiences of key groups from Strada-Gallup's nationally representative survey of college graduates. Specifically, the study examines a range of topics including student well-being, student engagement, student experiences, campus climate, and perceptions about educational value and quality.

Key findings of the study include:

Virginia Tech students are more likely than students nationally to be thriving in each well-being element

› In each of the five elements of well-being that Gallup measures, Virginia Tech students are more likely than college students nationally and students at other large institutions to be thriving.

› Key support and experiential learning experiences — like believing professors care about them and being extremely active in co-curricular activities — drive student well-being among Virginia Tech students.

Virginia Tech students are more likely than students nationally to be engaged with school

› Nearly half of Virginia Tech students are classified as engaged — surpassing college students nationally by 15 percentage points and students at other large institutions by 18 percentage points.

› Four of the top eight predictors of student engagement center on students' relationships with their professors, faculty, staff and mentors.

Virginia Tech excels in providing experiential learning opportunities, and its students are extremely involved in co-curricular activities

› The 32% of Virginia Tech students who strongly agree that they are extremely active in co-curricular activities and organizations surpasses the rate among college students nationally by 13 percentage points and doubles the rate of students at other large institutions.

› Virginia Tech's first-generation college students are more likely than their peers nationally and at other large institutions to strongly agree to having each of the key experiential learning opportunities Gallup measures.
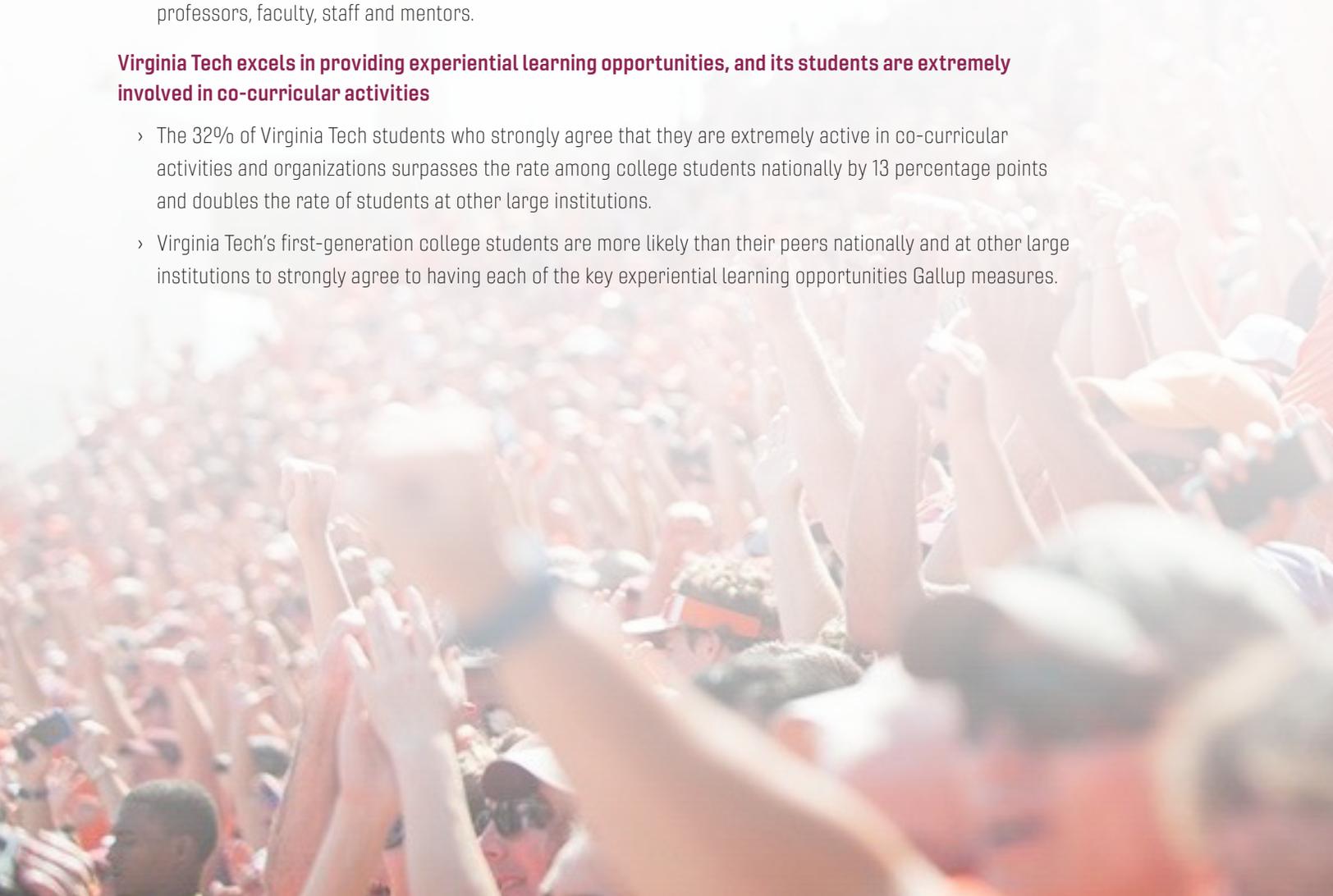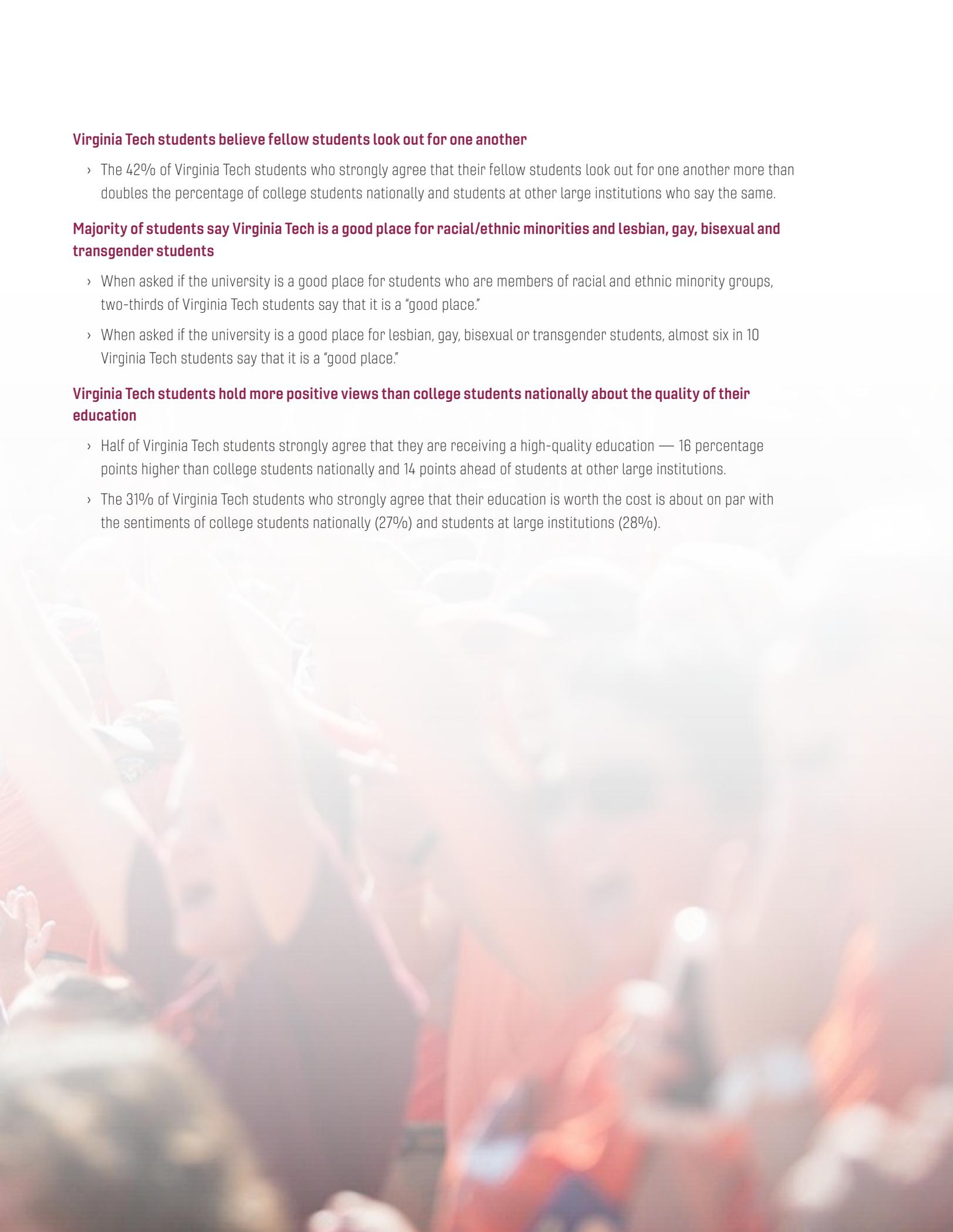
Virginia Tech students believe fellow students look out for one another

› The 42% of Virginia Tech students who strongly agree that their fellow students look out for one another more than doubles the percentage of college students nationally and students at other large institutions who say the same.

Majority of students say Virginia Tech is a good place for racial/ethnic minorities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students

› When asked if the university is a good place for students who are members of racial and ethnic minority groups, two-thirds of Virginia Tech students say that it is a "good place."

› When asked if the university is a good place for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students, almost six in 10 Virginia Tech students say that it is a "good place."

Virginia Tech students hold more positive views than college students nationally about the quality of their education

› Half of Virginia Tech students strongly agree that they are receiving a high-quality education — 16 percentage points higher than college students nationally and 14 points ahead of students at other large institutions.

› The 31% of Virginia Tech students who strongly agree that their education is worth the cost is about on par with the sentiments of college students nationally (27%) and students at large institutions (28%).

STUDENT WELL-BEING

STUDENT WELL-BEING

Virginia Tech students are more likely than students nationally to be thriving in each well-being element

Gallup has conducted decades of research on measuring and understanding human well-being. Well-being is measured in five distinct, but interconnected, elements: purpose, social, financial, community and physical.

Gallup categorizes individuals as "thriving," "struggling" or "suffering" in each element according to how they respond to long-tested questions that relate to each facet of their well-being. "Thriving" in a well-being element means that an individual is strong and consistent in that element, while those who are "struggling" in an element are moderate and less consistent in that element. Those classified as "suffering" are low and inconsistent in that particular element.

In each of the five elements of well-being, Virginia Tech students are more likely than college students nationally and students at other large institutions to be thriving. Virginia Tech students particularly excel in purpose well-being, meaning they enjoy what they do each day and are motivated to achieve their goals. The 42% of Virginia Tech students thriving in purpose well-being outpaces college students nationally and students at large institutions by seven and eight percentage points, respectively.

Virginia Tech students are also particularly likely to be thriving in community well-being — they lead college students nationally and students at large institutions in this element by 18 and 15 percentage points, respectively. The nearly six in 10 Virginia Tech students who are thriving in community well-being are highly engaged with people around them, feel safe in their environment and take pride in where they live. That Virginia Tech students have especially high community well-being aligns directly with the school's core motto of Ut Prosim ("That I May Serve"), which emphasizes self-development through a dedication to serving others.

PURPOSE WELL-BEING

Liking what you do each day and being motivated to achieve your goals

SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Having strong and supportive relationships and love in your life

FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

Effectively managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

The sense of engagement you have with the areas where you live, liking where you live, and feeling safe and having pride in your community

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

Having good health and enough energy to get things done on a daily basis

Student Well-Being

Legend:
- VIRGINIA TECH STUDENTS (OVERALL)
- COLLEGE STUDENTS NATIONALLY
- COLLEGE STUDENTS AT LARGE IHEs

The well-being of first-generation college students (FGCS) is the subject of increased attention at colleges and universities in the U.S., with studies finding that this student group reports higher levels of stress and depression and a lower sense of belonging on campus than do non-first-generation students.[2] Virginia Tech's own first-generation college students are about as likely as Virginia Tech students overall to be thriving in purpose, community and physical well-being. However, Virginia Tech's first-generation college students are less likely than Virginia Tech students overall to be thriving in social and financial well-being.

Compared with FGCS nationally and at other large institutions, Virginia Tech's FGCS are more likely to be thriving in purpose, community and physical well-being. Given research showing that first-generation students are more likely than their peers to feel out of place during college, the high level of community well-being among Virginia Tech's first-generation students is particularly notable. More than half of the school's first-generation students are thriving in community well-being, compared with 38% of college students nationally and 40% of college students at other large institutions.

Student Well-Being: FGCS

Legend:
- FGCS AT VIRGINIA TECH
- FGCS NATIONALLY
- FGCS AT LARGE IHEs
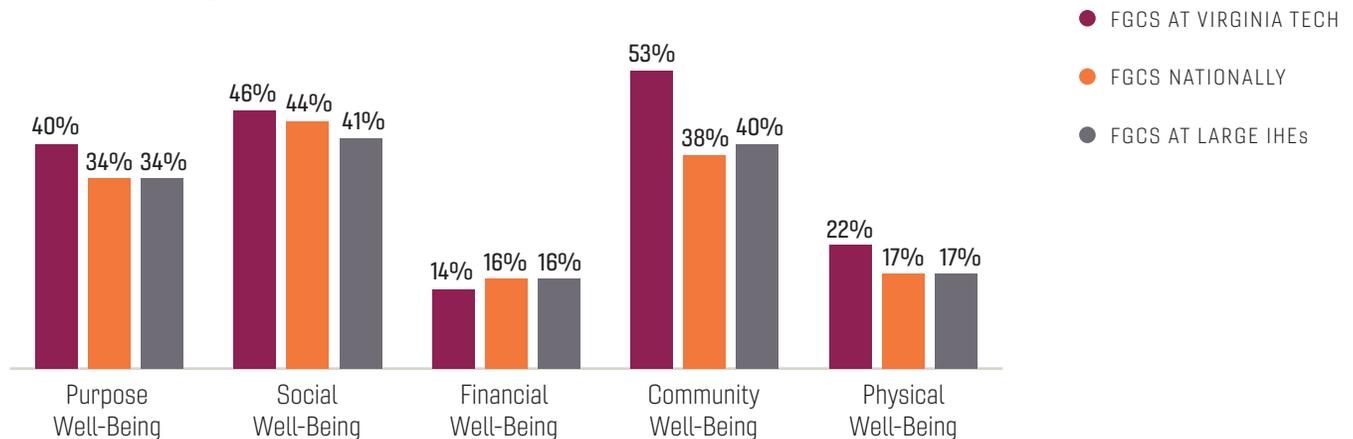
2   Stebleton, M. J., Soria, K. M., & Huesman, R. L., Jr. (2014). First-generation students' sense of belonging, mental health, and use of counseling services at public research universities. Journal of College Counseling. Retrieved from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/j.2161-1882.2014.00044.x

DRIVERS OF PURPOSE AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AT VIRGINIA TECH

Among Virginia Tech students, key support and experiential learning experiences drive well-being

Given that Virginia Tech students particularly excel in purpose and community well-being relative to their peers, understanding the experiences and perceptions that drive "thriving" in those elements can illustrate how the Virginia Tech experience promotes well-being among its students. Logistic regression models predicting the likelihood that students are thriving in each of those well-being elements reveal that, after accounting for student demographics and characteristics, a key set of experiences and attitudes drive purpose and community well-being.

The models in this section and throughout the report focus on a series of predictors that fall into six thematic categories represented in the following chart. The items they represent are included as inputs that can help explain key outcomes, such as students' well-being.

- The **SUPPORT-BASED EXPERIENCES** focus on meaningful relationships between students, faculty and mentors.

- The **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES** are focused on opportunities to learn through projects, internships and co-curricular activities.

- The **SELF-AWARENESS** items measure students' awareness and application of their own strengths.

- The **CAMPUS CLIMATE** items gauge students' perceptions about the environment on campus with respect to openness and beliefs about the university's commitment to safety.

- The **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS** measure key student characteristics such as gender, race, year in school and others.

- The **SKILL DEVELOPMENT** items measure students' beliefs about the degree to which their education is preparing them to succeed in their careers after college.

Among Virginia Tech students, the top drivers of purpose well-being center on distinct but interrelated supportive experiences from professors and fellow students. Three of the top six drivers of purpose well-being relate to support from faculty and staff — strongly agreeing that they have a professor who makes them excited about learning, that the faculty and staff are committed to helping students find rewarding careers, and that their professors care about them as individuals. Additionally, the third-strongest driver of purpose well-being is strongly agreeing that students at Virginia Tech look out for one another.

In addition to supportive relationships, involvement in co-curricular activities and a developed sense of their own strengths also represent significant drivers of purpose well-being among Virginia Tech students. These insights underscore the importance of meaningful interactions — with professors, faculty and fellow students — and self-awareness to students' purpose well-being.

Drivers of Purpose Well-Being Among Virginia Tech Students

(1) I have at least one professor at Virginia Tech who makes me excited about learning.

(2) The faculty and staff at Virginia Tech are committed to helping students find a rewarding career.

(3) Students at Virginia Tech look out for one another.

(4) I am extremely active in co-curricular activities and organizations.

(5) I accomplish a lot by using my strengths.

(6) My professors at Virginia Tech care about me as a person.

(7) I find ways to use my strengths at school every day.

DRIVER CATEGORY KEY

- ● SUPPORT-BASED EXPERIENCES
- ● EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES
- ● SELF-AWARENESS
- ● CAMPUS CLIMATE
- ● DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
- ● SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Community well-being among Virginia Tech students is also related to supportive experiences. The top driver of community well-being is strongly agreeing that students look out for one another, while the third and sixth drivers relate to having an inspiring professor and a mentor who encourages goals and dreams.

Two of the top seven drivers of community well-being relate to perceptions of campus climate. Students who believe that Virginia Tech is a good place for students who are members of racial and ethnic minorities and are confident that the school would do the right thing in an instance of discrimination on campus are significantly more likely to be thriving in community well-being. These findings highlight the importance of an institutional commitment to creating a welcoming campus environment for students of all backgrounds.

Drivers of Community Well-Being Among Virginia Tech Students

1 Students at Virginia Tech look out for one another.

2 Is Virginia Tech a good place or not a good place for students who are members of racial and ethnic minorities?

3 I have at least one professor at Virginia Tech who makes me excited about learning.

4 I know my strengths.

5 White vs. minority

6 I have a mentor at Virginia Tech who encourages me to pursue my goals and dreams.

7 If I raised an issue about discrimination on campus, I am confident Virginia Tech would do what is right.

8 I am extremely active in co-curricular activities and organizations.

DRIVER CATEGORY KEY

● SUPPORT-BASED EXPERIENCES

● EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

● SELF-AWARENESS

● CAMPUS CLIMATE

● DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

● SKILL DEVELOPMENT

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Virginia Tech students are more likely than students nationally to be engaged with school

Gallup defines student engagement as involvement in and enthusiasm for school. The index is generated using a series of measures that assess how students feel about their environment, their classes and whether they have the chance to do what they do best every day. Engaged students feel safe on campus, are plugged into their community, believe their coursework is important and have received positive feedback in their classes.

Nearly half of Virginia Tech students are classified as engaged, which far outpaces their peer groups. In fact, the 46% of Virginia Tech students who are engaged surpasses college students nationally by 15 percentage points and exceeds the rate of students at other large institutions by 18 percentage points.

Student Engagement

16%	Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	46%	● ENGAGED
36%			● NOT ENGAGED
32%	College Students Nationally	31%	● ACTIVELY DISENGAGED
		36%	
35%	College Students at Large IHEs	28%	
		37%	

The substantial gap in the rate of engagement between Virginia Tech students and students at comparison group schools remains when considering each group's first-generation college students. Forty-three percent of Virginia Tech's first-generation students are engaged at school, compared with 28% of FGCS nationally and 25% of FGCS at other large institutions.

Student Engagement: FGCS

21%	FGCS at Virginia Tech	43%	● ENGAGED
36%			● NOT ENGAGED
35%	FGCS Nationally	28%	● ACTIVELY DISENGAGED
		36%	
38%	FGCS at Large IHEs	25%	
		37%	
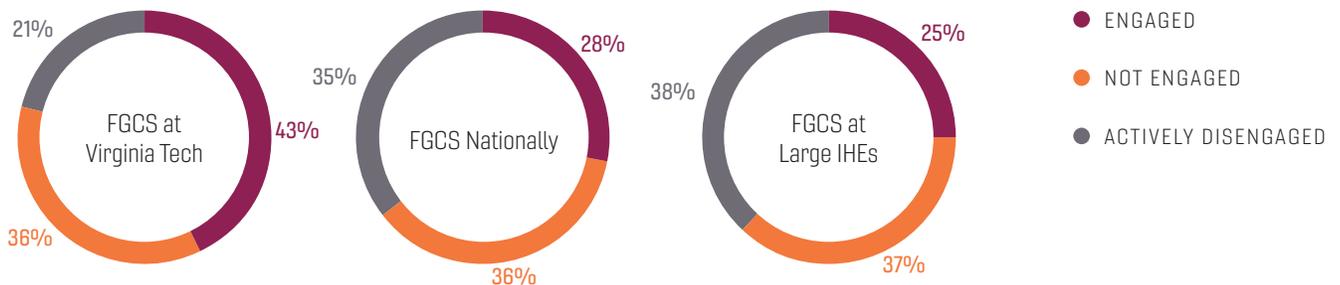
Among Virginia Tech students, professor and student interactions drive student engagement

Engagement among Virginia Tech students is driven by supportive experiences — to an even greater degree than supportive experiences drive well-being. Four of the top eight predictors of student engagement center on students' relationships with their professors, faculty, staff and mentors. Students who strongly agree that the faculty and staff are committed to helping them find a rewarding career, that they have at least one professor who inspires them, that they have a mentor who encourages their goals and dreams, and that their professors care about them as individuals have elevated odds of being classified as engaged.

Interactions with other students also drive student engagement among Virginia Tech students and account for three of the eight engagement predictors. Students who strongly agree that their fellow students look out for each other are more likely to be engaged, as are those who are actively involved on campus in organizations and intramural sports. Fostering an environment at Virginia Tech that encourages and creates meaningful interactions between students and professors — whether inside or outside of the classroom — increases the chances that students will be engaged in their college experience.

Drivers of Student Engagement Among Virginia Tech Students

1 The faculty and staff at Virginia Tech are committed to helping students find a rewarding career.

2 I have at least one professor at Virginia Tech who makes me excited about learning.

3 I have a mentor at Virginia Tech who encourages me to pursue my goals and dreams.

4 Students at Virginia Tech look out for one another.

5 Do you participate in intramural sports?

6 Female vs. male

7 My professors at Virginia Tech care about me as a person.

8 I am extremely active in co-curricular activities and organizations.

DRIVER CATEGORY KEY

- SUPPORT-BASED EXPERIENCES
- EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES
- SELF-AWARENESS
- CAMPUS CLIMATE
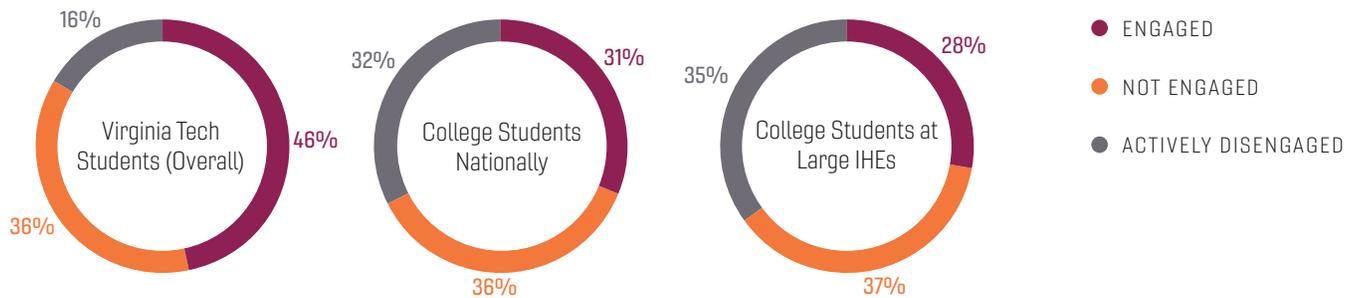- DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
- SKILL DEVELOPMENT

STUDENT EXPERIENCES

STUDENT EXPERIENCES

A variety of supportive experiences and experiential learning opportunities have consistently emerged as some of the strongest drivers of well-being and student engagement among Virginia Tech students. Gallup's examination of college students and college graduates at a national level has demonstrated that six particular college experiences are consistently linked to a host of critical outcomes, like well-being and beliefs about the value and quality of their education.

An understanding of institution-level performance on these measures provides leaders with insights about where their institution excels and where it can improve the student experience. While the findings in this report have already established the link many of these experiences have to well-being and engagement among Virginia Tech students, this section provides a broader view of these supportive experiences and experimental learning opportunities.

Virginia Tech students are about as likely as college students nationally to have had key support experiences

Overall, Virginia Tech students are about as likely as college students nationally and students at large institutions to have had each of the three core supportive experiences: having professors who care about them, a professor who makes them excited about learning and an encouraging mentor. Twenty-three percent of Virginia Tech students strongly agree that their professors care about them as a person — on par with students at other large institutions (23%) and slightly lower than college students nationally (28%). Just more than six in 10 Virginia Tech students (62%) strongly agree that they have at least one professor who makes them excited about learning, on par with college students nationally (59%) and slightly higher than students at other large institutions (57%). Additionally, 23% of Virginia Tech students strongly agree that they have a mentor who encourages their goals and dreams, compared with 25% and 21% of college students nationally and students at large institutions, respectively.

Support Experiences

My professors at Virginia Tech care about me as a person.

	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2	3	4	5 (Strongly Agree)
Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	3%	9%	26%	38%	23%
College Students Nationally	5%	10%	23%	34%	28%
College Students at Large IHEs	6%	12%	26%	33%	23%

- 1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (STRONGLY AGREE)

I have at least one professor at Virginia Tech who makes me excited about learning.

	1	2	3	4	5
Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	2%	4%	7%	25%	62%
College Students Nationally	3%	4%	9%	26%	59%
College Students at Large IHEs	3%	4%	9%	27%	57%

I have a mentor at Virginia Tech who encourages me to pursue my goals and dreams.

	1	2	3	4	5
Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	14%	21%	22%	20%	23%
College Students Nationally	18%	17%	21%	19%	25%
College Students at Large IHEs	21%	19%	21%	17%	21%

Virginia Tech's first-generation college students have these supportive experiences at similar rates as the school's overall student population. Additionally, Virginia Tech's first-generation students compare similarly with other first-generation college students on these experiences.
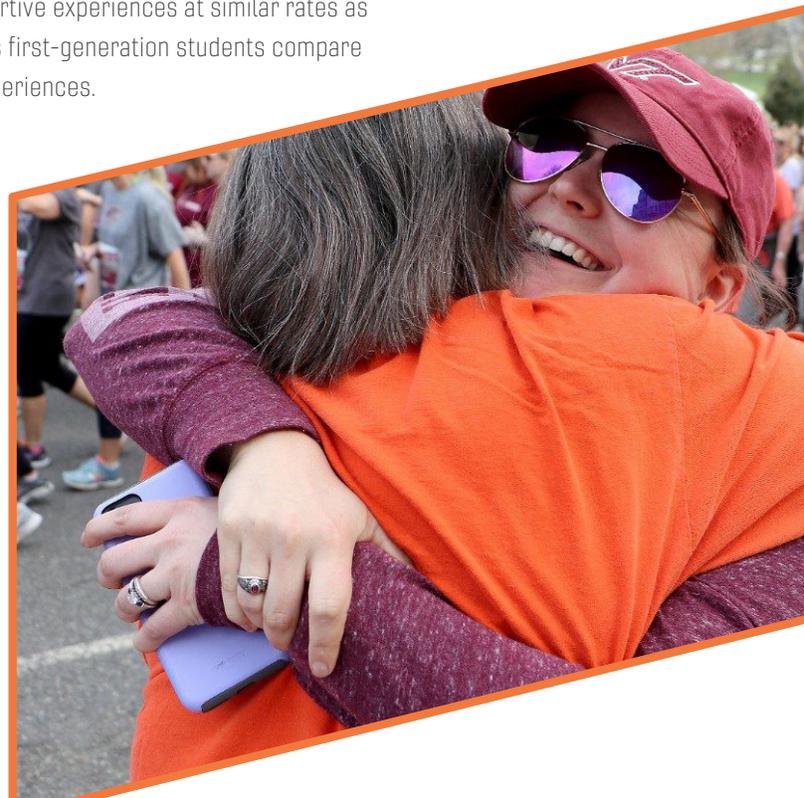
Support Experiences: FGCS

My professors at Virginia Tech care about me as a person.

Legend:
- 1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (STRONGLY AGREE)

Virginia Tech FGCS: 4%, 8%, 29%, 35%, 24%
FGCS Nationally: 4%, 11%, 24%, 33%, 29%
FGCS at Large IHEs: 5%, 12%, 27%, 32%, 24%

I have at least one professor at Virginia Tech who makes me excited about learning.

Virginia Tech FGCS: 3%, 3%, 7%, 27%, 60%
FGCS Nationally: 3%, 4%, 10%, 26%, 58%
FGCS at Large IHEs: 3%, 5%, 10%, 26%, 56%

I have a mentor at Virginia Tech who encourages me to pursue my goals and dreams.

Virginia Tech FGCS: 15%, 24%, 24%, 16%, 20%
FGCS Nationally: 20%, 16%, 21%, 18%, 25%
FGCS at Large IHEs: 23%, 18%, 22%, 16%, 20%

Virginia Tech excels in providing experiential learning opportunities, and its students are extremely involved in co-curricular activities

Relative to their peers, Virginia Tech students are particularly likely to have had experiential learning opportunities. More than half of Virginia Tech's students (52%) — including 72% of its seniors — have had a job or internship where they could apply what they were learning in the classroom, about six or seven percentage points higher than college students nationally and students at other large institutions.

Just more than a third of Virginia Tech's students (34%) — including 44% of its seniors — strongly agree that they have worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete, compared with 28% of college students nationally and 25% of students at other large institutions.

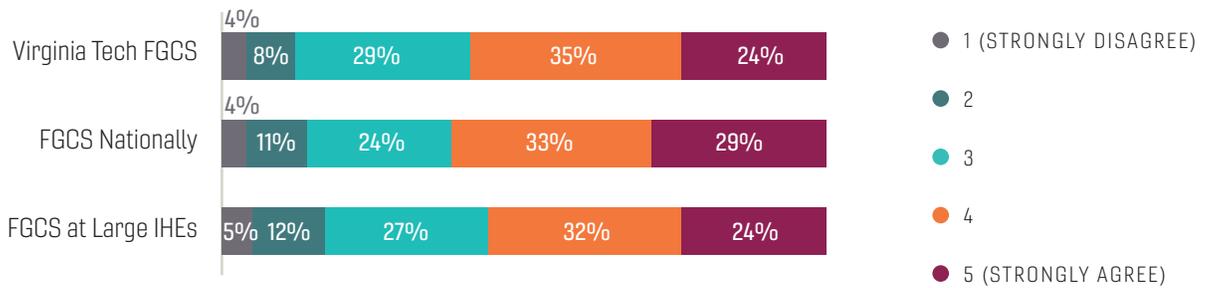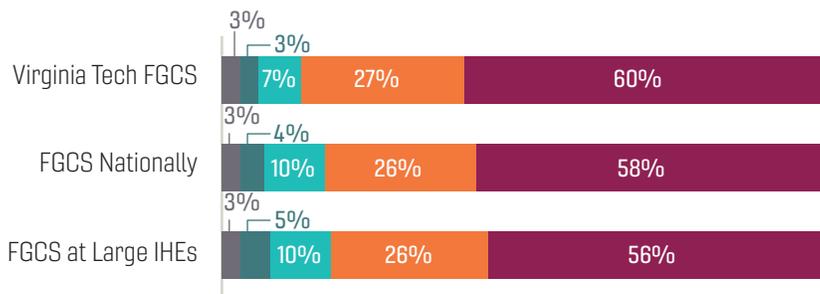Virginia Tech students are particularly active in co-curricular activities. The 32% of Virginia Tech students who strongly agree that they are extremely active in co-curricular activities and organizations surpasses the rate among college students nationally by 13 percentage points and doubles the rate of students at other large institutions.
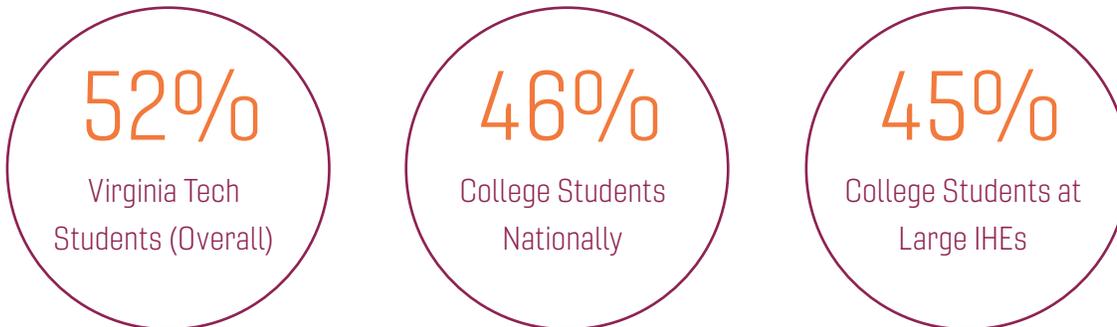
Experiential Learning Opportunities

While attending Virginia Tech I have worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete.

Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	25% 13% 10% 17% 34%	● 1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)
College Students Nationally	29% 14% 11% 18% 28%	● 2
College Students at Large IHEs	32% 15% 10% 18% 25%	● 3

● 4

● 5 (STRONGLY AGREE)

I am extremely active in co-curricular activities and organizations.

Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	7% 14% 22% 25% 32%
College Students Nationally	25% 19% 20% 18% 19%
College Students at Large IHEs	29% 20% 19% 17% 16%

Have Had Applied Job or Internship (% Yes)

52% Virginia Tech Students (Overall)

46% College Students Nationally
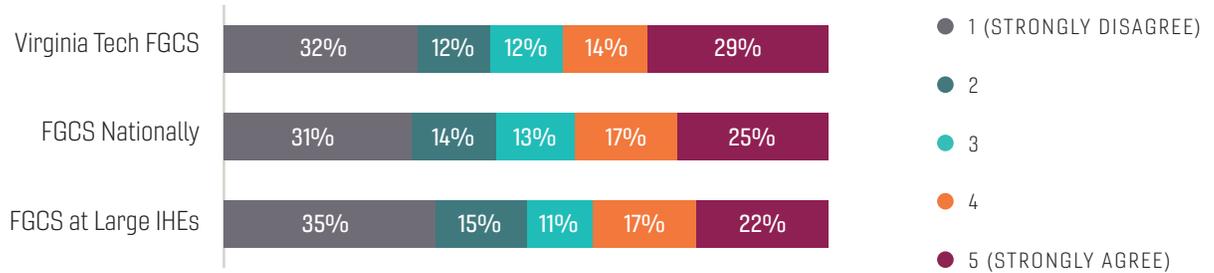
45% College Students at Large IHEs

At the national level, first-generation college students are slightly less likely to have had these key experiential learning opportunities. This could be partly attributable to FGCS being more likely than non-first-generation students to work while enrolled (76% vs. 62% among Virginia Tech's students). Given the competing demands on their time, first-generation college students are often unable to commit additional time and effort to participate in experiential learning and co-curricular activities. However, engaging in these opportunities may be particularly important for first-generation college students, as studies have linked involvement in co-curricular activities with persistence in college.[3]

While Virginia Tech's first-generation college students are more likely than FGCS nationally and at other large institutions to strongly agree to having each of these experiential learning opportunities, Virginia Tech's FGCS have worked on long-term projects and have had applied jobs/internships at slightly lower rates compared with Virginia Tech students overall.

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3   Fischer, M. (2007). Settling into campus life: Differences by race/ethnicity in college involvement and outcomes. The Journal of Higher Education, 78(2), 125-156. Retrieved from https://muse.jhu.edu/article/213593

Experiential Learning Opportunities: FGCS

While attending Virginia Tech I have worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete.

	1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)	2	3	4	5 (STRONGLY AGREE)
Virginia Tech FGCS	32%	12%	12%	14%	29%
FGCS Nationally	31%	14%	13%	17%	25%
FGCS at Large IHEs	35%	15%	11%	17%	22%

I am extremely active in co-curricular activities and organizations.

	1	2	3	4	5
Virginia Tech FGCS	8%	18%	22%	20%	32%
FGCS Nationally	31%	20%	20%	15%	14%
FGCS at Large IHEs	36%	21%	19%	14%	10%

Have Had Applied Job or Internship: FGCS (% Yes)

46% Virginia Tech FGCS
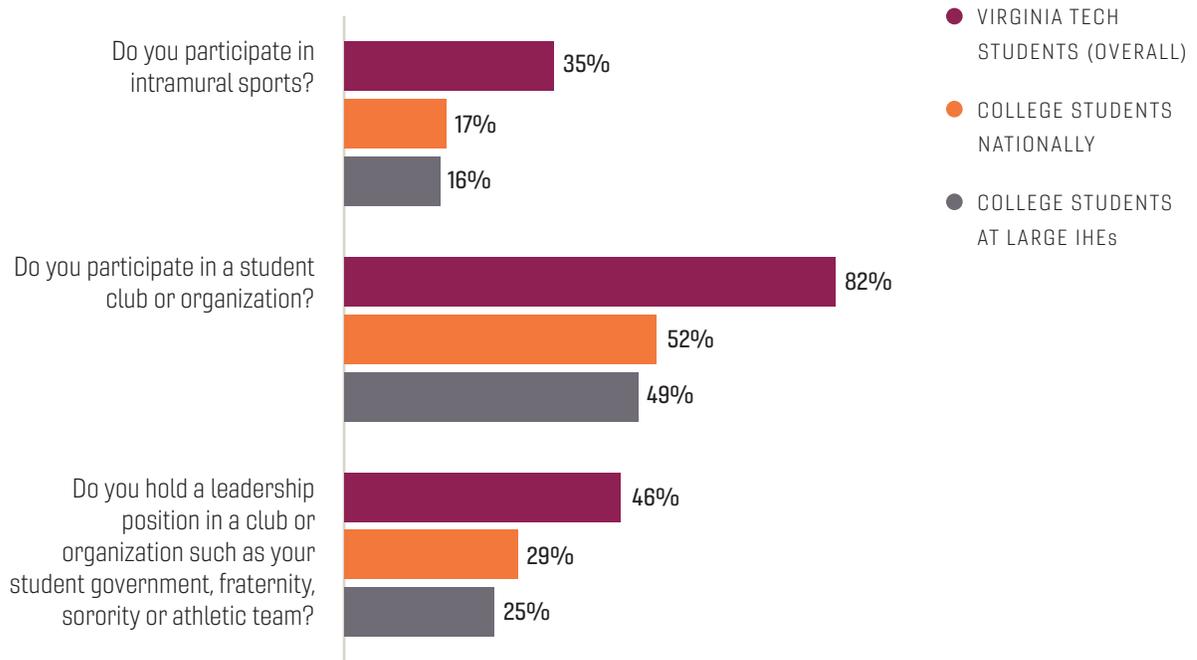
43% FGCS Nationally

40% FGCS at Large IHEs

The high rate of co-curricular activity among Virginia Tech students can also be seen through the lens of particular *types* of co-curricular opportunities. Virginia Tech students are more than twice as likely as college students nationally and students at large institutions to participate in intramural sports. Additionally, the 82% of Virginia Tech students who participate in a student club or organization exceeds the rate of college students nationally by 30 percentage points and surpasses the rate among students at other large institutions by 33 points.

Virginia Tech students aren't just highly involved in clubs and organizations — they also take on leadership roles in those organizations at higher rates than do their national and large school peers. Nearly half of Virginia Tech's students (46%) hold a leadership position in a club or organization, compared with 29% of college students nationally and 25% of students at other large institutions.
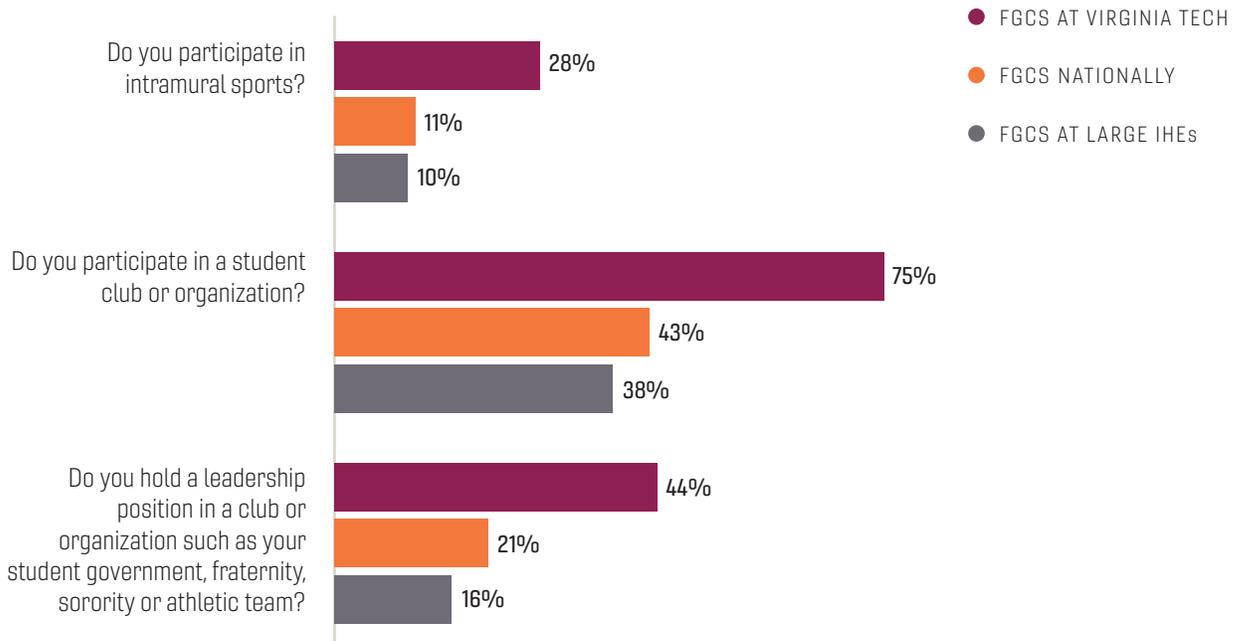
Activities on Campus

% Yes

Do you participate in intramural sports?
- **35%**
- 17%
- 16%

Do you participate in a student club or organization?
- **82%**
- 52%
- 49%

Do you hold a leadership position in a club or organization such as your student government, fraternity, sorority or athletic team?
- **46%**
- 29%
- 25%

● VIRGINIA TECH STUDENTS (OVERALL)

● COLLEGE STUDENTS NATIONALLY
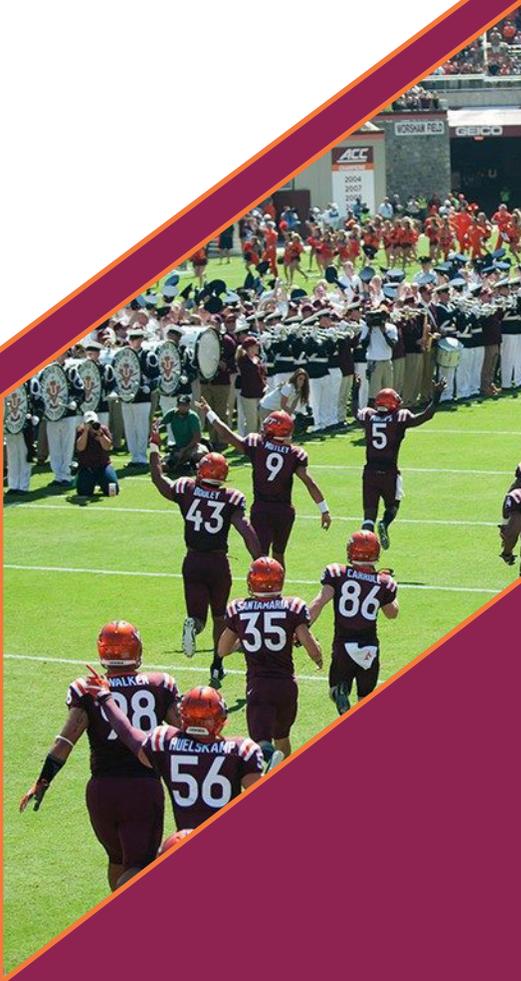
● COLLEGE STUDENTS AT LARGE IHEs

Following the overall pattern of co-curricular involvement, Virginia Tech's first-generation college students are slightly less likely than its students overall to participate in each of these activities. However, they are substantially more likely than first-generation students in their comparison groups to play intramural sports, be members of student organizations and hold leadership positions in those clubs.

Activities on Campus: FGCS

% Yes

Do you participate in intramural sports?
- **28%**
- 11%
- 10%

Do you participate in a student club or organization?
- **75%**
- 43%
- 38%

Do you hold a leadership position in a club or organization such as your student government, fraternity, sorority or athletic team?
- **44%**
- 21%
- 16%

● FGCS AT VIRGINIA TECH

● FGCS NATIONALLY

● FGCS AT LARGE IHEs

CAMPUS CLIMATE

CAMPUS CLIMATE

In recent years, colleges and universities in the U.S. have been giving increased attention to creating an open and welcoming campus environment for students of all backgrounds. Recent high-profile incidents about issues of discrimination, speech on campus and other related issues have only underscored the importance of understanding how students perceive the climate on college campuses. To that end, the Strada-Gallup survey of college students introduced a series of questions aimed at understanding campus climate.

Virginia Tech students believe fellow students look out for one another

When faced with issues of discrimination or sexual assault on campus, Virginia Tech students are more likely than their peers to be confident that their university would do what is right. In fact, Virginia Tech students are, on average, six percentage points more likely than students in the comparison groups to strongly agree the university would do what is right in instances of discrimination on campus. They are, on average, 12 percentage points more likely than college students nationally and students at large institutions to strongly agree the university would do what is right in instances of sexual assault on campus.
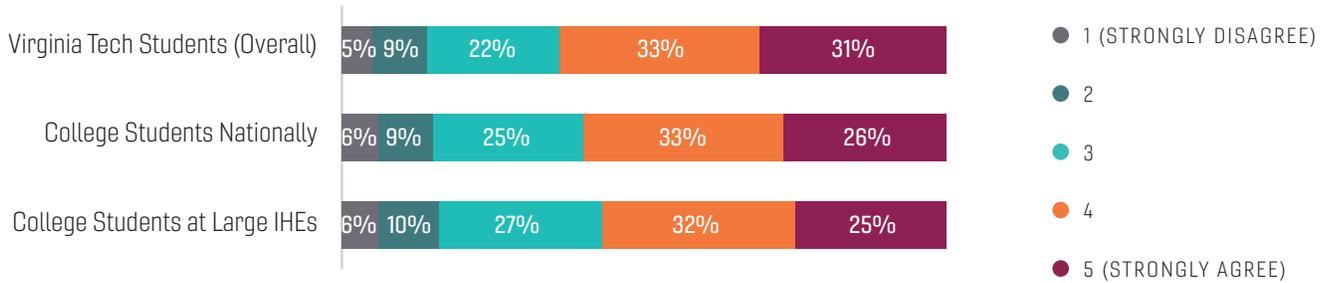
Virginia Tech students are particularly likely to believe that their fellow students look out for one another. The 42% of Virginia Tech students who strongly agree that their fellow students look out for one another more than doubles the percentage of college students nationally and students at other large institutions who say the same.

Like college students nationally and college students at large intuitions, Virginia Tech students do express some reservations about offering minority opinions in class. About two in 10 Virginia Tech students (20%), students nationally (22%) and students at large institutions (20%) strongly agree that they feel very comfortable sharing ideas or opinions in class that are probably held by a minority of people.
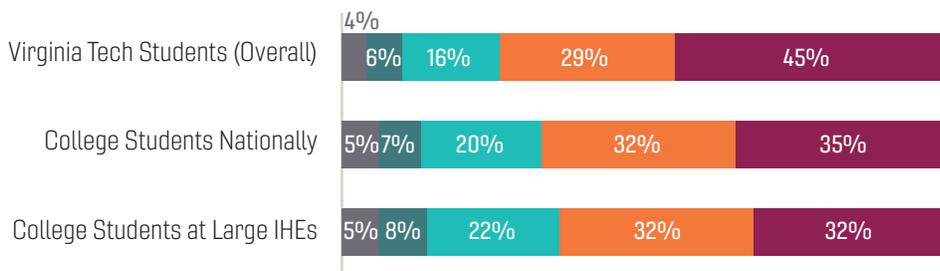
Institutional Response

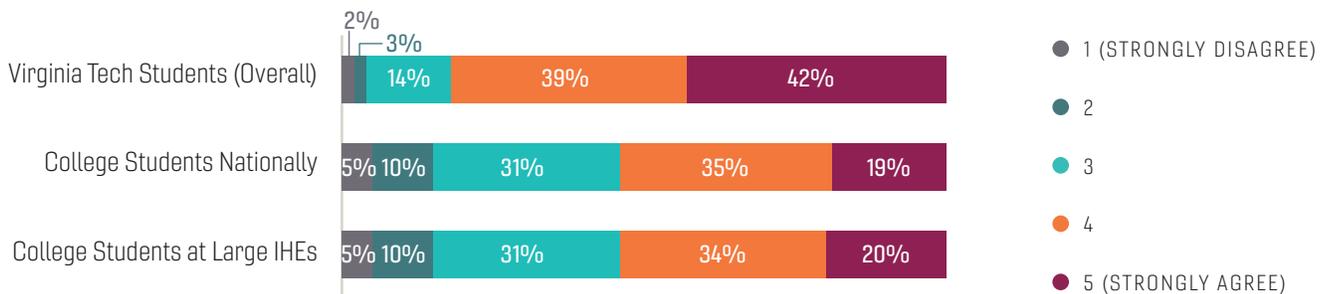If I raised an issue about discrimination on campus, I am confident Virginia Tech would do what is right.

	1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)	2	3	4	5 (STRONGLY AGREE)
Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	5%	9%	22%	33%	31%
College Students Nationally	6%	9%	25%	33%	26%
College Students at Large IHEs	6%	10%	27%	32%	25%

If I raised an issue about sexual assault on campus, I am confident Virginia Tech would do what is right.

	1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)	2	3	4	5 (STRONGLY AGREE)
Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	4%	6%	16%	29%	45%
College Students Nationally	5%	7%	20%	32%	35%
College Students at Large IHEs	5%	8%	22%	32%	32%

Campus Climate

Students at Virginia Tech look out for one another.

	1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)	2	3	4	5 (STRONGLY AGREE)
Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	2%	3%	14%	39%	42%
College Students Nationally	5%	10%	31%	35%	19%
College Students at Large IHEs	5%	10%	31%	34%	20%

I feel very comfortable sharing ideas or opinions in class that are probably only held by a minority of people.

	1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)	2	3	4	5 (STRONGLY AGREE)
Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	7%	16%	28%	30%	20%
College Students Nationally	8%	14%	25%	31%	22%
College Students at Large IHEs	8%	16%	26%	30%	20%

Confidence in how the university would respond to issues of sexual assault and discrimination do, however, vary somewhat by key student demographics. For example, Virginia Tech's LGBTQ+ students express less confidence than other groups in how the university would respond to issues of sexual assault (34%), as do female (40%) and nonwhite students (38%). On issues of discrimination on campus, Virginia Tech's LGBTQ+ students (24%) also report a somewhat lower level of confidence than other groups in how the institution would respond.

How Institutions Address Issues on Campus, by Demographic Groups (% Strongly Agree)

If I raised an issue about sexual assault on campus, I am confident
Virginia Tech would do what is right.

|	
Virginia Tech (Overall)	45
College Students Nationally	35
White Virginia Tech Students	47
Nonwhite Virginia Tech Students	38
Male Virginia Tech Students	53
Female Virginia Tech Students	40
LGBTQ+ Virginia Tech Students	34
Virginia Tech FGCS	54

If I raised an issue about discrimination on campus, I am confident
Virginia Tech would do what is right.

Virginia Tech (Overall)	31
College Students Nationally	26
White Virginia Tech Students	32
Nonwhite Virginia Tech Students	29
Male Virginia Tech Students	32
Female Virginia Tech Students	31
LGBTQ+ Virginia Tech Students	24
Virginia Tech FGCS	39

Perceptions about institutional response to discrimination on campus among Virginia Tech's minority populations compare similarly with those among similar populations nationally. Virginia Tech's white, Asian and Hispanic students are somewhat more likely than their peers nationally to believe their school would do what is right in response to an issue of discrimination on campus. Among black students, perceptions about institutional response to issues of discrimination on campus are similar for Virginia Tech students and college students nationally.

Institutional Response, by Race (% Strongly Agree)

If I raised an issue about discrimination on campus, I am confident Virginia Tech would do what is right.

32%
26%
White

24%
26%
Black

● VIRGINIA TECH STUDENTS

● COLLEGE STUDENTS NATIONALLY

28%
24%
Asian

35%
30%
Hispanic
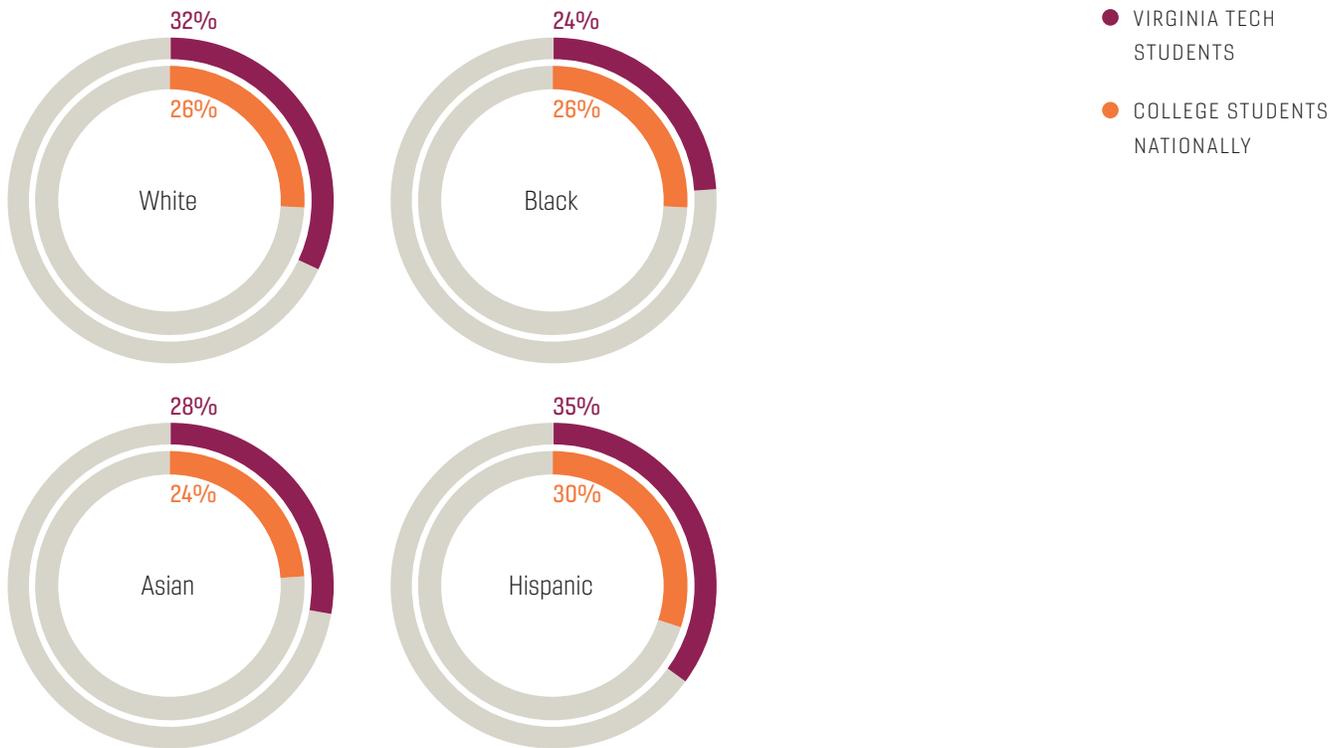
Female students at Virginia Tech are somewhat more likely than female students nationally to believe that the institution would do what is right concerning issues of discrimination on campus. In response to sexual assault issues on campus, Virginia Tech men and women are both more likely than their peers nationally to believe their school would do the right thing.
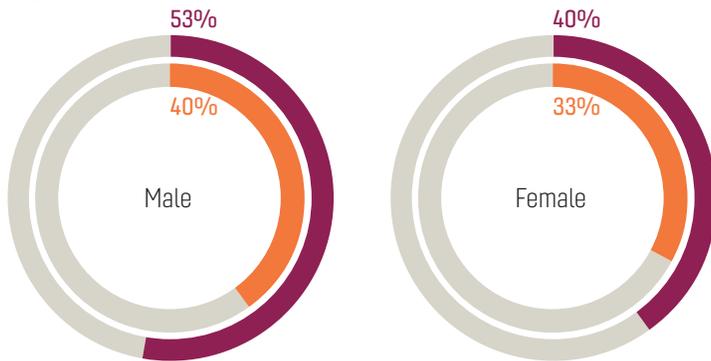
Institutional Response, by Gender (% Strongly Agree)

If I raised an issue about discrimination on campus, I am confident Virginia Tech would do what is right.

32%
29%
Male

31%
25%
Female

● VIRGINIA TECH STUDENTS

● COLLEGE STUDENTS NATIONALLY

If I raised an issue about sexual assault on campus, I am confident Virginia Tech would do what is right.

53%
40%
Male

40%
33%
Female
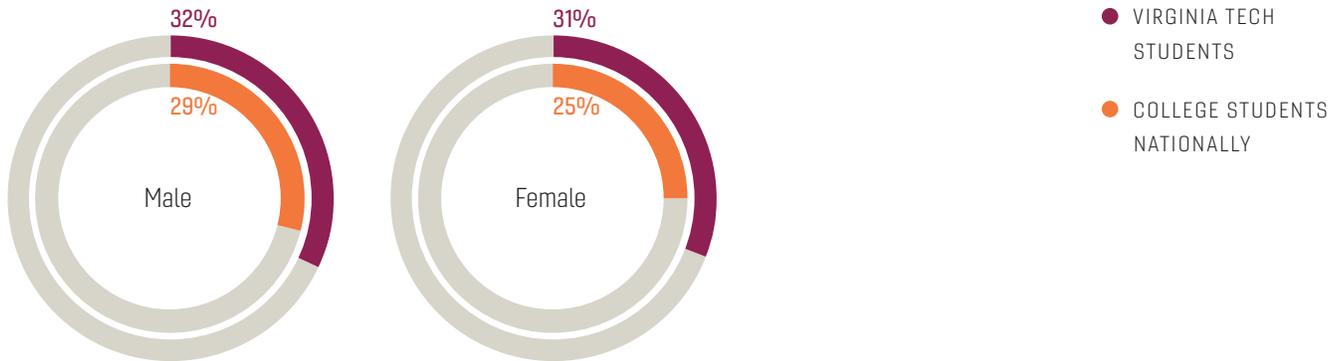
The strong belief among Virginia Tech students, overall, that fellow students look out for one another remains fairly consistent across student subgroups, with only nonwhite students (29%) and LGBTQ+ students (32%) reporting a somewhat lower level of agreement. Virginia Tech students also hold fairly consistent views about their level of comfort sharing opinions in class that are probably only held by a minority of people, with the exception of female students who, at 16%, express the lowest level of comfort of all subgroups.

Campus Climate, by Demographic Groups (% Strongly Agree)

Students at Virginia Tech look out for one another.

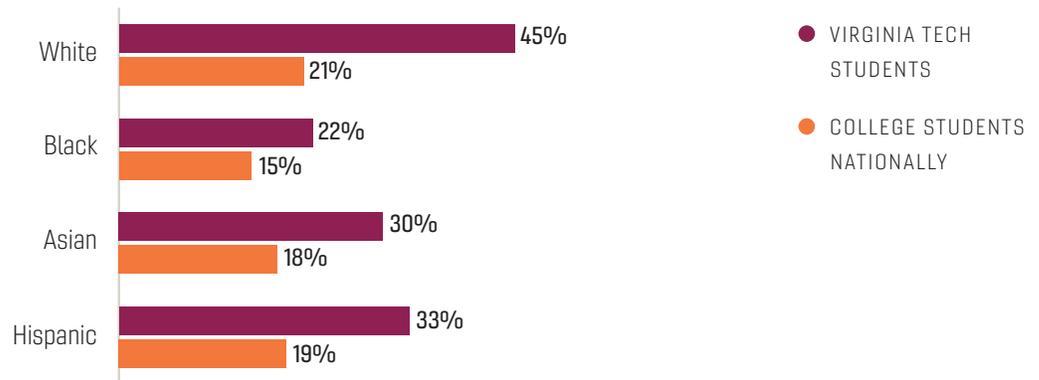|	
Virginia Tech (Overall)	42
College Students Nationally	19
White Virginia Tech Students	45
Nonwhite Virginia Tech Students	29
Male Virginia Tech Students	41
Female Virginia Tech Students	43
LGBTQ+ Virginia Tech Students	32
Virginia Tech FGCS	41

I feel very comfortable sharing ideas or opinions in class that are probably only held by a minority of people.

|	
Virginia Tech (Overall)	20
College Students Nationally	22
White Virginia Tech Students	20
Nonwhite Virginia Tech Students	21
Male Virginia Tech Students	24
Female Virginia Tech Students	16
LGBTQ+ Virginia Tech Students	21
Virginia Tech FGCS	21

Across all race and ethnicity groups, Virginia Tech students are more likely than their peers nationally to believe that their fellow students look out for one another. Across all groups, Virginia Tech students are, on average, 14 percentage points more likely than their peers nationally to strongly agree to that statement. Virginia Tech's white, Asian and Hispanic students compare similarly with their peers nationally in their level of comfort sharing ideas or opinions in class that are probably only held by a minority of people. However, Virginia Tech's black students are seven percentage points less likely than black students nationally to strongly agree that they feel comfortable sharing such ideas or opinions in class.

Campus Climate, by Race (% Strongly Agree)

Students at Virginia Tech look out for one another.

Race	Virginia Tech Students	College Students Nationally
White	45%	21%
Black	22%	15%
Asian	30%	18%
Hispanic	33%	19%

● VIRGINIA TECH STUDENTS

● COLLEGE STUDENTS NATIONALLY

I feel very comfortable sharing ideas or opinions in class that are probably only held by a minority of people.

| Race	Virginia Tech Students	College Students Nationally
White	20%	21%
Black	19%	26%
Asian	20%	19%
Hispanic	26%	26%
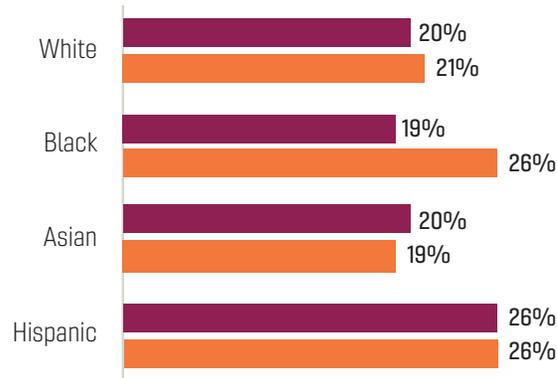
Male and female students at Virginia Tech are about twice as likely as their peers nationally to strongly agree that their fellow students look out for one another. Additionally, while Virginia Tech's male students are on par with male students nationally in their level of comfort sharing ideas or opinions in class that are probably only held by a minority of people, Virginia Tech's female students express somewhat less comfort than their peers nationally.

Campus Climate, by Gender (% Strongly Agree)
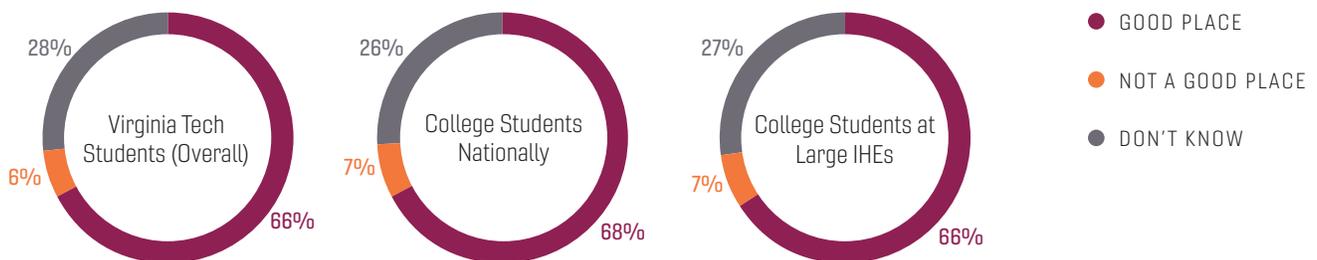
Students at Virginia Tech look out for one another.
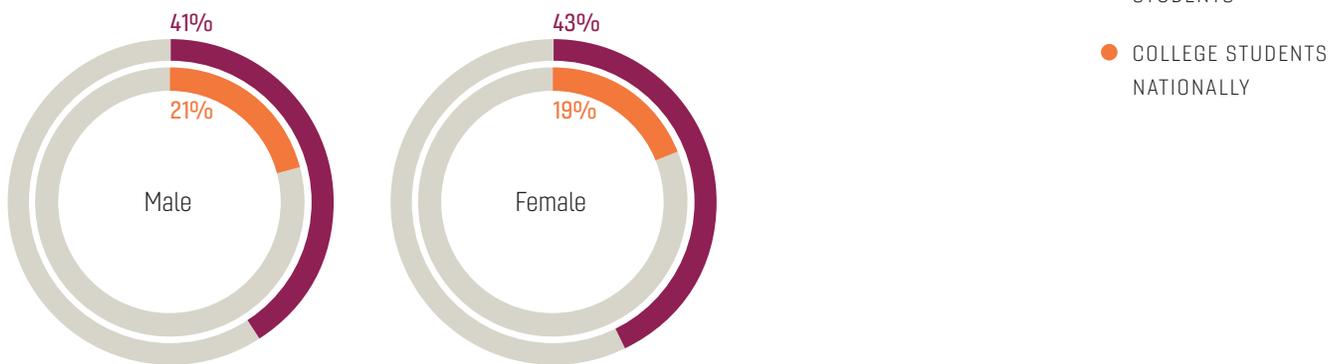
VIRGINIA TECH STUDENTS

COLLEGE STUDENTS NATIONALLY

41%
21%
Male

43%
19%
Female

I feel very comfortable sharing ideas or opinions in class that are probably only held by a minority of people.

24%
25%
Male

16%
21%
Female
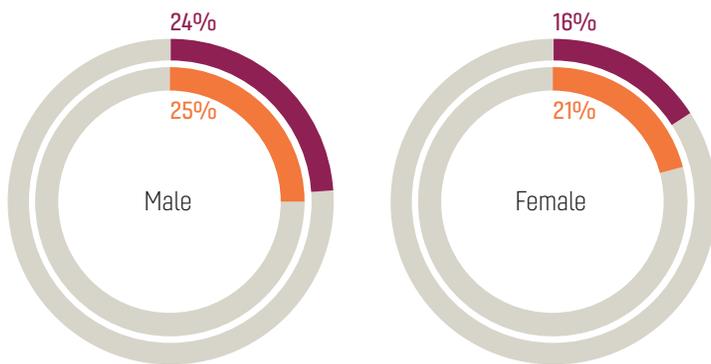
Majority of students say Virginia Tech is a good place for racial and ethnic minorities

When asked if the university is a good place for students who are members of racial and ethnic minority groups, two-thirds of Virginia Tech students say that it is a "good place," 6% say it is "not a good place" and 28% say they "don't know." This distribution of answers among Virginia Tech students mirrors — almost exactly — the distribution of answers among college students nationally and among students at other large institutions.

Is Virginia Tech a good place or not a good place for students who are members of racial and ethnic minorities?

28%
6%
66%
Virginia Tech Students (Overall)

26%
7%
68%
College Students Nationally

27%
7%
66%
College Students at Large IHEs

GOOD PLACE

NOT A GOOD PLACE

DON'T KNOW

The percentages of Virginia Tech's Hispanic (74%), Asian (78%) and white (64%) students who say the school is a "good place" are on par with their peers nationally and at other large institutions. However, Virginia Tech's black students (52%) are less likely to say the university is a good place for students of racial/ethnic minorities than Virginia Tech students overall (66%), black students nationally (74%) and black students at large institutions (65%).
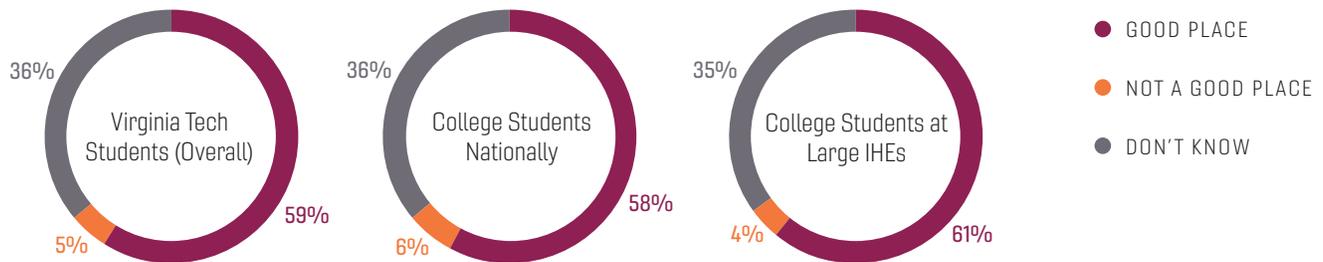
Is Virginia Tech a good place or not a good place for students who are members of racial and ethnic minorities?

White	% Good Place	% Not a Good Place	% Don't Know
Virginia Tech	64	5	32
College Students Nationally	64	5	31
Large IHEs	61	5	34
Black			
Virginia Tech	52	25	22
College Students Nationally	74	12	14
Large IHEs	65	17	19
Asian			
Virginia Tech	78	7	15
College Students Nationally	79	7	14
Large IHEs	79	8	14
Hispanic			
Virginia Tech	74	11	15
College Students Nationally	79	7	15
Large IHEs	79	8	13

Majority of students say Virginia Tech is a good place for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students

When asked if the university is a good place for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students, almost six in 10 Virginia Tech students say that it is a "good place," 5% say it is "not a good place" and 36% say they "don't know." These perceptions among Virginia Tech students compare similarly to those of college students nationally and students at other large institutions.
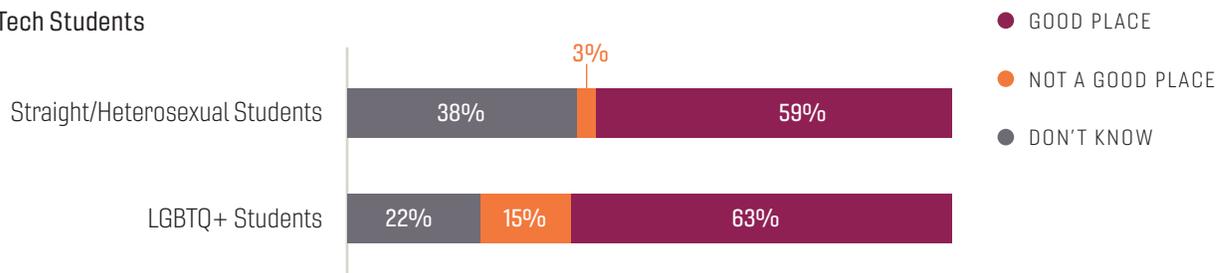
Is Virginia Tech a good place or not a good place for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students?

Virginia Tech Students (Overall)
36%
5%
59%

College Students Nationally
36%
6%
58%

College Students at Large IHEs
35%
4%
61%

● GOOD PLACE
● NOT A GOOD PLACE
● DON'T KNOW

The percentage of Virginia Tech's straight/heterosexual students who say the school is a "good place" for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students (59%) is on par with their peers nationally and at other large institutions. However, Virginia Tech's LGBTQ+ students are less likely to say the university is a good place for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students (63%) than LGBTQ+ students nationally (73%) and LGBTQ+ students at other large institutions (76%).

### Is Virginia Tech a good place or not a good place for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students?

Virginia Tech Students

● GOOD PLACE
● NOT A GOOD PLACE
● DON'T KNOW

Straight/Heterosexual Students: 38% | 3% | 59%

LGBTQ+ Students: 22% | 15% | 63%

College Students Nationally

Straight/Heterosexual Students: 38% | 5% | 57%

LGBTQ+ Students: 13% | 14% | 73%

College Students at Large IHEs

Straight/Heterosexual Students: 38% | 3% | 59%

LGBTQ+ Students: 13% | 11% | 76%
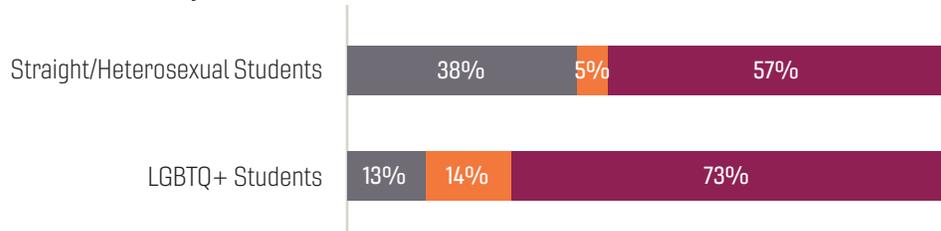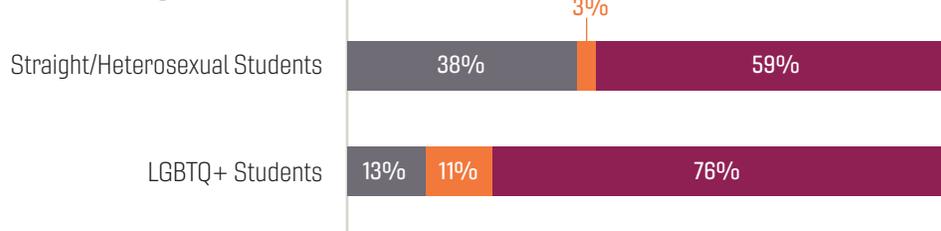
EDUCATIONAL VALUE AND QUALITY

EDUCATIONAL VALUE AND QUALITY

Having detailed a variety of their specific experiences and attitudes, what remains is to understand Virginia Tech students' broader perceptions about the quality and value of their education. To assess those views, students were asked to respond to three statements:

> › I am receiving a high-quality education at Virginia Tech.

> › The education I am receiving at Virginia Tech is worth the cost.

> › If I had to do it all over again, I would still enroll at Virginia Tech.

Virginia Tech students hold more positive views than college students nationally about the quality of their education
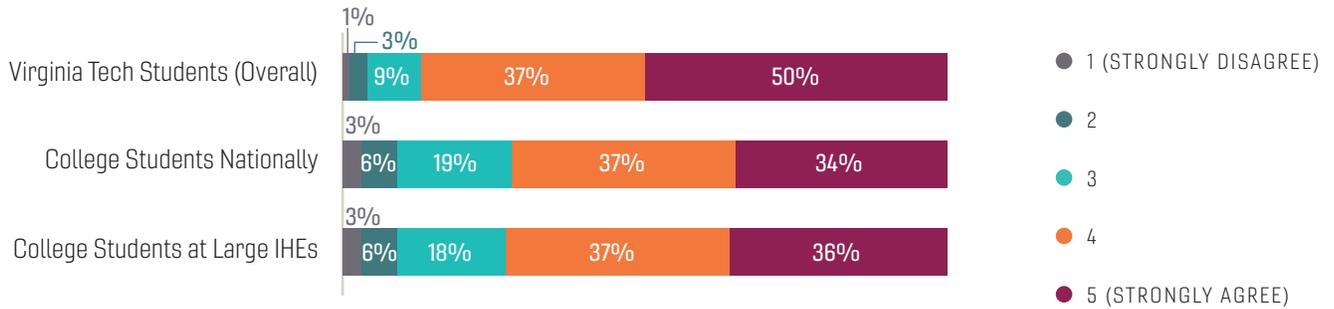
Half of Virginia Tech students strongly agree that they are receiving a high-quality education — 16 percentage points higher than college students nationally and 14 points ahead of students at other large institutions. In terms of the *value* of the education they are receiving, the 31% of Virginia Tech students who strongly agree that their education is worth the cost is about on par with the sentiments of college students nationally (27%) and students at other large institutions (28%).

Taken together, though, the vast majority of Virginia Tech students believe they made the right decision by choosing Virginia Tech and would do it again. While about half of college students nationally (47%) and students at large institutions (52%) strongly agree that they would enroll at the same institution if they had to start again, 67% of Virginia Tech students say they would choose Virginia Tech again.
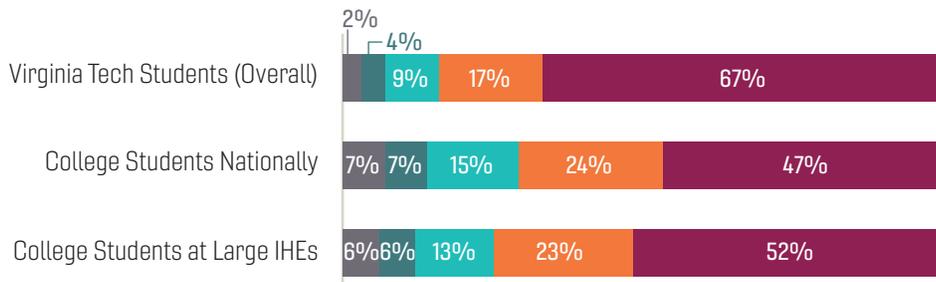
Perceptions of Education Quality and Value

I am receiving a high-quality education at Virginia Tech.

	1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)	2	3	4	5 (STRONGLY AGREE)
Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	1%	3%	9%	37%	50%
College Students Nationally	3%	6%	19%	37%	34%
College Students at Large IHEs	3%	6%	18%	37%	36%

The education I am receiving at Virginia Tech is worth the cost.

Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	4%	8%	21%	37%	31%
College Students Nationally	6%	10%	23%	33%	27%
College Students at Large IHEs	7%	10%	23%	34%	28%

If I had to do it all over again, I would still enroll at Virginia Tech.

Virginia Tech Students (Overall)	2%	4%	9%	17%	67%
College Students Nationally	7%	7%	15%	24%	47%
College Students at Large IHEs	6%	6%	13%	23%	52%

Among Virginia Tech students, attitudes about preparation for the workforce drive views about education value and quality

For Virginia Tech students, several of the top drivers of the perception that their education is worth the cost relate to career preparation. In fact, the top predictor is the belief that the faculty and staff at Virginia Tech are committed to helping students find rewarding careers. Additionally, students who are confident that they will graduate from Virginia Tech with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the job market and workplace are particularly likely to believe their education is worth the cost.

The education I am receiving at Virginia Tech is worth the cost

1 The faculty and staff at Virginia Tech are committed to helping students find a rewarding career.

2 I am confident I will graduate from Virginia Tech with the knowledge and skills I need to be successful in the job market.

3 My professors at Virginia Tech make me feel my coursework is important.

4 At Virginia Tech, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.

5 In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good school work.

6 I am confident I will graduate from Virginia Tech with the knowledge and skills I need to be successful in the workplace.

7 I feel safe at Virginia Tech.

8 Have you participated in a study-abroad or exchange program while attending Virginia Tech?

DRIVER CATEGORY KEY

● SUPPORT-BASED EXPERIENCES

● EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

● SELF-AWARENESS

● CAMPUS CLIMATE

● DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

● SKILL DEVELOPMENT

A nearly identical theme emerges when considering the drivers of students' perceptions about the quality of their education. In fact, here too, the top predictor of students' beliefs about the quality of their education is whether the faculty and staff at Virginia Tech are committed to helping students find a rewarding career. And, similar to beliefs about the *value* of their education, students who believe that they will graduate from Virginia Tech with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the job market and workplace are also particularly likely to say they are receiving a high-quality education.

Virginia Tech students' perceptions about the value and quality of their education are closely linked to how well they believe the university is preparing them to succeed *after* college. Students value the development of skills that will allow them to obtain and thrive in their careers, but they also value guidance and support from the institution — and faculty in particular — about how to navigate those career-related considerations.

I am receiving a high-quality education at Virginia Tech

1 The faculty and staff at Virginia Tech are committed to helping students find a rewarding career.

2 My professors at Virginia Tech make me feel my coursework is important.

3 I am confident I will graduate from Virginia Tech with the knowledge and skills I need to be successful in the workplace.

4 I am confident I will graduate from Virginia Tech with the knowledge and skills I need to be successful in the job market.

5 At Virginia Tech, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.

6 Students at Virginia Tech look out for one another.

7 Has at least one professor, faculty or staff member at Virginia Tech initiated a conversation with you about your career options?

DRIVER CATEGORY KEY

● SUPPORT-BASED EXPERIENCES

● EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

● SELF-AWARENESS

● CAMPUS CLIMATE

● DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

● SKILL DEVELOPMENT

METHODOLOGY

The 2017 Virginia Tech undergraduate student survey was administered Sept. 19 through Oct. 24, 2017, to all currently enrolled sophomore, junior and senior undergraduate students. The results in this report reflect 2,041 completed surveys. Virginia Tech provided the list of email addresses for all currently enrolled sophomore, junior and senior undergraduate students. Students were included in the study if the institution had an email address on file. The survey was administered via the web in English only, and students received the invitation to participate directly from Gallup. Gallup sent three reminder emails to nonresponders to encourage students to participate in the survey. Virginia Tech also sent a prenotification email to all students to encourage participation.

Strada-Gallup Student Survey

Results for this Gallup College Student Survey are based on web surveys conducted March 21-May 8, 2017, as part of the Strada-Gallup study of currently enrolled college students. Gallup randomly selected colleges and universities to participate in the study from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Colleges and universities were eligible for selection if they were degree-granting institutions awarding four-year degrees and if they were private not-for-profit and public colleges and universities. Forty-three universities participated in the study and provided Gallup email addresses for a random sample of all students enrolled either part or full time at their institution. Gallup sent an email invitation and a series of reminders to students to encourage participation.

The data are weighted to correct for unequal selection probability and nonresponse. The data are weighted to match institution characteristics by enrollment size, census region and institution control. Institution weighting targets are based on the most recent IPEDS database.

For results based on the total sample of 25,364 currently enrolled sophomore, junior and senior college students, the margin of sampling error is ±0.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting.

For results based on the total sample of 8,259 currently enrolled sophomore, junior and senior students at large institutions of higher education, the margin of sampling error is ±1.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting.

ABOUT VIRGINIA TECH

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, better known as Virginia Tech, is a public land-grant university with a 2,600-acre main campus in Blacksburg, Virginia. Virginia Tech pushes the boundaries of knowledge by taking a hands-on, transdisciplinary approach to preparing students to be leaders and problem-solvers. As the commonwealth's most comprehensive university and its leading research institution, Virginia Tech offers about 280 undergraduate and graduate degree programs to more than 34,000 students and manages a research portfolio of more than $521 million. The university fulfills its role as a land-grant by fostering a collaborative environment that integrates technology into all disciplines, so that the Virginia Tech community can serve as a force for positive change around the commonwealth, the country, and the world.

As a public land-grant university serving the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation and the world community, the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge are central to its mission. Through its focus on teaching and learning, research and discovery, and outreach and engagement, the university creates, conveys and applies knowledge to expand personal growth and opportunity, advance social and community development, foster economic competitiveness and improve the quality of life.

Virginia Tech attracts motivated, high-achieving students, staff and faculty who excel in an academically energized, technologically creative and culturally inclusive learning community. The university's bold spirit, climate of innovation and service, open boundaries of study and research, and entrepreneurial approach positively transform lives and communities.

ABOUT GALLUP

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 80 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of employees, customers, students and citizens than any other organization in the world.