



## REPORT OF THE W&M STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE November 2022

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### **Impact of the Campus Living Comprehensive Plan on the Student Experience**

We have been working with various campus partners to alleviate student concerns from the [announcement](#) regarding changes to the 2023-2024 room selection process and the closure of Yates and Monroe Halls as a result of the Housing & Dining Comprehensive Facilities Plan. Student Assembly has been working with the Office of Student Transition Engagement Programs to answer questions and provide resources for off-campus living through tabling and participating in housing fairs with off-campus providers. In addition, we will host a town hall on November 16th with stakeholders from Student Affairs, Campus Living, and the Office of Financial Aid to provide additional information and context for students.

The primary concerns and questions raised by our peers have been focused on:

- The impact of this decision for students reliant on financial aid and the inability to pay for a full 12-month lease, whereas aid typically provides funding for only the fall and spring semesters.
- Availability, and lack thereof, of an off-campus housing market in Williamsburg and surrounding localities.
- Rippling effects to University infrastructure (e.g., parking) and the impact on student engagement with an expanded commuter radius of 60-miles and increased off-campus housing.

We greatly appreciate the level of collaboration and willingness of campus administrators to listen to student concerns. We believe it is crucial that the Board and the administration continue to listen, advocate and respond to students—especially student populations that have been historically marginalized.

### **Continued Student Activism for University Divestment of Fossil Fuels**

We continue to urge the University to work towards complete divestment of its financial interests in all fossil fuels entities, and eliminate the endowment's exposure to carbon-intensive companies. The Senate of Student Assembly has passed two Senate Resolutions on divestment ([SR 327-001](#), [SR 328-010](#)) with significant community support. It is a foremost priority for the student body that our community fulfill its commitment to sustainability. We call for the Board of Visitors, through its partnership with the William & Mary Foundation, to provide transparency and actionable steps towards divestment.

### **Student Activities Fee Allocation Reform**

After a three-year long reform process, Student Assembly is now three quarters into the new budget allocation process of the Student Activities Fee. In the past two quarters, 162 Recognized Student Organizations have submitted requests with 137 receiving funds—a total of \$52,482.32 has been allocated to date. Given that this is the first year of the quarterly allocation system, Student Assembly continues to learn and adapt to emerging challenges.

### **Creation of the Student Assembly Data Science Task Force**

Student Assembly is excited to announce the creation of the Data Science Task Force. This group is charged with designing surveys and analyzing data to support initiatives on behalf of the student body. In alignment with the University's charge and vision, we believe that data will play a key role leading into the future and should be an area of focus for the student body. The Task Force will serve as a resource to advise student organizations and campus stakeholders looking to form data-informed decisions and initiatives. Additionally, this group will implement programming to educate students on data literacy, rights, and privacy. Our goal is to codify this group as a permanent part of Student Assembly's structure by the end of Spring 2023.

### **Highlighted Events for the Fall 2022 Semester**

- **Family Weekend Game Day Event:** Tribe Athletics, Student Unions & Engagement, and Student Assembly partnered to host a game day event on September 24th to help strengthen engagement in school spirit and athletics.
- **Williamsburg City Council Candidate Public Forum:** Student Assembly hosted a public form on October 19th and provided an opportunity for community members to learn more about the candidates and their platforms.
- **Mock Mehndi:** The South Asian Student Association and Center for Student Diversity worked to host Meck Mehndi on November 11th, a celebration of a (pretend) Pakistani wedding reception featuring food, dance performances, and music.
- **Sankofa Festival:** This festival aims to showcase the beauty and brilliance of the Black American experience while fostering a communal space of truth, healing, and restoration. There will be live music, performances, cuisine, and Black-owned vendors in attendance!