

**University of Delaware  
Office of Residence Life  
UPPER-DIVISION HALLS  
2010-2011  
3/29/10**

**Introduction:**

The upper division residence halls include Central, Christiana Towers, Independence South and Ray Street complexes. In total these areas include a mix of approximately 4000 students comprised of sophomores (@ 55%), juniors (@ 35%), and seniors (@ 15%). The upper division halls have unique characteristics and traditions resulting from special programs such as Special Interest Housing, Upper-class Honors housing, apartment-style and suite-style living. Due to the variety in type of student and housing, a wider variety of programming options will be offered for these areas.

The upper division plan includes activities to promote student interaction, attend to social needs, and generate opportunities for students to contribute to community life. The upper division plan continues to provide students with opportunities for reflection and exploration of citizenship while also providing opportunities for them to examine their undergraduate goals and plan for their future success within and outside of the University.

Staff members are expected to follow the guidelines within the program plan in developing and advertising activities. An emphasis is placed on partnering with professionally trained staff, students, and/or faculty whose involvement will advance the residents' understanding of citizenship.

With the exception of the floor and building meetings held at opening, all activities detailed in this plan are attendance-optional. Students will not face penalties, perceived or real, for failing to engage in residential activities and programs. Staff and students will be informed that no activity in the residence halls is mandatory for students to attend.

Repeating themes in the program plan are noted below. The selected themes place a heavy emphasis on student-to-student interaction and connection. This is in response to assessment data from the 2009 Educational Benchmarking Inc. (EBI) survey which showed that residents in upper division residence halls were consistently less satisfied (in comparison to residents in traditional style, first year areas) with their ability to meet other people and to improve interpersonal relationships.

**Repeating Themes in the Upper Division Program Plan:**

*Resident Connections:*

The RA-resident relationship can be critical to the success of a residence hall student. In the upper-division halls, the role can often evolve from one of support, common in first year areas, to a partnering relationship. Community meetings, residence hall student government (CCC), and the promotion of campus events will continue to be priorities as ways to promote resident connections. In addition a series of optional Resident Assistant to resident conversations are included as part of the plan for students who wish to participate.

The conversations are designed to connect residents to the relevant campus resource for the month's topic(s) as well as to the After Class Showcase (see below) activity for the month. Resident Assistants will also ask residents for assistance with upcoming Community Meetings (see below). Conversations will also focus on specific needs expressed by the resident to the Resident Assistant. Resident Assistants will also pay attention to the needs of our residents who are upper division students, but are new to campus such as transfer, Associate of Arts graduates, and international students.

**Resident Connections Topics:**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Topic</b>
September	Welcome, get to know each other, connecting residents to other residents, resident

	expectations/goals for living in residence hall, Student Initiative Fund
October	Connect residents to campus resources for: Choosing a major (Center for Counseling and Student Development, Academic Units); internships (Career Services Center, Academic Units); study abroad (Center for International Studies)
November	Wellness
December	Building closing, winter session updates
January	Connecting residents to each other
February	Welcome back, contributions to community (service initiative connections)
March	Preparing for the next stage – moving off campus &/or graduation
April	Relationships with roommates and significant others
May	Being safe on and off campus with specific emphasis on personal and property safety

### *After Class Showcase:*

Each month, the complex staff will develop an activity in collaboration with a Division of Student Life unit or a student services unit (i.e. Writing Center, Communication Fellows, Library Workshops, Academic Enrichment Center, etc.) to highlight the work and/or a specific event of that unit. This will allow our students to learn new or enhance skills as well as be encouraged to take advantage of services offered on campus with which they may not yet be familiar. Hall Directors will work with the Resident Assistants and residents to decide which resource would best serve residents during that month's activity. The Complex Coordinator will coordinate invitations to campus units.

### *Community Meetings:*

Community meetings are about the residents – a time for them to learn what is happening in their community, discuss any events that might be coming up in the residence halls or elsewhere on campus, and a time for them to get to know each other. To that end, the Resident Assistant will have responsibility for bringing forward relevant information ranging from Complex Community Council elections and break closing information to Recyclemania and student code of conduct policies. Resident Assistants should build the topic portion of their meeting based on their Resident Connection conversations and discussions with their Hall Director. Through Resident Connection conversations, Resident Assistants will invite residents to develop and facilitate a social activity to take place during the Community Meeting. Resident Assistants will be available as a resource to the activity if it needs to be facilitated and funding will be provided by the Office of Residence Life. These meetings will happen each month at the floor level (or combined floors as appropriate).

### *Service Initiatives:*

Semester-long service projects will be coordinated in an effort to offer opportunities for students to make their own unique contributions to the community. Events will be coordinated as building and complex initiatives and will take into consideration events on campus and the interest of the residence hall community. Residents who choose to participate in these activities will be invited to take part in the planning process, participate in the service project, and will be given an opportunity to provide feedback about the project and its impact on them and the community served. Generally, service projects should happen each month but this will vary based on the type of service project. Complex Coordinators will consult with the Associate Director for the appropriate level of depth and timeliness for each project to ensure that the requirements of the program plan are being met.

### *Community News:*

Each complex will promote news of the complex and community on a monthly basis. Postings in the community news should include relevant UDaily articles, information shared from other units on campus, environmental sustainability information, activities from the program plan, and any topics students would like to contribute. The Complex Coordinator will have oversight for all items posted in the monthly news. The news medium will be electronic which can take the form of an electronic document sent via email to residents, a blog, Facebook, or other electronic methods which are attractive to residents and appropriate for the information.

### *Student Spotlight:*

The monthly student spotlight is a way for the entire community to recognize the outstanding work done by our

residents. Efforts that should be spotlighted can include academic success, community contribution, environmental sustainability, and extracurricular activities. Nomination for recognition can be done by students and staff members. Students will need to provide permission and will have full editing oversight for all information posted connected to this recognition. When appropriate, this recognition should lead to the student's nomination for the National Residence Hall Honorary "Student Spotlight" award for the month in which they are recognized. Recognition can be done by building, area, or complex as appropriate for the structure of the complex. The Complex Coordinator will be responsible for setting up procedures for publicizing, nominating, selecting, and posting information about monthly spotlights.

#### *Faculty Connection Opportunities:*

A wide variety of opportunities will be made available for University of Delaware faculty to take part in activities and events in the residence halls to engage with students in the residential environment. Faculty will be invited to offer presentations, take part in major events, spend time with students in the dining halls, participate with hall student government activities, or other interactive opportunities. Each complex will offer at least two of these opportunities each semester based on availability of faculty members.

#### *Weekend Events:*

Weekend socials are a time for our residents to relax with their fellow community members. To highlight the high percentage of students involved with registered student organizations (RSOs) and the diverse offerings of these organizations, staffs are encouraged to partner with residents involved in RSOs in developing these activities. Weekend events will take place each week and can take place during Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings on building or complex levels.

#### *Bulletin Boards:*

Bulletin Boards are an important visual representation of both information and the community. Resident Assistants will have access to a number of bulletin board topics developed by a variety of Residence Life staff members which have been approved by the Associate Director with current information and can create a creative display to achieve this visual representation. Topics may include: Items related to the program plan (i.e. Resident Connections, We are UD, Faculty Connection Opportunity, etc.); recognition themes celebrated by the University (i.e. Hispanic Heritage Month, Constitution Day, Earth Week, etc.); and topics proposed and developed by residents. Bulletin boards will be changed monthly with chosen topics and quality approved by the Hall Director and Complex Coordinator.

#### *We Are UD:*

A monthly posting will be crafted, with the participation of appropriate units, to offer information on major commemorative dates such as Latino Heritage Month, African American Heritage Month, World AIDS Day, Earth Day and others. The monthly posting will also provide students with a listing of activities, events, and campus lectures should they wish to explore the topic further. Resident Assistants can encourage attendance based upon what they know residents enjoy or opportunities they are looking to take advantage of on campus.

#### *Student Initiative Fund:*

The Student Initiative Fund (SIF) is an Office of Residence Life opportunity which allows residents to create events in the residence halls designed to initiate and continue resident interaction. Because many upper division residents already have groups of friends when they arrive in our buildings, they are not as energized to meet new people as is typically the case in first year residence halls. An initial SIF kick off event will be held in each complex to make residents aware of this opportunity and residents will be encouraged throughout the year to develop activities to be funded through the SIF to increase interaction. In the past two years, the SIF has been utilized by many upper division residents and this level of participation will be encouraged to continue.

#### *Complex Community Council:*

Complex Community Councils (CCCs) are leadership groups that exist in each complex. Students will be encouraged to participate and become an active member of their community through the CCC. Student participation will allow them the opportunity to share thoughts and have an influence on the community. Each CCC is advised by the Complex Coordinator with assistance from the Hall Director staff. Residence Life Staff will provide a kick-off event to introduce students to the CCC, facilitate the election process to maximize student involvement opportunities, and

provide meeting space appropriate for all students to take part in their CCC regardless of involvement level. Ongoing CCC activities will be developed by members of the CCC and will take place each month, supported by Resident Assistants and Hall Directors through promotion and attendance.

*Department Wide Opportunities:*

Staff and residents will have opportunities to participate in a variety of additional activities supported by the Office of Residence Life. Examples of this include “Art Under the Stars” which takes place in Central Complex and is planned by both staff and students; Special Interest Housing (SIH) programs in Ray Street, planned by the SIH communities; and the activities offered by the Residence Life Environmental Sustainability Committee. The Office of Residence Life also co-sponsors many programs held on campus which are organized by other departments. These departments solicit our staff and resident input and participation. It is fully expected that our staff members promote these programs to our residents.