

RESIDENTIAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES
Bowling Green State University
August 22, 2007

Purpose/Goals

The overriding purpose of residential learning communities (RLC) is to enrich student learning experiences by linking the residential and academic aspects of students' experience. RLCs seek to provide environments in which in-class and out-of-class learning is seamlessly integrated. Residential learning communities: 1) provide unique opportunities for developing interpersonal relationships among students and faculty; 2) foster learning outside the classroom; 3) contribute to retention; and 4) promote greater collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

Number of Students Served (see <http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/mc/communities/index.html>)

- Nine learning communities and five theme communities in the residence halls.
- Freshmen and sophomores are mostly involved although some upperclass students are involved in some of the RLCs as participants or student leaders.
- Numbers of students involved range from 11 in La Maison Française (The French House) to 200 in Chapman at Kohl and 250 in the Honors Community.
- Total capacity for RLCs = 960
- Total capacity for Theme Communities (not including Greeks) = 230

Oversight and Coordination

- Provided by Learning Communities Advisory Committee (LCAC) with joint Membership is from Student Affairs and Academic Affairs:
 - Dr. Mike Coomes, Associate Professor, Higher Education and Student Affairs
 - Dr. Michael Griffel, Director, Residence Life
 - Dr. Mark Gromko, Vice Provost for Academic Programs
 - Dr. Paula Whetsel Ribeau, Interim Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs
 - Dr. Roger Thibeau, Executive Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
 - Ms. Jodi Webb, Associate Dean, Orientation and First Year Programs
- The first learning community, Chapman, came on line in 1997, with the Health Science Residential Community opening the following year. Proposals for new RLCs are brought to the LCAC for review and approval.
- There is no formal budget for oversight of the RLCs. Funding for academic programming tends to come from the sponsoring college or department and is partly based on the additional fee students pay to participate. Hall directors and resident advisors are funded through the Office of Residence Life. If additional funding needs arise, Residence Life or the College of Arts and Sciences have assisted. For example, the renovation of Kohl Hall for Chapman at Kohl was fully funded by Residence Life. An assistant dean for learning communities was hired by the College of Arts and Sciences to provide coordination of the learning communities and learning community directors.
- The Learning Community Directors meet regularly to discuss common issues and concerns. The Senior Associate Director of Residence Life is a member of this committee.
- All RLCs are developing "criteria for success" and learning outcomes for assessment purposes.