

Higher Learning Commission  
**Self-Study Questionnaire/Report for Non-Instructional Units**

Non-Instructional Unit: Office of Residence Life

Individual(s) Completing the Questionnaire/Report: Jeff C. Janz, Executive Director

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1. Describe in a paragraph or two what your unit does (i.e., the services it provides).

The Office of Residence Life provides housing for students enrolled at UW-Whitewater, as well as short term guests, summer campers and conference participants. In fulfillment of these duties, Residence Life manages and operates approx. 850,000 square feet of physical facilities in fifteen campus buildings, selects, trains and supervises approx. 63 full time and several hundred student employees, coordinates the programs and services for the student residents in the halls, administers the marketing, assigning and billing for student residents, manages a budget in excess of \$9 million, manages cable television services, and provides technical support and services for student residents and staff.

As part of its mission, the Office of Residence Life collaborates with various academic and non-academic offices and staff to facilitate a positive academic learning experience for students residing on campus.

2. Who is/are the constituency/ies you serve, and approximately how many of each constituency do you serve annually? (e.g., students, academic departments, classified staff, etc.)
  - Students – approx. 3,700 annually
  - Prospective students and non-students (as part of the Summer Camp and Conference operation) – approx. 11,300 campers and conference participants
3. Overview and evaluate the adequacy of the human, physical, and fiscal resources your department deploys to serve students and meet other programmatic needs by answering the questions below:

**Human Resources**

Evaluate the general adequacy of the human resources (i.e., the # of employees (including student help) and their skills) relative to the unit's ability to serve the constituencies identified above and achieve other programmatic goals. Do this by assigning a number between "1" (**completely inadequate**) to "9" (**completely satisfies needs**).

7

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you've assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because of limitations.

The skill level of the majority of Residence life employees is above the needed level to perform their roles. This is assessed with periodic evaluation processes. Residence life is adequately staffed in many areas such as student employees in the sections of residential education, facilities, cable services, MIS and administration. Residence Life is also adequately staffed in the area of unclassified administrative staff and classified Program Assistant staff. Residence Life is understaffed in the area of classified facilities staff.

As a relatively large department in terms of staff and fiscal resources, Residence Life has reviewed and updated its staffing configurations frequently over the past 12 years as a result of changing service demands. Recent budget cutbacks at the state level, however, necessitated a reduction in the facilities, maintenance and trades staffing. Adequately staffing for optimal

custodial care has been a continuous challenge for many years. The office is inadequately staffed for weekend cleaning and for cleaning services when employees are absent.

### Physical Resources

Evaluate the general adequacy of the physical resources (e.g., office and storage space, supporting technology, other equipment) allocated to the unit relative to the unit's ability to serve the constituencies identified above and achieve other programmatic goals. Do this by assigning a number between "1" (completely inadequate) to "9" (completely satisfies needs).

5

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you've assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because of limitations.

Office and storage space is quite adequate for an operation of its size. Technological equipment, as well as the tools and equipment to manage a large technical operation and physical plant are very adequate. In terms of the residential facilities, the volume of space is adequate, the age and condition of the overall space, however, requires significant attention. All of the current residential inventory is approx. 40 years old. The facilities have been cared for with preventative maintenance through the years. Significant upgrades, however, are required in the major building systems (electrical, plumbing, HVAC, windows, etc.). In addition, room configurations (primarily double rooms and group bathrooms) no longer accommodate the needs of all student residents.

### Fiscal Resources

While recognizing that every unit would benefit from a larger budget, evaluate the general adequacy of fiscal resources allocated to the unit to serve its constituencies and achieve other programmatic goals by assigning a number between "1" (completely inadequate) to "9" (completely satisfies needs).

5

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you've assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because of limitations.

The Office of Residence Life prides itself on the strength of its fiscal management. The forty year old facilities have been well maintained, and all have been fully refurbished over the past decade. Students enjoy a comfortable living environment with well-trained staff living the residence halls, and state-of-the-art residential computer labs, and a 'port-per-pillow' residential computer network.

The issues described above regarding the age of the physical facilities, however, requires extensive fiscal resources. A recent study estimates that as much as \$80 million must be spent to bring the facilities up to necessary condition over the next fifteen years. This will require, therefore, an increase in future room rates above that which has been issued in past years.

4. In a paragraph or two, overview significant changes made in your unit since 1996 (i.e., the last North Central Association Accreditation Visit). (e.g., re-organized, key staff changes, change in purposes, etc.)

Over the past decade, many significant changes have taken place in the Office of Residence Life including the following:

- A physical refurbishing effort which began in 1989 was completed in 1998. This effort included replacement of all residential furniture, carpeting, window treatments, lighting and common area remodeling.
- CAD 5 wiring was installed in every residence hall to provide residential computer network access in every student room and common area. More recently wireless access points have been introduced to provide wireless network access by fall, 2005.

- Mini-computer labs were installed in every residence hall.
- An elevator was installed in Knilans Hall bringing the three the number of low-rise residence halls equipped elevator access.
- Landscape remodeling was completed exterior to several residence hall to improve the appearance and presentation, as well as reduce annual maintenance requirements.
- New special living options were introduced including 'Global Village', 'Upper Class/Graduates', and 'Substance Free'.
- One tower of Wells Hall was equipped with a sprinkler system. The other tower's sprinkler system is scheduled for installation during the summer of 2005.
- An extensive long range residential master plan was developed in preparation for the marketing, facilities, fiscal, programmatic and political changes anticipated in the years ahead.
- Residential Education staffing was modified by eliminating (due to statewide budgetary constraints) one coordinator position which had supervised several Hall Directors and advised student leadership efforts. A position was also created to coordinated academic and leadership initiatives.
- A pilot living-learning community was launched in Lee Hall. As many as seven living-learning communities are planned for the 05-06 academic year. Learning Communities have demonstrated in the literature to have a strong positive impact on retention.
- The number maintenance staff was reduced and a new maintenance staffing program was initiated campus-wide. This involved staffing in unit slightly less than the anticipated need and further tied the services of more than half of the remaining staff into a campus central pool of maintenance employees.
- After the departure of the senior facilities administrator, the roles of Assistant Director – Facilities and Associate Director were consolidated into a single position.

In another paragraph or two, describe why these changes occurred.

All physical refurbishing efforts were undertaken to improve the lifestyle of student residents. The Wells Hall sprinkler project in particular was completed to comply with a new state law. The elevator was installed to better serve the needs of students with disabilities. Student technology enhancements were installed to provide academically conducive support to students in residence. The master plan was initiated to create a comprehensive road map for future residential planning given the age of the facilities, the demand for room configurations other than double rooms, the desire to collaborate with academic colleagues with living-learning communities, and to prepare for the possibility of the elimination of the sophomore residency requirement. A position was created to coordinated academic and leadership initiatives as a result of the needed coordination of these two important areas. The maintenance staff was modified in part to improve efficiencies, but primarily in response to the significant state-wide budgetary shortfall.

## MISSION & PLANNING

5. In a paragraph or two, describing any significant projects/initiatives that your unit is planning or currently has underway, but has not yet completed.

Several major initiatives are well underway in Residence Life and have already been mentioned in this document. First, a long range comprehensive master plan has been developed and approved by the university's administration. This plan calls for the following: remodeling of select halls (and construction of a new residence hall) to add suite-style room configurations on campus; upgrading all the major systems and amenities (plumbing, electrical, HVAC, windows, etc.) in each residence hall by taking one building off line per year; remodeling in select halls to add bathroom facilities; constructing elevators in additional facilities.

The other major initiative, partly tied to the master plan involves significant collaboration with academic units. Plans are well underway to establish a number of living-learning communities. These communities will be comprised of student cohorts residing together with a shared interest, and set of block course sections.

6. Below are five "core values" the University identifies as central to its purposes and operation. Please evaluate the importance of each core value in terms of how each aligns with the purposes of your unit (i.e., take a hypothetical 100 points and distribute them among the five values, with those values that align more closely to the purposes of your unit receiving more points).

Core Value	Importance (100 points)
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Commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding	15
Development of the individual	20
Personal and professional integrity	15
Commitment to serve	30
Commitment to develop a sense of community, respect for diversity, and global perspectives	20
<b>Total=</b>	<b>100 points</b>

7. Each and every academic and non-academic unit engages in planning for the future. Review the list of variables below and evaluate the extent to which each of the following influences decision-making behind the planning process for your unit (i.e., take a hypothetical 100 points and distribute them among the planning variables listed below, with those variables playing the larger role in your unit's planning efforts receiving more points)

Planning Variables	Importance (100 points)
The mission of the university or the unit	9
Academic assessment data/information relevant to student performance against learning outcomes	4
Other data/information gathered relevant to performance (e.g., Audit & Review feedback)	10
Societal/Cultural trends (e.g., changes in demographics, lifestyles, professions)	13
Campus trends (e.g., changes in university-initiated needs and demands)	13
Technology trends (e.g., technology developments that affect delivery of service)	10
Professional trends (e.g., changes evident at other universities/colleges)	4
Available human resources (e.g., # of employees, talents, etc.) within the unit	8
Available financial resources (e.g., budget, available and accessible \$)	10
Available physical resources (e.g., space, existing technology, etc.)	9
Other: Political pressures, legislative or UW System decision and actions	10
<b>Total=</b>	<b>100 points</b>

8. Does your unit have a mission statement?

Yes xxx No

If you answered "yes," please list the mission statement here. or, if your mission statement can be accessed on the web, please list the URL here: <http://www.reslife.uww.edu/>

"The mission of the Office of Residence Life at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is to provide quality housing services for students in a community that embraces pluralism and enhances student learning. We strive to create an environment that encourages responsibility, citizenship, civility and academic success."

If you answered "yes," please describe how, if at all, this mission statement plays a role in your unit's planning and/or decision-making.

The mission statement is very brief. While staff members don't necessarily have it committed to memory, it is included in many of our documents and posted in several locations. The concepts such as quality services for students, embracing pluralism, the value of student learning, and the promotion of civility are inherent in most decision-making efforts.

## OPERATION AND PERFORMANCE

9. What are the major or measurable objectives of the unit?

**Office Goal #1:** Provide quality services and programs for residential students that facilitate student success and track results.

**Office Goal #2:** Focus on initiatives that support the resident's academic experiences through collaborations with academic affairs colleagues

**Office Goal #3:** Maintain a watchful eye over the funding needed to proceed with the residential master plan initiatives.

**Office Goal #4:** Nurture the professional development of residence life employees.

**Office Goal #5:** Support and encourage leadership and campus engagement opportunities for underrepresented students.

**Office Goal #6:** Maintain and enhance a sense of partnership between the residence life community and the broader external community.

**Office Goal #7:** Enhance the integrity of the residence life management team by striving to improve internal communication and collaboration.

**Office Goal #8:** Maintain and upgrade residential facilities with an eye toward the safety and comfort of current residents and the long term usage of the facilities.

10. What outcome measures (i.e., data, information) provide evidence that your unit's objectives are being met?

**Office Goal #1:** Provide quality services and programs for residential students that facilitate student success and track results.

- *Measurement:* Overall residential satisfaction rating on the ACUHO-I/EBI resident study. *Outcome Target:* Maintain or improve the 5.34 overall satisfaction rating (on a 7 point scale).
- *Measurement:* ACUHO-I/EBI resident and RA satisfaction data distribution to appropriate staff members. *Outcome Target:* Result summary distributed by June, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Impact of the Live & Learn pilot program, by measuring preliminary retention, GPA and involvement of students involved, primarily derived from survey data. *Outcome Target:* Five percent higher involvement, GPA and retention rate for students in Live & Learn compared to a control group.
- *Measurement:* Impact of the YearOne program, by measuring the retention and GPA of students involved. *Outcome Target:* Five percent higher GPA and retention rate for students in special interest housing compared to other students.
- *Measurement:* Comparatative GPA and retention data between students on campus vs. off campus by class standing. *Outcome Target:* Five percent higher GPA and retention rate for on campus residential students.
- *Measurement:* Migration to a new vendor-based conduct database in collaboration with the Office of Student Life. *Outcome Target:* Fully install the program by August, 2004.
- *Measurement:* Electronic on line Resident Assistant application process. *Outcome Target:* Bring on line by February, 2005.

**Office Goal #2:** Focus on initiatives that support the resident's academic experiences through collaborations with academic affairs colleagues

- *Measurement:* Pilot Living-Learning Community in collaboration with Academic Affairs. *Outcome Target:* Implement by August, 2004
- *Measurement:* New residence life position designed to facilitate academic initiatives and serve as a liaison with academic affairs practitioners. *Outcome Target:* Complete selection by January, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Plan for future Living-Learning Communities in collaborate with several student affairs and academic affairs offices. *Outcome Target:* Plan to bring at least one new Living-Learning Community on-line and develop 2005-06 plans by December, 2004
- *Measurement:* Investigate collaboration with Academic Support Services to develop a pilot program involving tutorial services in select residence halls. *Outcome Target:* Complete investigation by February, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Expand Lee Hall faculty office hours to include many of the "Live & Learn" faculty members. *Outcome Target:* Expand hours by October, 2004.
- *Measurement:* Deploy wireless network access in collaborate with Technology and Information Resources. *Outcome Target:* Complete by June, 2005.

**Office Goal #3:** Maintain a watchful eye over the funding needed to proceed with the residential master plan initiatives.

- *Measurement:* Establish a financial plan including anticipated needed reserves, recommended annual room rate increases and estimated costs of major capital projects, deferred maintenance projects and other new initiatives, all as part of the long range comprehensive master plan. *Outcome Target:* Prepare by April, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Pursue alternative funding sources such as the ACUHO-I grant program and other extramural funding resources. *Outcome Target:* Obtain funds from at least one external source by June, 2005.
- *Measurement:* UW System Housing Audit response. *Outcome Target:* Respond by November, 2004.

**Office Goal #4:** Nurture the professional development of residence life employees.

- *Measurement:* Conduct Professional Staff Development sessions for most of the professional staff. *Outcome Target:* Provide programs at least monthly during the academic year.
- *Measurement:* Require administrative staff to complete individual development plans in order to facilitate a progressive level of personal development. *Outcome Target:* Completion of plans by November, 2004.
- *Measurement:* Take an active role in co-hosting the 2005 Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) conference in Milwaukee. *Outcome Target:* Four management team members actively involved in the host committee, and at least eight volunteers taking part on the conference itself.

**Office Goal #5:** Support and encourage leadership and campus engagement opportunities for underrepresented students.

- *Measurement:* Seek ways to involve and document the involvement of students with disabilities and students of color in leadership opportunities and positions such as RA positions, RHA and LIT teams. *Outcome Target:* Maintain or increase 2004-05 involvement.
- *Measurement:* Provide assistance to organizations and departments providing programs targeted for underrepresented groups. Examples include Black Student Union and Latino Heritage Month. *Outcome Target:* Provide financial support by April, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Safe Zone Certification training throughout the residence halls by Diversity Advocates. *Outcome Target:* Maintain or increase training during the 2004-05 academic year.
- *Measurement:* Cultural Identity workshops for all first year students enrolled in the New Student Seminar, Introduction to University Life. *Outcome Target:* Actively participate in the planning and facilitation of the program.

**Office Goal #6:** Maintain and enhance a sense of partnership between the residence life community and the broader external community.

- *Measurement:* Joint campus/community Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team. *Outcome Target:* Continue to be involved in the team and provide debriefing and diffusing services when called upon.
- *Measurement:* Janesville Leadership Development Academy. *Outcome Target:* Offer instruction for the academy by December, 2004.
- *Measurement:* Off Campus Living Guide. *Outcome Target:* Continue to collaborate with Whitewater Student Government to make available to residents.
- *Measurement:* Milwaukee community service activity entitled the Make A Difference program. *Outcome Target:* Engage the Resident Assistant staff and professional staff in this program by August, 2004 during Fall Resident Assistant training.
- *Measurement:* Fire Drill training activity which involved the Whitewater Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad as well as responders from Fort Atkinson, Milton, LaGrange, and Cambridge. *Outcome Target:* Implement by August, 2004 during Fall Resident Assistant Training.

**Office Goal #7:** Enhance the integrity of the residence life management team by striving to improve internal communication and collaboration.

- *Measurement:* Remodel staff meeting times and composition to better plan departmental activities, to improve communication with staff, and to make more efficient use of staff time. *Outcome Target:* Implement by November, 2004.
- *Measurement:* Publish periodic newsletters to staff from the director informing pertinent staff about critical departmental issues. *Outcome Target:* Implement by November, 2004.

- *Measurement:* Publish a brief summary of the ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Study results and distribute it to the full Residence Life administrative staff as well as a number of key stakeholders throughout the campus. *Outcome Target:* Implement by June, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Redeploy the ACUHO-I/EBI Resident study in order to gauge student satisfaction with services and take action on the results. *Outcome Target:* Distribute and collect in December, 2004
- *Measurement:* Develop plans to consolidate much of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Goodhue office space on to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. *Outcome Target:* Complete plans by January, 2005 and begin consolidating by June, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Develop an action plan in follow up to the Office Planning and Review process. *Outcome Target:* Complete by June, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Take an active role in the institutional accreditation process conducted by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. *Outcome Target:* Ongoing through June, 2005.

**Office Goal #8:** Maintain and upgrade residential facilities with an eye toward the safety and comfort of current residents and the long term usage of the facilities.

- *Measurement:* Take part in assessing the impact of the campus-wide central maintenance pool concept. *Outcome Target:* Complete by June 1, 2005
- *Measurement:* Proceed with implementation of the Comprehensive Residential Master Plan, including plans for remodeling Sayles and White and the construction of a new residence hall. *Outcome Target:* Ongoing through June, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Implement electronic door access in selected locations. *Outcome Target:* Completed by June, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Plan and implement refurbishing one residence hall. *Outcome Target:* Begin refurbishing in May, 2005.
- *Measurement:* Complete phase 2 of the Wells sprinkler project. *Outcome Target:* Begin installation in May, 2005.

11. Related to question #10, does the unit regularly collect data/information to evaluate how effectively it serves its constituency(ies)? (This might include surveys of constituencies.)

Yes xxx                      No

If "yes," please list specific data/information sets that the UW-W Self-Study Committees, and/or the Higher Learning Commission's Visiting Accreditation Team can access to review/consult.

- The annual ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Survey distributed to all residents (approx. 78% return rate) in December of each year.
- Survey of all students conducted by Master Planning consultants.
- Student Exit Survey of all departing student residents
- The annual ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Assistant Survey, as well as an in-house evaluation of RA's.

12. In a paragraph or two, describe specific changes to the unit's operation or planning, if any, have resulted from the collection and use of the data/information identified in the preceding questions. Please be specific.

The ACUHO-I/EBI survey provided beneficial information about student satisfaction. The results give comparative results between residence hall complexes, between campuses, and over several years. Data showing the importance of interaction with other students has impacted plans for remodeling common areas space. Interest in special living options led to pilot options. Ratings about cleanliness in the residence halls resulted in improved custodial efforts. Feedback about the use of telephone systems has directed future plans for telecommunication systems. Satisfaction levels with dining and security are annually shared with appropriate campus colleagues.

The master planning survey results directly impacted the capital plan in terms of the types of housing to provide and the ratios of various room types on campus. The results also supported the notion of establishing living/learning communities.

13. Please provide a list of services, if any, that your unit provides for constituencies that are external to the university.
- Overnight guest accommodations in Goodhue Hall for visitors to campus.
  - Housing for summer campers and conference participants.
  - Through our management of Cable Services, broadcast programming is provided on cable television external to the university.
  - A variety of community service projects are sponsored by Residence Life serving individuals external.
14. Please list any partnerships your unit has developed with the community (external to the campus, at the local, national, or global-level).
- Charter Cable
  - 
  - 
  - 
  -

**STUDENT LEARNING** (COMPLETE THIS SECTION ONLY IF YOUR UNIT HAS AS PART OF ITS MISSION OR PURPOSES THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS)

15. If your unit serves students as its primary constituency, does the unit have learning or development-related objectives relevant to its work with students? That is, does your unit expect that students will acquire certain knowledge or skill sets as a direct result of working with your unit or its programming?

Yes  No

If "yes," please list these outcomes/objectives.

- Increased retention to the second year of college
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16. Does the unit use data/information to evaluate the extent to which these learning or development-related objectives are, or are not being met?

Yes  No

If "yes," please list specific data/information sets that the UW-W Self-Study Committees, and/or the Higher Learning Commission's Visiting Accreditation Team can access to review/consult.

- Assessment data derived from the PeopleSoft dataset.
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17. What specific changes to the unit's operation or planning, if any, have resulted from the collection and use of the data/information identified in question #15? Please be specific.

An increase in collaborative planning for the future of Living-Learning Communities as well as special interest residence halls.

## SELF-EVALUATION

### Strengths

18. List and prioritize no more than three primary strengths that have emerged in your unit's efforts to meet its mission, goals, or objectives. To identify these strengths, you may wish to consider: What does your unit do very well? What good things do people say about your unit? How has your unit aided the campus in meeting its mission? In what ways has your unit "gone beyond the call of duty?"

After identifying each strength, specify supporting evidence that suggests that the statement is true. This may include data/information gathered relevant to unit performance, trend data, information gathered from audits or external agencies visit, etc.

1. Specific Strength: On a macroscopic level, the residential experience enhances student success
  - Supporting Evidence: Student retention data and student GPA data comparing student residency on vs. off campus. Additionally, ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Survey data demonstrates that residents experience a high level of interaction with other students, which is also the highest predictor of overall residential satisfaction.
2. Specific Strength: Residence Life staff members actively take part in the activities and services of the campus as a whole and with specific departments in particular.
  - Supporting Evidence: Focus group data from the Office Planning and Review and master planning processes.
3. Specific Strength: Residence Hall facilities are generally well maintained and in good repair
  - Supporting Evidence: ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Survey data

### Concerns

19. List and prioritize no more than three primary concerns that have emerged in your unit's efforts to meet its mission, goals, or objectives. To identify these concerns, you may wish to consider: What could be improved? What is done poorly? What do we, as a unit, avoid doing, even though we know it's important?

After identifying each concern, specify supporting evidence that suggests that the statement is true. This may include data/information gathered relevant to unit performance, trend data, information gathered from audits or external agencies visit, etc.

Finally, identify one or more recommended actions to address the area of concern. This may include actions that your unit has already begun, actions being planned, or preliminary thinking about how to address the area of concern.

1. Specific Concern: Residence Halls must be renovated to upgrade major physical systems.
  - Supporting Evidence: master planning data

- Recommended Actions: a 10-15 year master plan has been approved by University administration
2. Specific Concern: Many students demand/desire on campus residential accommodations not currently provided.
- Supporting Evidence: master planning analysis
  - Recommended Actions: the master plan recommends modifying the inventory of room types to fit with market demand.
3. Specific Concern: Lack of academic resources made available in hall for students
- Supporting Evidence: Academic Advising is the only current support office providing satellite support in the residence halls
  - Recommended Actions: Continue collaborative efforts to create opportunities for academic services (i.e., tutorial programs, study skills workshops, career services, reading/writing labs, etc.) to be offered to residence hall students.