

Aligning Departmental Mission & Outcomes with the Institution



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Office of Residence Life and Housing

Background

The Office of Residence Life and Housing last revised its mission in July 2013, when VP Rue had just begun at Wake Forest. The mission as approved at that time was:

The Office of Residence Life and Housing strives to foster a secure, comfortable, inclusive, and engaging residential community. We provide facilities, programs, and services that support the mission of the institution and prepare undergraduate students for life beyond Wake Forest University.

Additional language was included to showcase how the department achieved this mission:

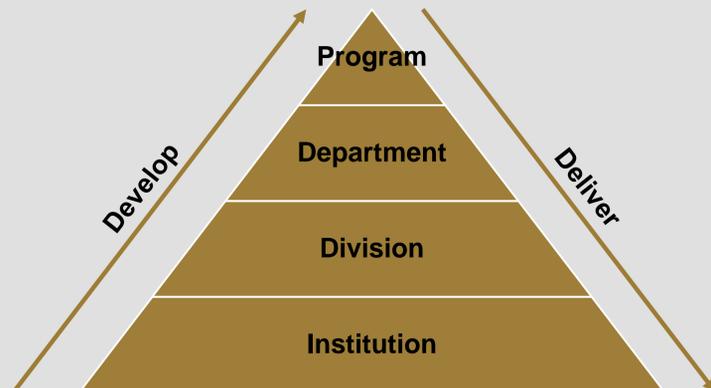
- Supporting faculty in their endeavors to engage students outside the classroom
- Promoting student learning through the pursuit of our learning objectives – (a) Authentic Membership in Real Community, (b) Global Citizenship and Perspective, (c) Synergistic Application of Academic Learning, (d) Practical Competence, and (e) Responsibility for Self, Others, Property, and the Environment
- Collaborating with campus and community partners
- Developing and implementing plans for the continual improvement of our facilities
- Implementing best practices in physical security technology
- Practicing sound and responsible stewardship of resources

The diffuse nature of the RL&H mission and outcomes proved to be a barrier to consistent assessment.

Methods

Throughout the 2015-2016 Academic Year, the RL&H Assessment Committee reviewed the existing departmental mission statement and outcomes to ensure alignment with divisional and institutional directions and to make it easier to plan for assessment.

The graphic below represents the way RL&H approached work related to alignment.



Results

In reviewing the new mission and outcomes, the Assessment Committee consulted the Campus Life mission, strategic directions, learning goals, and College Core Competencies for alignment.

The result is the new mission and set of outcomes outlined below for the Office of Residence Life and Housing.

Mission

The Office of Residence Life and Housing fosters secure, comfortable, inclusive, and engaging learning communities which prepare students to lead lives of meaning and purpose.

Outcomes

As members of vibrant and diverse residential learning communities, Wake Forest students will:

- **Find an authentic sense of belonging.**
- **Successfully navigate citizenship within diverse communities.**
- **Develop the skills, knowledge and perspective to maintain a healthy, balanced life.**
- **Engage and lead in ways that exhibit responsibility for self, others, property, and the environment.**

The table below shows how the new RL&H outcomes align with the various Campus Life guiding documents and the College Core Competencies.

Conclusions

As you likely notice, the new mission and outcomes are significantly shorter than the previous version. What is not included are the multiple items which fell under each of the bullets in the original mission. Having this many “outcomes” resulted in the department being overwhelmed in terms of even considering assessment and thereby paralyzed many of the department’s assessment efforts.

The new mission allows the department to more readily express our core values and critical success factors - providing secure, comfortable, inclusive and engaging learning communities. Additionally, it allows us to have a solid year over year assessment cycle where we focus in on two outcomes per year. This cycle is outlined below.



RL&H Outcomes	Campus Life Alignment	College Core Competencies
Find an authentic sense of belonging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Directions – Sense of Belonging; Civic Engagement • Learnings Goals – Global and Civic Engagement; Character and Identity Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Creative Thinking • Intercultural Learning
Successfully navigate citizenship within diverse communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Directions – Cultural Fluency; Civic Engagement • Learnings Goals – Global and Civic Engagement; Purposeful Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Reading • Communication • Inquiry & Analysis • Intercultural Learning
Develop the skills, knowledge and perspective to maintain a healthy, balanced life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Directions – Wellbeing • Learnings Goals – Wellbeing; Character and Identity Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Reading • Quantitative Literacy • Critical Thinking
Engage and lead in ways that exhibit responsibility for self, others, property, and the environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Directions – Peer Leadership/Accountability; Civic Engagement • Learnings Goals – Purposeful Leadership; Character and Identity Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative Literacy • Social Relevance • Critical Thinking • Communication