Residence Life

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CAS REVIEW AREAS

1. Mission
2. Program
3. Leadership
4. Human Resources
5. Organization and Management
6. Financial Resources
7. Facilities, Technology, and Equipment
8. Legal Responsibilities
9. Equity and Access
10. Campus and External Relations
11. Diversity
12. Ethics
13. Assessment and Evaluation
1: Mission

- The living environment, including programs and services, that promotes learning and development in the broadest sense, with an emphasis on academic success

- Reasonably priced living facilities that are clean, attractive, well-maintained, comfortable, and which include contemporary safety features maintained by systematic operations

- Orderly and effective management of Residence Life that consists of meeting the needs of students and other constituents in a courteous, efficient, and effective manner

- The provision of a variety of nutritious and pleasing meals, in pleasant surroundings, at a reasonable cost, and related services that effectively meet institutional goals (catering, retail/cash operations, convenience stores), in programs that include food services
1. Mission

8 criteria/criteria areas (4 subtopics under 1.6)
- 4 were rated fully met
- 1 area rated well met
- 0 areas rated minimally met
- 1 area rated not met
- 0 rated not done
1. Mission

- Sub-committee felt 3 areas should not be evaluated in the context of mission:
  - coordination between educational programs and services, business operations and management services
  - management services that ensure orderly and effective administration
  - food or dining facilities and related services
1. Mission

Strengths

The sub-committee believes that the Residential Life mission demonstrates that the Standard is FULLY MET for:

- Regularly reviewed (yearly)
- Focus on student learning and development
- Functions as an integral part of USD’s overall mission
- Alignment with USD’s overall mission
1. Mission

Opportunities for Improvement
The sub-committee looks forward to enhancement of the Living Learning Communities and believes this will enhance community development and learning, with an emphasis on academic success.
The formal education of students consists of the curriculum and the co-curriculum, and must promote student learning and development that is purposeful and holistic. Residence Life must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes and provide programs and services that encourage the achievement of those outcomes.

Relevant and desirable outcomes include: intellectual growth, effective communication, realistic self-appraisal, enhanced self-esteem, clarified values, career choices, leadership development, healthy behaviors, meaningful interpersonal relationships, independence, collaboration, social responsibility, satisfying and productive lifestyles, appreciation of diversity, spiritual awareness, and achievement of personal and educational goals.
Residence Life must provide evidence of its impact on the achievement of student learning and development outcomes.

Residence Life must provide educational opportunities for students and other members of the campus community that support the strategic initiatives of the institution.

Staff members must provide a variety of educational opportunities that promote academic success, and the achievement of learning and student development outcomes.

Residence Life must be (a) intentional, (b) coherent, (c) based on theories and knowledge of learning and human development, (d) reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the student population, and (e) responsive to needs of individuals, special populations, and communities.
Residence Life must provide access to experiences and services that facilitate:

- a seamless learning environment
- opportunities to interact with faculty and staff members
- encouragement and assistance in forming study groups
- access to academic resources through technology
- opportunities to develop a mature style of relating to others and living cooperatively with others
- opportunities for analyzing, forming, and confirming values
- activities and educational opportunities that promote independence and self-sufficiency
2: Program

Residence Life must provide access to experiences and services that facilitate:

- educational opportunities that assist residents in developing and confirming a sense of identity
- experiences that lead to the respect for self, others, and property
- experiences that promote a sense of justice and fair play
- opportunities to appreciate new ideas
- opportunities to appreciate cultural differences and other forms of diversity
- opportunities to apply knowledge, skills, and values
- opportunities for leadership development and decision-making
- opportunities to make career choices through planned activities
- opportunities to develop a balanced life style embracing wellness
- opportunities to learn life skills
In education and community development programs, staff members must:

- introduce and orient residents to community expectations, facilities, services, and staff opportunities to interact with faculty and staff members
- document institutional and residential living policies, procedures, and expectations including the potential consequences for violation access to academic resources through technology
- involve students in programming, policy development, and self-governance
- provide educational programs that focus on awareness of cultural differences and self-assessment of possible prejudices
- offer social, recreational, educational, cultural, and community service programs
In education and community development programs, staff members must:

- promote and provide education about the affects and risks of drug and alcohol use
- encourage residents to exercise responsibility for their community through confrontation of inappropriate or disruptive behavior
- encourage residents to participate in mediating conflict within the community
- encourage residents to learn about their rights as students, tenants, residents, and consumers
- promote appropriate student use of technological resources
In advising, counseling and crisis intervention, staff members must:

- provide individual advising or counseling support within the scope of their training and expertise, and make appropriate referrals
- create relationships with students that demonstrate genuine interest in students’ educational and personal development
In administrative activities, staff members must:

- provide a clear and complete written agreement between the resident and the institution, that conveys mutual commitments and responsibilities
- encourage residents to participate in evaluating Residence Life
- provide information on safety, security, and emergency procedures
- create and maintain an environment and atmosphere which is conducive to educational pursuits
- provide emergency response and crisis intervention management in coordination with relevant campus and community resources
- ensure that the safety and security of the residents and their property are taken into consideration as policies are developed
- assess needs of the housing population annually, specifically addressing the needs for special interest programming and for upgrading or modifying facilities
Residence Life must provide access to experiences and services that facilitate:

- educational opportunities that assist residents in developing and confirming a sense of identity
- experiences that lead to the respect for self, others, and property
- experiences that promote a sense of justice and fair play
- opportunities to appreciate new ideas
- opportunities to appreciate cultural differences and other forms of diversity
- opportunities to apply knowledge, skills, and values
- opportunities for leadership development and decision-making
- opportunities to make career choices through planned activities
- opportunities to develop a balanced life style embracing wellness
- opportunities to learn life skills
2. Program

10 criteria (multiple categories under 2.4 Evidence of impact, 2.8 Facilitation of environment and relationships, and 2.10 Staff behavior)

- 4 criteria/criteria areas rated fully met
- 12 criteria/criteria areas rated well met
- 6 criteria/criteria areas rated minimally met
- 1 criterion rated not done
- Evidence available to rate student learning in First Year Experience; no evidence for other programs
2. Program

**Strengths**

The sub-committee believes that the Residential Life program demonstrates that the Standard is FULLY MET for:

- The program has identified student learning and development outcomes for First Year Students
- Staff members provide orientation and community expectations to residents
- Staff members provide information of safety procedures
2. Program

Opportunities for Improvement

The sub-committee thought it would be appropriate to continue to develop and/or further explore:

- The development of learning outcomes for Soph., Jr., Sr. and graduate students.
- Methods to enhance meaningful interactions with faculty members
- Appropriate and manageable ways to support the university’s strategic initiatives
Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations. Institutions must appoint, position and empower Residence Life leaders within the administrative structure to accomplish stated missions. Residence Life leaders at various levels must be selected on the basis of formal education and training, relevant work experience, personal skills and competencies, relevant professional credentials, as well as potential for promoting learning and development in students, applying effective practices to educational processes, and enhancing institutional effectiveness. Institutions must determine expectations of accountability for Residence Life leaders and fairly assess their performance.
3. Leadership

- Residence Life leaders must exercise authority over resources for which they are responsible to achieve their respective missions.

Residence Life Leaders must
- articulate a vision for their organization
- set goals and objectives based on the needs and capabilities of the population served
- promote student learning and development
- prescribe and practice ethical behavior
- recruit, select, supervise, and develop others in the organization
- manage financial resources
3. Leadership

Residence Life Leaders must (continued)

- coordinate human resources
- plan, budget for, and evaluate personnel and programs
- apply effective practices to educational and administrative processes
- communicate effectively
- initiate collaborative interaction between individuals and agencies that possess legitimate concerns and interests in the functional area
3. Leadership

- Residence Life leaders must identify and find means to address individual, organizational, or environmental conditions that inhibit goal achievement.
- Residence Life leaders must promote campus environments that result in multiple opportunities for student learning and development.
- Residence Life leaders must continuously improve programs and services in response to changing needs of students and other constituents, and evolving institutional priorities.
3. Leadership

11 criteria/sub areas (3.7, the Program Leader, has subcategories)

- 9 criteria/criteria areas rated fully met
- 2 criteria/criteria areas rated well met
- 2 criteria/criteria areas rated minimally met
- 0 criteria/criteria areas rated not done
- 2 criteria/criteria areas not rated
3. Leadership

Strengths

The sub-committee felt that most criteria in this standard were WELL MET. Some highlights include:

- Leaders have appropriate degrees and experience for their positions.
- Leadership provides a clear vision, mission and goals.
- Residential life staff work successfully with many university departments and staff members.
- Processes and procedures are timely and purposeful.
- Revenue generation contributes to other campus areas.
- Staff and program assessment is regular and on-going and efforts toward improvement regularly occur.
3. Leadership

Opportunities for Improvement
The sub-committee felt there were three areas to review:

- Authority for decisions may be at levels higher than necessary or at levels inconsistent with peer institutions.
- Facilities/custodial processes and cost effectiveness when managed centrally.
- Human resource management – particularly since a restructure was completed – risk for burn out (including the level of administrative support of duty).
The sub-committee found two criteria that it did not feel comfortable rating:

- “Applies effective practices to educational and administrative processes.” The sub-committee thought there was not evidence to rate this and recommends that assessment should be done in this area.

- “The leader deals effectively with individuals and environmental conditions that inhibit goal achievement.” Although the sub-committee thought that crisis management was a strength of the department, they also thought that leadership expectations and levels at which crisis and daily management occur should be assessed.
Guided by an overarching intent to ensure student learning and development, Residential Life must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals. Evidence of appropriate structure must include current and accessible policies and procedures, written performance expectations for all employees, functional workflow graphics or organizational charts, and clearly stated service delivery expectations.
4. Organization and Management

- Evidence of effective management must include use of comprehensive and accurate information for decisions, clear sources and channels of authority, effective communication practices, decision-making and conflict resolution procedures, responsiveness to changing conditions, accountability and evaluation systems, and recognition and reward processes. Residence Life must provide channels within the organization for regular review of administrative policies and procedures.

- Where the management of Residence Life is divided among different offices within the institution, it is the responsibility of institutional leaders and involved staff organizations to establish and maintain productive working relationships.
4. Organization and Management

- Residence Life must maintain well structured management functions, including planning, personnel, property management, purchasing, contract administration, financial control, and information systems.

- Evaluation of the organization is based on progress toward the achievement of short-range and long-range organizational goals. Planning must be adequate to project and accommodate both immediate and future needs.
4. Organization and Management

7 criteria
- 4 criteria rated fully met
- 2 criteria rated well met
- 0 criteria rated minimally met
- 0 criteria rated not done
- 1 criterion not rated
4. Organization and Management

Strengths

The sub-committee found that this Standard was WELL MET due to the following:

- The vision, goals and expectations of the department were clear.
- The staff is dedicated to those vision, goals, and expectations.
- Formal, regular meetings; a timeline/calendar; performance evaluation process, and written formal procedures all existed and were regularly implemented.
4. Organization and Management

Opportunities for Improvement
The sub-committee recommends the following:

- Add Mission/Vision document to Residential Life website with the left hand links.
- The Central office Policies and Procedures be maintained in one document (such as the RA manual) versus multiple documents.
- Review/Create clear channels of authority for policies and procedures with residential life and other areas.
Opportunities for Improvement (continued)

The sub-committee recommends the following:

- There is concern about the new building on the property across the street and the implications it may have for occupancy. Implications for Residential Life need to be determined and responded to.

- Use the CAS study to inform the strategic plans already established and future processes (the sub-committee assumes this will happen).
5. Human Resources

- Residence Life must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. Within established guidelines of the institution, Residence Life must establish procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation; set expectations for supervision; and provide appropriate professional development opportunities. Residence Life must strive to improve the professional competence and skills of all personnel it employs.

- Residence professional staff members must hold an earned graduate degree in a field relevant to the position they hold or must possess an appropriate combination of educational credentials and related work experience.
5. Human Resources

- There must be at least one professional staff member responsible for the administration and coordination of the department. This individual must be knowledgeable about the goals and mission of the program.
- Degree or credential-seeking interns must be qualified by enrollment in an appropriate field of study and by relevant experience. These individuals must be trained and supervised adequately by professional staff members holding educational credentials and related work experience appropriate for supervision.
5. Human Resources

- Student employees must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated. They must be trained on how and when to refer those in need of assistance to qualified staff members and have access to a supervisor for assistance in making these judgments. Student employees must be provided clear and precise job descriptions, pre-service training based on assessed needs, and continuing staff development.
5. Human Resources

- Residence Life must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. Within established guidelines of the institution, Residence Life must establish procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation; set expectations for supervision; and provide appropriate professional development opportunities. Residence Life must strive to improve the professional competence and skills of all personnel it employs.

- Residence professional staff members must hold an earned graduate degree in a field relevant to the position they hold or must possess an appropriate combination of educational credentials and related work experience.
5. Human Resources

- Resident/community assistants and other paraprofessionals are expected to contribute to the accomplishment of the following functions: (a) educational programming, (b) administration, (c) group and activity advising, (d) leadership development, (e) discipline, (f) role modeling, (g) individual assistance and referral, and (h) providing information.

- Residence Life must have technical and support staff members adequate to accomplish its mission. Staff members must be technologically proficient and qualified to perform their job functions, be knowledgeable of ethical and legal uses of technology, and have access to training. The level of staffing and workloads must be adequate and appropriate for program and service demands.
5. Human Resources

- Salary levels and fringe benefits for all Residence Life staff members must be commensurate with those for comparable positions within the institution, in similar institutions, and in the relevant geographic area.
- Residence Life must institute hiring and promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. Residence Life must employ a diverse staff to provide readily identifiable role models for students and to enrich the campus community.
- Residence Life must provide procedures for filing, processing, and hearing employee grievances.
- Residence Life must create and maintain position descriptions for all staff members and provide regular performance planning and appraisals.
5. Human Resources

- Residence Life must have a system for regular staff evaluation and must provide access to continuing education and professional development opportunities, including in-service training programs and participation in professional conferences and workshops.

- Training and supervision to accomplish assigned tasks must be provided to Residence Life staff.
5. Human Resources

- Residence Life staff members must have a working knowledge of all relevant policies and procedures, the rationale for policies and procedures, and the relationship of policies and procedures to the organization's mission statement, goals, and objectives.

- Residence Life policies and procedures must be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate.

- Residence Life staff members must be knowledgeable about and remain current with respect to the obligations and limitations placed upon the institution by constitutional, statutory, and common law, by external governmental agencies and institutional policies.
5. Human Resources

20 criteria

- 13 criteria rated fully met
- 4 criteria rated well met
- 3 criteria rated minimally met
- 0 criteria rated not done
- 0 criteria not rated
5. Human Resources

Strengths

The sub-committee thought that Residential Life, Student Affairs and Human Resources processes demonstrate that the Standard is WELL MET for:

- Hiring/Selection (Human Resources, Student Affairs and Residential Life polices and procedures are followed.)
- Training (training occurs annually and on-going)
- Supervision (supervision includes regular meetings.)
- Evaluation (completed annually).
Opportunities for Improvement

The sub-committee thought it would be appropriate to look into:

- Expectations for duty coverage of Assistant Dean and Director of Residential Life duty (including the types of calls received) at other universities to compare expectations.
- The day-to-day responsibilities and the time of all staff around crisis management.
- How maintenance and upkeep is managed.
- Human Resources process to review compensation levels. This committee recommends that this analysis occur.
6. Financial Resources

- Residence Life must have adequate funding to accomplish its mission and goals. Funding priorities must be determined within the context of the stated mission, goals, objectives and comprehensive analysis of the needs and capabilities of students and the availability of internal or external resources.

- Residence Life must demonstrate fiscal responsibility and cost effectiveness consistent with institutional protocols.

- Administration of funds must be handled in accordance with established, responsible accounting procedures.
6. Financial Resources

- Adequate and appropriate internal controls must exist to ensure full accountability of financial processes.
- Financial reports must provide and reflect an accurate financial overview of the organization.
- Purchasing procedures must be consistent with institutional policies and be cost effective.
- The budget must be used as a planning and goal-setting document that reflects commitment to the mission and goals of Residence Life and of the institution.
A portion of fees collected must be dedicated to the immediate support and long-term improvement of housing and residential life programs and facilities. Funding must be available to provide for the continuous upkeep of facilities, equipment and furnishings, on-going repairs, educational programming, and services to residents. Reserves must be available for major maintenance and renovation of facilities, replacement of equipment, and other capital improvements.
6. Financial Resources

9 criteria
1 criterion rated fully met
4 criteria rated well met
3 criteria rated minimally met
0 criteria areas rated not done
1 criterion not rated
6. Financial Resources

**Strengths**

The funding model for RL while not a true self-supporting auxiliary is well funded and able to meet most financial obligations as well as contributes to the university general fund.
6. Financial Resources

Strengths

6.6 Funding includes adequate reserves for essential repairs, replacements and capital improvements.

*The panel was split on this question.*

RL does a good job of identifying and funding needs within the 1-5 year period. Funding for day-to-day operations are adequate and overall the unit is well run and managed in accordance with institutional fiscal standards.
Opportunities for Improvement

The Sightlines reports indicated a significant need for funding to renovate older residence halls.

Typically donors want to fund new construction not repairs; as such RL and USD must rely more heavily upon internal funding for these projects.

Recommendation: Improve funding program for major building renovations perhaps thru recapture of RL generated funds into a reserve expressly for this purpose.
6. Financial Resources

Opportunities for Improvement

6.8 Purchasing procedures are consistent and cost effective.

Not Rated: Opinion varied widely amongst panel members; what constitute consistent and cost effective. The panel was undecided and as such chose not to rate this element. Recommendation: RL may want to consider giving greater definition to it’s purchasing practices.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

- Residence life must have adequate, suitably located facilities, adequate technology, and equipment to support its mission and goals efficiently and effectively.
- Residence Life must ensure the physical environment is attractive, conducive to academic success and other learning opportunities, functional, in compliance with codes, and adequately provided with safety features.
- Individual rooms and apartments must be furnished and equipped to accommodate the designated number of occupants.
- Adequate space must be provided for student study, recreation, socializing, and group meetings.
Public, common, study, recreational areas and computer labs must be adequately furnished to accommodate the number of users.

Housekeeping programs must be required to provide a clean and orderly environment in all housing facilities. All community bathrooms, as well as public areas, must be cleaned and sanitized at least daily on weekdays.

Sufficient space for custodial work and storage must be available in close proximity to the assigned custodial area.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

- Maintenance and renovation programs must be implemented in all housing operations and include four major areas: (a) a preventive maintenance program designed to realize or exceed the projected life expectancy of the equipment and facilities, (b) a program designed to repair or upgrade equipment, facilities, and building systems as they become inoperable or obsolete, (c) a renovation program that modifies physical facilities and building systems to make them more accessible, effective, attractive, efficient, and safe, and (d) a program designed to provide emergency response 24 hours a day.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

- Periodic inspections must be made to: (a) ensure compliance with fire and safety codes; (b) identify and address potential safety and security hazards including fire extinguishers, exit doors, automatic door closers, outside building lighting, and identify other potentially dangerous spaces. Data from inspections must be used for repair and replacement schedules.

- A system of access control must be in place to provide for building security, monitoring of exterior doors, and stringent controls on the use of master keys/access cards.

- Systematically planned equipment replacement programs must exist for furnishings, mechanical, fire safety, and electrical systems; maintenance equipment; carpeting; window coverings; and dining equipment where applicable.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

- Painting must be done on the basis of current need and a preplanned cyclical schedule.
- Waste disposal, recycling, and handling and storage of chemicals and hazardous materials must be in compliance with federal, state/provincial, and local health, safety, and environmental protection requirements. Residence Life staff must identify work place hazards and strive to minimize the risk to employees through education, training, and provision of personal protective equipment.
- Grounds, including streets, walks, recreational areas, and parking lots, must be attractively maintained, with attention given to safety features.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

- Student housing construction project planning must be responsive to the current and future needs of residents. Residence Life staff must be involved in the design and development of new housing construction.

- A master plan for maintaining and renovating all facilities must exist and include timelines for addressing specific needs.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

16 criteria (7.10, Maintenance plan, has sub-categories)
12 criteria areas rated fully met
4 criteria areas rated well met
2 criteria areas rated minimally met
0 criteria areas rated not done
1 criteria areas not rated not rated
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

**Strengths**

7.2 – 7.3 Program facilities, technology and equipment are evaluated regularly. Facilities accommodate programs goals and meet student needs for safety and security.

We found that students had a very high opinion of USD facilities and felt that overall they were receiving good value. We concluded that in most areas the needs of students and student programs were being fully met by Fac/Tech/Equip.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

Strengths

7.5 Spaces are provided for study, office functions, lounging, recreation and group meetings.

Certain older facilities including Maher, Camino and Founders have very limited areas for group functions. The assumption might be that this would significantly lower the rating for this measure, however, our student members rated this area as well met and the recent resident satisfaction survey also supports a high rating in this area.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

Strengths

7.13 Grounds are attractively maintained and safe.

Again an area rated very high by all panel members and a major reason why students, parents, and visitors choose USD.
**Strengths**

7.14 Access control to buildings is addressed and provides safety to residents.

While students expressed some frustration with the system such as card-reader problems, restricted access to certain residence halls at hours/times of the day they note that the added security and sense of feeling safe outweighed other concerns.

This area was rated as fully met by all panel members and a significant factor in student retention.
Opportunities for Improvement

7.7 Facilities are accessible, clean, attractive, reasonably priced, properly designed, well-maintained, comfortable and conducive to study, and have safety and security features.

The team determined that 7.7 combined too many distinct areas to combine into a single question and subsequently was not rated.
Opportunities for Improvement

In areas of recreation students would like to have scheduling access to know when outdoor recreation areas are scheduled, they report having difficulty finding space for pick-up games and having to leave fields when sports teams or other organized activity are scheduled.

**Recommendation:** During master planning place a high priority on space for student outdoor activity. Develop student access to view facilities scheduling.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

Opportunities for Improvement

Technology: Wireless connectivity, speed issues, more computers in the valley and high def cabling.

The team had extensive discussions and the overall rating provided by residence indicate some levels of dissatisfaction; in several instances the service provider was not made aware of the problems. This was also true for contracted laundry services.

Recommendation: work with students to determine course of action and ways to improve feedback to service providers.
7. Facilities, Technology and Equipment

Opportunities for Improvement

7.16 A master plan for maintaining and renovating all facilities exists.

Panel ratings were impacted by the fact that the university does not have a current master plan; as such effective RL master planning would be impractical.
Opportunities for Improvement

**Recommendation:** RL may want to consider inviting key participants including students to participate in a visioning exercise concern the future of RL communities on our campus.

Our panel members expressed interest in contributing to the planning process for future RL facilities. This exercise may serve to augment the campus master plan that is currently being development.
8. Legal Responsibilities

Residential Life program staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to laws and regulations that relate to their respective responsibilities. Staff members must inform users of programs and services and officials, as appropriate, of legal obligations and limitations including constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; mandatory laws and orders emanating from federal, state/provincial and local governments; and the institution’s policies.
8. Legal Responsibilities

- Residential Life staff members must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. Staff members must be informed about institutional policies regarding personal liability and related insurance coverage options.
- The institution must provide access to legal advice for Residential Life staff members as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.
- The institution must inform Residential Life staff and students in a timely and systematic fashion about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities.
8. Legal Responsibilities

6 criteria
- 3 criteria rated fully met
- 3 criteria rated well met
- 0 criteria rated minimally met
- 0 criteria rated not done
- 0 criteria not rated
8. Legal Responsibilities

Strengths

Overall rating by the team: WELL MET

- Clear and open communication with university officials, especially Counsel, about legal issues – including periodic meetings to discuss legal changes/updates.
- Senior staff demonstrate ample prudence and caution and integrate prudence and caution into procedures (especially the RA’s responsibilities)
- Residence Life strives to communicate as clearly as possible with users (i.e., students and families). An example was the housing contract, which is available in multiple locations online.
8. Legal Responsibilities

Opportunities for Improvement

- Hold regular (i.e., once per semester) meetings with University Counsel to discuss legal obligations and pending reforms.
- Ensure that Counsel continue to review housing contract (and other legally binding documents) on an annual basis.
- Ensure that all employees receive FERPA training on an annual basis, including clarity on what it covers.
- While staff is informed, it is unclear if students are systematically informed of pending legal reforms, responsibilities, or obligations.
9. Equity and Access

- Residential Life program staff members must ensure that services and programs are provided on a fair and equitable basis. Residential Life facilities, programs, and services must be accessible. Hours of operation and delivery of and access to programs and services must be responsive to the needs of all students and other constituents. Residential Life must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws.

- Residential Life must be open and readily accessible to all students and must not discriminate except where sanctioned by law and institutional policy. Discrimination must be avoided on the bases of age; color; creed; cultural heritage; disability; ethnicity; gender identity; nationality; political affiliation; religious affiliation; sex; sexual orientation; or social, economic, marital, or veteran status.
9. Equity and Access

- Consistent with their mission and goals, Residential Life must take affirmative action to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns.

- As the demographic profiles of campuses change and new instructional delivery methods are introduced, institutions must recognize the needs of students who participate in distant learning for access to programs and services offered on campus. Institutions must provide appropriate services in ways that are accessible to distance learners and assist them in identifying and gaining access to other appropriate services in their geographic region.
9. Equity and Access

7 criteria

- 2 criteria rated fully met
- 4 criteria rated well met
- 0 criteria rated minimally met
- 0 criteria rated not done
- 1 criterion not rated
9. Equity and Access

Strengths

Overall rating by the team: WELL MET

- The staff strive to provide all services and programs on a fair and equitable basis, often going above and beyond to provide outstanding customer service and care.

- Students with special needs receive exquisite attention (i.e., Muslim students were relocated to San Buen and dining provides special foods such as Kosher or gluten free to those with special needs).
9. Equity and Access

Strengths (continued)

- Program has established protocols for appeals (i.e., housing contract) from students who don’t feel treated fairly.
- All facilities and programs are not accessible to every prospective user; however, across the system, there are equitable facilities and programs accessible.
Opportunities for Growth

- Issues may emerge regarding students who do not receive special treatment for their special needs. How should the program decide which special needs receive special accommodations?
- When accommodations are made for special needs, are students potentially faced with increased housing costs?
- Review issues regarding the visitation policy, especially in light of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- We did not rate the criterion regarding distant learners.
10. Campus and External Relations

- Residential Life must establish, maintain, and promote effective relations with relevant individuals, campus offices, and external agencies.

- Particular efforts should be made by the staff to develop positive relationships with campus and off-campus agencies responsible for judicial affairs, counseling services, learning assistance, disability services, student health services, student activities, security and safety, academic advising, admissions, campus mail and telephone services, physical plant services, institutional budgeting and planning, computer center, vendors and suppliers of products used in residence and dining halls, and private housing operators.
10. Campus and External Relations

- Special attention must be paid to the relationships with those units who use housing facilities to carry out their programs, such as conference services.
- Residential Life staff must develop and maintain staff relationships in a climate of mutual respect, support, trust, and interdependence recognizing the strengths and limitations of each colleague.
10. Campus and External Relations

3 criteria

- 1 criteria rated fully met
- 1 criteria rated well met
- 1 criterion rated minimally met
- 0 criteria rated not done
10. Campus and External Relations

Strengths

Overall rating by the team: MET

- Very good on-campus partnerships with units across campus, and a proactive effort to foster those partnerships.
- Regular gatherings / meetings with those units.
- Senior staff demonstrated strategic approach to building partnerships.
Opportunities for Improvement (continued)

- Clarify (likely with Auxiliary Services) who is responsible for reaching out to some off-campus units (such as food vendors).
- Strengthen relationship with Associated Students and Student Life
- Senior staff is, at times, overwhelmed and over-stretched. Devise alternative strategies of managing human resources, especially when staff are managing serious crises.
Opportunities for Improvement

- Consider additional staff resources devoted exclusively to educational initiatives in the residence halls, so that educational efforts do not have to compete for resources with crises.

- Monitor and benchmark how much responsibility RAs are asked to take on, especially the amount of difficult or intense student issues.
11: Diversity

Within the context of each institution's unique mission, diversity enriches the community and enhances the collegiate experience for all; therefore, Residence Life programs must nurture environments where commonalties and differences among people are recognized and honored. Residence Life:

- must promote educational experiences that are characterized by open and continuous communication that deepens understanding of one's own identity, culture, and heritage, and that of others. It must educate and promote respect about commonalties and differences in their historical and cultural contexts.

- must address the characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.
11. Diversity

4 criteria

- 0 criteria rated fully met
- 0 criteria rated well met
- 3 criteria rated minimally met
- 0 criteria rated not done
- 1 criterion not rated
11. Diversity

Strengths
The sub-committee rates diversity MINIMALLY MET because:

- Residential Life contributes to creating an awareness of diversity; for example, RAs and RHA councils hold events to promote dialogue around the topic of diversity.
- Trainings for staff occur regularly (i.e. summer reading program, seminar class, Rainbow Educators trainings, Student Wellness trainings and consultations).
- Roommate agreements allow for conversations regarding individual differences.
Opportunities for Improvement

The sub-committee believes that it would be helpful for Residential Life to explore:

- The role Residential Life should play, within the larger university community, in regards to promoting open communication, reflection, & deeper understandings.

- How to increase the evidence that diversity dimensions are considered when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.
12. Ethics

- All persons involved in the delivery of Residence Life must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. Residence Life must develop or adopt and implement appropriate statements of ethical practice. Residence Life must publish these statements and ensure their periodic review by relevant constituencies.

- Residence Life staff members must ensure that privacy and confidentiality are maintained with respect to all communications and records to the extent that such records are protected under the law and appropriate statements of ethical practice. Information contained in students’ education records must not be disclosed without written consent except as allowed by relevant laws and institutional policies. Staff members must disclose to appropriate authorities information judged to be of an emergency nature, especially when the safety of the individual or others is involved, or when otherwise required by institutional policy or relevant law.
12. Ethics

- Residence Life staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution's human subjects research policy and in other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices and confidentiality of research data concerning individuals.

- Residence Life staff members must recognize and avoid personal conflict of interest or appearance thereof in their transactions with students and others.

- Residence Life staff members must strive to insure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they deal. Staff members must not participate in nor condone any form of harassment that demeans persons or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus environment.
12. Ethics

- When handling institutional funds, Residence Life must ensure that such funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures and the fiscal policies or processes of the institution.

- Residence Life staff members must perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise, and competence. When these limits are exceeded, individuals in need of further assistance must be referred to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

- Residence Life staff members must use suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

- Residence Life staff members must be knowledgeable about and practice ethical behavior in the use of technology.
12. Ethics

12 criteria
- 9 criteria rated fully met
- 2 criteria rated well met
- 0 criteria rated minimally met
- 1 criterion not rated
12. Ethics

Strengths

The sub-committee found that the Standard was WELL MET because of the following:

- RA standards published on the website and reviewed every year
- Full time professional staff training: Duty to Care emphasized
- Orientation for new benefits-based employees
- USD Harassment Prevention Training
Strengths (continued)

- Centralized coordinator for assessment and IRB processes (Margaret)
- Residential Agreement includes clear community standards which everyone signs (including live-in staff and their live-in families)
- USD has a clear Conflict of Interest Policy that is followed.
Opportunities for Improvement

- The sub-committee felt that it would be helpful for all Residential Life Staff to complete the following:
  - FERPA Tutorial
  - Cleary Training

- The sub-committee felt that it would be helpful for all full time staff participate in:
  - Oracle Bootcamp/ Noetix Training/ Auditing SA policies

- Although one criterion was not rated, the sub-committee felt it was likely met, though it was difficult to identify evidence.
Thank you