Clemson University

Studentaffairs.com Case Study Submission

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See Hate Speech, Leave It Up

Resident assistants at University of Michigan are worried about not being able to remove racist or other offensive language from dormitory doors. Officials say they can't suppress free expression.

By Jeremy Bauer-Wolf   // February 11, 2019   64 COMMENTS

(Jackson, 2019) [4], (Lieberman, 2019) [5] , (Bauer-Wolf, 2019) [2]

Rationale for Innovation

Using Boyer's Six Principles of Building Community, our team has selected the following themes to scaffold content for this year's RA training: **Educationally Purposeful, Open, Just, Disciplined, Caring, and Celebrative.**

While we acknowledge the "bread and butter" content will still be addressed in-person, these comprehensive modules have baked in assessment checkpoints and in-person follow up strategies to ensure the holistic support and training of our staff.

Utilizing a variety of campus partners in each module, our student staff will be exposed to resources they can refer to throughout the year. Supervisors can reach out and further develop relationships with the campus partners based on the communities needs.

(Campus Life: In Search of Community, 1990)[3]

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Boyer's 6 Principles

Educationally Purposeful: a place where faculty and students share academic goals and strengthen teaching and learning on campus.

Open: a place where free speech is protected and civility powerfully affirmed.

Just: a place where the sacredness of each person is honored and where diversity is aggressively pursued.

Disciplined: a place where individuals accept their obligations to the group and where well defined governance procedure guide behavior for the common good.

Caring: a place where the well being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged.

Celebrative: a place where the heritage of the institution is remembered and where rituals affirming tradition and change are shared.

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"(Generation Z) students want to be involved in the learning process with the instructor and not just be the recipients of knowledge. Instructors who serve as facilitators of learning help students connect their foundational knowledge to applicable situations."

(Generation Z goes to college , 2016) [7]

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Mission & Goals

Mission

The mission of this training is to cultivate learning through interactive and intentional experiences focusing on components that contribute towards student well-being and success at the institution.

Goals

- To scaffold the content introduced to student staff through hands-on learning and development.
- To assess students ability to utilize intentional methods to engage with residents.
- To utilize online learning tool, such as Canvas, to facilitate content engagement and information retention.

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Equity and Inclusion Statement

We acknowledge and appreciate inclusion in our community, incorporating social justice themes into our training, continued staff development, and education of our residents. By bringing together individual talents, skills, and perspectives of students, faculty and staff, and partners we are able to foster a culture of belonging, collaborative practice, innovation, and mutual respect. We strive empower and celebrate the members of our community in actions that productively contribute to accomplishing the goals of our department.

Adapted from ACPA's Equity and Inclusion Statement [1]

Educationally Purposeful

- Topic: Reinforcing Academic Engagement Outside of the Classroom
- Learning Outcome: Utilizing Chickering's vector of *Developing Competency* [6], Resident Assistants (RAs) will be able to hone in on their ability to establish and sustain interpersonal relationships with academic partners, utilize academic resources, and accomplish administratively tasks required of them within the residential community.
- Campus Partners: Faculty Members, Returning Resident Assistants
- Process:
  - Overview of expectations and goal setting for faculty partners and RA staff
  - Highlight relevant academic partners on campus with contact information, location, hours, and services available
  - Share in-community academic partner pictures and contact information (Living-Learning Communities, Faculty Friends, and Faculty-in-Residence)
- In-Person Strategies:
  - Provide spaces for faculty partners to come into the residential community and engage with the RAs and residents
  - Resident Assistants will complete a qualitative open-ended assessment detailing what they learned from the session including takeaways, strategies, and resource implementation

Educationally Purposeful

- Topic: Sustainability
- Learning Outcome: Increase understanding of sustainable practices and the impacts it has on the local, state and global community.
- Campus Partner/Facilitator: ECO Reps (through the Residence Hall Association), Representative from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
- Process:
    - Overview Triple Bottom Line
        - People, Planet, Profit
    - Clarify sustainable practices currently in communities/department
    - Articulate opportunities for implementation within the collegiate setting.
- In-Person Strategies:
    - Collaborate on programming with student organizations on campus focusing on sustainability efforts.
    - Participate in Recyclemania/sustainability themed competitions
    - Conduct sustainability focused learning opportunities for RAs to engage with in staff meetings

Open

- Topic: Encouraging Conversations of Differing Thoughts and Opinions Without Fear of Discrimination
- Learning Outcome: Facilitate community dialogues with their residents in a way where everyone's voice can be heard, valued, and empowered.
- Campus Partner: Civic Engagement
- Process:
    - Resident Assistants must be able to create a brave space, an environment where students can gain knowledge and understanding from one another
    - While students will naturally disagree with each other on various topics (i.e. presidential elections), those differing opinions must not be attacked or devalued
    - Resident Assistants must lead by example by not becoming over-emotional or too stressed in these situations of difficult conversations; they must show that they are willing to embrace them
- In-Person Strategies:
    - Attend discussion or film series that covers a topic sparking conversation and dialogue
    - Invite a controversial speaker to come to campus and encourage students to be open to other different thoughts and opinions

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Just

- Topic: What Does an Authentic Community Look Like?
- Learning Outcome: Engage their community with difference through using educational strategies and campus partners. RAs will be able to articulate the impact of microaggressions, everyday actions and the importance of a diverse community of thought.
- Campus Partner: Multicultural Center Staff
- Process:
  - Presentation on the history of access to higher education
  - Overview the history of the institution
    - Whose land is it built on?
    - Who built the institution?
  - Resources for underrepresented communities available on campus how they can be referred to residents.
- In-Person Strategies:
  - Resident Assistants must respond in groups to a case study focusing on microaggressions within the residential community in front of their peers and receive constructive feedback
  - Resident Assistants will display their case study responses in their community on a billboard and engage with residents about the process

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Disciplined

- Topic: Team Building and Implementing Ice-Breakers
- Learning Outcome: Create an environment where RAs can build trust with each other, both in and outside of their roles.
- Campus Partner: Student Leadership and Development
- Process:
  - Peer Accountability — if someone one the team is faltering in their responsibilities, how do we as a group manage that? What will the conversation look like? Does the supervisor need to be involved?
  - Expectations of Communication — what are the avenues in which your staff will communicate and when? Will the staff use group message purely for area-related purposes, or can it also be used for casual fun? Do we need to differentiate the two purposes?
  - Building Respect — can we agree to respect one another as individuals? How do we navigate knowing you do not have to necessarily be friends with everyone on your team?
- In-Person Strategies:
  - Setting behavioral and communication expectations for weekly staff meetings
  - Providing opportunities of leadership development within weekly staff meetings
  - Encouraging the use of updated ice-breakers that will build camaraderie within the team (i.e. Shoe Travel game — what interesting places have your shoes gone?)

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Disciplined

- Topic: Campus Judicial Procedures
- Learning Outcome: Understand why campus judicial procedures are important to implement.
- Campus Partner: Student Conduct Officer
- Process:
  - Explain WHY we write Incident and CARE Reports and how they play a role in a student's experience
  - Articulate how housing partners with the campus judicial office
  - Offer checklist and how-to guide for writing reports
- In-Person Strategies:
  - Resident Assistant follow-up with supervisor to practice writing Incident Reports
  - Behind Closed Doors activity, integrating campus judicial office follow up into the conversation

Caring

- Topic: Self-Care and Wellness
- Learning Outcome: Describe why self-care practice is important to their role, demonstrate to residents how to apply self-care, and differentiate self-care practices and their intersection with varying identities.
- Campus Partners: Counseling and Psychological Services Staff Member, Campus Recreation Staff Member, Diversity and Inclusion Center Staff Member, and Academic Advisor
- Process:
  - Reminder of RA position as a role model (Person first, Student second, and RA third)
  - Highlight relevant wellness partners on campus with contact information, location, hours, and services available
  - Complete Wellness Wheel online, explaining the implications for lack of balance
    - Action Plan for improving wheel (brainstorm strategies)
- In-Person Strategies:
  - Create time in staff meetings for self-care
  - Practice intervention techniques when a RA recognizes poor self-care of residents
  - Check-in on balance of wellness wheel by supervisors

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Caring

- Topic: Sexual Assault and Harassment
- Learning Outcome: Scaffold learning around sexual assault and harassment policies and resources offered.
- Campus Partner: Title IX- Office of Access and Equity
- Process:
  - Assessment- Pre and Post Assessments/Quizzes
    - Comfortability having conversations with peers and students around sexual assault
    - Confidence in identifying warning signs of relationship abuse and sexual assault
  - Highlight relevant partners on and off campus with contact information, location, hours, and services available
    - Local Advocacy and Crisis Centers
    - Local Hospitals that offer Rape Kits
- In-Person Strategies:
  - Have students read a Dear Colleague letter and process afterwards
  - Participate in a OneLove workshops (Escalation training on domestic violence/relationship abuse)

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Celebrative

- Topic: What is Meaningful Programming?
- Learning Outcome: Recognize and celebrate differences within the residential and campus community.
- Campus Partners: Multicultural Center, Student Organizations for Varying Identities
- Process:
    - Recognizing the months that celebrate marginalized groups (i.e. Black History Month, Chinese New Year, etc.), offering a list of affinity months/groups
    - Highlight relevant partners on and off campus with contact information, location, hours, and services available
    - Commend past programmatic events that highlight the history and culture of marginalized groups and brainstorm ways to improve and implement
- In-Person Strategies:
    - Providing food as a way to come together and celebrate each other
    - Attending events with residents on campus highlighting underrepresented identities and cultures
    - Promoting the education and practice of inclusive language within the residential community through passive and active programming

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Celebrative

- Topic: Starting with WHY
- Learning Outcome: Articulate the foundational mission and goals of the department and explain personal motivation for being a Resident Assistant.
- Campus Partner: Housing Director/Executive Director
- Process:
  - Simon Sinek Video- "How Great Leaders Inspire Action"
  - Mission/vision of school and department
  - Organization charts of housing, on-call or response structure
  - Assessment
    - RAs will fill out survey explaining the following:
      - Why did you apply to be an RA?
      - How will you fulfill the mission and goals of the institution?
    - Supervisors will use the aggregate data to have conversations with the Resident Assistants
- In-Person Strategies:
  - Follow-up with supervisor about RA's personal WHY for serving in the role
  - Build confidence within RA by communicating WHY they were specifically chosen and how they are an asset to the team

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Implications for Asynchronous Presentation Style

Successes of Online Platform:

- Scaffold or reinforce the "bread and butter" content of training
- Supervisors can intentionally engage with training content throughout the school year
- Content is intentionally sequenced and allows for students to engage in reflective assessment and processing
- Collecting qualitative or quantitative data
- Gives control of content engagement back to the staff member

Challenges of Online Platform:

- Ability to click or skip through
  - Lack of accountability
- Learning Styles
  - Kinesthetic learners not catered to
- Accessibility Concerns
  - Is closed captioning or signing available for the content?

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