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9-19-2014

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WMU ScholarWorks Citation

Porter, Roshona, "Hall Director Professional Development Plan" (2014). *Academic Leadership Academy*. 57.

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Hall Director Professional Development Plan

Presented by: Roshona Porter

Residence Life, Assistant Director

Background: About Hall Directors (HDs)

The Office of Residence Life has over 100 student staff employees: 112 Residence Assistants (RAs), 14 Living Community Assistants (LCAs) , 9 Resident Mangers (RMs) and a host of Front Desk Workers, Fitness Workers, Office Managers, and Education Tutors. They also employ 12 Graduate Assistants (GAs).

All of the above student staff are overseen by a live-in professional staff member referred to as the Hall Director (HD). This professional staff member is required to have a Master's in Higher Education or a similar field and must live in the halls among the students.

There are 10 HD's on campus. There is a varying degree of professional experience. Some HDs have been in the position for 8 years and some for a few weeks.



Hall Director Responsibilities

- Provide leadership intentionally and work collaboratively
- Create environments that positively influence student learning and development
- Be responsible for 400-500 students
- Supervise, train, and evaluate one or more GAs, 7-11 RAs and OMs with indirect supervision of desk staff
- Guide hall programming to meet the students' developmental needs
- Work closely with learning communities and supervise learning community assistants, when applicable
- Act as part of an on-call duty rotation
- Adjudicate violations of the student code
- Serve on departmental committees
- Manage budget and occupancy for the hall
- Collaborate with others to ensure facilities are safe, secure and maintained

Project Goal

Create a 4 year Professional Development Plan for Hall Directors in order to support them in their professional growth and development both while they are at Western and beyond.



Validation

1. Western Michigan University recently appointed the Hall Director position a 4 year terminal position.
2. A successful implementation of the plan can help to produce more ready and able professionals.
3. Having a successful plan can help Western Michigan University's Residence Life Department have something more to offer professionals in the field as compared to their colleagues at other institutions.

Data

22% of Universities polled are in the process of putting a Professional Development Plan process in place for their Hall Directors.

11% of Universities polled have a successful Professional Development Plan in place for their Hall Directors.

67% of Universities polled do not have a Professional Development Plan in place for their Hall Directors.

Planning Process

Step 1: *Research*

Other Institutions:

There are very few institutions that have a Professional Development Plan Outline for their Hall Directors separate from what their Human Resources Department supplies; because the Hall Director position is so unique, this makes it difficult to hone in on what they need specifically in their area of growth and development.

Step 2: *Financial Support*

Professional Development Funds:

Before brainstorming what a Plan should look like, it was essential to determine if Residence Life would be able to support various pieces of the Professional Development Plan financially. Residence Life will continue to budget for each Hall Director to obtain \$1,000 a year to participate in various Professional Development of their choosing. The next obstacle that needed to be addressed was troubleshooting if Residence Life was not able to maintain their financial contribution in the years to come.

Step 3: *Logistics*

Length of PDP, HR PDP, implementation, topics considered

Length of PDP

The PDP will be a four year Plan that will have the ability to be individualized depending on the needs of the HD.

Human Resources PDP

HR has a PDP that the HDs work with their supervisor to focus on yearly. This will still be completed. The implementation of the 4 year PDP will be more individualized and specific.

Implementation

When a HD is hired on to staff they will work with their Area Coordinator to outline their PDP. Implementation of the PD P will begin immediately.

Topics Considered

Year 1: Understanding Residence Life and Western culture, understanding and familiarizing self with the position, sit on department committee

Year 2: Networking across the University, attend various conferences position related, sit on a University committee, financial responsibility workshops

Year 3:Resume writing, interviewing, attend various conferences professionally goal related, house hunting/purchasing seminars, mock interviews, cooking classes

Year 4: Interviewing, resume critiquing, job searching

Future Research and Implications

- Create a template friendly document to allow HDs and Area Coordinators to use to track PDP.
- Continue conversations with different real estate companies and banks to set up workshops and informational sessions.
- Track the success of the PDP through HD feedback and monitoring success upon position completion.
- Continue to converse with other institutions to use as a dipstick to monitor the relevance and success of our plan.



Academic Leadership Academy Reflection

The experience I had with the Academic Leadership Academy is irreplaceable. Though the project was insightful and I believe that it will help to make a difference in my department, the journey throughout the Academy was the most influential. I have been able to network across campus with various departments, learn more about the institution I hold dear, find different ways of working with departments to better the experience for our students, learn about my own department through the eyes of others, and build relationships with colleagues. The Academic Leadership Academy has helped to broaden my leadership skills and forced me to evaluate various subjects differently. My facilitators, Chris Sligh and Janette Gabel-Goes helped to build an atmosphere where I felt safe to share my thoughts, opinions, and ask even the most difficult questions. What a great opportunity for Professional Development!

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