

### **New committee involving faculty proposed by Ric Hall (VP of Student Affairs).**

NOTE: R&P 1.3.1 says that any new permanent University committee involving faculty must be approved by the senate.

During recent and ongoing conversations, retreats, planning sessions, etc., I've shared that a priority for Student Affairs during the 2021-2022 academic year and beyond will be the refinement - or even redefining - of Lehigh's residential experience. As stated during recent interactions with the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, "Our student population is increasing in size and diversity. A new college has been introduced, as have new residence halls. As Lehigh has evolved, so has our identity as a residential college. Student Affairs will work to identify key indicators of an optimal residential experience, to help ensure our offerings are distinctive and exceptional."

There is no singular, agreed upon, far reaching vision for our residential community. Rather, recommendations have been made over time (e.g. three year housing requirement), proposals have been presented (residential college models), or requests are periodically entertained and acted upon by one or more offices (e.g. repurposing of existing houses or additions of themed communities). While we have been actively engaged in conversations on the future of housing (housing capacity, future demolition/construction), the decentralized and far reaching elements of our residential community have made it difficult to do much more than address the present and plan for only the near future.

With an eye squarely on the future, I am creating a Residential Experience Advisory Group (name may change), which will be empowered to both take a lead role in residential strategic planning, as well as formalize decision making on residence life/housing matters that have been otherwise loosely distributed.

The REAG will be responsible for drafting a clearly articulated, cohesive, actionable plan to refine or redefine the Lehigh Residential Experience. Should a specific area of campus be designated freshman only? How might residential faculty be incorporated into the residential experience? What is the optimal mix of Greek versus non-Greek housing? Optimal number or percentage of Themed Communities? Should all housing be gender neutral? How might (or should) SouthSide Commons be differently assigned? The answers to such questions only begin to describe and outline a meaningful experience for our residential students.

The REAG will also be tasked with specific duties, such as:

- discuss and make final recommendations (to the Provost, Vice President for Student Affairs, VP for Finance & Administration) on faculty in residence proposals
- review and make final determinations on new Themed Housing Community applications
- review survey and focus group data, and other information provided by the Director of Assessment and Student Life Curriculum and make recommendations to the appropriate office(s).

There will be several "permanent members" of the Commission. Permanent members help ensure continuity, transfer of knowledge, direct and timely communication with various

constituencies, and administrative follow through on decisions and recommendations made by the body.

Below are my initial thoughts on REAG composition:

**Permanent members**

- Director of Residence Life - Keith Blankenship
- Director of Housing - Ozzie Breiner
- Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs - Jennifer Jensen
- Associate Director of Campus Planning - Tara Spagnoletti
- President of Residence Hall Association -
- Head Gryphon (1) -

**Two year appointments**

- Two members of the current freshman class - 1) 2)
- Two members of the current sophomore class - 1) 2)
- Two members of the current junior class - 1) 2)
- One graduate student -
- One Office of Diversity & Inclusion staff member - Denise Beautreau
- Two faculty members - 1) - (co-chair) 2)
- One student affairs staff member - Ashley Lemmons (co-chair)

This list of members is not final, though pretty close in size and scope to what I hope will not be overly large and able to represent (and/or have quick access to) various campus interests.

I think it's important to assemble a body that has been empowered to reimagine and "dream big", with the ability to situationally bring campus experts into conversations. I'm also hopeful that a representative mix of students, along with support and guidance from permanent appointees will help propel us to a residential experience more in line with our aspirations.