

Institutional Effectiveness Report

Assessment Summary

Administrative Unit: *Housing & Residence Life*

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Assessment Cycle (academic or calendar year): *Academic (July 1-June 30)*

Mission (related to VSU mission):

The Mission of the Office of Housing & Residence Life at Valdosta State University is to provide affordable quality housing in a safe and secure environment. Our caring staff is committed to serving our students by creating a holistic living and learning community which fosters: education, diversity, civic engagement, recreation, and personal growth through programming and leadership opportunities.

Assessment History (discuss here how and when the unit developed its current assessment program, what it used prior to starting that program to assess its effectiveness, etc.):

Housing & Residence Life utilizes a threefold assessment process. The assessment process for Housing and Residence Life includes conducting the Educational Benchmarking Inc. assessment, tracking and evaluating residential programs, and conducting internal assessments. Each piece of the assessment process combines to provide inclusive data that determines the goals and initiatives of the department to achieve high impact and high satisfaction in every aspect of our residential community and central office.

The first part of the assessment process includes conducting a comprehensive and comparative student satisfaction assessment provided by Educational Benchmarking Inc. (EBI). The EBI offers data regarding student satisfaction in 19 distinct areas. Those areas include:

- Hall/Apt. Student Staff*
- Hall/Apt. Programming*
- Room/Floor Environment*
- Facilities*
- Services Provided (cable, postal, telephone, vending, information desks, common areas, vending, computing facilities, laundry, internet connectivity in individual rooms)*
- Room Assignment or Change Process*
- Safety & Security*
- Dining Services*
- Tolerance of Fellow Residents*
- Climate of Fellow Residents: Respect*
- Climate of Fellow Residents: Sense of Community*
- Learning Outcomes: Personal Interactions*
- Learning Outcomes: Diverse Interactions*
- Learning Outcomes: Manage Time, Study, and Solve Problems*
- Learning Outcomes: Personal Growth*
- Overall College/University*
- Overall Resident Satisfaction*
- Overall Learning Experience*
- Overall Program Effectiveness: Full Resident Experience*

The assessment also allows each institution to ask 10 Institution Specific Questions. ISQ's for our department vary from year to year. In addition to the satisfaction data, the EBI provides a comparative report by providing a statistical test comparing our results to a group of self-selected institutions, institutions in our Carnegie Class, as well as all institutions that participated in the assessment. The assessment is administered annually in February and results are submitted to each participating institution in July. The assessment is distributed and collected in hard copy format to each resident by their respective resident assistant. The EBI has been administered every year in our department since 1999.

The second part of the assessment process in Housing and Residence Life includes planning, tracking, and evaluating residential programs. Since Fall 2007 we have utilized an online programming database entitled ResLife Bucks. The original intent of the system was to develop an incentive program for all residents to increase program attendance, but the database also allows our department to track all programming and programming budgets. Resident assistants enter programming details and logistics, advertise their program on the programming calendar that is built into the system, and upon completion of the program resident assistants and the residents who participated in the program can evaluate the program's effectiveness. Prior to the development of this database, program planning and evaluation forms, budget request, and program approvals were completed in an access database interfaced with the internet beginning in the 2005-2006 academic year.

The third piece of our assessment process includes Internal departmental and University assessments. Internal departmental assessments account for facility usage captured in an annual Housing Profile, our student-staff performance based on job description and duties assigned, and the usefulness of training and development programs provided for both our student and full-time, live in staff. Internal assessments are administered in hard copy format or by BANNER to complete our Housing Profile during fall and spring semesters. This format of assessment has been in place since 2001. University assessments include institution wide evaluations and projections which indicate needs and expected growth of the institution. Results yielded from each assessment that are applicable to Housing & Residence Life assist in the decision-making of facility and operation modifications and improvements. University assessments are completed on an as needed basis determined by the institution.

Goals for Unit (2005-2006):

1. To obtain the appropriate software package to make the assignments process more user and student friendly.
2. To install surveillance cameras at all exterior entrances of residence halls to better allow for student security and safety.
3. To seek to introduce a living-learning experience in a residence hall to focus on retention of upper-class students to the university.
4. To increase functionality and usability in the common spaces of all residence halls as well as the Central Office.
5. To introduce an effective means of recycling and trash removal in all residence halls to offer an environmentally friendly alternative as well as aesthetically pleasing environment on the exterior.
6. To work as a partner with other Student Affairs departments to sponsor weekend programming activities to increase retention and enhance the residential nature of the VSU student population.

Assessments 2005-2006

(include when and to whom these are administered, and align goals with specific assessments):

- Educational Benchmarking Inc. (Goal 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Residential Programming (Goal 4, 6)
- Internal Assessments (Goal 1, 3)
 - *Resident Assistant Training, August 2005 and January 2006*
 - *Housing Profile, August 2005 and January 2006*
 - *RA/RHD/Area Director Evaluations, December 2005 and May 2006*
- **Assessment Results** (submit an electronic file of the data collected):
 - Educational Benchmarking Inc.: Key assessment results are represented by the goals indicated above. Complete assessment results are on file in Housing & Residence Life Central Office.
 - Residential Programming: Housing & Residence Life resident assistants provided a combined total of 369 programs for Fall and Spring semesters.
 - Internal Assessments: Key assessment results are represented by the goals indicated above. Complete assessment results are on file in Housing & Residence Life Central Office. Furthermore a Vision presentation for the department was developed. The presentation can be found at the following link, <http://services.valdosta.edu/housing/aboutus.aspx>
- **Discussion/Dissemination of Results:**
 - Educational Benchmarking Inc.: Results of the EBI assessment were communicated to the department staff, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Director of Auxiliary Services.
 - Residential Programming: Residential programming information was shared with resident assistants, area directors, and professional staff members.
 - Internal Assessments: The Vision presentation was presented to all Housing & Residence Life professional staff.
- **Modifications Made:**
 - Goal 1: Research into various models that would best meet the department's needs are in progress.
 - Goal 2: Completed
 - Goal 3: Focus changed to developing two freshman living-learning communities
 - Goal 4: Completed first round of central office renovations to meet the demands of the growing staff
 - Goal 5: Partnership with Students Against Violating the Environment (SAVE) was developed to determine the feasibility of a recycling initiative.
 - Goal 6: Focus changed to co-sponsoring existing events due to a lack of interest in weekend programming.

Goals for Unit (2006-2007):

1. To obtain the appropriate software package to make the assignments process more user and student friendly or to enhance the current BANNER system to more effectively meet the department's needs.
2. Transition the department to being more web-centric and less paper driven. Almost any form can be online for use instead of only paper copies.
3. Clearly focus the department's efforts on marketing and public relations by implementing fall, spring, and summer newsletters for parents/students, having available every September the application and contract for the following academic year, and better explain the varied living options, living learning communities, and overall choices each student has at VSU.
4. Install card swipe readers at every building desk in order to better track who is entering and leaving the building for security reasons.
5. With the rebuilding/renovation process, pay special attention to creating 2 bedroom apartments with self-controlled heating, air conditioning, and laundry facilities for our live-in level staff. This will also eliminate the need to relocate full-time staff members during the summer season with GHP occupies their apartments.
6. To work to develop a marketing study, sector plan, feasibility study, and implement the final planning for a North Campus residence hall for completion by the 2010-2011 academic year.
7. To work to create a marketing plan and feasibility study as well as secure private funding through bond issuance or other means to complete the rebuilding/renovation process in Reade, Georgia, Langdale, and Hopper by Fall 2009.
8. To raise the rental income amount in conjunction with prevailing local community and peer institution rates to match the increased cost of living.

Assessments 2006-2007

(include when and to whom these are administered, and align goals with specific assessments):

- Educational Benchmarking Inc. (Goals 3, 4)
- ResLife Bucks Database (Goal 2, 4)
- Internal Assessments (Goals 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
 - *Resident Assistant Training, August 2006 and January 2007*
 - *Housing Profile, August 2006 and January 2007*
 - *Living-Learning Communities Survey, October 2006 and April 2007*
 - *Student Housing Market Research Study completed by MGT of America in April 2007*
 - *RA/RHD/Complex Directors Evaluations, December 2006 and May 2007*
 - *Process Improvement Study focusing on customer service was completed by the Valdosta State University Process Improvement Team in May 2007*
 - *Comprehensive Housing Plan was completed by Housing & Residence Life and Auxiliary Services in May 2007*

- **Assessment Results** (submit an electronic file of the data collected):
 - Educational Benchmarking Inc.: Key assessment results are represented by the goals indicated above. Complete assessment results are on file in Housing & Residence Life Central Office.
 - ResLife Bucks Database: Housing & Residence Life resident assistants provided a combined total of 588 programs for Fall and Spring semesters.
 - Internal Assessments: Key assessment results are represented by the goals indicated above. Complete assessment results are on file in Housing & Residence Life Central Office.

- **Discussion/Dissemination of Results:**
 - Educational Benchmarking Inc.: Results of the EBI assessment were communicated to the department staff, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Director of Auxiliary Services.
 - ResLife Bucks Database: Programming results were shared with the Director of Housing & Residence Life, Assistant Director for Residence Life, Coordinator for Residence Education, and resident assistants.
 - Internal Assessments: Assessment data and recommendations for all internal assessments were communicated to professional department staff, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Director for Auxiliary Services.

- **Modifications Made:**
 - Goal 1: Focus shifted to working with internal Information Technology department on campus to determine the feasibility of utilizing BANNER to meet the needs of the assignment process.
 - Goal 2: In progress with multiple tasks complete. Completed tasks include roommate matching, housing application, and housing contract available for download. Additional completed tasks include developing a database for all residential programming and programming money request.
 - Goal 3: Completed; Housing application and contract will now be available in October instead of September.
 - Goal 4: This goal was suspended due to high cost factors.
 - Goal 5: Implemented into to the construction projects and to be complete in Hopper for 2008 and Georgia for 2009.
 - Goal 6: Suspended due to pending construction and renovation for Georgia, Hopper, and Reade.
 - Goal 7: Completed, but awaiting Board of Regent's Approval
 - Goal 8: Completed. Rental rates were increased by 3.3% to match the local market.

Goals for Unit (2007-2008):

1. To obtain the appropriate software package or revise the current software within BANNER to make the assignments, inventory, and judicial process more user and student friendly to prepare for the rapid growth of the next 10 years with Housing and Residence Life.
2. Clearly focus the department's efforts on marketing and public relations by continuing fall, spring, and summer newsletters for parents/students, moving the application and contract online for greater

access, and better explain the varied living options, living learning communities, and overall choices each student has at VSU.

3. With the rebuilding/renovation process, pay special attention to creating 2 bedroom apartments with self-controlled heating, air conditioning, and laundry facilities for our live-in level staff. This will also eliminate the need to relocate full-time staff members during the summer season with GHP occupies their apartments.
4. To intentionally develop a room change process for residents to combine customer service aspects as well as residence life elements. This was a recommendation from Process Improvement.
5. To continue to expand the living-learning community offerings to reach the maximum amount of students possible.
6. To raise the rental income amount in conjunction with prevailing local community, Board of Regents regulations, and peer institution rates to match the increased cost of living.

Assessments 2007-2008

(include when and to whom these are administered, and align goals with specific assessments):

- Educational Benchmarking Inc. (Goals 2, 4, 5)
- ResLife Bucks Database (Goal 5)
- Internal Assessments (Goals 1, 2, 3, 6)
 - *Resident Assistant Training, August 2007 and January 2008*
 - *Housing Profile, August 2007 and January 2008*
 - *RA/RHD/Complex Director Evaluations, December 2007 and May 2008*
- **Assessment Results** (submit an electronic file of the data collected):
 - Educational Benchmarking Inc.: Key assessment results are represented by the goals indicated above. Complete assessment results are on file in Housing & Residence Life Central Office.
 - ResLife Bucks Database: Housing & Residence Life resident assistants provided a combined total of 514 programs for Fall and Spring semesters.
 - Internal Assessments: Key assessment results are represented by the goals indicated above. Complete assessment results are on file in Housing & Residence Life Central Office.
- **Discussion/Dissemination of Results:**
 - Educational Benchmarking Inc.: Results of the EBI assessment were communicated to the department staff, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Director of Auxiliary Services.
 - ResLife Bucks Database: Programming results were shared with the Director of Housing & Residence Life, Assistant Director for Residence Life, Coordinator for Residence Education, and resident assistants.
 - Internal Assessments: Assessment data and recommendations for all internal assessments were communicated to professional department staff, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Director for Auxiliary Services.

- **Modifications Made:**

- Goal 1: BANNER has proven to assist with the assignments process but does not meet all of the necessary capabilities needed. Housing & Residence Life will continue to explore methods of improvement with IT as well as alternative software.
- Goal 2: Completed
- Goal 3: The complex director for Langdale Hall is the only remaining staff member displaced by GHP. An apartment in Centennial has been designated for this complex director until renovation of Langdale Hall is complete.
- Goal 4: Completed.
- Goal 5: Completed.
- Goal 6: Completed.

Unit Director

Date

President/VP for Unit

Date

Adapted from: University of Alabama SACS site (<http://sacs.ua.edu/degreeInfo2.cfm?college=2&dept=50>);

University of Western Kentucky SACS Accreditation Review Process (<http://www.wku.edu/sacs/assessmentmanual.htm>) ; and

Mrs. Marila D. Palmer, VP-Executive Affairs & Planning, LeTourneau University, Presentation to 2008 SACS-COC Institute