Strengthening Campus Connections: How Living Learning Communities Increase Student Success

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Welcome!

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Today’s Presenters

Dr. Brenda Spencer
Director, Living-Learning Community Program, Florida A&M University

Neudy Nuñez
Assistant Dean of Students and Director for the Office of Multicultural Affairs, University of South Florida

Jasmine Welch
Junior (Biology/Pre-Medicine major), Florida A&M University

Delaenam Akahoho
First-year master’s student (College of Public Health), University of South Florida
Questions & Conversation

• Submit your questions in the box

• Share on social media
  Twitter: @FLCollegeAccess
  #FCAN
  #TalentStrongFL

This webinar is being recorded; all materials will be available within a week of recording
Our mission:
We lead the collaborative movement to ensure every Floridian achieves an education beyond high school and a rewarding career.

Our vision:
A Florida working together, where education is the pathway to economic mobility for all.
FCAN’s Work

Research and Data FCAN publishes research and data on evidence-based practices and policy opportunities to strengthen Florida's talent pool.

Local college access networks (LCANs) LCANs support 82% of the state’s population. These organizations are made up of community leaders who come together to create solutions and partnerships to support local talent development.

Statewide Initiatives FCAN coordinates 4 College Ready Florida initiatives that provides schools and community organizations resources to help students continue their education after high school.
Seven Conditions That Make Florida Talent Strong

- Opportunity for Everyone
- Clear Information and Guidance
- Affordability
- Multiple Pathways
- Lifelong Learning
- Data-informed Decision-making
- Community Collaboration
Introduction to Living Learning Communities (LLCs)
What are Living Learning Communities?

At both two- and four-year colleges across the nation, LLCs are a group of students who live on the same floor of a residential hall and share an interest in a common theme or major. Often, LLCs offer students access to events and resources, connect students with faculty, and bring students together inside and outside of the classroom.
Research background

• LLCs were identified as one of ten “high impact best practices” by the National Survey of Student Engagement, positively associated with learning, retention, and degree completion.
• Only about 15% of first-year students participate
• LLCs have been shown to:
  • increase student retention rates and academic performance
  • increase overall satisfaction with college
  • increase class attendance and participation

Ultimately, LLCs increase student engagement, which positively affects student outcomes

Why does this matter?

• 1 in 3 students do not complete a bachelor’s degree in six years.

• Regardless of credential level, first-generation students are more likely to stop out after their first year than their continuing-generation peers. They are also less likely to participate in extracurricular activities, conduct research with faculty, or hold a leadership role.

Dr. Brenda Spencer
Director, Living-Learning Community Program, Florida A&M University
Florida A&M University (FAMU) Living-Learning Community (LLC) Program
FAMU Living-Learning Community Program

- Started in Fall 2015
- Part of FAMU’s student success initiatives
- Partnership between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs
- 13 major-specific LLCs; over 300 students annually
- First-year students apply via the University’s Housing Application Portal and are accepted based upon specific academic criteria per LLC
- Designated Faculty/Staff Liaison per LLC
- Designated Resident Assistant per LLC
- LLCs located in one residence hall
FAMU Living-Learning Community Program

• Accepted students live together on same floor of the residence hall according to major area
• LLC roommate
• Students must sign an LLC Student Agreement Form
• Students remain in the program for one academic year
FAMU Engineering LLC
College of Agriculture and Food Sciences LLC
School of Allied Health Sciences LLC
School of Business and Industry LLC
College of Education LLC
School of the Environment LLC
School of Journalism and Graphic Communication LLC
School of Nursing LLC
College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences LLC
College of Science and Technology LLC
FAMU Living-Learning Community Program Activities

• Faculty Engagement
• Shared Classes
• Study Groups
• Group Activities/Projects
• Service Learning
• Career/Experiential Learning
• Leadership Development
• Global Education
• Field Trips
• Cultural and Social Events
Benefits of LLCs

• Higher First-Year GPAs
• Higher Faculty and Student Engagement
• Higher Retention Rates
• Higher College Satisfaction Rates
• Higher Graduation Rates
Neudy Nuñez
Assistant Dean of Students and Director for the Office of Multicultural Affairs, University of South Florida
FCAN Webinar: LLCs: A Bridge to Student Success
Neudy Carolina Nuñez, Assistant Dean of Students
10/20/21
LLC Best Practice Model Implemented at USF

“ICING”

Intentional integration

Study groups
K-12 outreach
Visiting work settings
Career workshops

CO-CURRICULAR ENVIRONMENT

Courses for credit

Faculty advising

Academically supportive climate

Socially supportive climate

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

Academic departments

Residence Life

Dedicated residence hall space

INFRA-STRUCTURE

Funding

Study groups
K-12 outreach
Visiting work settings
Career workshops

Academically supportive climate

Socially supportive climate

Dedicated residence hall space

Courses for credit

Faculty advising

Academically supportive climate

Socially supportive climate

Dedicated residence hall space

Study groups
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Visiting work settings
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Academically supportive climate

Socially supportive climate

Dedicated residence hall space
Living Learning Communities at USF

“Living Learning Communities at USF are residential communities designed to provide students a cohort experience with peers that share similar academic, career, and co-curricular interests.”

The best way to really learn something, is to live it!
LLC Program Data Highlights

- **Total LLC Students**: 820
- **Different Countries**: 14
- **Different States**: 27
- **Academic Majors/Disciplines**: 97
- **TOTAL LLC STUDENTS**: 820
- **DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**: 14
- **DIFFERENT STATES**: 27
- **ACADEMIC MAJORS/DISCIPLINES**: 97

**Experiential Learning**
- 10 Santiago Suites LLC residents visited a local LGBTQ+ clinic and resource center in the Tampa Bay area to connect their career aspirations with personal lived experiences.

**Career Readiness**
- 77 touchpoints for LLC students to engage with faculty, staff, and members of the Tampa Bay community around topics that support career readiness.

**In-Hall Advising & Tutoring**
- 636 LLC students engaged with Academic Advisors and/or tutoring services within the halls through their respective LLC.

**Service Learning**
- 229 co-curricular student-centered events were held among all LLCs during the academic year.

**Highlights**

**Overall Student Success**
- 100% of LLC students applied to be a Resident Assistant for 2020-2021.
- Average LLC student GPA: 3.57.
- 26% of program participants in LLCs are Out-of-State students.

**LLC Student Retention**
- 100% of LLC students in the Education, Provost's Scholars, Rising Health Professionals, and ZAP LLCs were retained at USF from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020.
Thank you!
Panel Discussion

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Q&A
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