

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

ACADEMIC REVIEW AND PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FINAL REPORT FOR THE RESIDENTIAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Presented to Provost Russell Moore

March 12, 2015

Accepted:



03.12.15

Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs : Date

I. REVIEW PROCESS

The review of the Residential Academic Programs (RAPs) was conducted in accordance with the 2014 review guidelines. Each RAP prepared a self-study, which was reviewed by an internal review committee (IRC) of one faculty member and an undergraduate or graduate student from outside the RAP. An external review committee (ERC) consisting of three faculty members from other institutions visited the RAPs between April 9-11, 2014 and, having reviewed the relevant documents, met with faculty members, students, and university administrators. The reviewers' comments and recommendations are cited at the appropriate points. This public document reflects the assessments and recommendations for the unit as approved by the members of the Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC).

II. OVERVIEW OF THE RAPs AND KEY POINTS RAISED IN THE SELF-STUDY

As of fall 2013, the University of Colorado sponsors thirteen Residential Academic Programs (RAPs), of which nine are housed in the College of Arts and Sciences (A&S): (1) Baker, (2) Communication and Society,¹ (3) Farrand, (4) Global Studies, (5) Health Professions, (6) Honors, (7) Libby Arts, (8) Sewall, and (9) Sustainability and Social Innovation. Of the remaining four, two are sponsored by the College of Engineering and Applied Science (CEAS), The Andrews Engineering RAP and the Sustainability by Design RAP. The Leeds School of Business sponsors the Leeds RAP, and the Leadership RAP operates under the jurisdiction of the associate vice chancellor for undergraduate education.²

RAPs are an elective residential studies program where students live together in a residence hall, share academic interests or majors, participate in seminar classes taught in the residence hall, have access to faculty in offices within the dorms, and engage in co-curricular activities that reinforce the program's academic theme. Given the large size of the incoming class and the limited number of these living and learning communities, participation in RAPs students are admitted on a first come, first served basis. And while the primary audience is the first-year student, some RAPs also include second-year students (Andrews, Baker, Global Studies, Health Professions, Honors, Leadership, Leeds, Libby, and Sewall.)

Students sign a contract to join a RAP and pay an \$850 fee. Each RAP encourages students to bring critical thinking and intellectual curiosity to the campus residential experience. RAPs allow students to live and study together in small social settings with

¹ It should be noted that beginning in Fall 2015, the Communication and Society RAP will be housed in the College of Media, Communication and Information (CMCI).

² In addition to the 13 RAPs, there are five Living and Learning Communities (LLCs), which are sponsored by Student Affairs through Housing: Active Living LLC in Darley North, Hallett Diversity LLC in Hallett Hall, Quadrangle Engineering & Science LLC in Aden, Brackett, Cockerell and Crossman Halls, Spectrum LLC in Hallett Hall, and the Transfer WEST LLC in Sterns Hall.

peers sharing similar academic interests and goals; participate in seminar type classes; and provide the opportunity for faculty-student interaction, which combines course work with other engaging and fun co-curricular activities. RAPs also help students adjust to campus life, to living away from home and to the undertaking of higher education. The individual RAPs are summarized below:

A. Overview of the RAPs

1. Andrews Engineering: The Andrews Hall Residential College (AHRC) originated in AY 2009-2010, and is primarily home to the Engineering Honors Program (EHP). The AY 2013-2014 student count indicates that there were over 200 students in the EHP, of whom 93 were returning students. As part of the CEAS commitment to “a workforce diverse in gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic representation,” the AHRC also includes 29 students from the GoldShirt Program, and 21 students from the BOLD (Broadening Opportunity through Leadership and Diversity) Center. The 2013-2014 figures also state that the AHRC includes 20 other engineering students and nine unaffiliated students. AHRC has a faculty-in-residence who serves as the program director and a program assistant. The GoldShirt program has its own program director that is responsible, along with GoldShirt mentors, for establishing policies and standards for the GoldShirt program.

The fundamental goals of AHRC are the development of community/collaboration, intentionality, personal ownership of relational impact, and commitment to self-defined excellence. Elements of AHRC that are central to the AHRC mission include student leadership; vertical integration of students across all four (plus) years; application process; self-selection of activity involvements; self-reflection via a required Honors e-portfolio; residence hall design projects; and availability of courses and research opportunities.

The self-study states that the fundamental goals of AHRC – quality of community/collaboration, intentionality, personal ownership of relational impact, and commitment to self-defined excellence – are difficult to assess directly and quantify. Therefore, markers of success are provided which include resident GPA, retention, student conduct, and student awards comparisons with comparable CEAS students not living in AHRC. On all indices, AHRC students have been found to outperform the comparison group.

2. Baker: The Baker Residential Academic Program (BRAP) focuses on Natural Sciences and Environmental Studies. BRAP was first established in 1993 and first housed in Williams Village. In 1998, it was moved and renamed, with an expanded focus. The program has grown from 47 students initially to a current enrollment of approximately 450 students. Major goals of BRAP are to promote scientific and environmental literacy and an awareness of the role of science in the world for future scientists and non-

scientists alike; to encourage as many students as possible to begin doing research or internships in the early stages of their college career; and to develop student awareness of the impact of humans on the environment and the world's ecosystems. In addition to offering 45 courses, BRAP also offers a co-curricular outdoor program and volunteer program designed to increase student awareness of nature, the environment, and humans' role in disrupting natural processes.

3. Communication and Society: The Communication & Society RAP (COMM RAP) was established in the fall of 2010 under the auspices of the Department of Communication in the College of Arts & Sciences. It is housed in Buckingham Hall, part of the Kittredge Complex. According to the unit's self-study, COMM RAP is "organized around the study and practice of communication as it occurs within—and also shapes—the social, political, institutional, economic, technological, and physical realities that define contemporary society." The report outlines the multifaceted approach that COMM RAP brings to the study of communication, which includes public and political discourse, work and organizational life, collective action and community dialogue, formations and experiences of culture and identity, modes of journalism and strategic communication, interpersonal, family, and group relations, evolving information and communication technologies, and multiple media and mediated forms of communicating.

Approximately 200 students are enrolled annually in COMM RAP (self-study). In fall 2012, COMM RAP offered 13 courses with enrollments ranging from 12 to 21 students. Of the 13 courses, nine satisfied an Arts and Sciences CORE requirement, two courses were applicable for Communication majors or as an elective, and one for journalism majors or as an elective. There were nine sections of one elective, Communication & Society and one section of a RAP Community Leadership Practicum. In Spring 2013, COMM RAP offered 13 courses with enrollments ranging from nine to 21 students. Of the 13 courses, 10 satisfied an Arts & Sciences Core requirement.

COMM RAP offers a plethora of co-curricular activities and skills-building academic workshops (the most of any RAP). In AY 2012-2013, COMM RAP offered 51 co-curricular and community building and social network activities as well as several academic and skills development programs.

In fall 2015, the COMM RAP will be moving to the College of Media, Communication and Information (CMCI). The unit's strategic plan acknowledges this shift and looks forward to changing direction by (1) building capacity in multimedia education, production, and expression; (2) shaping its own curriculum, and experimenting with different learning instructional methods; and (3) anticipating having more control over recruitment and an enhanced multimedia curriculum in hopes of attracting students with diverse social identities.

4. Farrand: The Farrand RAP was established in 1981 and has a current enrollment of 380 students. One of the older RAPS on campus, Farrand RAP emphasizes the study of

culture and society within the larger framework of a liberal arts education. All student residents participate in this RAP (although the self-study indicates that some students violate their contract to take one Farrand RAP course each semester) where small, seminar-sized courses (15-20 students) can fulfill every area of the lower-division A&S core curriculum. Farrand RAP typically offers 24 courses each fall semester and 23 every spring, which enables its students to take on average 1.2-1.3 RAP courses each semester. Given recent interest in a broader range of perhaps more vocational courses, Farrand RAP has begun to offer more courses outside the humanities disciplines (e.g., in physical science, math, and social science). Farrand RAP is faced with the challenge of students wanting more course offerings while needing to meet course enrollment minimums in an environment in which each faculty member's "repertoire is limited to 2 or 3" courses. Extracurricular activities include cultural immersion activities, community projects, and social events.

Farrand RAP has received national recognition for its co-curricular/service learning courses delivered via a one-credit service learning practicum attached to each service-learning course. On average, eight service-learning courses are offered each year. Instructors receive a \$1000 stipend for the additional work required to set-up this practicum. Farrand's service learning courses have been recognized for promoting multicultural understanding via various local and international projects.

5. Global Studies: The Global Studies Rap (G-RAP) began in 1998 as the Smith Hall International Program (SHIP), which was under the auspices of the Office of International Studies. In 2009, SHIP was transferred from the Office of International Studies to the College of Arts & Sciences with its new name, Global Studies (G-RAP.) According to the unit's self-study, the G-RAP's mission is to "promote international understanding and the recognition of the world's many cultures by fostering globally conscious, internationally competent college students, who are prepared to meet the challenges of an increasingly interconnected world." Additionally, the G-RAP serves as an entry point for first-year students interested in pursuing degrees in International Affairs, Anthropology, Political Science, History, Foreign Languages and Dance.

In fall 2013, the G-RAP offered 13 courses, of which 12 satisfied the Arts & Sciences Core. Of the 14 courses offered in spring 2014, 10 satisfied the Arts & Sciences Core. In addition, the G-RAP has also developed three courses that are taught exclusively for their students. The G-RAP has been able to maintain student course enrollment for each of its courses at 18. During the AY 2012-2013, the G-RAP sponsored 48 co-curricular and community-building activities. A special feature of the unit is its partnership with CU's Study Abroad program. In addition, the unit has been able to provide scholarship support to the "15-20 most promising students wishing to cap their year in the RAP with the service learning experience."

6. Health Professions. Begun in 2012, the Health Professions Residential Academic Program (HPRAP) started with 101 students and is now housed in Kittredge West. The

space is newly designed and renovated. While the self-study praises the quality of the space overall it states that the classrooms are too small to accommodate 20 students comfortably. (Three or four students have to sit around the perimeter holding laptops in their laps.) Its website states that the program now contains about 260 freshmen and returning sophomores. According to the self-study, this RAP has one staff person (program coordinator), two tenured or tenure-track (TTT) faculty members, eight Instructors, 10 lecturers, and two clinical faculty members. (The website lists a total of 11 persons as “faculty and staff.”)

Recognizing that students in this program often arrive with the thought of becoming doctors but that many are persuaded later to pursue other careers in healthcare, HRAP stresses the importance of early interaction between students and academic advising services. It also encourages students to join a listserv that introduces them to programs and workshops and similar events that are of use in making career choices.

7. Honors: Among the RAPs reviewed during the 2013-14, the Honors RAP is unique in being part of the Honors Program. The unit’s self-study states that the mission of Honors RAP is “to provide special educational opportunities for academically-prepared and highly-motivated undergraduate students.” Students admitted to the Honors RAP have a GPA of 3.3 or above; classes have a maximum of 15 students. The Honors RAP has seen substantial growth, with 210 students in AY 2010-11, 309 students in AY 2011-12, 288 students in AY 2012-13, and 340 students in AY2013-14. During the last four years, this growth pattern represents an increase in size of 62%. The Honors RAP also has the highest rate of returning students among A&S RAPS.

Not surprisingly, the Honors RAP produces a “substantial number of Latin Honor awardees”—with 29 (11.8%) of the 245 students receiving Latin Honors in AY2012-13, as well as a large number of RAs hired by Resident Life. (In AY 2013-14, 26 of the 200 RAs hired were members of the Honors RAP.) In AY 2012-13, the Honors RAP offered 30, 3-credit courses, largely in the arts and humanities, which satisfied A&S Core requirements for the students.

8. Leadership: The Leadership Residential Academic Program (LDSP) is comprised of the Chancellor’s Leadership Studies Program (CLSP) and the Ethnic Living and Learning Community Leadership Studies Program (ELLC). Begun in 1999, the program now enrolls about 130 students (80 CLSP and 50 ELLC), although the number has varied for the last seven years (from 90 on the low side to 132 on the high side). Students in LDSP are housed in Kittredge Central. LDSP students take one to four classes in the LDSP program per year and can earn a Leadership Certificate. Nearly two thirds of the LDSP program are enrolled in the certificate program (up from about one fifth in 2006).

This is the only RAP operating outside the auspices of a college or school. It is also the only RAP where the director is not a tenured faculty member. In this case, the director of LDSP holds a professional exempt-class position and reports to the associate vice

chancellor for undergraduate education. There is also a program coordinator (again professional exempt) and an administrative assistant. There are eight faculty members, all in non-rostered lecturer positions, plus three more persons described in the self-study as “RAP Faculty from Partner Departments.”

9. Leeds: The Leeds RAP is designed exclusively for business majors. Located in Cheyenne-Arapaho Hall, the Leeds RAP serves about 198 first-year students and 40 additional students who have been involved in Leeds RAP in prior years.

Leeds RAP identifies two professors in Leeds Business School as playing roles: one is said to provide “oversight and strategic direction,” and the other is said to provide “direct supervision” of the program. There is also a director (another professor in Leeds), a program coordinator, and an in-house academic advisor. The Leeds RAP self-study lists three discussion leaders and three lecturers. In AY 2012-2013, four courses were offered to 217 students with class size fluctuating between 19-24 students.

10. Libby: The Libby Arts Residential Academic Program (Libby RAP) is designed for students who consider study in the arts to be a valuable complement to a major in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, business, or engineering, or who have an interest in the arts as a major. Libby RAP classes satisfy either core, major, or elective requirements. Courses are offered in dance, acting, drawing, painting, writing, film criticism and theory, digital art, art history, music history, and media studies. In addition, a range of popular core curriculum classes is also offered each year in economics, math, and nutrition. AY 2012-2013 course enrollment figures indicate a class size range of six to 22 students, with 24 courses offered in the fall 2012 semester and 21 in spring 2013. All courses are taught in three RAP classrooms. The IRC notes that Libby RAP allows for students who did not realize that they were interested in arts or in majoring in art or art history to take studio classes offered to other students only in their junior and senior years. Libby RAP also exposes students to the diversity of the arts through co-curricular activities, experiential learning opportunities, and community events. Activities regularly occur on and off campus (including the Denver metro area), along with travel to the Telluride Film Festival and to New York City. In AY 2012-2013, there were 300 Libby RAP students. The fall 2014 census shows that Libby has 409 students. The IRC noted Libby RAP’s student-centered approach as well as the “significant level of community” and support among Libby RAP faculty members, leadership, and students.

11. Sewall: As of fall 2014, 314 students are housed in Sewall, which is generally considered a particularly attractive facility centrally located on campus. Sewall RAP (SRAP) is designed for students in the College of Arts & Sciences who have a particular interest in the study of history and culture. Formerly SRAP’s close ties to the Center of the American West dominated the program focus, which is now said to be broader. SRAP has a program coordinator, and four rostered instructors with appointments ranging from one-third to full-time. A chart in the self-study lists SRAP Courses in history, American studies, English literature, American literature, and economics.

12. Sustainability and Social Innovation: In fall 2011, the Sustainability and Social Innovation RAP (SSI RAP) opened in Williams Village North (WVN). According to the unit's self-study, the SSI RAP emphasizes "interdisciplinary, problem-based learning models in which freshmen would develop analytic, problem-solving skills to creatively and collaboratively address important contemporary issues." The curriculum requires students to take a one three-credit foundation course each semester (SSIR 1010: Sustainability and Social Innovation) that is built on SSI RAP's theme. In Fall 2012, the course was approved by A&S as a Core course meeting the requirements for the Ideals & Values category.

Given the similarity of the Sustainability of Design RAP (same campus location, sharing access to the same classrooms, occupying the same two floors in WVN, sharing faculty offices and often sharing faculty) students in the two RAPs take classes together, live together, and share common co-curricular activities. The self-study notes that, coming out of the same roots and with the same emphasis, the two RAPs are "committed to an integrated curriculum" and to "concepts of social innovation and social entrepreneurship introduces creativity and strategic thinking along with a focus on community benefits."

In fall 2013, the SSI RAP offered seven sections of a required course entitled "Social Entrepreneurship & Sustainability" having an enrollment of 118 students. SSI RAP also offered an engineering course entitled "Thermodynamics" with 13 students, a course entitled "Mediation & Other Helpful Habits," with 19 students, a course entitled "Ethics," with ten students, and a required A&S Core course entitled, "Writing and Rhetoric," with 20 students.

In following the model of other RAPs, the SSI RAP engages students in co-curricular and bonding activities. In fall 2013, the RAP held 14 co-curricular activities (about one per week) in its speaker series. SSI RAP also has students participate in other social events (e.g., dinners, cooking demonstrations). As part of its marketing strategy and as an incentive to encourage student participation, SSI RAP uses a "point" system requiring students to earn at least ten points during the semester or their participation grade suffers. Students with ten or more points are eligible for SSI RAP Stewardship scholarships.

13. Sustainability by Design: This RAP (SbD RAP), hosted by the College of Engineering and Applied Science (CEAS), opened in fall 2011 and enrolls about 90 students each fall. It is located in Williams Village North (WVN). SbD RAP has no rostered faculty. Instead, it relies on TTT faculty members and instructors rostered in home departments as well as lecturer appointments arranged through the Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering or CEAS. There is a director, a program assistant (position currently vacant), and an associate director. The self-study identifies nine persons (three described as tenured or tenure-track, three as instructors, two as research associates,

and one as director at ATLAS), and an additional five lecturers “hired on a semester-by-semester basis.”

Students in SbD RAP enroll in a three-credit course each semester during the freshman year. Courses in this program are designed to introduce students to “qualitative and quantitative characterizations of complex environmental and societal issues” in a setting of “problem-based and experiential learning.”

B. Key Recommendations from the RAPs Self-Studies and IRC and ERC Reports

Considering the concerns and recommendations that all RAPs had in common as well as the combined IRC report and the ERC report, the following emerges:

1. Flagship 2030 describes a first-year undergraduate experience with all incoming students living in residential academic programs on the Boulder campus. The IRC notes a “staffing and funding issue and a disjuncture between current professional goals and the current support provided to enable them.” In addition, the IRC suggests that the campus explore other innovative experiences that would deliver a comparable first-year enrichment experience, especially for those students who cannot live on campus.
2. RAPs should seek out other evaluative techniques to garner information on the experiences of students in RAPs versus non-RAP dorms.
3. While some RAPs would like to have more flexibility in determining class size, the IRC stresses the need to maintain class size no higher than 19, which is a national figure.
4. Daily interactions with housing personnel assigned to the RAPs are often positive and rewarding. However, few RAPs are positive about interactions with the bureaucracy of Housing and Facilities Management. The issues that emerge most frequently are (a) poor responses from Housing about issues having to do with the buildings — including air conditioning/heating (slow response if any); construction of new buildings and classrooms, with inadequate input from RAPs or inadequate attention paid to RAP requests; alterations to existing rooms such as black or whiteboards, tables and chairs (lack of flexibility in design); (b) lengthy lag time between requests made and responses forwarded (a matter of particular concern with such issues as students who request tutoring); (c) lack of flexibility overall, including specific issues such as protecting equipment during the summers.
5. In general, the reports were very positive about the work and contributions of RAP program coordinators/program assistants. The PCs/PAs themselves had several concerns, including lack of support, difficulty getting adjusted to what is a big and complicated job, and in some cases a sense of unfair distribution of resources, with some RAPs having more (and/or better-paid) staff than others of equivalent size and complexity.

6. Mentioned in various reports was a sense of isolation, of individual RAPs from one another, of RAP faculty members from faculty members in academic departments, and of the RAP system from academic departments.

III. HISTORY OF PROGRAM REVIEW

The most recent review of RAPs occurred in 2002. Included in the 2002 review were Sewall RAP, established in 1972 (which then focused on the American West, but since 2008 has focused on history and culture); Farrand RAP, established in 1981 with a focus on the humanities and cultural studies; Baker RAP, established in 1992 with a focus on natural sciences and environmental studies; and the Chancellor's Leadership RAP, founded in 1999, which focuses on leadership and problem-solving skills. (It should be noted that the Ship Hall International Program (SHIP) RAP and the Kittredge Honors RAP were folded into the 1999 Honors Program review.)

For the RAPs reviewed in 2002, recommendations included developing a vision that considers such things as expanding the programs and including academic components; examining the themes of each program; considering other programs for inclusion in the RAPs inventory; moving toward involving all students in RAPs; finding more funding; examining the relationship between RAPs and Housing; clarifying the "reporting structure" of RAPs; integrating RAP faculty members into campus life; and examining the tendency of RAPs to create a "two-tiered system" that creates a "dichotomy" between teaching and research. Also included in the recommendations was the establishment of a task force to examine these matters; encouraging closer connection between the RAP Council and Housing; developing standardized practices relating to personnel, curricular development, and funding of RAPs; encouraging more connections among RAPs; encouraging closer involvement of regular faculty members in RAPs; involving departments "centrally" in developing RAP courses; and limiting directorships to one per RAP.

Some of the recommendations in 2002 again emerge in ARPAC's current review (2014). These include examining the dependency on instructors and encouraging regular faculty involvement in RAPs; examining the role of Housing as it relates to the mission of academic programs; standardizing personnel policies; addressing the matter of funding; and improving the course approval procedures. Also surfacing in the current review are concerns over upgrading Williams Village to be more attractive to students; providing more research opportunities for RAP instructors; considering anew the question whether and how to expand RAPs programs; addressing funding and budgetary matters; and better integrating RAPs into cognate units. The following highlights the recommendations to specific RAPs.

Baker RAP: This RAP should set standards or expectations for faculty research and strengthen ties with the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP),

making participation more attractive for TTT faculty members. Also, it should support upgrading physical facilities (including classrooms), retaining the program assistant, expanding the curriculum to include more sciences, and encouraging students (particularly “women and minorities”) who may feel “alienated” in large classes.

Libby RAP: This RAP is “poorly served by the current space assignment providing by Housing.” Both students and faculty are concerned about “increasing class sizes.” There is also concern that the use of doctoral students for instruction was “compromising certain aspects of Program quality.”

Farrand RAP: The recommendations include more “community courses” to serve the “service-learning theme”; improvement of classrooms (e.g., “smart” facilities, better whiteboards); and an increased budget to offer additional courses.

Sewall RAP: Recommendations stressed changing the focus from American studies to the American West; expanding the co-curricular program to include field trips; making teacher agreements with departments to recruit faculty members to teach in the program; improving climate control in the classrooms and offices; making Sewall Hall more handicap accessible; institutionalizing the artist-in-residence program; and exploring the possibility of expanding Sewall RAP to four years.

IV. THE RAPs IN A CAMPUS CONTEXT

The RAPs represent a true partnership between Student Affairs (Housing and Dining Services) and Academic Affairs (College of Arts & Sciences, the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and Leeds School of Business). The internal reports generally describe the relationship between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs in constructive terms, with the Health Professions RAP reporting, for example, that the relationship with these “partners” is “good to very good.”

Clearly, however, there are some problems of coordination or perhaps communication. The Health Professions RAP self-study reports that students seeking tutoring through the Housing Academic Support Assistance Program (ASAP) “were frequently frustrated in the slow response of the Housing program,” with delays that often “spanned several weeks.” And the Libby RAP self-study commented that Admissions “misunderstood” LRAP initially but that this situation has now substantially improved. The SbD RAP self-study reports satisfaction with the cooperation it receives from the staff of the Office of Occupancy Management (OOM) but notes some frustration because OOM acts to reclaim spaces for non-RAP students in late June, diluting the student population committed to the RAP, and lessening pressures on students to enroll in RAP courses (because they will not be forced to leave the residence hall for failing to do so).

Necessarily the RAPs also work closely with departments affiliated with the particular emphasis that helps define each RAP. Some RAPs report having a close and constructive relationship with the cognate academic department (Leeds RAP being one example). In other instances—the Sewall RAP being an example—there is either little or no contact with the relevant academic department or interaction goes only one way. Sewall RAP reports that it must seek curricular approval for its offerings from the appropriate departments but otherwise has little or no interaction with them.

One component that seems common to all thirteen RAPs is that classes are taught “on site,” meaning in the residence area where the students live. Most of the self-studies report that this feature of what they do works well although some of the self-studies complain that the classroom facilities are too small to accommodate 20-person enrollment (particularly an issue for Libby RAP, where the self-study reports classes with 25-28 students crammed into a room with a capacity of only 21 to 24 students).

Budget

RAPs are funded by a combination of campus general funds and student-paid RAP fees of \$850 per participant per year. The total amount budgeted for all RAPs was over \$6.2 million in AY2014, only 41 percent of which came from student fees. The cost of the RAPs is partially covered by funding generated from students not enrolled in RAPs. And while each RAP has the flexibility in determining the direction of its expenditures, most of these fall under administrative costs (e.g., salary for program coordinator, stipend for faculty director, rostered and non-rostered salaries, space rental, office supplies, equipment) as well as classroom support; expenditures for co-curricular activities; and other student-generated expenses.

Staff Support

Administration for each RAP includes a program director, associate director and program coordinator. Some RAPs also have a part-time assistant. Two of the larger RAPs, Baker and Libby, are requesting a part-time assistant given the recent increase in size of both RAPs to 400+ students. The IRC report for both of these RAPs concurred that this was a reasonable request, pointing out that help is especially needed at the beginning of the semester and during course registration. Some RAP self-studies have proposed upgrading Program Assistant I positions to Program Assistant II.

Facilities

Each RAP has dedicated classrooms in its respective residence hall as well as offices for program directors, associate directors, and program coordinators. While the size of some classrooms appears to be adequate, others appear to be undersized. For instance, classrooms in the recently renovated Baker RAP are small, which has the effect of limiting course enrollments. RAP facilities that are used for summer conferences are in

jeopardy of sustaining damage that is costly and could impact course offerings (for example, the dance classroom in Libby RAP). Several self-studies point to the limitations of shared faculty office space.

Diversity

The IRC reports that two of the thirteen RAPs demonstrate the most diversity. The Leadership RAP combines two programs – one with “Ethnic” in its title is partially geared towards diversity and Andrews Engineering, which houses two programs aimed at achieving diversity, the GoldShirt Program and the BOLD Center. And while the GoldShirt Program represents a forward-thinking approach to enhancing diversity, some EHP student surveys indicate resentment of GoldShirt students. Interviews and surveys gathered by the IRC also indicated that the program pursues a narrow conception of leadership, resulting in a perception of leadership as less inclusive and flexible.

Most RAPs state that they achieve some measure of diversity through course offerings (mainly through the A&S Human Diversity Core), the CU Dialogues Program, and other co-curricular activities.

To fully understand diversity in the resident halls, it is necessary also to consider the five Living and Learning communities that are sponsored by Student Affairs through Housing: Active Living, in Darley North; Hallett Diversity, in Hallett Hall; Quadrangle Engineering & Science LLC, in Aden, Brackett, Cockerell and Crossman Halls; Spectrum LLC in Hallett Hall, and the Transfer WEST LLC in Sterns West.³ These programs are either free or cost \$130 as compared to the \$850 student fee for participating in a RAPs. It is worth noting that, as of fall 2014, there are 217 African American students (out of 568) living on campus, and 107 of these are living in Housing’s Living & Learning Communities RHs. As suggested in the IRC and ERC reports the matter of diversity in RAPs might reflect the economic circumstances of students.

V. RAPs IN A WIDER CONTEXT

The CU RAPs (sometimes referred to as Learning Communities) are part of a national movement to establish innovative programs that transform teaching and learning. With institutional partnerships between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, these programs play a crucial role in making the undergraduate experience an “inseparable part of an integrated whole” (Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, 1998, 5-6.).

³ Apart from these Living-Learning Communities) under Student Affairs, there are other living-learning communities that are not part of the RAPs or the LLC’s, which contribute to building community as well as addressing academic excellence: CU’s Marching Band, the Greek System, R.O.T. C., the Student Academic Success Center, which houses the McNeil Academic Program, the White Antelope Memorial Scholarship & First Nations Scholarship Programs, and The Athletic Department.

CU's Student Affairs Housing department is also a member of the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International and the Association of Intermountain Housing Officers. Both organizations include living-learning programs as a part of their mission.

VI. ANALYSIS

As noted above, RAPs are prominently featured in the Flagship 2030 Strategic Plan, where Core Initiative 1 calls for creating “a new campus-wide emphasis on ‘residential colleges,’ offering a multi-year residential academic experience for every entering student.” Accomplishments to date include the formation of a “RAPs Implementation Team to solicit program proposals from the faculty and make selections for new RAPs, and developed a new cross-campus advisory structure.”

Because of this commitment, it seems especially important for the RAPs to have a good idea of their mission and identity and a mechanism or plan for achieving that mission. Some RAPs seem to have a clearer idea of what they are doing than others. Leadership RAP, for example, defines success in terms of preparing students “with necessary tools to practice effective leadership,” with a stress on civic and social responsibility, and on creating within the university a “positive intentional multicultural community.” Similarly, the Andrews Hall Residential College (AHRC) has a strong orientation toward engineering (and is home to the Engineering Honors Program). Others, like Farrand RAP, one of the older and larger RAPs, seem less clear in their mission, and the IRC comments that the Farrand website suggests a lack of shared purpose or focus.

It is not necessarily the case that each RAP should define its goals and role in terms of subject area. Incoming students may not know what direction they want ultimately to take, and some students apparently choose one RAP over another for reasons of location and other amenities rather than subject specialties. If the RAPs grow as planned to the point where they are available to all, it seems all the more likely that defining the RAP mission in terms of specific subject areas will become less appropriate.

RAP programs as they currently exist are largely self-contained. Each RAP is connected, whether loosely or closely, with one or more cognate departments or schools, and necessarily each RAP is connected with Housing, which places students in rooms. But the RAP programs as such do not interact much with one another. If these programs expand as anticipated, it seems likely to become more important that they coordinate with one another so that standards and expectations do not vary too widely.

Behind the commitment to expand RAPs is the conviction that the RAP experience confers a substantial benefit on students. In a campus with more than 5,000 entering freshmen, it makes sense to suppose that providing some kind of smaller social and intellectual environment will help students transition to adult life and to independence and responsibility in ways that enhance progress and development and foster

intellectual growth. But metrics are hard to come by, and it is possible that the noticeable improvements in persistence (staying in school) and grade-point averages among RAP students reflect self-selection rather than the benefits of RAPs. In large measure, the effectiveness of RAPs has not been proven.

RAP courses require faculty members to engage in social and co-curricular activities that may exceed work expectations for instructors in departmental settings. RAP instructors often host evening talks and other activities, supervise field trips, and accompany students to cultural events. These activities may be essential to the academic and community missions that the college wants to promote in RAPs, but some instructors feel that this is uncompensated work.

More generally, there appears to be considerable dissatisfaction among RAPs instructors about their status and the expectations that come with their jobs.

Paying for the RAP experience is already an issue, and the issue is likely to grow in importance. Currently, joining a RAP costs each student \$850/semester, but this fee does not pay the full differential between the costs of the RAPs and the cost of non-RAP dormitory living. The result is that the current system in effect depends partly on each student paying “the price of admission” to a RAP and on what amounts to a tax on other students whose tuition goes partly to defray the costs of RAPs. Whether the current system achieves equity is a fair question, as is the related question whether putting all students in RAPs would improve student learning and the student experience generally.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

To the campus:

ARPAC endorses and values the academic communities that have been established to enhance the first-year experience of our students. ARPAC notes that it considers the RAPs primarily as academic programs and has focused its recommendations accordingly. To further understand the advantages associated with participating in these living-learning communities, ARPAC recommends that the provost convene a task force to explore the future of RAPs and alternative first-year experiences. The task force should undertake the following:

1. Work with the Office of Institutional Research (IR) to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to determine whether RAPs are meeting campus goals, especially those related to student learning, success strategies, and persistence. This assessment should also take into account (1) the administrative structure of RAPs, (2) incentives for greater faculty participation in RAPs, (3) partnerships and collaborations, (4) an inventory of all first-year experience programs (LLCs, SASC, etc.) to compare success rates, and (5) a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether RAPs are an efficient approach to meeting campus goals of improving

- student engagement, learning, and retention.
2. Explore ways to collect data on a regular, ongoing basis, in cooperation with the Office of Institutional Research. As part of this process, the task force and IR should consider: (1) coordinating through IR the research protocols that some RAPs currently use to assess their students, (2) adding to the annual Senior Survey items on the RAP experience that will enable the campus to compare it with the experience of those students who have not had a RAP experience. Additional survey items might focus on environmental issues, co-curricular involvement, peer/faculty interactions, use of residence hall resources, diverse interactions, STEM-related questions, study-group interactions and sense of belonging, perceptions of intellectual abilities and growth, and appreciation of diversity), and (3) employing qualitative and quantitative research techniques (e.g., interviews and focus groups) to assess items such as critical thinking, civic engagement, intentionality, flexibility/open mindedness, and the impact of these items on time to degree for RAP and non-RAP students.

While a full-scale review of RAPS is underway, ARPAC recommends the following:

To the RAPs generally:

3. Consider increasing the number of all-RAP meetings (currently all-RAP meetings occur twice per academic year).
4. Consider ways to help RAP-rostered instructors achieve more integration into the life of cognate departments for the purpose of professional development, enhanced morale, and professional progress.
5. Consider ways to streamline co-curricular activities to make them more efficient in terms of the demands on the time of directors and instructors. This suggestion might also include defining the co-curricular activities that are required and those that should be optional.
6. Consider ways to make the RAP experience more attractive to returning students.
7. Consider ways to develop more qualitative approaches to data gathering through the curriculum, which might include the use of reflective journals or portfolios to find out what students think of the RAP experience.
8. Consider creating a RAP student guide that describes research and internship opportunities and the resources available on campus (e.g., Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program-UROP) and off-campus as well as those offered through the RAP experience.
9. Incorporate the goal of increasing diversity into the strategic planning for each RAP.

To the deans generally:

10. Find ways to envision the RAPs as a campus-wide initiative rather than one sponsored by individual colleges/schools.
11. Seek out ways in which Student Affairs' LLC programs and Academic Affairs RAPs could work more collaboratively.
12. Resolve the problems that students face in meeting their contractual obligations to take courses within their RAPs. One solution would be to allow students to take a RAP course in another RAP to meet this obligation.
13. Consider either merging the Sustainability and Social Innovation Rap (under A&S) and the Sustainability by Design RAP (under CEAS) into a single RAP or finding ways to make the two more distinctly different (which might also include modifying the name.)
14. Consider ways to increase collaboration between the academic leadership of the RAPs and Student Affairs (housing in particular, and other academic related programs through housing) and the various ancillary services that the RAPs need to continue their academic mission.
15. Consider ways to help RAP-rostered instructors achieve more integration into the life of cognate departments for reasons of professional development, enhanced morale, and professional progress.
16. Consider ways to help RAPs become more attractive to returning students (sophomores, juniors, seniors), which may mean reducing costs or increasing benefits to these students. Note: Flagship 2030 suggest that the RAPs should have 30% upper classmen in their mix.
17. Consider a complete overhaul of the RAPs' digital presence and make changes where necessary, including the RAPs' presence on Housing websites.
18. Implement consistent budget procedures across the RAPs, including cost projections.
19. If departments are involved in the hiring of RAP instructors, streamline the course approval process.

To the A&S dean:

20. Consider creating some RAPs that are more broadly framed, offering the benefits of small sections in CORE courses without using a themed approach and without necessarily situating such small sections within the assigned living space of individual RAPs.
21. Consider mechanisms for strengthening relationships between RAPs and cognate academic unit(s), which may include involving the unit directly in the selection of RAP directors and in the hiring and renewal of RAP instructors.
22. Review the job duties of the RAP program assistants to determine whether the positions qualify for upgrading.
23. Consider recognizing the differential workload of RAP instructors so that the compensation levels reflect these differences.

24. Consider ways to encourage more TTT faculty involvement at the instructional level with RAPS. One possibility would be to reallocate underutilized faculty resources in particular departments to the RAPS. Another would be to allow TTT faculty members to count courses taught in RAPS against their normal teaching load, with replacement costs being provided to the home department of the faculty member. A third model is to create a contract with a unit whereby a new faculty hire is allowed in exchange for providing one FTE worth of teaching to one or more RAPS. These models are not mutually exclusive.
25. Explore ways to coordinate the hiring of instructors when they are teaching in more than one RAP.
26. Work with office of the CMCI dean to ensue a smooth transition for the Communication and Society RAP to the new college.
27. Clarify the focus of Farrand RAP. This will help determine short and long terms goals with respect to variety of course offerings. Once the focus of Farrand RAP is clarified, the Farrand website should be modified to include information on the focus of Farrand RAP. Also, Farrand RAP should consider offering a mandatory humanities course to better establish the focus of Farrand RAP.

To the dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science:

28. Identify and implement mechanisms to build a more diverse learning community in Andrews that takes into consideration gender, racial/ethnic, and socio-economic inclusion.

To the dean of the Leeds School of Business:

29. Continue efforts to improve Leeds RAP.

To the dean of the College of Media, Communication and Information:

30. Review the recommendations and seek ways to fully integrate the Communication and Society RAP into the new college.

To the assistant vice chancellor for housing and dining services and to the dean of students:

31. Seek out ways in which Student Affairs' LLC programs and Academic Affairs RAPS could work more collaboratively.

To the provost:

32. Depending on the findings of the RAPS Task Force assessment, formulate a strategy for the orderly growth of RAPS or alternative first-year experiences.
33. Depending on the findings of the RAP Task Force assessment, examine the

- administrative structure of the RAPs for the purpose of achieving (1) standardized personnel policies, new approaches to funding, and streamlined course approval procedures, (2) stronger connections between RAPs and relevant academic departments and colleges/schools, and (3) better coordination between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, with a particular emphasis on the interface between RAPs and Housing.
34. Consider creating standardized guidelines for RAPS including (1) policies and procedures, guidelines for handling crises, and expectations for RAPs in general, (2) governing documents including vision and mission statements, (3) bylaws and standards that define RAP programs, and (4) description of the roles of faculty and staff, including job descriptions and responsibilities of administrators (RAP director, assistant director, and program coordinator.)
 35. Consider moving the Leadership RAP, which currently reports to the office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education, to a college or school.
 36. Ensure systematic efforts to promote understanding and diversity throughout the RAPs.
 37. Implement consistent budget procedures across the RAPs, including cost projections.

The campus Residential Academic Program leads (at this writing, the associate vice chancellor for undergraduate education, and the deans assigned to oversee RAPs within the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering and Applied Science, the College of Media, Communication and Information, and the Leeds School of Business) shall report annually on the first of April for a period of three years following the year of the receipt of this report (i.e., April 1st of 2016, 2017, and 2018) to the provost on the implementation of these recommendations. The provost, as part of the review reforms, has agreed to respond annually to all outstanding matters under her/his purview arising from this review year. All official responses will be posted online.