



## **Advisor Information 2019-20**

Thank you so much for your role as an advisor for a Theme or Interest Housing community! We are very excited about the changes that Residential Engagement Communities are bringing to the residential experience at Wake Forest. Within this structure, there are three options for students wishing to create a student-led community living block--Living Learning Community, Interest Housing, and Theme Housing. As we expand our program we hope to create multiple opportunities for students to build authentic and inclusive community, pursue service and civic interests, and foster mentorship relationships between peers in the setting that best suites their group's needs.

Residential Engagement Communities function using a student-led, staff-advised format that relies heavily on the entrepreneurial spirit of students to form and run their own communities. Under the guidance of a faculty or staff advisor, student groups will develop their own programming and take part in campus opportunities in order to create an immersive living and learning experience. Students living in a Residential Engagement Community share responsibility for developing a thriving community and meeting community goals.

We invite you to partner with us to help meet the mission of Residential Engagement Communities, which is to create intentional communities by developing relational leaders and building a bridge between academic interests and a meaningful residential experience.

### **Theme Housing Option**

Beginning in the fall of 2016, the original Theme Program was expanded to include Interest Housing and Living Learning Communities under the umbrella program of Residential Engagement Communities. As part of this organizational shift, the specific purpose of Theme Housing has changed to include opportunities for students to explore ideas and create dialogue around a specific interest while working closely with a university office or department. Themes work closely with a faculty or staff advisor to create a community that directly engages with their area of interest through a variety of strategies including intentional dialogue, service opportunities, programming, and/or intentional engagement with the Wake community. Theme communities will look and function much as they have

in the past, with some additional expectations for theme members to demonstrate the intentional bridging of academic interests and a meaningful residential experience.

As the faculty/staff advisor for this group, your main responsibility is offering guidance to the TPA for the group who has been instructed to rely on their faculty/staff advisor for determining direction, purpose, and vision for their community. This may mean meeting regularly with the TPA or the group as a whole. The intention behind emphasizing your relationship with the TPA is to ensure that your expertise in the given area of interest is present as the Theme determines their direction. The hope is that, while Residence Education works with Theme Housing students from a developmental lens, your content expertise as a professional within your department or office will provide insight into what their Theme should try to accomplish, what core values their Theme should stand for, and what purpose the Theme should have within the greater Wake Forest community. Residence Education hopes to be a partner in this endeavor as we work together to develop students' leadership skills, build positive community standards, and emphasise intentionality in the theme program.

### **Interest Housing Option**

Interest Housing is similar to Theme Housing but is structured with less formalized requirements. Interest Housing groups are still required to create a purpose statement and identify goals for their housing group but do not have the same expectations for learning outcome completion or demonstrating member engagement. The purpose of Interest Housing is to provide chartered student organizations with an option to pursue living in community similar to that of fraternity and sorority block housing. The student leader for an Interest Housing community is called a Community Liaison.

As an advisor of an Interest Housing block, you should also be the advisor of the chartered student organization. We require that at least 2 of the organization's student leadership team (executive board, council, etc.) live in the block as Interest Housing community members. In this way, our hope is that the Interest Housing community will function as an extension of the parent organization. Your role as the advisor for an Interest Housing community is to help students incorporate their residential community into the life of the organization. Interest housing communities will not receive a budget from Residence Life and Housing, so we encourage them to partner with their parent organizations to create programming opportunities. Residence Life and Housing will only meet with Interest Housing groups for a mid-semester check-in to determine whether the group is continuing to work towards their community goals. We would encourage you to periodically meet with the Community Liaison to see how the organization and the community can partner.