

- Does your department operate from a commonly held philosophy for the first/freshman year? If so, please briefly explain.

**The Department of Residential Programs** operates on the principle that the freshman year is critically important to the future success of students. Staff members in planning roles are well aware of the research which documents how important the first six weeks of college are to persistence through graduation. Therefore, many steps are taken to actively engage freshmen into the life of the campus community. A few examples are listed below.

Special attention is given to freshmen in the form of “First Year Meetings” at which each RHD meets with every freshmen resident of his/her building on an individual or (very) small group basis during the first six weeks of school. The RHDs who work in traditional halls (which house freshmen) all teach a COL 101 section for freshmen to increase the quality and enhance the nature of the relationship with freshmen. Our Leadership LLC sponsors a development program designed for freshmen and those without college leadership experience. That program, known as LEAD, has a mentoring component as well. Our Leadership Awards categories include one for outstanding first year leader.

- What components are important in a campus first year philosophy?
  - ✓ Visible support for freshmen success from top levels of campus leadership.
  - ✓ Active collaboration between Academic Affairs and Students Affairs.
  - ✓ Purposeful engagement of freshmen in both social and academic endeavors.
  - ✓ Clear, concise list of values that can be easily identified by all involved parties.
  - ✓ Priority placed on both intellectual and emotional development.
  - ✓ Experiential learning opportunities.
  - ✓ Strategies for creating a sense of connection to the campus community and fostering school spirit and pride.