

1

The Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Student Learning in Residence Halls

College residence halls (RHs) have a rich tradition that closely follows the history of higher education and the educational philosophies that guide it. The residential experience was part of the founding of American higher education, and for most of its history RHs have served as a vehicle to educate students. However, the educational role of RHs did not come without a struggle. The reason that RHs exist today is an interesting story and part of an educational debate about the purpose of a college education. At the core of this debate is the question of whether college should focus solely on a student's intellectual development or on educating the whole student, including his or her character, values, maturity, citizenship, and life skills (practical knowledge).

The title of this chapter implies a question often asked by those outside of the student affairs profession—why do student affairs professionals call traditional student housing RHs and not dormitories? The simplest answer to that question is that today's RHs are not anything like dormitories. The word *dormitory* comes from *dormant*, which means “to sleep”; a dormitory is literally a place of sleeping. The term was applied to American higher education in part when the early colonial colleges brought the practice of

2 STUDENT LEARNING IN COLLEGE RESIDENCE HALLS

dormitory-style living from England's Oxford and Cambridge Universities. At one time, colleges and universities had large sleeping rooms known as dormitories; however, these facilities were abandoned many years ago. Today, occasionally a fraternity or a military academy will still have a dormitory room, but even these have become uncommon. Oxford and Cambridge abandoned dormitories, and the use of the term, more than a century ago. Now students at those institutions refer to college student housing as *halls of residence* or simply *halls*. Students living in college RHs in the United States are said to be living in college or simply living in.

Sleep is only one aspect of student life in RHs, which are often energetic spaces full of activity. Today they are centers of student life and places in which students learn from one another. RHs frequently house a variety of facilities to aid students in their studies and to facilitate community, such as study lounges, recreational spaces, computer labs, social lounges, student meeting rooms, and classrooms. Students in RHs make lifelong friends, form study groups, enjoy rich social lives, and pursue a host of recreational activities from sports to internet gaming.

In this chapter I review five historical periods that form the foundations for college RHs work and the philosophies under which they were operated: (1) collegiate; (2) impersonal; (3) holism; (4) student development; and (5) student learning. These five educational approaches parallel the changing student–institutional relationship from the earliest colonial colleges to that of contemporary residential colleges and universities. Although these five philosophies are the educational foundation of RHs, they do not tell the whole story. Housing and residence life professionals manage complex financial operations, build and maintain facilities, service bond debt obligations, market the use of facilities for summer conferences, and implement a wide range of institutional policies. Because of these administrative and management responsibilities, housing and residence life professionals straddle the teaching–learning mission of the university and the business management responsibilities

necessary to sustain a financially self-sufficient and stable operation. Evolving educational and business management roles have shaped how RHs operate today, and in the final section of this chapter I discuss how these educational and business approaches in RHs coexist to support the dual mission of RHs as an environment for learning and as a revenue-generating capital asset of the residential colleges and universities.

Collegiate Model

American higher education was founded under a collegiate model based on the educational traditions of Oxford and Cambridge, which the English brought with them when they colonized North America. All of the nine original colonial colleges (Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Princeton, University of Pennsylvania, Columbia, Brown, Rutgers, and Dartmouth) were founded on the Oxford and Cambridge model of classical education using this collegiate model (Rudolph, 1962). Under this model, college was the place where young men (in the early years only men went to college) not only learned Latin, Greek, mathematics, philosophy, and religion but also developed character and learned values, manners, and deportment (conduct) of a gentleman.

The collegiate approach to higher education was organized to foster respectful and sometimes close relationships between faculty and students. Colleges were small communities, and students were generally from privileged backgrounds and shared a common social class. However, one should not mistake the intimacy between faculty and students as friendship. Often the relationship was one of paternalistic supervision that included the use of corporal punishment for student offenders of college policies as well as open rebellion by students against harsh or unpopular instructors (Thelin, 2004).

The idea that students learn in RHs by living together as communities under the guidance of tutors grew from the idea of liberal education shaped in post-Renaissance Europe. The goal of

4 STUDENT LEARNING IN COLLEGE RESIDENCE HALLS

liberal education is the development of an educated person who is open-minded, knowledgeable of the Western canon, and trained as an independent thinker (Brubacher, 1977). Liberal education implies that the student acquired the values, ethics, and civic commitment to operate as an educated and informed citizen. William Cory (1861), a great Eton master of the 19th century, described some of the qualities of a liberally educated person:

You go to a great school, not for knowledge so much as for arts and habits; for the habit of attention, for the art of expression, for the art of assuming at a moment's notice a new intellectual posture, for the art of entering quickly into another person's thoughts, for the habit of submitting to censure and refutation, for the art of indicating assent or dissent in graduated terms, for the habit of regarding minute points of accuracy, for the habit of working out what is possible in a given time, for taste, for discrimination, for mental courage and mental soberness. Above all, you go to a great school for self-knowledge. (p. 7)

Under the collegiate approach, a liberal education was accomplished through adherence to the classical curriculum and by close association with other students under the guidance of tutors. One of the strongest proponents of liberal education using the collegiate approach was Cardinal John Henry Newman (1933), who believed that living in a common residence under the supervision of tutors was an essential part of becoming a liberally educated person. He wrote:

If I had to choose between a so-called University, which dispensed with residence and tutorial superintendence, and gave its degrees to any person who passed an examination in a wide range of subjects, and a University which had no professors or examinations at all, but merely brought a number of young men together for

three or four years, and then sent them away as the University of Oxford is said to have done some sixty years since, if I were asked which of these two methods was the better discipline of the intellect,—mind . . . if I must determine which of the two courses was the more successful in training, molding, enlarging the mind, which sent out men the more fitted for their secular duties, which produced better public men, men of the world, men whose names would descend to posterity, I have no hesitation in giving the preference to that University which did nothing, over that which exacted of its members an acquaintance with every science under the sun. (p. 137)

Impersonal Approach

During the 1800s, a large number of American faculty members completed their advanced academic work in continental Europe and learned under a philosophy of rationalism, which is based on a system of deductive and intellectual reasoning. Students who attended universities in continental Europe lived outside of the university in private homes, boarding houses, and similar accommodations. Although many of the universities there provided student housing early in their histories, by the early 1800s most had abandoned the practice (Cowley, 1934). The Germans abandoned the practice of housing students following the Protestant Reformation (1517–1648) because the facilities (Bursen) too closely resembled the monkish cloisters of Catholic monasteries, which were antithetical to the ideals of the Reformation. The French abandoned student housing after the French Revolution (1789–1799) because students could not afford to pay for the accommodations.

American faculty members educated in Continental Europe (usually Germany) adopted the view that the European system

6 STUDENT LEARNING IN COLLEGE RESIDENCE HALLS

worked well and that American colleges should focus exclusively on the creation and dissemination of knowledge, as was common in Germany (Rudolph, 1962). The role of faculty was to educate the mind; society, family, and church were responsible for the character and conduct of the student. Williamson and Sarbin (1940) observed that “the single greatest force that changed the old student-centered college [collegiate approach] was the growing emphasis on specialized scientific research and scholarship—particularly of the German pattern” (p. 6). The result of this change in philosophical orientation was that professors were appointed to faculty posts based on their research skills and their association with German universities, whether or not they had any interest in students. West (1907) described the ideal faculty member during this time as a “man dedicated to specialized learning who put research first, teaching second, and his personal care of students last” (p. 109).

A manifestation of the shift away from the British approach of student-centered collegiate learning to the German approach of content-centered (impersonal) learning was that faculty became increasingly devoted to the creation and specialization of knowledge. Consistent with this change was the development of specialized courses of study that reflected faculty members’ interests. So pervasive was the specialization of knowledge and the independent research interests of faculty that in 1869 Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard University, proposed dropping Harvard’s classical liberal arts curriculum and replacing it with an elective system of courses. Harvard implemented the new elective system with the senior class in 1872 and with other classes in successive years (Rudolph, 1962). “By 1897 the prescribed course of study at Harvard had been reduced to a year of freshmen rhetoric” (Rudolph, p. 294).

The new system of electives allowed for increased specialization of knowledge and eventually gave rise to departmentalization of faculty into academic disciplines. As the Harvard model was adopted throughout colleges and universities in the United States,

faculty became increasingly interested in knowledge specialization and much less interested in students. Faculty considered students to be adults and left them alone to resolve their personal problems. An educational philosophy focused on knowledge content and impersonal relationships with students became pervasive in American higher education. Faculty, who in past years were intimately involved in the lives of students, abandoned those roles and limited their functions to teaching, discipline, remedial education, and mentoring (Lloyd-Jones, 1952).

Students filled the void left by the impersonal approach with clubs, athletics, and student activities. Many college fraternities and sororities, which provided housing for students, were formed at this time, and debating teams, sports teams, and literary societies were born on many college campuses as well. The first intercollegiate boat race occurred between Harvard and Yale (Harvard won) in 1852, the first intercollegiate football game occurred in 1869 between Princeton and Rutgers (Rutgers won 6–4) (Cowley, 1934), and the first intercollegiate baseball game occurred in 1859 between Amherst and Williams (Amherst won) (Williams, 2009).

When universities adopted more impersonal relationships with students, faculty and administrators began to question the value of providing student housing. Many members of the faculty thought that the resources needed to build and maintain RHs could be put to better use in building classrooms, laboratories, and libraries. The presidents of the University of Michigan, Brown University, and Columbia University, among others, expressed harsh criticism of college RHs and the raucous behavior of the young men who lived in them. Henry Tappen, president of the University of Michigan, offered the following explanation for closing a RH and converting it to classrooms in 1852: “The dormitory system is objectionable in itself. By withdrawing young men from the influence of domestic circles and separating them from the community, they are often led to contract evil habits and are prone to fall into disorderly conduct” (as cited in Shay, 1964, p. 181).

In 1888, a faculty committee at the University of Minnesota that was formed to recommend reorganization of the University rejected any investment in student housing because RHs were associated with the old-fashioned American college. Committee members believed that investment in student housing would interfere with the “intellectual training” of students. Except for the students studying agriculture who lived on campus to provide labor at the university farms, the committee believed that students should find their own lodging with families in Minneapolis (Williamson & Sarbin, 1940). This recommendation created a problem for women students because off-campus housing was usually unchaperoned, but the committee defended its position by declaring that there was no system “so detrimental to sound morals and a healthy sentiment as this shutting young women up in cloistered dormitories away from common society” (as cited in Williamson & Sarbin, p. 5).

Holism Period

By the beginning of the 20th century, parents and some of the faculty who had continued to maintain personal relationships with students mounted an effort to make colleges and universities less impersonal and more focused on the needs and interests of students. The problems associated with student behavior in the mid-1800s had mellowed into funny stories and remembrances of days long since passed. People missed the sense of community they associated with the collegiate system and began to question the educational philosophy that separated what students were taught from who they became as a result of their educations. Educational philosophers such as John Dewey argued against educating only the intellect of students while ignoring their emotional and affective development. He advocated for an emphasis on the individual student and attention to the overall educational experience. This holistic philosophy promoted the idea that people function as complex systems and that they must be viewed as a whole and not simply as a

collection of independent parts. Dewey (1922) expressed that “the separation of warm emotion from cool intellect is the greatest moral tragedy” (p. 258).

Among the defenders of the educational values of college RHs during this time was Charles Franklin Thwing, who served as president of Western Reserve College and Adelbert College. Thwing (1920) explained the educational value of dormitory life:

The advantages of dormitory life are not hard to distinguish. One of the most inherent advantages lies in the tendency of this life to intensify academic atmosphere. The student is apart from his home. The building he occupies is made for the college; he lives with other students. Within he spends happy days and happier nights. The community is academic and of it he is an individual part. . . . His talk, his fun, his tricks, his friendships, are all academic; he takes the academic bath. The worth of such absorption is great. At the altars of good fellowship and of opportunity, as well as at the shrine of scholarship, it is worthwhile to burn incense. (p. 393)

College RHs also continued to exist in part out of housing necessity. The development of land-grant colleges under the 1862 and 1890 Morrill Acts established campuses in some less populated regions of the United States and required the construction of student housing so that students would have a place to live. Women’s colleges also played an important role in the rebirth of college residence halls. Vassar, Smith, and Mount Holyoke Colleges were founded in the 1800s and were strictly residential.

Where colleges did not provide student housing, students were expected to either commute from home or find lodging off-campus. However, off-campus housing was often inadequate, particularly for women. In unchaperoned off-campus housing, women had no place to receive callers except in their rooms, which Victorian morality

could not permit. This situation was unacceptable and required a change. It was one thing to let a group of young men fend for themselves in the community but quite another to abandon young women in unsupervised environments. Colleges came to accept the responsibility of educating young women and protecting their good reputations. Marion Talbot, dean of women at the University of Chicago, supported the need to provide student housing and believed that RHs also helped young women “acquire the power of expression, the facility in social intercourse, the ability to meet situations of an unusual or unexpected character, with dignity and poise” (Talbot, 1909, p. 45).

Although many educators supported the idea of educating the whole student, some thought less of the idea. Robert Maynard Hutchins, president of the University of Chicago, commented on the concept of educating the “whole person” in his exclamation “of all the meaningless phrases in education, this is the prize” (1943, p. 36).

Despite some opposition, a commitment to the education of the whole student began to emerge in the late 19th century, and with it a renewed commitment to student housing and a return to some components of the Oxford style of collegiate education. In 1907, Woodrow Wilson, as president of Princeton University, established the residential quadrangle plan; in 1929, Lawrence Lowell, president of Harvard University, established the Harvard House plan; and in 1931, James Angell, president of Yale University, established Yale residential colleges (Duke, 1996). Cooperatives (housing in which students share responsibility for the operation and maintenance of a rooming facility) were present on many land-grant campuses that operated under the student housing principles issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Nowotny, Julian, & Beaty, 1938). Traditional-style RHs were constructed to house increased enrollments at many universities. Rooming houses for off-campus students were still used, and deans of men took an interest in how they should be controlled and monitored to provide adequate supervision for students living off-campus (Clark, 1920).

The rejection of having impersonal relations with students, renewed interest in returning to the collegiate model, concern over the poor state of student housing, safeguarding the reputation of female students, and a commitment to educating the whole student gave birth to the personnel and guidance movement in higher education. However, faculty had no interest in retreating from their scholarship and teaching to embrace a new commitment to undergraduate life. At most colleges, faculty continued with research and teaching; select faculty members and others who had friendly relationships with students were appointed to positions in which they could care for undergraduates. In 1890, LeBarron Russell Briggs was appointed the first dean of students at Harvard College; in 1892, Alice Freeman Palmer was appointed the first dean of women at the University of Chicago; in 1916, the first graduate program to educate deans of women was established at Teachers College Columbia; in 1917, the National Association of Deans of Women was established (1917); and in 1918, the National Association of Deans of Men was established.

The debate about the purpose of education and the rejection of the impersonal approach to working with students were the foundations of the establishment of the core principles of student affairs' commitment to the whole student. On April 16, 1937, 19 educators appointed by the American Council on Education (ACE) came together and unanimously adopted a report on the philosophy and development of student personnel work in colleges and universities. *The Student Personnel Point of View (SPPV)* (ACE, 1937) called for colleges and universities to focus on the education of the whole student and not just the intellect of students. The report advanced a philosophy for the development of the student as an individual and imposed on institutions an obligation to consider a student's intellectual capacity, emotional makeup, physical condition, social relationships, vocational aptitudes and skills, moral and religious values, economic resources, and aesthetic appreciations. The *SPPV* rejected the idea that the purpose of a college education was only

12 STUDENT LEARNING IN COLLEGE RESIDENCE HALLS

the development of the intellect as reflected by the completion of a set of college courses. It placed the student at the center of learning and made it the responsibility of colleges to develop the individual student. However, neither this document nor anything else happening in higher education at that time brought faculty out of their laboratories and classrooms to engage students in their personal growth and development. Faculty continued their commitment to teaching and research and left other aspects of students' lives to student affairs professionals (Williamson & Sarbin, 1940).

Although some educators (Hand, 1938) advanced the belief that the benefits of college living groups were the most important influence on learning in college, exactly how to achieve the development of the whole student was open to interpretation. For female students, Orme (1950) proposed these goals:

Help every resident to develop the social skills which make for happier human relations; provide conditions conducive to study and suitable facilities for wholesome recreation; encourage the development of intellectual interests, aesthetic appreciation, and ethical values; give opportunity for the growth of leadership ability and social responsibility through participation in self-government; offer living conditions which foster physical and mental health; and help the student to manage her life with intelligence and self-discipline. In brief, a dormitory should contribute to the student's all around development, that she may become a socially competent, intelligent, well-balanced person, having concern for the welfare of others. (p. 3)

On many college campuses until the early 1970s, RHs were run by housemothers who acted in loco parentis. They were female faculty, faculty widows, deans of women, and other mature female adults with good judgment who could be entrusted with the supervision of

housing for students (Reich, 1964). They became the confidants of students and surrogate parents who not only chaperoned students' daily activities but also provided guidance on manners, conduct, and courtesies. Although RHs for women always had housemothers, not all RHs for men had houseparents. For example, during this time period land-grant colleges were required to operate Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC) programs, in which male students participated mandatorily for at least one year. It was common for first- and second-year male students to live in RHs supervised by military personnel and cadres of student officers from the corps of cadets.

People who performed student affairs functions on college campuses relied on what they knew from their own college experiences and from colleges' lists of rules and regulations. These rules covered everything from what time students needed to be in their RHs (curfew) to dress codes for various campus activities. A commitment to the development of the whole student may have been the operating philosophy, but it was implemented by student affairs staff assuming a paternalistic responsibility for controlling students' behavior. Students rebelled against these paternalistic rules during the 1960s. Peterson (1968) observed that student protests against college policies—the ones enforced by student affairs administrators—accounted for the second greatest number of student protests in 1967–1968 after those against the Vietnam War. As a result of student dissatisfaction, college administrators began to question the value of archaic paternalistic college rules, and student affairs professionals started to rethink their duties and search for a more coherent educational mission.

The Student Development Approach

Closely linked to the work of guidance and counseling, where student affairs work found a home in the 1950s, a new counseling

14 STUDENT LEARNING IN COLLEGE RESIDENCE HALLS

approach based in humanism emerged that was consistent with the values of student affairs work. Humanistic psychology is based on a holistic approach to working with individuals. It advances the belief that people are essentially good and that people who experience emotional problems are deviating from their natural tendency to be good. Personal growth, self-actualization, creativity, and individuality are driving forces in the lives of individuals, and guidance and counseling can help people overcome obstacles that inhibit these driving forces in people's lives. Humanistic psychology also accepts the importance of environmental factors in shaping people's personalities and behaviors. The work of humanists such as Abraham Maslow (1954) and Carl Rogers (1969) became required readings for student affairs administrators in the 1960s and 1970s.

Riker (1965) explained how the humanist approach came to infuse the work of residence life professionals:

Roadblocks to learning exist in a student's preoccupations with his vocational future, sex relations, home problems, finances, or physical condition and appearance. If these preoccupations are not reduced or removed as roadblocks, the student will fail and drop out. . . . Many institutions employ counselors and other personnel specialist to improve students' chances of learning. As part of this team, housing staff performs an invaluable function in identifying roadblocks, helping students to clear them away, or referring students where remedial action can be initiated rapidly. (p. 6)

Humanism offered a strong philosophical base for the work of student affairs professionals but lacked a clear articulation of what should result from students' growth and development as they matured. It also needed a theoretical base that defined work with students and a clear connection to the academic mission of universities.

The American College Personnel Association (ACPA) recognized that the philosophy of *in loco parentis* was dead and offered a new direction for student affairs work that Parker (1978) described as *student development*. In 1968, ACPA launched the Tomorrow's Higher Education (T.H.E.) Project, which began as a strategic plan to address the rapidly changing college environment and offered a vehicle for the revitalization of student affairs work. Although the original committee never released a workable document, a number of papers were written to address the need for change. One of the best known of these publications was a monograph written by Robert Brown (1972), who identified five key concepts to serve as a framework for defining student development and the work of student affairs administrators (pp. 33–36):

1. Student characteristics when they enter college have a significant impact on how students are affected by their college experience.
2. The collegiate years are the period for many individual students when significant developmental changes occur.
3. There are opportunities within the collegiate program for it to have a significant impact on student development.
4. The environmental factors that hold the most promise for affecting student developmental patterns include the peer group, the living unit, the faculty, and the classroom experience.
5. Developmental changes in students are the result of the interaction of initial characteristics and the press of the environment.

Miller and Prince (1976) further elaborated on the T.H.E. Project and how the work of student development could be realized through programs on university campuses. Although the ACPA

project advanced the thinking of student affairs professionals about their role within colleges and universities, “what was not accomplished in the ACPA project was a careful examination, identification, or elaboration of psychosocial, developmental theories which can be used to guide practitioners who work with students” (Parker, 1978, p. 9).

A substantive body of literature in the field of developmental psychology provided a theoretical basis for student development in the areas of cognitive development, psychosocial development, and person–environmental interaction. The works of Nevitt Sanford (1962), Arthur Chickering (1974), William Perry (1970), and Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) were instrumental in establishing a theoretical core for the emergence of the student development approach to working with college students. DeCoster and Mable (1974) saw the role of residence life professionals under this new student development approach as more than holding programs or creating activities—residence life professionals should help students develop their full potential by involving them in meaningful ways and by constructing shared educational experiences that allow them to learn from fellow students, faculty, and staff. These experiences, DeCoster and Mable believed, would assist students in their psychosocial development and help them master important interpersonal skills.

Student development was the dominant philosophical approach to student affairs work for more than 25 years. Virtually all master’s degree programs in the field of college student affairs required coursework in the psychosocial and cognitive development of students, and student affairs professionals began to define themselves as experts in the development of students. The *ACPA Journal of College Student Personnel* changed its name to the *Journal of College Student Development* in 1988, and many universities began using titles like *vice president for student development* for the senior student affairs officer. Student development theories provided a common theoretical base for student affairs work and helped inform

the professional standards for the field (Mable, 1991). Interaction with peers, educational programming, and the guidance of residence life staff who understood and applied student development principles to helping students grow and develop occupied the mission and purpose of most housing and residence life programs in the United States through much of the 1980s.

Student Learning Approach

Beginning sometime in the mid-1980s, educators in many fields began questioning how institutions of higher education were delivering education to undergraduates. Institutional pressure for increased research funding kept faculty from focusing their attention on teaching or mentoring undergraduates. On many campuses, low graduation rates, large class sizes, and extensive use of graduate assistants and part-time lecturers were sources of widespread criticism. More than two dozen reports published during this time scrutinized higher education for its failure to provide better undergraduate education (Gamson, 1987).

As the reform movement in higher education shifted toward greater attention to undergraduate education, student affairs professionals questioned whether they were doing all they could to help students learn. Among those who expressed concern that the student development approach was not well suited as an operating philosophy for student affairs were Boland, Stamatakos, and Rogers (1994). They challenged the student development approach and argued that the idea of student affairs professionals becoming experts on student development drew them away from the core university mission of teaching and learning. Their argument was not about whether student development theory was useful but that student development theories had limited utility in their application to the daily practice of student affairs work. They advocated for a return to the humanistic ideals embodied in the 1949 version of the *SPPV* (ACE, 1949).

In 1993, the Wingspread Group on Higher Education issued a report that called for a return to an emphasis on student learning as the focus of higher education. As president of ACPA, Charles Schroeder responded to this call by organizing a group of senior scholars and practitioners in student affairs to discuss the relationship of student affairs to the student learning mission of higher education. The Student Learning Imperative (SLI; ACPA, 1996) resulted from that meeting as a response to how student affairs organizations could fit into a renewed emphasis on undergraduate student learning. The introduction of the SLI stimulated a debate over the fundamental mission of student affairs, encompassing issues such as student development, student services, student learning, and principles advanced in the SPPV. The authors of the SLI argued that a student learning approach was more inclusive than a student development approach and that the SLI incorporated all of the developmental concepts on which student affairs professionals had come to rely. In the student learning approach, student affairs administrators were focused on the creation of learning experiences that connected students to the overall educational mission of the university rather than on the individual development of students, as was the case with the student development approach.

The SLI led to a reexamination of the mission of student affairs. It focused more effort on engaging students in active learning and shifted more emphasis to coupling student affairs with the learning mission of the university. In 1997, the two national professional associations in student affairs, ACPA and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), adopted seven principles of good practice for student affairs based on the student learning approach (ACPA & NASPA, 1997). The principles operationalized the student learning approach into actionable steps that could be used by student affairs administrators to focus on and to advance student learning by (1) engaging students in active learning, (2) helping students develop coherent values and ethical

standards, (3) setting and communicating high expectations for student learning, (4) using systemic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance, (5) using resources effectively to achieve institutional missions and goals, (6) forging educational partnerships that advance student learning, and (7) building supportive and inclusive communities.

Although the SLI addressed the issue of bifurcating student learning into academic instruction and development by stating that learning included development, two subsequent documents focused more attention on thinking about student learning as inclusive of both academic instruction and development. *Learning Reconsidered* (Keeling, 2004) and *Learning Reconsidered 2* (Keeling, 2006) emphasized that intellectual development and affective development are interlinked, integrated, and mutually dependent and that the idea of separating the two makes no sense from the perspective of student affairs work. Student affairs professionals should be engaged in advancing student learning, as a process and even more so as an outcome.

Administrative and Business Approaches

The five philosophical approaches form the core of student affairs work in RHs from an educational perspective. However, housing and residence life (HRL) professionals play a somewhat unique role in higher education. Although they focus on providing an educational experience for students by engaging them in experiences that facilitate positive educational outcomes, HRL professionals are also administrators with budgetary control, organizational demands, management duties, and policy enforcement responsibilities.

The management and administrative responsibilities encompassed in the duties of HRL are significant. RHs are capital investments that generate revenue from leasing rooms to students, and those funds are used to cover operating expenses of the RHs, including personnel and debt service on the buildings. HRL

professionals are often among the best business managers on a college campus. They have to be. They run multimillion-dollar enterprises and are responsible for the lives, safety, and education of students during many hours of each day. They are also charged with the fiscal health and operational quality of a significant budgetary unit of universities.

Because of this dual role, some HRL professionals have adopted a business management philosophy as their primary way of operating RHs. Emerging from this business management responsibility are two communities of practice in student affairs that emphasize a business approach to residence life and housing: student services and student administration.

Student Services

The student services approach is grounded in the student consumerism movement from the early 1980s, the business reform movement of the late 1980s, and the emergence of a practical-minded business orientation that has been a recurrent theme for those demanding greater business-like accountability in higher education (Blimling, 2001). The focus of this approach is to provide high-quality student services that are cost-effective and that result in higher levels of student satisfaction. Interest in student services as an approach to operating student housing and other student affairs organizations has been a continuing theme in higher education administration. However, in the early 1990s the American business community developed a fascination with the Japanese management style, based largely on the work of Deming (1982). The application of this approach included the adoption of programs such as total quality management, continuous quality improvement, and benchmarking. This management approach stresses student satisfaction based on evaluation of how well programs serve the needs of students. The quality of service becomes an end in itself, and student satisfaction is the primary measure of success.

Student Administration

The student administration approach is based on a philosophical orientation that views student affairs administration as an exercise in management and leadership (Blimling, 2001). The goal of this approach is to effectively and efficiently manage the resources available to students. Those who practice this approach are focused heavily on procedures, policies, and processes. Legal issues frame much of the conversation about interaction with students and play heavily into this organizational philosophy.

What Works, What Doesn't, and Why

Four communities of practice continue to operate on college campuses today: (1) student development approach; (2) student learning approach; (3) student administration approach; and (4) student services approach. Table 1.1 provides a comparison. Although they are presented as discrete approaches, effective student affairs professionals possess skills in each of these areas. However, the question is not about skills as much as it is about a philosophical orientation to working with students in RHs and how these communities of practice inform work with students. Each of the four communities has a strong philosophical base and reason to exist.

To manage the challenges of an HRL program, professionals need to have both business and educational skills. However, one of these approaches comes to dominate the philosophical orientation of an RH program. It is possible to administer RHs under a business-only philosophy or simply to contract the management of RHs to a private for-profit corporation commercial specializing in property management of college housing. That approach works reasonably well if the primary objective of an HRL program is to lease rooms to students and earn a profit. Building managers with the help of housekeeping and maintenance personnel can maintain the buildings and respond to students' basic needs. Essentially, this is the type

Table 1.1 Communities of Practice in Student Affairs

	Student Learning	Student Development	Student Learning	Student Administration
Purpose of Student Affairs	Student affairs as an active partner in the learning mission	Student affairs as equals in the education of students focused on personal growth and development	Student affairs as supporting the academic mission	Student affairs as managers of institutional resources to support students
Student Metaphor	Student as learners	Students as clients	Students as customers	Students as participants
Student Affairs Metaphor	Student affairs as educators	Student affairs as human development experts	Student affairs as managers	Student affairs as administrators
Process	Engage students in active learning	Assist students with life stage growth and development	Improve the quality and efficiency of services	Manage resources and policies to advance the quality of student life
Goal	Student learning, skill development, personal growth, and involvement	Greater self-knowledge and maturity	Student satisfaction	Organizational efficiency and effectiveness

Theory Bases	Learning theory, involvement theory, other educational theories	Human development theories; cognitive development theories	Customer services and management theories	Leadership and organizational theories, legal and policy analysis
Examples of Theories and Models	SLI; principles of good practice in student affairs	T.H.E. Project; Chickering and Reisser (1993); Perry (1970); Kohlberg (1969)	Total quality management; continuous quality improvement; benchmarking	Court cases; federal laws and regulations; systemic change theory; leadership trait theory; management theory
Assessment Examples	Tests, CSEQ, CAAP, NSSE	SDTLA, DIT, MJI	Satisfaction surveys	Graduation rates, employee evaluations, program usage analysis

Notes: SLI, student learning imperative; CSEQ, College Student Experience Questionnaire; CAAP, Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency; NSSE, National Survey of Student Engagement; T.H.E., Tomorrow's Higher Education; SDTLA, Student Development Task and Lifestyle Assessment; DIT, Defining Issues Test; MJI, Moral Judgment Interview.
 Adapted from Blimling (2001).

of program in operation by most off-campus landlords. They usually rent apartments and leave students alone.

This business-only philosophy does not work particularly well if the university expects RHs to engage students in active learning and build supportive inclusive communities. However, to operate a student housing program that was not grounded in a strong business model or that was not interested in providing quality student services to students who resided there would be a disservice to students and the university. Similarly, student housing programs would miss a significant opportunity to advance the educational mission of the university if they did not actively engage students in ways that helped them learn.

Regardless of the multiple skills that HRL administrators need in each of the four approaches, there emerges an overarching operating philosophy about how they do their work and the purposes of their work. If a person develops an administrative and student services orientation, the approach she uses is a principled decision-making mode about the creation of environments for students, the policies that operate to support students, and how facilities and programs are evaluated. Similarly, if a person has a student learning or student development orientation, that orientation tends to drive decision making in his work with students. The question about residence philosophies is not one of either-or. It is a question about which philosophy guides decision making. If an administrator's primary orientation is business, where success is measured by profits, decisions about the management of RHs will be made to advance that goal above other goals. In contrast, if an administrator's orientation is educational, where success is measured in terms of the best educational interests of students, the goal will guide decision making over other goals. These philosophical orientations are at the heart of many HRL decisions.

All four approaches can work on a college campus; my own view is that students need different types of housing at different stages of their development in college and that different stages may be best

served by different philosophical emphases. In the first year of college, I believe that traditional-aged undergraduates benefit most from living in traditional residence halls, not in apartments. As I discuss in later chapters, the evidence of the educational value of living in traditional residence halls is overwhelming (Blimling, 1993, 1998; Kuh, Kinsey, Buckley, et al., 2006; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005).

Although the emphasis may change slightly with the type of housing provided and the maturity of students, students are served by HRL operations grounded in a student learning philosophy, followed by a strong commitment to effective business management grounded in a student services philosophy. Administrative skills, leadership, operational policies, and student development theories are used to advance student learning. They are means to an end but are not ends in and of themselves. What I believe works best is a commitment to students individually and as a group. The tools in this process include quality student services, knowledgeable and well-applied institutional policies, highly trained staff members, an ethic of caring, and a deep commitment to enriching the lives of students.

Although a student learning approach may work best for working with undergraduates in conventional RHs, a student services approach may work better for housing upper-division students, graduate students, and families in apartments and other forms of independent living. Quality of facilities, availability of programs, ease of access, affordability, and help when needed reflect more the expectations and needs of students in these types of housing facilities.

How these philosophies combine to form a comprehensive HRL program that meets the needs of students, the educational objectives of the university, and the business demands of a financially independent unit of a university is a big challenge. In 1971, Riker and DeCoster developed a model that described the relationship between educational objectives and management functions in student housing. They identified five objectives and arranged

them in a hierarchy with level five at the top of the hierarchy as the most important (Riker & DeCoster, p. 6):

Level V: Opportunities for individual growth and development

Level IV: Development of an interpersonal environment that reflects responsible citizenship and a concern for others as well as an atmosphere conducive to learning

Level III: Establishment of guidelines that provide structure for compatible and cooperative community living

Level II: Adequate care and maintenance of the physical facilities

Level I: Provision of a satisfactory physical environment through new construction and renovation

The model was plotted along a continuum that started at the bottom of the hierarchy with attention to the facilities-oriented physical environment and proceeded to the top of the hierarchy (level V) with a student-oriented interpersonal environment. The model recognized the need for both management and educational functions in RHs and that the management of residential facilities ultimately served a higher educational objective, namely, the creation of a student-oriented interpersonal environment.

Riker and DeCoster's (1971) model incorporates many of the observations covered in this chapter and demonstrates how management and educational programs must be integrated into an overall student housing philosophy reflected in an HRL program. When they developed their model, residence life work was based on a humanistic approach that eventually transitioned into the student development approach discussed earlier. Since Riker and DeCoster developed their model, thinking about the role, scope, and mission of HRL has moved to more fully embrace student development and student learning. Using the four communities of

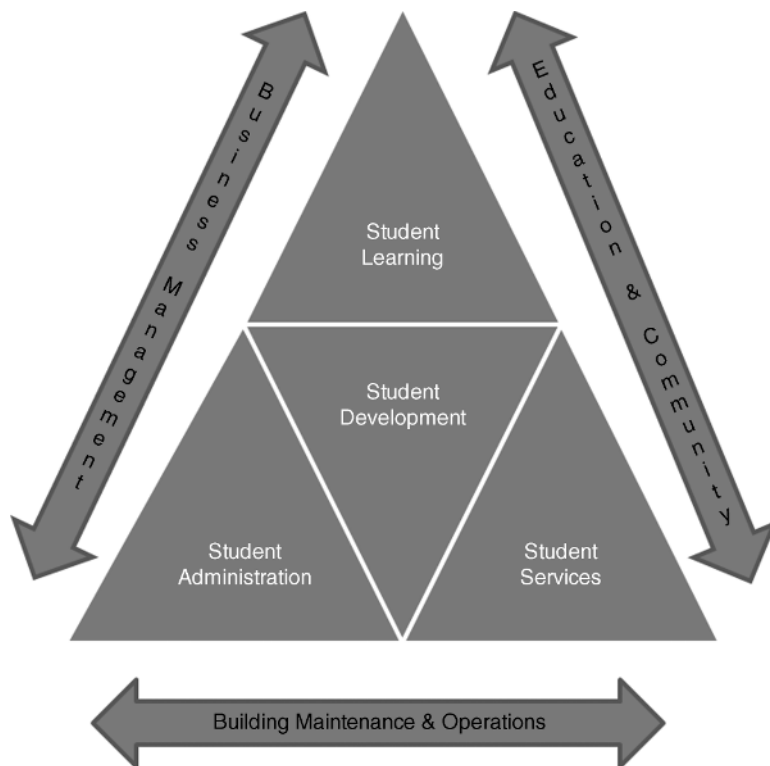


Figure 1.1 Model of Goals and Objectives for Housing and Residence Life

practice identified earlier, I have constructed a student housing model (Figure 1.1) that incorporates the housing fiscal and facilities management functions with the four educational program functions of student services, student administration, student development, and student learning.

Student learning: Active engagement of students in experiential programs in residence hall settings that result in measurable student learning outcomes

Student development: Structuring the peer environment in residence halls and providing residence life professionals

to support the psychosocial and cognitive development of students

Student administration: Policies and systems for the management of student housing that respect the rights of students, that support community living, and that most students accept as fair and equitable

Student services: Quality residential facilities that are clean, well maintained, and nicely appointed

Education and community: Efforts to advance student learning and build community among students

Building maintenance and operations: Quality facilities that are well maintained and efficiently managed for the welfare of students

Business management: Use of sound business practices and fiscally responsible decision making

The premise of this model, like the Riker and DeCoster (1971) model, is that the social and physical environment influence student behavior and that successful student housing programs are built on a foundation of good facilities that are well maintained and managed in a financially responsible way. The environment in which students learn influences their development by accelerating it or limiting it. This model is also based on a philosophy that student learning is a dynamic process that includes active engagement of students in experiences designed to create both functionally transferable skills and self-knowledge.

To realize these goals, HRL professionals need to understand why college students do what they do. The answer to that question involves an understanding of the neurobiological development of college students in late adolescence and how they change, grow, and develop during the traditional college years. These are topics for the next chapter.