

Housing and Residence Life –Residential Faculty Fellows Program – 2020-2021

Housing and Residence Life (HRL), a department within University Life, is committed to collaborating with Mason faculty to foster co-curricular learning, enhance the residential student experience, provide opportunities for meaningful interaction with students outside of the classroom, and support faculty innovation and research.

To advance this commitment, HRL is excited to launch the **Residential Faculty Fellows Program** to work with four of Mason’s Living Learning Communities (LLCs): Honors College, Volgenau School of Engineering, Business & Entrepreneurship, and Arts. Fellowships are open to term, tenure-track, and tenured instructional faculty.

Why a Residential Faculty Fellows Program?

Faculty matter – and research proves it:

- “Interactions between faculty members and students have long been shown to improve the quality of students’ learning and their educational experiences” (Kezar & Maxey 2014)
- “For most students, most of the time, the more interaction with faculty the better” (Astin 1993, Kuh 2003, Kuh & Hu, 2001)

When students engage with faculty outside of the classroom, specifically with “purpose, depth and quality” (Kezar 2014), evidence indicates there is a direct, positive, impact on:

- Graduation & completion rates
- Learning & development of critical thinking
- Self-confidence & sense of worth
- Research & mentoring

What is a Living Learning Community?

LLCs are partnerships between an academic unit/university department and HRL. Working together, LLCs help integrate a student’s academic major and interests with their residential experience. LLC students engage in curricular and co-curricular initiatives that support their academic and personal development, sense of belonging, and connection to their passions and future goals. By fall 2020, Mason will house over **1400** students in **nineteen** LLCs that include partnerships with almost every single college/school at Mason. Our LLCs provide students an opportunity to discover, explore, and apply knowledge through multidisciplinary projects, programs, and coursework in a wide array of different themes.

Mason LLC students outperform their non-LLC peers in both retention and graduation rates (Mason OIEP 2018). In addition, our academic partners report that LLCs are a great recruitment and retention tool for students, especially out of state students. In alignment with Mason’s strategic goals, LLC students create connections to their academic work in new and creative ways, receive additional academic and social support, and engage in transformative experiences through:

- Collaborative courses to foster and advance learning with peer mentorship
- On and off campus projects and field trips with faculty and staff
- Faculty mentorship and interaction
- Networking opportunities with alumni and employers
- Access to academic tutors in a wide-array of different subjects

Residential Faculty Fellows Core Opportunities

- **Engage** with LLC students outside of the classroom via events and initiatives at least three times per semester, six times per year for the term of the fellowship.
- **Support and mentor** LLC students during their collegiate journey by serving as a visible and available resource within the residence halls.

- **Collaborate** with Living Learning Community and Housing & Residence Life staff to develop innovative programs and services to enhance student learning in the residence halls.
- Offer **content expertise** to support student learning outside of the classroom through both social and academic engagement opportunities
- **Engage with student leaders** (Resident Assistants) within the Living Learning Communities to foster leadership and upper-division student growth and engagement in their major and area of interest
- Examples of Past Faculty-Led Initiatives Include:
 - Dinner, Play and Discussion at the Kennedy Center
 - *In the Kitchen* series – faculty cook with students in the halls and share their passions
 - Cinema Suppers – dinner, movie, and discussion
 - Tour of the FBI or Off-Campus Business/Employer
 - Eco Tour of Mason Neck State Park
 - Tour of a Cruise Ship for Engineers
 - Community Engagement/Service Off Campus
 - Hikes in Shenandoah National Park
 - Conducting research with students and supporting yearlong LLC topic-specific projects

Resources Available to Residential Faculty Fellows

“Partnership has its benefits” – Housing and Residence Life supports the co-curricular opportunities (field trips, guest speakers, makerspaces, supplies, programs, etc.) of each LLC both financially and administratively. In addition, we provide our Residential Faculty Fellows with:

- \$4,000 to be distributed as either a stipend or professional development funds for the 2020-2021 Academic Year
- Up to 20 meal swipes per year to engage students in the dining halls
- Space in the residence halls for classes and programs
- Administrative and financial support to plan, promote, and execute events and initiatives in the residence halls (*you come up with the idea, we help with the planning and execution*)

Timeline & Next Steps for Consideration

- Submit a letter of interest to the Living Learning Community Coordinator for your community of interest by **March 31, 2020**.
- Components required for the letter of interest:
 - Name & Contact Information
 - College & Department
 - Area of research and interest
 - Courses taught
 - Reasons why you are interested in serving as a Residential Faculty Fellow
 - Specific projects, areas of interest, or ideas that you would implement within the role
- A letter of support from the Chair is required
- An additional letter of support from a Dean or Director is preferred and encouraged

Honors College LLC	Telecia Taylor	ttaylo3@gmu.edu
Volgenau School of Engineering LLC	DaFran Ware	dware@gmu.edu
Business & Entrepreneurship LLC	Max Gocala-Nguyen	mgocala@gmu.edu
Arts LLC	Lauren Wagner	lwagner4@gmu.edu

For questions and/or learn more about the opportunity, please contact Aysha Puhl, Associate Director of Residential Student Education & Engagement, Housing & Residence Life at apuhl@gmu.edu or 703-993-8910.