Vanderbilt College Halls Assessment Design Team:
Recommendations
29 April 2014

OVERVIEW: FOUR AREAS FOR ASSESSMENT

The assessment plan is designed to track the College Halls project over a variety of parameters, as detailed in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Life within CH</th>
<th>2. Growth of person</th>
<th>3. How CH affects life across campus</th>
<th>4. What should we stop doing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affirmations (is this project achieving what we want?)</td>
<td>Discovery (interactions in CH increases interest in ideas)</td>
<td>How do CH students function in the broader campus context?</td>
<td>what 3 most important programs/activities gave you sense of community; what 3 should we cut and why?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional Commitment</td>
<td>How do non-CH students engage with the CH experience?</td>
<td>Attendance/involvement metrics (is it worth repeating?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>QLS questions (see Appendix A)</td>
<td>QLS “discovery” metrics; focus groups; RA small-group surveys; Oct. self-assessment data</td>
<td>Do CH students participate in research, honors; quality and kind of interaction with the faculty (GSS)</td>
<td>Focus group (2 or 3 per hall)</td>
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<td>Patterns of return (who stays in CH, and why do they stay or leave)?</td>
<td>New survey, approx. 20 questions (2-3 across each of 6 dimensions) (see Appendix E)</td>
<td>Comparative GPA</td>
<td>RA review</td>
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<td>Student org roles (are they still involved elsewhere on campus?)</td>
<td>&gt;&gt;feeds into survey questions in year 3</td>
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<td>Senior class giving rate</td>
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<td># of co-sponsored programs</td>
<td>Anchor Link data (see Appendix B)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td># /variety of non-CH students at programs</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

The majority of data gathering and parsing will be handled through existing processes. The Faculty Directors and the Graduate Fellows will be primarily responsible for running the assessment plan, but support will be provided by the existing DOS assessment team and by the Anchor Link office.
Some new resources, however, will need to be assigned:

1. We are in the process of developing a new 20-question survey on institutional commitment (column 2), drawing on a recommended framework drawn from the literature reviewed by the Assessment Design Team.
2. We will need to train up (and pay) a small group of graduate students to run focus groups in a January or February time frame. The expectation is that we will work with 10-12 focus groups each year, with 2 or 3 focus groups per Hall.
3. Eventually, we would like to work with VIRG and DAR to track longitudinal data – e.g. the 5-year-out impact of the CH experience on VU alumni.

In addition to the formal assessment of College Halls described here, there will also be information available from:

- the mid-October student self-reflection about his/her own experience as a member of an “engaged community”
- evaluations of individual activities and programs
- standard ResLife assessments and incident reports
- comparative and baseline data from the Ingram Commons and from the Spring Survey.

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INTRODUCTION:

The College Halls Assessment Design Team was brought together during late Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 to develop assessment plan for Warren and Moore Colleges, the two main-campus residential colleges scheduled to open in August 2014. Representatives of the faculty, including both faculty directors, of the Dean of Students office, of VIRG, and of the administration met on- and off-line to develop the plan. ¹

Baseline information for this work was drawn from the assessment work done at the Commons, including academic, cognitive, and social measures, and from the more general assessments in Residential Life. Assessment design for the College Halls system, however, was drawn from the ideals of “engaged community,” and emphasized the statements of affirmation and accountability that students sign as part of their application process:

**Statements of Affirmation**

- **I affirm** the importance of being a good student-citizen of Vanderbilt University and
  I pledge to promote the values espoused by our Community Creed -- Scholarship, Honesty, Civility, Accountability, Caring, Discovery, Celebration -- in College Halls.
- **I agree** to advance the cause of diversity by valuing human difference and through
  fostering an environment of open, constructive dialog in College Halls.
- **I promise** to care for and support my fellow students in College Halls, during times
  of both challenge and celebration.
- **I commit** to actively participate in the civic, social and intellectual life of College
  Halls.

**Statements of Accountability**

- **I understand** that my behavior and participation in a College Hall is subject to review
  by the Faculty Director and staff and that inappropriate behavior or lack of
  engagement may result in the loss of the privilege of residing in the College Halls.
- **If accepted,** I agree to participate in any assessments of college, hall, or program.

Our priorities were for an assessment model that was measurable and deliverable, and that could serve as the basis both for public-facing celebration of success and, in its diagnostic function, for year-over-year improvements.

An important point to remember is that “program” in the College Halls context is a loose umbrella term that includes a mix of formal programs, student initiatives, activities of a variety of sorts, and casual gatherings. Podiums are not necessary to the process! For instance, a “dinner in the communal kitchen” or a “poster campaign” would each be an important part of building an “engaged community.”

**SCHEDULE OF INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT STEPS:**

Historical and comparative data is available as described above. Additionally, the following timetable should be used cyclically:
Spring: Spring Survey data from first-year students (baseline)
Spring: Demographic data (baseline)
Spring: Institutional Commitment survey (baseline)

ongoing: Anchor Link data
ongoing: individual program/activity review
ongoing: RA review and standard ResLife assessment
    mid-October: Student self-reflection on their own participation in an “engaged community”
Winter Break: Quality of Life Survey
Late Jan/early Feb: 10-12 Focus groups
Feb/March: Satisfaction review: why did students stay / why did they leave?
March/April: Institutional Commitment survey
Spring: ask Admissions and the Parents & Family Office what questions they’re getting and what profile W | M has in their domains.
Late March/early April: Anchor Link end of year report (initial): prior to Board of Trust meeting
End of April: Anchor Link report (final)
May: review of “campus landscape” parameters (from column 3)
May: annual assessment report from Faculty Directors and Graduate Fellows due to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

KINDS OF INSTRUMENTS:

Quality of Life Survey (QLS) (Column 1):
The CH-ADT reviewed the QLS and extracted 40 questions correlated to the affirmations. The list of relevant questions mapped to the affirmation statements is found as Appendix A. VIRG has developed a template for a “Between Houses / House Type Design” (shared in Appendix D) that will allow comparisons of College Halls data with what emerging from other kinds of campus residential communities.

Institutional Commitment Survey (ICS) (Column 2):
The ICS is newly developed. This survey is interested in questions of **loyalty** to the institution, **trust** that the university will be there for them, that we keep our word, **satisfaction** of the area, living space, experience, and in a sense of **belonging** (and an affinity of values). It also wants to explore questions of practical value: students’ certainty of choice (“I am confident that I made the right decision in choosing to attend this university”) and their ideas of VU’s **quality and prestige**. The selection of these factors was based on the following:
A baseline ICS is being run during April 2014, and we hope that longer-term discussions with VIRG and DAR may lead to longitudinal tracking of these parameters.

A pull of basic data (Column 3):
The variety of data points regarding the impact of College Halls and campus life as a whole is rich; the questions framed here bubbled up as being particularly important to the discussion and worth annual review.

Focus Groups and RA reviews (Column 4a):
Focus group discussions and RA reviews will facilitate gathering of qualitative measures of success (what is working, and what is not). It will also help us to develop a clearer understanding of what the residents themselves believe to be important to “an engaged community.” Training of the graduate assistants will be handled by our Peabody colleagues.

As noted in Appendix D, the RAs can also serve as a source for qualitative data around civility through observable habits – handling trash, student behavioral patterns, and the like.

One of the expectations is that the conversations with students and RAs during the first two years of W | M residencies will guide the formulation of survey questions to be used in the third year’s assessment cycle.

Anchor Link data (Column 4b):
Event registration and tracking information will be housed in Anchor Link, with robust plans for weekly, monthly, and every-semester data reviews. Details of the plan are spelled out in Appendix B.

Additional data:
As noted in the Overview, data will be broadly available over and above the materials of the formal assessment plan. The October student self-reflection in particular will provide an occasion to clarify with the residents what they mean “active” in the phrase “actively participate” means. Our aim is “deep” engagement, rather than just check-the-box involvement.
Likewise, correlating incident reports (and aiming for a reduction in those) could reflect on the relative success of the College Halls project.

The minutes of 13 Jan 2014 and the Brainstorming report of 27 Jan 2014 (Appendices C and D) provide a rich vein of potential research projects around the College Halls idea. In particular, the review of social networking (following the Add Health model or following up on the modified “5 best friends” model described in Appendix D) might be considered as part of a next round of assessment design.
Appendix A: Alignment of Quality of Life Survey with College Halls Statements of Affirmation

I affirm the importance of being a good student-citizen of Vanderbilt University and I pledge to promote the values espoused by our Community Creed:

**Scholarship**
39a. How many hours per week do you spend studying?
102a. I have worked harder than I thought I could to meet or exceed a professor’s expectations of me.

**Honesty**
36a. How likely would you report an incident of academic fraud that you personally observed?

**Civility**
44c. Dorm damage is a problem on my floor.
44d. My floor is sufficiently quiet to allow me to study effectively.
46a. My floor is sufficiently quiet to allow me to sleep undisturbed.
46c. I regularly confront residents whose violations of quiet hours disturb me.
82a. My physical living environment has been damaged by others’ excessive alcohol use on campus.
82b. My personal or academic life has been disturbed by others’ excessive alcohol use on campus.
82c. I have been physically or emotionally harmed as a result of others’ excessive alcohol abuse on campus.

**Accountability**
67a. I categorize my use of marijuana as...
69a. I categorize my use of prescription drugs for NON-medical use as...
71a. I categorize my consumption of alcohol as...
75a. During the past two weeks, how many times did you have 5 or more drinks on one occasion?
77a. In the past year, I have had sexual intercourse while under the influence of alcohol/drugs with someone who was under the influence of alcohol/drugs (or both)...
78a. To the best of my knowledge, alcohol is consumed in my residence hall by...
79a. How many times this academic year have you used a false ID to purchase alcohol?
104b. I get consent before every sexual contact.

**Caring**
95a. I would know what to do if a friend told me he or she was considering suicide.
98a. When I need assistance with social issues, there are people at Vanderbilt on whom I can rely.
104c. If I saw someone who appeared to be at high risk for sexual violence, I would be willing to intervene.
105a. If a close friend of mine were sexually assaulted, I would know where to seek help.

**Discovery**
98a. Non-class interaction w/faculty has had a positive influence on my intellectual growth and interest in ideas.
119c. My spiritual/religious beliefs have been formed through much personal reflection and searching.
Celebration

I agree to advance the cause of diversity by:

valuing human difference and

85a. I have been made to feel uncomfortable on campus because of my race or ethnic origin.
85b. I have personally witnessed an act of discrimination (i.e., age, race, gender, sexual orientation) by a member of the Vanderbilt community this academic year.
87a. I have been made to feel uncomfortable on campus because of my sexual orientation.
87c. Multicultural issues experience campus-wide support.
109b. I feel comfortable with openly LGBTQI students living on my residence hall floor.
109c. I have LGBTQI students are likely to be harassed on campus.
109d. I have LGBTQI friends at Vanderbilt.
111a. While at Vanderbilt, I have experienced instances of harassment, bias, or discrimination because of my gender.
111b. While at Vanderbilt, I have experienced instances of harassment, bias, or discrimination because of my sexual identity.
111c. I identify as an ally to the LGBTQI community.

through fostering an environment of open, constructive dialog in College Halls.

48c. Students in my residence hall discuss social, political, religious, cultural, or ethical issues.
121c. I would participate in inter-religious dialogs if more opportunities were offered.

I promise to:
care for and support my fellow students in College Halls, during times of both challenge and celebration.

32a. I have reported suspicious persons to front desk workers (Reeves), residential staff, or VUPD.
32b. I always lock my room and/or apartment or suite door.

I commit to actively participate in the:
civic

100a. Students have significant opportunities to provide input into the decision-making processes at Vanderbilt.

social, and

44b. I know most of the people on my floor.

intellectual life of College Halls.

40a. How many programs sponsored by your residence hall have you attended this past semester?
48b. I discuss what I have studied in class with the other residents on my hall.
APPENDIX B:

Recommendations for College Halls
Usage of Anchor Link Data & Reporting
4-14-14

Utilizing Anchor Link as the primary tool for managing co-curricular engagement in the College Halls will mean that there will be an immense amount of data available for ongoing programming evaluation and annual assessment efforts. In order to most effectively utilize the data being captured, the Anchor Link team will provide reports on an ongoing basis to the College Halls staff and important stakeholders.

It will be the responsibility of the College Halls staff (Directors, Graduate Fellows, HRs, RAs) and any students involved in planning programs to register their events in Anchor Link and track attendance. This will be critical for the assessment efforts of College Halls and it will be important that staff at all levels continually reinforce this message and practice what they preach. Attendance can be tracked via card readers or manually using e-mail addresses or RSVP/invitation lists.

Each College Halls Anchor Link report will provide comprehensive information for all the programs happening in the College Halls but will breakdown the information by Warren College (Delbruck & Elliston) and Moore College (Rice & Smith) within the reports. The purpose of this is to ensure that all relevant parties are both aware of and able to effectively evaluate programming going on across College Halls as a whole and within each college independently.

Detailed information will be provided within each spreadsheet report but summaries/overviews will also be included to give an easily digestible snapshot of the programs and to help highlight trends or important points to be aware of.

The Anchor Link team will provide the following reports for each College Hall:

**Weekly:**

- ♦ Report of all events that that were registered & tracked in Anchor Link, including co-sponsored programs,
  - Basic event information, projected attendance #s, & actual tracked attendance #s
  - Including all data from the week prior and the upcoming week to bring attention to events that still need to be registered
- ♠ Demographic information for all students who attended any program that week
  - Ex. If three programs happen in Warren in one week, the report will show the demographics of all students who attended any of the three programs
  - Attendee demographic information provided:
    - ♣ Gender
    - ♣ Ethnicity (flag): White, International, Not White, Unknown
    - ♣ College Hall vs. Non College Hall Residents
    - ♣ Class Year
    - ♣ School
    - ♣ Greek/Non-Greek
Demographic information for any specific event can also be provided when needed

Monthly:
- Overview of events and statistics for the semester
  - Ex. # of events broken down by types of programs and size of events (# of attendees)
  - Demographic report of attendees for all programs that occurred that month
    - Attendee demographic information provided:
      - Gender
      - Ethnicity (flag): White, International, Not White, Unknown
      - College Hall vs. Non College Hall Residents
      - Specific Breakdown of Residence Hall or House
        - *This is an item that will be provided monthly and at the end of each semester but not weekly
      - Class Year
      - School
      - Greek/Non-Greek

End of Fall Semester:
- Overview of events and statistics for the fall semester
- Comprehensive listing of all events from the semester including basic event information for each program
- Demographic information for all students who attended any program during the fall
- Comparison of data from Moore vs. Warren

End of Year:
- Overview of events and statistics for the spring semester
  - Provide initial version at least 2 weeks before the April Board of Trust meeting
  - Provide final version at the end of the academic year
- Comprehensive listing of all events from the semester including basic event information for each program
- Demographic information for all students who attended any program during the spring
- Overall event and attendee data for the entire year
- Comparison of fall vs. spring event and attendee data
- Comparison of data from Moore vs. Warren

Each of these reports will be provided via e-mail to:
- Cynthia Cyrus
- Faculty Directors – Jim Lovensheimer & Doug Fisher
- Dean of Students – Mark Bandas
- Associate Dean of Students – Pat Helland
- Director of Res Ed – Randy Tarkington
- Director of Housing – Jim Kramka
- Associate Director of Res Ed – Traci Ray
Area Coordinator – Matt Sinclair  
Graduate Fellows (4) – TBD

Goals of these reports:

- Provide data on an ongoing basis that can be used to assess and improve the programming within the College Halls
- Provide an overview of the College Halls programs
  - # of programs
  - Types of programs
  - Types of programs not occurring
  - Attendance data
    - Are the expected attendee numbers aligning with the actual attendee numbers?
- Identify the demographics of the students engaged with the programming
  - Who is not being engaged with the programming?
  - Are specific types of programs attracting particular types of students?
  - Are students outside of College Halls being engaged with the programs?

How these reports should be utilized:

- Ongoing Basis:
  - The Faculty Directors, Graduate Fellows, and AC should review the reports each week to evaluate the effectiveness of the programming
    - Identify what programs are proving most successful and what types or programs are missing from the menu of options for students
    - Examine what student populations are not being reached & develop an action plan for how to engage these students
    - Evaluate cost-effectiveness of programs—ex. cost/attendee data
    - Identify what types of programs are proving unsuccessful or ineffective uses of College Halls funds—seek to either improve these programs or eliminate altogether
  - The Faculty Directors & Graduate Fellows should share relevant information from the reports with the College Halls Programming Council to guide them in planning their programs
  - The AC should share relevant information from the reports with his HRs and utilize the information gathered to guide the RA staff in planning their programs

- Each Semester/Annual Basis:
  - Relevant event and attendee data should be extracted for annual reporting purposes
  - Event and attendee data should be utilized in evaluating how the programming model should evolve for the College Halls
    - What types of programs need to continue
    - What types of programs need to be improved or eliminated
    - What student populations does the College Halls staff need to be particularly intentional about trying to engage in programs based upon lack of engagement during first year

Additional Notes:

- Ensure that spontaneous programs are tracked through Anchor Link after the fact
  - Train staff to register events retroactively and add attendance via e-mails
Include a question in the event registration process for College Halls programs to capture a student who is not an RA or a member of the programming council who is registering a program.

A Co-Curricular Program for College Halls can also be created through Anchor Link to enable assessment across different dimensions of the College Halls programs:

- See *Example Framework of a College Halls Co-Curricular Program* document (circulated to College Halls staff) for more details.
Appendix C: Minutes of 13 Jan 2014: various alternative assessment paths for affirmations (to be used as fodder for the October self-reflection)

1. Review and discussion of meeting of 13 Dec 13

2. Discussion of approach: There seem to be 3 stands of assessment: are the CH affirmations realized? What’s the impact on students’ university experiences? and are there improvements that can be implemented as best practices elsewhere on campus? To know that, we need to define: what IS the program? What is the population like? (Those data can be pulled after the January 27th selection day.)

3. Exercise: brainstorming on assessments related to the statements of affirmation:

3A. “I commit to actively participate in the civic, social and intellectual life of CH”
   Do they actively participate (though “actively” needs to be defined)
   Anchor Link, satisfaction measures, self-report, program publicity.
   Do they attend, organize, etc
   We should probably consider cultural elements, not just social or civic; might want to add physical/athletic as well
   During the October reflections, we might ask them what they believe “active” means.
   Inreach could be a better measure than outreach: how did you bring activities into your community.

3B. “I promise to care for and support my fellow students in CH, during times of both challenge and celebration”
   less vandalism, fewer incidents, fewer ED
   lower rating on QLS on noise; higher on comfort and satisfaction
   “I feel more safe” as a proxy on the GSS and QLS
   influx of tips of concern for peers.
   May need a more robust RA assessment. (They will be expected to meet 1:1 with residents.)

3C. I affirm the importance of being a good student-citizen of Vanderbilt University and I pledge to promote the values espoused by our Community Creed -- Scholarship, Honesty, Civility, Accountability, Caring, Discovery, Celebration -- in College Halls.
   Scholarship: GPA, Honor Society, etc.; what independent research they do
   Honesty: HC/conduct, but also white lies.
   Civility: noise as a proxy for civility: measure o noise, and the sound levels compared to different buildings. (Would need to correlate with RA report.)
   Accountability: conduct? participate in CH? ER visits?
   Discovery: stepping out of comfort zone.
   Diversity: Add Health model (http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/addhealth/data) – 5 best friends; could ask them to use VUNet ID like they do on ballots and do a set inside and outside of the CH system.
   Could also review social media trends or Anchor Link data.
4. Task to the Committee: by end of next week (Fri 1/24/14), provide to Cynthia at least 3 recommended ideas on how to assess these statements of affirmation. You may build on what we have here or address new approaches.

Please remember our goals of an assessment model that is measurable AND deliverable (!!!); it should serve as a basis for both public-facing celebration and year-over-year improvements.
Appendix D: Brainstorming report of 27 Jan 2014 (with research potential around the College Halls experience)

Statement: I commit to actively participate in the civic, social and intellectual life of CH.

Success/engagement of the College Halls Council(s) and its programs.

I know that the model is not yet developed for what the programming/governance council will look like but there could be a variety of things that could be explored related to this, such as the items below. Since the intention is for there to be a lot of student driven programming beyond/in addition to/in partnership with the RA, Graduate Fellow, & Faculty Director programs it would seem that the success and engagement of these councils could be a useful indicator to see

(1) if the programming model is one that is conducive to meeting the needs of the community and
(2) if the council is effective in planning programs that promote the civic, social, and intellectual life of the College Halls and
(3) if the council is successful in engaging other members of the College Halls community to become active participants in their College Halls experience.

Some ideas that might be considered related to this:

1) Interest in positions on the council
   # of students who apply/run for these positions
   Active participation of council members
       Attendance at meetings, attendance at programs, engagement in planning programs, marketing, etc.
   # of attendees (quantitative- Anchor Link) & level of engagement of attendees (qualitative feedback) in programs hosted by the council

2) Could use Anchor Link data to assess how many attendees are CH residents, how many live elsewhere, and what the various demographics are of the attendees—is the council successfully reaching a broad range of students

3) Faculty & campus partner engagement
   Planning council programs in conjunction with faculty members and campus partners
   Attendance of faculty members and campus partners at council programs (demonstrating outreach outside the community)

The commitment to active participation in “the civic, social and intellectual life of College Halls” involves more than passive attendance at various programmed events, although attendance is also part of that participation. But this commitment also involves the organization and promotion of, as well as engagement with, various programs throughout the academic year. The concept of engagement should be more thoroughly explored and demonstrated.

2. Re. the interconnectedness of the affirmation:

   Diversity (#2) and the care and support of fellow residents (#3) are closely related in that the latter should reach beyond the students’ “comfort zone” and more deeply into the diverse population of the Halls. While students may move to the Halls to be with already organized social and / or personal groups, their residency in the Halls should reach beyond those groups and into the entire population. This aspect of personal and communal growth is very important to the experience of living in the Halls as well as to the character of the Halls that will develop over the coming years.

3. We must explore how to create an awareness of and interest in research opportunities on campus, particularly in terms of how this is important to activities and programs outside the classroom and / or the individual course of study. In other words, we must demonstrate that research isn’t just important to classroom assignments, but that the living and learning experience can and should reach into varied facets of the
residents’ lives.

**Awareness of the Statements of Affirmation/expectations of being a member of the College Halls Community**

If we are focusing creating the experience of the College Halls around these statements of affirmation and we are going to be assessing students on these factors then I think we need to take some time to think about how residents will be educated about the statements of affirmation and the expectations being placed on them as members of the community. Yes, each student had to check that they affirmed these when they completed their housing application but I would venture to guess if we surveyed the students right now the vast majority could not tell you the general premise of what they said.

I think we should consider assessing the student’s awareness of the Statements of Affirmation or even reframe what we call them—the Commitment to College Halls, the Values of College Halls, etc. –something that when you say it a student will have an idea of what we are talking about. This goes back to the whole idea of what IS the program…what are we telling the students the programs should be? What outcomes are we expecting from them? What should they expect from themselves?

Ultimately it is going to be important when assessing this overall program that we measure students understanding of what the expectations are for them and they are supposed to be getting out of the experience. If we find that the students do not meet our expectations, it will be important to understand how aware they even are of them.

I think we need to be intentional about the ways that these statements/values are re-presented to the students upon their arrival in the College Halls and then at various junctures throughout the year. I’m imagining everything from being discussed at their first floor meetings to being printed and posted on every floor (perhaps placards that are more permanent than fliers that will disappear after a few weeks) to being part of the discussions about program development by RAs and the programming council. Then, I think we need to assess how familiar students actually were with these statements at both the pre and post survey points in order for us to understand how student’s awareness could have impacted the ultimate outcomes of our other survey data and identify what ways we can more clearly outline the experience for future residents.

**Assessment of the Reason to Join the College Halls Community**

In our previous meetings, we have discussed several times how there may already be sample bias with the population of students within College Halls because they are self-selecting. Potentially, the student choosing to be part of the College Halls community would already be more likely to be an engaged member of that community, have higher grades, be more respectful to their neighbors, etc. based

However, given that the program for the College Halls is not yet defined—I do not think that the goals of this community are very clear to the students. I’m not sure that we have any real sense of whether students are being driven to select College Halls because they are interested in the idea of the engaged community or because they want a giant suite.

In order to have a better understanding of the sample bias/the type of student we are assessing as we review each of the different components of the statement of affirmation, I think it is important that we survey the students upon entering about what their (1) what their reasons are for joining the community and (2) what their expectations are about their experience.

1) What are the actual interventions in College Halls that we are going to be assessing? Faculty presence, faculty interaction, faculty programming, student initiated endeavors, active compliance with standards, effect of CH social environment?
   - we can’t adequately design an assessment without knowing the interventions.
- the physical environment of CH's will be enough to move the needle on virtually every satisfaction measure we have or could design.
- statistically controlling for the effects of physical environment will be virtually impossible.

2) We are dealing with a self-selecting population, based on both their interest in living a beautiful new space, and having agreed to the expected standards for being a part of CH's.
- baseline data for these students prior to entrance to CH's will be essential for not overstating the effects of living and participating in these communities.
- will we know, systematically, why students have chosen to live in CH?

3) Our assessments, for the sake of both accreditation and possible future plans to expand residential education at Vanderbilt, will need to capture a significant amount of data on value-added dimensions.
- control groups will be essential and we can draw them from the pool of rejected applicants.
- we need to identify the data points (aside from persistence – because it is already so high) that Kirkland is most interested in tracking as a "selling points" for moving more in this direction.

I have taken an interest in addressing Affirmations 1 and 3, which I think overlap quite nicely. To begin, I would recommend assessing the following areas:

**Caring:** not only is caring part of our community creed, but we will be expecting the residents of Warren and Moore to express genuine care for their peers. To do so, we can utilize the response items on the QLS to understand the residents’ perceptions of caring. Additionally, if we were to consider the Commons as being effective and establishing our “baseline student” and “baseline community” which we develop through students’ senior year, perhaps we can see how responses/scores change at the student level, i.e. take all students living in Warren and Moore, identify their scores for the QLS when they were on the Commons, and see if they indicate greater perceptions of caring as compared to their peers who moved from the Commons to another location.

**Celebration:** I believe it is incredibly important for our students and the residents of Warren and Moore to have the opportunity to celebrate one-another’s successes/achievements/accomplishments. Through various avenues (RA and student-hosted events, poster displays, etc.) I’d like to showcase students. I don’t believe a survey item asking, “do you feel celebrated” is appropriate, but perhaps we can explore evaluating the frequency of celebrations and host focus groups to discuss how residents perceive celebration to be occurring in Warren and Moore. I must admit, I’m not intimately familiar with the QLS—perhaps there is already an item that addresses this.

**Caring/Accountability:** I really liked Richard’s idea of assessing how frequently students visit the ED or find themselves in a situation where their peers could have intervened but didn’t. I do not know if we have trend data on ED visits currently, but I’d be interested to see if we can explore options for collecting this and beginning a trend with the understanding that the trend largely depends on the “type” of student that resides in Warren and Moore. I’m still pondering this idea because it will be difficult to assume that if a student doesn’t go to the ED it is because their friends “cared” for them and held them “accountable” for how much they drink. Perhaps they know their own limits...

Perhaps a better way to approach this is to establish a system for anonymous reporting about concerns for another student or peer...even if they resident outside of Warren and Moore. If we were to roll this effort out for all of campus, we could compare the quantity and quality of these reports and determine if students seem to report more in Warren and Moore (this would assume that we have very intentional programming around what it means to care for one’s peers).

Community-building won’t just be about building community in W|M, but enhancing community at Vanderbilt through W|M. As we think about assessment, let’s think about capturing this latter networking property — characterizing W|M as a subnetwork *IN* the larger campus, as well as characterizing the W|M network per
Between Houses / House Type Design with eventual Within House Design using the QLS:
Having adequate control groups to draw conclusions is a difficulty with assessment. One approach to this is to use a between subjects design, where means across different types of houses is the actual control. By identifying QLS items that can be examined individually or combined into factors, we could create means or factors of variables of interest and examine them across houses to analyze for trends or expectations according to the type of house (Living learning, versus other). The possible interpretation is that we would expect means found for The Commons to continue across upper class living learning houses and to diminish for other types of houses where there is less emphasis on out of class learning or opportunity for faculty contact.

Below is a mockup of how this could possible look (made up data):

Over time, separate lines could be created for subsets of types of houses by academic classification, to look at changes within subjects.

Social Network Idea:
VIRG in conjunction with The Commons has initiated some new measures related to students social networks, with a goal of measuring how 1- the sources of students social groups change over the course of the first academic year and 2- where the settings that impact their diversity occur. Below are the items administered this fall to all first-year students. Our current plans are to administer these items again to see if either have changed in spring semester, as other sources of social networks start to compete (e.g., rush).

We could possibly administer similar items to the upper-class students in CH and as long as the surveys of the CH students are not anonymous, VIRG could match the new items to the same student’s responses from either their first fall or spring semester.

If additional items would be needed for the spring first year administration, we will need to work with Nina Warnke ASAP to get those items included, and will need to consider if they would negatively impact at all the spring semester Commons assessment needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Residents of my floor</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Residents of my House</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Residents of other Houses</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Members of organizations/ clubs/teams to which I belong</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Peers in my classes</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Upperclass students</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since arriving at Vanderbilt... (check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>My Visions group</th>
<th>Livin g in my House</th>
<th>My classes</th>
<th>Clubs/organizatio ns/ teams</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I have one or more friends that I do not think I would have known otherwise because of:</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
<td>76.2 %</td>
<td>62.0 %</td>
<td>55.7 %</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I have become closer with someone of a different culture because of:</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>58.1 %</td>
<td>35.7 %</td>
<td>28.6 %</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I have become closer with someone of a different race or ethnicity because of:</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
<td>63.6 %</td>
<td>40.9 %</td>
<td>32.9 %</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I have become closer with someone of a different sexual orientation because of:</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>32.4 %</td>
<td>19.5 %</td>
<td>17.4 %</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I have become closer with someone of a different religion because of:</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>63.0 %</td>
<td>42.2 %</td>
<td>29.4 %</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I have become closer with someone with a different political ideology because of:</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>58.2 %</td>
<td>42.7 %</td>
<td>31.2 %</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subjective & Objective Measure pairings:
Given the ability to obtain data from Anchor Link, we have good objective measures of actual attendance, however we do not have subjective feedback about the event such as attendee satisfaction and participation. We propose to pair subjective questions with objective measures of attendance so we can have a more complete picture of the student engagement in CH programming and activities.

For example for Program A we obtain:
1: Anchor Link record of attendance numbers for Program A.
2: Subjective questions such as: Why did you attend Program A?; I enjoyed this event (strongly disagree to strongly agree); I would attend this kind of event again (strongly disagree to strongly agree); I would recommend Program A to others (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

This pairing will allow you to have more focused assessment and evaluation, and a better understanding of the success an/or quality of program content without merely looking at the level of attendance as a proxy.

One thing that we talked about in our mini group but didn’t get put out in the larger group/minutes is the idea of objective ways of measuring hall civility. I especially liked the idea of working with cleaning/dining staff to measure things like how much trash is left in common areas, how much vomit is in the bathrooms on Monday morning, etc. Of course, we’d need to do this in the other residence halls as well to see if CH is really making a difference.

I really like the idea of a more robust RA assessment. Surveying the students is problematic for all kinds of response bias reasons. The RA’s may have some of the same sorts of response bias pressures, but at a minimum we would have an independent measure of many of the outcomes. In general for survey purposes I think we need to ask the same basic questions of multiple constituencies for triangulation/corroboration. We could also combine the first idea and this one by asking the RA’s questions about civility like hall cleanliness, etc.

Here’s an idea similar in vein to the ‘5 best friends’ idea [and maybe an alternative it is unwieldy to really get the name/vnet id thing right]. Ask students very basic factual questions about floor/hall/building/university characteristics. E.g.: ‘approximately how many black students would you guess live on your floor [or, alternatively, approximately what proportion of your floormates are black]? In the College Halls building? Attend this university?’ Or another example: ‘approximately how many/what proportion of students on your floor/CH/university come from outside of Tennessee?’ Another ‘approximately how many/what proportion of students on your floor/CH/university have parents who are divorced?’ [Then do the same thing with many other observable demographic characteristics.] The basic idea here is similar to the ‘5 friends’ idea: a student would be much more likely to know accurate answers to these questions if she interacted regularly with her floormates/building mates, perhaps through CH activities/programming. And since you know where every student lives [including on which floor in which building], you can calculate the ‘truth’ very easily. Asking about these same things outside the halls [e.g., at the university in general] would allow you to disentangle, potentially, how much of the better accuracy is due to ‘mixing/active participation’ versus just being better guessers [except if interacting with black floormates helps you better understand how many black students attend the university, which is plausible].

I also think asking objective questions about classmates – as opposed to floormates – would be useful. Since you know everyone’s class schedule, you could ask questions like ‘about how many students from your floor/CH are in your first/earliest class in a typical week? [where the earliest ‘first class’ would be Monday at 8am]. This is a question that has a knowable, factual answer that you could calculate easily and you could also ask this question of CH and non-CH residents to see if CH residents have better accuracy – again, presumably due to more active participation/community with their co-residents. [you could also ask about study groups, but these are really strongly chosen by students, so I like the idea about ‘who’s in your class’ better.]

1) Apropos Christopher’s comment on characterizing diversity from lists of 5 best friends, as well as Kalifa’s comment that de-identification of persons from names given by others is difficult, and Jim’s suggestion that applicant cohorts will have to identify precisely through student id
   => can we measure diversity of various types of applicant groups?
   => (and Matt’s comment) can we measure diversity in various activities through Anchor Link?
2) Mid-October reflections will give us consider info on what students regard as important in community
   => a) we want to compare and contrast College Halls (CH) community characteristics
       with campus population. Will OTHER resident halls also be asked to do mid-October reflections as well?
       => for purposes of compare/contrast
       => because the very act of asking creates a confound if we don't ask others
   => b) we should define means of revising our assessment, informed by the mid-Oct reflection
   => c) Can we use natural language analysis software, perhaps sentiment analysis software, to
go through these written reflections, and flag particular reflections to study (my role as Director of the Vanderbilt Institute for Digital Learning coming out here)

3) We want to characterize "the network" that is CHs, but we also want to characterize the social network that
   is Vanderbilt, and of which CH is a subnetwork, or a node -- how will we measure how CH interfaces with the
   rest of campus? Is it sufficient to query with CH only, or should we ask others (students, faculty, staff) how they
   interface with CH? "Have you visited CHG?" ...

4) In addition to natural language analysis software, I'd like whoever is interested to get together to talk about
   how other technology might be helpful, to include very notably mobile technology (e.g., can we collect tweets
for events for which we provide a hashtag?)

Our discussion centered around interactions and results of those interactions which is very close to trying to
establish cause and effect. I think it will be difficult to pull out all possible interactions to determine the
possible impact of College Halls. Plus, as was mentioned in the last meeting, The Commons is supposed to
have a substantial effect on Vanderbilt students' acculturation. Therefore I think the committee needs to
determine whether we are looking for enhancements to student experiences or are we looking at changes to
students caused by living in college halls?

   Also, it would be very important to make sure we take into consideration our limitations as to the
scope of what we actually can do before it gets out of hand and unmanageable. For this reason, it is important
to consider the other assessments already in place and determine if there are any that can be utilized in order
to not over survey our students.

   Existing surveys include the QLS, CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey, CIRP, Spring Survey (or it's
replacement), and the graduating student survey to name a few. It will also be helpful to include a mixed
methodology to bring in experiences that are best expressed through qualitative methods.

   Given the enormous amount of interest in living in W/M (because of the large amount of housing
applications), I wonder if it might be helpful to consider comparisons between those who applied and did not
get to live in CH versus those who do living in CH.

   Finally, given the size of the committee, I believe a subcommittee will be beneficial for developing the
actual assessments once the overall direction is set.
APPENDIX E: VU Student Trust and Commitment Survey Items

1) Vanderbilt values the things that I value.
2) I am confident that I made the right decision to attend this University.
3) Vanderbilt is sincere in what it promises students.
4) My close friends from home rate this University as a great institution.

5) Vanderbilt is generally flexible in meeting my educational needs.
6) I am satisfied with the level of prestige of Vanderbilt.
7) My professors at Vanderbilt are experts in their fields.
8) Vanderbilt designs academic programs that meet student needs.

9) My Vanderbilt education will help me secure the kind of future employment I desire.
10) Vanderbilt administrators use their knowledge and experience to help clarify confusion about educational processes.
11) I have faith in University faculty and administrators to do those things that relate to my education that I cannot do myself.
12) Expanding living and learning communities (such as The Commons and College Halls) at Vanderbilt is a good direction for the University.

13) In general, I appreciate the attitudes of Vanderbilt administrators and staff.
14) I am confident in University faculty and administrators to do those things that relate to my education at Vanderbilt that my family cannot do for me.
15) Vanderbilt professors treat students as important people, worthy of their time and effort.
16) Vanderbilt upholds academic integrity as a standard by which to live.

17) My professors at Vanderbilt are experts at teaching.
18) My commitment to Vanderbilt has increased during my time as a student.
19) Vanderbilt administration, faculty, staff, and students work together to achieve the common goal of making the University a better place.
20) Vanderbilt's commitment to students has increased during my time as a student.

21) I believe that Vanderbilt will always be honest in its dealings with me.
22) On a scale of 1-10, how likely are you recommend Vanderbilt to a close friend?
23) What is the primary reason for the answer you just gave? (OPEN-ENDED)

24) In your opinion, what is the one thing that Vanderbilt can do increase students' commitment to the University? (OPEN-ENDED)

25) I intend to support Vanderbilt in the future.