

Residential Faculty Fellow Program

Washington University in St. Louis

Dr. Brian Carpenter (Former Faculty Fellow in the Village and Professor of Psychology) reports, "Before living on campus, I knew students from the brain up. I knew in the classroom. After serving as a Faculty Fellow, I now know the hearts and souls of the students. It has changed the way I teach and advise."

Wash U Mission:

The mission of Washington University in St. Louis is to act in service of truth through the formation of leaders, the discovery of knowledge and the treatment of patients for the betterment of our region, our nation and our world.

Residential Life Mission:

Living@WashU - Live. Learn. Lead.

The Office of Residential Life seeks to provide a safe environment that encourages learning and personal growth in an inclusive community that empowers and challenges our residents. We continually strive to improve our services to meet the needs of our students and guests and reflect the high standards of Washington University in St. Louis.

Faculty Fellow Program Overview

"I am very proud of the willingness of our faculty to interact with students in the residence halls. I think this adds important enrichment to the lives of both groups. Faculty involvement is essential to our concept of a vibrant living and learning community in our student housing."

-Edward Macias

*Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs
(1988 – 1995, 2009 – 2013)*

History:

Washington University was a leader nationally in integrating faculty into the residential experience, known as Faculty Fellows, beginning in 1998 in William, Greenleaf, and Eliot Residential College. In 2022, now nine of our thirteen Residential Colleges/Communities are equipped with an apartment for a Faculty Fellow and their family to call home for 3-4 years (7 Residential Colleges on the South 40, 2 residential communities on the northside).

The Faculty Fellows program emerged in response to the desire to create connections between faculty members and undergraduate students on the Washington University campus outside of the classroom. Faculty members expressed interest in extending their interaction with students outside of the academic environment, and the undergraduate residential setting seemed to be a natural place to provide for ongoing, faculty-student interactions. Today, many campuses across the nation have well-developed faculty/student interaction programs.

Residential Faculty Engagement seeks to accomplish four main program goals:

- Provide undergraduate residents with role models or mentors and more contact with faculty members
- Encourage residents' use of faculty as resources for information, referral, or informal advising
- Increase students and faculty understanding of faculty and student culture at WU
- Meet the needs of those faculty who want more informal contact with undergraduate students

"Getting to know my Faculty Fellow made it easier for me to approach my professors in class. It is nice to see that they are real, normal people and have an interest in getting to know me and making sure I am experiencing a comfortable transition into college life." - Wash U student

Research:

Research has shown that faculty programs in residence halls benefit students and the university as a whole. Students who have contact with faculty outside the classroom have higher retention rates leading to graduation (Astin, 1977; Bean, 1980), are more satisfied with college (Astin, 1977; Pascarella, 1980), and exhibit higher levels of achievement (Centra and Rock, 1971).

The faculty members involved with students in out-of-classroom experiences also benefit from the experience. Faculty gain a greater understanding of students' needs, expectations, strengths and weaknesses that can lead to better structured academic expectations and challenges, and a reduction of misunderstandings (Pascarella, 1975).

Program Description:

Faculty Fellows will have the opportunity to live in residence among our undergraduate student population and activate programming that reflects their own academic and personal interests, as well as contribute to community development in a Residential College or Community. Faculty Fellows work in partnership with professional and student staff and are equipped with a programming budget to design structured events and informal connection points. Generally, activities should have appeal broadly to students, allow for meaningful interaction among students and faculty members, and promote critical thinking. Faculty Fellows will be expected to organize and facilitate programs in their community, as well as participate in larger traditions; have direct interaction with students, staff, and other faculty; and serve as a mentor, role model, and resource generally within their Residential College/Community.

Personnel:

Faculty Fellows should represent the different academic units at Wash U and will be sought primarily through an open application (including endorsement by Academic Deans or Department Chairs) and a relationship building focused interview process. Faculty Fellows are appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and the Provost. The Office of Residential Life coordinates oversight of the Faculty Fellows program, including facilitation of residential needs and partnership in programmatic development.

Duties and Responsibilities: (reference full role description)

Faculty Fellows are supporting the academic mission of the University and the goals of Student Affairs through the following responsibilities:

- Participate in and contribute to the life of the Residential College/Community, through formal and informal interaction with residents and Residential Life staff (professional and student);
- Provide leadership and direction in designing and implementing activities, events, and programs in and out of the residence halls;
- Serve as a resource, mentor, and role-model to individual students;
- Participate in on-going assessment of the program;
- Attend monthly Faculty Fellow round tables;
- Attend weekly residence college staff meetings (held most Monday evenings);
- Participate in preparation sessions (RA training, Residential Education training, and Faculty orientation) prior to the start of the academic year - requiring availability on campus around mid-August.

Washington University Faculty Fellow Role Description

Overview:

Faculty Fellows provide an intellectual presence in the residential colleges/communities and bridge connections from the academic core and student affairs. Faculty Fellows promote a spirit of intellectual inquiry in residence, by modeling and discussing all aspects of academic life and encouraging critical thinking, questioning and dialogue about important issues. Faculty Fellows partner with Residential College/Community Directors and Resident Advisors to engage students in learning and experiences in their residential community.

Faculty Fellows devote 5-10 hours per week toward the goal of helping students bridge academic and residential aspects of the undergraduate experience. They carry out their work through three main components: 1) serve as a model and mentor to undergraduate residents, 2) initiate and participate in residential college and residential life programming, and 3) co-facilitate the culture and identity of a Residential College/Community throughout their appointment.

- 1) serve as a model and mentor to undergraduate residents
 - Developing individual relationships with students and/or small groups of students through shared conversations, meals, and activities
 - Accessible to students in the residential college
 - Resource sharing and bridge builder to academic resources at the University
- 2) co-build the culture and identity
 - Serve as partner in developing Residential College identity, pride, and spirit alongside other Residential Life partners including RCDs, RAs, and more.
 - Co-host monthly Residential College traditions program
 - Participate in annual traditions rooted in Residential Life - RA training, move-in, Convocation, Parent/Family Weekend, Residential College Olympics, and more.
- 3) initiate or participate in residential college and residential life programming
 - Host or collaborate on 1-3 programs a month, using Residential Education Model for inspiration and/or individual interests/talents
 - Participate in programs hosted by Residential Life partners including Residential College Directors (RCD), Resident Advisors (RA), Residential Peer Mentors (RPM), and more.

Qualifications: Primary consideration for the faculty fellow position will be given to associate, full, and TRaP members of the faculty. Faculty Fellows must have belief in the benefits of a living/learning environment, a strong commitment to undergraduate education, and a willingness to make the necessary investment in time and energy in support of the aims of this program. Faculty Fellows must be excellent communicators in both one-one and group settings, effective programmers, able to work collegially with different constituencies, including

students, faculty, staff, and parents; and accessible and approachable to students. Faculty should be sensitive to and knowledgeable about the needs of underrepresented students.

Faculty members interested in the position should carefully consider intended scholarly activities or plans for sabbatical. Expectations regarding presence and engagement in the residence hall will preclude extended absence from the building. As such, absences other than regular vacations or short term travel should be discussed prior to appointment.

Term of Appointment: New Faculty Fellows will have an initial appointment of three years. In the third year, they can express interest for a one-year extension (potential total appointment of four years). All appointments are renewed annually subject to satisfactory performance and programmatic need.

The Associate Director of Residential Faculty Engagement is responsible for leading the recruitment, selection, and orientation of all residential faculty partners. Given the strategic importance of the Faculty Fellow position, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Provost appoints and renews Faculty Fellows, in consultation with Residential Life.

Conditions of Appointment: Faculty Fellows will receive appropriate housing, and dining privileges for themselves. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and the Provost reserve the right to make changes in the Faculty Fellow Program during the appointment period. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs maintains the right, at their discretion, to terminate immediately any Faculty Fellow who violates any terms or conditions of their appointment, fails or neglects to satisfactorily perform the responsibilities of the position, or violates any University rules, regulations, policies, or procedures.

Package Inclusions:

- Apartment: The faculty member is provided an on-campus apartment (2-3 bedroom) including rent, utilities, cable, internet, and phone service.
- The apartment is available for the faculty member and their direct dependents. Other occupants will be subject to local occupancy rules and may require permission from the University.
- Parking: Up to 2 yellow parking passes to be used in designated spaces on the South 40/Northside.
- Pets: Pets (i.e. dogs, cats, other domestic animals) Maximum of 2 pets, not to exceed 100 pounds total, are allowed per faculty family. Pet ownership must follow University policy and Residential Life expectations.
- Office Space: Faculty Fellows will also have access to an office space near their apartment equipped with a laptop/desktop, telephone, and other typical office amenities.