The Residential College System at Murray State University

Residential Colleges

- Clark College
- Hart College
- Regents College
- Springer-Franklin College
- Elizabeth College
- Hester College
- Richmond College
- White College

“Students shared that Residential Colleges create community and a sense of belonging, encourage cooperation and respect, and provide a support system with access to resources.” – MGT of America

All students, faculty, and professional staff are members of a residential college.

- Each residential college has a faculty head who is a senior member of the MSU faculty with an office within the residential hall.
- Each residential college has a College Council.
- Residential colleges have distinct identities as evidenced by shields, flags, graduation stoles and mascots.

Examples of Residential College Academic Activities

- Residential College Seminars – one credit hour elective courses taught by faculty within the residential college such as:
  - Animal Behavior – Intriguing India – Family Communication
  - Sign Language – Sociology of the Body – Lebanon and Arabic
- Honor Societies
- Academic Tournaments
- Tutoring
- Educational Programming

Other Activities that Support Student Success and Satisfaction

- All Campus Sing
- Murray “Idol”
- Community and Campus Service
- Athletic Teams
- Faculty/Staff/Student Dinners

GENERAL IMPACT

- Students and faculty get to know one another outside of the classroom.
- Students have more opportunities to be engaged.
  - The College Head is available to assist students who encounter academic or other challenges – serves as an ombudsperson for the residential college.
Six-year graduation rate cohort information prior to residential colleges averaged 46%. Our current average is 54% and we include high-risk students with developmental needs in our cohorts.

Prior to implementation of the residential college system, the freshmen to sophomore retention rate was 62%. It has exceeded 70% since 1996 and has reached 79% several times.

- Faculty and staff perceive that Residential Colleges contribute to successful recruitment and retention.
- Due in large part of the Residential Colleges, Murray State faculty are involved in student life to an extent that most campuses only envy and few duplicate.
- Administrators reported that the Residential College system is very popular with students and their families and serves as a powerful tool for the university.
- In summary, Residential Colleges are successful and attractive because they foster interaction between students and faculty and offer educational and social programming. They provide a group with which students identify, and they facilitate civic, educational, and personal development.
- The Residential College system is a highly visible component of the Murray State brand. Students identify with their Residential College, can articulate purposes of the system, and believe it is valuable.
- Administrators reported that the Residential College system is very popular with students and their families and serves as a powerful tool for the university.