

## Living, learning, and libraries: A cross-campus collaboration

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### **Abstract:**

Many colleges and universities have significant numbers of students living in on-campus housing. In addition to overseeing physical facilities, residential life staff provide programming that creates community and supports students' academic, social, and cultural development while living in the residence halls. In this chapter, Crowe, Hummel, Dale, and Bazirjian show the variety of programs that can be developed through a collaboration between residential life and the library and discuss some practical considerations for those interested in initiating a similar collaboration on their own campuses.

**Keywords:** living learning communities | UNCG | academic library liaisons

### **Book chapter:**

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) established one of the first Living Learning Communities (LLCs) in the country, the Warren Ashby Residential College, in 1970. UNCG now hosts eight LLCs, and the university's 2009-14 strategic plan identified expanding LLCs as a means to enhance the educational experience for students. Like most academic libraries, the UNCG University Libraries had a long-standing liaison program with academic departments and programs. In order to communicate more directly with students, the libraries also established formal liaisons to many of the LLCs in 2007. In 2009, UNCG's Student Affairs Division merged with Academic Affairs to report to the Provost. These administrative changes offered new opportunities to enhance the partnership between the libraries and the LLCs.

This chapter functions as a case study that describes an approach in which librarians and student affairs staff successfully collaborated to achieve the goal of expanded LLCs across campus. This collaborative effort began with the strategic planning process, continued with team participation in a national learning communities workshop, and established a variety of services tailored to meet individual program goals. It illustrates the development of best practices through a highly collaborative process. The challenges of applying theory in a practical setting are discussed, including the theoretical framework, staffing models, and specific programmatic efforts. The

examples, including those of negotiating these processes in a changing environment, may be generalized to other campuses working toward similar goals.

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO**

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, one of seventeen campuses of the University of North Carolina, is a publicly supported Research University with High Research Activity and an enrollment of 14,300 undergraduates and 3,225 graduate students. The Carnegie Corporation also granted UNCG its "Community Engaged Classification" in 2008. With 1,064.50 FTE faculty, UNCG's student /faculty ratio is 17:1. At the present time, 81 percent of freshman and 31 percent of the total undergraduate student body live on campus. Currently, 721 of these students are members of Living Learning Communities. Future plans for the university call for doubling the number of students living in residence halls with a special emphasis on LLCs. The University Libraries at UNCG collaborate actively with Housing and Residence Life and the LLCs to provide and support both academic and cocurricular programming. UNCG librarians also serve on campuswide committees engaged in planning future residence halls and LLCs. Through these partnerships, the University Libraries and Housing and Residence Life have successfully integrated libraries' services and resources with LLC student residents' course work and other activities.

Institutional leaders selected living-learning programs as a means to develop partnerships between academic and student affairs and as a vehicle to create greater student engagement with the institution. Living-learning programs are defined as involving undergraduate students who live together in a discrete portion of a residence hall or the entire hall; having staff and resources dedicated for that program only; and offering participants special academic and/or extracurricular programming designed especially for them.<sup>1</sup> In recent years, a number of national studies were published that highlight the importance of engagement. One is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), based on the simple premise that the more students do something, the more proficient they become. All of the benchmarks in the study (such as student/faculty interactions and supportive campus environment) can be enhanced through academic/student affairs partnerships in the residence halls.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the NSSE, there is a body of research that discusses how universities create environments to enhance student success.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Karen Kurotsuchi Inkelas, "Living and Learning Together: Results from the 2004 National Study on Living-Learning Programs," (plenary session, 8th Conference on Living-Learning Programs and Residential Colleges, Indiana University Bloomington, November 15-17, 2004), 2, [http://www.livelearnstudy.net/images/LLRC\\_plenary\\_address.pdf](http://www.livelearnstudy.net/images/LLRC_plenary_address.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> National Survey of Student Engagement, "Summary Statistics—National Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice," in *Converting Data into Action: Expanding the Boundaries of Institutional Improvement*, annual report (Bloomington: Indiana University, Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning, 2003), [http://nsse.iub.edu/2003\\_annual\\_report](http://nsse.iub.edu/2003_annual_report).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Alexander W. Astin, *What Matters in College? Four Critical Years Revisited* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993); George Kuh et al., *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005); Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini, *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*, vol. 2 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005).

While these studies describe the ways universities can encourage opportunities for academic achievement and success, living-learning programs in particular are excellent microcosms of these larger principles. The seminal study which illustrates the effects of living-learning programs is the National Study of Living/Learning Programs conducted by principal investigator Karen Inkelas. This study examined multiple typologies of living-learning programs and multiple outcomes on a number of campuses across the country. One key outcome noted that because there is no "one size fits all" model for a campus, different types of programs excel in different ways.<sup>4</sup> UNCG used this finding as the basis to develop multiple models of living-learning programs to meet a variety of needs.

## **LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES AT UNCG**

For forty years, UNCG has housed campus LLCs and through them, fostered a strong collaboration between academic and student affairs. The Warren Ashby Residential College (WARC), established in 1970, was among the first of its kind in the nation. It pioneered collaborations by providing on-site classes and faculty offices in the residence hall, academic advising, and a small student-faculty ratio. This coordination was represented in a unique way with a staff position, the Residential College Coordinator (RCC). The coordinator not only teaches several classes in the residential college, but is also responsible for the housing and community-building aspects of the residence hall. These collaborations formed the basis for additional types of linkages through the future partnership with the libraries' services and resources.

In the 1990s, as colleges and universities nationwide increased these types of learning opportunities, UNCG added several new LLCs. While they all share a residential requirement, each has varying degrees of curricular and cocurricular involvement. For example, Cornelia Strong College, modeled on the Harvard University Houses, offers students the chance for more informal interactions with faculty. Grogan College is designed around small groups of first-year students who share common interests and take courses together. More recently, additional programs have emerged spanning the range of transition programs, leadership, community service, and international education. The Reynolds First Year Experience (FYE) Program provides an introduction to the university and social support activities for a group of approximately 140 students living together in a residence hall. UNCG currently hosts a total of eight LLCs, and more are in the planning stages for fall 2011. UNCG adopted a definition for LLCs that includes having an academic component to the program as well as living in contiguous space. Another type of program at UNCG is defined as themed housing, where students live together and focus on developing leadership, communication, and social awareness skills focused on a particular area of interest such as sustainability, entrepreneurship, or health and wellness. These programs help students connect to the academic and cocurricular experience of the university and the greater community.

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<sup>4</sup> Karen Kurotsuchi Inkelas and Susan Longerbeam, "Working toward a Comprehensive Typology of Living/Learning Programs," in *Learning Initiatives in the Residential Setting*, First-Year Experience Monograph Series no. 48, edited by Gene Luna and Jimmie Gahagan (Columbia: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, 2008), 29-42, ERIC document ED503178.

Expanding LLCs is part of an overall Strategic Housing Plan, adopted by UNCG in 2009, which outlines a philosophy and strategy for doubling on-campus housing over the next ten years.<sup>5</sup> Key strategic directions focus on increasing campus living opportunities, becoming the first-choice living environment of undergraduates at all levels, building on the special attribute of being a strong residential community of common purpose in an urban setting, and enhancing the learning potential of residence hall life. From these directions, four goals were established for housing, two of which relate directly to this collaborative work between LLCs and the libraries. First, because 81 percent of first-year students live on campus, Housing and Residence Life should serve as the "gateway" experience for them. Creating a powerful gateway experience for first-year students and outstanding subsequent experiences for students at all class levels is a critical component of the plan. A second goal is to enrich community life and student learning by providing connections to programs of student engagement and experiential learning. The plan also identifies several core characteristics for all residentially based learning communities:

- Each program is a joint partnership between an academic unit or department and Housing and Residence Life.
- Each program has a unique identity.
- Core learning outcomes are established with active faculty involvement.
- Connections with academic support services such as advising, tutoring, and study groups are established.
- Adequate administrative and financial support is provided.
- Assessment is an integral part of the model.<sup>6</sup>

This plan is based on research that indicates campus living has a positive impact on student retention. At UNCG, there are higher rates of persistence by students who lived on campus their first semester than by their cohorts who lived off campus. This finding is consistent with national data stating the retention impact of residence hall living.<sup>7</sup>

## **CHANCELLOR'S VISION FOR LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES**

The Strategic Housing Plan is based on the university's strategic plan. Shortly after Chancellor Linda Brady arrived in fall 2008, UNCG embarked on strategic planning for 2009-14.<sup>8</sup> Writing the new plan was an inclusive, university-wide process with numerous committees structured around specific themes and strategic areas. Much of the plan was based upon the vision of the UNC Tomorrow Commission,<sup>9</sup> created by University of North Carolina then-President Erskine Bowles in the effort to make the university system more responsive to the needs of North Carolina citizens.

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<sup>5</sup> Department of Housing and Residential Life, *UNCG Strategic Housing Plan 2020* (Greensboro: University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2009), [http://hrl.uncg.edu/about\\_us/pdfs/housing\\_plan\\_2020.pdf](http://hrl.uncg.edu/about_us/pdfs/housing_plan_2020.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Pascarella and Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, 422-23.

<sup>8</sup> "Strategic Plan, 2009-2014," University of North Carolina at Greensboro, September 29, 2009, [http://uncgtomorrow.uncg.edu/plan/UNCG\\_StrategicPlan\\_2009-2014.pdf](http://uncgtomorrow.uncg.edu/plan/UNCG_StrategicPlan_2009-2014.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> University of North Carolina Tomorrow Commission, *Final Report* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 2007), [http://www.northcarolina.edu/nctomorrow/reports/commission/Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.northcarolina.edu/nctomorrow/reports/commission/Final_Report.pdf).

UNCG's new strategic plan focuses on the importance of student success with an emphasis on student retention and graduation rates. This dynamic document also stresses the importance of creating more meaningful connections between learning inside and outside of the classroom and collaboration. One strategic area, education and leadership, includes the goal "Implement first-year learning communities for all first-time UNCG undergraduate students to encourage integration of learning across courses."<sup>10</sup> The university defines a learning community as a curricular and interactive entity that enhances student success (learning, development, retention, and persistence) and also assists in recruiting quality students. It brings faculty, students, and staff together in a focused academic community organized around a thematic central thread that is intellectually attractive to all participants. The chancellor views the development of LLCs as a partnership between academic, business, and student affairs. She also recommended that UNCG consider adding one in-residence faculty or postdoc for each new residence hall. To accomplish this goal, a broadly representative committee was appointed to establish additional LLCs across campus. That committee included two faculty members from the libraries.

As noted in the Strategic Housing Plan, the chancellor also calls for UNCG to increase the number of students living on campus and plans to add several new residence halls in the coming years. As the university embarks on these construction projects, as well as the renovation of older residential halls, she sees the opportunity to integrate living and learning by challenging the campus community to think creatively about defining mixed-use spaces. She wants to be certain that plans for new and renovated housing facilities include models for LLCs and stresses the impact of LLCs on retention and graduation rates. She encouraged the committee to think about programming such as theme-based residence halls, where upper-class students in different majors could live and study around an interest in a specific theme—for example, sustainability, entrepreneurship, music and performing arts, or global business. Learning communities should also include integrative learning assignments, cocurricular activities, and faculty engagement beyond the classroom.

It is the chancellor's vision to provide a campus environment where as many students as possible belong to a community and where all first-year students are part of a learning community. Combining the benefits of learning communities with the academic path of students expands their educational experience and furthers their sense of belonging. This vision also provides for an enhanced role for faculty and academic affairs to participate in housing and residence life and is part of an overall university restructuring. In January 2010, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs combined to report to the provost in the effort "to better ensure the work of faculty within Academic Affairs and the work of Student Affairs professional—supporting the success of our students as partners—is better integrated to enhance services for our students."<sup>11</sup>

## **THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND THE SUMMER INSTITUTE**

The University Libraries were heavily involved in the strategic planning committee tasked with establishing LLCs across campus. All the academic deans were required to chair planning

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<sup>10</sup> "Strategic Plan," 3.

<sup>11</sup> University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting, October 7, 2009, 2, <http://facsen.uncg.edu/Content/Minutes/y-%20%20%20Faculty%20Senate%20Mintues,%20Oct%207,%202009.pdf>.

committees and the libraries' dean served as cochair of this one along with the dean of undergraduate studies. The libraries' First-Year Instruction Coordinator was also a member of this planning committee. In regular meetings throughout 2010, this committee engaged in planning for the practical implementation of the chancellor's vision for LLCs across campus.

An integral part of this process was UNCG's participation in the Washington Center's 2010 National Summer Institute on Learning Communities, an intensive four-day institute during which campus teams develop an action plan for creating new or enriching existing learning community programs.<sup>12</sup> An eight-member team was appointed to represent UNCG, with members from various campus units. The libraries' First-Year Instruction Coordinator was part of the team and played a role in the development of the action plan, further strengthening the libraries' role in the initiative. The action plan developed at the institute and revised upon consultation with the larger strategic plan implementation committee includes a learning community proposal plan for interested faculty, a timeline for implementation and assessment of learning communities on campus, and a series of workshops to engage faculty and staff in discussions about learning community development.

While action plan development was the primary goal of the National Summer Institute, large-group discussions and breakout sessions were also an integral part of the experience. Topics covered ranged from student learning to faculty development, with a recurring theme being integrative learning and its place in learning community models. Integrative learning can take place within the curriculum, as interdisciplinary work or integrative assignments across linked courses, or in a cocurricular setting, with learning experiences outside of the classroom or the campus.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching issued a statement on integrative learning in 2004, encouraging educators to "work together to build knowledge about integrative learning in its many varieties, and about how it is best encouraged and assessed."<sup>13</sup> AAC&U provides a rubric for assessing integrative learning, with criteria including making connections between academic content and experience, making connections across subject or disciplinary lines, applying knowledge in different settings or situations, "integrated communication," and self-reflection.<sup>14</sup> The AAC&U and the Carnegie Foundation statement recognizes learning communities as one type of space in which integrative learning can take place, and there has been significant talk on UNCG's campus about the importance of integrative learning experiences for students participating in planned LCs and LLCs. The libraries are uniquely positioned to support integrative learning in both curricular and cocurricular settings. In their more traditional public service and information literacy role, librarians assist students with integrative assignments and interdisciplinary work by providing instruction sessions, research assistance, and in-depth

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<sup>12</sup> See "2010 Summer Institute on Learning Communities," Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education, <http://www.evergreen.edu/washcenter/eventInfo.asp?eid=447>.

<sup>13</sup> "A Statement on Integrative Learning," Association of American Colleges and Universities and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, March 2004, [http://www.aacu.org/integrative\\_learning/pdfs/ILPStatement.pdf](http://www.aacu.org/integrative_learning/pdfs/ILPStatement.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> "Integrative Learning VALUE Rubric," Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2009, <http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/pdf/integrativelearning.pdf>.

consultations. As liaisons to student affairs units, librarians can also have a presence in the cocurricular aspects of learning community life.

## **UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES AND THE LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES**

Having library liaisons to academic departments is an established model in academic libraries. In 2007, the UNCG libraries applied this concept to other units on campus and developed a liaison program that assigns librarians to student organizations and offices as part of its Student Affairs Connection program, which also includes a Student Libraries Advisory Council and special events. The goals of the liaison program are to market libraries' services and resources directly to students, improve communication, and learn about particular student needs. The program fulfills one of the libraries' established public services goals, "connect with UNCG student, academic and administrative units to integrate the Libraries with the curriculum and student life."<sup>15</sup> Because of this goal, the liaison program has strong support from the libraries' dean and the Associate Dean for Public Services. Liaisons work with their units in a variety of ways, with involvement depending on the organization. They communicate with leaders and directors, meet with key staff, and attend lectures, meetings, and social events. New libraries' services and resources are advertised through e-mails sent to liaisons' contacts, who then forward them to their students. Several liaisons provide relevant programming, some of which is academic in nature, such as plagiarism workshops or information literacy sessions for courses in the LLCs. Others offer informal informational sessions such as presentations to student athletes or student government about libraries' services and resources. Liaisons also make presentations to staff of units such as the Student Success Center and Residence Life so that they are aware of appropriate times to refer students to the libraries. The Student Affairs Connection program provides many opportunities for collaboration within the libraries and across campus. Academic libraries' traditional student interactions are through information literacy sessions and research assistance, but Student Affairs Connection has enabled UNCG librarians to reach students in new and different settings and promote resources and services more effectively. Getting to know students better and being a part of their organizations is an added bonus. The program has also enhanced the libraries' collaboration with colleagues in student affairs and student services offices.

Since the liaison program began, the libraries were especially active with Housing and Residence Life and the LLCs, providing both academic and cocurricular programming. Some librarians provide introductory library sessions for UNS 101, UNCG's one-hour transition to college course, as well as information literacy sessions for upper-level courses. Two librarians taught a semester-long section of UNS 101 reserved for students in the First Year Experience LLC during fall 2010. Librarians also participate in House Calls, a program where each first-year residence hall student is visited by a faculty or staff member during the first week of the fall semester to welcome him or her and provide a bag of resource materials. One librarian was a faculty fellow in Strong College for many years and built on that relationship through the liaison program. Liaisons provide satellite reference service in the residence halls as well as individual consultation services. On a lighter note, they've served as judges in various contests and attend social events to get to know students and other faculty in the community.

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<sup>15</sup> "Public Services Mission Statement and Goals," University of North Carolina Greensboro University Libraries, accessed July 21, 2011, [http://library.uncg.edu/services/public\\_services.aspx](http://library.uncg.edu/services/public_services.aspx).

The libraries saw the increased emphasis on LLCs in the 2009-14 UNCG strategic plan as an opportunity to augment their relationship with the LLCs. Liaison assignments were expanded to all LLCs, and liaisons met in summer 2010 to set specific outcomes for the following academic year:

- Library liaisons to the LLCs will increase contact and embed further with their communities in order to establish closer communication and to ensure that students utilize the libraries' resources and services. Contact may be whatever is appropriate for the community and may include, but not be limited to, office hours, information literacy classes, UNS 101-type courses, training student peer mentors, and general programs.
- Liaisons will gather data such as number of questions asked, hours on site, classes, program attendance, and student feedback.
- Data will be collected at the end of the academic year and a report developed. We might hold a summit with the LLCs or participate in a program already happening to report our results.

### **CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS: LLC CASE STUDIES**

The Warren Ashby Residential College (WARC) appointed a new director beginning in fall 2010 who is very enthusiastic about strengthening its relationship with the libraries. The libraries' liaison to WARC established regular office hours in the residence with an average of four hours a week and more during peak times. She also joined regular staff meetings and worked to integrate information literacy into the curriculum. A WARC student assistant was identified as the Ashby Residential College Library Representative to serve as a peer consultant and is funded by the libraries for ten hours a week. The representative was trained by the libraries' liaison to WARC. Training included shadowing at the reference desk and liaison office hours as well as one-on-one instruction in basic library resources. The goal for the peer consultant is to embed in the LLC and to serve as a primary communication link between WARC students and the libraries. She also serves as the "first responder"—she can be in-house for those 2:00 a.m. paper panics! To track her work and help assess the success of a peer consultant, she recorded her work and the questions received in a Google form. This pilot program had a successful start and will serve as a model for future LLCs.

A new LLC established in 2010 was a residential component of the Lloyd International Honors College. The honors program was established in 1947 and the honors college in 2006. In fall 2010, 150 honors students moved into a newly renovated residence hall. A specific office space was identified for the libraries' liaison to hold regular office hours of one to three hours a week depending on the time of the semester. The liaison also worked with the eight UNS 101 sections called Proseminars. Also, a libraries' touch screen is installed in a common area of the LLC with access to the library catalog, AskUs, hours, and other information.

The libraries have a long history of supporting first-year student success at UNCG. This support has traditionally been academic and has been the role of the First-Year Instruction Coordinator, who coordinates outreach and instruction efforts for traditional first-year classes like English 101



and University Studies 101. While the creation of the First-Year Instruction Coordinator position predates the Student Affairs Connection program by over ten years, the increased focus on outreach expanded this position's role to include partnerships with campus units beyond the traditional academic departments. First-year LLC programs were a logical place to expand library services, with their academic and cocurricular components. The First-Year Instruction Coordinator serves as liaison to two first-year LLC programs on our campus: Grogan College and First Year Experience. To provide research and academic support, the First-Year Instruction Coordinator holds office hours on-site in the residence halls housing the First Year Experience and Grogan LLCs during peak research times. She also works closely with the University Studies courses (UNS 101 and UNS 105) associated with these programs, providing tours and research instruction. With the increased focus on learning communities for first-year students on UNCG's campus, the liaison to first-year LLC programs is currently working with coordinators of these programs to increase outreach. More office hours and research clinics are also planned with both of these first-year programs. In addition to these academic pursuits, the libraries hosted a "library mystery night" with Grogan College, which required creative use of library resources to solve a mystery.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Through this work with several program initiatives, overarching guiding principles were created which provide a framework for institutions considering these types of collaborations. These principles provide important checkpoints at the beginning of a collaboration and at key points along the way:

- Partners must commit staff time to work on a collaboration in a unique arrangement. With the variety of demands on both student affairs and librarians' time, each partner's supervisor must value the work and see it as a productive use of time. In addition, embracing the differences in work setting, hours, and delivery methods is a critical aspect of success.
- Senior leadership's support of and commitment to collaboration between student and academic affairs in key messages to the campus community and through reward and recognition systems is important for a sustained collaboration to continue to thrive. Inclusion in strategic plans, keynote addresses, and marketing materials are examples of this type of commitment. UNCG exhibited a strong commitment to LLCs by appointing a director of LLCs during the 2010-11 academic year.
- While resources between and among units can be pooled to create opportunities for new programmatic efforts, it is both an important message and statement of ongoing commitment to provide specific funds for staff, programs, and operation needs for collaborative projects. For example, specific internal grants can be established and request-for-proposal processes created to encourage new programs to develop. It will be important to be creative and consider different revenue streams to provide funds for these programs.
- In considering the ongoing efforts, it is important to put systems in place so that the collaborations can grow and be sustained beyond an individual's passion for the particular

projects. This integration into the culture of an institution is perhaps the most challenging of the principles to put into practice

- The programs and resources created should complement the student experiences in ways that are consistent with the university's mission, academic goals, and cocurricular opportunities. Involving students and faculty in the program development of these collaborations is key to the sustainability of the efforts.
- Clear learning outcomes should be established at the beginning of the project. A method of assessment should also be outlined at the outset and a timetable for measurement detailed.

## **LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

Much has been documented in the literature about the differences in culture between academic and student affairs. For example, faculty are rewarded for independent work, with strong allegiance to their discipline, and allowed to be institutional critics with the protection of tenure. Student affairs staff often enter the field to work with a student community and get involved with the larger campus and value collaboration with less allegiance to a discipline. They are not protected by tenure and therefore can appear to be more accepting of the status quo. With limited resources and potentially competing needs, these different cultures could lead to challenges. However, what is emerging is a new interest in student learning and collaboration focused on an emphasis on undergraduate education and retention. At the same time, residence halls are no longer thought of as just facilities. Instead, they are now considered part of the educational experience by combining academic and cocurricular activities. When faculty and staff from different professional cultures come together, there are always lessons to be learned!

As the University Libraries developed the liaison relationships with campus LLCs through the Student Affairs Connections program, it became apparent that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to providing outreach to learning communities. For instance, the relationship with WARC changed significantly with the appointment of its new director and her keen interest in working with the libraries. The WARC liaison saw an increase in opportunities for involvement with the community and is now considered an integral part of its staff. The libraries were also involved in the new residential program for the Lloyd International Honors College from the early planning stages, which helped cement our collaboration with it. The initial semester provided some good lessons and fine-tuning for the future. It turned out, for example, that the office hours scheduled both in WARC and Honors College were not convenient for students, so they were revised.

This close involvement, however, is not as good a fit for some of the other learning communities. For instance, liaisons to the first-year LLCs have learned that office hours in the residence halls met with varied success. Timing plays a critical role in these cases—office hours should be established at times with plenty of traffic in and out of the residence hall, but also must be planned at points in the semester when students tend to be working on research and writing assignments. Library tours and research instruction tend to be more consistently successful with first-year LLCs. Newer initiatives, such as the library mystery night and more structured research

clinics provided as part of the existing LLC programming structure, will include opportunities for student and LLC staff evaluation and feedback.

Because UNCG's strategic plan calls for a learning community program that permeates campus life, the libraries' role will likely expand and change. Assessment data from current initiatives will inform plans and decisions. As the number of communities increases, a reevaluation of the liaison structure may be necessary and discussions of scalability of programs will certainly be needed. As mentioned above, we hope the peer consultant pilot with WARC will prove to be a successful model that can be adapted for other learning communities. It may also be necessary to hire or designate a learning communities librarian to coordinate outreach efforts. Whatever the future holds, a collaboration has been established between an academic and student affairs unit that has contributed to enhancing student success at UNCG, and we look forward to building and growing this important partnership.