

## Redefining the Student Experience: A program to focus on the second-year

As part of Ohio State's ongoing commitment to redefining the student experience, the university is creating a transformational second-year residential initiative designed to lead to higher graduation and retention rates, improved student engagement and satisfaction, as well as post-graduation success.

A student's college experience is a time of sustained development. The first year of college is about discovering the campus and becoming familiar with its resources and opportunities. The second year is about the student discovering his or her place in the broader campus and global community; living on campus provides a higher degree of support for this self-discovery process. It allows students to become more involved in the collegiate experience, weaving classroom work with co-curricular endeavors.

Data show that a second-year residential experience enhances student success. Ohio State students who live in residence halls for two years have a higher second-year retention rate (95.7%) than all other students from that same entering class (91%). We also know that students who live on-campus are more likely (82%) to participate in campus activities than those who live off-campus (64%); such participation is among identified predictors of student success.

Through a university-wide effort, we will enhance the education of students beyond the classroom through a groundbreaking second-year plan. A pilot of the program was approved by the Board of Trustees in April and will begin in fall 2013 for a limited number of students who choose to participate in the program.

Central to the program is increased faculty engagement and mentorship. In addition to providing a variety of educational and developmental programs and support, faculty members will mentor students through the selection of experiential educational opportunities. Funding will be available for opportunities such as internships, Study Abroad, service learning, teaching and research assistantships, and leadership.

To complement the faculty involvement, the program will also offer individual co-curricular modules with applications for career growth, global citizenry, and general self-awareness and development. Examples include diversity training, intergroup dialogs, personal health and wellness programs, and professional development opportunities.

Living in university housing plays a vital role in student success. The experience can enhance and complement academics, provide support and a sense of belonging, build community and engagement, help develop leadership and life skills, and create lasting friendships. One year on campus is fundamental; two years allow for deeper exploration and better prepare students for a transition to the next step of their collegiate experience.