Themed House Living-Learning Communities

Memorandum of Understanding

2012-2013

1.0 Purpose of MOU
This Memorandum of Understanding is an agreement between the Housing Working Group, Housing Services, Residence Life, and the Council of Masters. This memorandum’s purpose is to identify roles and responsibilities regarding the Themed House Living-Learning Communities (THLLC) in York Residences for the 2012-13 academic year and to reflect support in principle by all parties to the success of the program.

2.0 Programs Goals and Student Outcomes:
Themed House Living-Learning Communities have been established in each undergraduate residence at York, focusing on an academic theme directly related to one or more of the undergraduate programs affiliated with each College and in which students will have the opportunity to live and interact outside of the class with other students sharing their common interests in an academic theme and, in some cases, one or more of the same classes.

The general purpose of Themed House Living-Learning Communities is to

1. Enhance the overall student experience of those residing in THLLCs and to improve their retention rate both at the University and within residence.
2. Help students establish peer support outside the classroom through intentional placement of students by academic themes in the Living-Learning Community clusters.
3. Provide mentorship, guidance and support with respect to a particular academic theme to students in the THLLCs by upper-year student leaders (THLLC Programmers) who are generally from the academic theme.
4. Provide opportunities for students to grow through appropriately themed events, some of which will be intended only for THLLC participants and some of which will be open to general student participation in addition to THLLC participants.
5. Provide ongoing support and involvement by faculty and/or staff with the development of the THLLCs and related events.

3.0 Responsibilities
Each party recognizes and accepts accountability for the following responsibilities:

3.1 Housing Working Group
1. With the assistance of partners, coordinate the development of program documentation and a guiding framework (e.g. THLLC descriptions, goals, learning outcomes, activities)
2. Organize meetings of all pertinent parties at least once per term, or as needed
3. Review the program in the context of the overall housing strategy, address issues and make recommendations to the Housing Steering Committee on all aspects of THLLCs including the addition of new THLLCs.
4. Ensure coordinated marketing for Student Housing, including THLLCs
5. Confirm application process, including supplemental application for THLLCs
6. With the assistance of partners, ensure appropriate, timely, and coordinated THLLC assessment activities.
7. Review and make decisions on any proposals related to facilities resources and space allocations with respect to THLLCs.

3.2 Colleges
1. Recruit and hire Themed House Programmers who will oversee living-learning community programming.
2. Provide / secure funding to pay Themed House Programmers - $1000 (Summer), $2500 academic year.
4. Maintain a common webpage for THLLCs, ensuring it is up-to-date and relevant.
5. Provide ongoing support and supervision for Themed House Programmers (e.g. regular meetings/feedback).
6. Working collaboratively with RLCs, provide training to Themed House Programmers.
7. Where required, coordinate with applicable academic department and faculty enrolment advising office.
8. Master or designate meet with RLCs to review supplemental applications and make final decisions per 3.4.1.6 below.
9. Manage administration of the THLLC's including Programmer wages and general program purchases.
10. Encourage Masters to attend at least one THLLC event in their respective college THLLC.
11. In order to support communication between Housing Services and prospective students, provide detailed description of past THLLC activities and possible plans for coming year by 15 April 2012.

3.2.1 Themed House Programmers
1. Working with Masters, RLCs, and, where possible, Dons, develop programming through the summer for applicable THLLC.
2. In coordination with Masters, RLCs, and Dons, oversee implementation of the program.
3. Ensure program engages students at different levels, both personally and within the overall THLLC.
4. Program to include events geared to THLLC only and events geared general students as well.
5. Meet regularly (at least twice per term) with Masters and RLCs to review development of program and its implementation through the year.
6. Participate in regular meetings with Masters, RLCs, and/or Dons.
7. Participate in assessment / evaluation programs.
8. Refer all non-THLLC student-related issues to Dons and/or RLCs.

3.3 Housing Services
1. Select THLLC locations in consultation with partners understanding that THLCCs are generally geared to first year transitional experience.
2. Include supplemental application as part of residence application.
3. Vet THLLC applications against conflicting preferences, confirming key preference, without consideration of academic program except in the case of Current Trends in Psychology and Life Science THLLCs.
4. Provide vetted supplemental applications to the respective RLCs (to be returned to Housing Services in accordance with the schedule outlined below.)
5. Assign THLLC rooms through the intentional placement of students in clusters based on recommendations from RLCs and Masters.
6. Develop strategy to communicate with returning students whose application deadline was 28 February 2012.
7. After each THLLC is full, maintain a waiting list and endeavour to assign rooms according to THLLC requirements, but without guaranteeing such assignments; After 15 July, room assignment priority will be based on efforts to fill all vacancies.

3.4 **Residence Life**

Residence Life staff will play a supportive role in this program as it compliments their programs and responsibilities. Residence Life will offer additional developmental opportunities to Themed House Programmers.

3.4.1 **Residence Life Coordinators**

1. Participate in the selection of THLLC Programmers.
2. Wherever possible, ensure Dons selected for the THLCCs reflect the theme of that particular THLCC.
3. Meet at least twice per term with College Masters to discuss these communities.
4. Help wherever they can to support the programming planning and delivery by the Themed House Programmers by offering expertise in residence life operations and activities.
5. Collaborate with Colleges to provide training to Themed House Programmers.
6. Receive supplemental applications from Housing Services; coordinate meeting with the applicable College Masters, or their designates, for deliberation and decision; communicate successful applicants for THLLCs to Housing services based on the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Receipt of Applications from Housing</th>
<th>Return Date to Housing (by 12 noon)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>May 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>May 18</td>
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<td>May 30</td>
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<td>June 5</td>
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<td>July 3</td>
<td>July 6</td>
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<td>July 10</td>
<td>July 13</td>
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3.4.2 **Residence Dons**

1. Where possible, work with Themed House Programmers to help develop programming through the summer for applicable THLLC.
2. Help wherever they can to support the programming, planning, and delivery by the Themed House Programmers by offering expertise in residence life operations and activities.
3. Endeavour to develop house programming that relates to and complements THLLC programming in such a way that engages students at different levels, both personally and within the overall THLLC.
4. Work collaboratively with Themed House Programmers on two events per term (where possible) in lieu of attending College-specific events as outlined in normal Residence Life Programming.
5. Participate in regular meetings (at least twice per term) with Themed House Programmers, Masters, and RLCs, to review and monitor THLCC program.
6. Participate in assessment / evaluation programs for THLCCs.

4.0 Global House
The parties recognize that Global House is a pre-existing THLLC coordinated by Residence Life and York International. Notwithstanding the processes laid out in this Memorandum, York International will continue to play a partnership role in the ongoing development and management of Global House including: the review and selection of applicants and the provision of programming expertise. The Global House Programmer is hired and supervised by Residence Life. Unlike all other THLLCs covered by this memorandum, the CLAY position at Global House will act as an assistant programmer supporting the work and programs of the Global House Programmer and be guided by the RLC on day to day activities.

5.0 Communication Protocol
1. Requests for detail information with respect to THLLC applicants will be made to the Director of Housing, or their designate, through the RLCs.
2. Notwithstanding point 1, the parties recognize the need for a distinct process to exchange information with respect to the Emerging Trends in Psychology and the Life Sciences THLLCs, to be coordinated between the Director of Housing, RLCs, and respective Masters.
3. Since Dons are employees of Residence Life, communications and requests to Dons from the Colleges should only be made through their respective RLCs.

6.0 Review
This Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed on an annual basis by the parties and revised as required.

7.0 Acknowledgement and Agreement
As of the 15th of May, 2012.

On behalf of:

[Signatures]

Housing Working Group  
Housing Services

Residence Life  
Council of Masters