

# Living. Learning. Belonging

## Supporting Student Success within the Residential Community

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**"Connecting authentically and deeply with others across all dimensions of life enriches the human spirit. The sense of community resulting from such connections is a hallmark of a supportive campus environment, which we know is an important factor in enhancing student learning."**

-George D. Kuh, chancellor's professor and director, National Survey of Student Engagement, Indiana University

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# Supporting Student Success

- Overview of University Housing Services
  - Relevant literature
  - How we support student success
    - Culture of Service and Caring (Mattering)
    - Staff training and preparation
    - Intentional Programming
    - Assessment
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# Vision 2010 Learning & Belonging

(Nellen and Willey)

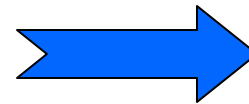
“A comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student development, processes that have often been considered separate, and even independent of each other”

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“Providing a welcoming, inclusive environment and exemplary student support services from application to graduation.”

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Providing a validating and engaging living environment with intentional patterns of activity designed to enhance learning and personal development.

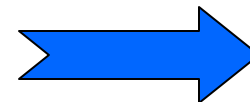


Learning

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Belonging



Living

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# University Housing Services

## Functional Components

**One-Stop Shop  
Model:**

Community  
Convenience  
Value

Professional staff = 85 / 38 vacancies

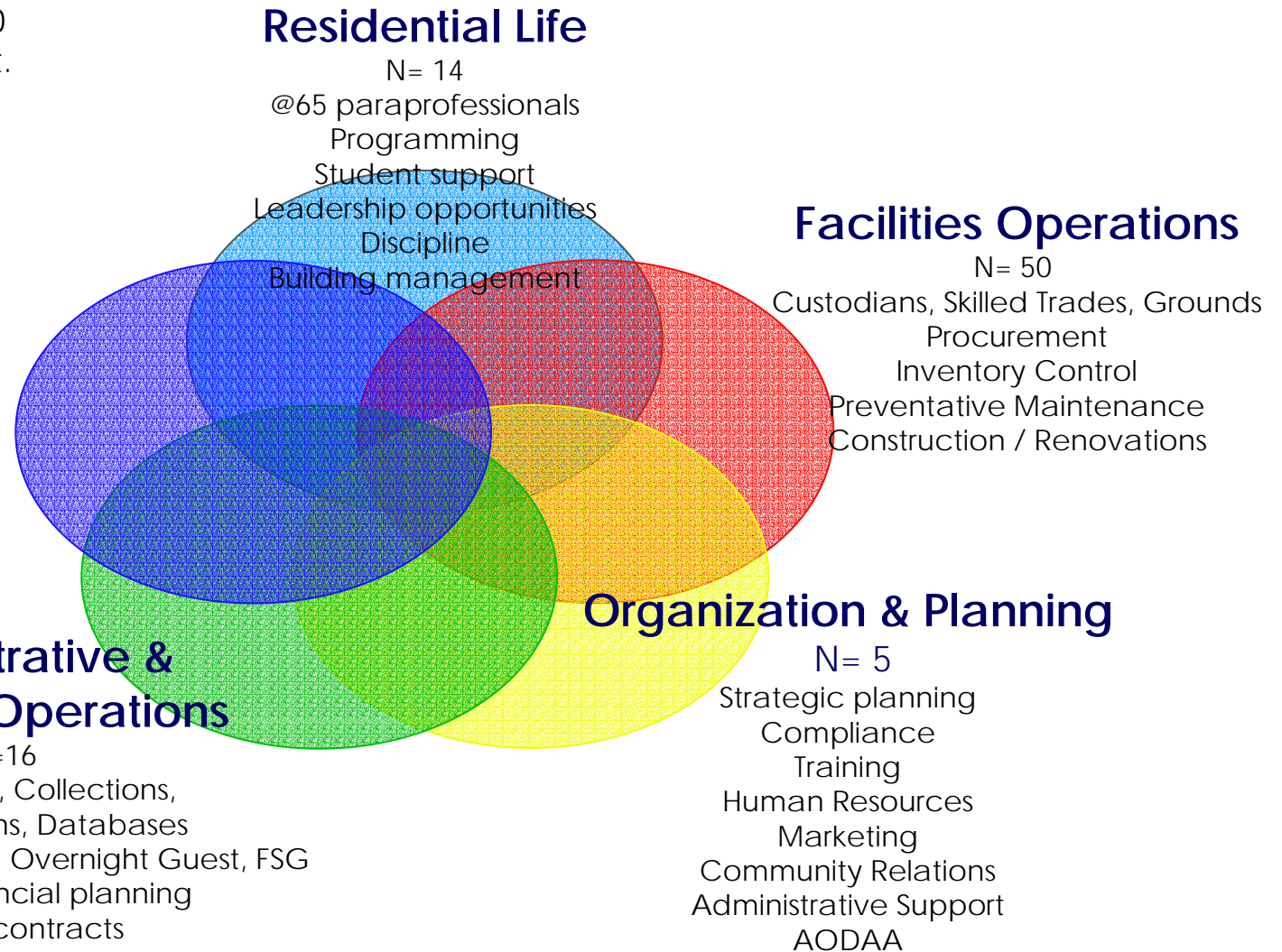
Student staff = 150-200

7 buildings, @ 2M sq. ft.

3200 residents

**Residents**  
student employees  
committees  
governments

**Administrative &  
Financial Operations**  
N=16  
Assignments, Collections,  
Payment Plans, Databases  
Conference program, Overnight Guest, FSG  
Budget / financial planning  
License contracts



# “Residence” as a variable

- Living on campus increases the likelihood of degree completion whether students' pre-college characteristics are controlled or not
- Resident students
  - ❑ participate in more co-curricular activities
  - ❑ report more positive perceptions of the of the campus climate
  - ❑ tend to be more satisfied with the college experience
  - ❑ report more personal growth and development
  - ❑ engage in more frequent interactions with faculty and peers



# “Residence” as a variable

- Social integration had statistically significant positive effect on
  - ❑ Students' intent to reenroll for the next academic year
  - ❑ Students' peer relationships
  - ❑ Institutional commitments
- Living on campus is a positive influence on persistence

Berger (1997); Christie and Dinham (1991); Wolfe (1993); Blimling (1993); Astin, (1993c); Astin et al., (1996), Ballard, (1993); Canabal, (1995); King, (2002), Pascarella Terenzini, (1991)





# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Applied to University Housing

Sometimes, we must settle  
for a series of "A-HA!"  
moments  
or experiences

Meaningful dialogue,  
self-reflection and self-ownership, clear career path  
and clarified values and belief system (sense of  
purpose and belonging)

Self-actualization

Growth  
needs

Students drive the processes and programming –  
partnerships, low vandalism – ownership,  
'higher level' programming (social justice,  
inclusiveness), relativism about 'perfection' –  
able to see past dualistic needs

Intellectual stimulation, faculty involvement &  
mentoring, study skills / academic assistance,  
study space, 'quiet'

Programming, leadership, student &  
Prof/staff mentoring /support, recognition

Culture of service, respect, caring,  
traditions, celebrations, active  
community rooms, programming

UPD presence, parking space close  
by, payment plan, doors that lock

Meal Plan, Stoves, \$ for food,  
reasonable rents, toilets working

compet

Belon  
with

Safety need

Physiolog

Basic  
needs

Full cable line up and remote control



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# Can We Create Community?

- We cannot 'demand' community, but, we can design for probabilities through intentional programming and through a welcoming 'spirit.' Creating community necessitates that those in the community actually feel involved and responsible. Community' involves elements of ownership, responsibility, struggle, and sustainability. (Roberts, 2004)
- Students' sense of community is most closely associated with being cared about and treated in a caring way; being valued as an individual; and being accepted unconditionally as part of the community - we start by being approachable and interested (Cheng, 2004).
- Real community, although challenging and taxing to build, creates in its members deeper personal awareness, appreciation for each other, and tolerance for the chaos and uncertainty of life experiences (Peck, 1987).



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# Mattering and Marginality

- Proposes that when people begin a new experience they can feel uneasy about their ability and what their role is or should be in that experience.
- Marginality equates to 'not fitting in.'
- Marginality results in self-consciousness. Self-consciousness results in the inability to perform up to one's capabilities.
- **When people believe that they matter to someone else elements of marginality diminish.**

# Mattering and Marginality

- Students succeed when they are appreciated by others and receive positive attention.
- Students who feel they 'matter' at an institution are more likely to persist and develop than those who feel they are on the margins and not connected.
- **Mattering includes:**
  - ❑ Attention: being noticed
  - ❑ Importance: believing one is cared about
  - ❑ Ego Extension: belief that someone else will be proud of successes or sympathize with failures
  - ❑ Dependence: being needed
  - ❑ Appreciation: feeling that one's efforts are appreciated by others

(Schlossberg, Lynch & Chickering, 1989)

# Community and Programming

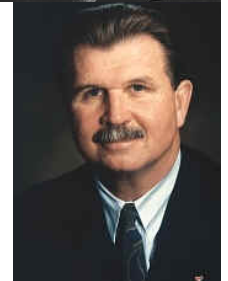
- By its very nature good programming lets students know that they 'matter' - by addressing their expressed or predicted needs and presenting social or intellectual opportunities that are of interest to them.
- SJSU residential communities and programs are designed to:
  - ❑ Encourage free expression
  - ❑ Accept and treat students as individuals
  - ❑ Facilitate meaningful interactions with faculty and staff within the physical residential setting
  - ❑ Provide active learning and social interaction
  - ❑ Celebrate traditions and heritage of SJSU
  - ❑ Offer assistance and programs to students who might feel lonely, depressed, and / or marginalized
  - ❑ Foster positive relationships among ethnic & cultural groups
  - ❑ Promote self exploration and values clarification
  - ❑ Promote ownership / common expectations within the group

# What do these people have in common?



Paul Reiser, actor, Mad About You  
Jerry O'Connell, actor, Stand by Me, Scream, Jerry McGuire  
Chyna, WWF  
Katie Couric, Today Show  
Mike Ditka, announcer  
Joseph Pantaliono, actor  
Donna Shalala, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services  
Hillary Clinton, former First Lady  
Wesley Snipes, actor  
Sheryl Crow, musical artist  
John Nabor, Olympic swimmer and commentator  
David Boren, Senator & former Governor of OK  
Madelyn Smith, actress  
Jeremy Castle, country singer  
Beatrice Berry, talk show host  
Jack Curry, editor of TV Guide  
Joe Pantene, actor and comedian  
Sean Sealy, from Road Rules  
Rusty Greer, player for Texas Rangers  
Mike Ditka, NFL player / coach  
Jack Curry, editor of TV Guide  
Grace Morgan, country singer

**They were all  
resident advisors!**



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# Residential Life Staff – one of our greatest assets!

## Training & Preparation

### ■ **Residential Life professional staff**

- ❑ Student development, emergency preparedness and response, counseling, building management Master's degree. Live-in.

### ■ **Resident Advisor staff**

- ❑ One semester leadership class prior to first semester as Resident Advisor
- ❑ Intensive two-week training program prior to assignment; on-going in-service training during the course of the academic year.
- ❑ Upper division / grad live-in student

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# Residential Life Programming Model

Community development is a natural by-product of good programming because good programs are based on student needs.

- **Multicultural Competence**

Wisdom that is built over time and reflection; 'inclusive excellence,' learning from cultural difference; a welcoming community that engages all of its diversity in the service of learning. Students will strive to learn from differences in people, ideas and opinions

- **Values & Identity**

Who am I? How will I interact in the world, with others?

- **Communication**

Interpersonal communication, recognition of barriers to good communication, positive listening, managing conflict

- **Lifelong Learning**

Develop academic and life skills to maximize personal success

- **Civic Engagement**

Being a responsible community member, making informed civic judgments, taking action on social problems and issues



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## 7 Vectors of Psychosocial Development

1. Achieving competence
2. Managing emotions
3. Becoming autonomous
4. Mature (Freeing) interpersonal relationships
5. Establishing identity
6. Clarifying purpose
7. Developing integrity

(Chickering Resieer, 1993). Non-linear. Not generalizable across all students and all cultures

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# First Year Students – applying the theory

## **Developmental Tasks:**

- Adjusting from living at 'home' (family / home life / jobs / friends), and transitioning to being on one's own (loss of community); developing and/or discovering one's likes, interests, and preferences, apart from past 'labels or definitions of self given by others; balancing social and academic demands and pressures.

## **Predictable Struggles:**

- Homesickness/detachment from family/ significant others; depression; anxiety; inappropriate study/academic skills; lack of connection/social life/ friends; loneliness; uncertainty about major and purpose in college; using unhealthy coping behaviors such as binge drinking, unprotected sex, promiscuity; roommate conflicts / relationship issues, isolation

# First Year Students (example)

## ■ Issue

- ❑ Homesickness
- ❑ Isolation / feeling lost
- ❑ Loss of Identity
- ❑ Loss of 'community'
- ❑ Roommate conflicts
- ❑ Testing the limits of RAs and other housing staff
- ❑ Financial adjustments / managing money
- ❑ Indecision / tension around choice of major
- ❑ 'Group specific' issues: international students, students from under-represented / marginalized groups, (vulnerability, lack of advocates and sense of belonging)

## ■ Approach

- ❑ Frosh Start – seminars
- ❑ Welcome Week
- ❑ Socials / interest surveys
- ❑ Floor meetings / roommate agreements / mediations
- ❑ 'Tone-setting' policies, procedures – noise, Code of Conduct
- ❑ Campus tour / scavenger hunts
- ❑ Values clarification, alcohol education, relationships, safe sex
- ❑ Referrals to campus resources
- ❑ Money management
- ❑ Library skills
- ❑ Job information
- ❑ Culture specific activities and organizations, peer role models from under-represented groups

# “Learning Communities” as a variable

- Learning Communities are living situations which center around an academic program and / or special interest. (Sometimes involves academic cohorts)
- Research indicates that learning communities have statistically significant positive net effects on student persistence into the second semester (Tinto & Russo, 1994) and into the second year (Stassen, 2003; Tinto, 1997)
- Meta-analysis of more than 300 studies indicate that cooperative learning environments promote both academic and social engagement and success (Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1998a)
  - Foster development of supportive peer groups
  - Greater involvement in classroom learning
  - Greater involvement in social activities
  - Perceptions of greater academic development
  - Greater integration of student's academic and non-academic lives
  - Foster a sense of 'educational citizenship" –that is, a sense of responsibility for the learning of others as well as for one's own (Tinto, 1997; Tinto & Goodsell, 1993; Tinto, Goodsell, & Russo, 1994)

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# National Living and Learning Study 2004

- 'Living-learning students' were more likely than their counterparts to
  - engage in positive, strengthening activities such as discussing academics and social issues with peers or forging faculty mentoring relationships and
  - reducing occurrences of negative behaviors such as binge drinking' (2006).
- Living / Learning students found the social transition to college somewhat 'easier' than their peers
- Higher levels of intellectual growth, academic and personal self confidence, and appreciation of diversity
- Benefits of Learning Communities over time include: improved academic achievement, higher retention rates, ongoing (positive) socialization, and increased faculty-student and student-student interaction.

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## National Living and Learning Study 2004

When compared to peers at other institutions,  
**SJSU residential students reported:**

- Lower levels of academic preparation and achievement in high school
- They found SJSU to be supportive academically
- Significantly more supportive related to campus climate issues
- They studied and attended classes less
- Worked more at jobs in order to pay for college
- Less community service activities and more use of technology as entertainment



# National Living and Learning Study 2004

When compared to peers at other institutions  
**SJSU residential students reported:**

- Slightly higher levels of faculty mentoring relationships
- Significantly less 'future related' academic related activities like study abroad, independent research or community service
- Probably the most dramatic difference between the SJSU cohort and their peers was the comparatively **low level of alcohol use in college** with 53% of respondents indicating that they either don't drink alcohol or are drinking less since coming to college.
- SJSU students, when compared to their peers, reported a significantly **lower 'overall sense of belonging' on campus and satisfaction with their courses.**

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# Living & Learning Communities at SJSU

- **2006/007 Living Learning Communities:**
  - ❑ Engineering
  - ❑ Honors Humanities
  - ❑ International and Global Living
  - ❑ Intensive Academic
  - ❑ First Year Experience
- **Future goals** for Living-Learning areas include:
  - ❑ Increased academic themed floors, graduate mentors, academic skill assessment and support, on-site academic advising, weekly dialogue groups and civic engagement activities, theme related 'blog' sites and online communities.

End of formal presentation

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# Traditions

- Frosh Start (Freshman transition programs)
  - Welcome week (social activities for all residents)
  - Community banquets
  - Leadership recognition banquets / ceremonies
  - Finals Midnight Breakfast (celebrity chefs)
  - Finals care packages
  - Battle of the Buildings
  - National Residence Hall Honorary
    - Chapter membership (per campus) is restricted to 1% of students living on campus. Criteria – leadership and scholarship
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# Family Support

- Family orientation
  - Web resources / special site
  - Homecoming Brunch
  - Finals care package
  - Letters home
  - ListServ
  - Future: e-newlsetters
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# Assessment

- **Educational Benchmarking Survey (EBI)**
- Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I).
  - Annual Benchmark with 150 colleges and universities.
  - Select six 'deep' comparison.
  - Student satisfaction data, student qualitative feedback and personal outcome assessment.
  - (Since 1999) (65% - 85% return rate)
- **CSU housing department benchmarking** (Since 2006)
  - Student satisfaction and personal outcome assessment
- **National Living Learning Study** (2004, 2006)
  - Student perceptions of campus and living environment
  - Controlled comparison against students not assigned to Living-Learning community
  - Student personal outcome assessment
- **Student Inquiry forms**
- **Web site:** [info@housing.sjsu.edu](mailto:info@housing.sjsu.edu)

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# The Future

- **Expanded academic partnerships**
  - Academic Related Living Learning Communities
  - Faculty-In-Residence program
  - Academic Skills Centers
  - Faculty Lunch & Learn series
- **Sophomore, Junior, Senior Year Experience programs**
- **Institutional-Specific Research**
  - Residential Student Success on campus
  - Emancipated Foster Youth
  - Longitudinal studies – comparative analysis
    - Students of color; multi-racial, GLBT, gender
- **Social Responsibility Initiatives**
  - Social Justice, Alternative Spring Break



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## Predicted needs according to class standing

### ❑ **First Year**

- ❑ Friendship / belonging
- ❑ Resource information
- ❑ Academic guidance
- ❑ Social outlets
- ❑ Personal responsibility – time / budget / commitment management
- ❑ Sexuality awareness
- ❑ Change in status- identity confusion – begin anew
- ❑ Need for a safe place to express feelings
- ❑ Accepting personal authority rather than having it imposed

### ❑ **Sophomore**

- ❑ Academic guidance
- ❑ Leadership responsibilities
- ❑ Greater recognition
- ❑ Broader social life
- ❑ Increase involvement
- ❑ Deeper relationships / history
- ❑ Greater mobility / independence
- ❑ Self assertion
- ❑ More privacy
- ❑ Career / major confusion
- ❑ Concern about 'right choice' of college
- ❑ Community service

# Predicted needs according to class standing

## ❑ Junior

- ❑ Establishing unique identity
- ❑ Clarifying career objective and goals
- ❑ Responsibilities to self
- ❑ Expanding horizons - independence
- ❑ 'Getting serious' about personal life, relationships, academics
- ❑ Time to self – reflection / interests
- ❑ Application of knowledge and experience
- ❑ Support of others
- ❑ Striving for personal balance

## ❑ Senior

- ❑ Autocratic about friends
- ❑ Interviewing for jobs – anxiety
- ❑ Worries about being competent
- ❑ Concerns about 'losing touch' with friends
- ❑ Being autonomous
- ❑ Reinforcement that they will be successful in the 'real world'
- ❑ Clarify goals and objectives

# Weekly RA Goals – First Year residents

- **Week 1:** meet residents when they arrive, personalized door tags, answer general questions, floor meeting, associate names with faces, learn room numbers and students in them, assist residents with way-finding and negotiating logistics of campus, needs assessment. Be available.
- **Week 2:** Programming interest surveys, begin formal programming, check-in with residents about classes, ask probing questions
- **Week 3:** By now RA should be able to 'match names with faces,' looking out for loneliness, stepped up programming efforts- homesickness, academic skills. Study bucks.
- **Week 4:** Floor logos, socials, programs: test taking / term paper anxiety, library skills
- **Week 5:** Roommate issues, maintenance issues, money concerns, loners apparent, relationship issues from 'home' - suicide / depression (October)
- **Week 6:** Residents learning to help selves, RA being visible

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# Faculty-In-Residence Film Series on Race, Gender and Multiracial Identity

- Faculty-In-Residence: Dr. Curtiss Rooks, Asian American Studies
  - The Scorpion King
  - Mississippi Masala
  - Romeo Must Die
  - **CRASH** - Facilitated by Prof. Hien Duc Do, Asian American Studies
  - **Showdown In Little Tokyo**- Facilitated by Prof. Perlita Dicochea, Mexican American Studies
  - **Daughters of the Dust**- Facilitated by Prof. Jennifer Rycenga, Women's Studies
  - The Nephew
  - Habits of the Heart
  - The Broken Nail -Facilitated by Prof. Shantanu Phukan, Religious Studies
  - Hot Chicks
  - RIZE
  - Charlotte Sometimes
  - Real Women Have Curves
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# University Housing Services Mission

- The mission of University Housing Services is to provide vibrant student-centered living communities designed to promote academic success, personal development, university involvement and civic engagement. Convenience and value are commitments that guide our program.

(Draft April, 2006)

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## University Housing Services Guiding Principles

- Provide desirable communities in which to live, learn, study and work
  - Provide high quality programs and services to our residents by applying the highest standards of excellence in all that we do and engaging in mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations across the University
  - Ensure responsible fiscal leadership
  - Being responsive and contributing to our communities
  - Embracing Vision 2010 and SJSU Shared Values
-