

## LITERATURE REVIEW

# A Suggested Reading List for Residential Life and Housing Research

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As college campuses continue to house more students, build additional facilities and offer a variety of programmatic options to residents, the literature becomes equally expansive. A vast array of options exist, but the following references were selected because of the robust review of research they provide, the practical nature of the content, the exploration of various residential life models and facilities, or to increase an understanding of the value that intentional programmes add to students' residential experiences. The selected references are also predominantly books. I would encourage readers to subscribe to the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) journal, which regularly publishes the latest and most relevant research globally in the field. A brief introduction to the selected literature is provided.

### *Student Learning: Environments, Models and Programmes*

Blimling, G.S. (2014). *Student learning in college residence halls: What works, what doesn't, and why*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119210795>

Inkelas, K.K., Jessup-Anger, J.E., Benjamin, M. & Wawrzynski, M.R. (2018). *Living-learning communities that work: A research-based model for design, delivery, and assessment*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Both books provide an excellent analysis of a broad spectrum of recent and fundamental research in the field. Dr. Blimling is one of the most published and experienced residential life professionals and he successfully crafted a book that aggregates relevant research studies with a pragmatic lens explicitly focused on developing living environments that are supportive of student learning. This book is primarily geared to practitioners considering types of residential life models, and especially those weighing how to integrate more intentional student programmes with measurable outcomes.

Amongst some of those student programmes are living learning communities (LLCs). These are residential housing initiatives that bring students together on a dedicated floor or in a specific residence hall, often with an affiliated faculty member, and grounded in an academic or cultural theme built to develop community through common learning experiences. Dr Inkelas – the most established researcher in this area – provided a comprehensive framework for the creation and implementation of LLCs grounded in

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nearly 20 years of research. A common challenge of LLCs research is the large variety within the typology of such programmes. This book successfully aggregates the research from US-wide studies to provide clear direction on how to maximise student outcomes through a suggested LLC structure.

Some other related examples:

Schroeder, C.C. & Mable, P. (1994). *Realizing the educational potential of residence halls*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Strange, C.C. & Banning, J.H. (2001). *Educating by design: Creating campus learning environments that work*. The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Winston Jr., R.B. (1993). *Student Housing and Residential Life: A Handbook for Professionals Committed to Student Development Goals*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

### ***Student Learning Outcomes***

Mayhew, M.J., Rockenbach, A.N., Bowman, N.A., Seifert, T.A., Wolniak, G.C., Pascarella, E.T. & Terenzini, Y. (2016). *How college affects students (Vol. 3): 21st century evidence that higher education works*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Mayhew et al. published the third edition of one of the most influential series of research publications in student affairs. Although this robust book is not specifically about residential life, it is an impressive synthesis of relevant outcomes to any staff or researcher in student life. In some respects, the relevance to residential life is quite literal. The authors reviewed a decade of research (2002-2013) related to the relationship of living on campus and retention – and provided an analysis of the decreasing influence between the two since the prior two additions. Other outcomes included in this text are broader, such as cognitive, moral or psychosocial development at large.

### ***Policy, Practice and Facilities***

Dunkel, N.W. & Baumann, J.A. (Eds.) (2013). *Campus housing management*. Columbus, OH: The Association of College and University Housing Officers-International.

Garvey, J.C., Nicolazzo, Z. & American College Personnel Association (2018). *Trans\* policies and experiences in housing and residence life*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Yanni, C. (2019). *Living on campus: An architectural history of the American dormitory*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. <https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctvdmx05>

In perhaps the most international friendly option, Dunkel and Baumann developed a six-book series geared towards practice and policy for residential life professionals. Volumes include the past, present and future of residential life, residential education, facilities, business information and technology, auxiliary services and partnerships, and staffing and leadership. Written by a group of practitioners, this series was designed to help improve student experiences and enhance residential life organisations of all sizes, locations and budgets. Any level of leadership can reference editions in this book series regularly.

Residential life has a major influence on the college experiences of trans\* students. The authors review ways that living on campus influences significant outcomes for trans\* students, including a sense of belonging, safety and well-being. In addition to the research,

the authors discuss policies that can help improve the residential experience for this population. Administrators seeking ways to make their housing experience more inclusive of students who identify with any or no gender identity could benefit from reading this book.

Finally, the residential experience on college campuses is centuries old and Carla Yanni captures the cultural significance of tradition. This book reviews the roles that residential halls have played in American higher education from the early days of Harvard to the more modern, 21st-century halls. Yanni successfully connects student needs to building design so, although this historical review is US-based, the commentary on the architectural style would be informative for any reader.

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