

RESIDENTIAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

RLC IDEAS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY

University of Georgia: Academic Excellence by Richard C. Proud, Georgia Delta Alumnus

“Set your eyes on goals not yet realized by this campus or this Greek community.” Each year, Victor Wilson, the Faculty Fellow, delivers these words to the brothers of Georgia Delta—both individually and as a chapter.

In the Spring of 2000, Victor’s wisdom sparked a desire among the brothers to truly lead balanced lives. Moreover, it fostered a competitive fire to show other Greek organizations that being different would excel on a traditional southern campus. Georgia Delta’s successes were plentiful. However, no accomplishment took the center-stage like academics.

Term	Year	GPA	ACA	Rank
Spring	2004	3.47	3.11	1/27
Fall	2003	3.4	3.12	1/27
Spring	2003	3.38	3.11	1/25
Fall	2002	3.31		1/25
Spring	2002	3.23	3.09	3/24
Fall	2001	3.15	3.04	3/24
Spring	2001	3.12		2/24
Fall	2000	3.07	3	5/24
Spring	2000	3.06	2.98	6/28

With a Spring, 2000, G.P.A. of 3.06, Victor Wilson made it a priority to sit down with every new member of Georgia Delta to discuss career aspirations, class schedules, and most importantly: academic progress. His dedication to the new

Date	Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors	Total
3/1/2004	26	16	20	24	86
3/1/2003	14	29	22	25	90
3/1/2002	23	24	28	20	95
3/1/2001	24	16	16	32	88

members led to a Spring, 2001, GPA of 3.12. It was time for the brothers to practice the hardest part of brotherhood—accountability. This included a strict academic plan for all members, study hours for all members, and face-to-face meetings with Victor Wilson for all brothers.

Within a year, Victor Wilson held office hours for 85 brothers to encourage, advise, and direct in the area of academics. This new approach led to a Spring, 2002, GPA of 3.23. This success poured over to recruitment where parents across the state of Georgia were hearing about the SigEps at UGA who held a commitment to the academic, social, and personal development of their sons. By recruiting the highest quality of individual that the University of Georgia had to offer, the GPA of Georgia Delta continued to climb. Spring of 2003 brought a 3.38. However, this success was overshadowed by an even greater success: Victor’s commitment to our brothers was being emulated by other faculty advisors to other fraternities. No longer were 2.65s considered decent fraternity grades. The new standard at the University of Georgia was 3.0—set by Sigma Phi Epsilon.

In Spring of 2004, Victor announced that he was leaving UGA to take the Vice President of Student Affairs position at the College of Charleston. To honor “YODA” (Victor’s nickname for the wisdom he bestowed upon “his boys”), the brothers of Georgia Delta turned in the highest GPA to date: a 3.47 chapter average. Victor taught the brothers of Georgia Delta that greatness was not measured in how many socials you planned with sororities or how many touchdowns you scored in an intramural football game. Rather, success would be measured by how you performed in your classes—for if you succeed in the classroom...everything else will follow. Over the course of Victor’s career at UGA as Faculty Fellow, the Georgia Delta Chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon became the campus leader in all measurable, and immeasurable, categories.

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University of North Dakota: Innovative RLC Programming by Kellen Utecht, Chapter President

In the Spring of 2002, the University of North Dakota RLC was awarded a \$22,000 grant from the Sigma Phi Epsilon Educational Foundation. This grant money was used to refurbish the chapter's office, turn the dilapidated kitchen into a study room, and renovate the seldom-used living room into a multimedia room. With the help of this grant, the countless hours of work by the undergraduates, and the charitable donations of our alumni, we are proud to call our chapter home a Residential Learning Community.



The chapter has utilized these new rooms by offering a variety of programming, and in the spring (2005), the RLC will play host to two additional programs: The *Balanced Man Elite Challenge* and a university-accredited class, "Introduction to Greek Life." Here are the details.

The *Balanced Man Elite Challenge* will be a nine-week program which will stimulate the Sound Mind and develop the Sound Body. For the Sound Mind aspect, we will be following Illinois Alpha's example by having our members participate in a book forum based upon If Aristotle Ran General Motors. For the Sound Body aspect, we are bringing in dietitians, a professor from the Exercise Science department, and employees of the Wellness Center to conduct seminars. After these take place, members will be asked to log their food intake, physical activity hours, meet weekly with a dietitian, and have pre- and post-fitness assessments.

The first ever "Introduction to Greek Life" class will consist of an eight-week curriculum in which Greek new members will meet twice a week for one hour. Each individual participating will receive one credit. This program will be directed from the Coordinator of Greek Life's office and will have three upperclassman Greeks (one SigEp) facilitating it.

University of Cincinnati: Maximizing Faculty Involvement by Jeffrey Bauer, Faculty Fellow

The University of Cincinnati chapter is embracing the RLC program by actively recruiting Faculty Fellows from the entire University of Cincinnati community. Their plan is to recruit a Faculty Fellow from each of the 17 colleges and schools and several key administrative departments comprising the university. This will enable all brothers and potential members to have access to a Faculty Fellow in their discipline, which will maximize the benefits of the RLC program for each man.



In addition to the benefit of having access to technical and teaching expertise, this model will provide the chapter with a rich pool of speakers for a wide variety of topics and will assist in disseminating the message about the RLC program throughout the campus. The involvement of multiple faculty will also highlight the academic leadership role of Sigma Phi Epsilon on campus. The chapter hopes the Faculty Fellows and the goodwill they spread about the chapter and its members will further improve their relationship with all faculty and the university as a

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whole. The chapter has business and communications accounted for with its first two Faculty Fellows and is currently working with the College of Engineering to identify a third Faculty Fellow candidate.

Georgia Institute of Technology: Demolishing the Bar from David O'Neal, Chapter President



After transitioning to the Balanced Man Program in 2000, the men of Georgia Alpha continued their strides at becoming a bigger and better SigEp chapter. According to the Chapter President, the main obstacle in their path was member grades. "To combat this problem, we demolished our bar and created a Residential Learning Community." The main attraction of their RLC facility became this first floor office/conference room. "The learning center has two computers, a fax machine, copy machine, a large conference table, and a desk for our Faculty Advisor. Initially, it seemed as though the only thing the room was being used for was Executive Board meetings. Now, it is constantly filled with brothers, old and new, studying." In the first semester the learning center room was completed, our chapter GPA rose two tenths from the previous semester. "With continued hard work and good fortune, we feel our RLC will be the catalyst for winning a Buchanan Cup."

Leadership Class at the Iowa State RLC



At 228 Gray Avenue, Iowa State University, Faculty Fellow Dr. Yvonne Gentzler is teaching a class...not for regular college students. This course is just for SigEps!

These SigEps are privy to a unique offering in their Residential Learning Community home. Worth one credit hour, this series of once-a-week evening classes examines the roles of males in society. A dozen SigEps are enrolled and are learning about themselves and their ideals while in close presence of chapter brothers.

Course Description

The primary purpose of the course is to help prepare participants to make a positive impact on peers, families, and communities in their lives. The course emphasizes practical problems that individuals and families/groups face daily and how the decisions they make may affect the larger community. The experiences members encounter are designed to encourage leadership qualities by exploring moral competencies within the context of personal growth. Speaking with Dr Gentzler, she says, "I work with the men and teach this course because it is growing and developing. The men talk and share and each one wants to be involved."

One compelling aspect of the course is that it bridges the gap between classroom and home. The pursuit of the Balanced Man Ideal is alive in practice. Listen to the variety of issues explored: What does it mean to be male? What should be done about assisting young men to develop into mature individuals assuming family, community, and work responsibilities? What rights do you have as a man in a democratic society? What obligation do you have to establish a plan for strengthening Virtue, Diligence, and Brotherly Love?

These are all discussion topics that can be translated back into the chapter and community. The experiences in this SigEp-sponsored course promise to create a new tradition of fun, learning, and innovation in the classroom.