DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE AND WELLBEING

ASSESSMENT PROJECT REPORT
2023-2024

DEPARTMENT: Housing and Residence Life

ASSESSMENT LEAD: Marshall Kole, Associate Director for Housing and Residence Life

PROGRAM: Statistical correlation between grade point average and housing program attendance for residential students.

SUMMARY

Data from Fall 2023 shows a positive trendline correlated between the total number of HRL staff-sponsored programs attended by students living in on-campus housing on Dodge Campus and the average GPA earned for that semester. Attendance and GPA data were compared for 905 residential students. Approximately 34% of residential students did not attend any housing programs during the semester. The average semester GPA attained by residents who attended no housing programs was 3.08 compared to 3.17 for residents who attended at least one program. The data indicated an average GPA increase ranging from +.06 points for residents who attended only one housing program during the semester, up to +.27 points for residents who attended ten or more programs.

Students who did not attend any housing programs during the semester were sent a survey to assess their experience in housing and what factors impacted their non-attendance at housing programs. The most common factors cited by respondents included academic obligations (19.05%), non-academic work obligations (14.29%), frequently away from the residence halls (12.7%), not wanting to attend programs alone (11.9%), and non-academic on-campus extra-curricular involvement (11.11%). Nearly 10% of responses indicated the student had no desire to participate in the housing community. Over 80% of program non-attendees reported having one or more jobs either on- or off-campus. Of these students, two-thirds (66.66%) reported working more than 15 hours per week. Over 20% - or one out of every five non-attendees – reported working more than 30 hours pers week.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Housing and Residence Life (HRL) assessed residential program attendance during the Fall 2023 semester and compared the semester GPAs earned by students in on-campus housing correlated to the total number of programs they attended that semester. Further, HRL surveyed residents who did not attend any programs during the semester to learn how they viewed HRL's programming efforts and what factors impacted their non-attendance.

The overall assessment methodology included the following steps:

- HRL staff tracked student attendance at all programs and events hosted within housing by HRL professional and student staff throughout the academic year. This typically involved each attendee scanning into the program with their MavCard or providing their NUID. For the same of this

assessment, we only considered a resident to have attended a program in housing if HRL staff had record of that student's attendance documented by card scan or written NUID.

- Following the completion of the Fall 2023 semester, the attendance data for all programs hosted by HRL was compiled. The compiled data captured the total number of attendees at all HRL programs, the total number of unique attendees at HRL programs, and the total number of programs each unique attendee participated in during the Fall 2023 semester.
- The overall dataset included students who were not occupants within Housing and Residence Life but who attended programs in housing at some point that semester (e.g., guests, non-residential attendees at Durango Days events hosted in housing, etc.). These students were removed from the dataset when finding the average GPA for residential students who attended programs in housing.
- Following the completion of the Fall 2023 semester, the Associate Director of HRL obtained three student rosters – an HRL in-room roster for the Fall 2023, the roster of all unique attendees to housing programs during the Fall 2023 semester, and a roster of all university students enrolled for the Fall 2023 semester. The all-university roster included term GPAs as well as demographic information for each student.
- The unique attendee roster was compared to the in-room resident roster to create two subsets of residents – those who attended at least one HRL program during the Fall 2023 semester, and those who attended none.
- The data subset of residents who attended at least one program in HRL during the fall semester was then further broken down to create smaller subsets categorizing residents who attended 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10+ programs, respectively. This resulted in final data subsets representing HRL residents who attended 0-10+ programs.
- Each grouping of data was then compared to the all-university roster to identify the average GPA earned in the Fall 2023 semester by the students in the subset. Each data subset was also analyzed to identify gender, racial, and class year for the residents included therein.
- After the program attendance and GPA data for Fall 2023 were compiled, HRL staff sent a survey to the residents in the subset of students who attended no programs in HRL during the Fall 2023 semester. This survey collected student demographic information (optional), as well as responses about what factors kept them from attending programs in housing and their responses to questions about their overall experience living in on-campus housing at UNO.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

A total of 905 unique housing residents were included in the data regarding program attendance during the Fall 2023 semester. Of those, 307 residents (approximately 34%) did not attend a program in housing, while 598 residents (66%) attended one or more programs. The average Fall 2023 GPA for program non-attenders was 3.08 compared to 3.17 for residents who attended at least one program.

Table A (below) provides an overview of the total number of unique residents who attended each number of programs in housing, as well as the average GPA for each grouping of residents.
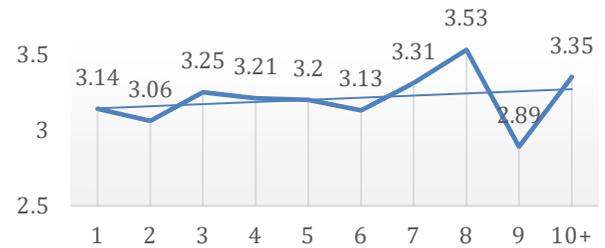
Table A.

Number of Programs Attended	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Number of Residents	307	174	120	104	62	51	24	13	9	7	34
Average GPA of Attendees	3.08	3.14	3.06	3.25	3.21	3.2	3.13	3.31	3.53	2.89	3.35

Represented in the form of a line graph, the GPA data shows an overall upward trendline correlated with resident program attendance. Put another way, residents who attended one or more programs in housing during the Fall 2023 semester likely had a higher average GPA than residents who attended no programs.

The data shows that residents who attended at least one program in housing earned a GPA nearly .1 points higher than those who attended no programs.

Fall 2023 HRL Resident GPA by Number of Programs Attended

The average GPA earned by residents who attended a specific number or programs in the Fall 2023 semester did not follow a consistently higher pattern. For example, students who attended two or nine programs over the course of the semester had a lower average GPA than students who attended no programs. The up-and-down movement of the average GPA data between data subsets for each number of programs attended may be impacted by the diminishing number of residents in each subsequently higher program number. For example, only seven students attended nine programs during the Fall 2023 semester. Those seven students represent slightly more than 1% of the total number of program attendees. With only seven GPAs to factor into the average GPA for the group, any individual GPA has a greater likelihood of impacting the overall group GPA average.

To better understand the overall GPA trend related to program attendance, it may be helpful to form larger data subsets out of the 11 subsets documented in Table A. Table B (below) shows the 11 data subsets organized into five groupings – residents who attended zero, one, two-to-four, five-to-nine, and ten-plus programs during the Fall 2023 semester – as well as the average GPA for each.

Table B.

Number of Programs Attended	0	1	2 to 4	5 to 9	10+
Number of Residents	307	174	286	104	34
Average GPA of Attendees	3.08	3.14	3.16	3.21	3.35
Average GPA Increase Over Non-Attendees	---	+.06	+.08	+.13	+.27

Organizing and presenting the data this way provides a more concise picture of what the trendline within the data shows. That is, again, that average GPA attainment consistently increases by up to .27 for residents who attended up to 10+ programs in housing during the fall semester.

Table C (below) shows the grouped program attendance data from Table B compared to similarly grouped attendance and GPA data from previous fall semesters when HRL has completed this same assessment.

Table C.

Number of Programs Attended	Attendee Avg GPA Fall 2023	Attendee Avg GPA Fall 2018	Attendee Avg GPA Fall 2017	Attendee Avg GPA Fall 2016
0	3.08	2.41	2.71	3.17
1	3.14	2.91	2.77	3.02
2 to 4	3.16	3.05	3.07	3.22
5 to 9	3.21	3.16	3.31	3.48
10+	3.35	3.36	3.36	3.55

It is noteworthy that the average GPA for program non-attenders in Fall 2023 started at a significantly higher point than for non-attenders in Fall 2018 and 2017 (+.67 and +.37 points, respectively). The average GPA "ceiling" earned by residents who attended 10+ programs in Fall 2023 was essentially the same as in Fall 2018 and 2017. The data from Fall 2016 is an outlier to the other three years as the non-attenders average GPA started nearly .1 points higher than the Fall 2023 non-attenders, and the average GPA for 10+ program-attenders was .2 points higher than the same group in Fall 2023.

With one-third of residents in housing falling into the "non-attender" category, a survey was developed with the intent of understanding what factors contributed to these students' lack of attendance at housing programs during the Fall 2023 semester. This survey included both quantitative and qualitative questions/prompts. Survey completion was optional, and all responses were submitted anonymously. The survey was sent to all 307 residents who were identified in the data as not attending a housing program in the fall. Of those 307, a total of 44 residents completed the survey – a response rate of over 14%.

Table D (below) includes the responses offered by residents in response to the question "What factors kept you from attending programs/events held in housing during the fall 2023 semester? (choose all that apply)." Residents were able to able to select more than one response to this question.

Table D.

What factors kept you from attending programs/events in housing during the fall 2023 semester? (choose all that apply)		
Answer	%	Count
No desire to participate in the housing community	9.52%	12
The programs/events hosted in housing did not meet my interests	5.56%	7
No one to attend programs/events with / Didn't want to go alone	11.90%	15
Social anxiety	7.94%	10
Academic obligations	19.05%	24
Non-academic extra-curricular obligations elsewhere on campus (e.g., student club/organization involvement)	11.11%	14
Non-academic work obligations	14.29%	18
Frequently away from the residence halls/campus for personal reasons (e.g., family, relationships, etc.)	12.70%	16
Not aware of what and when programs/events were happening	3.97%	5
Other (please explain)	3.97%	5

Academic obligations and non-academic work obligations registered as the two most common factors related to resident non-attendance at programs. This is in line with what HRL staff hears anecdotally from students during the academic year. To better understand the work obligations responses, the survey asked about student employment. Questions included if residents worked, where they worked (on- or off-campus), and the total number of hours they worked each week. Tables E, F, and G (below) document student responses to each question.

Table E.

Do you have a job?	
No	19.51%
Yes, I have one job	48.78%
Yes, I have multiple jobs	31.71%

Table F.

Do you work on- or off-campus?	
On Campus	12.12%
Off Campus	72.73%
Both – On and Off Campus	15.15%

Table G.

In total, how many hours/week do you work either on or off campus (or both)?	
0-5	0.00%
5-10	15.15%
10-15	18.18%
15-20	24.24%
20-25	18.18%
25-30	3.03%
30-35	15.15%
35+	6.06%

Nearly 88% of respondents indicated they work in addition to their responsibilities as a student, with two-thirds of those who work reporting they work 15 or more hours per week, and more than a third of those reporting a work week of over 20 hours. The Federal Work-Study Program directs that students eligible for the program are permitted to work a maximum of 20 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters. While there are several factors that likely contribute to 20 hours/week being set as the cap for student employment under the work-study program, one common rationale provided is to not overwork students who should be prioritizing academic success on campus.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha has adopted the US Department of Education's definition of one credit hour. The University's "UNO Credit Hour Policy" states "One credit hour is equivalent to one-hour (50 minutes

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minimum) of lecture and two (2) hours of out-of class work each week." The policy clarifies that one credit hour for online, hybrid, and asynchronous courses includes "3 hours of student work for each week.) Additionally, one laboratory credit hour equates to "2-4 hours of contact time for each week of instruction."

The average number of credit hours taken by the 307 residents who counted as program non-attenders was 13.7. Assuming three hours of in-class and out-of-class work each week per credit hour, the average non-attender resident spent 41 hours per week focusing on their academic obligations.

Looking at the data from the non-attender survey within the framework of the hourly commitment students have in relation to academic and employment work each week (not to mention general life and relationship commitments), it is easy to understand how some students may not prioritize or be available to attend programs in housing when they occur.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey data shows a generally positive correlation between program attendance and GPA attainment for residents living in on-campus housing during the Fall 2023 semester. This is consistent with similar positive correlations measured around the same criteria at various times in the past seven academic years.

This correlation is something HRL staff should publicize as value-added to the student-experience at UNO for students who live on campus. This data should be included in the HRL 23-24 Annual Report, as well as on the HRL departmental assessment webpage.

Residence Life staff in HRL plans to implement a structured plan for large-scale departmental and building-specific programming for residents during the first six weeks of the fall 2024 semester. Rather than wait until the end of that semester to pull program attendance data for all residents, HRL should review this data during the first part of October 2024 and identify which residents have not attended any programs at that point. The Residence Life Coordinator and RA teams should then do targeted outreach to those residents to encourage their attendance at future programs. This assessment should be completed again at the end of the fall 2024 semester, with similar outreach to non-attending residents sent at the beginning of the spring 2025 semester.