



Organization of Residence Students
Strategic Plan

2008-2011

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The University of Lethbridge Organization of Residence Students Strategic Plan

Vision:

The Organization of Residence Students strives to ensure that the University of Lethbridge is a great place to live by ensuring that every student in residence has access to the social support they need in order to achieve academic success in a safe environment that fosters the pursuit of personal and academic growth.

Mission Statement:

The Organization of Residence Students provides safety and security to people living within all areas of the University of Lethbridge residence and concerns itself with all matters pertaining to the well being of the people living in the residence of the University of Lethbridge by providing quality residence life programs and services that facilitate the personal, academic and professional growth of our members.

Fundamental Principles:

The Organization of Residence Students:

- acts as a liaison between residence students and the greater university community bringing forward concerns to be addressed to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.
- represents the interests of Housing Services to residence students by acting as stewards of housing property and services and maintaining open and frequent communication with the Associate Manager of Hospitality Services.
- actively facilitates social programming for residence students that encourage health, fun and safety in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning.
- represents the interests of residence students to the Students' Union by being an active voice on the Student's Union General Assembly and clubs council.
- represents the interests of residence students to Sodexo food services by holding monthly focus groups and having frequent and open dialogue with the manager of food services to promote health and quality nourishment for Residence Students.

- contributes to the professional development of its members by advocating scholarship opportunities and networking
- fosters an environment of safety and security for all its members by dedicating itself to the continual improvement of security systems and procedures in student housing.
- establishes an environment of tolerance and respect for the cohabitation of all its members by promoting respect and friendship.
- strives to create a social support structure for the creation of friendship and networking for all residence students by facilitating events and social programming.
- operates under the guidance of Housing Services and is subject to all the rules and guidelines of the University of Lethbridge

Our Values:

We foster and promote student leadership. The ORS provides scholarships and actively encourages the University to create new scholarships for our outstanding student leaders. We facilitate the personal and professional development of our members by teambuilding and empowering our student leaders to pursue initiatives that interest them.

We promote a culture of recreation and fitness and physical well-being. The ORS strives to be a good example for all students by organizing events that promote fitness and recreation. We also dedicate ourselves to providing the facilities and equipment necessary for residence students to pursue an active lifestyle.

We embrace change. As an organization we are continually evolving and growing in size and mandate. We continually add new positions and recruit new membership combined with an ongoing process of resource optimization to adapt to the ever-evolving challenges that face our organization while staying true to our vision of excellence.

We promote a collaborative and consultative environment. By establishing a climate of open dialogue with Housing and Hospitality Services and our other stakeholders we develop cooperation and trust. By aligning ourselves with the greater institutional vision of the University we can pool our resources and effort to achieve the synonymous goals of both the ORS and the University Administration.

We promote an atmosphere of respect, equality and inclusiveness. We celebrate the diversity of our staff and members by emphasizing synergies and embracing differences while always promoting open-mindedness, tolerance and respect.

Strategic Priorities – Our Goals

The Organization of Residence Students is committed to developing and implementing plans of action that align with Housing Services and the greater institutional goals of the University of Lethbridge. These institutional and student priorities become our goals.

It is our objective for ORS, that all our policy starts as a vision and ends as an integral part of our day-to-day operations.

Goals:

1) Students

1.1

Support scholarships

ORS Strategy: The Organization of Residence Students currently has five awards it has endowed for residence students. These awards are the ORS Greatest Scholastic Achievement (two recipients), ORS Residence Citizenship Award (two recipients) and the ORS Council Excellence Award (one recipient). These awards are supported by endowed funds and are supplemented by the revenue from bottle recycling. ORS will continue to support and grow these endowments. ORS will also pursue the opportunity of creating new awards and fostering an environment that supports the pursuit of excellence.

1.2

Expand residence life programming

ORS Strategy: Social Programming is the lifeblood of our operations and a key differentiation between off campus housing and student residence. These programs engage students and create a sense of fun and community. ORS will continue to develop cabarets, events and committees to encourage social support among students.

1.3

Promote health and wellness

ORS Strategy: ORS will continue to develop new facilities and upgrade the existing facilities in Aperture and University Hall that promote health and wellness. The development of our gym facilities and work out rooms as well as the addition of a volleyball court, basketball court and sports field will continue to be priorities.

ORS will promote and develop the physical health and wellness of our members through sports and recreation through sponsored intramural teams and a specific focus on events that involve physical activity.

In addition to the physical well being, we will promote mental and social health by hosting events related to alcohol awareness, sexual health and stress management. We will work closely with risk management, the health center and counseling to ensure the well being of all our members.

1.4

Work with Food Services and Hospitality Services to continually improve service

ORS Strategy: Quality of food and service for Residence Students continues to improve and innovate every year due to the efforts of Resident Assistants and Food service employees who work together to generate ideas and solutions. This committee has had great results and will continue to achieve change and innovations.

1.5

Expand the residence dining plan

ORS Strategy: Work with Food and Hospitality Services to create new locations for bridge bucks and the dining plan. Create more value for the meal plan and offer an increased variety of food and service to students. These new locations could include but are not limited to, off campus restaurants and services, i.e. Pita Pit and East Side Mario's.

Work with Food and Hospitality Services and the Students' Union to investigate the feasibility and outcomes of expanding the dining plan to the Student's Union Food Court. If this project is found to be feasible, then ORS will work with all effected stakeholders to find a mutually beneficial scenario for Residence Students, Students Union, food court tenants, Sodexo and the University.

Work with Food and Hospitality Services and the Students' Union to investigate the feasibility and outcomes of expanding the dining plan to the Students' Union Bar (Zoo). If this project is found to be feasible, then ORS will work with all effected stakeholders to find a mutually beneficial scenario for Residence Students, Students Union and the University. This meal plan expansion would be limited to food and non-alcoholic beverages only. All alcohol would be considered exempt.

1.6

Provide safety and security

ORS Strategy: Work with Housing Services and University Security to promote a safe living environment for all our constituents. We will achieve this by committing to the implementation and practices of safety protocols and equipment. ORS will utilize security cameras, secured doors, RFID keys, and swipe cards to protect and authorize access to secure spaces. ORS will also be well versed in all matters pertaining to fire alarms drills and safety.

1.7

Provide academic support

ORS Strategy: Work with campus resources to provide an environment that is conducive to academic pursuit. ORS will provide the necessary resources to our students to support their academic studies. These services include but are not limited to tutors, writing clinics, study workshops and other resources as deemed necessary.

2) Facilities

2.1

Continually improve social spaces

ORS Strategy: Work with campus resources to provide an environment that is conducive to social growth and support. ORS will work with campus resources to provide residence spaces with appropriate seating, new and improved recreational spaces, TV lounges games rooms and any other social mediums or facilities that are deemed appropriate.

2.2

Improve outdoor recreational spaces

ORS Strategy: Work with campus resources to provide an outdoor environment that is inviting and usable. ORS will work with campus stakeholders to maintain the current facilities and create new ones. ORS will pursue the development of campus spaces and the creation of new spaces the can include but is not limited to courts, fire pits, trees irrigation, BBQ areas, patios, recreational fields and outdoor seating.

2.3

Support the development of new residence buildings

ORS Strategy: The development of new residence facilities is important to the ORS because of its potential for student engagement and experience. ORS will actively promote the value of residence to all levels of government and administration to encourage the further investment in student housing. ORS will use media and create awareness on and off campus to display the value of public investment in housing at the University of Lethbridge while increasing the local and national profile of the institution.

3) Employees

3.1

Support of staff members

ORS Strategy: The residence council and ORS executive will provide any and all necessary support to our valued staff. ORS will foster an environment of trust and openness among members by operating with transparency and communication. ORS will maintain good relations with all current and past members.

3.2

Professional development of members

ORS Strategy: The residence council and ORS executive will offer staff access to opportunities that promote growth of members through additional training, conferences, speakers, resources and any team and skill building exercises that promote leadership. ORS will empower decision making among members and provide opportunities for leadership development in order to procure qualified candidates for succession.

3.3

Continually review and adjust compensation

ORS Strategy: The ORS executive will collaborate with housing services to continually review and provide fair CPI adjusted compensation for the hard work of our staff. ORS will also work with Sodexo to provide feedback on operations and continually review and provide a partial food plan to Resident Assistants who serve on Sodexo Focus Groups. ORS will also hold annual reviews of remunerative structure for non-university employees including business team members and office assistants.

4) Organizational Operations

4.1

Meet the needs of our voting constituents

ORS Strategy: As elected representatives operating with levied funds we exist solely to represent the student body that resides in campus housing to the greater student body, to the university and to the community. The officers of this council are ultimately responsible to the voting constituents of the U of L. To meet the needs of our most valued stakeholder, ORS must establish relationships and create the dialogue that is necessary to meet the needs of our constituents.

4.2

Support and collaborate with our stakeholders

ORS Strategy: Although autonomous, the Organization of Residence Students is an integral part of the University community and therefore interdependent with our various stakeholders. The Students' Union, Sodexo, Housing Services, students, employees as well as many other departments, clubs, societies and individuals are critical to the success of our operations. It is therefore necessary for members of ORS to maintain good relationships with these stakeholders by engaging in open and frequent communication to meet the needs of our partners to the best of our capability.

4.3

Hire quality employees

ORS Strategy: As a non-profit organization ORS does not have the capacity to use compensation as a motivator for employees. With this in mind it is essential that the hiring process is successful in hiring motivated candidates who are willing to work for little monetary gain. Hiring of quality staff is the most important aspect of the executive's job. Staff members need to be accountable, approachable, enthusiastic, assertive, dedicated and in good academic standing

4.4

Promote moral leadership

ORS Strategy: Support the democratic election of executive members and hold the President and the Vice Presidents accountable for all organizational direction and decisions. ORS will commit to the sustainability of our organizational leadership by planning for the succession of executive members. Leading by example allows for the perpetuity of strong executive leadership.

4.5

Practice fiscal responsibility

Financial Goals:

Effective 2008, ORS will raise its fees to cover inflationary increases ranging from the last fee increase in 2001. This \$10 increase from \$35 to \$45 per student per semester is intended to reflect the rise in operating costs over the last 9 years and should be sufficient for the next several years. This increase will create a surplus in the first few years and it is essential to the sustainability of the organization that these initial annual surpluses are well managed with our long term organizational interests in mind.

ORS Strategy: The executive council and business team will work together to ensure that ORS acts as a responsible steward of student fees. The organization will practice caution in business endeavors and will try to optimize external revenue sources such as cabarets and event revenue, recycling dividends and ATM machines to postpone the increase of student fees. The organization will practice due diligence and act transparently in all manners involving public funds and will perform audits as necessary.

4.6

Maintain a reserve for capital projects

Since 2006 ORS has relied on the Quality Initiatives Proposal Students' Union budget line for its major capital developments. It is uncertain how this budget will be allocated in the future. ORS can attempt to use these resources in conjunction with its own reserves for future capital projects.

This budget increase should provide an additional \$12,000 in revenue for the organization. This budget surplus should be dedicated to the completion of a large-scale project over a period of 5 or more years of savings. Over this time period the ORS council should invest this surplus into a dedicated zero risk fund to accrue interest on the initial principal. In past years, similar budget surpluses saw other great organizational improvements such as the creation of the family play ground and some of the existing scholarships that exist for ORS council members and residence students. After a period of several years this fund should then be used to achieve a major organizational goal. These goals could include but are not limited to the:

- Improvement of an existing facilities to such an extent that normal operational revenue dedicated to facility improvements falls short
- Construction of a new facility, indoors or outdoor including recreational areas, fitness centers or other similar facilities
- Endowment of a dedicated scholarship fund for recipients involved in the organization

ORS Strategy: Allocate a minimum as specified in the ORS Constitution every year into a reserve fund held with the ORS TD Trust account. The President and the Business Manager shall ensure these funds are allocated at the beginning of each semester and held in a zero risk, highly liquid security such as GICs or Treasury Bills. Overtime this reserve will grow and in several years there will be sufficient capital in to commit to a long-term capital expenditure of the ORS councils choosing.