

Executive Summary

Highlights

This was the first year of the Rhodos Fellows Living Learning Community for Information, Design, and Computing, giving us the rare opportunity to begin an exciting program from scratch. With our founding team of Simon Tarr as Faculty Principal, Amelia Quint as Assistant Principal, and Coy Gibson as Business Manager, we opened with over 280 first-year students from over 40 majors.

We started strong this year with over 100 programs and events to encourage Rhodos students on pathways to digital leadership, including three guest presentations from national leaders, four new student clubs, nine linked courses, a tutoring program, and over a dozen new partnerships on and off campus.

Mission Statement

The Rhodos Fellows program is a next-generation living learning community for students interested in professional pathways related to information, design and computing. Rhodos welcomes every student with the curiosity and desire to be a maker--;someone who creates something new in the world. Students come together to participate in interdisciplinary projects and events, connect with faculty and national leaders, and use the Rhodos makerspace to bring creative technology innovations to reality.

Updated: 12/31/2069

Vision Statement

Rhodos will be the home for creative students from every discipline who want to design an exciting and fulfilling life path in an information-rich world.

Updated: 12/31/2069

Values

We are at our best when we are curious about our world, unorthodox in our approach, generous with our ideas, mindful of our presence, and pioneering in our plans.

Updated: 12/31/2069

Blueprint for Academic Excellence

Rhodos Fellows

AY2019-2020

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Highlights	1
Mission Statement	1
Values Statement.....	1
Goals - Looking Back	2
Goals - Real Time	3
Goals - Looking Ahead	4
Programs or Initiatives	11
Effective Programs or Initiatives	11
Program Launches.....	11
Program Terminations	11
Program Rankings	11
Community Engagement	12
Community Perceptions.....	12
Collaborations	13
Internal Collaborations	13
External Collaborations.....	13
Campus Climate and Inclusion	14
Campus Climate & Inclusion.....	14
Initiatives and Fees	15
Initiatives.....	15
Fees	15
Concluding Remarks	15
Weaknesses and Plans for Improvement	16
Key Issues	16
Quantitative Outcomes	16
Cool Stuff	16
Appendix 1. Programs or Initiatives	17
Appendix 2. Community Engagement	17
Appendix 3. Collaborations	17
Appendix 4. Campus Climate & Inclusion	17

Goals - Looking Back

No goals have been entered for this section.

Goals - Real Time

No goals have been entered for this section.

Goals - Looking Ahead

Goals for the Rhodos Fellows that are slated for the upcoming year.

Goal 1 - Connect to Faculty Principal

Goal Statement	Enhance resident students' living and learning experience by encouraging interactions and connections with Faculty Principal.
Linkage to University Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Educating the Thinkers and Leaders of Tomorrow •Spurring Knowledge and Creation •Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities
Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values	Close connection with a faculty member is a high-impact practice of a faculty-led living learning community. As Faculty Principal, Dr. Tarr guides and communicates the mission and vision of the Rhodos Fellows program through direct interaction with residents in programs that he personally leads as well as through events and interactions he participates in, supporting community members' pursuits in information, design, and computing.
Status	Newly Established Goal
Action Plan	Maintain current and develop new programs and initiatives which have made a positive impact.
Achievements	<p>Regular open office hours with Dr. Tarr</p> <p>Weekly Café Rhodos to interact with Dr. Tarr (attendance between 5 and 20 students)</p> <p>Dr. Tarr leads many regular and special events, including Secret Tools series (3-8 attendees each)</p> <p>Dr. Tarr participates actively in many programs he is not directly leading, including Monthly Makes (7-10 students each), visiting guest events (5-10 attendees each), and large events such as the Rhodos Master Innovators keynote and dinner (22 attendees) and the Rhodos Rally (134 attendees).</p> <p>Dr. Tarr taught a linked media arts course (MART 210), regularly attended and collaborated with linked entrepreneurship COLA 298, and visited all other linked courses.</p> <p>Dr. Tarr leads social media interactions with students over YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook.</p> <p>Dr. Tarr also initiates many on and off campus partnerships to support new programs.</p>

Resources Utilized	Time and effort from Rhodos team for new and recurring content creation. Budget for equipment and program materials. Budget for food/refreshments.
Goal Continuation	Continuing in future.
Goal Upcoming Plans	Continuing all current activities. Develop program of microcredentialing pathways. Develop study abroad program.
Resources Needed	Continuing current budget.
Goal Notes	

Goal 2 - Support academic attainment

Goal Statement	Provide supportive living and learning environments that promote academic attainment of resident students.
Linkage to University Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Educating the Thinkers and Leaders of Tomorrow •Spurring Knowledge and Creation •Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities
Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values	The Rhodos Fellows fosters an environment of original research and creative activity, high academic performance, and collaborative learning.
Status	Newly Established Goal
Action Plan	Maintain current and develop new linked courses, tutoring sessions. Expand and further integrate linked courses. Add additional UNIV 101 sections. Expand peer tutoring sessions. Develop study abroad program and support grants.
Achievements	<p>Dr. Tarr taught a linked media arts course (MART 210), regularly attended and collaborated with our linked entrepreneurship course (COLA 298), and visited all other linked courses.</p> <p>11% of students in Dr. Tarr's linked class attended tutoring programs, and students who attended tutoring sessions saw their D/F/W rate drop to only 3%. (The non-tutored rate is 18%.) (Note: In order to maintain confidentiality, it is not known which attendees were Rhodos Fellows, as the tutoring was open to non-Rhodos students as well.)</p> <p>Rhodos students regularly bring their computer programming assignments to Café Rhodos to work on together.</p>
Resources Utilized	Time and effort from Rhodos team to coordinate and participate in linked courses. Seats set aside for Rhodos students in linked courses. Time and effort from SI leaders from Student Success Center.
Goal Continuation	Continuing in future.

Goal Upcoming Plans	Continue all current activities. Expand and further integrate linked courses. Add additional UNIV 101 sections. Expand peer tutoring sessions. Develop study abroad program and support grants.
Resources Needed	Collaboration with residential curricular initiatives, Student Success Center and UNIV 101. Collaboration with study abroad office. Budget for grants to encourage study abroad.
Goal Notes	

Goal 3 - Connect students to University and community resources

Goal Statement	Connect resident students to UofSC opportunities and activities both as part of the living learning community and outside of the community to cultivate a sense of belonging with the university.
Linkage to University Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Educating the Thinkers and Leaders of Tomorrow•Spurring Knowledge and Creation•Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities
Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values	Rhodos Fellows program connects and develops residents through strategic partnerships within and outside of the University community, positioning students to gain competitive, unique academic and professional experiences in information, design, and computing.
Status	Newly Established Goal
Action Plan	Maintain current and develop new partnerships across campus and within the wider community that have had a positive impact. Prepare returning students to be mentors for the Rhodos incoming class through leadership roles in our student organizations.

Achievements	<p>Created paid internship pathways through the Center for Digital Humanities for students to partake in challenging professional development early in their academic career (3 students hired in first round)</p> <p>Collaborated with Housing staff in South Quad to develop events that serve our shared community. In addition, we have worked together with Green Quad and the School of Visual Art and Design to put on unique events that model the creative collaboration that defines Rhodos.</p> <p>Established 4 Rhodos student groups to strengthen bonds within our community around shared affinities. These groups include Community Partners (for community service), Makers Club (for technology and information), the Incubator (for business), and the Rhodos Studio (for design and creativity). (2-8 members each.)</p> <p>Facilitated relevant connections to the wider community, including service at Still Hopes Retirement Community and a workshop with the Richland County Public Library.</p>
Resources Utilized	Budget for Rhodos events.
Goal Continuation	Plan to continue all programming.
Goal Upcoming Plans	Encourage growth in interest in Rhodos for both incoming and prospective students. Develop role of returning students in creating a sense of belonging for our community and to the university as a whole.
Resources Needed	Continuing current budget.
Goal Notes	

Goal 4 - Promote academic and professional pathways in information, design, and computing.

Goal Statement	Provide interdisciplinary opportunities for students to pursue academic and professional pathways related to information, design and computing.
Linkage to University Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Educating the Thinkers and Leaders of Tomorrow •Spurring Knowledge and Creation •Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities
Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values	The Rhodos Fellows program fosters experiential learning, cultivates internship and career insights, and creates co-curricular opportunities for students in information, design, and computing fields.
Status	Newly Established Goal
Action Plan	Maintain current and develop new programs, guest speakers/scholars/artists, workshops, and field trips. Connect with more local offices and business to foreground appropriate jobs and internships.
Achievements	Guests included: Rhodos Master Innovators keynote and dinner with venture capitalist and business leader Bea Wray, animator/sculptor/social media expert Cam Porter, video game/new media professor Evan Meaney. Workshops included: game development jam, Secret Tools seminars on design and professional communication. Hands on programs included: Plantbot art and robotics, Lego robotics, introduction to microcontrollers, introduction to electronics with arcade cabinet development. Passive/informal programs include: one-on-one 3D printing tutorials, one-on-one design and communications instruction with student workers and volunteers,
Resources Utilized	Time and effort from Rhodos team to develop and enact all new programs. Budget for space rentals, equipment, operations, and speaker honoraria.
Goal Continuation	Plan to continue all programming.
Goal Upcoming Plans	Continuing all current activities. Develop program of microcredentialing pathways. Continue to make more connections with job/internship sites, and guest speakers.
Resources Needed	Continuing current budget.
Goal Notes	

Programs or Initiatives

Effective Programs or Initiatives

List your most effective programs/initiatives toward fulfillment of mission.

Cafe Rhodos- a weekly gathering for coffee with the Faculty Principal and Rhodos staff.

Student groups- regular meetings and events for students interested in community service (Community Partners), business (the Incubator), creativity (the Rhodos Studio), and technology (Makers Club).

Secret Tools- professional development workshops through the lens of design, led by the Faculty Principal.

Master Innovator Series- a TEDx style keynote followed by dinner and discussion with students in the Makerspace.

Makers Club Presents- a guest speaker and workshop series featuring leaders in information, design, and computing.

Rhodos U101 sections and linked courses- our most engaged students were a part of this cohort.

Program Launches

List any programs/initiatives that were newly launched during the Academic Year or any programs/initiatives you would like to launch in the coming year(s). Describe the program/initiatives, provide financial requirements (including additional staff), and Academic Year in which you would launch. What key performance indicators are you utilizing to track the success of this program?

All programs started within the 2018-2019 academic year are new initiatives.

Program Terminations

List any programs that were newly terminated or discontinued during the Academic Year. Provide justification as to why the program was discontinued

None.

Program Rankings

List any nationally ranked or external recognition during the Academic Year. For each, provide the formal name of the program followed by the name of the organization that issued the ranking, the date of notification, effective date range, and any other relevant information.

None.

Community Engagement

Community Perceptions

Describe how your unit assesses community perceptions of your engagement, and how the unit assesses the impact of community engagement on students, faculty, community and the institution. Provide specific findings.

One measurement of community perceptions is media appearances. In our first year, Rhodos was featured in USC Today and on the University's Top 20 list of achievements of the year. Our primary social media presence is on Instagram, and we have a slow but consistently growing audience (150 followers) with consistent responsiveness (30-50 engagements per post). Our YouTube videos consistently upwards of 300 views for a very specific, targeted set of communications.

We continue to develop other metrics as we move into our second year.

Collaborations

Internal Collaborations

List your Unit's most significant collaborations and multidisciplinary efforts that are internal to the University. Details should be omitted; list by name only.

Green Quad
School of Visual Art and Design
Center for Music Entrepreneurship
Forum on Education Abroad
McNair Institute
Center for Digital Humanities
South Quad
Student Success Center
Carolina Gamers Club

External Collaborations

List your Unit's most significant collaborations and multidisciplinary efforts that are external to the University. Details should be omitted; list by name only.

Still Hopes Retirement Community
The Anne Frank House
Indie Bits (The Nickelodeon)
Residential College Society Conference
Richland County Public Library

Campus Climate and Inclusion

Campus Climate & Inclusion

Activities the unit conducted that were designed to improve campus climate and inclusion.

Prior to our first incoming class' arrival on move in day, we participated in a beta test of the Open Minds Platform, a psychology-based educational platform designed to depolarize communities. 84 students participated in the online program.

Co-sponsored The Yellow Ticket, a unique art exhibition featuring a historic silent film about anti-Semitic restrictions in tsarist Russia, set to live accompaniment by Grammy award winning musician Alicia Svigals and her performance group, The Klezmatiks. A Rhodos student facilitated a Q&A session between the performers and the audience.

Initiatives and Fees

Initiatives

Describe any new initiatives your unit will need for the coming year.

No new initiatives are planned for the coming year.

Fees

List any new or changed fees that your unit has implemented or had to take on in the last academic year.

No new fees are proposed for the coming year.

Concluding Remarks

Weaknesses and Plans for Improvement

What is your unit struggling with? What plans do you have to overcome the weakness that you have faced in the next academic year.

We were surprised by the large number of students (~35%) involved in Greek life and the effect that this seemed to have on engagement with Rhodos. Assuming this rate of Greek participation will continue, we plan to engage more specifically with students in Greek programs at early move in. We are working with the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life to develop strategies to encourage these students to sustain engagement with Rhodos.

In our initial pre-move in surveys, students indicated a strong desire to study abroad. However, in part due to the lead time needed to develop a study abroad program, we were only able to make initial progress into developing a Rhodos study abroad program. We have adjusted this to be a priority in the hopes of introducing the program as soon as possible.

As we learned from our learning community colleagues, general rates of attendance are lower than we would like, and this relates to but is not necessarily the same as engagement. We are working to develop new programs for next year are more independent of specific spaces and times while still encouraging engagement.

Key Issues

Identify key issues or potential challenges your unit will encounter this coming year and the steps you plan on initiating.

We will need to strengthen our relationship with RMs, and clarify the relationship of the Rhodos Fellows program as an important aspect of South Quad residence life. We were not successful enough at getting buy-in from the RMs, which affected communications to the residents through traditional res life channels. Our Area Coordinator and Assistant Director are very supportive of the Rhodos mission, and next year the single new RM will be one of our active Rhodos Fellows, so we are confident that we can improve in this area.

We assumed that students who completed the application and were admitted to Rhodos knew that they were participating in the Rhodos Fellows program, and would be predisposed to be engaged with our programs from the start. For several reasons, this was not a correct assumption. Next year we plan to tune communications and outreach during the summer, through the opening of the semester, and into the year.

Further, a crucial community-building window early in the year is overpacked with competition for students' time and attention; in our first year we had a difficulty communicating in competition with established patterns from Greek life, res life, academic programs and long standing campus organizations. This issue is not unique to our program. Taking this into account, along with frequent lack of awareness of being in the program mentioned above, we are designing programs and communications that are less likely to get lost in the inevitable shuffle.

Quantitative Outcomes

Explain any surprises regarding data provided in the quantitative outcomes modules throughout this report.

As mentioned in the "issues" and "weaknesses" sections, we did not anticipate such widespread competition for attention and engagement immediately upon students' arrival, which likely had an effect on initial attendance numbers. Student interactions also indicate meeting time and semester workload were major factors in lower attendance rates, particularly when programs were specifically designed in concert with direct requests from students.

Cool Stuff

Describe innovations, happy accidents, good news, etc. that occurred within your unit not noted elsewhere in your reporting.

In March, we hosted our first Rhodos Retreat for students returning to our community for a second year. During this day-long event, we collectively reflected on their past year in the program, planned for Fall, and prepared them to serve as mentors to our incoming class.

The Rhodos team was invited to speak to IB Design Technology classes at A. C. Flora High School to discuss the Rhodos Fellows program. Several new applicants for 2019-20 referred to this visit as a primary reason for applying to Rhodos.

Dr. Tarr attended the SXSW EDU conference to connect to national leaders in educational innovation and learn about cutting-edge technological innovations in education that we can use to develop to the Rhodos Fellows program in its second year.

We completed our first web site from scratch, including a new linked Foundation account that is already receiving Family Fund contributions.

With our makerspace studio in its final design phase for anticipated opening in Fall 2019, we look forward to developing into the destination for all Carolina students who want to weave creative technologies and experiential learning into a high impact experience in digital leadership.