What is Pathways?

The Pathways pilot intentionally integrates Boston College’s formational mission into the first year residential life experience.

Pathways invites first-year students to partake in a unique residential experience that consists of a deliberate approach to community building and student engagement. Within our new model, collaboration with University resources and programs will be an important aspect.

Logistics of Pathways

- Housed in Hardey House and Cushing House (~306 students)
- Traditional-style residence hall (doubles, triples, quads)
- Students are randomly assigned to Hardey/Cushing
- Building Staff Includes: 1 RD, 12 RAs, 1 GPM, 2 PGAs
**Students:**
1. Residents will develop a stronger sense of their own identity, values, and relationships with others
2. Residents will demonstrate and deepen a commitment to their intellectual growth
3. Residents will engage more fully with their own faith or beliefs

**Student Staff:**
1. Resident Assistants will further develop effective leadership skills
2. Resident Assistants will further develop effective interpersonal skills
3. Resident Assistants will create a unique and powerful residential learning environment
Collaboration Partners 2011-2012

- Academic Advising Center
- Campus Ministry
- Faculty
- Graduate Peer Ministry Program
- Office of the Dean for Student Development
- Office of the Provost and Dean of Faculties
- Office of Residential Life
- Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs
- Robsham Theater (performance Frosh.0 will not be launched until fall 2012)
- Student Programs Office
- United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley
- Volunteer and Service Learning Center
- Women’s Resource Center

Future collaboration partners...(perhaps) YOU!
Pathways

Overall Student Experience

Overall RA Experience

Fly Like an Eagle (Academic Initiative)

Pathways to Boston (Alternative Spring Break)

Frosh.0 (small discussion groups)

RA Training (fall and winter)

What did we want to know more about?
Methods for Frosh.0

- Short Answer
- *Rubrics
- Assessment Plan
- Focus Group
- Observation
Demonstrated greater vulnerability and comfort in sharing their thoughts and feelings compared to non-Frosh.0 participants.

Described how they have reflected on their experiences and growth thus far. They have a keen interest in self-awareness and personal connection with peers.

Participated in a social life that is an alternative to the BC drinking culture.

Discussed their personal faith and how they seek adults on campus to help them reflect and grow.

Identified the need for a better alignment of values and responsible decision making in regards to socializing with alcohol and extra curricular involvement (males).
Methods for Student Experience

- Short Answer (RA weekly reports)
- Reflection Papers
- Survey
- Observation
Relationships - Students desire and seek meaningful and deep relationships. This is sought through conversation with peers in small group settings (retreats, frosh.0, volunteering, weekly floor meetings).

Transition to College - Since moving into the residence hall, students reported a greater sense of independence, maturity, and confidence.

Academics - Students regularly engage in informal dialogue with peers and RAs about interesting coursework content and course/major selection.

Throughout the year, students engaged in conversations regarding academics, relationships, resolving transitional issues (fall), and extra curricular involvement (spring) more than any other topic.
Methods for RA Experience

- Short Answer (RA weekly Reports)
- Interviews (RA 1 on 1 meetings)
- Guided Conversation
- Observation
Relationship building amongst staff (formal and informal) was one of the most valuable aspects of training which they applied to their role throughout the year.

RAs demonstrated the ability to engage in intentional conversations during nightly RA social rounds, frequent informal conversations, and weekly floor meetings (bi-weekly in the spring).

RAs have displayed the ability to balance their roles as mentor, resource, and policy enforcer fairly and consistently.

RAs identified the need to have clear descriptions of their role, as compared to RAs in other buildings, as well as, the role of the graduate and professional Pathways staff.

RAs were more successful in creating a connected, comfortable community for its residents than other first year area halls.

RAs provided more mentors for first year students than any other hall.
Reorganize RA fall training (greater integration with overall RA training, inclusion of general RA specific skills, realignment of the length and flow of training, and introduce clear definition of staff roles)

Expand Frosh.0 (increase from 4 to 7 groups per semester, hire upper-class facilitator teams)

Provide more structure to the ‘Community Development Plan’ for RAs in order to better serve the residents’ needs and align with Pathways’ outcomes

Clearly identify the RD as the RA’s supervisor and prepare them for the expectations being an RA in Pathways (during the spring of 2012)

Simplify our assessment plan and tools to better manage the data (utilize existing data and collaborate with others when possible)

Systemically involve Faculty in the life of Hardey-Cushing beyond one time connections
For Further Information

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“I had a quality conversation with a resident who was documented multiple times this week. He was very upset with the situation. He felt horrible; he took responsibility for his actions and felt that he had let a lot of people down because of the choices he had made.”

“I have a better work ethic, set work load earlier, fall back on myself rather than relying on others, being more self-motivated.”

“Our conversation started from talking about premed classes to truly understanding who we are and how that fits into our vocation. We talked about what she sees on a typical weekend night in terms of drinking and people’s personalities. And I also shared with her some of my struggles in self-esteem and romantic relationships. Wow, just an all around great conversation!”

“I am surprised at how much I have stuck to my values and not afraid of being different and making other choices and not being met with resistance.”

“The best part of Frosh.0 is the talking, having people to talk to that are going through the same thing. The {upper-class} speakers that come in and have great advice and influence.”
“This conversation was especially significant because I felt like I was the complete opposite of Hannah when I was a freshman, and I had to put myself in her shoes. I came face-to-face with the reality that there are many BC students that are trying to "find their niche" or "group". But more importantly the question that we need to ask ourselves is "Who am I?“

“I talked with a resident about Kairos. She just recently got called (right after her roommate did), and will be attending in a few weeks. We talked about how you supposedly get called for Kairos when you are meant to be called and what that meant for her.”

“Had a great conversation with a bunch of the guys on my floor during my Black History Month program. We talked about what it would have been like to live in the 1960s, and about being a minority in the US today.”

“Frosh.0 was always the highlight of my week. Expressing my frustrations, problems and accomplishments made the transition into college life much easier.”

“Through Frosh.0 I was reminded to think and reflect about my experiences and where I most felt like "me," which was a really good way to guide me in the direction I wanted to go (with my decisions/friends/academics), and I wasn't just swept away with first friends I met and became someone I didn't want to be.”