The primary responsibility of the Office of the Dean for Student Development is to assist students in obtaining maximum educational benefit from collegiate life outside the classroom. From this purpose emerges the Dean's involvement in all phases of student life and thus most sectors of the University.

Specific areas of concern for the Dean's office include: evaluating the social and cultural needs of students and encouraging the development of programs to meet those needs; developing student leadership skills; coordinating the Student Judicial System, particularly the Student Judicial and Administrative Hearing Boards and all matters relating to student conduct and behavior; aiding in the formulation and implementation of University policies except those concerning academic affairs; coordinating with Housing to facilitate programs on safety, alcohol, and drug education, etc.; implementing immigration procedures for international students and scholars; and helping to foster relationships among students and between students and neighbors/community groups.

The Dean and his staff serve on numerous University committees and special project teams in order to advance student development, improve services, and build understanding and positive communication among students. Assistant and Associate Deans are involved in advising the Undergraduate Government, the Women's Resource Center, the Graduate Student Association, Murray House, O'Connell House, and all funded and nonfunded student clubs and organizations. The Office of the Dean for Student Development is also responsible for establishing policies and procedures for student clubs and organizations regarding the use of facilities, vending, leafleting, fund raising, club registration, office space allocation, physical plant services, bulletin boards, and budgets.