

Committee #3 — Executive Summary

Learning and Teaching about the implications of Wabash as a residential community

This working group developed two thesis statements for continuing discussion:

- #1 Enhance the quality of our residential community
- #2 Enrich the environment for campus discourse

Attached to these statements are a number of specific recommendations.

On the way to developing the two thesis statements and their more specific recommendations, this group reviewed the research on residence life conducted by rhetoric professor Todd McDorman in 2003 and 2005.

Professor McDorman conducted extensive interviews with students in work with the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts and in response to recommendations from the last strategic plan. Professor McDorman examined the living/learning environment in Wabash residence halls and fraternities. (Those two lengthy reports are not included here, but are available on request.)

But by far the most central aspect of the group's discussions over 10 meetings was a modified version of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis.

The committee used the rubric UVW – What is ugly? What do we value? What do we want? We posed these questions in each of six categories:

- Independent Living
- Fraternity Living
- Infrastructure
- Student Self-Governance & Behavior
- Athletics (Intramurals/Competition/Wellness)
- Wabash Community For Faculty/Staff

We also asked these questions of students and staff.

From these lists we developed the thesis statements and specific recommendations.