

Executive Summary

Blueprint for Academic Excellence Rhodos Fellows AY2021-2022

Highlights

Entering our third year, the Rhodos Fellows Living Learning Community for Information, Design, and Computing has expanded our reach. With our founding team of Simon Tarr as Faculty Principal, Amelia Quint as Assistant Principal, and Coy Gibson as Business Manager, we filled the South Quad building with 395 first-year students from over 50 majors, retained our first group of second-year Rhodos Returners, instituted a new Colossus Scholars program for advanced undergraduate research, and opened our state-of-the-art Makerspace.

This year, we held over 80 programs and events to encourage Rhodos students on pathways to digital leadership, including a nationally recognized guest speaker, professional development workshops, continuing student clubs, 10 linked courses, and maintaining on and off campus partnerships.

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: 08/24/2019

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: 08/24/2019

Values Statement

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: 08/24/2019

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Goals - Looking Back

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships. • Build teams that win with excellence and character.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
Action Plan	Maintain current and develop new programs and initiatives which have made a positive impact.
Achievements	<p>Along with regular open office hours, in AY 19-20 Dr. Tarr conducted individual Rhodos Fellow consultations (over 60). Weekly Café Rhodos interaction event with Dr. Tarr increased attendance to 10-20/week. Instituted new summer orientation consultations with 106 incoming students.</p> <p>Dr. Tarr lead regular & special events, including Secret Tools series (3-8 attendees each)</p> <p>Dr. Tarr participated actively in programs he did not lead, continuing the Monthly Make series (7-10 students each), multiple visiting guest events (5-10 attendees each), and larger events such as the 2019 Rhodos Opening Ceremony (55 attendees), 2019 Rhodos Rally (196 attendees), and 2019 Halloween Bash & prosthetic makeup workshop) (57 attendees). COVID-19 closed campus in March.</p> <p>Dr. Tarr taught linked courses (MART 210, UNIV 101), and visited all other linked courses.</p> <p>Dr. Tarr led social media interactions, fielding questions and responding to new students.</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.

Goals - Looking Back

Goal Continuation	Continuing in future.
Goal Upcoming Plans	Continue developing microcredentialing pathways.Develop Rhodos App.Increase consultations and workshops.Continue, update linked classes.Increase FP voice/presence in social media.
Resources Needed	Continuing current budget.
Goal Notes	

Goals - Looking Back

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Provide a sustainable campus infrastructure that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year 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	Dr. Tarr taught a linked media arts course (MART 210), collaborated with our linked entrepreneurship course (COLA 298), and visited all other linked courses. 11% of students in Dr. Tarr's FA18 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 was 18%.) Weekly Café Rhodos continued to flourish as an informal collaboration time for students (particularly computer science) to practice and work on homework problems.
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. Expand undergraduate research connections.
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	The Rhodos Makerspace, which serves as the central hub of programming for information, design, and computing, began construction in May 2019, and was not fully completed until October 26, 2019, and did not officially open until February 2020. COVID-19 closed campus in March 2020.

Goals - Looking Back

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive. • Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year 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>Continued internship pathways through the Center for Digital Humanities for students to partake in challenging professional development early in their academic career. Employed and trained 8 Rhodos Fellows as Makers Staff beginning in FA19 to lead in the new Makerspace.</p> <p>Began collaborating with Housing staff to develop events that serve our shared community and model the creative collaboration that defines Rhodos. Continued development of 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>Continued connections to the wider community, including service at Still Hopes Retirement Community, Richland County Public Library. IndieBits (a regional video game development showcase) partnership on pause due to COVID.</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

Goals - Looking Back

	a sense of belonging for our community and to the university as a whole.
Resources Needed	Budget for Rhodos events. Time and effort of Rhodos staff for programming.
Goal Notes	

Goals - Looking Back

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships. • Provide a sustainable campus infrastructure that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life. • Build teams that win with excellence and character.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
Action Plan	Maintain current and develop new programs, guest speakers/scholars/artists, workshops, and field trips. Connect with more local offices and businesses to foreground appropriate jobs and internships.
Achievements	<p>Continued seminars on design and professional communication. Rhodos Master Innovator Allen Simpson (PIXAR) gave visual storytelling workshops and had dinner with students.</p> <p>Experiential programs included: robotics, intro to microcontrollers, intro to electronics, intro to graphics, and more, culminating in semester-long project of building and programming an open source arcade cabinet system. Makerspace Marathon drew 68 attendees. Pioneered new digital microcredentialing system to incentivize and recognize student engagement and experiential learning. 170 unique students earned 186 badges in fields such as Makerspace competency, 3D printing and design.</p> <p>Rhodos Makerspace was available for students 24/7, with additional resources, checkout equipment, and expert assistance from 2-10pm every day. Over two hundred students completed the training process to use the Makerspace, and in our first year (abbreviated by COVID), we recorded over 2500 unique visits to the workshop to work on projects in information, design and computing.</p>
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.

Goals - Looking Back

Goal Upcoming Plans	Encourage growth in interest in Rhodos for both incoming and prospective students. Develop role of returning students as mentors and leaders in creating a sense of belonging for the Rhodos community and to the university as a whole. Improve collaborative environment with housing staff to encourage residence life community education plan to be more comprehensively integrated with larger learning community mission.
Resources Needed	Continuing current budget.
Goal Notes	

Goals - Real Time

Goals for the current Academic 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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships. • Build teams that win with excellence and character.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
Action Plan	Maintain current and develop new programs and initiatives which have had successful impact.
Achievements	<p>Colossus Scholars program has 10 students in its first year, with upper-division students pursuing undergraduate research projects. Rhodos linked classes serve 121 students, including new offerings that are important to most common majors.</p> <p>Continuing effective programs and repeat flagship events where possible adapted for COVID environment. Outdoor large-screen events (we're calling them "Screen Time") attracted 22 students at the first event.</p> <p>Increasing faculty principal voice and presence in and through social media, focusing on YouTube as communications channel.</p> <p>Open Makerspace as adapted grab-and-go environment, to provide support, mentorship, and instruction for Rhodos Fellows in physically distanced environment.</p> <p>Continuing individual consultations and Café Rhodos modified for COVID environment.</p> <p>During COVID all attendance at events has been generally suppressed but with quality engagements with those who attend.</p>
Resources Utilized	<p>Time and effort from Rhodos team for new and recurring content creation.</p> <p>Budget for equipment and program materials.</p> <p>Budget for food/refreshments.</p>

Goals - Real Time

Goal Continuation	Continuing in future.
Goal Upcoming Plans	(Anticipating relaxed physical distancing restrictions) Increase individual consultations in Rhodos Makerspace. Conduct more experiential workshops to encourage independent projects. Increase undergraduate research mentorship through fellowships, grant programs, and independent projects. Continue to teach Rhodos linked classes, as well as remain connected to other linked classes. Continue effective programs and repeat flagship events. Increase faculty principal voice and presence in and through social media.
Resources Needed	Continuing current budget.
Goal Notes	The Rhodos Makerspace, which serves as the central hub of programming for information, design, and computing, was open for students to check out equipment, ask questions, and submit 3D prints through the shortened on-campus Fall 2020 environment due to COVID-19. The space was not available for gatherings.

Goals - Real Time

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Provide a sustainable campus infrastructure that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year 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	Dr. Tarr taught a linked media arts course (MART 210) and two sections of UNIV 101, and visited all other linked courses. Instituted Colossus Scholars for students who are returning to the building, or who are moving out and want to remain active. The first cohort of 10 Colossus Scholars proposed plans for undergraduate research projects in information, design, and computing. Instituted Rhodos Magellan awards to fund undergraduate research projects for all Rhodos Fellows (including first year students). Weekly Café Rhodos continued to flourish as an informal collaboration time for students to develop research projects (for example, programming and building a retro-style arcade game cabinet system).
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	Maintain current and develop new linked course pathways. Add additional UNIV 101 sections. Promote and cultivate applicants to Rhodos Magellan Program. Increase undergraduate research mentorship through existing Colossus Scholar programs.
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	The Rhodos Makerspace, which serves as the central hub of programming for information, design, and computing, was open for

Goals - Real Time

	students to check out equipment, ask questions, and submit 3D prints through the shortened on-campus Fall 2020 environment due to COVID-19. The space was not available for gatherings.
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Goals - Real Time

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive. • Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year 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>Continued internship pathways through the Center for Digital Humanities for students to partake in challenging professional development early in their academic career. Employed and trained 8 Rhodos Fellows as Maker Staff for FA20 to lead in the new Makerspace.</p> <p>Two Rhodos Fellows developed the first Rhodos mobile app to promote direct communication from the leadership team to the students, and among students and groups within Rhodos.</p> <p>Continuing development of Rhodos student groups to strengthen bonds within our community around shared affinities. This features the new Rhodos Student Advisory Board to facilitate the gathering of new ideas from students and increase Rhodos Fellow interface with hall government as well as RMs.</p> <p>Built new connections with university admissions to communicate directly with prospective students in high school.</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. Continue to develop role of returning students in creating a sense of belonging for our community and to the university as a whole.

Goals - Real Time

Resources Needed	Continuing current budget.
Goal Notes	The Rhodos Makerspace, which serves as the central hub of programming for information, design, and computing, was open for students to check out equipment, ask questions, and submit 3D prints through the shortened on-campus Fall 2020 environment due to COVID-19. The space was not available for gatherings.

Goals - Real Time

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships. • Provide a sustainable campus infrastructure that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life. • Build teams that win with excellence and character.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
Action Plan	Maintain current and develop new programs, guest speakers/scholars/artists, workshops, and field trips. Connect with more local offices and businesses to foreground appropriate jobs and internships.
Achievements	<p>During COVID-19 crisis, modified the use of the Makerspace to a grab-and-go service model, allowing students to check out more equipment and tools than ever so that they can continue to work on projects in their apartments. The Makerspace also increased capacity to 3D print, and students are able to bring their projects there for output. In only the first month since move-in, the facility has produced 57 3D printed projects. Developing remote programs for mentorship in design and use of all our gear and facilities. Remote experiential programs being developed and deployed during COVID include: robotics, intro to microcontrollers, intro to electronics, intro to graphics, and more.</p> <p>Developed and distributed an in-home maker kit for each apartment in the building, with materials to encourage quick prototyping of ideas to develop into more significant projects.</p> <p>Extended digital microcredentialing system into the new Rhodos app to incentivize and recognize student engagement and experiential learning, focusing on remote experiences during the COVID-19 crisis.</p>
Resources Utilized	Time and effort from Rhodos team to develop and enact all new programs. Budget for space rentals, equipment, operations, and speaker honoraria.

Goals - Real Time

Goal Continuation	Plan to continue all programming.
Goal Upcoming Plans	(Planning for relaxed physical distancing restrictions) develop additional workshops to encourage independent projects. Recruit and develop next cohort of Colossus Scholars for undergraduate research mentorship. Cultivate Rhodos Magellan grant applicants. Continue effective programs and restart flagship events. Continue to extend microcredentialing pathways, and refine the development of the Rhodos app. Maintain current and develop new programs, guest speakers/scholars/artists, workshops, and field trips. Connect with more local offices and businesses to foreground appropriate jobs and internships. Cultivate new guest programs, collaborating with other units when possible.
Resources Needed	Continuing current budget.
Goal Notes	The Rhodos Makerspace, which serves as the central hub of programming for information, design, and computing, was open for students to check out equipment, ask questions, and submit 3D prints through the shortened on-campus Fall 2020 environment due to COVID-19. The space was not available for gatherings.

Goals - Looking Ahead

Goals for the next Academic 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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships. • Build teams that win with excellence and character.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
Action Plan	(Anticipating relaxed physical distancing restrictions) Increase individual consultations in Rhodos Makerspace. Conduct more experiential workshops to encourage independent projects. Increase undergraduate research mentorship through fellowships, grant programs, and independent projects. Continue to teach Rhodos linked classes, as well as remain connected to other linked classes. Continue effective programs and repeat flagship events. Increase faculty principal voice and presence in and through social media.
Achievements	
Resources Utilized	Time and effort from Rhodos team for new and recurring content creation. Budget for equipment and program materials.
Goal Continuation	Continuing in future.
Goal Upcoming Plans	Continuing all current activities. Develop program of microcredentialing pathways. Develop study abroad program.
Resources Needed	Budget for food/refreshments.
Goal Notes	

Goals - Looking Ahead

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Provide a sustainable campus infrastructure that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year 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	
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	Maintain current linked courses. Add additional UNIV 101 sections. Increase undergraduate research mentorship through existing Colossus Scholar programs. We also plan to be more targeted in our recruiting of prospective students, and are developing a plan to accept students into Rhodos before allowing them to choose roommates. We hope that this will yield more students in the building who are placed based on their interest in the program and less on roommate choice.
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	

Goals - Looking Ahead

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive. • Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
Action Plan	Encourage growth in interest in Rhodos for both incoming and prospective students. Develop role of returning students as mentors and leaders in creating a sense of belonging for the Rhodos community and to the university as a whole. Continue collaborative environment with housing staff to increase residence life integration with larger learning community mission.
Achievements	
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 budget for Rhodos events.
Goal Notes	

Goals - Looking Ahead

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"> • Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders. • Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible. • Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships. • Provide a sustainable campus infrastructure that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life. • Build teams that win with excellence and character.
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	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
Action Plan	(Planning for relaxed restrictions) develop additional workshops to encourage independent projects. Develop next cohort of Colossus Scholars for undergraduate research mentorship. Cultivate Magellan applications. Continue effective programs and restart flagship events. Extend microcredentialing pathways, refine Rhodos app. Maintain programs, guests, workshops, and trips. Connect local businesses to foreground jobs and internships. Cultivate new guest programs, collaborating with other units.
Achievements	
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 snacks with the Faculty Principal and Rhodos staff.

Master Innovator Series- Hollywood animation consultant Allen Simpson provided a guest lecture on visual storytelling, followed by a student Q&A over dinner.

Magic Garage workshops- previously Secret Tools, these professional development workshops through the lens of design are led by the Faculty Principal.

Student groups- Rhodos Studio (writing/art) continued into its third year, and we are developing a Student Advisory Board to guide future programming.

Maker Magellan Grant- our collaboration with the Office of Undergraduate Research launched this year.

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?

The Rhodos Makerspace was completed on October 26, 2019 and open until March 6, 2020.

During that time window, our Maker Staff recorded 2500 visits from 204 unique students, and the space has flourished as the active hub of our community.

We started our Colossus Scholars program with 10 upper-division Rhodos Fellows who wished to continue their involvement with us after moving off campus. Led by the Assistant Principal, these student leaders propose and will complete undergraduate research projects that align with the Rhodos mission.

We are continuing to develop our microcredentialing pathways to align with and incentivize Graduation with Leadership Distinction and undergraduate research, as well as integrate with the Rhodos app.

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.

Initiatives and Fees

Initiatives

Describe any new initiatives your unit will need 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.

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 conjunction with the Makerspace Grand Opening in February 2020, the UofSC social media team produced a video about the space which was widely publicized on the university's main channels. Our primary social media presence is on Instagram, and we have a growing audience (465 followers) with consistent responsiveness (30-50 engagements per photo, and 190-230 views per Instagram Live). Newsletter open rates remain at an average 30%.

As we overhaul our social media presence to model the Rhodos mission of innovation and rebuild our YouTube channel, we will develop other metrics moving into our third year.

Collaborations

Internal Collaborations

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

Office of Undergraduate Research

School of Visual Art and Design

McNair Institute

Entrepreneurship and Innovation LLC

Center for Digital Humanities

South Quad

Student Success Center

External Collaborations

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

Still Hopes Retirement Community

Indie Bits (The Nickelodeon)

Residential College Society Conference Planning Committee

Richland County Public Library

Campus Climate and Inclusion

Campus Climate and Inclusion

Activities the unit conducted that were designed to improve Campus, Climate, and Inclusion. Rhodos Fellows co-sponsored the 2020 Dr. Mary Baskins Lecture, “A New Jim Code?: Race, Technology, and Imagination in Everyday Life” by Dr. Ruha Benjamin, Associate Professor of African American Studies at Princeton University, together with the Department of Women and Gender Studies, the African American Studies program, the Ann Johnson Institute for Science, Technology, and Society, the Institute for African American Research, and TRIO, as well as arranged for Rhodos Fellows student leaders to participate in a lunch-and-learn with Dr. Benjamin following the presentation. This event, scheduled for March 26, 2020, was postponed due to COVID, but when the event is rescheduled we will continue our support.

While nationally diversity and inclusion in tech fields may remain low, women and people of color (BIPOC) are well represented among our inaugural Maker Staff, which is comprised of 57% women and 42% BIPOC. Additionally, the Rhodos app was developed by a student team of 2 Black women.

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.

As can be expected, the challenges of COVID have had a dramatic suppressive effect on event attendance, both in-person and virtual. We will continue to make every effort to keep students safe during this time while leaning on event types that have proved effective in the past, cultivating our Student Advisory Board to guide future programming efforts, and expanding our online presence to include more informative video content.

Key Issues

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

University-level communication in recruitment for LLCs is still insufficient; Housing communications does not effectively communicate our existence, let alone benefits, and continues to be disinterested in input from faculty principals in this area.

Non-faculty-led LLCs (including VPA and ECC) continue to confuse prospective students; many who would benefit from the community are relegated to theme houses, and our community is deprived of the benefit of potentially excellent fits.

Despite increased application quality this year, this did not translate into assignments; a large percentage of placements had been rejected during the application process, or were added as roommates. This continues to suppress engagement. Next year, we hope Housing will change roommate choice to take place after program acceptance.

Our new Res Life Coordinator and the support of the Exec Director and AVP for Student Housing and Well-Being have been excellent and vital. While there still seems to be some structural disconnect between the goals of Res Life and faculty-led LLCs, we continue to work closely with our RLC to align strategies and programs. Additional Housing-level communication with Faculty Principals during Res Life developments rather than afterwards would help ensure mission cohesion.

The removal of half of our Business Manager's time has severely diminished our ability to accomplish our mission with the staff we have. We hope that this position will be restored.

Quantitative Outcomes

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

Continuing our goal from last year to engage student independent of space and time, we are pleasantly surprised at the effect that our new Rhodos app (see Cool Stuff) has had on facilitating communications among Rhodos Fellows. Since reading email has not been a student priority, we are finding that students respond to the push notifications that come from the Rhodos app (and if they do not choose to get the app, they still receive the information via email).

Concluding Remarks

Beyond this, we note that closing the facility in March 2020, and retooling the entire program for dramatically limited physical engagement has suppressed student attendance at events and traffic in the Makerspace.

Cool Stuff

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

Construction on the Rhodos Makerspace was completed on October 29, 2019, and the space was opened to Rhodos Fellows for full operations until closure due to COVID on March 6, 2020. In connection with the Makerspace Grand Opening, the UofSC communications team created a video about the space that was widely circulated on the university's social media channels.

In keeping with our theme of information, design, and computing, we are currently piloting a Rhodos app as our central communication method, using push notifications and a central calendar to publicize events and important announcements. This app was developed by two upper-division Rhodos Fellows, who were also part of our Maker Staff team. There are nearly 200 active users of the Rhodos app, and students who choose not to use the app still receive all communications that come through via email.

Rhodos Fellows developed and continues to administer a Minecraft server, an online game/engineering platform for residents to interact together. In its first month, we saw over 50 unique users joining hundreds of sessions. We plan to expand this to encourage prospective students to visit a virtual replica of the Rhodos facilities.

We welcomed 5 of our Rhodos Returners back on campus for early-move in, during which they worked with us to prepare the opening of the newly constructed makerspace and participated in peer leadership and professional development training.

An independent group of 4 Rhodos Returners collaborated to build a retro gaming arcade cabinet that is now a fixture (and fan favorite) of the Makerspace.

Our Faculty Principal's recruiting efforts at local high schools have seen a strong payoff, with one of the students from the IB Design Technology course at A. C. Flora ultimately becoming a Rhodos Fellow in our 2019-2020 class. In addition, the university admissions team visited the makerspace, and since we have seen an increase in quality of applications and specific desire to participate in our LLC programs.