The Office of Residence Life & Commuter Services is proud to announce another year of Themed Communities. To foster the broadest range of successful living options possible, and in order to assure that residential groups contribute significantly to students’ individual development and the Doane College community, the Office of Residence Life & Commuter Services provides the following guidelines for reference as interested groups of students complete the application process. We appreciate your interest in making our campus community richer and more diverse in options and experiences.

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**Themed Community Mission**

The goal of Residence Life at Doane College is to offer autonomous communities, where groups of students who share a vision or commonality of interest can live together and learn from each other. By living together, themed communities have an opportunity to learn and grow together, while accepting the privileges and responsibilities that come with occupying themed.

Interested groups of students are eligible for themed living if they meet the identified criteria, including minimum GPA, having a mission, a predetermined roster of students committed to living within the themed community, and a community charter for the goals and intentions of their group during their year-long occupancy.

Themed communities are designed to increase the range of housing options available to all students. They allow students to experience the benefits and rewards of living in a smaller, purpose-driven community, while ensuring equitable access to residential resources. Themed communities are an option for interested groups whose mission is consistent with the goals and purposes of Doane College and whose ability to enhance that mission will be increased by the opportunity to live together.

Themed communities are potentially made available by quad in Colonial Hall and Hansen Hall. Groups interested in bidding for a theme community should contact the Interim Associate Director of Residence Life, Megan Failor, via email (subject heading: Themed Communities) at doanehousing@doane.edu.¹

¹ Recognition is due to Lawrence University, Oberlin College, and Illinois Wesleyan University for providing some language and ideas included in this document. We celebrate the excellent examples provided by our Student Affairs colleagues at these institutions.
**Selection Process**

Each year, students are given the opportunity to form a group and commit to living in a themed community through a charter proposal process. Interested groups of students can submit an application to live in Colonial before the lottery assignment process for other halls takes place. New charter proposals are due by 4pm Friday, 25 March 2016. Charter proposals should be emailed to doanehousing@doane.edu, subject heading “Themed Communities”.

Spokespersons from each interested group are encouraged to schedule an information session with the Interim Associate Director of Residence Life before submitting a charter proposal. The aim of these meetings is to answer any questions they may have and offer guidance in the chartering process.

Once submitted, applications will be reviewed by the Charter Review Advisory Board. Theme charters will be granted based on the quality of proposal. Chartered communities will be notified within a week of the deadline, 25 March 2016, and housing selection will take place via phone and/or email Monday, April 4, 2016.

**Eligibility**

To be considered for residency in a themed quad in Colonial Hall or Hansen Hall, the members of the proposed group must be comprised of individuals who will have lived on campus for at least two semesters by the end of this academic year and are eligible for housing selection as indicated by Doane housing policies. Transfers and spring-start students may be eligible, but must have attended college at least one semester and must complete all necessary steps to be eligible for participation in housing selection. In addition, the proposed themed group must meet and agree to the following criteria and expectations:

1. Themed communities must be filled to capacity. *If a group loses a member after housing selection is completed, remaining members will be allotted 2 weeks to find a replacement.*
2. The proposed group must demonstrate a commitment to service learning and Doane values through proposed service/outreach activities, for example volunteering for local service organizations. Members of themed communities are expected to complete at least 15 hours of community service a semester.
3. Proposed group members must have at least a 2.0 GPA in order to submit a charter and select housing in Colonial Hall. Members proposing to live in Hansen Hall must have and maintain a 3.0 GPA
4. Proposed groups intending to live co-ed must complete a gender neutral housing agreement and submit it with their proposed charter. The form is available at the Residence Life Office in Perry Campus Center.
5. Themed community members will be charged a reduced housing rate for their private rooms - $2,460 per semester. Themed community members may have the option of having double occupancy rooms.

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2 For more information, please contact doanehousing@doane.edu.
Questions to answer in the proposal

1. What are the values of this themed community and how will the community put these values into action?
2. What is the mission of this themed community and how will the mission focus the activities of the themed community?
3. How does the mission support or enrich the Doane community and values?
4. How will this community facilitate inclusiveness both in application for housing and in activities throughout the year?
5. What will your community do for fun?
6. What makes this theme stand out above others?
7. How will the proposed themed community maintain enthusiasm and commitment throughout the academic year?
8. **OPTIONAL:** What programs/activities will be planned? How do these programs relate to the proposed mission of the theme community?
9. **OPTIONAL:** If the proposed themed community will require funding for programs or activities, what steps have group members taken to raise funds? Please include a budget with the charter proposal.

The first seven questions are essential and should be answered in any proposed charter. The optional questions are included as an example, because more information will always help your proposal. If you intend to host activities as a themed community, providing a tentative social calendar may enhance your proposed charter. If you have additional information beyond the 9 listed questions, please include it in your charter.

Charter Formatting Guidelines

The formatting guidelines are 12-point, Times New Roman or Cambria font, double spaced, no more than 5 pages long, not including appendices or title page. The title page should include the name of the community and community members.

Service Leadership

At Doane, we believe that to lead is to serve. Although community service is required of Colonial residents, proposed themed groups that include intentional community service and that can articulate how their community service will contribute to their proposed mission or values will be given greater consideration.
Assessment & Renewal

Assessing a Themed Community

Themed communities will be held accountable for their charters by the Charter Review Advisory Board. Thus, it is essential for themed communities to provide document which will display their commitment to their original proposal. This documentation may also be relied on during the charter renewal process each year.

During the fall semester, themed communities will compile a report (either written or in presentation format, no longer than 5 pages or 15 minutes, respectively) that will cover activities that have already occurred as well as planned activities for the rest of the academic year. These activities should demonstrate a commitment to Doane values in accordance with their theme.

The topics considered for theme assessment will include but are not limited to:

1. How has the themed community lived up to their charter?
2. What programming has been put on by the community up until the point of the report/presentation?
3. How has the themed community enhanced the intellectual and community life of Doane’s Crete campus and beyond?
4. What are the future plans of the community for the rest of the academic year?

The Associate Director of Residence Life will coordinate the presentation process.

Renewing a Themed Community

Communities wishing to renew their charter for another year must participate in the general application process; however, preference will be given to renewal applications. In the renewal proposal, themed communities should reflect on their experience from the year in addition to planning for the next year by completing a 1-2 page summary.

Probation

If themed communities fail to meet expectations, they will be subject to a probationary period. The Charter Review Advisory Board will determine the length and conditions of probation. If a community is unable to restore their status, they may lose their theme charter and ability to renew their theme for the following academic year(s). Loss of charter will result in removal from Colonial Hall.

Themed community probation does not replace the residential living standards or conduct process. Themed community members who violate conduct policy or residential living standards
as outlined in the Student Handbook may face judicial action in addition to any themed community probation.

**Charter Review Advisory Board**
The Charter Review Advisory Board is comprised of the Interim Associate Director of Residence Life, the Director of the Hansen Leadership Program, the Assistant Director of College to Career, the President of the Residence Hall Association, and a faculty member. This group is responsible for reviewing applications and proposals for new and existing themes, discussing pertinent issues relevant to themed housing, and arbitrating any probation process.