

2025 University of Wyoming Floor Community Sponsorship

What's a FIG? What is an LLC?

Living Learning Communities (LLCs), including First-Year Interest Groups (FIGs), foster a community surrounding a common interest. In a FIG, first year students take two to four sections of linked or clustered courses together while living in a designated floor in the University of Wyoming Residence Halls. At the University of Wyoming, there are three types of floor communities with sponsors:

1. FIG LLC (includes 2-4 required courses)
2. Recommended-Course LLC (students may opt to take 1-2 courses)
3. Floor Sponsor Only LLC (without course component)

Why sponsor a FIG or LLC?

Research nationally and at UW indicates a significant positive correlation between FIGs and one-year retention rates, as well as between FIG participants and engagement in the first year.

| students starting in... | FIG students | % Retained | Non-FIG students | % Retained | FIG vs. Non-FIG |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Fall 2015 | 335 | 83.0% | 1,339 | 74.8% | +8.2% |
| Fall 2016 | 267 | 81.3% | 1,267 | 77.4% | +3.9% |
| Fall 2017 | 224 | 79.0% | 1,460 | 77.8% | +1.2% |
| Fall 2018 | 218 | 84.9% | 1,631 | 74.4% | +10.5% |
| Fall 2019 | 224 | 82.1% | 1,528 | 79.0% | +3.1% |
| Fall 2020 | 196 | 76.5% | 1,205 | 76.0% | +0.5% |
| Fall 2021 | 218 | 78.0% | 1,233 | 74.9% | +3.1% |
| Fall 2022 | 268 | 78.4% | 1,320 | 76.7% | +1.3% |
| Fall 2023 | 305 | 80.3% | 924 | 78.6% | +1.7% |
| AVERAGE 2012-2023 | | 80.6% | | 75.6% | +5.0% |

Well-conceived and well-executed Living Learning Communities garner these positive results because they focus on **creating an environment for students that eases the transition to college and lays a foundation for success**. Living Learning Communities balance academic and social development through activities and events outside of class (planned by involved faculty and staff) that

- 1) connect students to each other
- 2) demonstrate how academic concepts and theories have practical application
- 3) introduce students to campus and community resources and networking opportunities

Who is eligible to start a floor community?

We welcome proposals from *any* faculty or staff in any college, program, or major. The proposal might have an academic component within a university college or department (for example, the *Foundations in Business* departmental sponsor is the College of Business). We also welcome proposals that incorporate a faculty or staff member's hobbies, passions, or identities, such as the Sci-Fi & Fantasy Floor Community, the Videogaming community, and the Makerspace community.

What are the responsibilities of the Sponsor?

Faculty and staff are asked to:

1. Meet the floor's Resident Assistant (RA) during the spring semester after they are hired.
2. Attend the Saddle Up initial floor meeting in the halls to be introduced to the community (if possible).
3. Attend the Colloquium at 4PM on August 27, 2025 (or set up an alternate meeting if a schedule conflict exists).
4. Maintain regular communication throughout the semester with the RA.
5. Commit to attending one meal with the RA and students during each semester (usually October and March).
6. Lead or participate in two events in the fall (usually Sept. & Nov.) and one event in the spring.
7. Complete a Sponsor Activity Form at the end of each semester narrating your experience with the floor.

What is the timeline of my responsibilities?

You will begin with a late spring meeting with the newly hired RA for your floor to build a connection with that person. The planned events will take place during the fall semester with two activities and one shared meal and continue into the spring semester with one activity and one meal.

When are students enrolled in courses?

Students are accepted into their choice of floor as early as January. Targeted marketing to incoming students starts in January, and students are enrolled through the spring semester with a priority of enrollment prior to the March Admitted Student Days. **Application for floor communities will close June 1.**

Best Practices - Designing a Floor Community

1. **Give it a Face** - Create a title and description for your floor. Keep in mind your title and description are targeted to first-year students, so keep it simple. For examples, please visit this website:
<http://www.uwyo.edu/figs/current-figs>
2. **Identify Courses (if applicable)**
 - **For floors with required courses (FIGs):** Choose between 6-10 credit hours during the fall semester. This allows students to take a group of classes together, but still have enough wiggle room in their schedule to explore other courses on their own. Choose one anchor course and 2-3 satellite courses for the fall semester. Be sure to get departmental approval. **Informal approval is fine** (verbal, email, etc.).
 - **Anchor Course** All FIGs have an anchor course, such as [an First Year Experience course \(the FYE is variable credit 1 to 3 hours\)](#) or major-specific course, taught by the "home base." The anchor course can meet as many times as necessary (1-3 times per week). Typically the anchor course (or course section) gives priority enrollment to FIG students.
 - **Satellite Courses** The satellite courses should support the main theme or topic of the anchor course. High demand courses such as Chemistry, Biology, English, and Public Speaking may be more difficult to schedule; however, if you need one of these courses, the LeaRN coordinator can help you work with the departments to get approval.
 - **Consider instructor involvement** - FIGs are successful because of the dedicated involvement of the course instructors who interact with the students in class and attend out-of-class events and activities. Ideally the instructors of all the courses in the FIG are involved and active participants. At least one instructor must be identified as the main contact for the community and coordinator.
 - **For Recommended Course LLCs:** Choose 1-2 recommended courses, such as a First Year Experience course, STEP 1102, or a course that fulfills University Studies Program requirement.
3. **Need help? Starting a new Floor Community?** If you'd like to set up a brainstorming meeting, or a meeting to talk to your faculty/department, please contact figs@uwyo.edu.

4. **Send in the Proposal Form** - The deadline for receipt of proposals is 5:00 pm on Oct. 31, 2024. Email proposals to figs@uwyo.edu or bring them to Coe Library Room 106.

This form is for new Floor Communities – Renewals will be handled on a digital form.

Proposal Form

The deadline for proposals is 5:00 pm on Oct. 31, 2024.

Proposals can be sent by email or campus mail to: Mollie Hand, LeaRN Program (Coe 106) or figs@uwyo.edu.

Title for FIG/LLC:

Community Description (example descriptions can be found at www.uwyo.edu/figs/current-figs)

Primary Sponsor(s):

Secondary Sponsor:

(if primary steps down or unavailable)

Sponsoring College/Program:

Floors with fewer than ten participants may be canceled. Please indicate the maximum number of students allowed in your LLC

(must not exceed 33 or the maximum enrollment in anchor course, whichever is smaller)

Fall Courses & Team Contact Information

Please list all anticipated courses, but **only list instructors if they are actively involved in the FIG/LLC**. Each department must give approval for a required course to be part of a FIG.

| Instructor Name | Course Number | Title | Departmental Approval? ² | Required courses? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
|-----------------|---------------|-------|-------------------------------------|---|
| (Anchor Course) | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

LeaRN and Residence Life will award FIG/LLC Sponsors up to \$500* and opportunities for meal swipes at Washakie Dining to recognize service and dedication to the following required elements of the floor community:

1. Floor Communities with fewer than ten students will not be offered.
2. Sponsors must meet the floor's Resident Assistant (RA) after they are hired.
3. Sponsors are encouraged to attend the first floor meeting with the RA and community.
4. Sponsors must attend the Colloquium at 4PM on August 28, 2025 (or alternate)
5. Sponsors must maintain regular communication throughout the semester with the RA.
6. Sponsors must commit to attending one meal with the RA and students during each semester.
7. Sponsors must lead or participate in two events in the fall and one event in the spring.
8. Sponsors must complete a Sponsor Activity Form at the end of each semester.

Initial below to indicate that you understand the required elements:

* Sponsors can earn \$300 (paid by LeaRN) for fall commitments and \$200 (paid by Residence Life) for spring commitments. Co-sponsors will split the earnings. The dollar amount of the stipend may vary from this figure based on budgets and number of communities offered.

Floor Activity (Tentative) Plan (see next page for template of what RAs use)

- Please list some of your early brainstorming ideas for events you might want to plan with your RA.*
- Activities can be casual or social (like playing a game together) or more structured and academic (activities that complement the curriculum or needs of students). Plan for both types during the year. *Activities that build community, help students see connections between classes, and/or incorporate service learning are especially meaningful to students.*
- Please do not feel limited by the spaces provided – we certainly encourage you to plan as much as possible!

| | Activity | Date |
|---|----------|------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |

Signature of proposed Primary Sponsor(s) *(typed signature is acceptable):*

Signature of Secondary Sponsor *(to be called upon only if Primary Sponsor cannot fulfill the duties of the sponsorship):*

Signature of Anchor Course Instructor (if different from Primary Sponsor) *(electronic signature is fine):*

*We understand that these events are largely tentative at this point and are likely change.