mission  
The mission of the Division of Student Life is to foster the intellectual, cultural, social, and emotional development of students by providing a climate conducive to learning and personal growth, enabling them to become fully productive members of a global community.

vision  
We strive to promote an engaged community of learners and scholars, create a sense of belonging and community, and empower all students to find and make their unique contributions both within and outside the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

strategic goals

1. Engage all students in meaningful co-curricular opportunities to promote retention and persistence toward graduation.

2. Foster a campus environment that meets students’ evolving cultural, facilities, physical, and social needs.

3. Sustain and strengthen partnerships with Academic Affairs to support the academic mission of the institution.

4. Enhance services for students through data-informed decision-making, branding, and communication.

5. Support division staff’s ability to be effective in their respective roles.
The Division of Student Life is charged with improving the student life at the University of Tennessee. Its various departments encompass many different aspects of university life but all work toward one goal - providing students with an engaging and enlightening atmosphere of living and learning. The Division is committed to an uncompromising respect for diversity, strong partnerships with University programs and support of the University’s academic mission.

plan progress

In 2010, the University of Tennessee launched its quest to become a Top 25 institution. In response to the University’s commitment to recruit, retain, and graduate the best and brightest undergraduate and graduate students in Tennessee, the Division of Student Life created a complementary strategic plan to further support the goals of the University (http://studentlife.utk.edu/forms/StudentLifeStrategicPlan.pdf).

Each of the departments within the Division of Student Life uses the following overarching goals as guiding principles. The following highlights reflect areas where units within the Division of Student Life made exemplary gains and progress within their departmental strategic plans.

Student Engagement & Success
Engage all students in meaningful co-curricular opportunities to promote retention and persistence toward graduation.

- In 2012-2013, departments within the Division of Student Life exemplified ingenuity with the creation and modification of Student Life programs and services designed to enhance student engagement in the University.
- The Center for Leadership & Service created a volunteer hours tracking system. Over 12,000 volunteer hours were logged during the 12-13 academic year.
- Participants in the Alternative Break program facilitated by the Center for Leadership and Service had very high retention rates, with 93% to 95% graduated or on track to do so.
- The Office of the Dean of Students used an intentional advising approach with the Student Government Association to promote student leadership and learning opportunities and was able to send SGA Students to three leadership meetings during the academic year.
- The Office of Multicultural Student Life included the Native American Student Association and Asian American Association in the Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 Multicultural Student Leadership Development Weekend.
- The Sexual Assault Protocol for the Division of Student Life was launched in the fall of 2012. Those trained on the new protocol included: Division of Student Life Professional Staff, Housing Directors, Assistant Hall Directors, and Resident Assistants.
- Sorority & Fraternity Life collaborated with NPHC and MGC in leadership development programs such as New Member Convocation, Greek Summit, Greek Leadership Initiative, and Officer Training Boot Camp.

Student Environment
Foster a campus environment that meets students evolving cultural, facilities, physical, and social needs.

- As the Division of Student Life endeavors to enhance the quality of life of the students of UTK, its departments work together to promote civility, inclusivity, and wellness in a holistic and systemic way.
Career Services partnered with Center for Leadership & Service to host a new Impact Careers and Professional Leadership Track as part of the annual Clifton M. Jones Student Leadership Conference & MLK Day of Service. Career services also partnered with the College of Arts & Sciences and Social Work consultants to offer Social Service Careers Panel and Job Fair.

Sorority & Fraternity Life established the Multicultural Greek Council as the governing council of the five multicultural organizations, and included it in the Student Handbook, Hilltopics, as an official “Student Governing Body” at UT.

Student Activities collaborated with the former Student Orientation & Leadership Development Office to collect data in order to demonstrate the need for funding and development of an independent office for service and volunteerism on campus. The result of this partnership was the creation of the Center for Leadership and Service in Spring 2012.

The Student Health Center (SHC) implemented a new policy that requires and provides tuberculosis (TB) screening for all incoming freshmen and transfer students. As of June 2012, all new students were screened for TB risk. Additionally, in November 2012, the Student Health Center (SHC) opened a full-service pharmacy for use by University staff and students.

Substantial progress was made toward construction of Phase One of the new Student Union. Rentenbach, Inc., project construction manager, completed significant foundation work. Following completion of the new Student Union and opening of the new facility, the capacity to meet the needs of the campus community will be greatly enhanced.

University Housing partnered with the Office of Sustainability to host the Power Challenge. During the 2012-13 Power challenge, residents helped UT avoid approximately $56,000 in water, wastewater, electricity and trash disposal costs - all in just one month. University Housing also collected 20,000 lbs. of cardboard during hall opening and closing.

Student Learning

Student Learning involves efforts to support and strengthen partnerships with Academic Affairs to support the academic mission of the institution.

Several departments within the Division of Student Life engaged in partnerships with academic departments by going into the classroom as well as engaging faculty in events and activities outside of UTK’s labs and lecture halls.

In efforts to support and demonstrate the importance of first-year academic programs, New Student & Family Programs (NSFP) engaged in teaching the First Year Studies courses. Additionally, NSFP Welcome Leaders conducted small group meetings with first year students to emphasize the importance of seeking academic resources, attending class and managing time.

The Diversity Dialogues Faculty Advisory Board was established by the Office of Multicultural Student Life (MSL) in February 2013. Five faculty members from different academic disciplines are involved and responsible for facilitating and identifying topics for the Diversity Dialogues series.

As of December 2012, the S.E.E Center staff facilitated hundreds of Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) trainings as well as trainings about 974-HELP. Other informational sessions have been provided to the College of Public Health, via the Office of Multicultural Student Life, and to Sigma Nu and Delta Tau Delta Fraternities.

Student Publications produced 163 regular issues and 4 special issues of the Daily Beacon, 2 issues of Phoenix Magazine (Fall and Spring), the 2011-2012 Volunteer Yearbook. The Web Archive was also completed.
Student Services & Communication

Enhance services for students through data-informed decision making, branding, and communication.

- To establish and promote the Division of Student Life as a unified body dedicated to establishing and improving services for students, all departments within the Division began using the new Student Life logo and branding campaign via departmental websites, publications, and events.
- The Division of Student Life relies heavily on data-driven programming and continuously seeks feedback in order to best serve students. CLS conducts annual student needs surveys to measure student engagement, leadership development, service engagement and sense of belonging. Two major assessment projects were conducted in 2012-2013. University Housing completed an assessment initiative regarding reasons for diminishing populations of returning students.
- New Student and Family Programs provided weekly emails to parents that contain student resources and opportunities. Between 85% and 90% of parents consider the weekly emails to be helpful in supporting their student and list the weekly emails as one of the top 3 services that are most important to them. 84% of parents reported the Parents Association provides timely and effective communication to parents.
- The S.E.E. Center developed new promotional materials for the 2012/13 year including Survival Guide to Stress, Vols Help Vols Buttons, Ask Rosa stickers, S.E.E. Center stickers, Vols Help Vols phone number cards, Beacon ads, S.E.E. Center information and business cards, and a social media board about the Center’s campaigns.

Staff Support

Support ability of staff to be effective student affairs practitioners and administrators.

- Nearly all of the departments within the Division of Student Life were able to send staff and/or students to professional and academic conferences and trainings in 2012-2013 in efforts to promote professional and intellectual growth.
- Several departments within the Division engaged in initiatives to promote wellness among their staff. Career Services staff members participated in the Career Services Fit and Fun program. Contests were held for walking, weight, BMI, and body fat. Weekly “Healthy Lunch” meetings were also held. The Student Counseling Center (SCC) collaborated with other divisional departments in VolAware, which resulted in over 3000 people in attendance. Physical therapy equipment was made available to Student Health Center (SHC) staff. SHC staff currently utilize the equipment throughout the day.
- The Center for Leadership & Service (CLS) was awarded a three year $240,000+ gift from Leadership Knoxville to establish a new program.
- Per the recommendation by Student Activities, Graduate Assistants are now recognized at the Dean of Students Student Awards Banquet and are invited to attend the Dean of Students Staff Banquet.
- In order to support established University Housing groups such as the RA Council, Director’s Dialogue and ERC, University Housing tracked the number and types of professional development activities in which employees participated.
- The divisional Professional Development Committee hosted eight professional development breakfasts or coffee houses during the past year. All exempt staff and graduate assistants were invited to these presentations which included offerings on skill development, diversity, professional growth, and divisional updates. The PD Committee also planned the summer divisional Annual Meeting (for all exempt staff members), the fall Graduate Assistant Orientation, and the winter Holiday Luncheon (for all divisional staff members). The Non-exempt Professional Development Committee hosted 5 professional/employee development lunches during the past year.