

FOCUSED INTEREST COMMUNITIES AT HILLTOP HALL

What are Focused Interest Communities (FICs)?

FICs are centered on a combination of intellectual, cultural, and social affinities. They offer a unique opportunity to live and engage with people who share interests similar to your own. FICs are meant for students who want to engage with others, to experience activity when they are at home in their residence hall and who embrace the idea of faculty and staff being part of their living experience. Hilltop Hall, the location of our 2022-2023 FICs, was built for social engagement and students who want to leave their room and find activity in their residence throughout the day and night. If this sounds like you, and you are looking for a place to live with like-minded students of all class years, FICs at Hilltop might be for you!

What are the perks of living in a Focused Interest Community at Hilltop Hall?

- Residency at Hilltop, which includes a state of the art building with hotel style bedrooms and private bathrooms. Suites include kitchens and shared living rooms, as well as study rooms and on floor laundry.
- The ability to reside with 36 other people in a variety of shared spaces and to share common interest in academic programs, hobbies, activities or passions in daily life/life at home.
- Additional programming dollars to create your own suite events and opportunities. Each living learning community or special interest community will receive \$2,000.00 in addition to the standard residential programming support offered by Residential Life, which is about \$28.00 per resident per year (about \$1000.00).
- The chance to mentor SUNY Poly first year students who are interested in starting their college experience within your unique Focused Interest Community and being part of more than a standard first year college residence hall.
- Successful FICs, meaning those who meet their programmatic goals, who demonstrate a healthy and safe environment and who contribute positively to campus life, will be offered the chance to keep their community for 2023-2024 without having to re-apply for the community or for individuals to continue to live in the suite as returning students.

APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE IN MICROSOFT EXCHANGE FORMS:

[FIC MICROSOFT EXCHANGE APPLICATION](#)

FIC SUBMISSIONS MUST INCLUDE:

Description of the Community and Support of the Academic Mission of SUNY Poly

Each FIC must clearly define its mission, purpose and goals. What is the shared academic connection or focused interest that your community will promote? Although all FICs will undoubtedly provide a social living experience, the suite must always first and foremost support academic success and a healthy collegiate experience. Applications should demonstrate a shared interest in supporting the academic success of everyone who lives in the suite.

Community Sponsors

Applications should include at least one form of sponsorship or multiple sponsorships. FIC Sponsors are academic programs, individual faculty and staff members, alumni or organizations and clubs that are committed to supporting your suite and articulate and commit to their specific role as a supplement to your application. Sponsorship roles can be in the form of direct community engagement, programming opportunities, advisement, a shared academic course or a shared volunteer or off campus experience.

Mentorship

Each community must reserve 8 spaces (4 double rooms) for incoming first year students. The first year students must reside together and not with upper-class roommates for their first year. The application must provide a description of how the other members of the suite will mentor and support first year students who are placed in the community. In the summer, Residential Life staff will work with the Resident Advisor for the FIC to review first year student applications for the community and place successful applicants in the suite. As part of the application, submit the questions you would ask all applicants to your community.

Programming and Experiences

Applications should detail the unique opportunities that residents will experience by electing to reside in the Focused Interest Community. Some of your programming may be required (ie, floor meetings or community developed events) and some may be of interest to most, but not all, of the people on your floor. As an example, perhaps 15 people on your floor are going to commit to taking an academic course together, and the professor of that course has agreed to be a sponsor to your FIC and will eat dinner there with the community once per month.

A Statement of Commitment to Sustainability

Hilltop Hall is the first net-zero Residence Hall in the state of New York. All of its occupants must have some commitment to sustainability, and each and every community member must be conscientious about their energy consumption and the amount of “stuff” they bring and plug in at Hilltop. Energy consumption is important in our entire residential program, but if you do not intend to be energy conscious as a person or community, Hilltop Hall is not the correct residence for you.

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION FOR FICS

- Each FIC will have a Resident Advisor, selected trained and compensated by Residential Life. If a contributor to the initial group application would like to be the assigned Resident Advisor, if the community is selected for 2022-2023, than that person should be sure to participate in the Resident Advisor selection process. If that individual is hired to be a Resident Advisor, they can preference their interest in being the RA for your community. If they are not selected to be RA they can still choose to live in the community as a member. And if they are selected to be an RA, but not for that community, they can decline the position and choose to reside in the FIC as a member, instead.
- Focused Interested Communities must inclusive and open to all students who wish to apply. Although a specific program, like a club, athletic team or academic program, may be an important and helpful sponsor to an FIC, membership in the FIC cannot be limited to only members of exclusive groups. As an example, A Wellness Community FIC might have sponsorship by Women's Volleyball because 10 members of the women's volleyball team are passionate about this topic and perhaps their coach is committed to running some fitness classes for the floor, for example. However, spaces on the floor cannot be reserved ONLY for women's volleyball or vacancies filled ONLY by members of this team or only by students who identify as women.

Similarly, IMGD might be interested in a Gaming Community FIC and the initial applicants may be all IMGD majors, but the floor vacancies cannot be exclusive to only people who are enrolled in the IMGD program. A passion for gaming and commitment to the major may boost someone's application, all things being equal to other applicants for vacancies, but it cannot be a requirement to join FIC if there are vacancies. It is possible to require membership to a club or organization if that club or organization accepts anyone who is interested without restriction, but you should consider if that requirement will limit interest in a way that does not allow you to recruit enough people for the entire suite.

If you have questions about this, please do not hesitate to ask.

- You CAN have requirements for your FIC members to participate in community meetings, in community chores and tasks (like maintaining your kitchen!) and we encourage you to include these as minimal requirements – they are important community development tools. Your requirements, however, must be to participate in things everyone in the FIC can attend. Your requirements should include a structure for response to students who do NOT meet expectations. Residential Life will work with the community to manage members who do not participate, the process will need to be fair and provide for restitution. Roommates and suitemates will not be able to remove someone from the floor without due process and demonstration of support for improvement.

- Your FIC suite space will offer 26 spaces to your group (in addition, 1 single is reserved for the RA and 8 doubles reserved for first year students.) Your initial application to start the community will require at least twenty of those spaces to be filled. Any vacancies will be advertised and open for applicants during room selection and 8 spaces are held for new first year students. Vacancies that remain or that open up in the summer or during the course of the year 2022-2023 will be available to interested transfer student applicants. *The suite can never refuse the right of Residential Life to use vacant spaces and Residential Life will be guided by Disability Services on use of single rooms before they are open for seniority placement.*
- Hilltop Hall will have increased pricing due to amenities, custodial support in kitchens and common spaces, private restrooms and increased programming dollars. Hilltop residents will pay about \$500.00 more per semester versus other complexes.

THE PROCESS

Information and Help Sessions

Have questions? Have an idea but need some help developing an application? Attend a session to learn more or get support for building an idea into reality. Bring your whole team or send one representative.

February 22 noon In person, Residential Life, Campus Center

February 23 9pm Virtual, Zoom Register to participate here:

[Zoom Help Session](#)

February 24 noon In person, Residential Life Suite, Campus Center

Groups can also schedule support and inquiry sessions for their own team by request. Email adamsj4@sunypoly.edu to set up a session in person or virtually.

Applications Due

March 13, 2022

Submit a group application to start a Focused Interest Community. The initial application can have up to 27 applicants but must have a minimum of 20 applicants for consideration. Review and selection of communities will be done by a diverse group of faculty and staff.

Successful Communities Announced – Group Applicants Select Individual Rooms

March 21, 2022

Resident Advisor Selected

TBD (Dependent upon Resident Advisor Selection Decisions)

Vacant Spaces Advertised to Returning Students

March 28, 2022

Applications from First Year Students and Transfers (if Applicable) Due

June 15, 2022