

Institution: University of Richmond

Quality Enhancement Program (QEP): The Richmond Endeavor – An Innovative First-year Living-learning Experience

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Richmond Endeavor is a first-year student living-learning experience that is grounded in four key learning outcomes (Self-Efficacy, Community, Intellectual Engagement, and Ethical Understanding). The Richmond Endeavor program will pursue these four outcomes through the intentional integration and enhancement of existing aspects of first-year student programming, including focused academic advising that begins during the summer and continues until a major is declared, an academically based pre-orientation program, a fall academic course, and a spring half-unit project (or, where appropriate, a related full-unit course), all combined to create a set of potent first-year living-learning communities.

Drawing on the lessons learned from and successes of our Sophomore Scholars in Residence (SSIR) program, The Richmond Endeavor will provide approximately 220 first-year students with a yearlong, course-based, living-learning experience by its fifth year. In summary, The Richmond Endeavor will provide the following:

- Living-learning communities established around courses with focused interactions with the faculty instructor that emphasize in intentional ways four learning outcomes (Self-Efficacy, Community, Intellectual Engagement, and Ethical Understanding). These outcomes encompass key goals of the University, including facilitating academic and social adjustment and providing a more robustly academic introduction to UR;
- Each Richmond Endeavor course will begin with our popular Roadmap to Success pre-orientation program, which Endeavor faculty will introduce their selected topic to their students through a multi-session pre-orientation mini-course. In addition to introducing the course topic, these sessions will begin to build community and promote the four learning outcomes, while also allowing Endeavor students to benefit from all the other aspects of the Roadmap pre-orientation;
- Each fall course will be followed by a spring semester half-unit project or full-unit course designed to continue student engagement with faculty, peers, and the academic subject area;
- The faculty member will also serve as the student's academic advisor—a relationship that will begin during the summer when the faculty member helps the student prepare for fall registration. Each course will have an assigned peer advisor, called Endeavor Navigators, who will assist with advising during the summer and continue to work with the faculty member and students throughout the first year;
- The four learning outcomes will be pursued in intentional ways throughout the Richmond Endeavor program (from introductory-invitational information during spring and summer before enrollment, through the pre-orientation program, the academic advising process, the fall course, and the spring project/course).

Overall, this program will reach more than one quarter of the first-year class with a year-long living-learning community that draws students and faculty together in an intensive academic and social experience beginning before students arrive on campus, continuing throughout the first year, and into declaration of a major during sophomore year (with ongoing academic advising).

For program information contact: Dr. Scott Johnson (sjohnson@richmond.edu), or Mr. Andy Gurka (agurka@richmond.edu), co-directors of The Richmond Endeavor.

Link to the program website: <https://livinglearning.richmond.edu/endeavor/index.html>