



## d.arts at Rensselaer

Rebecca Radparvar

Design and Arts Housing (d.arts) is a themed housing option for students with a personal interest in exploring the intersection of design, the arts, technology, and their chosen academic major.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A wise man once said, “Engineering, technology and science enable life, while the arts make it worth living.” Rensselaer currently fosters an environment for engineering, technology and science to develop; through this environment, however, arts and creativity are not fostered and encouraged.

As Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute chooses embrace these words and moves from a more technical mindset to a well-rounded institute, a strong push to incorporate more non-technical activities and offerings has emerged. Rensselaer wishes to slowly shift its image from a purely technical institute to one with a more diverse student body. This shift can be seen in things as subtle as their new prioritized use of ‘Rensselaer’ over ‘RPI’.

As a part of this initiative, themed housings have been implemented and expanded upon to as a mechanism to allow cross collaboration between students for coursework and independent projects; d.arts is the means to which to achieve these goals. d.arts is a themed housing option on the second floor of Cary Hall with a classroom space, which provides residents, as well as the Rensselaer community, with a space and opportunity to engage collaboratively and think creatively. The d.arts initiative aims to attract incoming residents, who have a particular affinity for design and the arts, into a program that could meet these interests. Through the development of d.arts on campus, Rensselaer is taking the steps to support the creativity of its students.

d.arts, a wildly student run initiative that, with the support of Residence Life and the Advising and Learning Assistance Center, aims to grow and slowly transform itself from a simple themed housing option to a living and learning community as Rensselaer grows and transforms into a well-rounded institute.

## THE NEED

Rensselaer is a technical institution, which does not create the most welcoming environment for the creative minded. Often times, these students find it challenging to express their ideas and breakthroughs to others, as they do not share the same

creative understanding. They find it difficult to find support as the majority of the student body lacks appreciation for their work and cannot relate to them on this level. There is a need for a larger creative community within the overall Rensselaer community, where students can collaborate and fuel each other's creativity. Additionally, there is a need for awareness and respect of art and design on campus, which can improve the overall experience for creative students and make it more welcoming for prospective students who have an artistic mind.

## D.ARTS

Design and Arts Housing (d.arts) is a themed housing option for students with a personal interest in exploring the intersection of design, the arts, technology, and their chosen academic major. d.arts aims to provide a space of diverse, shared creativity within the living and study spaces of students, while following the guidelines and developments of the CLASS initiative. d.arts aims to address the need for support for a creative community within the Rensselaer student body and is set to ultimately transform from a themed housing option into a living and learning community. This type of environment is crafted to support the students within it and to demonstrate the importance and value of the creative and free-thinking majors within Rensselaer campus.

## HISTORY

While the first year of d.arts was successful with recruiting students who are heavily evolved with different aspects of the design culture at RPI, the second year had trouble with both student involvement and staffing.

*See Appendix for comparison chart.*

### Students

In year one, students were primarily DIS students. They spent many after class hours in the dorm, utilizing the lounge to socialize and work together. A third of the students were majoring in subjects other than an affiliated design major, however they

were strongly involved with design culture on campus (ie. Ground Zero, EMPAC performances). The second year was primarily architecture students who spend most of their time in studio outside the dorms. This led to a closed-door, quiet dorm lifestyle which does not breed a collaborative creative environment.

### Staffing

The first year of d.arts was run by the LA who was the creator of the program. He was passionate about getting students involved and would go out of his way to get the word out about programs and he encouraged students to take control of their own education. For performances and design events around campus, he would inform students and tag along with them. This past year, the LA was not a design major, and the RD and RA were placed primarily because of their major and not because of their interest in design.

With students who were rarely in the dorms and a staff that was not motivated to promote design culture, d.arts was unsuccessful this past year. In the future, it is a priority to have a diverse set of students with a strong interest in design and a staff that is interested in spreading design and art thinking to younger students.

## THE MARKET

As students enter the world of on-campus living, they are faced with a multitude of options that are able to satisfy their needs. At Rensselaer alone, freshman can choose to live in the Freshman Five (Bray Hall, Cary Hall, Crockett Hall, Hall Hall, or Nason Hall), Burdett Avenue Resident Hall (BARH), The Quadrangle (Quad), Davison Hall, or Barton Hall. With this many options, the choice can be overwhelming, yet not particularly compelling. Students are required to make a decision of where to live based on building characteristics - that much of the time do not differ from one to another - creating a clumsy decision schematic. Rensselaer's themed housing options provide students the opportunity to review their housing options more critically - enabling students of similar interests, affinities, and passions to cohabitate in a living & learning community. Rensselaer's Residence Life therefore offers four different

options for freshman themed housing: Vasudha – Earth and the Environment, Design and Arts, Leadership, and Wellness Housing.

Design and Arts Housing (d.arts) was originally conceived for incoming freshman with special interests in design and arts, and is the newest themed housing option for freshmen at Rensselaer. d.arts is found to be particularly compelling for students who wish to maintain their creative edge in an overwhelmingly technical environment. d.arts mainly targets students with affiliated majors (Communication (COMM), Design, Innovation, & Society (DIS), Electronic Arts (E-Arts), Electronic Media, Arts, and Communication (EMAC), and Games and Simulation Arts and Sciences (GSAS)) or those with an interest in design and the arts. d.arts targets these affiliated majors specifically based on the assumption of their interests and personalities. All of these disciplines seek to solve problems using creative, visual outlets, in conjunction with the technical skills and theories they gain through their coursework. Additionally, these disciplines have much overlap in coursework and desired skill sets - allowing for collaboration and the transfer of knowledge between students, the true aim of a living and learning environment and d.arts ultimate goal.

d.arts aims to not only pull from affiliated majors, but also from those outside of the traditionally creative disciplines at Rensselaer, who still have an interest in practicing and immersing themselves design and the arts. The choice to market to all students is a critical one, creating a diverse and stronger community. Unaffiliated majors bring alternate skill sets and ways of thinking that they can impart on their fellow d.arts students.

Architecture, although a wonderful intersection of design, the arts, and technology, is not the ideal major for the majority of residents to study while living in the d.arts community - and therefore not specifically targeted. The coursework of architecture majors is structured as such that they spend most of their time in the Greene (Architecture) Building, and not much time in their residence halls. By prioritizing Architecture majors over other majors for the d.arts community, it creates a very desolate and stark community since they seldom inhabit their halls during non-sleeping hours. For this reason, Architecture majors are given the same consideration

as all other non-affiliated majors - allowing them to be represented, but not the overwhelming majority of the d.arts population.

d.arts mainly exists to serve its immediate residents, especially to ensure the program continues to receive interest and engagement from incoming classes, but is unique in that it not only grants these opportunities and amenities to Cary 2<sup>nd</sup> floor residents, but any Rensselaer community member interested in the design and the arts. d.arts serves as a host and catalyst for design related opportunities and experiences at Rensselaer, providing a space and support for those interested in exploring the intersection of design, the arts, technology, and their chosen academic major. This merge of residential and non-residential community members creates a synergistic learning environment, where students can learn from students from other years, interests, or those who missed out on the opportunity to live in the space.

## THE COMPETITION

### Internal Competition at Rensselaer

Rensselaer offers four different themed housing to its incoming freshman residents: Vasudha (Earth and Environment), Wellness House, Leadership House, and Design & Arts Housing (d.arts). While Vasudha is the only true living and learning community at Rensselaer, each themed housing option provides incoming students with different benefits, yet is an option open for all students to apply. For this reason, each option serves as competition to the d.arts program. Non-themed housing may also act as competition for d.arts. Typically, incoming residents have to sort through 16 different housing options, excluding the choices for themed housing, when determining where they would like to live.

### External Competition

When students are looking at colleges, residential living is typically an important factor to consider. Whether it is the layout of the residence halls, or the themed housing that may be offered, colleges may draw in a wide range of applicants. In terms of design housing, many schools provide programs that could feed right into a creative applicant's interests. These programs may act as competition to d.arts if the applicant

is deciding between the two colleges to begin. Some of these competing programs are as follows:

*Living Arts, University of Michigan:* This competitive program is open to all majors at University of Michigan and allows 80 students. Living Arts brings together undergraduate students in a variety of fields “to explore innovation, creativity and collaboration.”<sup>1</sup> The program offers workshops, classes and interactions with professionals in a variety of fields.

*The Arts House, Franklin and Marshall:* This program is a living and learning community for about 12 juniors and seniors. This environment aims to create a “non-academic artistic community, but to also facilitate the exchange of different forms of artistic expression amongst our residents and our campus community.”<sup>2</sup>

*ARTS House, Union College:* This program houses 10 students and is “designed to create an environment that fosters creativity and imagination. Its programs speak to the mission of bringing awareness to all artistic endeavors on campus.”<sup>3</sup> The specific focus of this theme house is art and creativity.

*Creativity and Innovation, Emory University:* This program is offered as a part of “First Year at Emory.” The program teaches its residents to “draw connections between non-traditional ‘creativity’ and the field in which they are interested”<sup>4</sup> Creativity and Innovation offers a variety of interactive faculty discussions, trips around Atlanta to spark inspiration and programming that is attractive to students interested in creativity and the arts.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.livingarts.umich.edu/about.php>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fandm.edu/housing/themehouses>

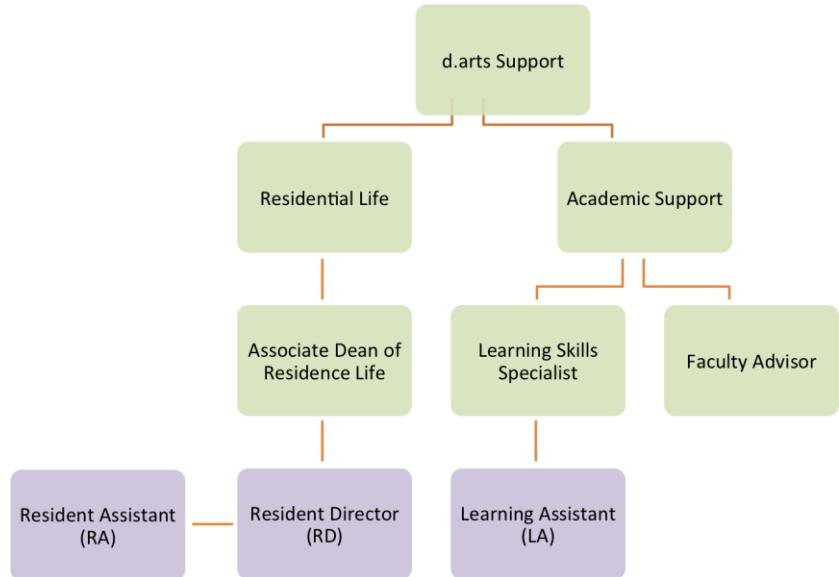
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.union.edu/campus/life/housing/theme/>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.emory.edu/HOUSING/LLC/create\\_programs.html](http://www.emory.edu/HOUSING/LLC/create_programs.html)

# PERSONNEL

## Residence Life Staff

*Resident Director (RD):* A RD is a veteran Residence Life Member, who is responsible for overseeing an entire Residence Life building in addition to typical RA duties. RDs must also oversee their staff to ensure they are on track with programming and resident concerns, while facilitating their staff to work as efficiently as possible. RDs are also the bridge between their staff and the Residence Life Professional Staff when necessary.



*Resident Assistant (RA):* RAs are responsible for the operation of an entire floor under the direct supervision of the Residence Life Office. The role of the RA is to facilitate and maintain a positive living environment in the residence hall, which is conducive to the academic achievement, social, and intellectual growth of residents. RAs are also responsible for creating a community environment in which people respect each other's rights, property and sensibilities. The d.arts RA (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) is responsible for watching overall residents while creating a collaborative design and arts living environment.

*Learning Assistant (LA):* LAs are responsible for assisting first-year students in becoming active, independent, and successful learners by providing academically-related programs, information, and assistance. The LA provides a direct academic support service and acts as a liaison between Advising and Learning Assistance Center (ALAC) and their residents, but are not personal tutors. The d.arts Learning Assistant is responsible for making all of their materials pertinent to d.arts and non-d.arts majors, in an effort to engage all residents.

Requirements on filling these Resident Life Staff Positions can be found under ‘Staff Selection’.

### **Administrative Support:**

*Learning Skills Specialist:* The Learning Skills Specialist sets mandatory programming guidelines for LAs, while providing support to the LAs when necessary. This support can be in terms of tracking down students with LA’s cannot, helping with difficult cases, and offering advice to LAs when necessary. In addition to these offerings, the Learning Skills Specialist can offer ALAC services that are specifically designed for design majors if requested by d.arts staff.

*Associate Dean (AD) of Residence Life (Supervisor of Cary Hall Student Staff):* The Associate Dean of Residence Life is the first contact for Resident Life Staff Members in times of need. The AD helps to ensure housing logistics, maintaining a safe and comfortable living environment, mandates disciplinary action, and can intervene on resident conflicts when necessary. He/She also maintains an AD fund, which can help offset expenses of larger programs such as trips to museums, larger purchases for the studio space, etc.

*Faculty Advisor:* The Faculty Advisor is the main contact for the Residence Life Staff. He/She can offer support for design related thinking and programs, especially in the brainstorming stage. If willing, the Faculty advisor can lead a d.arts program or talk throughout the year, depending on student and faculty availability.

## **SPACE**

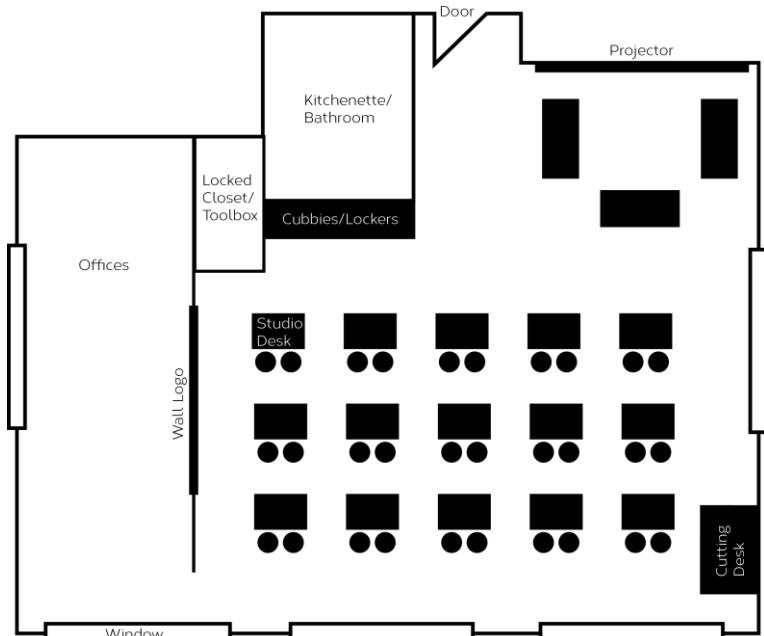
### **Studio**

Over the summer, Rensselaer will be constructing a studio space on the first floor of Cary Hall. For design students who generally have access to studio space on-campus, this space brings the atmosphere of a studio directly into the dorms. These affiliated majors have individual spaces on campus, but no space where they can work with each other. It also allows students who do not usually have access to a similar classroom to

be introduced to a new style of collaboration. It opens an opportunity for students to be creative in a multidisciplinary space.

The studio space will include large tables for students to spread out and work on projects and other assignments. White boards on the walls will allow students to work through problems visually. A projector will allow students to display videos and work on the wall

allowing them to practice presentations as well as socially engage within the space. A locked art supply closet will give students access to tools and materials that are hard to find, such as a drill or an exacto knife. Locker space will allow d.arts students to leave their supplies within the studio so they do not have to transfer project materials back and forth from their rooms. A printer and cutting desk in the space will give students easy access to quality printers that are not easy to find when on campus. The space will be decorated in a way to spark creativity among the residents through the use of bold color choices and a wide variety of furniture. The goal of the space is to provide students with a space to work together on their coursework in an environment that is conducive to their interests and needs. The space will be accessible from a key-card entrance to the outside of the building. d.arts students have 24 hour access and all other students living on campus have access from 8 AM to 9 PM. This lets d.arts collaborate with all Rensselaer students, including upperclassmen. The d.arts logo will be on the wall to unify students and to be used as a marketing tool for prospective residents. It will be visible from the window and will be a way for students to clearly identify the design space. The wall will also be magnetic allowing for a pin-up space to show-off students' work.



## Living Space

In addition to the addition of the studio space, the actual living space of the d.arts residents (Cary Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor) will include additional design features to accompany the goals of the space. Each door of the d.arts floor will have a door-sized whiteboard decal, in order to foster and encourage expression and communication from its residents and between students. Additional changes will be made as d.arts Staff recognizes further opportunities for collaborative and creative touches and as d.arts grows in size and strength.

## BENEFITS

### For RPI

d.arts provides Rensselaer with unique value due to it's alignment with the CLASS (Clustered Learning, Advocacy, and Support for Students) initiative of Rensselaer, which aims to enhance the lives of students on campus both academically and personally. This initiative exists through six key growth areas: Personal Development, Professional Development, Leadership Development, Cultural Development & Electronic Media and the Arts, Community, and Communiiversity. Each growth area taps into different activities and organizations that exist at Rensselaer and have the ability to enhance the student's overall college experience. d.arts, specifically, fits into this CLASS initiative through the Personal Development, Cultural Development and Electronic Media and the Arts, and Community key growth areas. This housing environment gives students the opportunity to participate greatly within their Residence Hall, attend performances at EMPAC, think and act creatively through their programming and interactions, and establish a community of students who share their affinities for design and the arts.

Rensselaer established the CLASS initiative in part of their efforts to move from its purely technical image, to a well-rounded institute. Rensselaer is aiming to entice students with a wider variety of interests and affinities. d.arts not only fits, but aids, this mission of creating this kind of environment. This concept has been supported through Rensselaer's interest in growing the program by planning to give the themed

housing its own classroom space. d.arts provides something to students that Rensselaer fails to provide anywhere else: a creative community. The unique value of d.arts is in its ability to peak creative students' interests further than their current major coursework and student body presence can. The existence of d.arts will demonstrate to incoming students and show them that Rensselaer values their more creative-minded students.

In addition, d.arts benefits Rensselaer by housing a strong collective of design-oriented students together. This community energizes students in the residence hall to work collaboratively on different problems and projects, frequently leading to better results due to the increased interest and affinities for the subject matter. A strong example of this is the CLASS logo design competition that was successfully run by the d.arts community, on behalf of the administration. Also, the housing of these students together can lead to a strong entrepreneurial effort if prompted. The programming for this residence hall can include exercises with a focus in entrepreneurship; this could lead to endless possibilities for ideas and products that could emerge from Rensselaer students. These projects and collaborations within d.arts, grow and strengthen the design oriented presence on campus, helping students, both current and prospective, view Rensselaer in a more creative light. This is particularly advantageous for prospective students with a creative interest. The creative context d.arts nurtures, leads students who may have initially dismissed Rensselaer due to it's overwhelming technical emphasis to reevaluate the institute with serious consideration.

### For Freshmen

As freshmen make their housing choices, they must weigh the benefits of each option they have. For d.arts housing, the freshmen students may experience a large array of benefits that will support their needs through their first year of students, in addition to attracting to their specific affinities.

Similarly to all residence halls, programs are held throughout the semester in order to engage and bring together the residents. Residence Life imposes a 125 point system, where each RD, RA, and LA must earn 125 "programming points" throughout the semester to engage and interest students with life at Rensselaer. Points may be gained

through a number of various outlets, but are mainly gained through programming. Staff members must present their residences with a minimum of 6 to 8 programs a semester - much of the time exceeding that number in freshman residence halls. All students are required to pay a programming fee on the day of move in, making the cost very pertinent to them and creating the need for relevant, interesting, and engaging programs to feel them feel that the cost has been worthwhile.

RD's and RA's programs are completely up to their own discretion, with a desired emphasis on the CLASS initiative. While the RD has a larger commitment to the entire building, the d.arts specific RA does not and therefore should program specifically to his/her residents in the d.arts space. The RD is encouraged to commonly hold d.arts related programs, but can deviate out of that space as desired as well to ensure engagement from the entire building.

In contrast to RD and RA programs, LA programs have more structure due to their ALAC affiliations. It is the LA's responsibility to hold these, as well as other programs, but with a d.arts emphasis. For example, LA's must not only teach basic time management skills, but those specific to students within creative majors as well, to ensure d.arts and non-d.arts residents' needs are met.

*Examples of these programming structures and options may be seen in the Appendix.*

In addition to the design related programming, d.arts residents will have the 24/7 access to the studio space and the supplies contained within the space. This could prove to be one of the more attractive benefits for students who are majoring in disciplines that require more building and group based projects. The desk space allow for students to spread out and work with a variety of materials and/or multiple people at the same time. This type of environment in such close distance to your living quarters will be highly attractive to the target market of this themed housing.

The community surrounding d.arts sets up the environment for a strong support system, both with neighboring residents and alumni of the program. Being at a technically oriented institute, it can be difficult for students within the more creative disciplines to find support and help with their coursework or career aspirations in

their living community. Students also may share the same coursework as well, making it convenient to live within the same residence hall. Having this immediate support system allows the residents to feel comfortable about their major choice and their interests and thrive within their respective programs. More importantly perhaps, is the interactions and relationships that the residents will have with alumni of the program. This network will aid students in the course choices, job opportunities and other questions that they may have in regards to their major path or college, in general. This informal mentorship is beneficial beyond the walls of d.arts and could be a huge draw for the applicants to the program.

### Beyond the First Year

While the freshman may significantly benefit from having the alumni of the d.arts program, the alumni may also benefit greatly through their upperclassmen years. Each year, d.arts residents live together and typically work together through courses and programmed activities. Through this, it is easy for students to get familiar with one another and establish a strong connection. This support system is designed to last throughout all of their college years and work in a similar fashion; the students will most likely still remain in classes together and it will be extremely beneficial to know each other as a result of this environment.

In addition to this connection with their cohort, alumni will still have the opportunity to connect back with d.arts, itself. All programs for current residents are open to any alumni who are interested. A schedule of programs will be specifically emailed to any alumni of d.arts so they may attend those that seem interested. Additional programs will also be scheduled in order to foster the networking between current residents and alumni. These programs could include dinners, socials or just programs specifically geared to facilitate networking.

## THE MARKETING PLAN

Design and Arts Housing is shortened to d.arts, which is read as d arts, rather than “darts.” “Darts” does not appropriately represent the program and can give the wrong impression to what the program is. If it is called “darts” it can be confused with an

unrelated program, such as a recreational games club, or could be taken literally as a darts club. d.arts emphasizes that it is a program involved with art, implying creativity and design.

Design and Arts Housing is marketed for first year students with an interest in design and arts. Although the program is open to all majors at Rensselaer, the target market are students within creative majors, such as DIS, EMAC, E-Arts, GSAS, and Communication/graphic design. Admissions and d.arts will target students based on major and medalists, in hopes to pursue students who will be a good fit for the d.arts program. General email blasts, publications and flyers are sent out to accepted students about themed housing opportunities. Targeted students within affiliated majors will receive additional flyers, specifically about the d.arts program and personalized emails, hoping to encourage them to apply for the program.

Open house events at Rensselaer, such as Accepted Students Day, are opportunities to interact directly with our target audience. A table can be set up in the Student Union to speak with prospective students and hand out promotional materials. Current and previous d.arts students and staff will talk with incoming freshmen and prospective students as they visit campus to share their personal experience of the program; these personal stories will highlight the benefits and favorite aspects of d.arts.

To further promote the program and the new studio space, the prospective students tours will walk through the d.arts space and studio. This will bring more awareness of not only the program, but also the presence of a creative community within Rensselaer. d.arts will coordinate with admissions to house prospective students of affiliated majors to stay with students within d.arts housing on their overnight visits. d.arts will also reach out to incoming freshman classes by posting information on the Official Class of 20XX Facebook group.

Instagram provides a great opportunity for marketing within social media. The Instagram account will be run by the d.arts staff, who will update it regularly with pictures of student work, workshops, field trips, etc. Incoming students can follow the account to see what is going on in the program and within the studio space. Current students, alumni, or any affiliated student can follow, tag d.arts in photos and interact

over the Instagram media. Instagram is an easy, yet effective, form of marketing, especially since it is so widely used amongst students.

Within the d.arts program, marketing of d.arts events will use common communication measures and social media. Emails will be sent out to the residents, as well as d.arts alumni and affiliates (when appropriate), to inform them of the upcoming events, field trips, workshops, etc. Flyers will also be posted within the residence hall, such as the hallways and studio space. There will also be postings on the d.arts Facebook page and the d.arts Facebook group for the current year. The general d.arts Facebook page can also be used for communication within the whole d.arts community.

### Logo

The logo consists of logotype partially placed within a circle. It is important that the logo be gender neutral, which is why the blue/teal color was chosen. The color is also bright and fun, which is appropriate to represent the d.arts program. A circle was

chosen because it is a welcoming shape representing unity and inclusion. The circle highlights the d within the logo in order to separate it from arts so that it is not read as 'darts.' Overall, it was important that the logo was fun and inviting in order to represent the program appropriately.



### Flyer

The design of the flyer is simple and continues using the circles from the logo. Since prospective students will be getting a lot of paperwork and reading material from Rensselaer, we wanted to keep the flyer light in content. If it was too content heavy and wordy, the student would be less likely to read it, which is why the flyer is designed to be more visual and highlight important aspects of the program. The flyer includes two pictures taken at d.arts events or field trips as well as a blurb about what

the program is and a brief list of some of the benefits. There is also information of where to apply to the program and contact information for Residence Life.

*See Appendix for the flyer.*

## SELECTION

### Resident Selection

When incoming students receiving their Residence Life Housing Packets, they are asked to number their housing preferences from most desired to least desired. After numbering these options, they are given the option of applying to live in a themed housing community. If interested, students must check off the appropriate living community and answer the following supplemental questions:

1. Why are you interested in the specified theme housing?
2. What do you hope to gain from living in this community?

If applicant interest in d.arts exceeds its available space of 30 female and 30 male openings, students will then be evaluated on a number of factors, with a large emphasis on their answers to the supplemental questions. Diversity of interests and affinities will be taken into consideration to maintain a collaborative living and learning community/themed housing option based on students' personal statements and resumes. Preference will be given to the affiliated majors with a goal to create a diverse community of ideally 2/3 of affiliated majors and 1/3 of non-affiliated majors and design related majors.

d.arts chooses to maintain it's 60 student maximum capacity to ensure the program's quality. As the program grows, and student and staff interest increases, the program can, and will, increase its student capacity to accommodate as many interested students as possible.

### Staff Selection

Due to the specific nature of the d.arts program, interested staff must undergo an additional interview process if interested. New hire's would indicate their interest

through their written application process, while current Residence Life members would take the initiative to speak with the Cary Hall Associate Dean (AD) to express interest. This additional interview would be conducted during typical Residence Life or ALAC hiring process interview for a new hire, or through a quick additional interview for returning staff - as they do not need to reinterview to maintain their Residence Life position, and be conducted by the AD and current RD, RA, or LA, depending on the position and schedule availability. This additional interview process, while short, must be conducted to ensure staff investment and engagement in the program

All applicants interviewing for a d.arts staff position must answer the following questions:

- What do you think d.arts main value is?
- What kind of programs and experiences would you like to offer your residents?
- Why do you want to work on the d.arts staff?

Additional questions are up to the interviewer's discretions.

In addition to the traditional Residence Life qualifications, to be selected for a d.arts position, a prospective RD, RA, or LA must show interest in the d.arts mission and program vision. While the RD and RA, do not necessarily have to be d.arts affiliated majors, it's strongly recommended that they are. The Cary Hall Learning Assistant, while responsible for all d.arts (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) and non-d.arts (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> floor) students, must be specifically qualified to work with the d.arts students. In addition to the Residence Life requirements, and the Advising and Learning Assistance Center (ALAC) requirements set for LAs (such as a minimum 3.0 GPA, etc.), the Cary Hall LA must also be enrolled within a d.arts affiliated major to ensure a knowledge of the academic space within a creative discipline at Rensselaer.

Although, this gives a rough framework as to how to choose d.arts student staff, all final decisions are up to the discretion of the interviewers and professional Rensselaer Residence Life Staff based on the candidates and their qualifications.

## FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR D.ARTS

### *Transition from a Themed Housing Option to a Living and Learning Community*

As Rensselaer further shift towards a well-rounded educational and social experience, d.arts will continue to grow and ultimately transform from a themed housing option to a true living and learning community. While this shift cannot be forced, as it is dependent upon Rensselaer's allocation of resources of faculty and design-related supplies, the program will eventually transition to its final form. Faculty able to teach in the following course areas are the most desirable to enhance the d.arts program:

- CAD Design: Solidworks
- Design Thinking Seminars
- Interaction Design
- Art Movements and their Social Implications

Granting access to the Greene Building for d.arts students, while a possible future accommodation, as informed by the current Associate Dean, would provide d.arts students with additional supplies to further inform their design decisions when working on their projects throughout the elementary stages of d.arts, as a living and learning community. As the community continues to grow, it would be advantageous for Rensselaer to further build out the d.arts workshop space to allow more collaborative living and learning experiences. These stronger resources will ultimately lead to stronger ties to nurture the arts, design, and innovation culture at Rensselaer, bring more attention to the institution and more resources to its students.

### *The Five Year Forecast*

*Staff Selection:* To ensure that d.arts continues to grow and flourish, current staff members will be expected to entice future Residence Life, and non-Residence Life, members to apply for positions within the program. Although informal, this engagement is crucial to ensure the continuation of the program. As the program grows larger, stronger, and begins to mature, d.arts alum will ideally fill these roles due

to their interest, and their overall understanding of the coursework and d.arts living experience.

*Student Interest:* Student interest in d.arts is dependent on Rensselaer's continued growth in design and the arts, to maintain a student population with those interests. As Rensselaer continues to carry out the d.arts initiative it's imperative that they continue to market and highlight the program to incoming students.

*Financial Forecast:* Due to Residence Life structuring and Budget, d.arts, as a themed housing option, is financially stable for as long as programming at Residence Life exists. After the creation of the studio space, no additional funds are necessary to maintain the space in comparison to the other residence halls. As long as Rensselaer's Residence Life continues to maintain an emphasis on programming, the funds will be present to maintain the collaborative living environment and community.

d.arts' transition into a living and learning community, however, will require more financial support than the project currently receives. The main expenditure necessary to facilitate the shift will be faculty to support the program, through academic programming in the space, and more design related supplies for students to take advantage of. Within the next five years, the addition of one faculty member, as well as access to the Greene Building's workshop space would more than satisfy these needs on an elementary level.

*Overall:* As the Rensselaer builds out the size of their student body, as they have been predicted to due to the increasing number of incoming students from year to year, interest in the d.arts program is expected to grow as well. The program hopes to gain enough staff and student interest to ultimately build out to the first floor, creating a total enrollment of 110 residents within the program. While this size may seem large, it is definitely manageable and advantageous to the program, as well as Rensselaer's, interest in strengthening the non-technical aspects the institute has to offer. As the size increases, d.arts aims to transition from informal classes and programming to more formal activities, evolving from a themed housing option to a true living and learning community.



## APPENDIX

### Chart comparing past d.arts breakdowns

Year	Students	Staff
2012-2013	<p>15 Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— 5 DIS Majors</li> <li>— 4 Other Affiliated Majors (EMAC, Architecture)</li> <li>— 6 Other (ENGR, Biology)</li> </ul>	<p>1 LA (Architecture Major)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Creator of d.arts - vested interest in program</li> <li>— Pestered students to get d.arts things done</li> <li>— Brought students to campus-wide, art-related programs           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ GZ</li> <li>○ EMPAC shows</li> <li>○ Taught Programs/Found speakers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2013-2014	<p>60 Students (Full Enrollment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— 40% Architecture</li> <li>— Chosen based off Major &amp; other housing options selected</li> </ul>	<p>RD/RA are do not have a vested interest in seeing the program succeed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— RD is a 5th year architecture student</li> <li>— RA is a past PDI student who changed her major</li> <li>— LA is not an design or arts major</li> </ul>

### Required IA Programs

Program	Semester	Time Allotted	Cost	Details	Supplies
Task Management	Fall	1 hour	\$20	ALAC mandated programs.	Snacks
Study Skills & Exam Preparation	Fall	1 hour	\$20	Must follow ALAC's course outline for said program – additional information in terms of d.arts affiliated majors will be provided at events. (ie: Time management: how to manage your time between your studio and non-studio classes)	
Stress Management	Fall	1½ hours	\$20		
Career Fair Preparation	Fall	1 hour	\$20		
Spring Registration	Fall	1½ hours	\$20		
Final Exam Preparation	Fall	1 hour	\$20		
Spring Refresher	Spring	1 hour	\$20		
Stress Management	Spring	1 hour	\$20		
Preparation for Sophomore Year	Spring	1½ hours	\$20		

## RA/RD/LA Program Options

<i>Program</i>	<i>Semester</i>	<i>Time Allotted</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Supplies</i>
DECO outreach/collaboration	(Early) Fall	1 hour	\$20	Bring in DECO to meet in d.arts space to inspire collaboration and interest	Snacks & various materials*  *Contact DECO to find what they would like to do and what materials are necessary
MassMoCa	(Early) Fall	Full Day	AD Funds	Students visit MassMoCa and explore freely	Bus arrangements & Museum Tickets
d.arts Social	(Early) Fall	2 hours	\$50	For all applicable majors, d.arts current members, and d.arts alum. Used for networking and to create informal mentorships.	Food and Drinks (Pizza, chips, soda, etc.)
Decorating Studio Space: Snowflakes	(Late) Fall	1.5 hours	\$30	Students create and hang paper snowflakes in d.arts space to get into holiday spirit	Hot chocolate and various winter snacks and snowflake making materials (paper, string, tape, etc.)
Condom-grams	(Early) Spring - Valentine's day	1.5 hours	\$35	Students make arts and crafts-y condom-grams from old magazines and construction paper while learning about safe sex.	Condoms (donated), Magazines (donated), Construction Paper & Snacks
Housing Forum	(Early) Spring	1 hour	\$20	Present Sophomores with housing for the upcoming year (including Group Commons Housing – highlighting the opportunity to continue d.arts housing if desired)	Snacks

End of Year Dinner	(Late) Spring	3 to 4 hours	AD Funds	Formal dinner in d.arts space for d.arts current members and alum.	Catered
Mockuptionary	--	2 hours	\$40	Two teams are given the same two prompts (that consist of a person and a problem) and are given three minutes n teams to make up a design – they then present their ideas and the crowd chooses a winner, the winner team then plays against another group	Snacks & Rapid Mock Up Materials (tape, construction paper, styrofoam, clay, etc.)
CAD Crash Course	--	1 hour, with 30 Q&A/o pen studio	\$20	Bring in a PDI or Architecture student with advanced in CAD modeling skills (ie: Jeric) to teach elementary CADing skills with quick design walkthroughs. (If there is interest on the volunteers end, it can turn into a set of programs throughout the semester leading to Intro to 3D Printing/Laser Cutting sessions.)	Snacks
Illustrator 101	--	1 hour, with 30 Q&A/o pen studio	\$20	Teach residents how to use basic illustrator tools to create a poster. (Vector creation, image tracing, printing, pen tool, exporting, printing, etc.)	Snacks
Rapid prototyping	--	2 hours	\$50	Students go through rapid brainstorming for a problem area and then create a prototype to model one part of the design solution	Snacks & Rapid Mock Up Materials (tape, construction paper, styrofoam, clay, etc.)

# d.arts



## d.arts benefits

- creative community
- d.arts socials
- MASS MoCA trip
- crash courses (illustrator, CAD, etc)
- design thinking workshops
- upperclassmen mentors

Design and Arts Housing (d.arts) is a live and learn community for students with a personal interest in exploring the intersection of design, the arts, technology and their chosen academic major.

d.arts housing is available for 60 students.  
Apply on your housing application!  
For more information contact Residence life.  
<http://reslife.rpi.edu> (518) 276-6284

Poster

# d.arts



Design and Arts Housing (d.arts) is a live and learn community for students with a personal interest in exploring the intersection of design, the arts, technology and their chosen academic major.

The d.arts program works to create a supportive, creative community on the Rensselaer campus. Located on the second floor of Cary Hall, Design and Arts Housing brings together students and staff with a passion for art and design. A newly designed studio space located on the first floor of Cary Hall provides a collaborative learning environment for students both within and outside of the program. Programs and workshops led predominantly by the Resident Assistant and Learning Assistant, are designed specifically to peak the interests and fulfill the needs of students with affinities of the arts and design. d.arts goes beyond themed housing; it is an opportunity to build and foster the creative community of Rensselaer.



Agenda  
What is d.arts  
What is for  
Where it is (space, layout, and features)  
Why it exists  
What it has to offer  
How it is structured

## Themed Housing at Rensselaer

- Wellness House (Bay Hill)
- Leadership House (Hill Hill)
- Design & Arts or d.arts (Gary Hill)
- Visuals - Earth and the Environment (Nixon Hill)
  - Additional classroom and living space
  - Students are also given the opportunity to take additional credits that focus on sustainable practice
- Ground Zero (Night - Upperclassman)
  - Underground Performance Space

## What is d.arts?

Design and Arts Housing (d.arts) is a living and learning community for students with a personal interest in exploring the intersection of design, the arts, technology, and their chosen academic major.

## Who is d.arts for?

### Modeled for first year students

- Tags DIS, BMG, E-Arts, GSAS, Communication & other design and art related majors
- Students who demonstrate an interest in design and the arts

Programs are open to all students interested in design, art, and media

## Last Year (2012-2013)

Students	Staff
15 Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 5 DIS Majors</li><li>- 4 Other Art related Majors (ENAC, Architecture)</li><li>- 6 Other (ENGR, Biology)</li></ul>	1 IAA (Architecture Major) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Created d.arts - voted interest in program</li><li>- Research students to get d.arts things done</li><li>-rought students to campus wide art related programs<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CZ</li><li>• BMG Shows</li><li>• Tightening Fundraising</li></ul></li></ul>

Current Year (2013-2014)	
Students	Staff
<p>60 Students (full residents)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 40% Architecture</li> <li>- Chosen based off Major &amp; other housing options selected</li> </ul>	<p>RDs/RAs are chosen based on interest in seeing the programs succeed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RD is a 3rd year architecture student</li> <li>- RA is a 1st year student who will be a major</li> <li>- LA is not a design/crafts major</li> </ul>

**Where is it?**

Located in Gary Hall on Freshman Hill

- Second floor for living space
- 60 students can fit into the floor
- Whiteboard space on the door

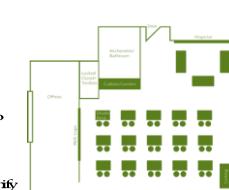
Studio space will be on the First Floor

- Tables similar to ECI studio
- Cupboards/lockers to hold student supplies
- Tool box for uncommon supplies (ie. drill, exacto, etc.)

**New Space Considerations**

**Studio Space**

- Large tables
- Corkboard/Whiteboard walls
- Art and Supply Closet to store supplies
- Projector and white wall
- Large lobby space to unify students and as a marketing tool for incoming students



**Marketing Plan**

- Logo
- Email blasts
- Flyer
- Prospective Student Tour Walk-throughs include space
- Scheduling overnight visits with darts residents for prospective students with affiliated majors



**Recruiting Process**

- Promotional materials are mailed with housing materials & given out to all listed majors on Accepted Students and Open House Dates
- Email blasts are sent out to the entire incoming freshman student body about all Temecula housing options
- Optional housing application
  - Supplemental questions
    - "Why are you interested in the specific dormitory/housing?"
    - "What do you expect from the dormitory/housing?"

**Beyond Recruitment**

If applicant interest in darts exceed available space, students are then chosen on the following factors

- Preference to DIS, BMAC, BA Arts, CSAS, Communication majors than other majors
- diversity of interests and activities taken into consideration to maintain a collaborative living and learning community
- Personal statement

### Benefits to RPI

- A collective of design oriented students who have strong affordances for design and the arts.
- The CLASS logo design competition was successfully run by d.arts and won by d.arts students.
  - Program in general fits with CLASS Initiative

### Five Year Forecast

- **Financially:** d.arts can be easily sustained after the creation of its studio space this summer since there are no additional costs to run the program compared to other residence hall floors
- **Staff Interest:** to ensure that d.arts continues, current staff members will be expected to entice future Res Life, and non-Res Life, staff members into possibly applying for positions within the program (ideally people who were in the d.arts program as Freshman and understand the benefits)
  - Desired trajectory is to grow the program - possibly gaining absorbing the first floor as well to have a total enrollment of 110 residents
- **Student Interest:** Student interest is dependent on Rensselaer continuing to provide materials about the program to students and highlighting it as desired in the marketing plan

QUESTIONS?