New Theme Community Application Proposal

For the fall of 2023 (for housing selection in the spring of 2024) Residential Engagement & Wellbeing will be accepting New Theme Community applications. We envision communities wherein members of our whole student body can come together around shared goals, interests, identities, and activities to form a community that lives, learns, grows, and supports each other together.

Our general theme community timeline is:
1. Advertising of theme community options begins in November and a theme community event is held in December where students can explore different options for theme communities. Each theme community is required to have a representative at this event.
2. Student applications (both a pre-application ranking choices and a theme community-specific application) for theme communities are due mid-February.
3. A theme community leadership decision process or a lottery is held to select students for each community.
4. Students are then placed based on their ranking of which communities they would like to live in and be part of. Students can apply to multiple communities and are asked to rank in order their preferences.
5. Students are notified and go through a separate room draw for their community at the beginning of March.

New Theme House Application and Review Process

To submit an application for a new theme community please answer the following questions and submit them to rew@amherst.edu by **Monday, November 13, 2023 at noon.** All application materials must be thorough, typed, and submitted on time to be considered for this academic year's review process. Applications will not be considered after the deadline.

Please read through the application carefully and make sure that your proposal answers all of the questions completely.

Criteria for Selection
A review committee composed of staff and students from Residential Engagement & Wellbeing and Housing & Operations will review all submitted applications. The committee will be evaluating theme community applications on the criteria listed below:

- The proposal application was thoughtful, thorough, complete and submitted by the deadline.
- The theme would appeal to a wide range of students. The proposed theme is not already met by another theme community.
- The proposed growth and learning opportunities are relevant to the theme and would contribute to the overall student experience in the residence halls

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Application

Theme Community Application Information
1. Names, pronouns, graduation years and email addresses of students submitting the proposal.
2. What is the name of the proposed theme community? Who will this theme community serve?

Purpose of the community

3. Please describe the purpose and mission of the proposed theme community. Why do you want to form this theme community at Amherst College?
4. Does this community already have organizations or offices at Amherst with a similar theme? If yes, how would this theme community differ and add to the experiences of the students who live there? If not, why do you view this theme community as an important addition to the Amherst community?

Structure of the proposed community

5. Please identify the name, role, and contact information for the proposed advisor for this theme community. Why did you choose them for this role?
   Note: We are requiring that new communities have a formal advisor who is a current member of the faculty or staff of Amherst College. If you do not currently have an advisor, you must have identified a person who agrees to serve in the role when and if the community is approved. Only list an advisor if they have agreed to serve in this capacity. The advisor is a volunteer position that does not include remuneration.

6. Are there requirements to live in this community? What students will this community serve? If so, please describe.

    Note: This is where you should describe who will live in the community- for instance if you are creating a community centered around sustainability-commitment to sustainable processes might be a criteria. Remember that these communities should be places of learning and exploration. Theme communities that center specific identities are welcome, but theme communities must be open to all.

7. What is the leadership/decision making structure of the community?

    Note: Some communities have a formalized structure with roles such as President, VP etc., others have an e-board. You are not limited to those models. There is no requirement related to the kind of leadership/decision making model a community wants to have and, there does need to be an explained process for how decisions will be made. Theme communities receive a small budget for programing from Residential Engagement & Wellbeing, management of the budget is one of the responsibilities of student leadership.

8. How many people have you identified that want to live in the community?

    Note: Communities must have a minimum of 12 residents.

9. Please describe the structure for community membership. Please include how you view the length of time someone can live in a community, and if returners are automatically allowed to return.

    Note: Theme communities will participate in a separate room selection process based on their assigned housing selection number. Selection of members to live in the community is based on a lottery of people who are acceptable to the community leadership. Communities will be required to develop a rubric for selection based on their reading of applications with names removed.

Location and physical needs of the community

10. What hopes do you have for where the community would be located. Please list specific buildings or areas of campus and why those locations best support the community's goals.

11. What are the requirements of the community space and building? Please list as requirements only those pieces of the community that are absolutely necessary. We have limited spaces for theme communities.

12. What are the things that you would like to have in the space, but are not requirements?

Learning and growing together/Shared learning

13. What are the ways you envision this community creating opportunities for shared learning/exploration/experiences as a community? Please list ideas for how you would accomplish the goals of shared learning and exploration of the theme.
14. Each theme community will be required to engage with the greater community on issues, ideas or experiences related to their theme. This engagement can take many forms (art exhibits, cooking demonstrations, speakers, craft or experiential learning). What learning opportunities do you envision for the greater campus community?

Additional Information (optional)

15. Is there any additional information you would like us to know as we consider this application?