

“Examen-ing” The Year

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Background:

Hannah Sanders and Anderson Reeves are colleagues in the Office of Residence Life.

When we began our respective courses in the Center for Mission and Identity, we explored ideas related to how we can utilize this information for the benefit of our students. As former Hall Directors, our minds naturally gravitated toward creating resources for the Resident Assistants (RAs), who exemplify Ignatian Leadership skills every day, often without knowing it. We settled on creating a series of RA-centered Examens that Hall Directors can use with their staff at various times of year. These reflections will serve as tools for introspection and growth during the academic year. They are designed to help the RAs identify how they have learned and grown from their position over time.

Implementation:

The Examen exercises are housed on this internal [website](#). There are three examen reflections for the fall semester: embracing new, reviewing progress, and mid-year pause. These examen activities encourage the RAs to reflect on the excitement that comes with a new role at the beginning of the year, review how things have been going after their first few weeks, and to take a breath before finals. The spring semester kicks off with a visual art examen, engages in another mid-semester review, and closes with an end of year review. These Examens are designed for the RAs to embrace new perspectives at the start of the semester, remind themselves of their mission during the mid-semester mark, and encourage pride in their work at the end of the year.

As the years progress, Residence Life staff members may update and add to these existing reflections based on the needs of new student populations. The true beauty of these examen reflections is their ability to help both student and professional staff members remember the university’s mission during times of stress.

Conclusion:

By working on this project together, we reminded ourselves of the importance of discernment and reflection throughout the year. We look forward to sharing this resource with our fellow staff members and learning about their experiences.