

Utilizing an Online Platform in Disseminating Information about Housing Renewal to  
Residential Students in their Second Year and Beyond

by

Catherine-Ann LaRoche

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Ying-Chih Chen, Chair  
Kristen Hermann  
Shannon Staten

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## ABSTRACT

Colleges and universities have goals and strategies in place to fill their on-campus housing facilities with students. At Arizona State University (ASU), the goal is to fill every bedspace on campus. All first-year students are expected to live on campus their first year at ASU. In Barrett, the Honors College (BHC), students are expected to live on-campus their first and second year at ASU. This study explores the BHC upperdivision communities to better understand why students are not returning to live on campus beyond the two-year live-on expectation. In this study, the researcher created a website to better inform students of the renewal process and the benefits of living on-campus. More than 200 BHC upperdivision students participated in this study through interviews and surveys. Quantitative results of the study indicated a positive and significant correlation between students who believe it costs less to live on campus, enjoy living on campus, interact with faculty and staff outside of the classroom with intent to live on campus the next academic year. Students who felt their currently living situation had a positive impact on their overall emotional/mental wellbeing, feel a sense of community or connection to others, and feel more connected because they live on campus are more likely to intend to live on campus. Students who were surveyed after the implementation of the renewal website believed it cost less to live on campus than off campus, felt that it was easier to navigate the application, and felt that they had a better understanding of the renewal process. Qualitative results of the study indicated students were deciding to live off campus due to the limited room options and the cost of on-campus housing. Students did not feel that there was a sense of community in BHC upperdivision housing, but they did feel like living on-campus was convenient and opened opportunities to get involved.

The renewal website did not have an effect on students' behavior, knowledge and intent to renew housing, and the renewal process was easy to navigate for some of the participants and difficult to navigate for the other participants.

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to many people who have supported me throughout life. I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family: Michael LaRoche (dad), Kathryn LaRoche (mom) and Amy LaRoche (sister). My family has always believed in me and have supported me on every journey I take in life. They have truly given me the strength, motivation and determination to be the best version of myself.

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the purpose and significance of this study, which is to explain the importance of Barrett, The Honors College (BHC) students living on campus beyond the two-year live-on expectation. It addresses the research problem in the context of on-campus housing retention issues across the United States of America, and the need for innovative strategies during a time of increase growth of off-campus housing development and online technology.

### **Opening Statement**

A student begins their freshman year of college in the Barrett Honors College (BHC) at Arizona State University (ASU). The student gets involved in the Residence Hall Association (RHA) and becomes the Vice President for Barrett Residential Council (BRC). The student is an Engineering student. The student's first semester academically was good, but they hoped it would have been a little better. It is time for the student to think about which housing facility they would like to live in the following year, and then sign up for housing. Over the break, the student talks to their parent about the housing option, and the parent lets them know that they need to move back home for financial reasons. The student is disappointed that they would not be able to live on campus the second year, but knew it was the best decision to save money. The student is determined to focus on academics and still be involved in other organizations on campus.

The Fall semester has come again, and the student is beginning their second year of college but commuting this time. The student realizes that the commute with traffic is 45 minutes one way, which means they are getting less sleep to make sure they make it to their 8am class on time. As the year goes on, the student picks up a job to help their

family out financially. The student is still unable to move back on campus. Because the student is now getting minimal sleep and working, this starts to cut into their time for homework. They then begin to miss assignment deadlines. At the end of the year, the student drops below the academic requirement to remain in the Engineering program and is far from the GPA required to graduate from BHC. The student then decides to drop BHC and pause their academic pursuits to work more and focus on financially supporting their family full-time.

Although this is not the path for most students, this is a common result for some students who decide to move off campus while pursuing a degree in college.

### **Local Context**

Looking at the cohort of first year students entering ASU in Fall 2013, 53.1% graduated with a bachelor degree (Graduation Rates for First-Time Freshman). Between 2011 and 2016, the overall 6-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time students who began seeking a bachelor's degree at 4-year degree-granting institutions increased by 1 percentage point, from 59% to 60% (Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates, 2018). Looking at graduation rates in four and five years from the cohort entering in Fall 2012, 51.9% graduated in four years and 64.7% graduated in five years (Graduation Rates for First-Time Freshman). The graduation rates for the cohort entering ASU in Fall 2011 were slightly lower with 46.3% graduating in four years, 59.8% graduating in five-years and 63.3% graduating in six years (Graduation Rates for First-Time Freshman).

***Defining key terms.*** In University Housing and Residential Life at ASU, the renewal process is when current ASU on-campus living students can sign up to live on campus for the following academic year. Upperdivision residents in BHC are students in

their second year or beyond at ASU. Community Assistants (CAs) play a big role in the renewal process. CAs are student staff members in their second year or beyond and live in the same community or on the same floor as their residents. CAs are utilized as a resource on campus to help residents succeed personally, professionally and academically while living on campus. Community Directors (CDs) are full-time masters-level Residential Life professional staff members who work and live in the residence hall they manage. CDs supervise the CAs and are a resource for students living in the residence hall. Occupancy Managers (OMs) are University Housing professionals who work on the operational side of Housing. OMs help students and staff navigate the software system used to assign students to bedspaces. OMs have a role in the housing renewal process. The Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) is the governing board for the state's public universities: ASU, Northern Arizona University (NAU)), and the University of Arizona. ABOR provides policy guidance in such areas as: academic and student affairs; financial and human resources programs; student tuition, fees, and financial aid programs; university capital development plans; strategic plans; legal affairs; and public and constituent outreach (Board Members).

***Why is this study important?*** From a researcher's perspective, this study is important because there is not much literature available about upperdivision students living on campus. Much of the literature focuses on freshman living on campus. There is not literature arguing the importance of upperdivision students living on campus. However, in attending several student housing conferences and speaking with Housing department directors across the country, this is a challenge many institutions experience and are failing to find solutions to keep their upperdivision students on campus. Many of

the directors spoke about wanting students to remain on campus for retention issues. They mentioned that many students who moved off campus were not graduating from the institution. By conducting this study, the researcher would be able to add to the literature on the upperdivision population, their needs and how to improve the on-campus housing experience for upperdivision students. The intervention, detailed later in this dissertation, will be designed to explain the on-campus experience for upperdivision students, the process for upperdivision students to renew to live on campus, the benefits of living on campus and important information about choosing to live off-campus. Although there is not much literature about upperdivision students, there is literature on the importance of students living on campus. Previous studies indicate students who live on campus are more likely to be involved at the university (Kuh, 2009), which helps with retention and persistence to graduation (Whalen, Saunders & Shelley, 2009). From an administration perspective, this is important because University Housing and Barrett need to fill the bedspaces and the preference is with upperdivision BHC residents.

In the Spring 2018 semester, the researcher created an e-portfolio for the BHC Renewal Process. An e-portfolio is similar to Blackboard in that an administrator could upload information, videos, assignments, quizzes, etc. for students to complete. The researcher used the e-portfolio to upload important information about the renewal process, housing options, the benefits of living on campus, and uploaded videos, activities and quizzes. Six BHC housing professional staff members and one CA participated in the study. Some themes that came from this study were students want to live on campus due to the convenience, the living environment, the support staff available and the friendships they obtain. One participant expanded on convenience and said he



enjoyed living on campus because it was right next to everything, meaning they can sleep in longer and it's easier to meet with classmates for group projects.

***Hypothesis.*** Students who live on campus are more likely to be retained at the university and persist to graduation. This could be related to the type of on-campus experience and their understanding of the renewal process. BHC students who have a positive on-campus experience and understand the benefits of living on campus and renewal are more likely to participate in the Barrett renewal process to live on campus the next academic year.

***Positionality Statement.*** As an Assistant Director of Residential Life who works in Barrett, the Honors College, the researcher understands and is aware of the roles and responsibilities she holds in BHC and University Housing to make sure that the bedspaces provided within Barrett Complex and Vista del Sol are filled with BHC students. However, the researcher lacks the understanding of why many BHC upperdivision students are choosing to live off campus instead of in Barrett Complex or Vista del Sol. The researcher wants to learn more about why students are choosing to live off campus and how they are making their housing decisions for the next academic year.

***Problem of Practice.*** The problem of practice the researcher will be studying is the trend of upperdivision BHC students moving off campus after their second year. In University Housing and Residential Life at ASU, the renewal process is when current ASU on-campus living students can sign up to live on campus for the following academic year. At ASU every first year student that lives on campus lives in a residence hall or community with all other first year student within their academic college. Until 2015-2016 academic year, it was a requirement for all ASU first time students to live on

campus and within their residential college. In Spring 2015, the Arizona Board of Regents no longer made it a requirement for students to live on campus at ASU, the University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University. The problem is that upperdivision students are not returning to live on campus beyond their first year, and BHC and University Housing are not filling BHC bed spaces with upperdivision BHC students.

The researcher chose this problem of practice because she has seen BHC continue to grow since 2012, and the researcher noticed the challenges to fill the vacancies the last two years. As an Assistant Director of Residential Life it is her responsibility to assist with the renewal process, but the researcher would like to play a bigger role by trying new strategies through an action research study to see if there is any increase in the on campus living population of BHC sophomores, juniors and seniors.

ASU enhances the idea of complementing the lessons learned in the classroom with on campus living experiences through the residential college model. The model is designed to have academic college partners work with housing on the overall student experience both inside and outside the classroom. The programs and events outside of classes are intentional in connecting what the students are learning in their major and applying it to what they will learn post-graduation. Many students often state their reason for living on campus is due to the convenience of living close to classes and not having to commute for class or meetings.

Through the residential college model at ASU, faculty are often brought into the residential communities to assist with educational programs and engage with students living in the residence halls. However, this is not the same for upperdivision students.

The literature does not mention upperdivision students. Upperdivision students in BHC live in apartment-style communities, which make it harder to create opportunities of engagement due to there being an extra door to the student. Upperdivision students tend to already be involved on campus and are in a routine, therefore they do not attend programs and events as often as first time student and they keep to themselves.

In the state of Arizona, there are three large public universities: ASU, Northern Arizona University (NAU) and the University of Arizona (U of A). Prior to 2015, the three universities were able to enforce their live-on campus policies as needed by institution. At the time, ASU was the only institution with a mandatory live on campus policy for students enrolled at the university. ASU required all first year undergraduate students to live on campus, and BHC students were required to live on campus their first and second years enrolled at ASU. The only way a student could live off campus is if they were approved by University Housing and/or a College Dean through the exemption process. Examples of approved exemptions are living at home with a parent or legal guardian, military duty, medical or financial hardships.

In 2015, the ABOR rescinded the requirement for students to live on campus at ASU. Although this became an overall concern for all of University Housing, this became a bigger concern for BHC being that they are the only residential college requiring all first and second year students to live on campus. Since the change, BHC has focused on communication with students and parents. BHC changed their communication to incoming students and parents from “mandatory” to a live-on “expectation” their first and second year at ASU. BHC explains to students and parents that Barrett is a four-year residential college housing freshman, sophomore, junior and senior residents on campus.

Since ABOR mandated ASU change the live on requirement, BHC and University Housing have had issues filling the upperdivision on campus learning communities. BHC has been able to fill the first year community. The first year community is known as the Barrett Complex and is on the corner of Apache Blvd. and Rural Road. The upperdivision community is mostly housed in an apartment complex across Apache Blvd., called Vista del Sol, with about 200 bedspaces in the Barrett Complex, specifically in Willow and Sage North halls. Both Vista del Sol and Barrett Complex are properties built and managed by a third-party partner, American Campus Communities (ACC). ACC master leases Vista del Sol to University Housing, therefore University Housing expects to fill all bedspaces. For the 2017-2018 academic year, Vista del Sol did not fill all bedspaces with BHC students, therefore, University Housing filled two buildings in Vista del Sol with upperdivision non-honors students to fulfil the master lease agreement. There were about 1,300 BHC upperdivision students living in Vista del Sol. Approximately, two-hundred bedspaces in BHC Complex are set aside for BHC upperdivision students because the Dean of Barrett wanted upperdivision students living with first year students as an opportunity to mentor and interact with one another as both persist through the program and to graduation.

Through observation over the last six years, Residential life programming and student staff play a big role in retaining students to Barrett. CAs are upperdivision student staff who live in the residence halls to mentor students, uphold policies and procedures and help maintain a safe and secure community. All CAs are expected to engage with the students living in their communities. One way that CAs engage residents is through programs and events. Because ASU Housing is a residential college model, CAs keep

their environment a learning community by helping residents form study groups, bring faculty onto the floor to discuss topics related to their coursework and provide mentoring and tutoring when necessary. It is important for students to continue to learn in the BHC Community. CAs help students meet other students they may share common interests with, or encourage an open door policy, which is when students keep their doors open to let other students know they are welcome to enter their room for opportunities to interact with one another.

This becomes a problem, because Barrett Honors students expect to live with other Barrett Honors students while living on campus due to what was communicated to them when they signed up to be a part of the BHC experience. Parents tend to be more concerned about their students living with students who are not Barrett Honors students. Parents' concerns usually range from study habits and sleep schedules to extracurricular interests and personality differences.

This becomes a problem because University Housing tends to go into manual assignments and consolidation period over the summer to eliminate potential issues between Barrett and non-Barrett students. Manual assignments is when the Occupancy Manager assigns students to vacant bedspaces based on preferences and availability of room types. Consolidation period is a time frame after renewal process when there are still vacant bedspaces left and students need to be moved to open up complete apartments to accommodate future application requests. The problem here is that once Barrett students have self-selected their room, they often do not want to be consolidated to another room because there was a specific reason why they chose the space they selected. The people that care about this problem are University Housing, BHC, ASU and parents

of students because students who live on campus are more likely to be more involved on campus, more academically engaged, and persist to graduation.

The research questions for this action research study are:

1. What are the factors influencing residents' decision to live off campus?
2. How and to what extent do students' sense of belonging in BHC influence their decisions to live on campus?
3. How does the incorporation of a housing renewal website effect students' behavior, knowledge and intent to renew housing?

The cycle 0 research questions are:

1. What are the perceptions and knowledge of BHC upperdivision students of the BHC live on campus policy and renewal process?
2. What are the perceptions and knowledge of the stakeholders of the BHC live on campus policy and renewal process?
  - a. Specifically, University Housing and BHC staff?

### **National Context**

Many studies show that students who live on campus are more likely to persist to graduation (Whalen, Saunders & Shelley, 2009; Friedman, 2016; Bozick, 2007).

Whalen, Saunders and Shelley (2009) found that students who lived on campus a great number of years were significantly more likely to graduate or be retained than were students living on campus for fewer years; each additional year living on campus increased by 75.1% the probability of graduating or being retained. Students

who live on campus have easier access to faculty, staff and resources and tend to be more involved (Bozick, 2007).

A 2016 study of 1,800 undergraduate college and university programs reported the on campus living population for several universities (Friedman, 2016). There were 276 universities that self-reported Fall 2015 data by participating in the annual survey. Results showed that 39% of undergraduate students lived on campus in the Fall 2015 semester. However, the average among the 11 schools with the most on campus housing was 90%. The leader was Harvard University, with 99% of undergraduates living on campus.

According to Bozick (2007), living on campus is viewed as the key means whereby youths acquire daily living skills, learn time management, and develop personal accountability. Moreover, living on campus often exposes youths to others from different racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, and geographic backgrounds (Bozick, 2007). These experiences are believed to complement the lessons learned in the classroom, thus enhancing the overall college experience (Bozick, 2007). Bozick (2007) explains that students who live on campus, by nature of their location, likely have more frequent contact with other students, faculty, and staff members than do their classmates who live at home. In a study on the impact of living on campus, Kuh (2009) reported that first-year participants in a learning community who were required to live on campus together reported more positive views of social life and more contact with faculty. This is common feedback from first-year students in BHC, as they are consistently socializing amongst one another, getting involved in student

organizations, attending programs and events and engaging with faculty through events or utilizing office hours.

Pascarella et al. (1992) suggested students living on campus are not only more involved in the various educational and social systems of the institution than their commuter counterparts, but they make significantly greater gains during college on a range of outcomes. The outcomes included: aesthetic, cultural and intellectual values; sociopolitical liberalism; secularism; self-esteem; autonomy, independence, and internal locus of control; persistence in college and degree attainment; and use of principled reasoning in judging moral issues. The findings from the study suggest that residing on campus may enhance the impact of college, not only in areas such as student values, attitudes, personal development, and persistence, but in student cognitive and intellectual growth. It is recommended that integration of a student's classroom and non-classroom experiences during college is more likely to occur in residential settings than when the student lives off-campus and commutes to college (Pascarella et al., 1992).

Lopez Turley and Woodtke (2010) did a study investigating the effect of college residence and the extent to which it varies among both student and institutional subgroups. They first compared the grades of a national sample of college students living on campus in residence halls, off campus in private apartments, and at home with family, adjusting for student and institutional differences. Then, they compared the effect of college residence by race/ethnicity and gender. Last, they examined whether the relationship between residence and achievement varied across different post-secondary institutions characterized by enrollment size, research orientation, 2-



year versus 4-year, and public versus private control. They found that Black students who live on campus in residence halls have significantly higher GPAs than students at the same institution who live off campus with family. Lopez Turley and Woodtke (2010) stated that racial minorities who live on campus may benefit more from the campus living environment because they tend to be more concerned about being academically integrated, interact with faculty more frequently, and are generally more involved in institutional activities.

de Araujo and Murraray (2010) examined whether on-campus students are more likely to take advantage of university provided resources than off-campus students, as well as the influences and interactions of friends and classmates. They found that living on campus does have an immediate positive effect on academic performance and a permanent effect evidenced from higher academic performance for students that lived on campus during any part of their college career. They showed that living on campus causes an increase in performance from half a letter grade to a full letter grade during the semester they live on campus.

### **Personal Context**

The researcher of this study is an Assistant Director for Residential Life within University Housing and works with BHC. She has worked with University Housing and BHC at ASU since June 2012. Her role within the BHC renewal process is to oversee the overall renewal process for the BHC Complex. Her responsibilities include meeting with University Housing and BHC staff to discuss strategies for renewal and implementing the plan, and then assisting with issues that may occur throughout the process.

The researcher leads a team of four CDs, who are full-time professional staff that work with the researcher to implement strategies for renewal. They indirectly supervise 52 Community Assistants, who are undergraduate upperdivision student staff, who assist in communicating important dates and information to their residential students about the renewal process and assist them in completing the renewal process. They work with an Occupancy Manager (OM), who works on the operations side of University Housing and is able to pull data about renewal and can assist with the software students use to sign up for housing.

The researcher is responsible for making sure residents living in the Barrett Complex understand their live-on expectation as a Barrett student, inform and educate the residents of important information regarding the renewal process, strategize creative ways to market the renewal process to BHC students and meet with BHC staff and the OM to discuss successes, challenges and questions regarding the renewal process. There are various steps in the renewal process, which can become confusing for students. Students have to apply for housing, select their roommate groups, select their bedspaces and sign their license agreement. These steps are spread out from October through February. The researcher helps students understand each renewal step and the renewal timeline clearly.

### **Informing Cycles of Research**

This section provides a summary of three earlier cycles of research that informed the development of the current study. These cycles guided the research questions and the creation of the innovation introduced in this dissertation. Table 1 provides a brief overview of each cycle and an explanation of how it informed the following cycle.

Table 1

*Summary of Action Research Concurrent Mixed-Methods Design and Process*

Cycle	Purpose and research questions	Methodology and methods	Key Findings	Actions for the next cycle
<b>Cycle 0</b>	<p>Primary purpose/s: Confirm presence of problem of practice.</p> <p>RQ1: What are the perceptions and knowledge of BHC upperdivision students of the BHC live on campus policy and renewal process?</p> <p>RQ2: What are the perceptions and knowledge of the stakeholders of the BHC live on campus policy and renewal process?</p> <p>3. Specifically, University Housing and BHC staff?</p>	<p>Qualitative; conducted semi-structured interviews of faculty and staff.</p>	<p>Faculty and staff confirmed presence of problem of practice. Faculty and staff informed researcher beds were not being filled due to perceived costs and maintenance concerns. Faculty and staff explained the goal to fill bedspaces with BHC students</p>	<p>Conduct further interviews with students.</p>
<b>Cycle 1</b>	<p>Primary purpose/s: Test the innovation and gather data from staff.</p> <p>RQ1: How does the incorporation of a housing renewal e-portfolio effect a student's behavior, knowledge and intent to renew housing?</p> <p>RQ2: How does the incorporation of a housing renewal e-portfolio effect on campus living knowledge of students in their second year and beyond?</p>	<p>Mixed-Methods; piloted the innovation, conducted semi-structured interviews, collected pre- and post-survey data on the influence of the innovation.</p>	<p>Staff further confirmed presence of the problem of practice and discussed reasons why students are not returning to live on campus. The cycle confirmed the viability of the innovation's design, but confirmed potential necessary changes to the innovation.</p>	<p>Collect additional quantitative data via survey instrument and qualitative data via semi-structured interviews to support final cycle of this study's focus on the benefits of living on campus and the renewal process. Create a website about the benefits of living on campus and renewal process to disseminate important information.</p>

<p><b>Cycle 2</b></p>	<p>Primary purpose/s: Test the updated innovation and gather data to better understand why students are choosing to live off campus and if they understand the renewal process.</p> <p>RQ1: What are the factors influencing residents' decision to live off campus? RQ2: How does the incorporation of a housing renewal website effect students' behavior, knowledge and intent to renew housing? RQ3: How and to what extent do students' sense of belonging in BHC influence their decisions to live on campus?</p>	<p>Quantitative; collect survey data on student perception of on-campus living experience/plans, renewal process and benefits of living on campus.</p>	<p>Data confirmed students' enjoyment of living on campus but plans to not return to living on campus beyond the two-year requirement for various reasons.</p>	<p>Utilize these findings to further develop the Renewal Website and possibly a mobile application for students for Cycle 3.</p>
<p><b>Cycle 3</b></p>	<p>RQ1: What are the factors influencing residents' decision to live off campus? RQ2: How does the incorporation of a housing renewal website effect students' behavior, knowledge and intent to renew housing? RQ3: How and to what extent do students' sense of belonging in BHC influence their decisions to live on campus?</p>	<p>Mixed-method; conduct the innovation, collect pre- and post-survey and conduct pre- and post-semi-structured interviews</p>	<p>Not complete at this time.</p>	<p>Not complete at this time.</p>

The next chapter will explore the literature and theoretical framework guiding this study. I will take a look at Astin's Student Involvement Theory, Tinto's Theory of Departure and Gusfield's Sense of Community Theory. Chapter 3 will focus on the cycle 1 intervention and results.

## **CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Perspectives and Research Guiding the Project**

The literature reviewed in this chapter will first focus on the student perceptions regarding benefits of living on campus vs. living off campus and the reasons some students are not retained in student housing beyond the first year. The next section will focus on three theories that will guide the action research, followed by a discussion regarding how these theories relate to the problem of retention of upperdivision students in on-campus housing. The three theories guiding the framework of this study are Vincent Tinto's Theory of Departure (1987), Alexander Astin's Student Development Theory (1984), and Gusfield's Sense of Community Theory (1975). Tinto's Theory of Departure is used to explain why students may not be returning to live on campus. Astin's Student Development Theory is used in the potential solution to the problem. Gusfield's Sense of Community Theory is used to understand why students may not be returning to live on campus and as a potential solution to the problem.

### **Perceptions of the Benefits of Living on Campus vs. Off Campus**

Previous studies have explored student perceptions surrounding the benefits of living on campus. One of the key benefits of residential living are involvement opportunities. Li, Sheely and Whalen (2005) discussed leadership opportunities as the second important predictor of retention in the residence halls. The authors noted that this could be due to the strength of leadership programs within the residence hall community at the university where the study was conducted. When students live on campus, they are often involved in leadership opportunities within the residence halls, such as RHA, National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH), Resident Assistant (RA) or a Desk Assistant

(DA). Students tend to get involved in other student organizations on campus. Leadership is important because it develops from involvement and interaction with peers and the living communities (Li, Sheely, & Whalen, 2005). Schudde explains how students who are more involved in the campus community learn to effectively live in the college environment (2011). In Schudde's (2011) study on the causal effect of campus residency on college student retention, she found that students who live on campus averaged a 2.216 on a scale of 1 to 3 for involvement in comparison to a 1.698 for students who live off campus. Whalen, Saunders and Shelley (2009) found that students living in residence halls have higher personal and social gains, which are associated with increased involvement with and connection to the institution. The authors explain that students' involvement experiences contribute to increased retention.

Li, Sheely and Whalen (2005) identified location close to campus and academic support available as two other significant predictors. Walsh and Robinson Kurplus (2016) found in their study that providing resources so that students can be assisted in their transition into the college social and academic environment is a benefit for living on campus. Many students often notice the resources available to students who live on campus, such as extra support for Residential Life staff, programming and events for on campus students and access to faculty and staff. At ASU, the residential college model is a model that supports learning outside of the classroom. Often, Residential Life staff will create and implement programs for on campus students that provide access to faculty and staff. An example of this is Coffee Chats with Advisors or Faculty about registering for classes. These types of programs are only available to students who live on campus. In a study, Brooks (2010) discussed how the University of Pittsburgh housing and residential

life office planned how they were going to engage students throughout their entire first year starting before they stepped on campus and until the end of their first year. In June, resident assistants were given floor rosters with the expectations to reach out to their residents and begin communicating throughout the summer through social media. During resident assistant training, resident assistants called their residents to welcome them to the university and answer any questions they might have. The University of Pittsburgh has created over twelve Living Learning Communities (LLCs). LLCs were created as a means to integrate students' in-class and out-of-class experiences by providing a community that fosters greater faculty and peer interaction, increased opportunities for coordinated learning activities, and an academically and socially supportive living environment; thus, living and learning are combined seamlessly in students' college experience (Inkelas & Weisman, 2003). Participants not only partake in coordinated curricular activities, but also live together in a specific residence hall where they are provided with academic programming and services (Inkelas & Weisman, 2003). Brooks (2010) concluded that the Residence halls have been a major player in the recruitment and retention of students.

Another advantage to living on campus is academic support. Brooks (2010) pointed out in his study that in recent years there have been a significant increase in educational partnerships between academic and student affairs that help extend learning beyond the traditional classroom walls. An example of this is ASU's residential college (RC) model. In an RC model, residential life staff work closely with faculty and academic college staff to assist students in their growth and development both in class and in the residential community. Ways that faculty, residential life and academic college



staff collaborate in this model is assisting students through crisis, facilitating social, service and educational programming, retention efforts, affinity to the university and policy enforcement.

Additionally, Kuh (2009) reported students in learning communities report higher levels of academic challenge and contact with faculty. Often the convenience of being close to campus and the academic support is a reason why students want to remain on campus. Moving off campus makes it less convenient to access academic resources, therefore resulting in retention concerns. Cox and Orehovec (2007), conducted a study on faculty and student interactions outside of the classroom. In the study, faculty were present at meals in the dining hall and off-campus, and then at tea parties but did not engage with students. They discussed the importance of faculty and student interactions, which can lead to greater success and retention of students.

Elkins, Forrester and Noel-Elkins (2011) conducted a study on students' perceived sense of community and the influence of out-of-class experiences. Using a hierarchical cluster analysis, out-of-class involvement levels were examined through an exploratory factor analysis of the following six factors: teaching and learning, history and tradition, diversity and acceptance, residential experience, and loneliness and stress. The survey was completed by 330 students. Focusing on the residential experience, they found that there was a strong connection between the residential factor and fine art or campus recreation activities. They suggested that participation in these programs contributes to a greater sense of campus community because of vibrant living-learning communities and a strong residential community. Elkins, Forrester and Noel-Elkins (2011) did explain the institution at which the research was conducted has vibrant themed

living-learning communities, including one for Wellness and one for the Fine Arts. Similar to Barrett Honors College, there is a two-year residency requirement for students.

Many studies identify why students are choosing to live off campus. One of the reasons why students live off campus is the additional cost to student fees for living on campus. Part of what goes into the cost at times is a dining meal plan. In two studies by Li, Sheely and Whalen (2005) and Radtke (2018), authors suggest that dining meal plans can be an issue because students who are dissatisfied with the dining program tend to move off campus and can be expected to share their unsatisfactory views of dining services with their peers.

Students describe their disapproval of the dining program and meal plan to Aramark at ASU. Often, if students are dissatisfied with the dining options, students will feel like the additional cost for a meal plan is not worth or equal to the quality of food they are receiving. To prevent continued dissatisfaction with dining services, students often receive opportunities to share their feedback to improve the options available. At ASU, students receive the opportunity through open forums with Dining Services, feedback cards at each dining location and the opportunity to approve or deny proposed dining rates for the upcoming year through RHA. In order for Dining Services to move forward with dining rates for the upcoming year, they must receive a majority vote from students through RHA. RHA then either writes a letter in support or not of the rate increase to the ABOR. During the fall 2017 semester, RHA held an open forum with dining services, Aramark, to give feedback on the services provided. One of the most common concerns to come up was the available food options. Students want a variety of food options that meet dietary restrictions.

A common perception among students is that the cost of housing off campus is lower than housing on campus. In Bozick's (2007) study on economic resources, employment and living arrangements, the results showed when compared to high-income students are 74 percent more likely to state that they are working to pay for college and 72.8 percent more likely to forgo dormitory life to live with their parents. Bozick (2007) found students will commute between their parents' homes and the campus when faced with limited resources. However, Bozick (2007) explains that those who work more than 20 hours a week and forgo dormitory life are at an increased risk of dropping out during the first year of college. Schudde (2011) stated that students who live off campus work on average almost twice as many hours a week as students who live on campus. Schudde (2011) found a positive and significant impact of living on campus on retention, even after accounting for student background characteristics.

The main themes in the literature can be categorized by advantages of living on campus and disadvantages of living on campus. According to the literature, the advantages of living on campus are opportunities for involvement, location to resources and classes, and support from faculty and staff. However, the disadvantages of living on campus are the cost and meal plan/options. The advantages of living on campus were directly connected to retention and persistence to graduation. Whereas, the disadvantages meant students were choosing to live off campus, which could lead to the likelihood of retention to and graduation from the institution decreasing significantly.

### **Theoretical Perspectives**

Vincent Tinto's Theory of Departure (1987) suggests that students who socially integrate their commitment to the institution are more likely to graduate. According to

this theoretical model, students must separate from the group in which they formerly associated, undergo a transition, and incorporate and adopt the normative behaviors of the new group. Tinto (1987) identified 3 major sources of student departure in his framework: academic difficulties, the inability of individuals to resolve their educational and occupational goals, and their failure to become or remain incorporated in the intellectual and social life of the institution. In Tinto's theory, academic and social integration are complementary but independent processes in a student's life. Academic and social integration leads to greater commitment to institution and graduation. This theory relates to previous studies and perceptions of the benefits of living on campus, such as academic resources and leadership opportunities. Students that are living on campus and utilizing the access to faculty and staff and getting involved socially are more likely to be retained by the University and graduate.

Student and faculty interactions help students stay involved on campus. Students who live on campus are more likely to utilize faculty office hours due to the convenience and distance of faculty offices to a residence hall. Living on campus, a student does not have to worry about commuting to faculty's office hours or the barriers they may encounter on their commute (i.e. traffic and parking issues). Instead, students are able to walk from their residence hall to the faculty member's office. Faculty help students stay involved through mentorship. Faculty have the ability to build stronger relationships with students who are able to make it to office hours or meet before or after class. These interactions with students are opportunities for faculty members to have a better understanding of the students' interests and connect them to resources to help improve their experience at the institution.

Another theory guiding this study is Alexander Astin's Student Involvement Theory (1999). Student involvement in co-curricular activities such as student organizations, leadership positions, and activity in campus residence halls has a positive correlation with retention and academics. Astin's Student Involvement Theory explains how students change and develop as a result of being involved co-curricularly. The core concepts of the theory are: 1) a student's "inputs" such as demographics, background and previous experiences, 2) the student's environment, which includes all experiences during college, and 3) "outcomes" which include a student's characteristics, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and values that exist after the student graduates (Astin, 1999). One of the assumptions that Astin makes is that academic performance is correlated with the student involvement. If students live on campus, they are more likely to get involved and perform at a higher rate academically, which would lead to persistence to graduate.

Gusfield determined there are two major uses of the term community: 1) Territorial and Geographical notion of community – neighborhood, town, city and 2) Relational, concerned with quality of character of human relationship, without reference to location (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). McMillan and Chavis (1986) proposed a definition of community using four elements: Membership, Influence, Reinforcement and Shared Emotional Connection. Membership is the feeling of belonging or of sharing a sense of personal relatedness (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Influence is a sense of mattering, of making a difference to a group and of the group mattering to its members (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Reinforcement is integration and fulfillment of needs, meaning the feeling that members' needs will be met by the resources received through their membership in the group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Shared Emotional

Connection is the commitment and belief that members have shared and will share history, common places, time together, and similar experiences (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). McMillan and Chavis (1986) define the sense of community as a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) expand on the sense of belonging and identification when discussing the element of Membership. The sense of belonging and identification involves the feeling, belief, and expectation that one fits in the group and has a place there, a feeling of acceptance by the group, and a willingness to sacrifice for the group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Building a sense of community and belonging is a priority in the Barrett residential communities for all residents living in Barrett Complex and Barrett at Vista del Sol. Community Assistants (CAs) are trained for two weeks in August before the academic year starts. Half of the training are focused on building a strong and inclusive community for their residents. Some of the ways that CAs build community is through floor meetings where residents meet and get to know the other people living in their community, connecting residents to other residents who share the same interests, and through programming and events, which gives residents an opportunity to engage with other residents over shared interests and activities.

In reviewing the literature, the take aways are student involvement, a sense of belonging, convenience and faculty/RC involvement. Essential features of the design of a residential program must include student feedback, should not inconvenience students and faculty or RC staff, and should assist in the program. Overall, being able to say that a

design was created based on student feedback will help create buy-in and participation in the program. Time and location is important to students. Students are busy with coursework and extra-curriculars, therefore, they do not have much more time to dedicate to a program that interferes with their priorities. The design should not be time-consuming or an inconvenience. In order to be successful in creating a decision, faculty and RC staff must support the idea and design. If faculty/RC staff are not on the same page in collaborating with residential life staff, students will continue to not participate in renewal.

Currently, the renewal process needs work because there is not enough student involvement in the process and the program is inconvenient. Faculty and RC staff are involved in the process, which is helpful in retention efforts. The goal moving forward is to continue to involve faculty and staff and improve student involvement and convenience.

Overall, this chapter discussed the theories and literature supporting this study. The next chapter will give the reader a better understanding of the researcher's plans for the study. Chapter three will describe the methodology, data collection, data analysis and validity of this study.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### **Method**

In chapter 3, the methodology of this action research project will be explained in detail. Before presenting the details of the methodology, a brief introduction to the study and some context is provided. Then the various parts of the method section will be presented. First, the setting, participants and role of the researcher will be described. Second, the instruments and data collection will be depicted. Third, the Renewal website as an innovative intervention to address the perceived barriers of the benefits of living on campus and the renewal process will be portrayed. Fourth, the data collection and data analysis procedures will be illustrated. Finally, the validity, reliability, and conclusions will be outlined.

### **Setting**

Barrett Honors College students are elite and high-achieving students from all majors offered at ASU. In 2015, BHC was recognized as the “gold standard” of honors institutions by New York Times columnist Frank Bruni. Bruni (2015) gave BHC his highest praise stating BHC combines the intimacy and academically distinguished student body of a Swarthmore with the scale, eclecticism and sprawling resources of a huge university. It is two experiences in one. The residential college model makes a large campus feel small for students. Students living in BHC are able to take courses and study with other BHC students. Students who live on campus create a learning community within BHC because they engage with faculty and staff outside of the classroom, and they are consistently studying with their peers. A learning community within BHC is important because students are able to better understand coursework, interact with their



peers, and persist to graduation. BHC's purpose is to promote and enable the very best education possible for intellectually-engaged students from Arizona, from America and from the world. Once admitted into the BHC program, the goal and expectation is that students will remain on campus throughout their undergraduate career.

In BHC, between the Barrett Honors Complex (BHC Complex) and Vista del Sol, there are approximately 3,600 bedspaces for honors students. In the BHC Complex, there are about 1,740 bedspaces; approximately 1,540 for first year students and 200 bedspaces for upperdivision students. There are approximately 1860 bedspaces in the Barrett at Vista del Sol (VDS) community for upperclassman students. In fall 2017, there were approximately 1,150 second-year students living in both VDS and BHC Complex. There were about 350 third and fourth-year students living in BHC Complex and VDS. In fall 2017, there were 6,894 students enrolled into BHC. In spring 2019, there are about 1,400 upperdivision honors students in VDS and about 160 upperdivision students in BHC Complex.

***Participants.*** BHC upperdivision on campus residents living in BHC Complex and VDS were recruited to participate in this study. There were 209 BHC upperdivision on campus students participated in this study. There are about 2,000 BHC upperdivision students living on campus. The researcher has access to a roster of all students who live on campus. The researcher e-mailed all BHC upperdivision students requesting their participation in the study. Student usage of the website was collected through the post survey and interview through questions about the website.

Participants must be an upperdivision BHC student living in the Barrett Complex or Vista del Sol. All participants gave consent to participate in the study. About 2,000

students received an e-mail requesting their participation in this study. The researcher confirmed participants met the qualifications of being an upperdivision student living in BHC before conducting the study.

***Sampling procedure.*** The researcher e-mailed about 1,000 BHC upperdivision students within the Barrett Honors Complex and Vista del Sol requesting their participation in the pre-survey, which focused on the on campus student experience, their knowledge of the renewal process and their housing plans prior to experiencing the intervention. The researcher e-mailed the remaining upperdivision BHC students living in the Barrett Complex and Vista del Sol communities requesting their participation in the post-survey, which focused on the same questions from the pre-survey and additional questions about their experience utilizing the Renewal Website. All BHC upperdivision students living in Barrett Complex and Vista del Sol were offered an opportunity via e-mail to participate in an interview. The target number for intervention was 300 upperdivision students. The target number for the post survey was 300. This intervention included those declining to live on campus. The intervention took place October through December, which was during the time period when upperdivision students were deciding where they want to live: on or off campus.

***Role of the Researcher.*** As the Assistant Director of Residential Life in BHC, the researcher acted as both researcher and practitioner. The researcher utilized a roster of upperdivision students living in the BHC Complex and Vista del Sol communities to invite BHC upperdivision students to participate in the innovation. The researcher worked with college and housing partners to create content for the innovation. The primary role as a researcher was to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data.

This included administering surveys and conducting interviews. The primary role as a practitioner was to offer instructional support and resources throughout the Renewal process.

### **Data Collection and Instruments**

*Data Collection.* There was many sources of data needed to answer the research questions. One of the sources of data was a roster of all upperdivision students living on campus in Barrett Honors Complex and Vista del Sol. This was used to e-mail the students and to pull demographics of the population. There were key people who were sources for answering the research questions. One person was the BHC Assistant Dean of Students. This person is the individual from BHC that was overseeing the Renewal Process, therefore they had access to the Barrett website and helped with marketing the intervention and the renewal process. The student staff and professional staff within BHC Residential Life were helpful sources for answering the research questions because they assisted with disseminating important information about the website and the renewal process. The researcher worked closely with the Occupancy Manager in University Housing, which is a helpful source because they pulled data on students who applied for housing and those who did not apply for housing.

*Strategies for how data collection will answer the research questions.* The surveys helped answer the research questions in a few ways. The pre-survey helped the researcher understand residents' on campus experience, knowledge of the renewal process and their future housing plans. The post survey after the intervention helped the researcher understand how the intervention had an impact on residents' housing plans, their understanding of the renewal process and the benefits of living on campus. In this

study, the independent variable was the on campus students and the dependent variable was the renewal website.

The interviews helped the researcher understand why residents planned to live on or off campus the upcoming year and more details of their on campus experience and their knowledge of the renewal process.

***Instruments.*** In late October, pre-surveys were given to on campus residents to measure students' perceptions of the on campus experience, the renewal process and the benefits of living on campus. In this study, the independent variable was the on campus students and the dependent variable was the renewal website. In early-November, I trained the CAs on how to engage with their residents about renewal, the benefits of living on campus and utilizing the website. In mid- November, I interviewed BHC upperdivision students living on campus to learn more about their on campus experience, their perceptions of the renewal process and their plans for housing the upcoming year. I wanted to learn more about their on campus experience, such as the challenges and benefits, and how that may contribute to their decision for housing the upcoming year. At the end of October through December, CAs engaged with residents about the renewal process and the benefits of living on campus. While engaging with their residents, the CAs answered questions that students may have about living on campus or the renewal process, walked them through utilizing the website and connected them to professional staff who can assisted them through the renewal or exemption process. The unit of analysis was the BHC upperdivision students because they were making the decision on whether they should return to live on campus or not.

In late November, I had students take a post survey to see if the website had an impact on their intent to return to live on campus.

***Reasons this methodology was appropriate for the study.*** This methodology was appropriate because it was an opportunity for students to share their level of on campus living experience and how that experience impacts their decision to live on or off campus through responding to pre and post surveys and interviews. Students were asked questions about their on campus experience, the renewal process and their intent for housing the upcoming year. Through this methodology, I was able to find out why BHC upperdivision students need or want to live off campus. This design was multiphase because there were multiple phases in the study.

***How the methodology was compatible with action research.*** This methodology was compatible with the action research because it lined up well with the renewal timeline and it was an easy way for me to get participants to participate in the study. This intervention revolved around the renewal timeline, which made it important to choose a methodology that works with action research. In my role as a researcher and Assistant Director for BHC, it was easier to get students to participate in the study because I have access to a roster with contact information for students and reached out to those students requesting their participation.

***Design.*** This study was concurrent mixed methods (Research Rundowns). This study required mixed methods because the data was more comprehensive by including numbers, statistics and narrative from students participating in the study. Mixed methods answered the research questions by using more than one approach and it added insights and understanding that could have been missed by not using mixed methods. The study

began in September 2019 and ended in December 2019. This study consisted of three phases. The first phase was training the staff on the renewal website and how to communicate the importance of living on campus and the renewal timeline to their residents. The second phase was implementing the intervention by having students go to the website as a resource of information. The last phase was students renewing to live on campus. I knew if students were visiting the website through the surveys and interviews. The staff walked students through the website and were expected to interact with all students living on campus about renewal. This was appropriate for my study because it helped the student staff understand renewal and how to communicate this information to students, which helped staff know which students were planning to return on campus and which ones were not. The website helped students understand their housing options, important renewal dates and the benefits of living on campus.

### **Data Analysis**

When putting the pre-survey and post-survey together, the researcher used Qualtrics to gather data from participants. Prior to the intervention, the researcher reviewed the data from the pre-survey. After the intervention, the researcher reviewed the data from the post-survey. She then used SPSS to further review the data to see what correlations and frequencies existed. After the intervention, the researcher examined each question thoroughly to identify which questions support the importance of the renewal process and the benefits of living on campus. After the intervention, the researcher thoroughly reviewed the qualitative data from the interviews, which further explained the data from the surveys.

Table 2

*Data Type, Source, and Purpose Collected*

<b>Data Type</b>	<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Survey	Before learning the renewal process	To understand students' knowledge about the renewal process and their perceptions of the on campus living experience and the benefits of living on campus.
	After learning the renewal process	To understand students' knowledge about the renewal process after going through the innovation. To understand students' intentions to for housing the next academic year after going through the innovation.
Semi-Structure interview	After learning the renewal process	To understand students' understanding of the renewal process, benefits of living on campus and housing plans for the upcoming year after using the innovation.

**Validity, Reliability and Conclusion**

**Limitations.** Potential limitations could be the renewal website and the sample size. The renewal website could be a limitation if it is not effective in getting students to

renew their housing for the next academic year. The renewal website could be a limitation if there is difficulty building the website and adding all the necessary content. The sample size could be a limitation because students may choose not to participate in the study making the sample size smaller than 300 participants.

***Trustworthiness.*** The findings in this study were true and accurate because I used methods of triangulation by doing surveys and interviews. The data collected through multiple methods helped identify if the data was consistent, which helped with credibility. The study applies to other universities with similar challenges. This study was based on participants' responses to the surveys and interviews. The one concern with validity and trustworthiness is that if another institution was to repeat this study at their institution, the results could be different because the on-campus experience and renewal process could be different from BHC.

***Conclusion.*** Overall, the methodology and methods discussed in this chapter helped meet the goals of the researcher and answer the research questions. This aligned well with the renewal timeline, which will help this process be efficient.



## Timeline

Table 3

*Timeline of the Project from May 2019 – March 2020*

Activity/Month	2019-2020										
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3
Revise Renewal Website and create renewal application	■	■	■	■							
Create renewal information dissemination training for staff			■	■							
Train staff on renewal dissemination					■						
Renewal Process						■	■	■			
Data Collection						■	■	■	■		
Data Analysis							■	■	■	■	
Report written								■	■	■	
Dissertation Defense											■

The researcher worked with University Housing and BHC staff to revise the renewal website. She then created a training for BHC Residential Life staff about the renewal process and website, and then trained the staff on how to disseminate information to residential students. Prior to, during and after the renewal process, the researcher collected data from students on their experience with the renewal process, living on campus and their housing intent for the upcoming academic year. During data collection, the researcher analyzed the data collected as she completed each phase. The last four months were spent writing the dissertation and presenting and defending it.

Chapter 4 will focus on the quantitative and qualitative findings from the study as it relates to the research questions.

## CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

### **Participant Demographics**

In this study, the researcher conducted interviews, a survey prior to the Renewal website implementation and a survey after the Renewal website implementation. Five interview participants shared their experiences and perceptions of living on campus and the renewal process in BHC at ASU: Hannah, Olivia, Alisha, Madison and Renee. All students who participated in the interview identify as female. All of the participants lived on campus in BHC the entire time they have been at ASU. All participants lived in the Barrett Complex their first year, and then lived in VDS their second year. Hannah, Olivia, Alisha and Madison identify as second-year BHC students, while Renee is in her last year at ASU. There were 204 students who participated in the online survey: 104 participants took the survey prior to the implementation of the website, and 100 participants who took the survey after the implementation of the website. On average students who participated in the survey were 19.57 years old ( $sd = 0.94$ ). More than half of the participants identified as female (66.9%), followed by male (32.6%) and non-binary (0.6 %). More than half of participants were white (62.9%), followed by Asian (20.2%), Other including multi-ethnic (11.8%), Black or African American (3.4%), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (1.1%) and American Indian or Alaska Native (0.6%). For each research question, themes were identified through the narratives and quantitative data from surveys were analyzed. The qualitative and quantitative analyses are presented below separated by research question.

#### **RQ1: What are the factors influencing residents' decision to live off campus?**

**Results from qualitative analyses regarding on-campus experience.** When interviewing the participants, there were some barriers to living on campus shared with the researcher.

**Room options.** Some of the participants shared they did not receive the type of room they wanted. As a part of the renewal process, students receive a lottery time and date to select the room they want to live in the following academic year after they complete their housing application. Hannah and Alisha explained because they did not receive the room type they wanted, they were planning to live off campus. Hannah said:

“Last year my issue was when I thought I was going through [the renewal process] with two other people in my group [...], three people total [...] online. It said that there is a three private bedroom option [...]. We're like, ‘oh, we're going to sign up for that.’ It was like in the Vista front desk book and everything, [...]. And then on the day when our time slot opened, it wasn't a thing. So we had to go back to housing and be like, ‘well, why was this an option? Literally everywhere.’ And they were like ‘Oh Sorry.’”

Alisha went through the renewal process and successfully reserved a room in VDS, but said she is still keeping her options open for housing next year. Alisha said:

“So as of now, we are planning to live in Vista again. But that's not really stopping us from looking at off campus housing just because. So I do get scholarships, but it's not going to cover housing. So just because of it, I mean, this is a little pricey compared to some other places around here. Not like right around here, but like a little further. Like two intersections away, which either I can take

the light rail or can bus. It would be a cheaper option for me and my roommates. But we do have like this like right here.”

Some other factors mentioned about the room options available to BHC students were: students don't get to pick the amenities they want in a room, the lack of Kitchen space for the amount of students living in the VDS room and the quality of appliances in the VDS apartments. Hannah expressed that the amenities offered to tenants in the off campus apartment complex she is moving to next year are more appealing than the ones offered in VDS and influenced her decision to move off campus. Hannah said:

“So in the kitchen. Personally, I'm a gluten free, dairy free and vegetarian. So I have to make all my meals. And the new one has granite countertops and farm housing, which is like so, so stupid. But like I really like because I spend a lot of time in the kitchen because I do have to make everything myself. And so I like that. And then there are common rooms and study areas on each floor, which is nice. And there are two pools because the Vista pool gets really crowded. So I'm excited to have like a different place to go and most of my friends don't live in Barrett. So a lot of them are living at the place where I'm living next year. So I'm excited to have a closer group of friends. I don't know. I've been in the E.R. twice this semester and it was kind of hard because people were like, 'oh, but you live so far from me,' like when I needed something. And I was just like, 'oh, okay. That is true. You do live like a 20 minute walk from me and most of my friends don't have their cars.' So I am looking forward to like more of a community aspect because last year, I don't know, I feel like you have a tighter bond as

freshmen versus sophomores where everyone's kind of off doing their own thing. So I'm excited to have that back.”

As Hannah explained, students are concerned about the lack of study spaces and sense of community in VDS. Hannah suggested if BHC had a roommate matching option, more students would choose to live in VDS because then they would have a better chance of getting the room type they want with the right amount of students in their group.

**Cost.** The cost of living in VDS in comparison to the cost of living off campus was a theme that came up in the interviews with Olivia, Alisha and Renee. Olivia said: “[...] unfortunately, the challenges, it is more pricey than the off campus communities. However, I have learned in the past that Vista [cost] matches about [the same cost as] off campus communities if you stay during the summer. But I think they are thinking about changing that for the academic year. You pay this amount of fee, but then you can stay in that room over the summer for free? [...] But now that I'm hearing they're probably changing that it might be smarter for me to move to a closer apartment that isn't on campus just because of the price. It is a big difference for that summer; which is really unfortunate. Then again, I probably will end up staying because I think the benefits do outweigh that price challenge because I live on campus and having that experience is way more beneficial than saving some money. ”

University Housing used to allow VDS students to live in Vista over the summer for no extra charge. However, summer of 2019 was the last summer VDS students could take advantage of summer housing at no extra cost in VDS.

Although Renee has lived on campus all four years of college, she did share that her perception of off campus housing is that it is cheaper than on campus housing. Despite her perception of off campus housing, her preference is still to live on campus due to the quality of VDS. Renee said:

“I feel like it's cheaper, and I think that's probably a common thought that people have about living off campus. But I think with that there are definitely tradeoffs in terms of quality. Meaning that, you know, perhaps my perception is that the cheaper you go, the less quality that you have and where you are. And so even though this does cost more than other places I could have found, I like it in the quality. There is like quality checks or inspection in the sense that whenever you move out, the room has to be in a good condition and you [complete a UCF] to ensure that your room is in good condition.”

#### **Results from quantitative analyses regarding on-campus experience.**

Correlations between students' intent to live on campus and the factors influencing this decision can be found in table 4. Believing that on-campus housing costs less and enables faculty and staff interaction and enjoying living in BHC were all positively and significantly correlated with intent to live on campus the next academic year. Students who believed it costs less to live on campus than it does to live off campus had higher intentions of living on campus. Students who felt that it was easier to interact with faculty and staff outside of class have higher intentions of living on campus the next academic year. Students who enjoy living in Barrett on the ASU campus have higher intentions of living on campus the next academic year.

Satisfaction with the dining options on campus was positively and significantly related to both feeling it was easier to interact with faculty/staff outside of the classroom and enjoyment living in Barrett. Feeling that on-campus living made faculty/staff interaction easier was positively and significantly correlated with enjoyment living in Barrett.

Students' beliefs that it costs less to live on campus than it does to live off campus was positively and significantly correlated with satisfaction with the dining options on campus and enjoyment with living in Barrett on the ASU campus. Students' belief that it costs less to live on campus than it does to live off campus was not significantly related to students' liking their roommate/suitemate(s), the overall emotional/mental well-being of students and the ease of interaction with faculty/staff outside of class. Students feeling that living on campus made it easier to interact with faculty/staff outside of class indicated significantly higher enjoyment living in Barrett, their feelings that living on campus contributed to their emotional/mental well-being, and their satisfaction with dining options on campus. Students' enjoyment in living in Barrett was positively and significantly related to feeling that living on campus contributed to emotional/mental well-being, satisfaction with the dining options on campus, and ease of interaction with faculty/staff outside of class.

Despite nonsignificant correlations between liking roommates/suitemates and intent to live on campus, liking roommates/suitemates was positively and significantly correlated with ease of interaction with faculty/staff outside of the classroom and enjoyment of living in Barrett on the ASU campus, both of which were positively correlated with intent, as well as a positive overall emotional/mental well-being and

satisfaction with the dining options on campus. Similarly, students' beliefs that on-campus living contributed to their emotional/mental well-being and satisfaction with dining options were not significantly related to intent. However, believing that on-campus living contributed to emotional/mental well-being was significantly and positively related to both satisfaction with the dining options on campus and enjoyment living in Barrett.

**Integrating qualitative and quantitative findings for on-campus experience.**

In the qualitative findings regarding the on-campus experience, the students mentioned the importance of receiving the specific room types they wanted to live in and the people they wanted to live with. Some of the students mentioned that when they did not get the room type they wanted or did not get to live with the people they wanted to live with, they chose to look for housing options off-campus. If students were able to get the room type they want and live with the people they want to live with then that could contribute to their enjoyment on campus and ultimately help them make the decision to stay on campus. In the quantitative findings, students who liked their roommates/suitemates positively and significantly correlated with the enjoyment of living in BHC at the ASU campus.

Cost of BHC upperdivision housing was a finding from the qualitative study. Some of the students felt that the cost was comparable to off-campus housing nearby when summer housing was included. Some students felt that it was more expensive to live off campus but the off-campus housing room options and amenities made up for the extra cost. In the quantitative findings, students who felt that it costs less to live on-



campus were more likely to live on-campus. The qualitative findings support the quantitative findings.

Table 4.  
*Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations of Study Variables*

<u>Variable</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
1. Intent									
2. LOC reason for connectedness	0.094								
3. Perceived connectedness	0.12	.372**							
4. LOC cost less	.416**	0.042	0.067						
5. Liking roommate	-0.013	.416**	.269**	0.015					
6. LOC improves well-being	0.101	.299**	.301**	-0.026	.606**				
7. Satisfied with dining	0.178	.287**	.254*	.200*	.340**	.284**			
8. LOC enables faculty/staff interactions	.227*	.446**	.395**	0.136	.290**	0.126	.260**		
9. Enjoys LOC in Barrett	.351**	.259**	.310**	.310**	.340**	.452**	.448**	.302**	
<i>M</i>	3.41	4.69	4.18	2.41	4.82	4.27	3.74	4.89	4.78
<i>SD</i>	1.746	0.957	1.115	1.33	1.178	1.08	1.402	1.054	0.925

*Note.* \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*  $p < .05$ . LOC = living on campus.

**RQ2: How and to what extent do students' sense of belonging in BHC influence their decisions to live on campus?**

**Results from qualitative analyses regarding sense of belonging.** When interviewing the students, they discussed what aspects of living on-campus contributed to their sense of belonging in BHC.

*Community.* When discussing their sense of belonging living on campus in the Barrett Honors College communities, the interview participants compared their living experience in Vista del Sol versus their living experience in the Barrett Complex. Some of the participants explained that they felt the Barrett Complex was more of a community than Vista del Sol. Alisha said:

“Because compared to both my experiences, I mean, I've only lived here for a semester and I mean from here on out, every semester is going to get harder and it's going to get busier. I just feel like the sense of community that was in like Barrett is not really there at Vista yet, but I do understand why. Like everyone's busy. It's more like apartment style. You have your own kitchen, so you're eating in your apartment. You don't have a dining hall. It's just not like that sense of community that you had at Barrett's Honor Complex is to me not there At Vista. Yeah. Because I always used to be outside to meet new people.”

Hannah discussed how part of what made VDS feel like less of a community from the Barrett Complex is seeing more people around the community in Barrett Complex than she does in the VDS community. Hannah shared:

“I really liked freshman year being in the complex because I would see my friends all the time, like walking to *The Human Event* and walking back to my dorm or in the dining hall. I really like that community aspect because I am an out-of-state student. I didn't know anyone coming in, so that was really nice for me. In Vista it's a little different because I'm in building K, so I just walk straight across and go straight into my dorm. It's not like I'm walking by and I feel like I don't see as many people that way. So that can be a little sad. I feel like I'm not as much part of the residential life community anymore.”

Interview participants discussed how the lack of study spaces and common rooms made it hard to feel a sense of community in the VDS community. However, interview participants discussed how living with like-minded people in BHC and making new friends helped them feel a sense of belonging and connection with ASU and Barrett.

Madison said:

“Living in the Barrett Complex, I did feel more connected to Barrett students specifically, so I did enjoy that quite a bit. It did feel a little sheltered. I think that was kind of necessary for freshman year because like coming into college, I was still very naive about everything living in Vista, I really like it because it does feel like you have your own community, but you're still part of the ASU population and you're surrounded by a lot of like-minded people. I'll talk to the other ASU kids. They're not quite as focused as the Barrett kids. It's kind of nice to be surrounded by people who are still striving to get a little extra.”

***Convenience and Involvement Opportunities.*** Most of the interview participants shared how the convenience of living on campus and the involvement opportunities

available influenced their decisions to live on campus. From a convenience factor, being close to other BHC students, faculty and the dining halls or dining options played a big part in their on-campus living experience. Alisha said:

“Benefits is like you're always on, you're living on campus. Wherever you have to go, you don't have to worry about going back home. But it's like right here. [...] And then other benefits, having food right here. Being able to go to the dining hall and the food in Barrett's dining hall compared to the other dining halls are a little better, especially because you have more choice and like there are more vegan options for vegan people.”

Renee said:

“So to ASU as a whole, it's nice to live on campus because I'm always in walkable distance to anywhere that I need to go. And typically faculty has office hours or something that are past 5 p.m. if they ever do. It's really accessible to me, whereas I feel like for a lot of my friends who commute [it is not as accessible]. I think I'm the only one that has lived on campus as long as I have. Most of them just live the first year and then they move back home. For them, they don't necessarily come back to Tempe once they're done with class for the day. They don't. So if they end class at eleven o'clock, but then there's something at 5:00, they can't just find themselves coming back. But for me, I can just walk back to my place and then whatever time something is, I'm able to walk back. So I think it's been really nice in that way. And for intramural sports and stuff, which are usually really late at night, play on like at 8:00 or 9:00 team at night, you know, it's really easy for me to play and be involved.”

Most of the interview participants discussed how living on campus has helped them stay involved and helped them find job opportunities. Intramurals and the Vista and Villas Residential Council were just two opportunities participants discussed as ways for on-campus students to get involved. In the four years Renee has been living on campus, she took full advantage of her opportunities to get involved. Renee said:

“I think the breadth of clubs that I've been involved in, I could probably not count on my fingers how many things that I am involved in, whereas a lot of my friends pick and choose and they're more selective about how many things they get involved in. And maybe there's two or three clubs or organizations that they're involved in because it's too much effort to have a meeting every single day of the week. Whereas I feel like I'm able to stack everything so that every day of the week something happens in the evenings that's on campus. So I've definitely been involved in a lot of clubs and organizations.”

Olivia spoke about how living on campus has helped her get a job on campus. Olivia said:

“I believe living on campus has allowed me to get all of my commitments. Other than being new student orientation presenter. I also work as a community service event planner in the faculty offices. And I don't think I would have ever heard about that position if I had not woke up early on a Saturday morning living on campus to go hike A Mountain with the former community event planners. I learned about that position that way. And I don't think if I lived off campus, I wouldn't want to drive all the way at 7am to hike to A Mountain. But by living on campus, I was able to meet those people and get that job opportunity.”

**Results of quantitative analyses regarding sense of belonging.** Correlations between variables related to students' sense of belonging and their intention to live on campus the following academic year can be found in table 4. Overall, neither feeling connected and part of a community while living on campus nor feeling that living on campus contributed to feeling connected were significantly related to intent of living on campus the following academic year. However, both of these variables were related to factors that did contribute to intent. Students' feelings that living on campus made them more connected and their feelings of a sense of community or connection to others where they live while attending college were significantly and positively correlated with each other as well as: liking their roommate/suitemate(s), feeling that living on campus contributed to their positive emotional/mental well-being, satisfaction of dining options on campus, ease of interaction with faculty/staff outside of class and enjoyment of living in Barrett but not to believing that living on campus costs less than living off campus.

**Integrating qualitative and quantitative findings for sense of belonging.** In the qualitative findings, the students spoke about the impact of community in the BHC communities, the convenience of living on-campus and the involvement opportunities. The students discussed how the lack of community in the VDS community influenced their experience living on campus. They discussed that there was more community in the BHC Complex their first year because they engaged with other students at the dining hall or throughout the community. The students discussed how in VDS they do not see many other students and students eat in their own apartments. The students discussed how living on campus has opened them up to many involvement opportunities.

In the quantitative findings, students' feelings that living on-campus made them more connected and their feelings of a sense of community or connection to others where they live while attending college were significantly and positively correlated with each other. The qualitative findings support the findings from the quantitative data.

**RQ3: How does the incorporation of a housing renewal website effect students' behavior, knowledge and intent to renew housing?**

**Results from qualitative analyses regarding the renewal website.** When interviewing the students, they discussed the effect of the renewal website on their behavior, knowledge and intent to renew housing.

***Renewal website.*** All but one of the interview participants said they did not look at the renewal website before or during the renewal process. They explained the renewal information was accessible through e-mails they received from BHC and University Housing, and they were familiar with the process from their experience going through renewal years prior. Therefore, interview participants did not feel that the website influenced them to renew their housing on campus.

Reflecting on what they remembered from the renewal website in prior years, they did have recommendations for improvement. Interview participants recommended the renewal website include a compare and contrast of on campus housing vs. off campus housing, roommate matching option and a checklist of important tasks to do prior to and for the renewal process.

***Renewal process.*** The interview participants had many perceptions about the overall renewal process, some of which were mixed perceptions. Most of the participants



felt that the renewal process and application was an easy and straightforward process.

Olivia said:

“I would say I'm more knowledgeable. I know how to make a group. And it's pretty straightforward. You make a group, you get your lottery time and then you pick your apartment. Unfortunately, sometimes the site crashes and that's a little overwhelming, but it's pretty straightforward, the process.”

Not all of the interview participants thought the process was straightforward.

Some of the interview participants felt the renewal process was confusing due to changes and inaccurate information. Madison said:

“I thought previous to this, I knew it pretty well just from last year. And I had an idea of how it worked. It sounds like this year they changed quite a bit. So I thought I knew a lot. I really didn't. Just sort of the logistics of how everything works. I don't like that some of the dates on the website specifically were wrong because the e-mail was supposed to go out on Friday, went out on Tuesday and then I didn't get an e-mail with my time. Even though my roommates did. So, I had to go find out myself. So that was a little tricky. So I thought I knew a lot. It turns out I really didn't.”

When discussing the timeline of the renewal process, the interview participants had mixed feelings about the timeline. Most of the interview participants thought the renewal process started too early, while two of the interview participants felt the timeline for renewal was a good timeline. Madison said:

“[...] the timeline isn't great. Just in my opinion. Just from last year being a freshman only three months into the school year, I really didn't know anyone,

didn't know anyone I would live with. So it turned out to be kind of very quickly trying to find people who are looking online and trying to meet people online through the roommate search. I ended up with really great roommates, but some people haven't. So I know that's kind of, yes, like it may work out, may not. This year was a little better because then, you know, people but it's still pretty early to make a decision about living here or living elsewhere. So I don't know when, but when you can pull out of the lease, I need to look into that. But it's kind of very quick.”

The room selection part of the renewal process appeared to be difficult for some of the interview participants. Some of the students expressed that they did not get the room type they wanted due to availability during their lottery time or because their roommate group did not meet the requirements to reserve a specific room type they preferred to live in for the next academic year.

Madison and Renee reflected on the renewal process overall and said they would have liked to see rooms available by type at the time of selecting their room. They said that it would have been helpful to have a countdown clock with how much time is left after selecting a room. When discussing challenges her roommate group leader experienced when selecting a room, Madison said:

“She ended up selecting it and she was texting me as she was doing it. She ended up trying to select one, but it was taken while she was selecting it. And so it might be nice [to have a countdown clock] like they have on AMC. You choose a seat to hold for a certain amount of time. Just because she went through it and told me, ‘oh, let’s do this room’ and it was taken immediately is the only thing.”

**Results from quantitative analyses comparing the pre-website group with the post-website group.** One group of students were surveyed prior to the implementation of the renewal website and one group of students were surveyed after the renewal website implementation. Most students (81.9%) in the group surveyed after the implementation of the website indicated that they reviewed the website. Independent samples t-test were conducted to compare students' understanding of living on campus and the process of renewal between these two groups. Results from these analyses can be found in table 5. Significant mean differences were found between these two groups regarding perception of cost to live on campus being less than living off campus, feeling that the housing application process was easy, and understanding the renewal process. Students who were surveyed after the implementation of the renewal website believed it cost less to live on campus than off campus, felt that it was easier to navigate the application, and felt that they had a better understanding of the renewal process.

**Integrating qualitative and quantitative findings for the renewal website.**

From the qualitative findings, not all of the students, with the exception of one student, looked at the renewal website. All of the students said the renewal website did not influence their decision to live on-campus. Some of the students said the renewal process was easy to navigate, while some students struggled with the renewal process. The students who experienced challenges with the process said the process changed from years prior and the information provided was either unclear or they did not receive information necessary to complete the renewal process.

In the quantitative findings, significant mean differences were found between the groups surveyed prior to the renewal website implementation and the group surveyed

after the renewal website implementation in regards to the perception of cost to live on-campus being less to living off-campus, feeling that the housing application process was easy, and understanding the renewal process. Students who were surveyed after the implementation of the renewal website believed it cost less to live on campus than off campus, felt that it was easier to navigate the application, and felt that they had a better understanding of the renewal process.

Although the most of the students interviewed did not look at the renewal website, majority of the students who took the survey after the renewal website implementation did look at the renewal website. Those students believed that it cost less to live on-campus than off-campus, felt it was easier to navigate the application process, and felt like they understood the renewal process better. The qualitative findings support the quantitative findings because most of the students interviewed did not look at the renewal website, whereas most of the students who participated in the post-survey did look at the renewal website. If the students interviewed did look at the renewal website, they may have not experienced the challenges they experienced throughout the renewal process.

Table 5.

*Independent T-Test Comparing Pre-website Group with Post-website Group*

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Pre-website Group M (SD)</u>	<u>Post-website Group M (SD)</u>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
I believe it costs less to live on campus than it does to live off campus.	2.41 (1.330)	2.88 (1.452)	-2.301	185	0.023
The housing application process is easy to navigate/complete.	3.56 (1.301)	3.97 (1.071)	-2.333	183.281	0.021
I understand the process to renew my housing for the next academic year.	4.18 (1.311)	4.71 (1.089)	-2.984	183.588	0.003

*Note.* Levene’s test of equality of variances was significant for ease of application and understanding of renewal process, so results not assuming equal variances are reported for these tests.

While chapter 4 discussed the findings of the study, the next chapter will focus on a discussion of the overall study; summarize all of the chapters, explain the results and a conclusion.

## CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this action research study is to examine the influence of the Barrett Renewal website, which focused on important renewal information and timeline information. Chapter 5 is presented in the following sections: summary, explanation of results, limitations, implications for practice, implications for research, lessons learned and conclusion. This chapter contains discussion and future research possibilities to help answer the research questions:

(R1): What are the factors influencing residents' decision to live off campus?

(R2): How and to what extent do students' sense of belonging in BHC influence their decisions to live on campus?

(R3): How does the incorporation of a housing renewal website effect students' behavior, knowledge and intent to renew housing?

**Summary.** This section will summarize the first four chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the problem of practice to the reader, as well as shares local and national context. The problem is many upperdivision BHC students are not returning to live on campus beyond the second year live on requirement. The researcher explains the importance of living on campus through some of the literature. It is shared that students who live on campus interact with faculty and staff more, get involved more, and are more likely to persist to graduation. The researcher explains the first cycle of research, which involved creating an e-portfolio as the innovation. An e-portfolio is similar to Blackboard in that an administrator could upload information, videos, assignments, quizzes, etc. for students to complete. The researcher used the e-portfolio to upload important information about the renewal process, housing options, the benefits of living on campus, and

uploaded videos, activities and quizzes. Six University Housing staff members participated in the study. Some of the most important findings in this initial study were staff members' perceptions of why students want to live on campus is convenience, the living environment and the friendships obtained living on campus.

Chapter 2 focuses on the literature and the theories guiding this study. Although the researcher discovered that there is not much literature about upperdivision students, the researcher did find literature about retention and students living on campus. Important points from the literature includes the academic support available to students living on campus, residential life staff are key stakeholders, interactions between faculty and staff can lead to retention of students and the dining meal plan is a reason that students may decide to live off campus due to cost and quality. The advantages of living on campus and the disadvantages of living on campus were an important part of chapter two.

According to the research, some advantages of living on campus are involvement, location of resources and classes, and the support from faculty and staff. All of these advantages lead to increased retention and persistence to graduation. The disadvantages of living on campus are the cost of housing on campus and the cost of a meal plan and the dining options available to students living on campus. This can lead to decrease in retention and less likely-hood of students persisting to graduation. The three theories guiding this study are Tinto's Theory of Departure, Astin's Student Involvement Theory and Gusfield's Theory of Community.

Chapter 3 shares the design that is used for the study and explains the researcher's role. The study is concurrent mixed methods. The researcher conducted a pre-survey prior to the start of Renewal. Approximately 1,000 BHC on campus upperdivision

students were e-mailed requesting their participation in the pre-survey. The researcher created a renewal website as the innovation of this study. The renewal website included important dates and information in regards to renewal, the importance of living on campus and the application process. Approximately 1,000 BHC upperdivision on campus students who did not participate in the pre-survey were e-mailed requesting their participation in the innovation and post-survey. Approximately 2,000 upperdivision BHC students living on campus were e-mailed requesting their participation in an interview. The first five students to respond were chosen to participate in the interview. The researcher explained her role as both the researcher and the Assistant Director of Residential Life in BHC. The researcher's primary role was to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data, which included administering surveys and conducting interviews. As a practitioner, the researcher's primary role was to offer instructional support and resources throughout the renewal process.

Chapter 4 explains the qualitative and quantitative findings from the study based on the research questions. The findings for research question 1, students felt that not receiving the room type they wanted or living with the people they wanted to live with contributed to their decisions to look at off-campus options. Cost was another factor students considered when looking into off-campus housing options. The students interviewed felt that it cost less to live off-campus than it did to live on-campus, unless summer housing was included in housing costs for on-campus. The qualitative findings supported the quantitative findings because students who liked their roommates and felt that the cost to live on-campus was less expensive than off-campus housing were more likely to live on-campus. The findings for research question 2, students felt more of a



sense of belonging their first year living in the BHC Complex than they did living in VDS. Students who felt a sense of community or connection to others where they lived were more likely to live on campus. The qualitative findings supported the quantitative findings because students provided specific examples of how their personal sense of belonging experiences living in BHC. The findings for research question 3, students who did look at the renewal website had a better understanding of the renewal process. Most of the students who participated in the interviews did not view the renewal website and had challenges with the renewal process.

### **Explanation of Results**

Throughout this study, many themes were discovered when analyzing the qualitative and quantitative data. The themes presented in the findings were: (a) room options, (b) cost, (c) community, (d) convenience and involvement opportunities, (e) renewal website, and (f) renewal process.

**Room Options.** There is a variety of room options available to residents living in the BHC upperdivision communities. The most popular room option is the private room and private bath spaces in the VDS community. These spaces tend to fill early in the renewal process, leaving students participating in the renewal process with limited room options pending lottery times. Students with later lottery times tend to be the students not happy with their room selection. The findings indicated that students were not happy with the room options to choose. Students shared that they planned to live with specific roommates, but often had to change their roommate based on the rooms available during their lottery time slot. As a result, students who were satisfied with their room selection or roommate were more likely to live on-campus. However, those who were not satisfied

with their room selection or roommate were more than likely going to move off-campus. Some of the students mentioned that they planned to keep their VDS room, but they were going to look at off-campus options to see if they could find a housing option comparable in price but fit their living preferences. Students may be looking for amenities that both the BHC Complex and VDS cannot offer to students. Hannah mentioned how important it was for her to have the kitchen she wants because she spends a lot of her time in the kitchen due to her dietary restrictions. She is looking for an apartment with granite countertops and farmhouse style. She said she wants to live in a community where most of her friends are living and one that has multiple swimming pools. These amenities and other amenities students may want are not available to students on campus, which may be a reason students choose to move off-campus. It is important to note that many students are satisfied with the offerings in the BHC upperdivision communities and they intend to remain on campus.

**Cost.** In the findings, cost was another theme many students considered in their housing intentions for the upcoming academic year. The cost for housing during the 2019-2020 academic year ranged from \$8,578 to \$11,030 in the BHC Complex and from \$7,380 to \$18,100 in VDS, pending room type. Students who live in the BHC Complex are required to have a meal plan, which ranges from \$3,190 to \$6,830 pending meal plan. Students who live in VDS are not required to select a meal plan because they have a full kitchen in their apartment, making it convenient to cook their own food. However, there are cost effective meal plan options available to students living in VDS should they decide to purchase a meal plan.

Most of the students interviewed perceived the cost of living on-campus to be higher than the cost to live off-campus. At the time of the interviews, University Housing communicated summer housing would not be free to BHC students living in VDS. In prior years, summer housing was included in the cost of housing for the academic year in VDS, which students felt made the cost more comparable to off-campus cost. During the Spring 2020 semester, University Housing changed the decision for summer housing, allowing BHC students living in VDS during the 2019-2020 academic year to live in VDS during the Summer 2020 semester at no additional cost. Renee's perception of cost was it cost more to live on-campus in comparison to the cost to live off-campus. However, Renee explained she felt the quality of living on-campus in comparison to living off-campus would be higher due to paying more. Renee's experience is University Housing standards for room condition are higher; therefore, ensuring students' rooms are in good condition.

**Community.** McMillan and Chavis (1986) define the sense of community as a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together. At ASU, community building/engagement is a core value of the mission of residential life. Residential life student and professional staff engage with students living in the residential communities to ensure that they have a sense of belonging to the community in which they reside. Community Assistants focus on getting to know their students one on one and connect them to other students who live in the community and ASU Resources. We provide an opportunity to create a sense of

community through residential programming. Programs are events hosted by staff to engage students in activities and learning experiences.

During interviews, some of the students shared they do not feel a sense of community living in VDS. However, they did feel a sense of community living in the BHC Complex their first year of college. Hannah suggested there is less sense of community in VDS due to the structure of the community. The BHC Complex has a dining hall, where all of the students eat together. She explained in VDS, she does not see many other students because from where she lives, she crosses the street to go to class and then goes back to her apartment after class. The VDS community lacks lounge/study spaces for students to gather, making it harder to engage with other students while in the community.

**Convenience and Involvement Opportunities.** Many students highlighted that they live on campus because of the convenience factors and the involvement opportunities available. From a convenience perspective, students enjoy that they live so close to staff and faculty offices and they can go to their room in-between classes and involvement opportunities. Renee enjoys the ability to be in walking distance from anywhere she needs to go on campus. She shared how many of her friends live off-campus, making it difficult for them to return to campus after they have returned home after classes.

Astin's Student Involvement Theory explains how students change and develop as a result of being involved co-curricularly. The core concepts of the theory are: 1) a student's "inputs" such as demographics, background and previous experiences, 2) the student's environment, which includes all experiences during college, and 3) "outcomes"

which include a student's characteristics, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and values that exist after the student graduates (Astin, 1999). When discussing student involvement in the interviews, students mentioned the impact of living on-campus. Renee disclosed how if she did not live on campus it would be difficult for her to be involved with intramurals when her games are at 8pm or 9pm. The convenience of being able to go to her room in-between classes and intramurals helps her stay involved on-campus. Olivia mentioned how living on campus provided her opportunities to get an on-campus job and be involved. She said how she participated in a 7am event on-campus that lead to her opportunity to be a student orientation presenter. She mentioned how if she lived off-campus, she would have not drove to campus at 7am to participate in the event. In the quantitative findings, students disclosed that living on-campus made them more connected and their feelings of a sense of community or connection to others where they live while attending college were significantly and positively correlated with each other.

**Renewal Website.** The renewal website went live in late October 2019. On the website, students could find important information about the renewal process, inclusive of important dates and deadlines, frequently asked questions with answers, photos and layouts of room options for BHC Complex and VDS, and information about the application and room selection. Most of the students who participated in the interviews did not view the renewal website prior to the start of the renewal process. However, most of the students who participated in the survey after the renewal website was published viewed the renewal website. Students did recommend additions to the renewal website to help students when making decisions for housing plans the next year. Some recommendations included sharing a comparison and contrast of on-campus housing to

off-campus housing, roommate matching option, and a checklist of important tasks to do prior to and for the renewal process.

**Renewal Process.** There were a couple changes to the renewal process for the 2020-2021 academic year. The renewal process was shortened by approximately two months. In prior year, the renewal process started in October and ended in February. The renewal process for 2020-2021 academic year started in late October and ended in early December. This was a major change for upperdivision students because they were accustomed to having a longer timeframe to apply for housing, form roommate groups and select rooms. Another change to the renewal process was upperdivision students could not renew to their same room unless everyone in their current room wanted to renew to the same room. This change was implemented because if only some people in the room wanted to renew to the same space, it blocked other students who had larger roommate groups to reserve the space, making them break-up their roommate groups.

There were mixed perceptions of the renewal process. In the findings, the researcher learned students who viewed the renewal website felt they understood the renewal process and the application process was easy to navigate. Students who did not view the renewal website experienced more challenges and felt the application and room selection process was not as easy to navigate as years prior. In addition to navigating the renewal process, the timeline was a topic with mixed perceptions. Some students felt the timeline was too early and should be implemented in the spring semester to allow for more time for first-year students to decide where they want to live and who they would like to have as a roommate/suitemate. Other students felt the timeline for renewal was a

good timeframe, and understood the timing of the renewal process because they are aware of off-campus properties recruiting ASU students to live in their housing facilities.

**Connecting findings with theories guiding the study.** It is important to connect the three theories mentioned in the theoretical framework guiding this study to the findings of this study. Tinto's Theory of Departure describes how academic and social integration are complementary but independent processes in a student's life, and how academic and social integration leads to greater commitment to institution and graduation (Tinto, 1987). In the findings, students explained how their interactions with faculty and staff contributed to their decisions to intent to return to campus housing the next year. In a residential college model, students are able to engage with their peers socially but because they are living with other students with the same academically-focused mindset they are also engaging with their peers, staff and faculty academically through study groups, faculty office hours and events. As discussed in interviews, students feel that they are more likely to be involved if they are living on campus; which would contribute to persistence to graduation.

Astin's Student Involvement Theory explains the importance of who a student is prior to their college experience, their environment and experiences during college and who they become after they graduate (Astin, 1984). This theory looks at the holistic student from start to finish. In the findings, students shared how their experiences living on campus their first year helped them build relationships and create a sense of belonging in BHC, get involved on campus and develop as a person. For students who understood the value of getting involved on campus and how that contributed to their academic

success, they continued to live on campus, which again contributes to retention and persistence to graduation.

Gusfield's Sense of Community Theory terms community as a physical place or relational (Gusfield, 1975). In the findings, students described community as both a feeling and a physical place they lived. When the students described their sense of belonging or community their first year in Barrett they described how they physical building was structured in a way that made the environment more conducive to building relationships with their peers that lived in BHC Complex. They discussed their interactions with peers in the dining hall, on their floors and in passing throughout the BHC Complex. All of the students interviewed explained that they felt a sense of community and belonging their first year. All of the students spoke about the community of Barrett at Vista del Sol as a facility that they lived as an upperdivision student. Many of the students explained they did not feel a sense of community or belonging as an upperdivision student because of the physical structure of the building, the lack of time to spend interacting with their peers living in their community or the lack of opportunities to pass or run into peers. The students who described a lack of sense of belonging or community in Barrett at Vista del Sol were the same students who were looking for the sense of community off campus with friends.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of this study were the renewal website, the sample size and participant diversity. The renewal website was a limitation because it did not influence students' decision to renew their housing for the next academic year. If the renewal website included information that students were not getting from interacting with staff or



reading their e-mails, more students would have been drawn to view the website prior to going through the renewal process. The renewal process changes delayed the renewal website implementation, giving less time to create more content for the renewal website. The sample size was a limitation because the goal was to have more than 300 participants for this study. Instead, there were 209 students who participated in the study. This was a limitation because it does not encompass all of the BHC upperdivision on-campus students, therefore a small representation. Participant diversity was a limitation in regards to individual interviews. Four of the five participants identified as white ethnicity and all of the participants identified as female gender. If the interview participants were more diverse, the findings could have been different and the participants could have been more of a representation of the BHC upperdivision community.

### **Implications for Practice**

In the immediate future, the researcher plans to share the findings and data with the BHC Student Services staff and University Housing's Operations and Residential Life teams as context as to what the student perceptions are of the renewal process. This will give them a better understanding of why upperdivision BHC students are not returning to live on campus, and then give them an opportunity to implement solutions for challenges with the renewal process. In the summer, BHC Student Services and Residential Life staff meet to discuss renewal and begin planning for the renewal process for the upcoming academic year. Sharing the website recommendations from students with these two teams will help the marketing and website development teams get a better idea of what can help students understand the renewal process better and help retain students in on-campus housing.

In the long-term, I hope to present my research at future conferences to help other Housing and Residential Life departments create opportunities to retain their upperdivision students if that is a challenge area for their department. Some of the content in this study could be a resource for recruiting students to live on-campus for institutions who do not have a live-on policy or who may struggle with recruiting students to live on campus, both first-year students and upperdivision students. Additionally, the researcher would like to work with a technology team to see if it is possible to take the content for the renewal website and create an application for mobile devices. Today, students are on their cell phones and tablets more often. Therefore, the researcher believes a mobile application may be more user-friendly and possibly engage more on-campus students than the website.

### **Implications for Research**

If the researcher were to conduct this research study again, she would spend more time working on the renewal website, conduct more qualitative and quantitative research and bring in a diverse group of participants. The process in general for implementing an intervention and collecting data is fast-paced. There is not much time to work on both of these parts of the research study as it relates to renewal. University Housing controls the renewal process timeline. With the shortened timeframe for BHC renewal, the researcher did not spend as much time as she intended.

The researcher would add more to the renewal website. In addition to the recommendations to be added to the website from students interviewed, the researcher would have wanted to add student testimonials to the on-campus experience and highlight the benefits and opportunities that students receive from living on campus. Some of these

items were implemented into the renewal information sessions, which happened three times in person. The researcher would interview and survey more BHC upperdivision students, as well as look at other opportunities to collect data. The Community Directors met with first-year students who did not know their future housing plans or were intended to move off-campus, while the BHC Assistant Dean of Student Services met with first-year students who wanted an exemption to live off-campus their second year. Although those meetings are with first-year students, the researcher would like to observe some of those meetings to see if the data could provide useful information to improve the renewal process or the on-campus living experience. Additionally, the researcher would possibly interview Community Assistants to understand students perceptions of the on-campus experience from the CA point of view based on their intentional interactions and engagement opportunities with their residents. Although the participants whom participated in the survey were a diverse population, the students who participated in the interviews were not a diverse representation of the BHC community. The researcher would interview more diverse participants to have a better representation of the BHC upperdivision community.

### **Lessons Learned**

Throughout this action research journey, the researcher has experienced many personal lessons along the way. The three most important lessons the researcher learned throughout this process are (a) the impact of students, (b) the importance of living on-campus beyond the first year of college and (c) the importance of a good support group.

As a student affairs professional for the last 11 years, the researcher always knew how powerful our students are to an institution. Working through this research study, the

researcher has learned how important the student voice is to a process. The highlight of this study was interviewing the students. When the researcher started this study, she assumed students were not returning to live on campus because of the cost of on-campus housing and the response to maintenance concerns. However, the researcher learned more from interviewing the students. Through data collection, the researcher found there were many students who did not have an issue with the cost of on-campus housing. It was great that the students interviewed invested in improving the on-campus experience or the renewal process. They shared ideas and asked questions. Sometimes it is easier for people to complain about things they are not satisfied with, but instead of complaining, these students were solution-oriented. The researcher believes that the recommendations and the data collected for this study will be used to improve the renewal process and on-campus experience in BHC.

When the researcher was in college, she was going back and forth the spring semester of her freshman year trying to decide whether she should return to live on-campus. The researcher was not chosen to be a Community Assistant and the cost to live on-campus was a concern. However, the researcher remembered speaking to her student orientation leader from her first visit to the University of Louisville as an incoming student and telling him that she did not know if she would be returning to live on-campus. He responded, “You have the rest of your life to live off-campus. You only have these 4 years to live on campus.” That alone was enough for the researcher to reflect on her on-campus experience and understand the importance of living on-campus. The researcher shares this story because she did live on-campus all years of college and this opened so many opportunities for her as a student and professional. As a University

Housing staff member, it is her responsibility to make sure students enjoy their on-campus experience, and understand the importance of living on-campus beyond their first and second year in BHC. Although the researcher always understood the value of living on-campus, analyzing the perceptions of living on campus from over 200 BHC students helped her see what is important from current students living on campus.

The importance of a good support group was what got the researcher through this doctoral program and the dissertation process. The researcher is someone who has a plan and sticks to it, so she knew she would be successful in her pursuit. However, there were many times this process challenged her more than she thought she could handle. In those times, the researcher relied on her support group to get her through challenges. At work, the researcher relied on her staff, partners and colleagues to help her balance the demands of work, especially when it was an action research heavy week. Personally, the researcher had many family members and friends to listen to her challenges and help keep her both focused and distract her when she needed to be distracted. Academically, the researcher learned her peers were not her competition but instead her support group to get her to the “finish line” of this doctorate program. The researcher got the opportunity to learn more about what her peers were researching and help them through the many revisions and presentation practices. They were great at giving her advice and encouragement.

## **Conclusion**

There are many resources and research to support the importance of living on-campus the first year of college. There is nearly not as much resources or research about the importance of students living on-campus beyond their first year of college. However, this study demonstrates how critical it is to retain students on-campus beyond their first-

year. In this study, Renee was one of the students interviewed. She had the opposite experience from the one described at the beginning of this dissertation. Living on-campus provided her opportunities to engage with other students, focus on her academics, interact with faculty and staff, get involved in clubs and organization, experience both dormitory and apartment-style living and persist to graduation. Renee will be living on-campus as she attend medical school at UCLA. To retain upperdivision students beyond their first and second year, it is important for stakeholders to create an on-campus experience that helps upperdivision students feel at home, understand the value-added when paying to live on-campus, have a sense of community, get involved, and understand the processes in place to renew to the same quality of experience until they graduate.

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APPENDIX A

IRB/HUMAN SUBJECT APPROVAL

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Ying-Chih Chen  
 Division of Teacher Preparation - Tempe -  
 Ying-Chih.Chen@asu.edu

Dear [Ying-Chih Chen](#):  
 On 9/30/2019 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Utilizing an Online Platform in Disseminating Information about Housing Renewal to Residential Students in their Second Year and Beyond
Investigator:	<a href="#">Ying-Chih Chen</a>
IRB ID:	STUDY00010677
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissertation Protocol, Category: IRB Protocol;</li> <li>• Survey Questions, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);</li> <li>• Interview Recruitment Form, Category: Recruitment Materials;</li> <li>• Study Consent Form, Category: Consent Form;</li> <li>• Interview Questions, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);</li> <li>• Survey Recruitment Form, Category: Recruitment Materials;</li> </ul>

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 9/30/2019.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Catherine-Ann LaRoche Catherine-Ann LaRoche

APPENDIX B  
STUDY CONSENT FORM

## Utilizing an Online Platform in Disseminating Information about Housing Renewal to Residential Students in their Second Year and Beyond

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Ying-Chih Chen in the Mary Lou Fulton Teacher's College at Arizona State University. I am conducting a research study to better understand why Barrett Honors students are not returning to live on campus beyond the second-year live-on requirement.

I am inviting your participation, taking a pre-survey, post-survey or interview. Those participating in the post-survey will be prompted to review the Barrett housing renewal website prior to taking the survey. For the surveys, participants will use a unique, reproducible identifier known only to them. The unique identifier will consist of the first three letters of one of their parent's name and the last four digits of their ASU student ID numbers. Some participants will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview. The first 3-5 people to respond to the interview recruitment e-mail will be interviewed for the study. The study will take place October 2019 through December 2019. You have the right not to answer any question, and to stop participation at any time.

You must be 18 years or older to participate in this study. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty.

Your participation in this study will help University Housing and Barrett, the Honors College better understand the student experience living on campus and how the experience can be improved. Your participation will also contribute to improving the renewal process. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

To protect your confidentiality your responses will be anonymous. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used.

I would like to audio record the interview. The interview will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be recorded; you also can change your mind after the interview starts, just let me know.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: Dr. Ying-Chih Chen at [ychen495@asu.edu](mailto:ychen495@asu.edu) and Catherine LaRoche at [claroche@asu.edu](mailto:claroche@asu.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788. Please let me know if you wish to be part of the study.

APPENDIX C  
SURVEY RECRUITMENT FORM

Dear BHC Students:

My name is Catherine LaRoche and I am a doctoral student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Ying-Chih Chen, a faculty member in MLFTC. We are conducting a research study to understand the implementation of an online platform for disseminating information about the Barrett Honors College (BHC) Renewal Process. The purpose of this study is to understand implementation efforts from the perspective of BHC upper-division honors students.

We invite you to participate in a survey about the on campus living experience and renewal process in BHC. The survey is brief, consisting of 31 questions. We anticipate that the survey should take no longer than 15-20 minutes to complete.

Your participation in the survey will help with this study. There is no penalty for non-participation. The benefit to participating in the survey is the opportunity to reflect upon your on campus living experience and the renewal process, while also thinking about future plans for on campus housing. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with your participation in the study. Participants will use a unique, reproducible identifier known only to them. The unique identifier will consist of the first three letters of one of their parent's name and the last four digits of their ASU student ID numbers.

Questions and Concerns:

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please contact the research team: Dr. Ying-Chih Chen at [Ying-Chih.Chen@asu.edu](mailto:Ying-Chih.Chen@asu.edu) or (480) 965-9612 or Catherine LaRoche at [Catherine.Laroche@asu.edu](mailto:Catherine.Laroche@asu.edu) or (480) 776-4386.

Thank you,

Catherine LaRoche, Doctoral Student  
Dr. Ying-Chih Chen, Assistant Professor

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

APPENDIX D  
SURVEY QUESTIONS



## Introduction

This is a pre-survey to help the researcher better understand Barrett Honors College (BHC) students' current on-campus living experience, their understanding of the renewal process and their intent for housing the next academic year. The pre-survey will begin with a consent form. You must sign (using a unique identifier, not your name) and date the consent form if you choose to participate in this study. After reviewing the consent form, you will answer three qualifying multiple-choice questions. After answering the qualifying questions, you will access the pre-survey. Please read over the questions and select the best answer that describes your experience. At the end of the survey, there are demographic questions, which helps the researcher better understand the population of the participants. Once you have completed the survey, please click the submit button at the end. Thank you for your participation in this survey.

## Unique Identifier

Please create a unique, reproducible identifier known only to you. The unique identifier should consist of the first three letters of one of your parent's name and the last four digits of your ASU student ID number.

## Qualifying Questions

1. Are you a Barrett Honors College student? (Yes, No)
2. Are you a first-time freshman (in your first year at ASU)? (Yes, No)
3. Are you a returning student (in your second year or beyond at ASU)? (Yes, No)

## On Campus Living Experience

1. I enjoy living on campus. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
2. Living on campus makes it easier to be involved with clubs/organizations. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
3. Living on campus is the reason I feel more connected. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
4. Living on campus makes it easier to interact with faculty and staff outside of class. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
5. I am satisfied with the dining options on campus. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
6. I believe it costs less to live on campus than it does to live off campus. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
7. I like my roommate(s)/suite(s). (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that you feel a sense of community or connection to others where you live while attending college? (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
9. What best describes the impact your current living situation has had on overall emotional/mental well-being? (Likert scale- Strong negative impact, Negative impact, Slightly negative impact, Slightly positive impact, Positive impact or Strong positive impact)
10. During the current school year, about how often have you been homesick? (Never, Once, Twice or Three or more times)
11. How do on-campus resources impact your current living situation? (Long answer)
12. Why do you live on campus? (Long answer)
13. If you disagree with any of the previous questions or statements, please explain your answer. (Long answer)

#### Renewal Process Knowledge

1. I understand the process to renew my housing for the 2019-2020 academic year. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
2. I will attend events/meetings about Renewal to better understand how to apply for housing. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
3. I would participate in renewal sessions if the information was available online. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
4. The housing application process is easy to navigate/complete. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)

#### On campus Living Plans for the Next Year

1. I intend to live on campus next academic year. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
2. I plan on living in BHC Complex or Vista del Sol next year. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
3. I plan to live with people I know next year. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
4. I plan to purchase an on campus dining meal plan next year. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
5. How does your current living situation impact your intent to renew housing? (Long answer)
6. How does your relationship with your current roommate/suitemate impact your housing decision? (Long answer)

#### Demographic Questions

1. Age (short answer)
2. Gender (short answer)
3. Ethnicity (check all that apply- White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Native American or American Indian, Asian or Pacific Islander)
4. How many academic credits do you have at ASU? (short answer)
5. What is your projected graduation year? (short answer)
6. How much of your housing and meal plan are covered by financial aid? (multiple choice- None, Some, About Half, Most or All)
7. What type of room do you live in? (multiple choice- Studio (private room and private bathroom), Shared room and shared bathroom, Single/Private room and shared bathroom, Quad (private room and shared bathroom in a 4-person room) or Triple (private room and private/shared bathroom in a 3-person room)
8. About how many years have you lived on campus while attending ASU? (Less than 1 year, 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years or more than 4 years (4 plus 1 program))

### Post Survey Information/Questions in Addition to the Above Survey Questions

#### Post Survey Introduction

This is a post-survey to help the researcher better understand Barrett Honors College (BHC) students' current on-campus living experience, their understanding of the renewal process and their intent for housing the next academic year. The post-survey will begin with a consent form. You must sign (using a unique identifier, not your name) and date the consent form if you choose to participate in this study. After reviewing the consent form, you will answer three qualifying multiple-choice questions. After answering the qualifying questions, you will be prompted to review the BHC Renewal Website and a powerpoint about living off-campus. After viewing the website and powerpoint, you'll access the post-survey. Please read over the questions and select the best answer that describes your experience. At the end of the survey, there are demographic questions, which helps the researcher better understand the population of the participants. Once you have completed the survey, please click the submit button at the end. Thank you for your participation in this survey.

#### BHC Renewal Website & Living Off Campus Powerpoint

Barrett, the Honors College created a website to help students understand the Renewal process and the benefits of living on campus. Copy and paste the below link into a web browser to review the BHC Renewal website. Once at the website, make sure to click on the "Renewal FAQs" and then click on the "Tempe" tab to read more information about the Tempe BHC Renewal Process. This should take about 5 minutes.

<https://barretthonors.asu.edu/student-life/housing/renewal>

Below is a link to a powerpoint about living off campus and things to consider. This powerpoint also shares the cost of living in Barrett uppperdivision housing this academic

year. Please copy and paste the below link into your browser and review the powerpoint. This will take about 3 minutes.

<https://tinyurl.com/bhclivingoffcampus>

#### Website and Powerpoint Questions

1. Did you review the Barrett Renewal website? (Yes, No)
2. Did you review the Living Off Campus powerpoint presentation? (Yes, No)

#### Post Survey Questions ONLY (in addition to the above questions):

1. I prefer to participate in renewal sessions if the information is available online. (Likert scale- Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree)
2. Did you attend a Renewal Information Session? If so, what was the date of the Renewal Information Session you attended? (Short answer)

APPENDIX E  
INTERVIEW RECRUITMENT FORM

Dear BHC Students:

My name is Catherine LaRoche and I am a doctoral student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Ying-Chih Chen, a faculty member in MLFTC. We are conducting a research study to understand the implementation of an online platform for disseminating information about the Barrett Honors College (BHC) Renewal Process. The purpose of this study is to understand implementation efforts from the perspective of BHC upper-division honors students.

We invite you to participate in an interview about the on campus living experience and renewal process in BHC. The interview is brief, consisting of 26 questions. We anticipate that the interview should take no longer than 30-45 minutes to complete.

Your participation in the interview will help with this study. There is no penalty for non-participation. The benefit to participating in the survey is the opportunity to reflect upon your on campus living experience and the renewal process, while also thinking about future plans for on campus housing. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with your participation in the study.

Questions and Concerns:

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please contact the research team: Dr. Ying-Chih Chen at [Ying-Chih.Chen@asu.edu](mailto:Ying-Chih.Chen@asu.edu) or (480) 965-9612 or Catherine LaRoche at [Catherine.Laroche@asu.edu](mailto:Catherine.Laroche@asu.edu) or (480) 776-4386.

Thank you,

Catherine LaRoche, Doctoral Student  
Dr. Ying-Chih Chen, Assistant Professor

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

APPENDIX F  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Thanks for meeting with me today. My name is Catherine LaRoche and as you are probably aware, I'm conducting research on the perception and knowledge of the Barrett Honors College live on campus policy and renewal process. The information collected in this interview will strictly be used as a component for my research project to better understand why upper-division students are not returning to live on campus. The information collected from the interview will remain anonymous at all times.

With your permission, I would like to audio record this interview. Do you agree I may audio record this interview?

This interview will likely take 30-45 minutes. You do not have to answer all the questions. Please let me know if you wish to stop the interview at any time.

In your responses, please do not mention your name or the names of others.

Please note that I am a mandatory reporter, meaning that if anything is shared in this interview that involves harm to self or others, I will have to report it.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Questions about on-campus experience:

1. How long have you been living on campus?
2. Which on campus communities have you lived in?
3. Have you had roommates while living on campus? If so, what has your experience with roommates been?
4. Have you lived off campus prior to coming to ASU?
5. Does living on campus make you feel more a part of the university? Why or why not?
6. How has living on campus made you feel more connected to BHC and ASU?
7. Please describe your on-campus living experience.
8. In what ways do you feel you have benefited from living on campus?
9. In what ways do you feel living on campus has been a hinderance?
10. What are the challenges of living on campus?
11. How has living on campus contributed to your academic success?
12. How has living on campus contributed to your involvement on campus?

Questions about the Renewal Process:

13. How would you describe your knowledge of the renewal process? Please explain your answer.
14. Please explain the challenges you have faced with the renewal process.
15. What are the pros and cons of the Renewal information sessions?
16. What are your perceptions of the application process and timeline?



Questions about Housing Plans for Next Academic Year:

17. What are your housing plans for the next academic year? Please explain why.
18. What are your perceptions about living off campus?
19. If planning to live off campus, what type of housing are you looking for off campus?

Questions after the intervention:

20. How would you describe your knowledge of the renewal process after utilizing the renewal website?
21. What new information did you learn from the renewal website?
22. What information do you wish was provided on the renewal website?
23. What were the pros and cons of the renewal website?
24. What challenges did you experience throughout the renewal process?
25. Did the website influence your decision on where to live next year? How or how did it not?
  
26. Is there anything else you would like to share? If so, please explain.