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Methods and Procedures

The precedent study will consist of three different kinds of precedents. These three will hit the three main categories of what the proposed project will be focused on: safe space, health and wellness, and support. The first method, in the category of creating a safe space, will be looking into gender inclusive housing. By definition, gender inclusive housing is a housing option in which two or more students share a multiple occupancy apartment or suite regardless of students' sex, gender identity or gender expression. In other words, this option allows for same gender or other gender identities to live together regardless of biological sex. The way this method was utilized is through data collection through university housing websites. A list was put together of most if not, all universities and colleges that offer gender inclusive housing. This number is 204 universities/colleges in the country.

The next step is to determine how many of these 204 schools offer gender inclusive housing to freshmen. When entering a new environment, it is important for these new students to feel comfortable for what they say their identity is. Out of these 204 schools, 131 have this type of housing available for freshmen at 64%, while 73 schools do not. The charts below show this:
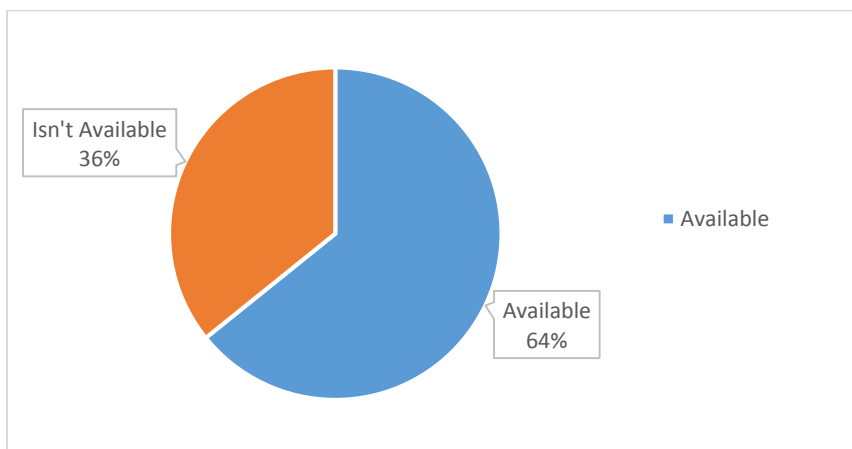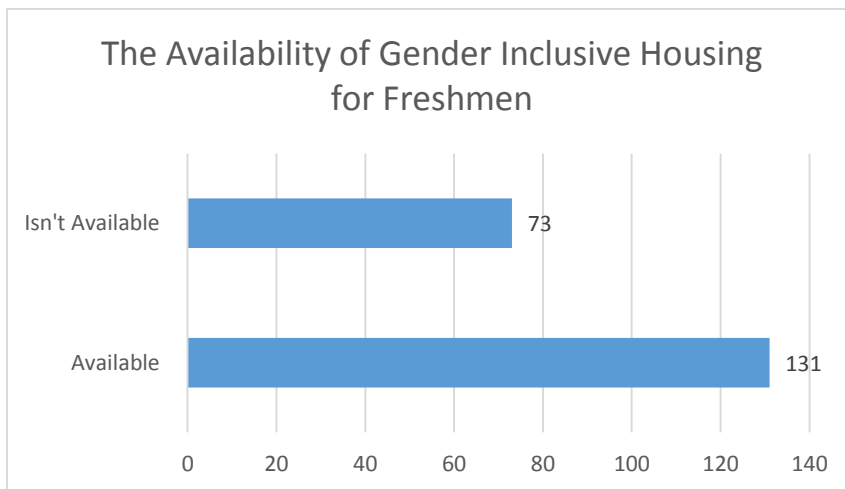
Next, the type of dorm room needs to be considered. The two different types of rooms are traditional and suite style. Traditional is a room with beds/desks what have you, with communal bathrooms/showers and a communal kitchen/living area (somewhere in the dorm building, may not even be in the wing or on the floor. Suite style usually has the room(s) and a living area and possibly its own kitchen and/or bathroom. Schools differ on this, and even in the same school buildings and wings vary with their definition of 'suite style'. The main issue between these two in regards to gender inclusive housing are the bathrooms. Which is safer: a gender neutral bathroom in the corridor or a private one that is shared with 1-3 people. Below are charts looking to see what kind room setup these 131 schools have associated with gender inclusive housing: traditional rooms, suite style, or both. It turns out that it about half way down in regards what style is used more.
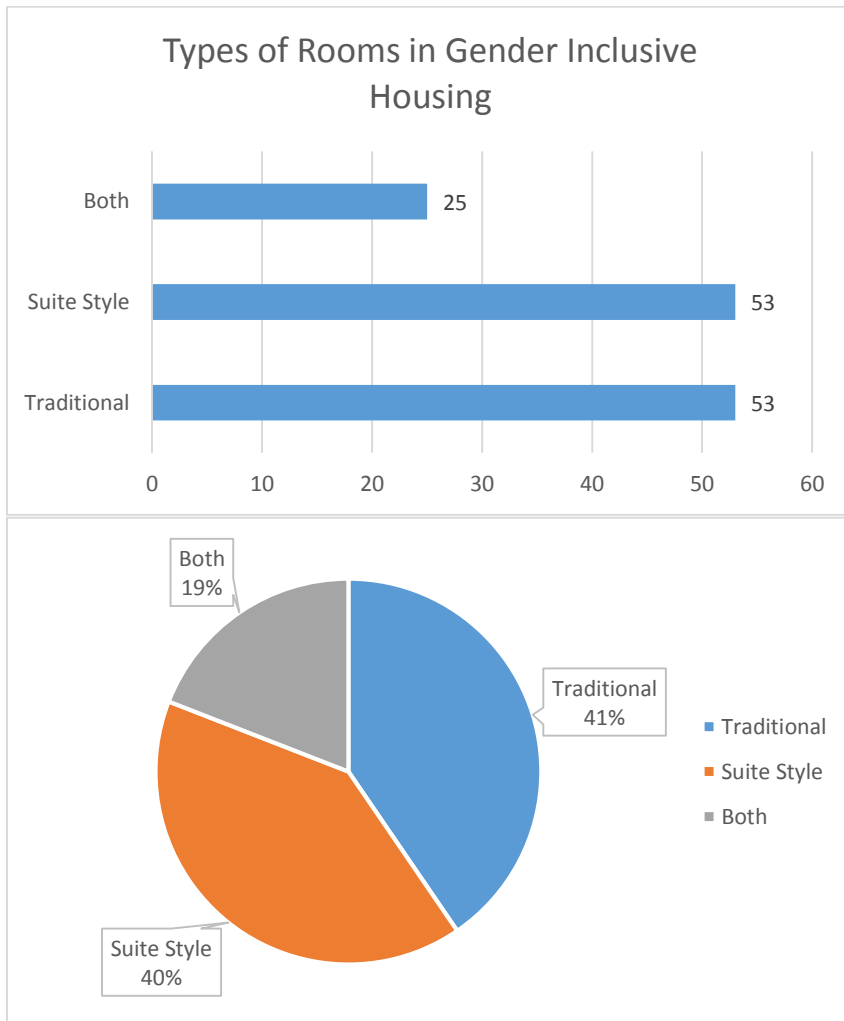
The second method used is in regards to maintaining health and wellness within a residential dorm. This looks into the issue of nutrition. Between full-service dining hall meals, the campus sundae bar, late-night food delivery, and cheap ramen, it's easy to see how college students lose control of their diets. In one nutritional study of public university freshman, one in four college students were shown to gain an average of fifteen pounds during their first semester, the famous "Freshmen 15". Unsurprisingly,

students that gained the most weight ate fewer fruits and vegetables, indulged in fattier foods and slept less than students that saw no change in their weight by winter break. This leads to the importance of having a proper dining hall that is both accessible to students and lets students know exactly what they are eating. This way they can make the choice themselves of what they eat.

The way this method will be conducted is looking at the best dining halls in America. This is based on Colleges Niche's The 2017 Best College Food ranking. This ranking, according to the website, "is based on meal plan costs and student reviews. Top-ranked colleges offer outstanding on-campus dining—students can easily access healthy, quality food across a wide range of cuisines and dietary preferences." The ranking consists of 100 colleges and universities. The reason this is looked upon is to make a connection of what make these dining halls the best and if a part could be their placement in or directly next to a residential hall. These schools will be looked upon to see this exact fact.

Next, regardless of the statistics that follows, a brief look into the residential dorm floors. This means seeing if there are kitchens or even kitchenettes located for student use. Regardless if they have a convenient dining hall downstairs or down the street, students still cook for themselves. The last thing that will be checked is if the nutrition information from the dining halls is available to students. Since this data collection is online exclusive, it is limited to checking if the university website has this information for the schools that do in fact have a dining hall connected directly to the dorm. The output of this information will be similar to the first method.

The last method is researching living learning communities. This is in regards to having support in a residential dormitory. Living learning communities are residential housing programs that incorporate academically based themes and build community through common learning. LLPs range from a handful of students living together because they share common academic interests to a four-year, degree-granting, residential "college-within-a-college". These can be very successful for college students. Living learning communities with the strongest outcomes are most likely to do: have a strong student affair–academic affairs presence and partnership, identify clear learning objectives with strong academic focus throughout the program, and capitalize on community settings to create opportunities for learning wherever and whenever it occurs.

The group of schools that will be looked at are in the SUNY system. The State University of New York is the largest comprehensive university system in the United States. The impact in New York State and across the globe begins with 64 institutions, including research universities, academic medical centers, liberal arts colleges, community colleges, colleges of technology and an online learning network. Approximately 460,000 students are educated in more than 7,500 degree and certificate programs, and nearly 2 million in workforce and professional development programs. Since the proposed project will be on a SUNY campus, the living learning communities are looked at.

Using the internet and their school websites, information about these communities will be found out. The first step is to find out how many of the 64 schools in the SUNY system have housing on their campus. If they don't have residence halls, then they won't have living learning communities. Then, logically next, is to find out if they have living learning communities offered within their dormitories and how many. After that, it's important to find out what they offer in two regards: type of community and what do they offer. In regards to type of community, it refers to having communities that are formed around a basic idea. Whether it be a major or an interest outside of studying, students should want to be a part of these groups for enjoyment, socialization, and an easier adjustment to college. When it

comes to what they offer, it is about the activities and methods these groups do. A few examples are in peer study groups, academic/vocational discussions with peers, social/cultural discussions with peers, course-related faculty interaction, academically supportive residence hall climate, and socially supportive residence hall climate. The output of information will be data collection similar to the first method.