

Student Life Division Annual Impact Report 2024–25



VITERBO
UNIVERSITY





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Student Life Division Learning Domains and Outcomes

- ✓ **Personal Development**
Students will identify an increase in self-advocacy and self-efficacy as a result of their interactions with the student life division.
- ✓ **Community Consciousness and Competency**
Students will engage in experiences that help them explore beliefs and understand biases, grow in appreciation of others, and live respectfully within their diverse communities.
- ✓ **Ethical Awareness and Action**
Students will serve their local and global communities through leadership and decision-making grounded in Viterbo’s Catholic, Franciscan values.
- ✓ **Holistic Wellbeing**
Students will exhibit behaviors that foster wellbeing for self and others through use of campus services, programs, and resources.

Student Life Division

KIRSTEN GABRIEL, VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE AND DEAN OF STUDENTS



Welcome from the Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students



In a year marked by profound socio-political change and an evolving higher education landscape, the division of student life remained grounded in our Catholic, Franciscan identity and our mission to provide opportunities, services, support, and spaces where students can learn, thrive, and grow into faithful servants and ethical leaders. This year, we are proud to see our mission realized in many ways, including through end-of-year assessments in which 100% of our student employees in campus recreation, engagement, and wellbeing (CREW), as well as resident assistants (RAs) in residence life agreed or strongly agreed that their work with us significantly contributed to their development as ethical leaders. ✓

We also witnessed students navigating challenges with courage, engaging communities with purpose, and shaping our campus culture in ways that reflect their resilience, empathy, and passion. Our attentive community submitted a record 288 CARE (Campus Assessment, Referral, and Education) reports this past year, demonstrating their awareness of mental health or behavioral concerns and their commitment to supporting their fellow V-Hawks. We continue to evolve our professional practice by reconfiguring staff into new departments such as counseling and health services and campus recreation, engagement, and wellbeing (CREW) to better meet the needs of our students and our university.

Our work has never been more critical—or more rewarding. This report highlights the stories, data, and initiatives that defined our year—not as a checklist of accomplishments, but as a testament to the power of collaboration, compassion, and shared purpose. I could not be prouder of our capable and committed student life team and the profound differences we’re making in the lives of our students.

Happy reading!

All the best,

Kirsten Gabriel

Kirsten Gabriel, MA
Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students



R·I·S·E

Significant, cross-institutional work was accomplished in 2024–25 in support of Viterbo University’s RISE Strategic Plan. Highlights include:

- improving interdepartmental communication to help with early identification of domestic English language learners and increasing supports to facilitate their success (I1),
- embedding counseling services personnel in strategic areas across campus as well as embedding key campus partners in CARE team and counseling services structures and workflows (S3), and
- convening a cross-institutional group to create a comprehensive First Year Experience program that extends from Accepted Student Day through the end of students’ first year that integrates values exploration, vocational discernment, belonging, and connection (S3).

Campus Dining

HAVIN REHWINKEL, DIRECTOR, CAMPUS DINING



This year, campus dining continued to evolve to meet the changing needs and preferences of our students. The Caf saw steady engagement throughout the year and served Viterbo students with a strong commitment to providing quality, convenient options.

Meal exchange usage more than doubled over the last academic year across Einstein Bros. Bagels and Provisions on Demand (POD). This impressive increase points to students' demand and preference for flexible dining options.

Sustainability and support for student wellbeing remained central to dining initiatives. Dining services continued sustainability efforts by offering a compost bin throughout the 2024–25 academic year. In addition, the meal donation program launched in spring 2024 provided even more meals to campus ministry for distribution to students in need or facing food insecurity. Student feedback on dining services meal donation and composting initiatives highlighted a growing commitment among students to support a more sustainable dining culture. ☑ Campus dining remains focused on innovation, inclusion, and sustainability, aiming to make every student feel nourished and supported.



Annual Senior Soirée with the President — Honoring the achievements, growth, and community built over four transformative years.



Campus dining staff prepare plated meals for the President's Holiday Dinner to honor our students, celebrate the end of the semester, and provide a festive atmosphere.

Department Mission

Make every student's dining experience exceptional by offering nutritious, high-quality meals in a welcoming and comfortable setting. Strive to create an environment where students not only feel well-fed but also at home, supported, and connected through food.

Student Perspective

"I'm more mindful about how much food I take—as a result [of campus dining's compost initiative], I produce less waste, knowing I can always go back for more." ☑

—Anonymous student

Campus Safety and Security

ALYSON GRAEF, DIRECTOR, CAMPUS SAFETY AND SECURITY



"Collaboration" was the theme for campus safety and security during 2024–25. Progress was made in key areas, including:

- **Emergency Preparedness:** A formal evacuation partnership was established with the Aquinas School District, and a revitalized collaboration with the Tri-Campus Alliance helped to improve coordination between higher education institutions and the City of La Crosse Police Department. Annex plans for Viterbo's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) were also created to provide guidance for specific types of incidents (i.e., tornados, active threats, and power outages).
- **Business Continuity Planning:** Campus safety worked closely with human resources and instructional and information technology to create a system to collect and track business continuity plans for all departments on campus.
- **Safety Signage and Wayfinding:** Physical plant and campus safety spearheaded efforts to provide clarity to campus constituencies and emergency responders via updated building address numbers, new signage, and building emergency action plans (BEAPs).
- **Provision of Training:** A community policing approach remained central to departmental efforts. Officers received training in de-escalation, engaged in regular check-ins with key university departments, and partnered with the accommodations office to provide a variety of services to students. In addition to hosting training for officers, campus safety hosted training for students and employees; as a result of these trainings, participants demonstrated a greater understanding of campus safety offerings, proficiency in de-escalation strategies, and increased awareness of institutional emergency operations plans and procedures. ☑☑ Campus safety also coordinated a two-day training with nationally recognized emergency preparedness experts to enhance institutional readiness.

Department Mission

Promote a safe and welcoming educational environment and support the university's Catholic, Franciscan identity through service motivated by integrity, hospitality, and impartiality.

Student Perspective

"My internship with the Viterbo campus safety and security team has helped me develop my communication skills. The whole team is very welcoming and willing to help with any questions I had. The training I went through was very in-depth but this internship also helped me grow more connections with the La Crosse community through the training we went through as a team as well as helping people in the Viterbo community."

—Anthony Reza,
Campus Safety
and Security Intern



Campus Safety Officers: Committed to fostering a secure and welcoming environment for all members of our campus community.

16,442

meals purchased
using meal exchange

926

meals donated to
campus ministry

123,552

meals served
in the Caf

5

new systems to improve
the campus safety and
security department

287

incidents to which
campus safety
staff responded

15

on-campus trainings for
officers, students, and
employees

Campus Recreation, Engagement, and Wellbeing (CREW)

JONNY SOLMA, DIRECTOR, CAMPUS RECREATION, ENGAGEMENT, AND WELLBEING (CREW)



In January 2025, the university brought key student development functions in recreation, student engagement, and student wellbeing together to form a new integrated department—campus recreation, engagement, and wellbeing (CREW). Since its relatively nascent inception, CREW has been working to creatively and strategically maximize resources, streamline operations, and improve the student experience. A highlight for this new department for 2024–25 was a rise in participation levels at recreation events that had not been seen since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 65 students participated in intramural volleyball and over 60 individuals participated in the 3x3 basketball tournaments. Additional new and popular programming included multiple campus-wide pickleball tournaments and a wiffleball tournament. Through program evaluations, students reported an increased sense of belonging, greater respect for others and themselves, improved self-efficacy, and reduced stress levels. ✓✓

Building community and connection with student employees across the CREW department was also a primary focus this year. Professional staff continued to provide student staff with opportunities to enhance communication skills, customer service, conflict resolution, and emergency response. Student employees indicated that they saw greatest personal growth in the following areas: communication, leadership, time management, and self-efficacy. ✓✓

The department launched a new and exciting virtual group fitness app called Fitness on Demand with over 105 members of the Viterbo community registering to use the app within this inaugural year. The implementation of this app enabled students to participate in group fitness classes, nutrition classes, and other programs designed to enhance holistic wellbeing through a combination of education and physical activity. CREW continued to connect the entire campus by hosting wellbeing challenges for students and employees. These challenges included hydration challenges, movement challenges, and Fitness on Demand-hosted activities. ✓



Campus comes alive at Viterbo's annual end-of-year Courtyard Carni — a vibrant celebration of community, resilience, and a successful academic year.



Students rally for wellbeing and community during one of CREW's campus-wide Pickleball Tournaments.

Department Mission

Promote holistic wellbeing and community engagement. Foster an inclusive environment where students and the campus community can engage, belong, and thrive.

Student Perspective

“As a nurse, it's important that I can work well in a team setting. Working in CREW has helped me enhance communication, teamwork, and people skills.” ✓

—CREW student employee



One of the signature programs CREW spearheaded was Service Saturdays, which helps to build a culture of service, foster community engagement, and introduce students to the Franciscan values that are central to the university's mission. These monthly service opportunities not only provided meaningful experiences for students that helped them grow in their understanding of social issues facing their neighbors and their community ✓, but they also delivered tangible benefits to the local community. ✓

Community building was a strong focus of CREW programming throughout the academic year. First, the department welcomed new students during orientation and enhanced student knowledge of on-campus resources as well as helped to facilitate activities for them to get to know their peers. Events centered on creating connections and promoting belonging proved to be the most popular among students. These included partnerships with athletics, the second annual Viterbo Prom, petting zoos, and the campus-wide Courtyard Carni at the end of the academic year. ✓

The Student Recognition Ceremony was newly rebranded “The VICS: Student Recognition Awards” and saw incredible growth this year with a dramatic 150% increase in the number of student nominations. In its exciting return to campus after several years being hosted off-campus, the event brought together students and employees in a shared celebration of leadership, achievement, and community. Throughout the night, Viterbo's Franciscan spirit shone brightly, as the campus came alive with stories of exemplary student leadership and achievement, Viterbo pride, and a strong sense of connection. ✓



Franny Fest — Students enjoy the petting zoo as part of a joy-filled annual celebration of mission and community in the spirit of St. Francis.



The VICS: Student Recognition Ceremony to celebrate our student leaders on campus.

Student Perspective

“He is a caring, hard-working individual of high character willing to ask for help or seek advice. As president of Viterbo's Student Veterans of America (SVA) club, he was selected as one of 67 people and the only Wisconsinite to participate in the national SVA Leadership Institute in Washington, D.C. and also organized for four SVA members to attend the National Conference in Colorado Springs. His ability to balance being a full-time student, working outside of school, being a present husband and father, and serving at outreach, recruitment, orientation, and resource events to help our military students thrive is extremely admirable.” ✓✓

—Nomination from club advisor for the VICS Outstanding Student Leader Award

19,484

student visits to the Mathy Center (704 unique users)

90%

of survey respondents indicated an increased sense of belonging by participating in intramurals

90%

of students felt knowledgeable or very knowledgeable about Viterbo resources as a result of participating in new student orientation

687

total Service Saturday volunteer participants

2,065

total hours volunteered

53

Student leader nominations submitted for The VICS

Compliance and Title IX

MARCI IVERSON, COMPLIANCE AND TITLE IX COORDINATOR



In 2024–25, the compliance and Title IX office focused on proactive efforts to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive campus community. Now situated within the division of student life, the office expanded its reach by prioritizing prevention education, responsive policies, and student-centered practices rooted in Catholic, Franciscan values. Over the academic year, the office managed many Title IX reports and facilitated trainings and events which engaged over 675 students and employees across campus. These initiatives emphasized awareness, accountability, and compassionate support. ✓ Significant policy advancements were achieved, including updated protocols on hazing, pregnancy and parenting accommodations, minors on campus, and emergency removal procedures. These developments promoted a culture of safety and equity, while reinforcing institutional integrity and responsibility. Targeted trainings reached athletics, faculty, and staff, and first-year students, resident assistants, and international students received in-person violence prevention sessions during orientation to encourage critical dialogue and bystander intervention. ✓✓

Support for pregnant and parenting students expanded with individualized accommodations and embedded training across departments highlighting a commitment to holistic wellbeing. ✓ Additionally, the Title IX team advanced athletic compliance by launching a liaison program and preparing to implement the Good Sport Review action plan to improve gender equity. ✓

Through its comprehensive approach, the compliance and Title IX office contributed to students' personal development, fostered ethical awareness, and nurtured inclusive communities which all directly support Viterbo's Student Life Learning Domains and Outcomes.

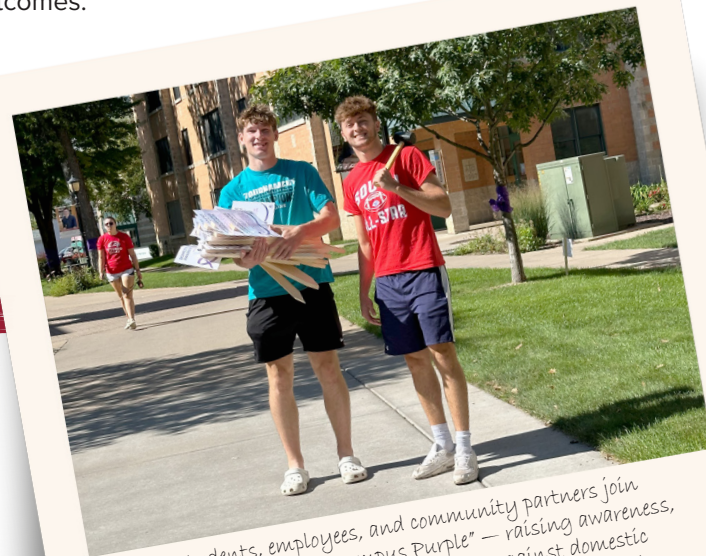
Department Mission

Promote a safe, respectful, and inclusive campus by ensuring equity, accountability, and institutional compliance. Support the holistic development and wellbeing of all students through education, prevention, and fair response processes rooted in Viterbo's mission and commitment to human dignity.

Student Perspective

"What I appreciated most about Viterbo's Title IX office is how they committed to stepping in during a very stressful time and took on the burden of reaching out to people, coordinating follow up, connecting with resources, and completing or at least making paperwork easy and accessible. The compassionate approach of listening to my individual situation and considering my preferences for how to proceed was so impactful." ✓

— Anonymous Student



Students, employees, and community partners join together to "Turn the Campus Purple" — raising awareness, showing solidarity, and standing against domestic violence during Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Counseling Services

JUSTIN McKNIGHT, LPC, NCC, DIRECTOR, COUNSELING AND HEALTH SERVICES



During 2024–25, Viterbo University counseling services experienced a year of growth, change, and achievement. The team welcomed a new therapist, bringing fresh energy and perspectives to the department while also adapting the caseload to support the students of another staff member on maternity leave. Even during these transitions, the office maintained a high level of service, supporting students through over 1,400 individual counseling appointments. ✓✓

In the summer of 2024, therapists continued their commitment to professional development and evidence-based care by completing certifications in Internal Family Systems (IFS) and specialized training in Somatic work. These trainings enhanced the office's capacity to address complex emotional relational concerns and further strengthened the team's overall skillset to ensure students receive high-quality support.

A significant milestone this year was being awarded SAMSHA's Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grant. This achievement reflects a proactive approach to mental health and dedication to campus-wide wellness initiatives. The funding allowed for the additional hire of a full-time grant coordinator to improve outreach, education, and intervention strategies. Some of our most impactful, campus-wide work centered on the delivery of QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) trainings, a proven strategy to reduce suicidal behaviors and save lives, during Suicide Prevention Month. The department hosted a full day of five. Counseling services raised awareness during September—Suicide Prevention Month—by hosting a full day of five QPR trainings where 42 members of the Viterbo community became QPR Certified. ✓



Counseling Services team members connect with students during Franny Fest, spreading positivity and mental health and wellness resources.

Department Mission

Promote the mental health and wellbeing of students to foster the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, occupational, and physical development of each person served.

Student Perspectives

"I have a great relationship with my therapist. I don't feel any judgment from them and feel like they get what I'm trying to say. They've also used my interests to help explain things to me, which I've never had a therapist do before."

"[My therapist] is quite literally the best therapist I have ever had (and I've had more than I can count). Her dedication and ability to understand and connect with her clients is next to none other. She's the best!"

"With my therapist I felt as if they were able to connect to me and go above and beyond and connect to my Christian way of life. It made me feel heard and seen and they didn't have to do it, but they did and that's what makes me want to continue."

"My therapist is one of the kindest souls I have ever met. He will listen to you and help you confront whatever you are feeling. There is absolutely no judgment, and he utilizes his tools in a great way to help you conquer your emotions. I made a ton of progress with him and thank him for helping me." ✓

—Students who utilized counseling services

35

Title IX reports

100%

training compliance within the athletics department

24

trainings and events

246

unique student users

1,468

completed appointments

70

individuals completed QPR training

Health Services

AMBER WEBER, RN, BSN, HEALTH SERVICES COORDINATOR



This year, health services made strides in supporting the health and wellbeing of the campus community. The department hired three nursing students, providing them valuable clinical experience and meaningful opportunities to apply the skills learned in their coursework. These students played a key role in the department's efforts and reported gaining real-world experience. ✓

Throughout the year, health services hosted several programs to promote healthy habits. The popular Period Product Campaign continued to be well-received across campus with personal hygiene products regularly restocked in campus restrooms to ensure accessibility. Health services organized two blood drives in collaboration with Versiti Blood Center of Wisconsin. These drives supported our local community by collecting a record number of life-saving blood products impacting 153 local patients. ✓

To address seasonal health needs, the department distributed the highly sought after cold and flu kits again for fall and winter. ✓ Health services continued flu vaccination efforts by hosting four flu shot clinics across campus and partnering with Hy-Vee to provide flu and COVID-19 shots to students, staff, and families during Franny Fest. ✓ The flu vaccine was also available throughout the year in the health services office.

Health services demonstrated a strong commitment to student wellbeing by providing continuous care and support beyond the initial appointment. Follow-up touchpoints to check on progress after appointments to ensure students are taking care of themselves and improving demonstrate a dedication to fostering a comprehensive support system for students and reinforcing the importance of holistic care. ✓ This personalized attention helped build a supportive environment for students, which was crucial for their overall access and wellbeing.

Overall, this year's health services initiatives reflect a strong commitment to supporting student health and fostering a thriving campus environment.



Health services student and professional staff provide free flu shots and health support, promoting campus wellness.

Department Mission

Enhance the learning experience of each student by promoting the health and wellness of the entire university.

Student Perspectives

"I have been able to use my assessment skills nearly daily while providing effective, compassionate, and empathetic communication with my peers. Serving in this position has allowed me to develop skills of organizational leadership, project management, and patient education." ✓

—Hailey Ohlert, Senior Health services student employee

"This on-campus position has provided me with hands-on opportunities that align closely with my future career in health care."

—Aubri Chenal, First Year Health services student employee

Residence Life

JOANN STACEY, DIRECTOR, RESIDENCE LIFE



During the 2024–25 academic year, residence life worked to refine, clarify, and streamline all housing policies and procedures and make them available to students in a more accessible format. Additionally, residence life digitized the lockout slip, ID checkout, and lost key and ID processes to enhance efficiency and inclusivity for diversely-abled students. As a result of this comprehensive work, residence life empowered students to access information easily and fostered self-advocacy and self-efficacy ✓ while helping to create an equitable environment where all students can thrive.

In addition to improving policies and procedures, residence life collaborated across campus to improve the residential student experience and continued to be a key partner in Viterbo's Higher Learning Commission's Quality Initiative, "The Business of Being a Student." In collaboration with campus partners, residence life reduced the threshold for student account holds due to housing and conduct fines to minimize barriers to student academic success and increase student retention. ✓ As a result of these efforts, residence life and student conduct-related student account holds decreased by approximately 60% relative to the previous year.

Finally, through partnerships and collaboration with various departments on campus including counseling services, Title IX, and the business office, the department of residence life:

- revised summer housing contract and billing processes to improve success and retention of summer on-campus residents and set clear expectations for students and families.
- promoted a respectful and inclusive community by placing residents at the center of all major initiatives, enhancing accessibility, fostering self-advocacy and reducing barriers to success to ensure a supportive and robust residential experience. ✓

Department Mission

Engage, educate, and support the active, ongoing, holistic journey of individual student fulfillment and community engagement.

Student Perspective

"[Being an RA] has significantly impacted my understanding of community. So much so that I really don't want to leave. It is amazing knowing that I have not just a place to visit, but an alternative family that cares about my wellbeing and my future. I wish everyone had an opportunity to be an RA, especially here at Viterbo." ✓

—Devin Brown, Resident Assistant



Resident Assistants (RAs) gather for their annual End-of-Year Celebration and Passdown Ceremony, honoring faithful service, teamwork, and ethical leadership.

200

cold and flu kits distributed

47.3

average weekly appointments
1,505 total appointments

51

units of life-saving blood products collected during blood drives

98%

of residents surveyed agree RAs offer opportunities to grow in community.

85

residential educational programs conducted with campus partners.

150

hours of intensive staff training for each RA

Violence Prevention

KRISTIN MULL, 2024–25 VIOLENCE PREVENTION COORDINATOR



In 2024–25, Viterbo’s violence prevention department significantly broadened its reach, strengthened survivor support, and advanced its mission to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault. Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office on Violence Against Women, the department deepened campus partnerships and increased awareness of its services to foster a safer, more supportive campus community. In May, the department welcomed Miranda Hanke as the new coordinator to finish out the academic year.

The Coordinated Community Response team (CCRT) made notable strides in strengthening its mission, values, and operational framework. A key achievement was the development of the CCRT handbook, ensuring continuity in operations, streamlining information dissemination, and establishing an effective onboarding process for new members. Another important achievement this year was the successful implementation of a referral process for victims seeking services at New Horizons, the local partner dedicated to supporting individuals affected by violence. ✓ This strengthened partnership ensured that the survivor closet remained adequately stocked with essential items, providing tangible support to students in need. ✓

The department led a series of impactful initiatives, including the Turn the Campus Purple initiative for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Turn the Campus Teal event for Sexual Assault Awareness Month a stalking awareness campaign on social media, and two Viterbo Speaks Up Days to promote campus reporting tools in partnership with Title IX and the PROMISE committee.

Students and community members also participated in the second annual campus-wide Denim Day, experienced support for survivors, and learned how to reject victim-blaming and shift focus from the victim to the perpetrator. ✓✓

In partnership with UW-La Crosse, the nonprofit Level Up, and the Viterbo University athletics department, students attended “Can I Kiss You?” by Mike Domitrz, a program focused on consent, bystander intervention, and survivor support. The department also welcomed nationally recognized speaker David Coleman, who led engaging conversations on communication, respect, and building healthy relationships. ✓✓

Department Mission

Promote health and safety of campus environment through education and programming focused on sexual violence. Provide support and connect students with services for victims and survivors.

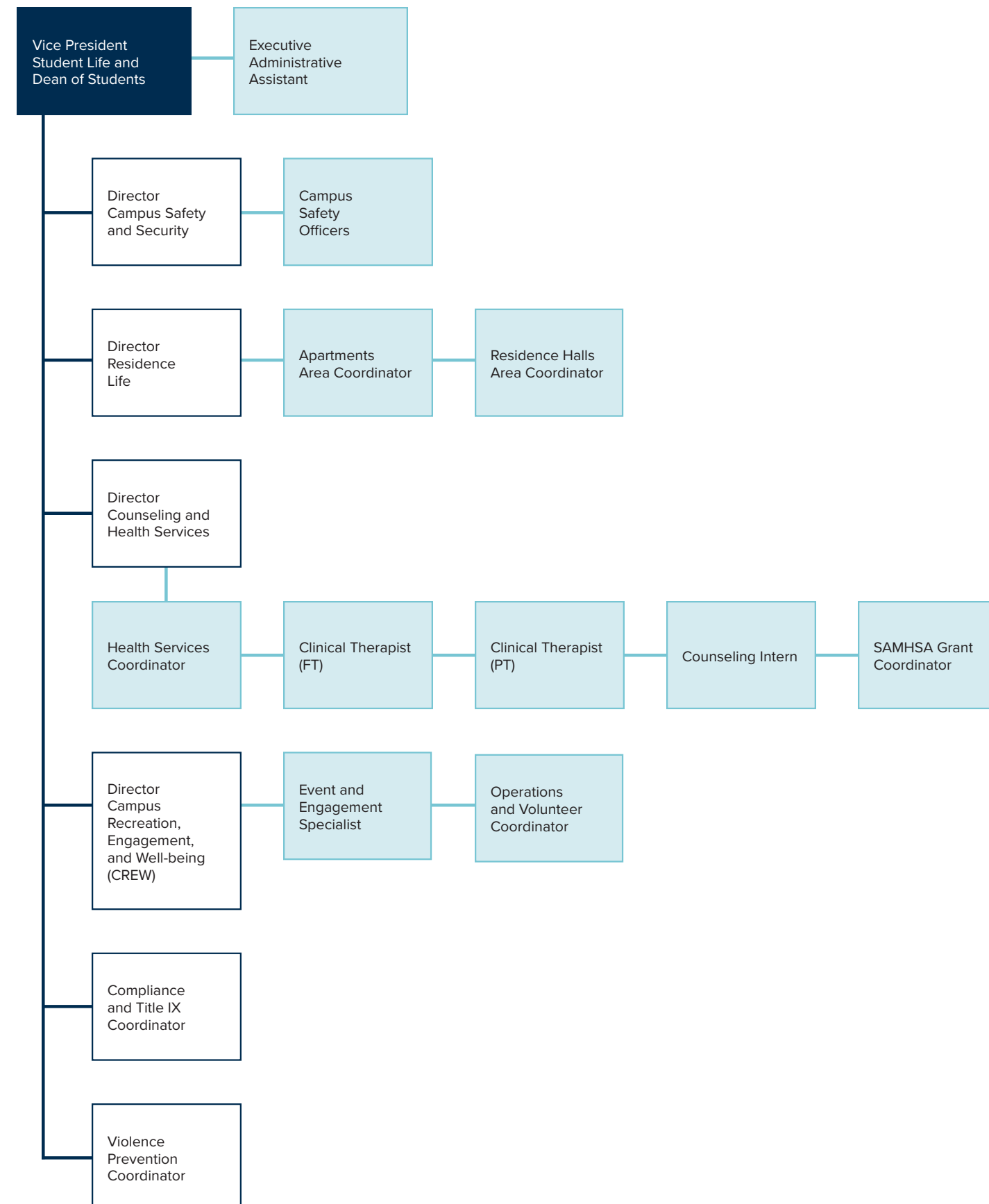
Student Perspective

“Some of the insights and resources I picked up along the way turned out to be exactly what I needed, even if I didn’t realize it at the time. [The department’s resources] helped me grow the confidence to speak up for myself, define my boundaries, and hold onto what was right.” ✓

—Anonymous student



Student Life Division Organizational Chart



140

hours of training for campus offices and community partners

11

agencies involved

21

violence prevention events and initiatives



Service Saturdays unite students as they volunteer alongside our neighbors, reflecting the university's commitment to service and the common good.



A record number of graduating seniors came together with university leadership for the December and May Senior Soirées with the President — a beloved pre-graduation tradition celebrating student growth, achievement, and success.



At the annual President's Holiday Dinner, faculty and staff serve students a festive, elegant meal—celebrating community and holiday spirit via a cherished campus tradition.



Viterbo Prom 2025



Students from across campus gathered in style for the third-annual Viterbo Prom—a student-led celebration of community and V-Hawk spirit.



Students show off their V-Hawks at this year's newly revamped student recognition awards, "The VICS."



VITERBO

**STUDENT
LIFE**

viterbo.edu/student-life-division