

MAPLEWOOD MANSION LEARNING LAB:  
MUTUALLY-BENEFICIAL OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Carla Earhart, Professor of Residential Property Management  
Ronald Harrington, Graduate Assistant, Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab  
David Martin, Manager, Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab  
Sotiris Hji-Avgoustis, Professor and Department Chair

Department of Management, Ball State University, Muncie IN

**Introduction:** Maplewood Mansion is one of the original Ball Family homes, located in the Minnetrista Boulevard Historic District of Muncie, Indiana, less than two miles from the Ball State University campus. Through a partnership established in 2017 between Ball State University, Ball Brothers Foundation, and Indiana University School of Medicine, Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab was established with these goals in mind:

- To provide short-term housing for medical students completing their educational requirements at Ball Memorial Hospital;
- To provide these medical students with an exceptional Muncie experience that encourages them to return to the area after graduation to live and work;
- To provide immersive learning experiences for Ball State University students.

**Purpose of Presentation:** In this interactive session, presenters will share more detail about learning opportunities created through Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab, as well as the challenges involved. It is our desire to inspire faculty at other universities to create similar learning opportunities in their housing-related classes.

**Project Accomplishments:** To provide faculty with resources related to this project, an online site was created as a repository of information. Information included the history of Maplewood Mansion, links to educational resources, and space for faculty to share their involvement in teaching, research, and service activities through Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab.

Specific accomplishments of advanced Residential Property Management classes included identification, research, development, and/or implementation of these activities:

- Mission/Vision/Values statement
- Social media sites
- Logo
- Career apparel for student staff
- Resident handbook
- Forms and procedures
- Updates to common spaces
- Welcome gifts for residents
- Inventory of furnishings
- Bike share program
- Rotating student leadership roles
- Responding to fictitious “on call” situations

In addition to the work accomplished by the advanced RPM students, other Ball State University students have been involved in Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab. Introductory RPM students use the site for job shadowing experiences, students in the RPM maintenance class use the site for property-related field experiences, and a capstone class in the Management Department used the site for a SWOT analysis. Both RPM students and Hospitality/Food Management students use Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab as an internship site, and students in the HFM Catering class assist with special events held at Maplewood Mansion.

**Project Challenges:** Although a great deal has been accomplished in a very short time through Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab, a variety of challenges exist. Teaching that incorporates this “applied” methodology rather than traditional lecture and assessment is time-consuming and requires faculty to be more responsive to the educational needs of the students and the day-to-day needs of the site; some faculty have been reluctant to shift to this mode of teaching. The distance from campus, resulting in the need for both students and faculty to often drive to Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab, has been a scheduling challenge and a transportation challenge. Another challenge has been the need to provide learning opportunities for students without interrupting the daily activities of Maplewood residents. And an ongoing challenge of Maplewood Mansion Learning Lab is the cost of operations and upkeep, especially for a historic building.

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