



## **THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

You may reside in University housing only if you are properly registered and in good academic, financial, and disciplinary standing with the University. Single incoming full-time undergraduate students must be registered for at least 12 hours of academic credit in the spring or fall semester. Single freshmen students are required to live in University housing or at home with parents or guardians. Requests for exception may be made to Housing Assignment Services.

## **APPLICATION PERIODS**

Under the Student Housing Agreement, you may request housing for any of the following periods: the full academic year (fall and spring semesters and Winter Session) or spring semester only.

## **DEPOSITS**

To apply for housing for the full academic year or spring semester, submit a completed housing application (and a housing deposit) according to the application instructions. All new students, including freshmen, transfers, and exchange students, pay a \$100 deposit. These fees are credited towards your first semester's room charge.

## **THE ASSIGNMENT PROCESS**

As an incoming freshman or returning student, you are guaranteed University housing if you meet the requirements for application and you submit an application by the appropriate deadline date. If you miss the deadline, you will not be guaranteed housing but may be housed if space permits. On-campus housing is available for transfer students, although demand is often greater than space available to them.

## **HOUSING PREFERENCES**

After you submit an application and pay the housing deposit, you will need to submit your housing preferences. Your preferences are used in making assignments, but you are not guaranteed a specific location, room type, or roommate. Assignments are based upon the information you provide on your housing application and preference form in keeping with the University's prioritization practices (see the *Living Here* guide).

## **PERIOD OF ASSIGNMENT**

Normally, room assignments are binding for the full academic year, but you may request a room change to another space in the residence halls or the Christiana Towers apartments.

## **EXTENDED HOUSING**

As an incoming freshman student, you may be assigned to extended housing if other spaces are filled when your application is considered for assignment, even if your application is received prior to the deadline. Freshman housing assignments are made by a computerized random process for students whose applications are postmarked by May 1. Extended housing rooms are usually double rooms furnished for three students. In the event that you are assigned to extended housing, you may move to a permanent space as cancellations occur, usually during the fall semester. Each student in extended housing will receive a 25 percent rebate on housing costs for each full week of residence until a permanent space is offered. Rebates are offered only during the fall semester, as sufficient spaces are available for spring semester to accommodate students in extended housing.

## **ROOM ASSIGNMENT PHILOSOPHY**

Residence halls and on-campus apartments provide shelter for a diverse population of students representing different nationalities, races, sexual orientations, and cultural and religious backgrounds. The University strives to promote a campus community where no one feels excluded. Consequently, the room assignment process was developed to encourage diverse, inclusive communities.

## **OCCUPANCY**

Each year, the Official Student Handbook includes an updated calendar specifying opening and closing dates for residence halls and the Christiana Towers apartments, as well as recess periods for the coming academic year. These dates define the occupancy periods included in your Student Housing Agreement for the year.

## **BREAK/RECESS PERIODS**

The following policies apply to room/apartment occupancy during recess periods:

All residence halls, except specifically designated Independence Complex buildings and the Christiana Towers apartments, are closed to occupants during recess periods (Thanksgiving, December break, Spring break). The Christiana Towers apartments and specifically designated Independence Complex buildings are open to occupants during recess periods. If you remain in your room/apartment during any or all of the recess periods, follow posted registration procedures. A fee is charged to students living in open buildings during recess periods, except in the Christiana Towers apartments.

## **ROOM CHANGES**

To move from one room to another, you will need authorization from Housing Assignment Services staff. Room changes must be authorized in advance by Housing Assignment Services staff after in-building room changes at the beginning of the semester. The signature of a Residence Life staff member is also required after the open room change period of each semester.

After classes begin each semester, a specific room-change period will be announced by Housing Assignment Services. Room changes are subject to the following policies:

- If you initiate the room change, you will be required to move.
- Housing Assignment Services will not notify roommates about room changes.
- A \$20 fee is charged for all room changes, except moves from extended housing to a permanent space.
- If you move or are moved to a space with a different rate, your room charges for the semester or session will be adjusted to reflect the length of time spent in each assigned space. A charge or credit will be added to your student account.
- Housing Assignment Services staff must authorize room changes in advance.

### University-Initiated Room Changes

The University can make room changes or reassignments under the following circumstances:

- If a living unit, floor, or larger unit needs to be closed for health or safety reasons or converted to serve another purpose that will benefit the University over the longer term.
- At times when student behavior in a section of a residence hall is judged to be disruptive to the community, all or some students may be relocated to bring order.
- If you fail to comply with any provision, policy, rule or regulation.
- If you are a resident of special-purpose housing--such as Special Interest Housing or an alcohol-free residence hall--and you fail to satisfy the requirements of group membership, you may be assigned to a vacant space elsewhere.

### **Note: You will not be released from your Student Housing Agreement in this situation.**

- If your roommate cancels his or her housing assignment, you may be reassigned to make sure that all rooms house the maximum number of roommate pairs.

**Note: You will receive at least 24-hour advance notice of any reassignment during the academic year.**



## RETURNING STUDENT ROOMMATE CHARACTERISTICS QUESTIONNAIRE

### A. Which statement best describes you?

1. I am a morning person and prefer to live with a morning person.
2. I am a morning person and can live with a night person.
3. I am a night person and prefer to live with a night person.
4. I am a night person but can live with a morning person.

**Tell me more:** Late nights quickly become part of the college routine. 8:00 a.m. classes are also a college reality. Adequate and consistent sleep increase both memory retention and recall. Make sure you communicate with your roommate about your weekly schedule. If you have an early class on Friday, you don't want your roommate to build a late Thursday night into the weekly routine. It is virtually impossible to "come in quietly" at 3:00 a.m., so realize that you are waking up your roommate each time this occurs. It will take some time for you to get in sync with another person's sleep patterns, so it is important to communicate early and often about each other's needs. A major part of your freshman year should be the development of your ability to demonstrate responsibility for yourself. With that in mind, it is important that you understand that when your roommate is inconsiderate of your sleep needs, you have the responsibility to discuss your concerns directly with her. Should you fail in that responsibility, you have contributed to the overall problem.

### B. Which statement best describes your preference of study environment in your room?

1. I prefer a study environment that is very quiet.
2. I prefer a study environment with some noise (e.g., music, TV, etc.) in the background.
3. I am able to study regardless of the noise level.
4. I must have some level of noise in order to study.

**Tell me more:** Earphones are a fantastic invention. If you need noise, you can have it without infringing on someone else. You should not have to escape your room in order to have a place to study. Nor should your room become a 24 hour quiet sanctuary. In this area, much like so many others, general consideration, communication of needs, and flexibility are key. Most students make too many assumptions that their roommate is fine with noise simply because they have not said otherwise. Conflicts in this area are generally the result of poorly communicated needs. You have the responsibility to be flexible when someone requests quiet time for study AND the responsibility to be reasonable with your need for quiet. All residence hall students engage in a process of both creating and actualizing community expectations. As a member of a community of approximately 40 people, you need to contribute to creating the type of community that is both accommodating of the social needs as well as the academic needs, You will take part in a Community Agreement process during which you will shape group expectations about noise levels.

### C. How do you feel about your roommate's significant other frequently spending time in your room?

1. I would usually be comfortable in this situation.
2. I would usually agree if I didn't plan to be there.

3. Only if my roommate asked and I agreed.
4. I would agree if the significant other was not spending the night.
5. I would not be comfortable in this situation.

**Tell me more:** Roommate guests, primarily those of a romantic nature can become especially problematic in living situations regardless of sexual orientation. Residence hall rooms are limited in size and no one appreciates having to share space with someone else's significant other. Overnight stays by guests are the leading cause of roommate tension in the residence halls. Although policies do not limit the number of hours a guest can stay or the type of guest a student chooses to host, it is expected that all roommates agree about who is allowed in the room and the duration of a guest's stay. Even with roommate agreement, guests are not allowed to stay longer than three consecutive nights. Hosts are responsible for all actions of guests and must make sure that guests do not infringe upon community expectations.

**D. How do you feel about groups of people socializing in your room?**

1. This would be fine with me except when I am trying to sleep or study in my room.
2. This would be fine occasionally.
3. I would be okay only if I didn't plan to be there.
4. I would expect to find privacy in my room most of the time.

**Tell me more:** While it can be enjoyable at times to be living in a highly social room, all floor communities eventually develop patterns in which certain rooms are the most common hang-out point for groups of students. Keeping your door open and being open to meeting new people is important, but learn how to set some parameters about your needs for privacy and others' use of your personal property. Make sure that you and your roommate see eye to eye on this issue. If you enjoy having a constant crowd and stream of activity around your room, you must make sure that you continually check with all members of the community to determine if your room is a source of disruption. If you don't enjoy having this stream of activity in or around your living area, it can be difficult to go against the crowd. Make sure you take a step back to examine how others influence you and make sure you are comfortable with the degree of influence. Every member of the floor is responsible to create and live by community standards even when challenging steps have to be taken.

**E. Which statement best describes your standards for the condition of your room?**

1. I like my room to be clean almost always.
2. I like my room to be generally neat, but I am willing to put up with a little clutter from time to time.
3. It does not bother me if my room is cluttered and disorganized.

**Tell me more:** Your room will be clean when you enter it for the first time, but from that point on, it is up to you and your roommate to determine your living conditions. Most people can handle their own mess, but find others' messes annoying. In general, if you keep your clothes put away, take out your trash, there is usually not an issue. It is helpful to establish individual cleaning responsibilities for your room. For example, one person can handle sweeping or vacuuming each

week while the other handles the trash. If you are someone who is comfortable living in a more chaotic, messy environment, make sure you periodically ask your roommate if she/he is OK with the conditions in the room. Don't assume that your roommate will say something if bothered. As with sleep and study time, this area requires that you accommodate reasonable requests of your roommate and that you are reasonable in your need for cleanliness.

**F. How would you feel about your roommate borrowing or sharing your personal belongings?**

1. I would not mind at all.
2. I would not mind sharing things like TVs, stereos, etc. but would mind sharing personal items like clothing.
3. I would not mind if I had been asked and had given my permission.
4. I would not use other people's things and expect others not to use mine.

**Tell me more:** Everyone defines "personal" as something different. Roommates generally don't want to come off as rude or territorial and thus fail to communicate that some personal items are completely off limits. It is strongly suggested that each roommate communicates which items are for shared use, items that guests can use, and items that should not be handled by anyone but the owner. We also suggest that you password protect your keyboard on your computer. Many problems arise each year when computers are left unprotected.

**G. Residence halls are composed of a wide variety of individuals of different social identities (nationalities, races, sexual orientations, socio economic groups, cultural, and religious backgrounds). Your community members have a multitude of characteristics and values. How do you feel about living on this type of environment?**

1. It's really exciting!
2. I like it.
3. I can tolerate it.
4. I'm not really comfortable with some or all of these differences.

**Tell me more:** You are expected to learn, grow, and change as a result of your college experience. Exposure to different ways of being and thinking are some of the best ways to closely examine yourself. While it is very beneficial to actively seek out and learn from those who are different than you, it is also understood that everyone has a different level of experience and openness to differences, especially differences in race, religion, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. The Residence Life staff is highly committed to helping students learn and helping students challenge themselves to explore differences. You should examine and explore how your social identity influences the way you view the world. You should also determine the specific areas of social identity where you have the least exposure and knowledge so that you can establish a sense of what you need to learn in this area while you are in the college environment. If you have the good fortune to live with someone whose social identity is in an area where you lack exposure, please take advantage of this powerful learning opportunity. The Residence Life and the Housing

Assignment Services staff do not consider room change requests based on a difference in race, religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation to be emergency in nature.

**H. The University prohibits the use of alcohol when in violation of state law; however, your attitude on alcohol use is important. How would you describe your attitude toward the use of alcohol?**

1. Very approving of its use.
2. Accepting, if it is used occasionally.
3. Tolerant, if it is not used in my presence.
4. I do not tolerate its use.

**Tell me more:** Both you and your roommate are responsible for what happens in your room. If alcohol is present and you are each underage, you will both face judicial action. Excessive alcohol use on or off campus virtually guarantees roommate conflict. Coming home intoxicated is rarely something that occurs without disruption and often results in some fairly inconsiderate actions. If your roommate is engaging in alcohol use in a manner that is disruptive to you, do not ignore it in hope that it will go away. This is an issue that must be confronted early before the roommate relationship is damaged beyond repair. Those who frequently disrupt the community with alcohol related issues not only damage the environment for the whole floor, but place themselves in situations that have a high potential for harm. If you observe a community member in need of assistance, please do all you can to assist and alert the staff so that help can be obtained.

**I. I see my room as a place to be used primarily for:**

1. Studying
2. Socializing
3. Quiet, sleep, and relaxation
4. Playing (music, TV, computer games, video games)

**Tell me more:** Some students see their room as the primary study sanctuary. Other students see the room as purely a place to socialize and relax. Chances are that these two types will be living together. Up front, early communication of how each person expects the room to be used can eliminate a great deal of frustration. If you are the type of person who invests 30 hours a week into video games, chances are that you are driving your roommate out (unless that person happens to be player #2). The most important thing to keep in mind in this area is that balance is best. Your room should be a place where all the listed options are possible.

**J. In dealing with conflicts:**

1. I am able to clearly express my feelings and concerns.
2. I will generally express my concerns in a joking fashion so that the other person gets the hint.
3. I usually wait until I am really annoyed or angry.
4. I am not comfortable asserting myself in conflict.

**Tell me more:** Failures to assert or ineffective assertiveness techniques will contribute greatly to every possible roommate problem. Most students believe that they are both effective problem solvers and effective communicators in conflict. The reality is that almost everyone could improve in expressing themselves in conflict and negotiation. If you are the type to “drop hints” or to make an off-handed remark or joke about things that bother you, don't expect the other person to change. It is incredibly rare that someone will hear and understand your concerns without you clearly expressing them. It is fully expected that you will experience conflict. In fact, negotiating conflict is something you should encounter enough so that you become skilled by the end of your college career. If you are concerned that you may have potential for conflict with your roommate, we suggest that you make every effort to contact this person even before you arrive on campus so that you can negotiate boundaries. If you are experiencing frustration in this area after move-in, you can work with your Resident Assistant or Hall Director to develop a strategy to express yourself to your roommate. The Residence Life staff can also act as impartial mediators in conflict situations. Please note that avoidance of conflict is both a guarantee of continued problems and will limit your success later in life. Take advantage of the college experience to become a conflict expert. It is also important that you understand how your own social identity (race, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religion) can influence how you and your fellow community members respond to conflict. Take the time to get to know all community members so that conflict can be navigated smoothly.