Housing Selection for Fall 2021

Kim Proulx, Director of Housing Services

The time of year is quickly approaching when current residents who will be living on campus next year will have the opportunity to choose their future roommates and housing assignment. Referred to by our department as “Housing Selection”, this is one of the largest processes managed by our office with up to 9,000 students participating over the course of several weeks. This includes students in Learning Communities, student athletes, Honors students, and students in various other interest based communities. Although we do work with some students individually on their housing assignment, it is likely that your student has some level of participation in this process.

This past year has been so unusual and atypical for most of our housing related processes. We understand that many students are still trying to plan for the fall 2021 semester, but that it can be challenging to do so without knowing what the summer months will bring in regards to COVID-related policies.

We are moving forward with plans for fall 2021 to be at full housing capacity. As the spring and summer months progress, we will make necessary adjustments based on the health and status of the state. We will always have your student’s best interests in mind and will communicate updates as early as possible.

On February 8 we sent out an email to students who currently live on campus and who have applied for fall 2021 informing them of an updated housing selection schedule. This decision was based off of responses to a survey that students completed, indicating their preference for an earlier or later selection schedule. We are updating our website information and timelines for the selection process and will be communicating with students in March regarding their status for the process.

We have a variety of resources for students to review in advance of this process, including video tutorials, infographics, and floorplans and in person opportunities to meet with staff and also tour certain residence hall areas of campus. Please encourage your student to follow us on social media platforms, and do so yourself if you are interested in seeing our reminders and fun facts!

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It may be helpful for you to discuss your student’s plans and expectations with them for the upcoming year. Important factors to consider are cost, location of campus, how many roommates they plan to have, etc. Students get very excited for this process but we find it can also be stressful for them. Our staff are available via email, phone, and social media and in person to answer any questions your student might have and to try to guide them through the process.

If discussions with your student turn to the option of living off campus, please be sure to review with them the housing cancellation deadlines and policies. We send email reminders to students to help them plan accordingly if they will be living off campus so that they can notify us and avoid fees. This year, students can cancel fall housing until July 31 with no fee. Beginning August 1, the fee will be $500 for any student that cancels their fall housing.

We are here to help make this process for your student be as user friendly and low stress as possible, so please encourage your student to contact us with any questions. Don’t hesitate to reach out yourself if you are looking for information!

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UConn Promise
We are One UConn.

Now more than ever, we must embrace and support the diversity of our community. In making this promise, I commit to do my part to protect the health and safety of myself and those around me. I will always seek to learn and develop myself while respecting the needs of others.

I will practice compassion, understanding, and respect. In making this promise, I acknowledge the harm of hateful and racist behaviors that discriminate against others. I stand aligned with our communities who have experienced greater vulnerabilities to mistreatment during COVID-19.

For more information about the UConn Promise, please visit: https://reopen.uconn.edu/uconn-promise/
Rising Sophomore Students and the Housing Selection Process

Kim Proulx, Director of Housing Services

Let’s face it - it has been a rough 12 months for our current freshman students. Finishing their senior year in high school while a global pandemic was unfolding; trying to prepare for their first year at college without participating in anything in person; and finally, starting their first collegiate year either living at home or participating in almost all remote learning courses while living on campus with only a few thousand of their peers. Someday, these will be stories your students tell their children and grandchildren! But right now, those of us working at higher education institutions recognize what these students are missing out on and how they are feeling about their freshman year.

Your students are brave, strong, and resilient. They have persevered during this time and have carried on with their freshman year, with little complaint, ask for help or “woe is me” attitude. These are students that will be role models for years to come in all they have learned and the challenges they have overcome.

We hope to offer some small token of appreciation and recognition of this by offering a process for these rising sophomores that is different from our typical processes. The housing selection process for the fall 2021 semester is approaching, and while students typically are excited about the prospect of selecting housing in a new area with a friend or peer, we know that it has been difficult for many students to meet and interact with others and that this process could inadvertently be causing your student stress. In an effort to relieve this stress we plan to offer the rising sophomore class a few different options, and provide an option for a “do over” year in regards to housing and roommate selection.

Rising sophomore students will be able to inform us if they would prefer to participate in the online selection process with all other students eligible for fall 2021, or if they would like to be assigned and matched with a roommate. The application will be available in their MyHousing accounts from March 1 - 14.

Roommate matching and assigning students is a process typically reserved for new incoming students. We use the answers from housing applications to match students on their living preferences to hopefully identify compatible living styles. As many rising sophomores did not have the chance to live with another student this year and may not know how to identify a compatible roommate, we will offer to do this for them if they would rather forego participation in the selection process. More information is available at: https://reslife.uconn.edu/continuing-placement-process/

Current freshman students will receive information from our office with more details about this process and what they should do to inform us of their choice. There is no wrong answer and either preference will still allow your student to identify areas of preference and to guide them toward a successful sophomore year living experience. Please encourage your student to reach out to us with any questions, concerns or feedback.

Find us on Social Media!

www.facebook.com/UConnResLife

@UConnResLife on Twitter and Instagram

We encourage all residents to use #LiveonandLearn to showcase the benefits of living on campus!
What is a Residential Learning Model?

 Prepaped by the Residential Learning Model (RLM) Committee:

 Amy Crim, Director of Residence Education and Chair of RLM Committee, Hall Directors Jeff Benike, Steph Boykin, Joseph Revander, Veronica Roberts and Housing Specialist Randy Shannon

We believe that students develop as people through living in the residence halls and participating in their community. Residential Life staff utilizes a curricular approach in the residence halls called the Residential Learning Model, or RLM. The RLM is the roadmap the RA staff uses to engage with students through a variety of different strategies including one on one conversations, bulletin boards, email notifications, community meetings and community activities. Each of these strategies can be focused on a different learning goal for students to achieve through their engagement.

Our Learning Goals are:

• **Personal Success:** Students will become personally successful by exploring their identities, values and wellness.

• **Interpersonal Competence:** Students will become interpersonally competent by communicating effectively, navigating relationships and developing a sense of responsibility to others.

• **Intellectual Engagement:** Students will become intellectually engaged by thinking critically, making decisions and developing intercultural perspective.

This spring, our primary goal is to create positive, supportive and meaningful connections with and among residents. These are some examples of how we are achieving this:

1. Black History/Black Excellence Bulletin Board for February; Sustainability themed Bulletin Board in March (Interpersonal Competence)

2. New to Campus Resident Introduction meeting with the Hall Director and a one-on-one conversation with the RA to learn about more about the campus and each other within the first week on campus for residents who joined us in January. (Personal Success)

3. RAs are having conversations one-on-one with residents about their experiences throughout the semester. These Resident Conversations are focused on the well-being of the student and focusing on what the needs and wants of the individual student are. (Interpersonal Competence)

4. Table Talk conversations will occur a few times this semester. These are facilitated conversations among residents about a variety of topics selected by the RA. Some examples of topics include Black History Month, Socioeconomic Status, or Weight Discrimination. These conversations are new to the RLM this semester and are an opportunity for students to learn more about themselves and others. (Intellectual Engagement)

5. Community Activities: These are small, engaging opportunities for RAs to interact with their residents ranging from grabbing dinner, attending an on campus event or a virtual Netflix watch party. These could be individual or small groups depending on the needs of the community and occur a few times a month.

These opportunities for connections with others while learning more about themselves are available for all of our residential students if they choose to engage. Please encourage your students to take advantage of all living on campus has to offer!
Who are our Resident Assistants and how they can assist your student?

Amy Joy Crim, Director of Residence Education

We hire the Resident Assistant (RA) staff we believe will serve as outstanding role models to their residents while providing an inclusive community. Our RAs are peer undergraduate students who have demonstrated successful living on campus. During the application process our RAs undergo a rigorous screening process which includes maintaining a 2.5 GPA, a positive conduct record and demonstrated interpersonal competencies during the individual interview process. Our RAs are hired based on these credentials and we are proud to have them on our team. These staff frequently display care of others, show support for Residential Life and University policies, provide support through relationships with their residents and providing information as needed. The list of accomplishments and competencies could go on and on but I think you get the picture of the type of people RAs are. They work hard and care deeply about their communities.

This position has proven to be additionally challenging this academic year due to COVID-19. While our RA staff have had to figure out how to navigate campus with COVID as students, they have also had to develop additional strategies to utilize while working with their community. They know more about the quarantine process, surveillance testing, and the Temporary Health and Safety Procedures than the average student and share this information daily. I have a group of RAs that meets regularly for me to hear staff concerns and challenges in the position. In our meeting last week, their primary concern is how to help their residents to engage with others and understand the importance of connection. This year, the face-to-face in-person contact has dropped significantly. When your student is asked by their RA how they are doing, I hope they are being honest and asking for what they need. A chance meeting in the hallway could be a great opportunity for your student to ask to meet with their RA if they have questions or concerns. Our team only knows there is a concern if they are told or it is shared with them. Please encourage your student if they are struggling to reach out to their RA or their Hall Director if necessary. The staff is here to help and support in any way they can but they need to know that the need exists.

The uKindness website has some amazing opportunities for students to connect including participating in the Jonathan’s Challenge. Check it out! uKindness UConn - Social Distancing Doesn’t Mean Social Isolation

Please encourage your student to connect with us if they have questions or have concerns, we are here to help when needed!
Jonathan’s Challenge

Jonathan is inviting your student to join in on the wide range of activities happening across the University. By opting into this challenge your student can attend/participate in any of the JC identified events and begin gathering points for the challenge. These challenge points lead to rewards and gaining more points leads to greater rewards. Once your student joins, challenge points will be automatically tracked.

Please visit https://kindness.studentaffairs.uconn.edu/jonathans-challenge/ for more information.

We are here for you and your students if you have any questions!

Contact Information

Department of Residential Life
Whitney Hall, ground floor
(860) 486-2926
livingoncampus@uconn.edu
https://reslife.uconn.edu

Find us on Social Media!

www.facebook.com/UConnResLife
@UConnResLife on Twitter and Instagram

We encourage all residents to use #LiveonandLearn to showcase the benefits of living on campus!