

To the Staff and Partners in Resident Education & Housing Services:

Michigan State University's Council of Racial and Ethnic Students & Council of Progressive Students (CORES & COPS) would like to voice our joint concerns of the status of Resident Education & Housing Services (REHS). MSU's REHS have made many strides in the past few years to accommodate the student populations we represent but we would like to take this opportunity to explicitly express our concerns as of November 24th 2015.

1. Resident Assistant Hiring Process

- The current hiring process of REHS for Resident Assistants does not align with the university's focus on interculturalism. The hiring process is biased in nature and systematically oppressive towards marginalized student populations on campus. The people who are in charge of hiring are able to biasly score candidates with internalized biases to which people who have already been hired by REHS hold. This creates a systematic cycle of biases that cannot be fixed by simply filling quotas.

2. Role of Resident Assistants

- Resident Assistants' are tasked with the safety and security of residents in the buildings that they work and live. Whereas they should be concerned with the health and wellness of residents, the emotional intelligence of residents, and the academic growth of students and staff members. The role of a Resident Assistant should be expanded to include interculturalism as larger pillar in the continual training process. Interculturalism cannot be said as the Intercultural Aides role because they come out of the Office of Cultural & Academic Transitions.

3. REHS Does Not Properly Account For The Support Of Student Staff

- Many of Resident Assistants fear termination will be the consequence of speaking out about things they have a passion for. It is the job of the entire department to support student staff but in reality their expectations of student staff far exceed what is manageable for an undergraduate student. The current structure of REHS also allows for people to step into advisory positions that simply are not trained on how to support students in a positively impactful way.

4. Bias Incidents In The Residence Halls

- Incidents of bias are extremely prevalent in the Residence Halls and the solution is not just reporting the incident but to ensure that the person whom the bias was committed against feels supported. There must be intercultural programing that is being tasked to the Resident Assistants and not just Intercultural Aides. It should be the job of the Resident Assistant to support their community and prevent instances of bias from occurring.

5. Reporting Incidents Of Bias That Occur In The Residence Halls

- The process of reporting incidents of bias is for the most part knowledge keep away. REHS staff does a great job at understanding the procedure but we are not confident that the correct amount of discretion is used with every incident unilaterally. We have seen all too often that student do not understand how to file a claim of bias of that it is even possible to do so.

6. International Housing Between Semesters

- Many of our international students have no place to go during winter closing because where they were placed by the housing office in buildings that are closed between semesters. Although there is housing available for students in the Kellogg Center it comes at a great financial burden to residents.

We would like to open these concerns for collaborative conversation in order to work towards creating a more inclusive and accepting Michigan State University.

Sincerely,

CORES & COPS of Michigan State University