Sign-up Edition

view
for parents of students in
CAMPUS LIVING SERVICES
AND RESIDENCE LIFE

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
IT’S ALL ABOUT THE NUMBERS

Sometimes there is a misperception that the number of years a student is in college matches up to their class standing (or grade level) as it did in high school. Unlike high school, in college not all students take a full load of classes each semester. They also have the ability to drop a class part-way into the semester. The number of credits a student has successfully completed determines his/her college class standing: Freshmen 0-27; Sophomores 28-55; Juniors 56-87; Seniors 88+.

Michigan State University requires that students must live on campus their first year. Research has shown that students who live on campus at least two years have higher GPAs on average, are more likely to graduate in four years and have greater connections to the MSU experience. Living on campus for four years can significantly decrease the overall cost of college by eliminating the costs associated with a fifth or sixth year.

DOLLARS AND $ENSE

New Students who live on campus pay a set rate for everything associated with their housing unlike off campus where bills vary each month for water, electric, gas – even cable and Internet rates keep changing. Living on campus makes budgeting easy for students getting a first taste of independence from home.

HOUSING FLEXIBILITY

Students who will only be on campus for one semester prior to graduation, participate in a study abroad program or an out-of-town internship can find flexible housing on campus, where their housing contract can be cancelled for these reasons. Students who are forced to drop to part-time class status or withdraw from the University due to an unexpected financial hardship will not be bound to their contract. Living on campus also provides flexibility in the sense that if students sign up to live with someone and then have a falling out, they may change to another room or select another roommate. This is not the case off campus.
TRANSITIONS
by Amy Franklin-Craft, Associate Director of Campus Living Services and Residence Life

College is a time of great transitions. Students, often for the first time in their lives, are making decisions independently and learning to navigate the consequences of their choices. The University requires that all incoming students take part in two learning opportunities designed to help them better understand their attitudes and values about alcohol use and engagement in sexual relationships. The two programs required of all incoming first-year students are e-CHUG, and the Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence workshop.

E-CHUG is an anonymous, interactive Web survey that allows college and university students to enter information about their drinking patterns and receive feedback about their use of alcohol. The assessment is self-guided. Although it requires no face-to-face contact time with a counselor or administrator, Residence Life staff often engage students in reflective conversations about what they have learned about themselves after taking the survey.

When students access e-CHUG, they are prompted to enter information about themselves. After all requested information has been entered, students submit the form. E-CHUG calculates a number of variables and compares student responses to national and local college norms. The students then receive personalized feedback and useful information about:

- Calorie intake
- Peak blood-alcohol concentration
- Income spent on alcohol
- Norm comparisons
- Tolerance levels
- Genetic risk score
- Personal results and explanations
- Referral information

The Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence Workshop is a required two-hour workshop facilitated by an undergraduate man and woman. It explores the definitions of sexual assault, rape and relationship violence, and offers ways in which both men and women can actively prevent sexual violence from happening to themselves, their friends and their peers. Workshop participants will interact in college life scenarios in both mixed-gender and separate male and female groups. The goals of the program are to: 1) educate students about the facilities and resources available on campus and in East Lansing; 2) empower students to become active in the prevention of sexual assault and relationship violence; 3) educate both men and women to understand that they each share the responsibility to prevent sexual violence and create a safe community.

Both e-CHUG and the Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence Workshop are outstanding educational opportunities offered by the University to each of our students. In addition, the Residence Life staff continually offer students reflective opportunities to learn about themselves. Most recently, the entire Residence Life staff has been trained to understand warning signs of self-harm and address students who may be considering self-harm.

Students are now entering the homestretch of the semester. They may be experiencing a variety of issues, including anxieties about final exams, concerns about leaving for the semester or/and returning home, financial issues, etc. Often, students will look to staff for assistance. Other times, staff members will see or hear about concerning student behaviors. Sometimes though, students find themselves trying to manage troubling issues all by themselves. If you see or hear things from your student that concern you, please contact the resident director of the hall in which your student lives. We encourage you to also contact our central number at 517-353-3780 and ask to be transferred the appropriate hall director.
ROOMMATE MATCHING APPLICATION AVAILABLE

New this fall, MSU has partnered with RoomSync, a Facebook-based application that allows students to find potential roommates based on lifestyle criteria such as messy versus neat and late-night people versus early-morning risers. Students can search for others with similar criteria selections and then contact them through Facebook to explore the option of living together for next year. This service will be available prior to the start of housing sign-up.

MSU CAR SHARING

MSU has partnered with Zipcar to promote carpooling and the use of mass transit. The program, which officially begins in January, will put six cars on campus for students, faculty and staff to reserve and use. MSU will be giving special membership rates to students, faculty and staff. Reservations start at $8 an hour or $66 a day and include gas, insurance and up to 180 miles per day. More information about this program can be found at www.sustainability.msu.edu or www.zipcar.com.

“WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH MY LIFE?”

by Eduardo Olivo, Assistant Director of Campus Living Services and Residence Life

“Is college really right for me?”

“I have no idea what I want to major in.”

“Man, college life is really different than it was when I was a freshman.”

Sound familiar? These thoughts and more are common to second-year students, struggling to find their way to campus as they prepare to make their mark in life.

In their second year, students may enter what has been called the “sophomore slump.” During their first year at MSU, students get intentional support and consistent attention through first-year experience programs and campus neighborhood services. In their second year, if the same level of resources and support are not available, sophomores may find themselves vulnerable, alone, and in some cases, even more lost than ever before. This “slump” can affect their ability to be successful at MSU.

According to Sara Lipka, author of “After the Freshman Bubble Pops,” the Consortium for Student Retention Date Exchange reported that while 80.6 percent of freshmen enrolled in 2003 at 440 four-year institutions as sophomores, the following year only 70.7 percent of those students remained enrolled as juniors at the same institution one year later. Research done by the US Department of Education has demonstrated that “among all students who drop out of college, about two-thirds as many do so in their second year as in the first year.”

In Lipka’s article, one of the students suggested,
“I think the sophomore slump is a very real thing – I see a lot of my friends going through it, and I imagine a lot of it has to do with picking majors... it’s particularly difficult to stay as excited as you were as a freshman.” This increased pressure can manifest itself in numerous ways. Add to it changes in friendship groups and other social challenges, and it is easy to see how sophomores can end up disenchanted, dissatisfied and stressed.

We believe that, through the neighborhood engagement centers being added throughout campus, we are helping our sophomore students increase academic performance, improve and enhance relationship development, explore careers and vocations, and ultimately, help them stay in college until they graduate.

We have a responsibility to create a residential experience that minimizes “slumping.” We provide second-year students with a residential program that supports their wants and needs. We are implementing innovative programs and services that help them achieve their goals. Second-year career and academic advising, intercultural skills, leadership tracks and meaningful connections with faculty, and academic and student affairs staff are just some of the examples of the intentional experiences that second-year students who take advantage of neighborhood services are exposed to on a regular basis.

Campus Living Services and Residence Life, and a plethora of academic and student support units on campus are joining forces to develop a holistic program designed to help second-year students succeed academically, professionally and personally. We believe we are making an impact on the personal and academic experiences of all of our students.

**EAT LOCAL AT STATE**

Culinary Services is committed to providing local and regional foods at the residential dining halls and our retail locations. Our 20 Sparty’s locations also sell local foods at their stores, from MSU Bakers baked goods, to grab & go sandwiches. MSU’s Spartan Spirit Coffee is also locally roasted right here in Lansing. Our ‘Grown at MSU’ program includes produce from the Student Organic Farm and MSU Beef featured at the dining halls. The all-new South Pointe at Case Hall opening in January 2012 features Great Lakes Plate where all entrees are prepared from Michigan and/or Mid-West products. Read about our partnership with local farmers in Farm to MSU stories on [www.eatatstate.com](http://www.eatatstate.com).

**STUDENTS WHO DINE ON-THE-GO**

When students don’t have time for a sit-down lunch, Combo-X-Change keeps students fueled between classes. Combo-X-Change allows resident students to use their dining plan at Sparty’s, Union Deli, Union Pizzeria and Serrano’s at the MSU Union, and Riverwalk Market at Owen Hall once per day, Monday through Friday. For more information on Combo-X-Change and MSU dining plans, visit [www.eatatstate.com](http://www.eatatstate.com).
**FALL 2012 HOUSING SIGN-UP SCHEDULE**

Housing reapplication for next year began in early October. While some students have already signed up for housing, there is plenty of time for students to make a housing decision that is right for them. Students should not feel pressured by any off-campus landlords to make a quick decision because housing is in short supply; in fact, there are more than 230 different apartment complexes and a wide variety of houses to select from. The housing decision is one that may affect students through spring of 2013 so it’s not one that should be made lightly.

We hope that your child will choose to live on campus next year because we believe strongly in the advantages of doing so. Information will be directly communicated in multiple ways to your student so they know how and when to select a room, and sign their housing contract. Remember, MSU does not require a security deposit for on-campus housing.

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<tr>
<th>Nov. 7 – Apr. 15</th>
<th>Students sign up for any available room or apartment, anywhere on campus</th>
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<tr>
<td>After April 15</td>
<td>Online housing sign up is complete. If students would still like to reserve a room, they can contact the Housing Assignments Office by calling 517-884-LIVE or emailing <a href="mailto:liveon@msu.edu">liveon@msu.edu</a>.</td>
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WE’RE LISTENING

Over the last few years, Campus Living Services has been busy implementing changes to on-campus housing based on input from students, parents, staff and a host of others. While more plans are in the works, here’s an overview of some of the changes we’ve already made:

• Major renovations have been completed to Brody Hall (including Brody Square dining hall) and Emmons Hall. Emmons reopened in August and includes new student room furniture, paint and flooring, new community bathrooms and vibrant gathering spaces with a music room, game room, private study rooms and a community kitchen.

• Engagement Centers have opened in Holden, Hubbard and Brody, bringing campus’ many services to students in the halls where they live, including academic advising, health and wellness services and tutoring.

• Returning Student Communities were created in Abbot, Butterfield, McDonel and Wonders Halls. These communities are geared toward older students and are in an environment of primarily single rooms.

• Community kitchens were created Abbot, Butterfield, Holden, Owen and Williams Halls, allowing students to do some cooking and baking on their own.

• Holden Dining Hall reopened in August after renovation during the summer and now features similar venue-style stations as The Gallery at Snyder/Phillips and Brody Square, including homestyle cooking, Asian cuisine, vegetarian dishes and specialty salads.

ZHOU FANG
JUNIOR

“I moved back for the convenience. In my apartment, I had to cook every day, clean and buy furniture. It was also really loud all the time and it was hard to study. I missed the comfort of the residence halls so I decided to move back and live with my friends.”

What she likes most about living on campus:

Being able to access the CATA bus system easily to get anywhere she wants to go.
VISIT US ON THE WEB:

www.liveon.msu.edu

Campus Living Services and Residence Life is a unit of the Division of Residential and Hospitality Services at Michigan State University.

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This free newsletter will give you timely information throughout the academic year.