

Students who like coed living say lifestyle is friendly

By Sara Martens

Students and administrators agree that the coed living system is working well.

Coed living began in Schramm Hall, an all-male dorm which opened every other floor to women in 1970.

This change was requested by Harper-Schramm-Smith residents and reflected a need for more women's housing, according to Margaret Wenke, coordinator of housing contracts and assignments.

Abel Hall became coed in 1974 with the opening of 80 spaces on two floors to women.

Two hundred sixty two openings on six floors in Abel are available this year.

Doug Zatechka, director of housing, said he sees no need for major changes in the system and has not heard any requests for changes from students or administrators.

Floors may be changed to house a different sex, depending on the number of men and women requesting rooms, but the coed system will remain the same, he said.

The number of students requesting coed living is comparable to the number of units offered, and most of the 5,200 residents are happy with the situation, he said.

A large number of students request single sex housing, which makes expansion of the coed system unnecessary.

"The trend is to liberalize housing, but that would be a drastic mistake considering the number who want the conservative, or single sex option," he said.

Zatechka questioned the benefits of 24-hour visitation when weighed against the security problems it would create.

"College students seem to be a trusting group, which creates a potential disadvantage when entrance to the hall is not controlled"

The Residence Hall Association has prepared a proposal to change two undergraduate floors in Selleck Quadrangle to 24-hour visitation on an experimental basis. Coed graduate floors in Selleck now have 24-hour visitation.

This proposal must be approved by the housing office and the NU Board of Regents and would be effective next semester at the earliest, Zatechka said.

"I am content with our present situation and I don't know of any students who are discontent," he said.

Student assistants in the coed halls reflect this satisfaction.

Mary Fowley, Schramm 7 S.A. moved there from Fedde, an all female hall on East Campus.

"I don't know if I like it better, but it's a good experience," she said.

The girls on her floor are aware of the presence of men and try to present themselves well most of the time.

"The atmosphere is easy-going and friendlier than in an all male dorm," said Dave Stokes, Schramm 2 S.A.

Stokes said he lived in Abel for two years on an all male floor, but didn't think of Abel as a coed hall.

He moved to Schramm last year as an S.A. and said he was worried that a coed situation would cause the residents to be self-conscious and less out-going.

He said he now likes the atmosphere of a coed dorm, and as an S.A. finds less of a need to schedule activities since the social interaction between floors is informal.

Schramm's alternate floor form of coed living does not present any problems in enforcing visitation hours, Stokes said, but a system such as Abel's would be harder to enforce.

The areas are not as clear-cut in Abel, said Sue Schaeffer, a former Schramm resident and now an Abel 13, S.A.

Women on Abel 13 must use the hallway and elevators in the male half of the floor, but Schaeffer said visitation policies are not hard to enforce.



Photo by MaryAnne Golon

Relaxing in Abel Hall, 9th floor, are (left to right) Debi Kraft, Randy Kraft, and Scott Baker. Coed living was introduced in Abel Hall in 1974 and the split floor system results in a friendlier atmosphere, claim some residents.

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