

# Students' lifestyle concerns a big factor in housing decision

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more involved in activities and have more contact with faculty.

Resources such as computer labs and libraries are easier to get to for students living on campus. Students are also more likely to go to class and meet with instructors if they live on campus, he said.

Students cite other benefits of living in the residence halls when they are deciding to return. The reason students most attributed their return to the residence halls was location.

"Living on campus is convenient. You are always no more than 15 minutes away from a class," senior history major James McGowan said.

The university offers a couple of different payment options for students paying their bills. They can pay all at once or monthly. Also, the university will not evict students for being a few days late with a payment, as some landlords might.

With university billing, all of the costs of living are included in one consolidated bill. There are no separate phone, electric or cable bills.

The residence hall staff is responsible for all of the cooking and cleaning, which lets students concentrate on other things.

"It is easier living (in the dorms) with everything taken care of for you," McGowan said.

Also, the cafeteria food is nutritional and all-you-can-eat. There are several options on the serving line for students to choose from.

Living in the residence halls gives students the chance to interact with other students on their floor, and through hall activities.

"In the dorms there is always someone to do stuff with, and you can meet lots of new people," junior pre-pharmacy major Renee Jensen said.

The university tries to provide a safe and secure environment for students in the dorms with community service officers, after-midnight check-in and escort policies.

Senior secondary education major Cory Emal has lived in the residence halls for four years and enjoys having his needs cared for.

"I guess I was just always too lazy to move off campus," Emal said.

University officials say the costs of living in the residence halls are about the same as the costs of living off campus.

Yet as students mature and learn to handle the demands of college there are some benefits to living off campus, Zatechka said. Students learn how to deal with landlords, hook up utilities and other skills they will need to know after they graduate.

### On their own

Students living off campus say the new freedoms and space students find can easily outweigh the day-to-day problems many students may encounter.

The benefits of living in an apartment are numerous, although many of them depend on individual students' tastes and priorities.

"An apartment is just more like a home than the dorms," apartment manager Julie Fix of Cherry Hill management said.

Apartments offer students the freedom to live their lives as they choose. For instance, they can have alcohol in their home, play loud music and have guests overnight.

Students can keep their own schedules and come and go as they please in their apartment. They can also eat whenever it is convenient for them, instead of trying to eat during the specific hours the residence hall cafeterias are open.

"In an apartment I have more control over what and how I do things," freshman mechanical engineering student J.D. Johnson said.

Many students also look forward to cooking their own food so they can choose what they want to eat.

Apartments offer students more privacy because each student can have their own room.

Some students find living in an apartment quieter than living in the halls.

"It's easier for me to study in an apartment without having to deal with all those other people," Johnson said.

Many students move into apartments because they think they can live on their own for less money than they spend to live in the residence halls.

"An apartment was cheaper for me, and there is a lot more freedom in living in an apart-

ment," senior international business major James Ferranty said.

Apartment life may sometimes be cheaper than living in the residence halls because living in an apartment allows students to pay for only those things they use.

"In the dorms, students have a board plan that is often not used, so it goes to waste. In an apartment you decide what food you eat and what amenities you want to pay for," Patricia Jones, an apartment manager for Jones Properties, said.

Something students may not consider when moving into an apartment is the skills they will learn that will help them after they complete school.

"Paying all the different bills and being accountable for their own apartment teaches students responsibility," said Claremont Park manager Siefkes.

In the end, the decision to move into an apartment is mainly a lifestyle decision.

"Students just need to decide how much freedom they want and what is important to them," Zatechka said.

## Choosing apartments takes research

By JOSH FUNK  
Staff Reporter

After a year or two of living in residence halls, many students decide they are ready to move off campus and into an apartment, but they may not know what to do next.

There are many things that must be considered when students decide to move into an apartment.

The first step for students looking for an apartment is to decide who they will room with and make a budget. Apartment managers advise students to decide what they want in an apartment and what factors are important before they begin looking.

Then students can begin to look through advertisements to find an apartment.

Several apartment managers listed these things for students to consider as they look for an apartment:

- Landlords' backgrounds.
- Proximity to campus.
- Neighborhood.
- Age and history of the structure.
- Maintenance policy of complex.

Students can check out potential landlords with the Better Business Bureau or the Real Estate Owners and Managers Association here in Lincoln.

When touring the actual apartment it is important to see the entire apartment and try things out.

■ Turn on all the faucets and flush the toilet at the same time to make sure there's enough water pressure.

■ Make sure all major appliances are in good working order.

■ Look at the furnace, water heater and air conditioner.

■ Check how many phone jacks are available and where they are.

Patricia Jones of Jones Management said

students should remember a few tips about leases and applications as they get closer to deciding on an apartment.

■ Managers may charge an application fee to process application (\$25 or more).

■ Landlords will run a credit check and evaluate income of applicants.

■ Without a credit history, the student will need a co-signer.

■ A damage deposit equal to one month's rent will be required with lease.

■ A lease is a legally binding document that both tenant and landlord must follow.

It is a good idea to find out everything about the lease before signing, Fix said.

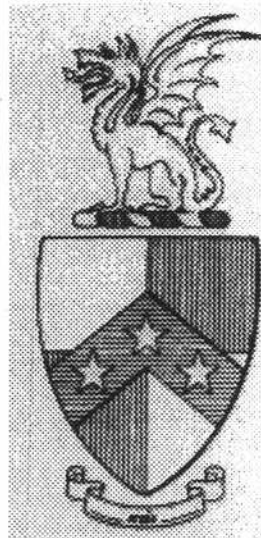
Property manager Sarah Siefkes of Claremont Park apartments said students should also be prepared for leaving the apartment.

"Find out how and if you can break your lease before you sign it," she said.

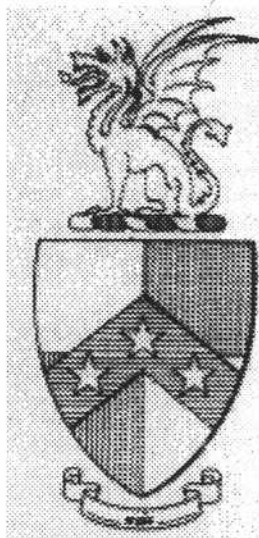
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