ROOMMATE SELECTION

Most students sign leases up to a year ahead of time. And, the choice of who to live with is as much a priority of where to live. Let’s face it, roommates can break or make your off-campus experience. Your best friend may not be your best choice as a roommate. But, before you sign on with potential roomies, consider the following:

* How well do you know your potential roommates?
* Are you willing to enter into a legal and financial agreement with them?
* Is this friendship secure enough to last until next year when you will take residence of your rental? And, can this friendship endure for the term of the lease?
* Have you discussed your lifestyle and expectations with one another?

Every year, students sign leases before they are ready. Financial, family and student status are just some of the variables that can change. Once you sign, a landlord can hold you to the obligations of the lease. Backing out of a lease leaves the remaining roommates in a difficult situation and possibly responsible for your portion of the rent.

Take some time to consider what is important to you regarding your lifestyle. Once you clearly realize your priorities, making a decision for the most compatible roommate can be more successful.

Let’s look at the personal inventory.

Be honest and hope that your perspective roommates will be also!

**Discuss study habits and the expected study environment:**

* Do you like to study with background noise? Would you mind small interruptions?
* Do you prefer to study in the room or another location?

**Discuss social habits, sleeping habits and guests:**

* Are you a smoker?
* How often do you like to have friends over? Do you like to have an open door policy for your friends and roommates?
* Do you party? If so, how many times a week?
* How do you feel about guests of either sex sleeping over?

**Discuss your cleaning habits or preferences (messes, dishes, bathrooms)**

* Do you prefer a spotlessly clean house or is neat and tidy your preference?
* Do you do laundry on a regular basis or only when you are completely out of clothes to wear?
* If you select housing with a shared bath, how do you feel about cleaning the bathroom?

**Be careful that you and your roommate(s) have the same idea of your relationship.**

* Are you looking for a best friend, someone to do things with on weekends, or just a roommate?
* Discuss how you feel about sharing personal property, including food, clothing, and electronic equipment. Do you prefer your roommate(s) ask first before borrowing?
* Is it okay to share and what is off limits?

Discuss how you plan to handle disagreements or misunderstandings when they happen. Stick to your agreement; avoidance and/or gossip is never the way to resolve a conflict.