



## AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

W A S H I N G T O N , D C

January 4, 2010

Dear Resident Student:

I hope you had a successful conclusion to your fall semester and are enjoying your Winter Break. I am writing to alert you to some changes that are taking shape for the spring room re-application process so that you will have the opportunity to discuss them with your family before returning to campus in January. If you will be a third or fourth year student in fall 2010, these changes may affect the availability of on-campus housing for you.

**Housing Conditions.** AU is retaining continuing students and enrolling first year and transfer students with greater success than ever before. We are also retaining more students in the residence halls as a result of their satisfaction with the experience. However, the university's current housing inventory is not sufficient to keep pace with this rapidly increasing demand. As you know, the number of first year students assigned to triples has increased over the last several years. In an effort to enhance the quality and preserve satisfaction with the residential experience, we've begun to address the need for increased housing capacity through some short term renovations and long term campus planning. In the short term, addressing these priorities will require changes in the way we allocate university housing for third and fourth year students.

As we look to next fall, we have two priorities:

- (1) reduce residence hall occupancy to achieve a better quality of life;
- (2) make the first of several planned additions to our housing inventory.

**Student Housing Plan for Fall 2010.** These are the steps planned to address our housing priorities in fall 2010:

- (1) Roper Hall will open in August 2010 to accommodate first year students in several University College sections;
- (2) Clark Hall will open in October 2010, enabling us to de-triple almost 70 first year students early in the fall semester;
- (3) we will maintain the lease for 100 apartments in the Berkshire to address some of the housing demand from upperclassmen and transfer students.
- (4) additional single rooms will be created out of small doubles to support a growing need for private accommodations

Even with the additions to the housing inventory included among these measures, we project being approximately 200 beds short of the total demand for university housing next fall.

After thoughtful consultations with campus planners, student leaders and the President's Cabinet, we have concluded that the best way to manage this shortage, until we can build more student housing, is to reduce the number of campus housing spaces for third and fourth year students and to increase support resources available for finding off-campus housing. We are pledged to do everything possible to make this change manageable for the students affected by it.

**Housing Options for Upperclassmen.** We are reserving the campus housing most preferred by upperclassmen for their continuing use. This includes the new inventory of single occupancy rooms, Nebraska Hall apartments and some Centennial Hall suites. Apartments at the Berkshire will supplement these options, but we anticipate only housing 400 rising juniors and seniors in total.

**A New Housing Lottery.** Students who have completed four semesters in campus housing (including spring 2010) will be invited to participate in a lottery for the 400 upperclassmen spaces. While the lottery details are still being worked out, we can tell you that students who can fill the apartment or suite they're applying for, and those who are willing to sign an 11 ½ month lease for Nebraska Hall will have priority in the lottery drawing.

**Off-Campus Housing Assistance.** Students who do not secure campus housing assignments through the lottery will receive assistance in finding off-campus housing.

**Housing Fair.** Housing & Dining Programs will host the second annual Off-Campus Housing Fair, bringing over 40 apartment complex managers to campus, along with vendors who offer services for apartment living. The fair is scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, 2010, 4-6 pm on Mary Graydon Center First Floor – University Club Rooms.

**Web Service.** Housing & Dining Program will maintain an off-campus web service listing current vacancies in the AU area: [www.american.edu/offcampushousing](http://www.american.edu/offcampushousing).

**Workshops.** Housing staff will offer three workshops to provide students with valuable tips on conducting off-campus housing searches. Topics will include: Housing Options, Landlord Relations, Financial Planning, DC Transportation Services and the Ins & Outs of Leasing. Workshops are scheduled for:

- Monday, January 25, 2010 – 7 pm, Letts Formal Lounge
- Wednesday, January 27, 2010 – 7 pm, McDowell Formal Lounge
- Thursday, January 28, 2010, 7 pm, Tenley Campus – Location TBD

**Other Housing Developments.** In recent years, AU has taken important steps to link students' experiences in the classroom with their lives in the residence halls. University College and the Honors Community are prominent examples of these efforts. In fall 2010, we plan to enhance these programs through some redesign in housing assignments:

- (1) Letts Hall will become a first year student hall and home to most University College sections. This means that current Letts residents will need to select other housing options for 2010.
- (2) Hughes Hall will accommodate a larger proportion of the resident Honors Community. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors will house Honors students, and the Honors Program staff will relocate their offices from Hurst Hall to the first floor of Hughes. Students currently

living on Hughes 4 & 5 will not be able to return to these floors for fall 2010, but may choose other rooms in Hughes or in other halls, as their eligibility permits.

**Information Sessions.** We know this letter presents a lot for you to think about, and that you will have questions about what it all means for you. I have planned several Information Sessions for when you return to campus to help you process this information and clarify your options. To learn more about the Fall 2010 Room Re-Application Process, please plan on attending one of the following information sessions:

***For rising juniors and seniors (current sophomores and juniors):***

Wednesday, January 13	7-8 pm	McDowell Formal Lounge
Thursday, January 14	7-8 pm	Letts Formal Lounge

***For rising sophomores (current first year student):***

Tuesday, January 19	8-9 pm	Letts Formal Lounge
Wednesday, January 20	7-8 pm	Letts Formal Lounge

***For student living at the Tenley Campus***

Thursday, January 21	7-8 pm	Capital Auditorium
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***For students living at the Berkshire Apartments (under AU lease only)***

Thursday, January 21	9-10 pm	McDowell Formal Lounge
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**The Room Re-Application Process Guide will be available on February 1, 2010 at [www.american.edu/ocl/housing](http://www.american.edu/ocl/housing).**

We think that the steps we have outlined here are necessary to advance us quickly toward a better quality of residential life. We appreciate your patience and cooperation as we work our way through this transitional phase. Additional student housing is a top priority in the university's Campus Plan, currently under development.

We look forward to having you back on campus for the spring semester.



Chris Moody, Executive Director  
Housing & Dining Programs

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