

What to consider if you decide to rent.

Will this place meet my needs?

Housing opportunities vary in size, proximity to campus, price, and age. The checklist below can help you think through the kind of things you need to consider when you begin your search for an apartment or other rental arrangement. Mark those things that are essential or important to you and use this checklist as you begin your search. Leases are legal contracts, so it may be difficult or costly if you change your mind after you have already moved in—don't be shy about asking specific questions.

Academic Needs:

- Will you have the computer and Internet access you may need for your classes?
- Will it be easy to get the library, computer labs, advisors, study groups, etc?
- Is there a quiet and well-lit place to study either within the building or nearby?
- Can you get to your classes and activities easily and quickly without a car?

Physical Needs:

- Is there enough space and room to live and study?
- Are there recreational/work-out facilities on-site or nearby?
- Are there laundry facilities on site?
- Is there a secure or covered place like a porch or garage to lock-up or store your bike?
- Will you be close to grocery and other stores?
- Does the neighborhood or complex provide a safe, secure, and well-lighted environment?
- Will you have off-street parking? Is it enough for all your roommates and guests?
- Does the landlord provide garbage/recycling pick-up?
- Who is responsible for snow removal and yard maintenance?
- Does the landlord allow pets?
- Does the landlord allow smoking?
- Does the apartment have air conditioning?
- Are any furnishings, including curtains or blinds, provided?
- Does the apartment have the physical adaptations and/or accommodations you may require?
- Are banks/credit unions/ATMs or check-cashing facilities located nearby?
- Are daycare or school facilities for children nearby?

Safety Considerations:

Does the apartment/house you are currently considering have...

- an outside security door, separate from the door to your apartment?
- a deadbolt lock and peepholes on the interior apartment door?
- working locks on all first floor windows?
- locked access to laundry or other shared facilities (garage, storage, etc.) or rear entryways?
- well-lighted entryway and parking lot?
- well-trafficked street or sidewalk?
- working smoke detectors and a fire extinguisher? (This is required by law.)
- a sufficient number of two and three prong electrical outlets?
- working appliances that are plugged into the appropriate size (amp) outlets?
- locked or interior mailboxes?

Affordability:

Does the rent or lease agreement include ...

- utilities in the rent (heat, water, electricity, cable, garbage pick-up)?
- off-street parking?
- cable or internet service?
- on-site laundry facilities?
- air conditioning?
- if the rent does not include utilities, are the utilities affordable? (You can find out what utilities cost the previous year by contacting the power and gas company.)
- additional deposit for pets?
- additional fees for late payment or subleasing?

Social Needs:

Does the housing option you are currently considering ...

- make it easy to meet new friends?
- meet the needs of your roommates?