

Student 1

The university housing unit offer queue is never published. An applicant has no clue that they would be approved for a unit until like 3 days ago of the official offer. Applicants aspiring to move in have to go through a lot of headache over waiting in the dark or make the deadlines from another landlord. In a lot of instances, people have to break/relet other leases to be able to take an unit offer(even a day late) from university housing made after they have already signed a lease somewhere else.

I see no serious problems with publishing the offer queue, so that applicants know their chances.

Student 2

a) What issues have you encountered with the application process for University Housing?

-- I didn't have any big issue. When I applied for Agate, Spencer View, and East Campus Apts for 'Family Housing and University Apartments,' I received an email that I am in a '4-month waiting list.' But I received a first-come-first-serve offer after 2 weeks, and got the room I am living now. I think I was lucky.

-- One issue I had in the beginning was; I think for many international students, it is difficult to know that the "residence halls" are almost entirely designed for the undergrads. That the term "residence halls" usually refers to the small-sized-room-clustered-closely buildings mainly for freshman undergrads. When I took a look in 2014, the housing/application website didn't have that kind of explanation or filtering system. Some of my INTL grad friends, and myself as well, applied for residence halls in 1st year and later got shocked of its high cost and mandatory meal-plan subscription. I was lucky to cancel it quickly but my friend had to live one year there.

-- I heard a lot of INTL grads didn't got any notification for a long time from Housing office after they submitted University Housing application. They just got a short message saying "6 month wait list." I think they can do better with being more transparent and detailed in notification and question responses. Or they can form a support team that specifically specializes in the room search and roommate matching/communication.

b) What would you as a grad student need in a residence hall environment

for residence halls to be desirable?

-- I think the question here is about the Family Housings and University Apartments (FHUA) that many grads live?

I would ask for increased safety system. I believe most or all FHUA rooms only have single-lock doors that may be easily opened with some kind of trespassing tool. I have asked couple of times for University Housing to consider installing additional locks or more stronger locks, but I haven't heard any news. In 2015(?) UO Housing sent group email that one female student was in bed and a guy came into her bedroom. Fortunately he ran away when she screamed. I am not sure door was unlocked, but it is a possibility that anyone with ill intention can break into the FHUA rooms easily.

--Mine and my neighbors' mailbox had gone through several times of apparent mail-thief attempts. There were obvious damages and some mailbox doors were left open. Fortunately nothing important was stolen for me, I believe. I have reported this to FHUA staff as well, they said they will do everything to prevent it. The thief attempt happened couple times more. Only way of fixing this would be installing a stronger mailbox facility. Increasing patrol frequency near mailbox can be a consideration, but I also told the staff that I understand that may not be feasible, that we would want UOPD to patrol for the human life safety not for the mailbox.

Student 3

a) What issues have you encountered with the application process for University Housing?

Before the application there is a warning at the university housing webpage that houses availability are up to one-year waiting (then you hear stories about getting a unit after three weeks of applying) and that the best option is Spencer View. I'm a single mom from Costa Rica and have a cat (I had no idea how hard it is getting a pet friendly affordable housing in Eugene) The application process for me was okay, however after that, the protocols were a little gray. There seems to be some "tips and tricks" that I didn't know (and I think there shouldn't be). I learned all of this during the town hall that the grad school organized.

I ended up paying a very expensive apartment the first year, and the second year I found a friend to share a townhouse. The university offered me a unit at spencer view after I already postponed my moving date because I already signed the lease of the townhouse. Honestly, I gave up to the university housing. It is frustrating to hear that you need to know the tricks to get university housing.

b) What would you as a grad student need in a residence hall environment for residence halls to be desirable?

Because of my situation I would not apply for a residence hall but I guessed access to a kitchen space and quiet hours.

Student 4

My issue with University Housing was communication:

When I applied for Graduate University Housing at UO 6.5 years ago, I heard only a few weeks in advance that I was accepted. However, I was accepted for a much more expensive apartment than I had anticipated, and it was too late to start looking for off-campus living. (At that time, I didn't even know that as an international student, I wouldn't have had a chance anyway on the off-campus rental market. But it would have made a difference if I had been a domestic student.) Grad School and ISSS told me only two weeks in advance that I had to come to an international introduction week a week before my program started. So I tried to change the start date for my UO rental, but without success. It was very stressful to find a person last minute via Couchsurfing.org, with whom I could stay. Housing Office told me I should come in for the paperwork as early as possible, only I couldn't get a key yet. When I came to the office the day of my arrival, they pushed the key into my hand (and prorated the rent for the extra week of course) - just at a point when it would have been rude to prematurely leave my couchsurfing host. So I paid a week for nothing.

What would attract grad students to resident halls:

I don't think a grad student (at least not of my age, mid-thirty) would ever want to live in an undergrad residence hall. Maybe (very very maybe), if there were kitchens, private bathrooms, and silent hours. I personally even felt too constrained in East Campus Graduate Village. I was not allowed to put up curtains, so I had difficulties sleeping (there was a street lamp directly outside my 2nd floor window). We were not allowed to even have a microwave, because of fire hazard.

To give you a general impression about what looking for a rental off-campus is like:

After a year, someone asked me to move in with him, so I did not renew my rental contract. The problem back then was (maybe still so?) that you ended up on the bottom of the waiting list, if you did not want to pay your UO apartment through the whole summer - which is by the way really bad for people going to their home country over the summer.

Anyway, the relationship turned out to be mentally abusive, so moving-in plans didn't go through in the summer, and I suddenly needed an apartment. I spent 2.5 months looking for one; during that time, I slept in my office on the floor or alternatively on a friend's couch, in a room that had glass walls and was 93°F all night. Every single rental company wanted my credit score, my recent paychecks (difficult when no GE summer appointment) and several AMERICAN friends/acquaintances as references. I didn't have a car, so I needed to look for something

reachable by bus. At the end, I managed to find something in West Eugene with Umbrella Properties, who charged me 2 times the normal deposit in the absence of a credit score. This was difficult for me, as I didn't have a credit card yet (Internationals get their first credit score only after a year.) I had to ask family to lend me money, something considered very humiliating in my country for a grown-up person.
