Our HOUSE
livinglearningleading

UNIVERSITY HOUSING & FOOD SERVICE
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO
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Greetings!

It seems like only yesterday that students (with families in tow) were first arriving on campus to move into their residence halls and prepare for their first semester at the University.

By the time you receive this second issue of *Our House*, the majority of students have experienced at least one round of midterms and are bearing down on fall semester final exam preparations.

Much has been happening on campus. We hope that you were able to return to the University and participate in our Family Weekend activities (Oct. 5-6) or some part of the Chico Experience Week that followed. This is always a great time for students and families to reconnect and share a wide variety of events hosted by the campus and greater Chico community.

It’s a special time of year around here. The fall seasonal chill is in the air every morning and the trees are beginning to turn amazing hues. More importantly, our students are settling into university life, the rigor of college-level study, and—whether they realize it yet or not—have established friendships that will last a lifetime.

The Residential Life staff, Residence Hall Association, and Residence Hall Program Board (Prime Time Productions) have provided many exceptional programs this semester (see schedule provided within this publication and on the University Housing website). So, if your student complains that there is “nothing to do in the residence halls,” I beg to differ! For example, educational programming has included alcohol and drug education, cultural and social diversity, personal health and safety, academic support and campus services, plus a wide range of social events in which students have been invited to participate. The centerpiece program this semester has been the highly successful University Housing Spirit Week. Spirit Week includes a variety of events that provide friendly competition among our five residential communities. Points are awarded in various categories, all culminating in a Spirit Week Champion. It’s all in the spirit of fun and brings community members together in a positive and productive way. See the story in this issue for more information.

I hope that you find *Our House* a beneficial resource as it continues to serve as a window into the residence hall experiences your student enjoys every day. To that end, your suggestions for future issues are always welcome.

Thank you. Happy fall!

Sincerely,

David Stephen, EdD
Director
Semester meal plans and flex cash do NOT rollover to the next semester. Any unused meals and/or flex cash will expire at the end of the semester. Additional semester meals can be purchased through Associated Students Dining Services in 25 meal plan blocks. Students will be able to change their meal plan for the spring semester by submitting a request by Jan. 10, 2014.

Please send an email to University Housing and Food Service with your meal plan and flex cash change request to housing@csuchico.edu.
The term of the 2013-2014 University Housing License Agreement is a legal, binding contract to live in University Housing until May 16, 2014. This applies to all residents including International and National Student Exchange as well as anyone that is attending the University only for the fall 2013 semester.

If your son/daughter is NOT returning to Chico State for the spring 2014 semester, please make sure they make an appointment to see their assistant residence community coordinator (ARCC) or residence community coordinator (RCC) before Nov. 21, 2013. They will need to complete the 2013-2014 University Housing License Request for Early Release form to initiate the process. The RCC or ARCC can provide the form and explain the process to be released from their License Agreement after the completion of the fall 2013 semester. If their request is approved, they will receive a confirmation email from the University Housing and Food Service office regarding the final check-out process and possible notice charge.

Upon submission of a request and approval, residents leaving the University at the close of the fall semester will be released from their 2013-2014 University Housing License Agreement without financial penalty for the spring 2014 semester. However, University Housing must receive the written petition before Nov. 21, 2013. Late, approved petitions could potentially be assessed a failure-to-give-notice charge of up to $1,065. Giving written notice by this date will avoid any notice charges.

Please note that spring enrollment will be checked for all submitted and approved requests. If your student is enrolled in spring 2014 semester classes, they will be held to the full terms of the License, even though they may have moved out of University Housing. University services (including enrollment in future classes) will be held until full payment has been made for the academic year.
# Important Dates to Know

## November
- **Monday, Nov. 11**: Veterans Day—Campus closed
- **Friday, Nov. 22**: All halls (excluding University Village and Konkow House 6) close at 6 PM
- **Nov. 25–29**: Thanksgiving Break—No Classes Held

## December
- **Sunday, Dec. 1**: All halls open at 2PM
- **Dec. 16–20**: Final exams
- **Friday, Dec. 20**: All halls (excluding University Village and Konkow House 6) close at 6 PM
- **Dec. 25–30**: Winter Break—Campus Closed

## January
- **Thursday, Jan. 2**: Campus reopens
- **Jan. 16–17**: Residence halls reopens
- **Monday, Jan. 20**: Martin Luther King Jr. Day—Campus closed
- **Tuesday, Jan. 21**: Spring classes begin
It will soon be time to start recruiting for the resident advisor (RA) staff for the 2014-2015 academic year. This is a great opportunity for interested student leaders to get further involved in University Housing and the campus community. RAs gain valuable leadership skills and assist other students in countless ways.

The RA staff is responsible for providing a safe, secure, and respectful living and learning environment conducive to the academic pursuits and personal development of residential students. This occurs through peer advising, leadership development, programming on various educational topics, civic engagement, social justice topics, counseling, and referral to other university offices and services.

This compensation package is valued at approximately $13,000 for the academic year! This is an excellent paid leadership experience. University Housing and Food Service hires as many as 65 RA staff annually.

We would like to ask for your assistance in this year’s recruitment process by encouraging your student to apply for one of these positions. Student applicants must maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA (semester as well as cumulative) and be committed to helping students adjust to college life. Early information sessions will take place in the next few months in all of the residence halls. Posters promoting the information sessions will be posted in each community during October and November.

Students can ask their RA for more information and can check the University Housing webpage for updates at www.csuchico.edu/housing.
Only by living in University Housing will students have the opportunity to meet each other and become members of the Residence Hall community. Our nationally-recognized student groups—Residence Hall Association (RHA), Prime Time Productions (PTP), and National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH)—are just a few of many options students have to get involved and connect to campus. Included in this newsletter are some programs and leadership events scheduled for the fall semester.

RHA is the governing body that represents all students living in University Housing at CSU, Chico. RHA’s primary function is to ensure that students are represented in any decision that may affect their quality of life and education while living in the Residence Halls. RHA also provides educational, social, and community service programs to facilitate student involvement and connection to the community.

PTP provides late-night and weekend entertainment to all students living in University Housing. PTP brings to the residence halls pre-home-release blockbuster movies, comedy shows, mentalists, hypnotists, and speakers. PTP also provides special events throughout the year, including Welcome Week, Spirit Week, Queer Week, and Parents’ Weekend. PTP is supported by each resident who lives in the Residence Halls so all events are free to Residence Hall students.

The NRHH was founded to recognize both students and faculty that have made great contributions toward the growth and improvement of the CSU, Chico residence community. Those students who are selected as members have displayed outstanding service and leadership in University Housing. NRHH also serves as a philanthropic organization dedicated to giving back to the greater Chico community.
Leadership and Engagement Opportunities Are Abundant at Chico State:

At Chico State, involvement starts the day our residents step onto campus. We know that students who are engaged in experiences both in and out of the classroom will have a more satisfying college experience and are more likely to graduate on time. Whether you are in communication with your student on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis, you may be hearing about some of the amazing opportunities in which they have had the opportunity to participate. Here is a list of popular programs and what they offer—use these as a conversation starter.

**FLO—Freshman Leadership Opportunity Program**
Freshman Leadership Opportunity (FLO) not only has a memorable acronym, but also happens to be an unforgettable program. Under the watchful eyes of a coordinator and five facilitators, each year the new generation of 50 FLO students come to understand and value the FLO moniker: ME, WE, SERVE.

**CAVE—Community Action Volunteers in Education**
Established in 1966, this student-led program serves primary and secondary age children, senior citizens, animal shelters, low-income residences, the environment, and young adults, CAVE members can also attend weekend immersion trips to state parks and institutions throughout Northern California. Annually, more than 2,000 students provide 60,000-plus hours of community service through CAVE!

**CLIC—Community Legal Information Center**
CLIC is a student-run, nonprofit organization that has been providing legal information to students and community members for over 40 years. CLIC also provides paralegal internship opportunities with students working directly under CLIC’s four supervising attorneys.

**GSEC—Gender and Sexuality Equity Center**
The Associated Students Gender and Sexuality Equity Center (GSEC) is a student-run activist organization, which strives to empower all students through its two programs: the Women’s Program and the LGBTQ Program. The GSEC challenges societal norms that have been used to oppress and marginalize by providing opportunities for leadership, personal development, and referral services. GSEC offers a safe and inclusive space where the campus and community can effectively support the academic mission of the University.

**CCLC—Cross Cultural Leadership Center**
The Cross-Cultural Leadership Center values and respects the richness and understanding that diversity brings. The CCLC exists to create an environment in which all students, regardless of their ethnicity, culture, or differences, feel safe and respected. Through leadership development, cultural awareness, community education, and the creation of constructive social change, the Cross-Cultural Leadership Center contributes a positive, enriching, and memorable life experience to every Chico State student and our campus community.

**Greek Life**
Our Greek community is composed of 26 vibrant Greek-lettered organizations. Greek Life membership provide students with opportunities for lifelong friendship, leadership development, scholarship enhancement, philanthropic endeavors, and community involvement. Membership also provides social interaction, for example, Greek Week, Omega Week and individual chapter socials/mixers and formals. Our motto, “Letters today, leaders tomorrow,” exemplifies our commitment to our pillars of distinction and the University’s mission.
Prime Time Productions (PTP) is the major programming organization for University Housing. This six-member student board handles everything from publicity to sound and lighting to the booking of professional entertainers. Since 2007, PTP has been recognized both regionally and nationally for its innovative programs and outstanding board members. The purpose of PTP is to provide late-night and weekend entertainment to all students living in University Housing. PTP brings to the halls pre-home-release films, comedians, bands, hypnotists, mentalists, magicians, speakers, and a whole lot more!

**November**

- Friday Night Game Nights (Every Friday of the semester)
- Pinterest Night – Crafting (Every Tuesday of the semester)
- 11/6 Dave and Ethan—Dating Comedy
- 11/7 Keeping It Reel Film: *Pursuit of Happiness*
- 11/12 Matt Franco—Magician
- 11/14 Movie: *The Hunger Games*
- 11/16 Movie: *The Hunger Games*
- 11/17 Movie: *The Hunger Games*
- 11/18 Ignite

**December**

- 12/5 Keeping It Reel Film: *Religulous*
- 12/12 Movie: *We’re the Millers*
- 12/14 Movie: *We’re the Millers*
- 12/15 Movie: *We’re the Millers*
The evening trudge down the stairs to the kitchen is painful, because my stomach is making noises and I know what disappointment awaits on my shelf in the cabinet.


A date with my concoction of s’mores Goldfish cereal it is.

I used to complain about the walk from Esken Hall to Sutter Dining freshman year, but now I’d be willing to walk from University Village. Instead, I live in a house with my friends and just hope I don’t burn the butter and set off the fire alarm.

I miss the variety of food every day.

I miss the all-you-can-eat setting and not worrying about people calling you fat, because everyone had six plates for dinner.

I miss not having to cook.

Not only was the luxury of Sutter Dining taken away when my freshman year ended, but so was Sutter Cafe and my big sister’s cooking.

I cheated on my boyfriend with the endless amounts of macaroni salad I would buy. You can only imagine the gleam in my eye when I found out that I could use multiple swipes when I reached the register.

My sister graduated in spring, so I can no longer enjoy her home cooking. She was blessed with the cooking gene, while I inherited the sensor reheat button.

Nonetheless, I have picked up some cooking tricks from watching the servers at Sutter Dining. I toss my salad with the same elegance and create experimental pizza toppings with whatever I find in my refrigerator.

Sutter Dining was also a place to be social. A meme was popular in February for its sad truthfulness.

“Asks a girl out for Valentine’s Day. Takes her to Sutter.”

Sutter Dining was the place where I could hang out with my friends. Now we have to actually make plans to see each other and demonstrate whether we are bad at cooking or are Top Chef material.

I miss the days when we gathered around our plate-infested table and broke bread together. Then we would draw straws to assign someone to fetch luscious brownies, cookies, or other sweets from the dessert cabinet.

The memories, smells, and tastes of Sutter Dining flash on the imaginary movie screen in my kitchen cabinet before I snap back to reality.

Swipes are golden, freshmen. Use them with care. Before you know it, you’ll be staring at a kitchen cabinet full of junk food—tapping your finger.
Food is a universal language, one that can bring people together, and through the histories of our dishes, share bits of our own personal stories. This concept was brought to life in the Campus Cook-Off Recipe Competition, a collaborative effort between AS Dining Services and the office of University Housing and Food Service where residential students were given the opportunity to submit their favorite recipes from their childhood.

Submissions this year included a variety of dishes such as soups, pies, pastas, and a slew of cultural specialties that were judged according to the recipe’s feasibility to be produced on a large scale, the uniqueness of the dish, and the story of why the dish was significant in the student’s childhood.

Winning recipes were prepared and served for dinner at Sutter Dining on Nov. 14, 2013. All students, staff, and faculty who ate at the dining hall that night got to vote for their favorite recipes! Student stories explaining the history and importance of the dish were also prominently displayed at each dining station.

Winners received special CSU, Chico prizes and their dishes are permanently added to the general menu in Sutter Dining so that they can be enjoyed on campus for years to come.
It is FLU SEASON once again! Did you know that an excellent way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year?

Influenza (flu) is a contagious disease, which can be spread by coughing, sneezing, or nasal secretions. Influenza can occur at any time, but usually occurs November through May. All individuals six months of age and older should get the flu vaccine as soon as it is available. The vaccine will provide protection if the flu season comes early.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

**Q: Which flu viruses does the seasonal vaccine protect against?**
A: The vaccine provides protection against A/H1N1 (pandemic) influenza and two other influenza viruses—Influenza A/H3N2 and influenza B. It will not prevent illness caused by other viruses.

It takes up to two weeks for protection to develop after the shot. Protection lasts about a year.

Some inactivated influenza vaccines contain a preservative called thimerosal. Thimerosal-free influenza vaccine is available. Ask your healthcare provider for more information.

**Q: When should I get vaccinated against seasonal flu?**
A: Yearly flu vaccinations should begin in September, or as soon as the vaccine is available, and continue throughout the flu season which can last as late as May. This is because the timing and duration of flu season varies. While flu season can begin as early as October, most of the time seasonal flu activity peaks in January or later.

**Q: Who should get vaccinated?**
A: On Feb. 24, 2010, vaccine experts voted that everyone six months and older should get a flu vaccine each year starting with the influenza season. CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted for “universal” flu vaccination in the United States to expand protection against the flu to more people. While everyone should get a flu vaccine each flu season, it’s especially important that certain people get vaccinated either because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications or because they live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications.

**Q: Who should not be vaccinated against seasonal flu?**
A. Some people should not be vaccinated without first consulting a physician. They include:

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs.
- People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination in the past.
- People who developed Guillian-Barré syndrome (GBS) within six weeks of getting an influenza vaccine previously.
- Children younger than six months of age (influenza vaccine is not approved for use in this age group).
- People who have a moderate or severe illness with a fever should wait to get vaccinated until their symptoms lessen.

The Student Health Center is offering in-house flu shots daily at the following times:

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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Tues</td>
<td>8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Wed.</td>
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<td>Thurs</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.</td>
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Located in the Student Health Center on Warner Street
Phone: (530) 898-5241
The Butte County Public Health Department will also be holding Flu Clinic days. For more information, contact the department at (530) 538-2840.

If you have questions about whether you should get a flu vaccine, consult your health care provider. For more information see references below:

1. Butte County Public Health: www.buttecounty.net/publichealth/
2. California Department of Public Health: www.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/DEFAULT.aspx
3. Centers for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/
You are encouraged to check your student’s account balance online on a monthly basis to avoid any late fees! Although University Housing room and meal plan payments are due on specific dates (12/12/13, 02/03/14, 03/04/14, and 04/04/14), students may be assessed miscellaneous University Housing charges at any time. The final payment for the fall semester was due Tuesday, Nov. 5th, 2013. The first payment for the spring semester is due on Dec. 12th, 2013. If your student hasn’t contacted you or forwarded the payment email reminder to let you know the amount to pay, you might want to remind them. Late payments are subject to a $20.00 late fee by the university, and registration, grade, and transcript holds maybe placed on student accounts for unpaid balances.

You can also talk to your student about setting up an online Parent Portal Account where your student can grant you access to financial and academic information related to them. Please check out the details at http://www.csuchico.edu/parents/parent-portal/index.shtml.

For your convenience, payments can be paid by electronic check or credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover cards are accepted) by going to: http://www.csuchico.edu/sfin/payment-info/payment-methods.shtml.
University Housing and Food Service (UHFS) office recently completed the bi-annual health and safety inspections within the Residence Halls and University Village apartments. UHFS staff perform this service once every semester. After notifying the students we will be coming, University Housing staff pairs up and enters each student's room to verify that general cleanliness standards are being fulfilled and that the path to exit is clear, and appropriate extension cords and lighting are being used. We also look for candles and any possible situations (e.g., obvious policy violations) that may be a hazard to the student's health and safety.

Why do we conduct these health and safety checks? On April 13, 2005, a fire broke out on the ninth floor of Whitney Hall, displacing 31 residents. All residents had to be relocated for the rest of the semester. No injuries involving students were reported as a result of the fire and all 490 residents of Whitney were safely evacuated and accounted for after the fire alarm sounded. The cause of the fire was the illegal use of a candle, a clear policy violation of our residence hall contract.

If a violation is found, your student will be contacted by the Residence Life staff to discuss the serious nature of such findings. The inspections also allow the entire University Housing staff to interact with many of their student clients. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the University Housing office at (530) 898-6325.

For more fire safety tips, click on the picture:
Greetings from the Residence Hall Association (RHA) at CSU, Chico!

RHA is sponsoring College Care Packages through Bundle It! for all students living in University Housing this fall. Proceeds from this program will be used to help fund events and services sponsored by RHA for the students living in University Housing. The following care packages are offered this fall:

Exam Cram Bundle: When your student is feeling the pressure of taking their first college exams this Bundle gives them the encouragement they need!

- Famous Amos Cookies
- Tootsie Pop
- Fruit by the Foot
- Nutri Grain Bar
- Pencils and Pens
- Oatmeal
- M&Ms
- Gardetto’s
- Hershey’s Candy Bar
- Post-it pads
- Rice Krispie Treat
- Frito Lay Chips
- Tree Top Fruit Snack
- Nature Valley Oats & Honey
- Highlighter

For Questions: Contact Stefanie Olson 530-521-9551 bundledit@gmail.com

To order, go to our website at www.bundledit.com

Delivered December 9, 2013

$24.50
THE INTERNATIONAL THEMED HOUSE:

The International House is a part of the Konkow Residence Hall Community and serves as an exciting opportunity for international and domestic students to experience college life in the United States in a house setting. The International House offers students the opportunity to meet and live with international students from a variety of different countries and cultures. A live-in resident advisor provides social and educational programming for both domestic and international students specifically catered to enhancing their understanding of diversity, culture, and traditions. There are 12 students and one resident advisor that make up this all female house. This unique combination of residence hall atmosphere and apartment-style living is proving to be an enriching experience for students seeking to broaden their minds and meet others from around the world!

A Little Bit About Konkow:

Konkow Hall is a house–styled unit with a common living room, gender-specific restrooms, and a kitchen. There is a computer lab on-site as well. Each unit houses 12 students and one RA. In cooperation with faculty in their academic departments, the residents of each unit create a living environment to enhance their academic program. This focus is achieved through organized activities such as lectures, slides, musical and cultural evenings, and dinners.
Q: Can you tell us a little about yourself, your department, and how you are connected to the International House in Konkow?

A: I am often the first point of contact for international undergrad students. Once students are determined eligible for admissions, we admit them and send them their acceptance packets as well as information on housing. In this instance, we have an International House (IH).

Q: What do you feel are the benefits of domestic and international students living in this themed house?

A: The ideal set up for IH is to have half international and half domestic students. I think there are some really great opportunities for all of the students in IH to have a valuable experience learning about other cultures and ways of life, while sharing their own cultures. By sharing meals, stories, and experiences, friendships can be made and awareness about others’ way of life can be gained.

Q: How do you feel your program supports the living, learning, and leading community of the International House?

A: This intercultural exchange is what it is all about. By getting to know one another personally, they are better able to see each other as people, and not simply as stereotypical representatives of another culture or country. It seems that intercultural exchange becomes more personal and less abstract when you are housemates with someone from another country. The Office of International Education would like to continue this program by working with University Housing when a student expresses interest in the IH as a housing option.

For more information on the International House, please contact:
The International Admissions Department
California State University, Chico
400 West First St.
Chico, CA 95929-0725
530-898-5415
http://www.csuchico.edu/international/index.shtml
Tuning in to What Your Student is Learning

Ask about more than just grades! Studying and striving for good grades are both important and admirable, but college has a lot more to offer besides just book learning. When you’re trying to stay connected to your student’s life while they’re away at school, ask about some other things, too. For instance…

- **Talk about books**, especially if your son or daughter is the type of person to do reading outside of what is assigned. Have you read a great book lately? Maybe your child has, too. Talking about literature is a great way to get a fuller understanding of what you have read and also about the way your student thinks.

- **Ask about their favorite professor** and what makes him/her such a good teacher. Talking about what goes on in class aside from assignments will give you a more complete picture of your child’s day-to-day experiences.

- **If your student has a job or internship**, ask what they like and don’t like about it. After they tell you what’s on their mind, give some suggestions on how to make what they dislike easier, and offer any advice you might have on what they could look for in another position either next semester or after graduation.

- **The social aspect of college is a learning experience, too.** Is your daughter in a sorority? Does your son plan campus events? Ask about them! Your student might also want to complain about a roommate or rave about a new friend, but is just looking for you to ask first.

- **Has your student still not chosen a major?** Talk about the best and worst classes he or she has taken, and work together to figure out what a good path could be. You can at least narrow it down to a few different subjects.

- **If your student is taking a class that sounds similar to one you took while you were a high school or college student**, tell him or her what you remember about the course. Depending on the nature of the material, it’s very possible that the way that particular subject is taught now is very different than the way it was taught a few decades earlier. But who knows, maybe it’s exactly the same! Talking about the similarities and differences will give you great insight into what is being taught, learned, and understood.

- **If you also went to college**, talking about your own experiences gives your student the chance to open up to you about **his or her own**. The most important part of keeping in tune with what your child is learning is keeping the lines of communication open and comfortable.

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**The Learning Lab**

Instead of grades, you can focus on learning topics such as:

- A paper or project topic your student is currently pursuing
- Something cool they just learned in lab
- An interesting classroom conversation and what made it so
- A discussion your student had with a peer, a teaching assistant or a professor
- One of the most interesting things they’ve learned in class this week
- Something your student learned about himself while working on a group project
- Research tricks that are helping him dig up great info for his next paper

There is a wealth of topics to discuss that focus on learning rather than grades. Give them a try!
Helping Students Handle Conflict

Conflict is an inevitable part of life, especially on a college campus. Close quarters, stressful experiences, and a multitude of values make the environment prime for challenge and disagreements. Of course, interacting with a diverse group of people also makes for loads of learning!

It’s important for students to remember that conflict itself is neutral. It is the behavior of the individuals experiencing conflict that determines its value. A conflict can impact a person’s emotions, thoughts, ability to learn and engage, and behaviors. How one chooses to deal with a conflict will directly determine the result. Dealing with conflicts in an unhealthy manner weakens relationships and makes getting to the “real issue” more difficult. When dealt with in a positive manner, however, conflict serves as a unique opportunity for growth, understanding, and the strengthening of relationships.

When Mediation is Necessary

Sometimes, a conflict is too difficult for the parties involved to solve themselves. Emotions and irrationality can run high, especially in a roommate situation or a conflict among students living on the same residence hall floor. Home is generally one’s escape. For those living on a college campus, their residence hall is their home away from home. If they are experiencing conflict in that environment, the conflict can become overwhelming.

What is mediation?

Mediation is a flexible, educational process that provides a safe forum for disputing parties to express themselves and resolve differences. During a mediation, a neutral third party facilitates a conversation between disputants. The people involved choose to be there; mediation is a voluntary experience where the disputing parties come to communicate their feelings and negotiate a mutually acceptable resolution.

The person or team serving as the mediating party ensures that each person has equal opportunity to voice perspectives, clarify issues, and explore options for resolution. Mediators do not act as judges and they do not take sides. Their goal is to facilitate, guide, and encourage an exchange where the disputants come to their own conclusions. The mediation process is typically confidential and takes place in a neutral location.

Although many students are hesitant to go through a mediation process at first, the process works. Mediation is successful in almost 90 percent of cases, according to some researchers. When handled well, it’s a process full of respect, integrity, and compromise.

Where can my student go for mediation?

On many campuses, Resident Assistants (RA) are trained as mediators. If your student is experiencing a roommate or hallmate-related issue and is comfortable with his RA, encourage him to ask the staff member to conduct a mediation.

If your student is not comfortable with or does not have an RA, there are plenty of other resources available. An Ombudsperson can assist students who are experiencing a conflict with an office, department, or faculty member. Additionally, residence life professionals, counseling centers, a dean of students, or community conflict team can help. There are many people who are here to help your student learn to handle conflict positively and productively.

Five Tips for Handling Conflict

Whenever possible, students should be encouraged to handle conflict on their own. Here are five tips they can utilize in conflict situations:

1. Know the difference between your principles and your preferences.
2. Review your expectations. Are you being realistic? Is the person capable of changing in the way you desire? Can you adapt to the situation or is it totally unacceptable?
3. Listen! Hear the other person’s feelings as well as arguments. Don’t interrupt.
4. Accept the right of the other person to a satisfactory solution to the problem. Recognize that this person has legitimate rights that must be respected.
5. State your opinions and feelings frankly but calmly. Be assertive, not aggressive.