



Information on the Second-year housing requirement

Beginning with the Fall 2014 entering freshman class, the University of San Diego will implement a new policy requiring undergraduate students to live on campus for both their first and second year at USD.

Higher education research consistently demonstrates the positive outcomes of living on campus (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). It helps to build a “holistic and transformative educational experience” to maintain USD’s liberal arts values and intellectual culture. Students who live on campus are more likely to persist and graduate than students who live off campus. Residence halls facilitate students’ social, and perhaps academic, involvement with other students, their professors and the university community. Residential students participate in more co-curricular activities, report more positive perceptions of the campus social climate, are often more satisfied with their college experience, report more personal growth and development, and engage in more frequent interactions with peers and faculty.

The new residency requirement complements the 2012 debut of Living Learning Communities for freshmen and a number of enhancements to the Second Year Experience in the past several years, including the opening of the Student Life Pavilion, the San Buenaventura apartments, and the Bosley Missions Café and Fitness Center; the Second Year Experience Abroad program; a community building initiative, the House Cup, which raises awareness about Catholic Social Teaching; specific activities to welcome second year students back to campus; and either no or minimal increases in housing rates during the recent economic downturn.

A task force comprised of faculty, staff and students has been charged to design a sophomore experience program to accompany the residential experience. Their focus is directed toward addressing common issues facing sophomores such as choosing a major, exploring plans after graduation, academic planning, developing relationships and life skills. Simultaneously, planning is underway to upgrade the Palomar lounge community space in the Vistas to include food options.

It is important to note, that currently most second year students at USD choose to live on campus. Typically, close to 70% of the freshmen who live on campus elect to remain on campus for their sophomore year.

The inventory of existing campus housing will accommodate the new policy. Nevertheless, with on-campus living also popular among some juniors and seniors, and among some graduate and law students as well, consideration of additional residence halls in the future remains a component of the university’s campus master plan. Meanwhile, beyond first- and second-year students, preference for on-campus housing will be extended to undergraduate and international students, followed by graduate and law students, space permitting.

The second year residency requirement at USD will enhance the sense of community among our students, faculty, and staff; foster the objectives of a more integrated living learning environment on campus; and encourage greater identification and affinity among undergraduate students with their alma mater, thereby increasing the likelihood of sustainable ties with the university after graduation.

Contact Residential Life at housing@sandiego.edu with any questions