February 13, 2019

Dear Students:

This message is regarding the housing selection process for Fall 2019. While it may seem a ways off, conversations around this topic are already happening, and we want to disseminate information in a timely manner so that students can start to make plans. The following is an initial overview of how the process will be facilitated in the Spring for next year, as well as some history and context in order to promote greater understanding around the topic.

As many of you know, the College has experienced significant enrollment growth over the last few years. Since the on-campus housing inventory has remained constant, it means that more students who do not fall under the College’s housing requirement (i.e. through sophomore year) have had to seek off-campus options. The Office of Residential Life has and will continue to try and accommodate as many students as possible, but there are many factors in play, and the process is highly complex.

The housing selection process for the following year has traditionally taken place during Week 9 of Spring Quarter over a period of three days, with one day dedicated to each rising class. Every student was issued a lottery number, but the prevailing trend for many years was that most rising juniors and seniors did not use theirs in lieu of off-campus options or participation in study abroad programs. Students then showed up to select housing during their respective date and time. As the size of incoming first-year and continuing sophomore classes grew over time, the amount of available on-campus housing for other groups shrank. Consequently, we had to cap how many rising juniors and seniors could sign up for housing at the front end of the process last year when demand exceeded capacity. In light of all of this, the traditional sequencing of the housing selection process is no longer appropriate since we simply do not have the flexibility that once made it feasible.

This year, housing selection will be consolidated into one day during Week 9 of Spring Quarter (i.e. Thursday, May 30), and there will be no differentiation between the classes of those who participate. All rising sophomores will be issued a lottery number per the housing requirement, and rising juniors and seniors will have to request housing and be issued a lottery number in order to participate in the process. The number of juniors and seniors who are issued a lottery number and permitted to participate in the process will be based on the projected number of available spaces after all other groups falling under the housing requirement are accounted for. Junior and senior lottery numbers will be randomized among those for sophomores, thereby leaving things to chance and not class standing. After weighing the options, this is the only way to ensure fairness among all involved groups – sophomores, who are required to live on campus, and juniors and seniors who also deserve a fair shot at getting something they want if they participate.

In an effort to be strategic, we will also be establishing several firm deadlines, namely for rising sophomores wishing to commute from home or petitioning to live off-campus next year, and for rising juniors and seniors requesting housing for the Fall. Please understand that we cannot predict the likelihood or probability of being able to accommodate students who do not fall under the housing requirement, so you are advised to have a backup plan if you fall into this category. Ultimately, the number of rising sophomores moving through the pipeline and the number of incoming students the College intends to admit, both of which become more evident closer to the housing process, will have a significant impact on our abilities.

Another message will follow by the end of the month that will include dates, deadlines, and other pertinent information. It will also provide answers to frequently asked questions about the process. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,
Stephen Sanney
Director of Residential Life