What’s In A Name?
The Difference Between Dorms and Residence Halls

If you refer to the “dorms” in front of a Residential Life & Housing staff member, you are apt to be told that they are residence halls, not dorms. But isn’t this a matter of semantics? Does it really make a difference what they are called?

The dictionary defines a dormitory as “a room for sleeping, especially a large room containing a number of beds.” It defines a residence as “a building used as a home.” Just as more occurs in a home than just sleeping, more also occurs in a residence hall. The professional and semi-professional staffs of the residence halls provide programming, tutoring, socializing, counseling, emotional support, discipline, leadership skills acquisition and a myriad of opportunities to grow and develop.

Over the years, residence hall staffs have come up with a number of acronyms to illustrate the difference. For example, “DORM” stands for “Dismal Ordinary Room of Mine”, “RESIDENCE HALL” stands for “Really Exciting Sensational Individually-Designed Enlightening New College Experience that Houses an Abundance of Life and Love.”

There is an old story about a wealthy jeweler and his wonderful boat. The captain explains that his wonderful boat. The captain explains that his wonderful boat. The captain explains that this boat has the potential to impact the student, both academically and personally, more than anything else in the university with the exception of the primary curriculum system. That’s why VSU has residence halls, not dorms.


FROM THE DESK OF DR. RACHELL...

Dear New and Returning Students,

On behalf of the entire staff of the Department of Residence Life and Housing, I would like to personally welcome you to “on campus living” and thank you for residing with us. While living on campus, you will be a short distance away from classes, professors, the library, academic resources, recreational facilities, athletic events, or student organizational meetings. Research shows that students who live on campus tend to have a higher GPA, are more academically and socially integrated into college, and tend to graduate more often. The residence hall staff is also committed to your academic success, and will offer programs on topics such as academic success strategies, personal and social development, and career planning. Education does not stop outside of the classroom. More than 80% of your time will be spent outside of the classroom within the residence hall and we feel that our job is to assist and partner in this educational effort.

I hope your full semester is off to a fantastic start and I wish you a successful academic year.

Dr. Kelvin Raehell,
Director of Residence Life & Housing

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Virginia State University
DEPARTMENT OF RESIDENCE LIFE & HOUSING
OUR PROMISE TO YOU

The mission of the Department of Residence Life and Housing (RLH) at Virginia State University is to create and maintain an academically-supportive living and learning environment, which encourages students to explore their communities and differences and foster an educational community that respects and values all members. We seek to provide an atmosphere that supports students in their intellectual, moral, personal, social, and spiritual growth through the cultivation of responsible citizenship and leadership.

RLH is designed to support, complement and expand the total university education while focusing on the

Integrity—Displaying the highest degree of ethical commitment in the pursuit of knowledge.

Character—Understanding the development of mental and moral qualities to an individual.

Effectiveness—Measuring and attaining the degree to which students are successful in producing their desired academic and psychological results.

Respect—Treating others with kindness, fairness and concern while creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and collegial towards other.

Diversity—Fostering a community that identifies, values, and respects differences of all people by creating a positive experience for students, faculty, staff and the community.

Student Centered—Promoting the intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of students in all facets of University life.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

* The telephone number to Campus Police is 804-524-5411.
* Be familiar with the Campus Police call boxes on campus.
* Be familiar with the entrances and exits of the campus.
* Having your student ID on them at all times to enter the residence hall.
* Lock your car doors anytime you leave the car. It takes only seconds to lock and unlock your car doors, and these seconds can save you from being victimized.
* Don’t leave obvious valuables in plain view in your car. Sometimes, temptation and availability are all that is needed to cause a would-be thief to attempt and complete a theft.
* Lock your residence hall room.
* Don’t display large sums of cash or expensive jewelry. Again, these actions may provide temptation to a thief.
* Check the back seat of your car before you get in. You may have an uninvited passenger.

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“I believe in Campus Unity. VSU is a great place where you find your niche. Yes, it’s overwhelming at first, but there are always fellow Trojans willing to help somehow.”

~ Tarik Floyd, Mr. Senior
### ROOMMATES

I don't mind having a roommate. I actually like it! Being roommates has its ups and its downs and it's always nice rooming with someone you know. Just remember that you have to be considerate of personal space and respect each other. Time together is just as important as time apart. Ammen... always be considerate. As for Marianne and I, I love having her as my roommate—she's my best friend!!

— Najiah Shakil, Graphic Design

I love being roommates with Najiah! We like the same things and we laugh a lot. She's so easy to talk to and she takes showers...lol. If you have problems with your roommate, try talking it out. If that doesn't work...talk to your RA. The last resort should be moving out, but communication is key. Either way, you're going to have to learn how to overcome obstacles and work through your problems—because it could seriously hinder you in the real world.

— Marianne DiNallo, Biology

### ROOMMATE SUCCESS TIPS

COMMUNICATE.

Other than a spouse, there is probably no other person in the world you will get to know as well as your roommate. Other than a spouse, there is probably no other person in the world you will get to know as well as your roommate. Other than a spouse, there is probably no other person in the world you will get to know as well as your roommate. Other than a spouse, there is probably no other person in the world you will get to know as well as your roommate. Other than a spouse, there is probably no other person in the world you will get to know as well as your roommate. Other than a spouse, there is probably no other person in the world you will get to know as well as your roommate. Other than a spouse, there is probably no other person in the world you will get to know as well as your roommate. Other than a spouse, there is probably no other person in the world you will get to know as well as your roommate.

STUFF.

Less is more. By the time you've managed to fit in two beds, a computer, CD-player, CDs, and sports equipment. The less you bring, the less you have to keep track of and maintain.

BORROWING.

Rule #1: Don't! Rule #2: Only if absolutely necessary. If you damage or lose something you bor-row, you are responsible for replacing it. See rule #1. Nothing causes more strife between roommates and friends than borrowing—money, food, clothes, CD's, and sports equipment.

NEATNESS.

If the love of order prevails, one of you will be extremely neat and the other extremely messy. Here is where you learn the great art of communication and compromise. Mom doesn't live here, but you do. The next one will have to learn to tolerate life's inescapable. The messy one, well, it's time to start keeping up after yourself.

LIGHTS OUT.

It's inevitable. One of you will have an 8 AM class and the other will want to stay up until 2 AM. Work out routines for late night studying (is there a lounge?), late night returns (tiptoe and use a flashlight), and early morning classes (tiptoe out and dress in the bathroom). Everyone needs their z's.

QUIET TIME.

All residence halls have quiet hours. Loud music, or socializing in the hall will not be appreciated by your fellow roommates and are a one way ticket to unpopularity.

IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES.

When the course of rooming does not run smooth, seek counsel. But remember, not liking your roommate does not grant you a room change. This is college and you will meet people from many different backgrounds.

# ROOMMATES

# SOPHOMORES

# QUADII

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