

Greek Releases
September 18, 2006
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Background

Drake University has a two-year “live-in” requirement for its undergraduate students. This means that all first and second year students are *generally* required to live in Drake residence halls. The live-in requirement is a long-term policy, developed to create a strong living/learning environment on the Drake campus. It is Drake’s philosophical belief that students benefit from living on campus – student retention is stronger, and the student’s personal experience is richer because of it. The policy as written in the 2006-2007 Drake University Academic Catalog is as follows:

Drake University believes that the experience students receive from the residence hall program benefits their academic, social, intellectual, and personal growth. The philosophy of Drake University is that student life in the residence halls is not separate from the academic mission of the University, but rather it is supportive of the students’ total development. The overriding goal of the Office of Residence Life (ORL) is to align the residence education structure with that of the overall University to provide an intentional, progressive, and dynamic student experience.

Therefore, all full-time students must live in the Drake University residence halls during any period of university enrollment occurring within two years following their high school graduation. Students meeting this requirement during the contract year are expected to fulfill the terms of the contract.

Exceptions to this residence rule are granted if the student 1) is married or 2) lives with a relative (parent(s) or legal guardian). The latter exemption requires the student to be residing in a 45-mile radius from Des Moines, Iowa. Any student who is beyond two years of high school graduation is not required to live in a residence hall but may elect to do so if space is available.

A written request for an exception to this policy must be filed with the Office of Residence Life prior to the semester for which the request is made. Students may also pursue medical exemptions from the residence rule by contacting the Office of Access and Success.

In addition to the educational implications, there are financial ramifications to students being released from on-campus living. Each available, but unoccupied bed, in the residence halls translates into an annual revenue loss in [room and board](#).

The overriding goal of the Greek Release is to maintain fiscal and educational integrity for the University while supporting the needs of this specific student population. The group recognizes the need for these releases based on University support of the Greek system (i.e., the role it plays with respect to campus vitality, student leadership, student retention, alumni relations, and fundraising), but also recognizes the need for equal treatment for all students.

Greek Releases

Annually, the University will permit a maximum of 35 sophomore students during the school year to be released from the two-year “live-in” requirement so that they may move into Greek houses. A formal written request via the document provided from the Greek chapter to the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life is required no later than March 1 for the upcoming fall semester and November 1 for the spring semester. These dates are subject to change according to the room selection calendar. The following criteria must be met before any release is granted:

- All juniors and seniors must be living in the chapter house (exception if financial aid package requires they live on-campus.)
- The chapter occupancy rate must be below 90%.
- All students requested for release must have a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA and be free of disciplinary violations.
- The chapter score on the Community Standards Report will affect whether a chapter will be eligible for releases and how many will be granted. (The scoring process is a requirement which produces a numerical score based upon the chapter’s academic results, disciplinary measures, community service, alumni relations, and a variety of other factors.)
- Releases for spring semester will not be considered for any new members who joined their organizations during the current fall semester.
- Drake University will not consider or grant releases to students who go through FSL recruitment during the spring semester. Spring recruitments can seek a release for the following spring term if they apply by the November 1st deadline.
- Releases will only be considered based on the merit of the student’s request; the financial status of a housing corporation will not be a factor in the decision-making process.
- Greek Releases will only be considered and reviewed through the process that has been laid out by the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life. External constituent e-mails, phone calls, or other requests not made through the formal process will not be reviewed.
- For the institution to consider releases for a chapter, the housing corporation’s guidelines should permit those students (with proper document such as a documented medical condition) the ability to seek a waiver to not live in the chapter house and not be financially penalized as a result.

Fall releases are granted without consideration for residence hall occupancy since that information is unavailable at the time they are granted. Residence Life has the option in the summer to request that more releases be granted if occupancy rates are exceeding maximum occupancy. For spring release, if hall occupancy falls below 95%, new releases will only be granted to chapters to fill vacated spaces (i.e., those spaces resulting from students who leave the houses due to graduating, transferring, or studying abroad).

All residence hall students considering a move to Greek housing are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Financial Planning to discuss any change a move from residence hall living might make in their financial aid packages. Since most Drake scholarships are merit-based, changes to student financial aid packages are infrequent. **Scholarships or grants that are specific to room and board are not eligible for exceptions.**

As it pertains to Appeals, it is recommended that the student complete a Housing Application for the term for which they were denied requesting a room with their housing preferences. Students may also

email housing@drake.edu to apply again for commuter status under a different exemption category (excluding the FSL Housing Release). Finally, the student may appeal the decision of their Greek release application within five (5) calendar days of their notification by providing written notification via email to the Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Residence Life at Lorissa.Sowden@drake.edu. Appeals should speak to the criteria in which your FSL Housing Release was denied. The Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Residence Life or designee may also require an in-person meeting. The decision of the Assistant Dean of Students or designee is final.