

# **Residence Life Policies**

Southwestern Christian University believes in a total educational experience which encompasses learning that takes place outside the formal classroom setting. The residence halls are an integral part of the learning process and are designed to provide a challenging and supportive environment. Residence hall programs, staff, and policies are all intended to promote personal and social growth, as well as support the pursuit of academic goals.

Southwestern Christian University encourages students to reside on campus so they can become actively involved in the richest meaning of the university lifestyle. It is the conviction of the University that an important element of its educational program is living in the residence halls.

## **Residency Requirements**

Students **under the age of 20** are required to live on campus. All students that desire to live off campus must fill out the Request to Reside Off Campus form available with the Director of Campus Life and Housing. The VPSS and the Office of Student Life have the final decision concerning approval of all requests to live off campus.

### **1. To be eligible for approval a student must meet one of the following criteria:**

- i. The student is 20 years old before the beginning of the fall semester.
- ii. Completed 56 credit hours before the fall semester begins.
- iii. The student will be living at home with parents or legal guardian within a 45 mile radius.
- iv. The student is or will be married during the semester for which they are applying.

**\*\* Supporting documentation must be provided for criteria 3 and 4. \*\***

***Meeting a criterion does not guarantee approval.***

### **2. Breaking Contract (Between Fall and Spring only)**

- i. Requesting to reside off campus between semesters. (Must be approved by VPSS)
- ii. Contract cancellation fee of \$1,000.00

## **Housing Contracts**

Student housing contracts are for the full academic year. A student who occupies a room in university housing will be held responsible for that room and for stipulated charges until the end of the academic year, unless the Vice President for Student Services or his/her designee expressly releases the student from the contract. Each student must sign a Housing Agreement before receiving his/her room assignment. The agreement should be read carefully, as students will be held responsible for the terms and conditions stated in the agreement. Any exceptions to the instructions stated regarding Housing Contracts will be viewed on a case by case basis. All students are encouraged to supply their own renters

insurance.

### **1. ASSIGNMENT OF RESIDENTIAL SPACE**

The student is contracting for space within the University residential facilities, not for a specific residential facility room. The University may reassign the student to a different room or residential facility, or the University may adjust the occupancy of the room in order to maximize utilization of space; further, the University may take such action as is necessary to control the use of rooms in the event of an epidemic, disaster, or other emergencies or circumstances that appear to require such control.

- 2) This document becomes a legally binding contract when accepted and subscribed by the Office of Housing.
- 3) All unapproved moves will result in a \$50.00 charge with that person being immediately moved back into their original assigned room.
- 4) Student housing contracts do not permit students to remain in the residential facilities during Christmas (winter break) and the summer (any days past the official move out date stated in the academic calendar; typically mid-May to mid-August).
  - a) Intersession classes require an additional housing contract and fees for winter and summer sessions. Contact the Director of Housing for more details.

### **2. RESIDENTIAL HOUSING POLICY/MEAL PLAN ASSIGNMENT**

All full-time (12 or more credit hours per semester), unmarried students younger than the age of twenty (20) that are not serving in the United States Armed Forces, or are the primary caregiver of a dependent child, are required to reside on campus in one of the University's residential facilities so long as space is available. All residents in University housing are also assigned a meal plan that is included in their housing charges.

### **3. TERMINATION OF CONTRACT**

Students may apply to terminate their housing contract by submitting a completed Housing Contract Cancellation Form to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will review all off campus housing waivers and grant approval on a case by case basis. Upon approval, a cancellation fee of \$1,000 becomes due.

To be eligible for approval a student must meet one of the following criteria:

- The student is 20 years old before the fall semester begins.
- The student has completed 56 credit hours (junior status) before the fall semester begins.
- The student will be living at home with parents or legal guardian (within 45 miles radius).
- The student is or will be married during the semester for which they are applying for a waiver and will provide a copy of the marriage license or certificate.
- The student is the primary caregiver of a dependent child
- The student is serving in a branch of the United States Armed Forces and is currently on active duty.

#### **4. DAMAGES/VANDALISM**

**All** damages and vandalism will be charged appropriately and dealt with on a case by case basis.

#### **5. ENTRY INTO YOUR ROOM BY UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS**

The University shall at all times during the term of this contract retain legal ownership and right to possession and ultimate control of the student's room and/or University property assigned to such room (ex. beds, other provided furniture, bathroom, etc). The Residence Life staff, including but not limited to Resident Assistants, Resident Directors, the Director of Housing, and the Dean of Students reserves the right to maintain and preserve the residential facilities. The student hereby understands and agrees that authorized personnel may enter the student's room at any reasonable time for life, safety, or health threatening emergencies; to perform requested or preventative maintenance; to respond to a cry for help or the smell of smoke or suspicious odor; or of an apparent violation of Southwestern Christian University rules, regulations and policies; or to silence a disruptive noise. The student hereby authorizes Residence Life personnel to allow access to the student's room when access is requested by any law enforcement officer possessing a valid search or arrest warrant.

#### **6. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

As a condition of this contract, you agree to comply with all University rules, regulations, and policies. The Southwestern Christian University Student Handbook and other posted and/or distributed rules and regulations are incorporated herein by reference. This includes those rules and regulations now in effect, and rules and regulations that are amended or enacted during the term of this contract. If you violate University and/or Residence Life regulations, create undue disturbances for other residents, or unreasonably withhold your cooperation from other students or from Residence Life staff, you may be dismissed from the residential facilities. Also, at the discretion of the Dean of Students, University Disciplinary Committee, or the President's Cabinet, you may be recommended for dismissal from the University. In this event, the student who enters into this agreement with Southwestern Christian University still maintains responsible for the Housing Contract and all associated room charges.

#### **Director of Housing and Director of Campus Life**

The Director of Housing and the Director of Campus Life oversee all aspects of the residence life program and are responsible for creating a vibrant residential culture for undergraduate students, graduate students, and international students. The Directors provides leadership, management, and support to the Resident Assistants and reports to the Vice President of Student Services.

#### **Resident Director (RD)**

The Resident Director is a professional staff member that resides in the residence halls providing leadership to the Residence Life staff while managing all day to day operations

of their assigned residential facilities. The Resident Director reports directly to the Vice President of Student Services. Southwestern Christian University has two (2) resident directors that live on campus.

### **Resident Assistants (RA)**

Resident Assistants live within each residence hall for behavioral role modeling, encouraging faith development, building community, acting as a student advocate and resource, and confronting individuals who exhibit behavior that is contrary to the community standards. Resident Assistants will typically assume more community responsibilities than Resident Chaplains. The Resident Assistants report directly to the Resident Director(s).

## **Residence Hall ROOM INFORMATION**

### **Room Assignments**

Rooms and roommates will not be assigned until a housing application and a non-refundable room fee are received.

When a student is assigned a room, he/she is responsible for signing a Room Condition Form (RCF) that has been completed by Residence Life staff prior to move-in day.

Existing conditions of the room are listed on the RCF prior to the resident's arrival. Upon check-out, Residence Life staff will inspect for any new damage not indicated on the RCF upon move-in. Any necessary charges will be billed directly to the resident's student account.

Students must remove their personal property when vacating the residence hall at the close of the academic year. Any personal property left in the residence halls as of the Monday following commencement will be discarded.

### **Room Check In/Check Out**

Upon check-in, residents will sign an RCF and Emergency Medical Card, to give to EMS in the event of an emergency. Students will also complete a Housing Contract and receive any applicable parking permits. Once all required documents are received by the office Housing and Residence Life, room keys will be distributed.

Residents must remove all personal items and thoroughly clean their room prior to check-out. Upon check-out, residents must contact an RA. The RA will inspect the room and complete the check-out side of the RCF. The resident will sign the RCF which verifies the condition of the room upon check-out. Once the RCF is completed, the resident must return their key(s) to the RA.

Note: Any items left in the room after check-out will be disposed of after 5 days. If a student does not return after a break or fails to check out by the official move out date set by the academic calendar, all items will be disposed of after 5 days. The Director of Housing will make an attempt to contact the student before disposing of any items.

### **Room Changes**

If a student wishes to change rooms, he/she and all individuals involved should discuss the reasons for the change with the Resident Director. The Resident Director will then submit the room change request to the Director of Housing and Campus Life for approval. If a student moves without permission, he/she will be required to return to the original room. All room changes must be recommended by the Resident Director and approved by the Director of Housing and Campus Life. There will be a \$25 charge for approved room changes and a \$100 fine for unauthorized room changes.

**\*\*NOTE\*\***

**Room changes may result in a change to the charges on the student's account.**

### **Room Prohibited Items/Actions:**

The following items/actions are prohibited in Southwestern Christian University residence halls, rooms, and common areas. Items found in rooms that are in violation of school policy are subject to confiscation by school officials.

- Alcoholic beverages, containers, and promotional items;
- Antennas attached to windows or outside of buildings;
- Athletic activities including running, throwing, bouncing, or kicking of objects; and the use of golf clubs, lacrosse sticks, footballs, etc.;
- Children are not permitted as permanent residents of the residence halls.
- Baby-sitting is not allowed in the residence halls;
- No pets are allowed in the residence halls, including lobbies and common areas;
- Blocking and/or propping open entrance and/or exit doors;
- Ceiling alterations such as ceiling fans, mounting light fixtures, removal of ceiling tiles, etc.;
- Cooking appliances designed for frying or with open heating elements such as toaster ovens, electric skillets, hot plates, waffle makers, etc.;
- Excessively large mini-fridges. (Determined by the Resident Director, if you are unsure ask)
- Construction of any kind;
- Controlled substances, designer drugs, or prescription drugs written for another individual;
- Fighting;
- Fire-arms, ammunition and other weapons;
- Fireworks of any kind;
- Exiting or entering a room through a window (except when exiting in the event of an emergency);

Mopeds, motorcycles, flammable fuel, gas engines;  
Open flames such as candles, incense, matches, lighters, etc;  
Paint or painting, other than art supplies;  
Students should use discretion when viewing TV, movies, or on-line material and listening to music. Video games with T [Teen] are acceptable; those with M [Mature] must use discretion. Sexually explicit or inappropriate material, including but not limited to: movies, posters, print materials, music, art, displays of profanity, or other potentially offensive, insulting, or provoking materials that are not consistent with the general spirit and message of Southwestern Christian University are not permitted;  
Smoking;  
Space heaters;  
Throwing anything off a roof or out of a window;  
Any other item deemed inappropriate by the Resident Directors, Vice President for Student Life or any other university Official;  
The Resident Directors and/or VPSS reserve the right to make alterations to this list.

### **Room Sign-Out (Overnight & Weekend)**

Students wishing to check out on the weekend or a weeknight must sign-out with the RA assigned to their floor. Sign-outs should be completed and approved by 10 p.m. on the day of departure. Students under the age of 18 are required to notify their RA of their destination when leaving the campus after 10 p.m. Contact with the RA should take place upon return to campus.

#### Rules & Expectations:

Freshmen are allowed to sign-out during the week (Sun – Wed) to parents home only;

Sophomores, juniors, and senior students are allowed unlimited checkouts, but are asked to use discretion;

Any resident student on academic or disciplinary probation will not be allowed overnight stays without the approval of the VPSS, with the exception of weekends and holidays.

Weekend privileges apply to Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights.

Sunday is considered a weeknight.

Southwestern Christian University does not permit students to spend the night in the company of members of the opposite sex.

Abuse of these privileges may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of privileges. The Resident Directors and/or Resident Assistants reserve the right to deny or limit sign-out requests.

### **Health and Safety Inspections**

During each semester, Residence Life Staff will conduct Health and Safety Inspections of the residential facilities. Such inspections will be made for health, safety, and maintenance purposes. If during Health and Safety Inspections, a student is found to be in violation of the Student Handbook, appropriate action will be taken. Signs will be posted at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance and will indicate the date and time inspections will take place. Students are not required to be present for inspections to take place.

### **Room Displays**

Residents are free to display posters and other appropriate items in their room. Possessions or displays that are inconsistent with the Southwestern Christian University Vision, Mission, and Values Statement (i.e. Alcohol advertising, pornography, etc.), and/or items which violate accepted campus standards should not be displayed. Check with the Resident Director if you have any questions about what may or may not be appropriate.

### **Room Use Policy**

In order to maintain an environment conducive to receiving a high quality education and to protect the resident's rights to privacy and safety, the following policy has been put into place:

Commercial use of your room or solicitation (phone, door-to-door, advertisement postings etc.) anywhere on the premises is strictly forbidden. This includes commercial use of the University Network computer connections. It is not permissible to publicly list Residence Hall room numbers or phone numbers in commercial ads or other business announcements. Specific exceptions for approved student concessions in Residence Halls must be authorized in writing by the VPSS.

### **Room Safety and Security**

While Residence Life Staff make regular rounds through the residence halls, the ultimate responsibility for the security of a student's room lies with the student, and the security of the hall rests upon the community. Students are urged to keep their room doors locked at all times and not to prop any exterior doors open. Students are also encouraged to report any strangers in the building to the residence hall staff or to notify Campus Security immediately. The University does not assume responsibility for damage to or loss of personal belongings, including as a result of theft or burglary. Students are encouraged to obtain their own insurance coverage if their parent's or guardian's homeowners' policy does not cover the student's personal campus belongings.

### **Cohabitation**

Students may not cohabit on-campus. Cohabitation is defined as spending the night together with romantically involved partners. "Spending the night" is also a violation of visitation hours.

### **Curfew**

Curfew is 1:30 am Sunday through Saturday.

All rooms are subject to room check at curfew.

Action regarding curfew violations will be dealt with on an individual basis..

### **Curfew Extensions**

Curfew extensions are not allowed except in cases of emergency. In such cases, the student must notify the RD or RA as soon as possible. Should there be an extenuating need for a curfew extension, the RD or RA must approve it before curfew.

### **Laundry and Linen**

Laundry facilities are available in each Residence Hall and are available to residential students at no charge; however, students must provide their own detergent. Laundry is not to be left unattended at any time. The university is not responsible for articles left in laundry rooms. Laundry facilities are for resident students only and any unauthorized use of the facilities is subject to disciplinary action.

### **Painting**

Rooms are to be painted by designated university staff only. Residents will be charged for repairs and/or replacement, and disciplinary action may occur for unauthorized painting of rooms.

### **Trash Collection**

Trash collected in the individual rooms may not be deposited in the trash receptacles located in the laundry rooms or in any other part of the building. Trash must be taken to the dumpster provided outside.

### **Residence Hall Meetings and Devotionals**

Regularly scheduled meetings are held for resident students, either as one body or within the separate halls. Residence Hall residents are required to attend all hall meetings and devotionals. Schedules for Residence Hall meetings will be posted at the beginning of each semester. All meetings must be approved by the Resident Directors. All Southwestern Christian University students are welcome to attend the hall devotionals.

### **Residence Hall Programs**

Students are highly encouraged to participate in the hall programs provided by Resident Life. These programs are a great way to connect with other students and to build community within each hall and on campus.

### **Residence Hall and/or Overnight Guests**

Students may invite guests to visit them on campus. It is the student's responsibility to see that their guest abides by the rules and regulations of the university while visiting on campus. All guests must leave the campus before curfew. An overnight guest is defined as any person who is not a resident. Permission to entertain overnight guests must be

obtained from the Resident Assistant prior to curfew. Guest requests must be approved by all occupants assigned to the room where the guest will be staying. A stay of more than two nights must be approved by the Resident Director. Guests staying in the residence hall more than two nights will be subject to a \$20 per night fee.

### **Privacy Rights**

In a resident community, privacy and respect for others is of great concern.

Therefore, the following guidelines are necessary:

- No one is permitted to enter another's room without first being granted permission to do so. This does not apply to routine room inspection or an university official entering for a legitimate reason;
- Items should never be taken from another room unless permission has been granted to do so;
- Students are expected to obtain room keys from the Resident Director and should lock their rooms when planning to be away from the residence hall area

### **Noise Control**

In order to develop a pleasant atmosphere, students must exercise noise control at all hours of the day and night. When music, singing, or an extreme level of noise is heard outside a student's room, other residents are being denied the right of privacy. Therefore, the following guidelines will be enforced to regulate noise control:

- Room doors and windows must be closed when music is being played. Repeated violation of this guideline may result in loss of privilege of having the device in one's room or removal from campus housing (if student is of age to live off-campus).
- Stereos, radios, and televisions must be turned off when a student is absent from his/her room.
- A moderate level of volume must be used when operating stereos and televisions. This applies to both the lobby and residence hall rooms.
- Lights, stereos, televisions, etc. must not be left on, or unattended, for an extended period of time.
- Quiet/study time will be from 10 p.m. - 8 a.m. All talking, music, etc. must be at a reasonable volume and confined to individual Residence Hall rooms.
- The common areas should be a place where students can congregate to talk, etc. without being overly concerned with noise level. Pillow fights, wrestling, rowdiness, excessive noise, etc. are not allowed in the commons areas. All hours other than those designated as quiet/study time are considered to be courtesy hours. Any student who confronts other residents regarding bothersome noise or activity should do so in a respectful manner and expect the cooperation from the student(s) in resolving the issue.
- During finals week, specific quiet hours will begin on dead day and end on

the last day of finals.

### **Restricted Areas**

Students are not allowed in the residence halls of the opposite sex. All Men's Housing (including area outside of windows) is restricted to female students. All Women's Housing (including area around outside of windows) is restricted to male students. Approval must be obtained in advance from the Resident Directors or an official of the University for a Student to bring guests of the opposite sex into their residence hall or room. Common areas are not restricted.

### **Furniture**

Southwestern Christian University provides each resident with a bed frame, mattress, desk, chair and dresser. Each resident provides his or her own linens, blankets, bedspreads, pillows, study lamps, wastebasket, small items of furniture, small area rugs, etc. Students are responsible for proper use of furniture provided by the university. Mattresses must remain on bed frames and may not be placed on the floor. Dressers may not be stacked or used as supports for other items. Any damage that results from improper use of furniture will be charged to the resident(s). Beds may not be placed on other furniture. University-supplied room furniture is not to be removed from rooms for any reason.

**Note: Any unissued furniture must be approved by the Resident Director including couches, recliners, or cloth chairs.**

### **Care of Furniture, Building, Etc...**

Students are expected to maintain the residence buildings and all items found therein, so that they are in the same condition as they were found at the beginning of the semester. Students are expected to clean up after themselves and throw all trash away immediately. Student Center furniture should not be taken to the residence hall rooms. No one is allowed to move furniture or furnishings from the rooms without permission from the Residential Director. Students damaging or placing excessive wear on furniture will be in violation of school policy. Movies and games that are viewed in the common areas must be approved by a member of Residential Life.

Nails, screws, and types of tape that may damage walls **may not** be used to hang objects on the wall in your room or in the hallway. If students wish to hang items, products designed to not damage surfaces or remove paint may be used. If there is a question regarding a certain product being permitted, please discuss this with the Resident Director.

### **Room Damage/Furniture/Building Costs**

Southwestern Christian University officials have the right to determine cost damages to be assessed to students. Listed below are some approximate damage costs to students:

- Broken door \$200
- Broken window \$250
- Drawer replacement \$50
- Un-cleaned room \$25 per hour
- Painting door \$20
- Broken bed \$200
- Chest defacement \$100
- Screens \$40

Damage costs will be billed to the student's financial account. All costs must be satisfied prior to a student receiving his or her grades, transcript, or enrolling in the university for a subsequent semester.

### **Cosmetic Changes**

The residence halls are designed for the use of students over several years. Certain personal cosmetic changes by the students (contact paper, hooks, wallpaper, etc.) require unnecessary repairs by the University. Therefore, unauthorized alterations to the rooms may not be made. Residents will be charged for repairs and/or replacement, and disciplinary action may follow unauthorized alterations of rooms.

### **Hallways**

Hallways are not to be used for congregating or studying. Hallways are to be kept clean and clear at all times. Items may pose a hazard as obstacles in the event of a fire or other emergency.

### **Windows and Screens**

No person should use windows as a room entry/exit. Screens must not be removed, cut, or damaged, except in the case of fire or emergency. Violations will be subject to disciplinary action and a fine.

### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills will be held at various times throughout the year. Instructions for the evacuation of the halls in the event of a fire or emergency are provided in student rooms and on hall bulletin boards. Residences will also be instructed on the proper fire procedures during the first week of school.

All residents must evacuate the residence hall if a fire alarm is activated, whether for the purpose of a drill or in the case of an actual fire. Disciplinary action may be taken if a student does not evacuate.

Smoking, the use of candles or incense, or any open flame is strictly prohibited in the residence halls or in the commons areas. Flammable materials (gasoline, kerosene,

propane, etc.) are not permitted inside buildings.

NOTICE-Tampering with fire alarms or activating smoke/fire alarms for reasons other than an emergency is considered a criminal offense and will be treated as such. Any student caught in violation may be subject to criminal and Southwestern Christian University disciplinary action. The emergency exits of the residence halls are only for use in emergencies.

**IN CASE OF FIRE, Call 911.**

### **Threatening Weather Conditions**

When threatening weather is imminent, the Resident Director or Resident Assistant shall monitor certified meteorological broadcast for current information. (KTOK Radio - 1000 KHZ or television channels 4, 5, or 9). Any storm warning affecting western Oklahoma County or eastern Canadian County shall be monitored closely by the Resident Director. In the event of a tornado warning, the Resident Directors, along with the RAs, shall immediately notify campus residents.

Residents shall take cover in the library or the Learning and Living Center (LCC) shelter away from glass. The Southwestern Christian University website [swcu.edu](http://swcu.edu) has more information on storm preparation and weather related information.

### **Forfeiture of Residence Hall Privileges**

Living in the Southwestern Christian University Residence Halls is a privilege, not a right. A student may be asked to move out of the residence hall with or without warning for any reason deemed necessary, by the Resident Director or VPSS, in order to protect the health or welfare of students, faculty, staff or others or to safeguard University property or property of others. The following are examples, but not an exclusive list, of conduct which may warrant removal from the residence halls:

- Abusive behavior (including continued disrespect) toward people;
- Intentional or reckless destruction of or damage to property;
- Any serious violation of the housing contract or of University policy, rules or regulations;
- Any behavior deemed inappropriate by the Resident Director or Vice President for Student Affairs.

Example: If a student is caught drinking, using drugs, in possession of a dangerous weapon, in the room of the opposite sex, sneaking out of Residence Halls after curfew, etc., that student is subject to dismissal from the Residence Halls and the university.

Note: Due to safety concerns, the parents of students being dismissed from the Residence Halls will be notified.

If a student is asked to move out of the Residence Halls, they may or may not be allowed to stay that night subject to the determination of the Resident Director or

VPSS. Every reasonable effort will be made by Southwestern Christian University officials to accommodate the student removing their belongings. If a student is asked to move out and does not comply with those instructions, the Bethany Police Department will be notified to assist in the removal of the student from campus.

**University Breaks/Residence Hall Closures**

Southwestern Christian University residence halls will be officially closed during Christmas break. Residential students are responsible for securing accommodations off-campus during any university breaks when the residence halls are closed. Signs will be posted and hall meetings will be held by Residence Life staff to inform students how to properly prepare for leaving/staying in the residence halls during university breaks. The residence halls will be available during Fall and Spring break and limited food service is provided. For security purposes, those who need accommodations during Fall and Spring break must complete an Extended Stay Form, which is available in the Housing and Residence Life office located in the Learning and Living Center.