Off-Campus Housing Resources

Researching the Problem

UC Student Survey Results

50 University of Cincinnati students were surveyed to assess the need to address four specific aspects of finding Off Campus Housing: Safety, Affordability, Appropriateness, and Fair and Honest Landlords. Their responses and further explanations are given below.

**UC Students**

**Safety**
In August 2013, the City of Cincinnati created the Student Safe Housing List in response to the deaths of two UC students in an off-campus fire.

Chad Kohls
Ellen Garner

At this point, the Student Safe Housing List has 116 properties by 9 different landlords in its database. When asked about fire safety and using this resource, survey data shows:

- 80% of UC students are concerned with safety off campus
- But only 5% know about Cincinnati Safe Student Housing

The current information available is incomplete and unknown by nearly all UC students.

**Affordability**
Due to a limited ability to evaluate or effect economic data for UC students, we chose to examine how students determine the value of housing options.

Our data shows the most popular method of determining the value of off campus housing (76%) is consulting peer opinions.

**Appropriateness**
40% of students have changed their off-campus housing due to inappropriateness.

20-25% Multiple Changes!

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**Fair and Honest Landlords**
20% of student’s have had a landlord they consider to be dishonest or unfair. Half of those who indicated issues said they would have appreciated legal advice.

**Other Available Resources**

**Fair & Honest Landlords**

Government website dedicated to tenant rights. Site here: This site is linked through the UC Graduate Webpage.

These resources are not advertised to undergraduate students, however.

The website also includes a link to typical landlord-tenant problems and the actions available.

Site here:

**UC TIP Line**
The UC College of Law supports the Tenant Information Project (TIP), a call center which students can phone in to receive information on tenant law. Legally, this service cannot provide legal counsel.

**Fire Safety**
Through the UC Office of Student Affairs, there is an brochure available to educate students on the do’s and don’ts of off campus fire safety. This resource is shown below and includes outdated information including types of approved smoke detectors.

In general, UC sourced Off-Campus Housing Information is scattered and out-of-date. UC students are largely unaware any even exists.
Off-Campus Housing Resources

Comparable Solutions – Ohio State University

Ohio State University is comparable to the University of Cincinnati. Both are large public research institutions set in the heart of a Midwestern Urban Center. They have a comprehensive Off-Campus Housing resource that is linked directly through the main University webpage. We are examining features of their website, which is hosted by OSU student government, as a baseline model for our solution.

OSU Resources are located in one central Off-Campus Housing directory.

OSU Undergraduate Student Government publishes an annual Off Campus Housing “Catalog”.

Their website includes the following features:
- Searchable Database of Properties
- Roommate / Sublease Finder
- Login ability for Landlords
- Conflict Resolution
- Transportation Information
- Roommate Agreements
- Safety Information
- Move In & Move Out

Problem Statement: UC students are currently ill informed and equipped to find affordable, appropriate, and safe off campus housing with fair and honest landlords.

Supporting Data

Clarion Partners
The Opportunity in Student Housing Investment

“There is generally an under supply of high quality on- and off-campus housing that is safe, secure, well priced, professionally managed, and with modern amenities.”

University of British Columbia
Student Rental Experience Survey Data

Fair & Honest Landlords

Percentage of students claiming to have experienced discrimination of age, gender, or ethnicity with landlords.

Sources Cited

Housing & Off-campus University Student Equipment

Case Studies

UC students are currently ill informed and equipped to find affordable, appropriate, and safe off campus housing with fair, honest landlords.

A Case Study of UBCO (University of British Columbia)
Student Youth Rental Housing Experiences in the City of Kelowna¹

The primary conclusions of this case study are that the student youth respondents face barriers of rental housing unaffordability, unsuitability, and unavailability. (p ii)

For students, adequate, affordable, and suitable housing is a major factor in the successful completion of their education. Further, housing is tied to general levels of individual physical and psychological health, as well as overall quality of life. (p 11)

Transportation

97% of UBCO students consider Transportation to be a major barrier to finding off-campus housing.

Appropriateness

19.23%
The percentage of population youth in Kelowna, in part due to the lack of appropriate housing for youth.

67% of UBCO students consider Appropriateness (Roommates & Overall Quality) to be a barrier to finding off-campus housing.

Affordability

30%
The expected amount of a income spent on housing to be in core housing need.

100% of UBCO students consider Affordability to be a major barrier to finding off-campus housing.

Fair & Honest Landlords

77% of UBCO students claim to have experienced discrimination of age, gender, or ethnicity when dealing with landlords.

Clarion Partners

The Opportunity in Student Housing Investment²

There is generally an under supply of high quality on- and off-campus housing that is safe, secure, well priced, professionally managed, and with modern amenities.

National Undergraduate Student Growth is projected to steadily increase at least until 2020. This trend could cause the affordability and availability of student housing to worsen.

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