

## Things to Consider Before Living Off Campus

The decision to live off campus and enter into a rental agreement is a big one. You should consider these factors before making the decision since it will affect more than just where you live, but also affect how your entire college experience will be. These are real situations and concerns taken from students seeking advising about their off-campus housing issues after the fact.

When budgeting for off-campus expenses, there are some knowns and some unknowns.

### Additional Expenses

- Housemates who don't pay rent or don't contribute towards other bills
- Housemates that move out, leaving your household responsible for their portion of the rent for the rest of the year
- Finding a new roommate to replace another one and possibly ending up sharing a room with a total stranger
- The cost of breaking your lease, which makes you responsible for rent until the end of the lease or for paying a fee (e.g. \$1,500) to be released from the agreement
- Deposits for setting up utilities
- The cost of utilities, internet connections, phone, cable, water, garbage, sewer, etc.
- Fluctuating monthly electricity and gas bills (which increase in the winter)
- Deposit return disputes
- Buying furniture and household furnishings, kitchen appliances and cookware, cleaning tools and supplies, and having to dispose of them each June

### The Unexpected

- The landlord's lack of response to problems with the rental
- The house you are renting goes up for sale and you have to show it
- The house you are renting is sold and you have to move
- The house you are renting is foreclosed upon and you have to move
- One housemate breaks the lease and all tenants are evicted
- Having to move unexpectedly during mid-terms or finals
- Your liability for housemates' and guests' behavior or damage to the rental
- Substandard housing, heating, or electrical systems that won't support all your devices
- Having less time to sleep and study due to the commute and other household responsibilities
- Feeling isolated from campus; not participating in after-school hour activities and events
- The neighborhood you moved into isn't safe

### Housemate Disputes

- An unreasonable housemate who won't alter their behavior AND won't move out
- Housemates who let their 'significant other' essentially move in without paying rent, food, and a share of other expenses
- Housemates who consistently don't do their share of household responsibilities
- Really cold houses because housemates can't agree to pay extra costs of heating throughout the winter

Your time is valuable and what you choose to do with it matters. Students living off campus have told us they need extra time to deal with new issues they had not previously given any thought:

- The commute to classes, libraries or recreational facilities once or twice a day, especially during the winter when dealing with long lines for the bus in the rain and cold
- Grocery shopping, cooking, and cleaning up after your meals
- Cleaning the kitchen, bathrooms, and other common areas in addition to your own space
- Taking care of the yard
- Attending household meetings and taking care of other responsibilities like paying bills, meeting repair persons, landlords, or unreasonable housemates
- Finding a quiet study area

In addition to considering your off-campus options you may also want to look into the various campus housing options available. For more information visit [housing.ucsc.edu](http://housing.ucsc.edu), call (831)459-2394, or email [housing@ucsc.edu](mailto:housing@ucsc.edu).