

Residence halls see increased demand

BY STEPHANIE HALL
Staff Reporter

With more upperclassmen staying on campus and more freshmen likely to enroll, housing for Fall 2011 still will be busy, even with all of Ryle's beds back in commission.

John Gardner, Director of the Office of Residence Life, said approximately 600 students signed

a housing contract to live on campus Fall 2011. Residence Life provided early housing registration in January of last year. This year they started accepting early housing registration contracts Nov. 1, giving students a \$100 discount on housing. Gardner said it also gives Residence Life staff a better idea of how many students want to live on campus. This year the early housing registration will last until all 700 discounts are used.

He said they also sent a survey to 2,500 students, which revealed 1,400 students, or 56 percent, plan on returning to the dorms next year. Another smaller survey of 1,500 students found that 57 percent would want to stay on campus next year. Gardner said percentages of students wanting to remain on campus are on the rise.

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Gardner said.

This year 260 beds in Ryle were unusable because of construction, which left 2,900 total beds on campus. Gardner said that next year they expect to see an increase in beds for students, depending on partial Centennial Hall renovation.

"We could possibly start [renovation] next year," he said. "If it did, it would create a crunch for beds. I think we would have to be very creative in terms of our housing processes."

Regina Morin, vice president of enrollment management, said freshman applications currently are up 22 percent from last year, which was higher than the previous year. She said one reason applications might be up is they moved the

deadline for full scholarship consideration from Dec. 15 to Dec. 1.

"The value of Truman is really resonating in this economy," Morin said. "Many students who would be applying to private schools are also applying at Truman ... so that is probably feeding applications."

She said admissions will begin meeting with Residence Life in January to look at housing for the fall semester. She said she thinks with the addition of Ryle's beds there wouldn't be the serious crunch for beds that there was last year, especially since construction on Centennial Hall could be delayed.

"It would be more incremental," Morin said. "We don't have to make

the decision yet. We can monitor the situation to see what will be doable for us."

Next year, another change in housing costs will depend on whether scholarships exceed tuition, in which case students will no longer be able to apply them while living off-campus. Morin said many students have used their extra scholarship money for meal plans or bonus bucks on the scholarship committee changed the rules. She said this might be an incentive for more upperclassmen to stay on campus.

To prepare for a large incoming freshman class last summer, Residence Life added beds to rooms to increase capacity. One change was buyouts, or a student's ability to buy out an entire room. Last year they had 100 of these, but recalled them when there was a shortage of beds. He said buyouts would not be available this semester, but they might start a waiting list in case they do have extra rooms.

In Missouri Hall, deluxe double rooms were changed into triples, which is what the rooms were before the renovation, Gardner said. In Dobson Hall, triple rooms changed back to quadruple rooms. In West Campus Suites, they offered an "economy suite" in which each bedroom of the suite had three beds instead of two, making it a six-person suite.

"So essentially, we increased our capacity by doing some stuff that puts people in more rooms that have had more people in the past," Gardner said.

He said the occupants of the Missouri Hall triple rooms, which have the tightest space, had prior-



Krista Goodman/Index

Freshman Sana Khan sits at her desk in her West Campus economy suite, which houses three beds and desks instead of two.

ity choice of moving out, but Garner said most chose to stay.

Freshman Shelby Nail is staying on campus next year because she likes the atmosphere. She said she hopes to stay in Missouri Hall because there is a cafeteria, and she likes having her bathroom cleaned every day. She said she also likes the community aspect of the residence halls.

Junior Alissa Murray is moving off campus next year. She said

she's moving off campus because she likes to bake and cook a lot. She said she also wants the freedom to enter and leave her residence as she pleases.

Senior Ashley Brakensiek said she is squatting, or staying in her current room, because it's closer to campus and more convenient.

"It's just because I'm an accounting major and I just have to walk across to Violette Hall," Brakensiek said.

Truman prepares students to graduate



Krista Goodman/Index
Registrar Margaret Herron sits in her office Tuesday. The registrar puts on a graduation fair each year to prepare students for graduation.

BY KAITLIN DAVIS
Staff Reporter

Consider this hypothetical situation: you can either go to the graduation fair, or not go. You can't decide whether it will be worth your time to spend part of your day in the SUB Down Under because you ignored the e-mail from the Registrar's Office explaining what the graduation fair entails. In the end you decide not to go, but do not understand the ramifications of your decision until trying to obtain clearance for graduation.

Mandy Dixon, a senior health science major, is one of the students who chose to attend the graduation fair on Nov. 17. She said that she received a purple sheet at the fair, with a checklist of all the offices from which she would need a signature to graduate. She had access to all the offices at the graduation fair, which were in one central location for the day.

She said most students who attend the fair complete their checklist that day. However, choosing not to attend the gradu-

ation fair means going to each office on the checklist and ultimately spending an entire day running around campus.

Registrar Margaret Herron said the reason for requiring clearances from many different offices is to ensure a student has no loose ends to tie up before graduation. She said her job is to make sure a student has met all their degree requirements.

Herron said besides meeting their degree requirements, a student also must complete the Liberal Arts portfolio, complete nationally normed or licensed exams in their major, pay the graduation fee and all outstanding fees and complete the graduating student questionnaire.

Herron said the questionnaire is mainly an institutional tool used to gain information about student experiences at Truman.

"We want to know what we can do better," Herron said. "It's

things such as what a student liked or didn't like that can help Truman to improve in the future."

Another major part of the graduation clearance process is to help students deal with their financial aid, Herron said. Once a student has stated they wish to graduate, she said they will begin to receive notifications on what will happen next with their financial aid and how the government will handle it.

"We do this to prevent a student from just being thrown into the wind after graduation and not know what's happening," Herron said.

Although Herron has only been with the Registrar's Office since Nov. 1, she said she thinks the graduation process runs smoothly at Truman. She said the only aspect of procedure she receives complaints about is that e-mail notifications are easily ignored.

"It's just hard," Herron said. "Right now we're aiming to get through this graduation period then take a step back and look at some ways we can notify students better without being invasive but still catching their attention."

Herron said another problem she sees is that students are uninformed about the graduation process and do not pay close enough attention to signatures needed on the clearance form.

"I see the same thing over and

over," Herron said. "A student comes in nervous and saying 'I didn't know, I didn't know.' If students would attend the graduation fair and pay attention to notifications, then that would help everyone involved."

Herron said the graduation fair is hosted every semester, and it is there to help graduating students understand the upcoming processes required for graduation. She said it can only benefit a student to attend the fair.

Herron said the fee a student must pay for graduation is \$30, or \$35 if a student is graduating with a dual degree.

Ralph Cupelli, assistant to the Provost, said the purpose of this fee is to help cover the costs of the commencement ceremony. These payments go into the University's general fund, and then a budget is set to cover the costs of the commencement ceremony.

"There are a lot of expenses we have with the ceremony," Cupelli said. "The budget will cover expenses such as diplomas, flowers, a speaker and to have the ceremony televised."

In addition to the graduation fee, a student must purchase a cap, gown and tassel, which Truman bookstore assistant manager, Kris Hurley said cost \$34.98 for those graduating with a bachelor's degree and \$36.98 for those graduating with a master's degree.

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Margaret Herron
Registrar

Congratulations Fall 2010 Alpha Sigma Gamma's New Actives!

Katy Been
Katey Carlton
Victoria Caskey
Rachel Chambers
Mamie Cox
Rachel Dicke
Megan Distler
Taylor Dodson
Ashley Evers
Alex Fowler
Liz Fifer
Karen Hancock
Stephanie Huynh
Brittany Johnson

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Cara Lowry
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Elizabeth McBride
Amanda Meyers
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