

Problems and Advantages with living on campus at FIU



Honors College

IDH 1931 U-11 & Adam Gorelick

Honors College

Florida International University, Miami, FL. USA

ABSTRACT

In this experiment, a study was conducted to know what students thought about FIU housing conditions. Students mentioned problems like maintenance, appearance, overall comfort in their living quarters, and the cost of living here on campus. The university was also compared to other universities in Florida that offer housing for their students. Some examples of Questions that arised during this research included: "Does living on campus influence a student's GPA?", "What can be done to increase an interest for students to live on campus housing?", and "How could better housing enhance the public image of Florida International University?". In this research, six goals were created to drive our experiment in a specific and wanted direction. These goals were:

- Goal 1: Increase percentage of students living on-campus
- Goal 2: Increase student involvement through a focus on student housing
- Goal 3: Support more public-private housing partnerships
- Goal 4: Balance quantity and quality of current and future campus housing:
- Goal 5: Enhance public image of FIU through a focus on student housing
- Goal 6: Support a more involved commuter-student population



METHODOLOGY

Students from Professor Adam Gorelick's IDH 1931 class, section U11 researched the quality of housing in different universities statewide and how they compare to housing at FIU. Research was also done into the factors that encourage students to live on campus as well as how living on campus affects academic performance and school pride. The housing at FIU was also compared to that of FGCU, which is the best student housing in Florida. Students in the class also created a survey to get an idea of how students living on campus felt about their living experiences with FIU's housing solutions.



CONCLUSION

Currently, out of 47,736 students, only 8% of FIU's student body lives on campus. FIU is one of the top 12 national universities with the highest percentage of freshmen living off campus or commuting for fall 2012. FIU has a high retention rate but its initial amount of students living on campus is small compared to the student populace. Through a multitude of studies conducted on student involvement and achievement while dorming during college, a trend can be seen which shows that students that live on campus not only get more involved in school life and activities, but also achieve higher GPAs than students that live elsewhere. When apartment prices from surrounding locations are compared, living on campus is more expensive than apartment complexes in Sweetwater. Overall, in comparison to on-campus housing, private housing is considerably better and more attractive to current and future students. As such, a goal of FIU should be to increase both the quality and quantity of its own housing solutions. A focus on student housing can also help to achieve an elevated public image of FIU. The goal of increasing the quality and quantity of student housing at Florida International University is intertwined with the goal of supporting a larger and more active on-campus population and in turn a better FIU for all.

INTRODUCTION

When high school students begin their search for the perfect university and "dream school" to attend, there is a list of key factors that they have in pursuit to find the right university for them. The lists could most likely include things such as location, tuition pricing, the major they want to pursue and very importantly, on-campus housing. When it comes to housing at Florida International University, the school overall is seen as a commuter school with over 55,000 students. But as the housing buildings increase at Florida International University and the school opens its doors for more students outside of Florida, housing is a main concern and a key reason as to why an FIU expansion exists.

RESULTS

The results of the survey that was conducted support the idea that the majority of people enjoy their housing situation on campus regardless of the problems discussed in the research. But on the other hand, the majority of people surveyed do not live on campus, showing that FIU housing may still not be attractive enough to bring in more students.

The results of the research show that students who live on campus tend to have higher GPAs than those who live off campus. Students who live on campus also show a higher degree of school pride than off-campus residents. Research also showed that students look for things like specific amenities, such as wifi and a kitchen, low cost, and proximity to classes when considering on-campus housing. FIU's reputation as a commuter school also decreases students' desire to live on campus when their own homes are so close by.

On a scale from 1 - 5, 1 being unacceptable and 5 being superb, how would you rate your experience within your housing complex?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	5	2	2%
2	4	25	29%
3	3	20	23%
4	2	0	0%
5	1	1	1%
6	Not Applicable	39	45%
Total		87	100%

FURTHER RESEARCH IDEAS

In addition to conducting more local surveys, additional research into what exactly makes other housing solutions more attractive to the general college student populace can perhaps shed more light on the issues here at FIU. Collecting national data on what exactly would encourage new students, especially out-of-state students, to live here on-campus would generate better initiatives towards making FIU an even more hospitable and welcoming campus.