Special Interest Housing

Always wish you could live with people with similar interests as you? Now you can! Special Interest/Theme Housing allows groups of students with similar interests, majors, goals, or life pursuits to live and learn together through shared experiences and programming in a residential living environment.

**Special Interest/Theme Housing Timeline**

- **December 1, 2012:** Applications packets available
- **January 31, 2013:** Applications must be submitted to Housing & Residence Life by 5:00 p.m.
- **February 4-8, 2013:** Presentations (groups must sign up when application is submitted)
- **February 11, 2013:** Decisions will be communicated to students
- **February 15, 2013:** All members of approved groups must have completed housing applications on file by 5:00 p.m.
- **February 15, 2013:** SIH must submit final roster (with roommate/suitmate pairings) to HRL office by 5:00 p.m.
- **April 5, 2013:** SIH orientation and training (10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)
- **April 26, 2013:** SIH Coordinator meeting

**For More Information**

Please visit our website to download an application packet, including full requirements, at [www.odu.edu/housing](http://www.odu.edu/housing)

**Questions**

If you have questions or would like assistance, please contact:
Daniel Terrell, Associate Director for Housing & Residence Life - Housing Services
Email: dpterrel@odu.edu
Phone: 757-683-4283 (Main Office)
Special Interest/Theme Housing

Purpose
Special Interest/Theme Housing allows groups of students with similar interests, majors, goals, or life pursuits to live and learn together through shared experiences and programming in a residential living environment.

Group Requirements
Groups requesting to participate in Special Interest Housing (SIH) must meet the following requirements:

- Complete and submit a written proposal that includes all of the documents and information listed in the Written Proposal Guidelines section of this application
- All members (and alternates) must be in good student conduct standing
- Complete and submit an official Special Interest/Theme Housing Application on page three of this packet
- Submit a complete participant list, including alternates, showing the group’s ability to completely fill a designated section of an assigned residential complex (the number of spots that will need to be filled will vary based on the group’s assignment; this number may vary from 12-40 participants)
- Facilitate a 10-15 minute presentation for University faculty, staff, and students explaining how the group can benefit the ODU residential community
- Assign one member to serve as the SIH Coordinator (See details on page two of this application)
- Plan and execute a minimum of four (two per semester) educational programs for the assigned residential community during the academic year (will work directly with Residence Hall Director/Assistant Director of assigned community to coordinate/collaborate or with the respective school/college within the University); these programs will be open to all students living in the residential community, not just those participating in the SIH group
- Demonstrate a commitment of funds to support the programming efforts of the Special Interest Housing Group (HRL will not provide funding for the programming requirements; however, groups do not necessarily need to use funds to facilitate the educational program requirements)
- If a group is affiliated with a school/college, University office, national association, chapter or organization, the group must abide by the overall guidelines, policies, and/or goals, as applicable (student organizations must be registered as an official group with the Office of Student Activities and Leadership)

Written Proposal Guidelines
Along with the Special Interest Housing Application Form, please provide the following information:

- Group’s mission and vision
- Brief but detailed description (no less than one page and no more than two pages) of the learning outcomes set forth for the group and how these outcomes will be measured
- Detailed calendar of activities the group intends to sponsor within its residential community and how the group plans to assess these programs and activities
- Provide the GPAs of intended participants (cumulative as well as semester of application); each participant should print their GPA record from LeoOnline or get from the Registrar’s Office so that the records are official
- Detailed list of facilities requests that the group may have for its residential community (i.e. access to a community learning center; access to community room; etc.)
- Detailed plan of how the group plans to recruit members to live within its designated residential community
- Overall statement of how living together as a group may enhance retention to the University and contribute to student success

Presentation Guidelines
Groups will be required to facilitate a 10-15 minute presentation for an audience of University faculty, staff, and students explaining how the group can benefit the ODU residential community. Groups should discuss the topics listed below:

- Description of the theme and purpose of the Special Interest Housing Group
- How will the group’s mission, vision, and goals enhance the ODU residential community and support the academic mission of the University?
- How will an official section within the ODU residential community help the group carry out its intended goals?
- How will the group foster a positive relationship with other students living within the ODU residential community
- Discuss some possible programming topics
Special Interest Housing (SIH) Coordinator Guidelines
The SIH Coordinator will serve as a liaison between the SIH Group and Housing & Residence Life and will fulfill the following duties in conjunction with the position:

- Participate in a Special Interest/Theme Housing orientation and training session hosted by Housing & Residence Life
- Serve as the liaison between the Special Interest/Theme Housing Group and Housing & Residence Life during the SIH Selection Process
- Meet on a monthly basis with the Residence Hall Director/Assistant Director of the SIH’s respective building
- Provide a detailed written description of the group’s progress in programming and general contributions to the residential community to the Residence Hall Director/Assistant Director of the SIH’s respective building each month
- Hold weekly meetings with the members of the Special Interest/Theme Housing Group to discuss floor issues and updates from Housing & Residence Life

Failure to Meet Requirements
All groups taking part in SIH understand the importance of the program and the high expectations that have been set for its group and participants. The following guidelines apply to groups who do not fulfill their obligations:

- At any point during the academic year, groups that are not fulfilling expectations may be terminated, and students may be relocated to other residential facilities
- Individuals or groups failing to adhere to the terms outlined by either the group’s proposal or the “Terms and Conditions of the 2013-14 Housing and Dining Agreement” may be subject to relocation or other disciplinary action at the discretion of Housing & Residence Life

Filling of Vacant Spaces
If a Special Interest/Theme Housing Group falls below the required and agreed-upon number of participants, the group may forfeit their status as a group if they cannot fill the vacancies through alternate or new members within five business days of the vacancy. Groups are encouraged to work with Housing & Residence Life if a vacancy occurs to determine best strategies to fill the vacancy (i.e. marketing to current and/or new students). If the group is unable to maintain the required numbers they may be reassigned throughout the campus to better meet the needs of the residential community; if reassignment is not possible or not preferred the Special Interest/Theme Housing Group will be financially responsible for the associated cost of the vacancy.

Application Process
- Both new and existing groups interesting in obtaining SIH must submit an application to Housing & Residence Life each year; groups are not automatically renewed each year
- Both new and existing groups interesting in obtaining SIH must facilitate in a 10-15 minute presentation for an audience of University faculty, staff, and students explaining how the group can benefit the residential community
- If approved, each student that will be participating in the SIH group must submit an individual Housing and Dining Application and fully agree to the Terms and Conditions of the Housing and Dining Agreement

NOTE: Special consideration will be given to returning groups who have demonstrated a significant positive impact on the residential community. However, groups are not guaranteed renewal from year to year and must reapply each year through this process.

Special Interest/Theme Housing Timeline

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Questions
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Daniel Terrell, Associate Director for Housing & Residence Life – Housing Services
Email: dpterrel@odu.edu
Phone: 757-683-4283 (Main Office)
General Group Information

Group Name: ____________________________________________________________

Number of Members: ________________ Cumulative Group GPA (please note this will be verified): ________________

Affiliation with a national organization: ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, provide the name: _______________________________________

Founding Date at ODU ________________

Residence Hall Request Information

Please indicate your preferred residential community (preferences will be considered, but are not guaranteed):

1. ___________________________ Number of male spaces requested: ________________

2. ___________________________ Number of female spaces requested: ________________

3. ___________________________

SIH Coordinator Contact Information

Name: ___________________________ UIN: ________________

E-mail: ___________________________ Phone: ________________

Advisor Contact Information (if applicable)

Name: ___________________________ Phone: ________________

E-mail: ___________________________ Role: ☐ Faculty ☐ Staff ☐ Community Member

SIH Coordinator Signature: ___________________________________________ Date: ______

President Signature: _________________________________________________ Date: ______

Advisor Signature: _________________________________________________ Date: ______

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Received:
Participant List
(Attach additional forms if necessary)

Please list all of your committed participants below. Please also include the names of any alternate participants. By signing below, both committed and alternate participants should understand the commitment of being involved in the Special Interest/Theme Housing Program and promise to fulfill the guidelines outlined in the attached application. Providing your signature and date below gives Housing & Residence Life permission to pull the individual’s academic and judicial record to determine eligibility for participation.

Committed Participants

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