

“UNT Leaves Upperclassmen in the Dark to Find Housing Option”

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University of North Texas (UNT) Housing has implemented a new policy change that will leave upperclassmen with fewer options for on-campus housing.

This new policy change will take place during the 2020-2021 academic year. It will allow freshmen to live in the Mozart and Santa Fe dorms, which were once reserved for upperclassmen. According to Housing Ambassador Collin Renfro, “Housing has decided to reserve more room space on campus for freshmen only, which decreased the number of rooms available for upperclassmen.”

An NBC [article](#) mentions that “UNT also touts its largest-ever freshman class this fall. A record 5,522 freshmen are on campus, which is an increase of 15.3% in first-time college students at the university.”

With the large influx of incoming freshmen, it makes it harder for upperclassmen to have a guaranteed spot for on-campus housing availability.

Angelica Martinez, UNT education major said. “I didn’t get a dorm so that’s when I decided to look off-campus. The process for on-campus housing as a freshman was quick and simple. The next year I tried signing up and it was frustrating because by the time on campus was open for upperclassmen, [the] majority of the halls were full.”

The process of applying for on-campus housing applications also has its complications. Students are placed in an online queue as they wait for the status of their living situation.

“You’ll be the 40th person in line and then out of nowhere, you get pushed down to 267. They need to make the process better,” Yaritza Hernandez, UNT photojournalism major said.

The cost of on-campus housing has also risen over the past year. In the 2019-2020 housing rate, single occupancy rooms in Legends, Mozart, Santa Fe, Traditions, and Victory dorms were \$6,500. The 2020-2021 report shows a \$200 increase. Housing contracts are binding and make it impossible for students to leave, even if they are unable to afford it. Students are required to stay through the full nine-month period of their academic year. Due to rising prices and the lack of dorms available for upperclassmen, living off-campus has been a more suitable solution, making it less stressful and more affordable.

“Living off-campus is so much better than living on campus. A dorm can be from \$9,000 to \$10,000 for nine months, while an apartment can cost as little as \$3,600 for a whole year,” Hernandez said.

It has also been beneficial for students to be away from campus. Giving them more freedom to live as they please. “I prefer to live off-campus because I find it much easier to destress from school,” Martinez said.

UNT has tried to provide more space for on-campus housing by building new residence halls on campus. New residence halls were built in the summer of 2018, including Joe Greene Hall. According to the [UNT website](#), “Joe Greene Hall was part of a \$58.9 million project that also included the new UNT Welcome Center.”

Although, even with the addition of new residence halls, there still has not been a proper solution that would help upperclassmen settle into new housing.

According to the [UNT website](#), more money has been funneled into fixing repairs, water leakages, and renovations to residence halls Clark and Maple Hall. While UNT has been trying to focus on fixing these problems, the lack of on-campus housing remains an ongoing issue.

According to the [North Texas Daily](#), on-campus housing has been so limited that UNT emailed current students \$1,000 to live off-campus. Students that relied on scholarships to live on campus are unable to use them for living off-campus. Students have complained about how the \$1,000

isn't helpful enough, leaving them to still struggle to find off-campus housing. Even those who accepted the buyout still found it to be troublesome rather than helpful.

The [North Texas Daily](#) reported, "Students of the University did say they find that this situation should have been handled more properly and UNT should have not have accepted as many students as it did."

According to the [North Texas Daily](#), many students have declined the buyout (only six out of 177 students accepted it), which led to the deletion of their room and termination of their meal plans. Additionally, many students who paid more for a single occupancy room were promised a room of their own but ended up living with a roommate.

UNT's negligence has raised concerns about upperclassmen living situations as well as not being guaranteed the accommodation of a possible dorm. Students have already raised concerns about their future housing and demand that UNT finds a solution to the problem immediately.

As more students are accepted into UNT, the burden continues to fall on the upperclassmen. Though some upperclassmen have an easier time than others when it comes to finding more suitable living options off-campus, the overall experience is a stressful one. Only time will tell how UNT will decide to move forward in addressing and resolving these issues.