Join us on Tuesday, 10/24 for our next webinar!

All presentations will be made available on our You Tube page “Terp Family”.
Helping Your Child Navigate Conflict From Afar

Ray Nardella, Centreville Resident Director
Jordan Adams, Elkton Resident Director
We want you to.....

• Gain an understanding of the context and philosophy of the roommate mediation process
• Gain advice and resources that you, as parent(s) or guardian(s), can use when your student is going through a roommate conflict
• Understand the process and policies around mediating a roommate conflict
• Understand the role of the student; the role of the RA; and the role of the RD with regard to handling roommate conflicts
• Roommate Relationships Across the Board:
  • First two weeks of the honeymoon phase
  • Listening to the positive comments about the roommate(s)
  • Distinguishing between small issues and filtering out irrelevant issues
• Does the story seem one-sided?
  • Understanding that there are multiple sides
  • Are they contributing to the issues? How?
• “Advice from my Father”: Jordan’s story
  • Asking rather than telling
    • At this point – Have they done the CLA? Talked to the roommate about values, beliefs? Have they listened to their roommate?
• Transferring these skills into post-UMD life
• Ray’s roommate conflict success story
Setting the Context: When the Issue Arises

- **Mediation**
  - Ideal mechanism for dealing with roommate issues
  - First source of resolution that staff will use

- **Room exchange (potential for additional problems)**
  - A room switch won't be the first option an RD seeks out

- **Parent/Guardian Support**
  - Counseling center warmline for parents
  - Calling via the community office

- **Social Media Realm**
  - Not a great channel to manage a situation
  - Does not tell the entire story
  - Many misconceptions and distorted views
• The phone call.....

• Does the story seem one-sided?
  ○ Understanding that there are multiple sides
  ○ Are they contributing to the issues? How?

• Remember: you are hearing your student in a very emotionally-charged state

• Have they spoke to their roommate(s) yet?
  ○ Why? Why not?

• Encouraging honesty

• Basic communication skills
  ○ “I” statements
    ■ non-accusatory
    ■ hard to argue with
    ■ demonstrates genuineness

  ○ Compromising
  ○ LISTENING- cannot be overemphasized
The Role of the RA

- RA Training
  - Extensive training in conflict mediation and community living
  - RA’s and other staff facilitate and structure the conversation; they do not dictate or order an outcome
    - Students are living in (and paying for) the space; not us
    - Students will learn to advocate for themselves
  - RA’s are trained to empower students to solve the issues at hand themselves

- CLA Training session
  - RA’s have intentional and specific conversations with students regarding their CLA’s
  - CLA’s must be certain criteria set by professional staff, and enhanced by RA’s, in order to be deemed satisfactory.
    - CLA’s: encourages honesty; plausibility of agreements; can be modified

- RA’s have access to see the CLA’s of their residents

- Mandatory RA check-ins during the 3rd and 6th weeks of the semester

- Advanced issues: RD or CD will intervene in the situation
When living with others, there are issues that tend to cause friction. These are highlighted below. If not addressed, little things can get blown out of proportion. **Please fill out all sections of this form before signing.**

When completing the sections of the CLA, consider how each resident’s identity or background experiences may influence one’s individual preferences related to the topics covered in each section.

**Communication:**
1. What steps will you take to communicate and resolve a disagreement or conflict that arises?
2. What methods will you use to communicate with each other if this agreement is not being followed?
   How/when will this agreement be revised?

**Cooperation: Sharing Space and Things:**
1. What temperature will you keep the space? Will you use a fan and if so, how?
2. Which of your belongings are you comfortable sharing and under what circumstances? What items are NOT okay for another person to use or require special permission to use?

**Cooperation: Sleeping and Studying:**
1. What are your expectations when trying to sleep (wake up/go to bed time, heavy/light sleeper, noise in room, lights-music-TV on/off, etc.)?
2. When will your space(s) be used as a primary place of study? What expectations do you have when studying?
Community Living Agreements

Cooperation: Visitors
1. Are visitors allowed in your space? If yes, who is allowed to visit and for how long? May visitors use your belongings?
2. How will you communicate with each other regarding visitors? How much notice is needed? How long may they stay?

Cooperation: Cleaning
1. What does keeping the space clean mean to you? Who will do the cleaning, and when?
2. Suite/Apt. residents & those who share bathrooms please print and complete a Cleaning Schedule
3. Address the following as appropriate:
   ● Trash and recycling
   ● Bathroom
   ● Kitchen
   ● Living Room and/or other common areas

Safety
1. How will you keep your space, belongings, and others in the space safe at all times? When will you lock the door?
2. It may be a good idea to let your roommate(s) know when you’ll be gone from the room for extended periods of time. How will you go about this?
Civility
1. What things/activities are you comfortable with in the space. What things/activities are you not comfortable with?
2. Identify and discuss aspects of your identity or experiences that may affect living together. Consider family background, dietary restrictions, cultural or spiritual background, etc.

Alcohol and Other Drugs
As stated in the Community Living handbook, UMD Residence Hall rules prohibit the following in the residence halls:
- Possession/use of alcohol by minors
- Kegs and other common sources of alcohol
- Parties involving alcohol
- Sale of alcohol
- Possession of alcohol in common areas
- Possession/use of any illegal drug is prohibited
- Sale, distribution or provision of any illegal drug
- Drug paraphernalia

You should discuss these rules, your expectations, and the choices you and your roommate(s) will make. Consider the following in your conversation:
1. What things or activities are you comfortable with in your room, suite, apartment?
2. What things or activities are you uncomfortable with in your room, suite, apartment?

Please complete all the sections of your agreement before signing.
Post-Mediation & Successful Remainder of the Semester

- What happens if they do not follow the new guidelines in their CLA amendments?
  - Resident will decide themselves, with guidance from staff

- Helping them understand the skills they’ve gained and how they may use them in the future.

- Checking in following individually within the next week to see how things are going

- Being reasonable about making the accommodation - it takes time to make a change in behavior.
  (openness, flexible)

- One back step does not mean that it is the end of the world, or that the entire process was a failure

- **Time AND process** will help resolve the issues; not a magic wand

- Help your student understand that you are proud/happy that they took it upon themselves to start the process to resolve these issues
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