What to look for in your off-campus housing search:

**PRICES**
- Monthly rental cost per person?
- How much do utilities cost?
- Is there a security deposit?
- Will you have to pay for parking?
- Any other fees?
- Are pets allowed? Is there a cost?
- Are you signing the lease individually or with others?
- Can you sublease?

**INTERIOR QUALITY**
- Is there considerable damage inside?
- Any minor damages to note?
- Are there any drafty windows or doors?
- Any signs of pests or bugs?
- How old is the unit?

**LOCATION**
- How far are you from campus?
- What is your form of transportation?

**SAFETY**
- Is there external lighting on the building?
- Are there cameras?
- Are there trees and branches near power lines?
- Any loose wires hanging anywhere?
- Are there enough outlets? Are there GFCI outlets in areas within 6 inches of water?
- Do the outside doors lock? Are they made of solid material?
- Do the windows have locks?
- Do the windows have screens?
- Do bedroom doors have their own locks?
- Are there working smoke detectors?
**Important Housing Terms to Know**

- **CO-SIGNER/GUARANTOR**: Someone who signs the lease with the primary person; they will be financially responsible for unpaid rent and damages.

- **JOINT AND SEVERAL LIABILITY**: Each tenant is responsible for not only their share of the rental costs, but also the entire rental amount and damages to the property.

- **SECURITY DEPOSIT**: Initial payment when signing a lease that covers potential damage and unpaid rent; often equal to one month’s rent. Whatever of the security deposit is not used for unpaid rent or repairs should be returned at end of lease period.

- **HOLDING DEPOSIT**: Money paid by tenants to “hold” a property prior to finishing signing a lease; property will be taken off the market during this time.

- **EGRESS REQUIREMENT**: Each individual bedroom must have safe “exits” (i.e., windows) that meet city codes; this is in case of emergency.

- **RENTER’S INSURANCE**: This is similar to homeowner’s insurance, but for those who rent property. Your landlord’s insurance does not cover your personal property. Premiums are typically low.

- **SUBLEASE**: Agreement between an original tenant on the lease with the landlord and another person (the sublessee). The sublessee is not on the original lease and takes over the tenant’s lease for an agreed duration. Make sure to check local laws and the lease agreement to confirm that subleasing is an option.