

# **VISITATION and COHABITATION POLICY**

*AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2006*

Residence halls are communities. The students who choose to live on campus accept the rights and responsibilities associated with communal living. More specifically, Dominican believes that students, by agreeing to live on campus, agree to certain roommate rights, including the right to sleep undisturbed in one's room without noise caused by roommates or guests, to have free access to one's room and its facilities without pressure or interference from roommates, and to personal privacy. Roommates and suitemates should always discuss during the first days of the academic year the rules that will govern how they operate within the room and suite. Agreements should be reviewed periodically by the residents of a room.

At Dominican, students who live in the residences have helped to develop for themselves and for the community a policy on visitation and cohabitation based on their experiences in the halls and their understanding of what works here. Civil laws, too, will have an impact on how students live in their environment.

Students, and roommates in particular, are expected to engage with each other in a positive, respectful manner, even when dealing with conflicts. It is doubtful that any roommates make it through a year without disagreements. The hallmark of "good" roommates is their willingness to calmly talk through their differences, and to seek compromise when appropriate. Students are encouraged to bear in mind that their actions may affect the entire student community. Sometimes the intervention of a facilitator (for example, the resident advisor) may be necessary for students in a room or suite to work out their differences.

Occasionally problems arise because of guests in a room. In the Dominican residence halls, *a visitor is defined as any person, including another Dominican student, who has not been assigned to live in the room he/she is temporarily occupying.* Guests are welcome; however, all hosts and guests are expected to abide by regulations that have been developed by students to assure the consideration of and respect of the host's roommates, suitemates, and members of the hall. Student hosts have the responsibility to inform their guests of University rules and regulations, and to inform their room/suitemates in advance of the arrival of a guest.

In general, visitors must vacate rooms by midnight each evening, not to return before noon of the following day, unless all residents of the room agree that the visitor may stay. If roommates (and suitemates as appropriate) agree to have a visitor stay beyond midnight the student host must register the guest with the RA. There are times when students may wish to study in their room with other students or classmates beyond midnight. Occasional late study hours are reasonable by most student standards and need not be cleared with the RA; however, all residents of the room must agree to having extended study sessions continue beyond midnight.

No guest may remain in the residence halls for more than three consecutive nights without permission of the Director of Residence Life. Violation of this policy may result in a \$50 fine per night for the host of a guest.

Cohabitation is never allowed in University residence halls. Cohabitation is defined as any visitation that disrupts the living unit or violates University social standards. Excessive and/or extended visitation is not allowed. The policy applies to a student's friends and to the student's sexual partners. The University will take appropriate disciplinary action against students who violate the cohabitation policy. Students considering violating it are urged to consider the liability of having members of the opposite sex or sexual partners remain in a room overnight as well as the University sanctions that will be imposed.

Students who violate the cohabitation policy will meet with the Director of Housing for a first offense. The director has the discretion of determining an appropriate sanction for the violation. For a second offense the student violator will be charged a fine of not less than fifty dollars. A third violation warrants dismissal from the residence halls. Some offenses may warrant an immediate dismissal no matter how many times the student has violated the policy.

Because men and women students frequently congregate in each other's rooms, a bathroom usage policy is necessary. Someone of the opposite sex should use the bathroom or the shower only with the consent of all roommates/suitemates, and never when an occupant of the room is using the bathroom or shower facilities. Student hosts have the responsibility to check with roommates and suitemates when someone of the opposite sex is using the facilities. For example, it is reasonable for the host to inform suitemates when someone of the opposite sex is using the bathroom. Residents of a room/suite should always discuss their comfort with this policy; they may collectively decide upon a more restrictive one.

Guests should be told by hosts that they may never park overnight in any of the residence hall lots. Guests must park overnight in the lot near Conlan Recreational Center, off Grand Avenue. Guests may never park in numbered spaces.