INTRODUCTION

Welcome to United States International University!

We believe that you have made the right choice and are very pleased to have you with us. This Handbook is for your convenience to identify services, programs and resources available to you as a resident student at the USIU Hostels. Your education takes place in the campus environment, as well as, the classroom. We are committed to providing services which benefit your health, safety, and welfare. We are equally committed to enhancing the opportunities for learning through various activities, recreational programs and personal relationships which make up life.

We are glad that you are now a member of the USIU family. Our life together is guided by the spirit of service, friendship and learning. This spirit allows us to share our intercultural resources and experiences outlined in this handbook. On behalf of the Vice-chancellor, Prof. Freida Brown, the management, faculty, staff and your fellow students, I wish you success in your educational life at USIU and hope that you will enjoy the USIU EXPERIENCE.

Sincerely,

Mrs. R.J Asunda

DVC, Student Affairs
INTRODUCTION

This Resident Student Handbook is an extension of your room contract. It supplements, but does not replace, the Student Handbook and/or any other university policies.

1.0 STUDENT RESIDENTIAL LIFE

1.1 University Housing – Introduction

USIU is mainly a ‘day-campus’ with very limited on-campus housing. Priority is therefore first given to international students. Should space permit, students from outside Nairobi City are then considered. You must be enrolled as a full-time student (9 credits units or more) at USIU to live in the Residence Halls. Graduate students must take a minimum of 6 credit units to be permitted to stay in the Residence Halls. For those interested in off-campus housing, a recommended list is available from the Housing Office.

USIU-housing allows students to live close to instructional and academic support buildings, the dining facility and other university services. Two residential buildings accommodate 256 students on campus. Facilities in the buildings include the Table Tennis/Darts Room, three TV Rooms and a Study Room.

Unlike most colleges, USIU Housing provides fully furnished rooms for two people each. Each room has two beds and mattresses, study tables, chairs and wardrobes. There are communal bathrooms on each floor shared by occupants from four rooms. Items you will need include:

- Bed linen
- Personal care products/toiletries
- Clothes hangers
- Stationary/writing materials
  The following items are optional
- Personal computers
- Sports equipment
- Rugs, décor
- Stereo

A telephone is located on each floor for incoming calls. You can coordinate with your roommate to create a living environment you will both enjoy.

Resident Assistants live on each wing to provide assistance and facilitate a positive community experience.
1.2 Rules and regulations

a) University rules and regulations are established to promote the safety and protection of students and to support educational experiences. Students accepted on campus housing must sign a statement committing them to read, understand and abide by the USIU Statement of Policies and Regulations.

b) All Kenyan national and provincial laws are in effect on the USIU campus. Violations of these laws are also violation of USIU policies and can result in arrest by outside enforcement authorities, in disciplinary action by USIU or both. Failure to comply with any university policies and regulations will result in disciplinary action by USIU.

c) USIU expects each student to assume the responsibility of protecting his or her own individual rights as well as the rights of others. Any persons violating any student’s rights will face appropriate disciplinary action including the possibility of suspension or dismissal.

1.3 ACCOMMODATION

1.3.1 Room Reservation

a) Due to the limited space available in the hostels, it is advisable for residents to secure their rooms for the following semester by completing the ROOM RESERVATION form as soon as it is availed to them and within the stated deadline.

b) All residents must pay residence fees in full and be cleared to reside in the hostels not later than the first Friday of the semester. The room allocation committee will re-allocate any spaces that will have not been paid for after the first week of the semester.

c) In making room assignments the Housing Office will not honor any requests for assignments or room change which discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, nationality, ancestry or disability. Whenever possible new residents will be assigned to their preferred locations or roommate.

d) All physically challenged students will be assigned rooms on the ground floor.

e) The Housing Office shall reserve the right to change room allocation.

f) Students wishing to cancel their reservation and get a refund must ensure that the Housing Office receives a written notice for the same no later than three (3) weeks prior to the first day of the semester; otherwise the deposit will be forfeited.

1.3.2 Check-in / Check-out

a) When checking into the room, the resident will be required to fill in a check-in form with his/her Resident Assistant. This form will then be checked during checkout and any damages other than normal wear and tear will be the resident’s responsibility.
b) Residents who fail to check-in or checkout properly will be liable to disciplinary action.

c) It is always advisable to inform the Resident Assistants a week before you plan to leave (check-out)

d) At the end of their last semester in the hostels, resident will be required to clear all fees and other charges, process a FINAL CLEARANCE form from the Finance Office and receive the balance of caution money (if any).

e) All residents MUST vacate the rooms on the last day of checkout.

f) If a resident fails to hand in his or her keys with the appropriate housing staff, it will be assumed that he/she is still occupying the room and will be charged accordingly, i.e. for the number of days the student was away with the keys. In addition, the room will be evacuated with the help of the auxiliary security and reassigned to the next person on the waiting list.

g) No resident is allowed to change his or her room, without prior approval by the Housing Office. Room change forms are available in the Housing Office.

h) All personal belongings of NON-CONTINUING residents left in student residence rooms after checkout will be confiscated and disposed of.

1.3.3 Caution Money/Deposit

a) Caution money is payable together with the room and board fee for all new residents. Caution money is a one-time payment only and fully refunded at the time of final checkout if no damage to university property is assessed.

b) Residents who do not officially withdraw from the hostel and yet do not return to the hostel the following semester will forfeit this deposit. Only residents who formally withdraw (check-out) from the hostel may apply for a refund of their caution money by filling a Refund Form available in the Housing Office.

c) Please note that any outstanding charges due to loss or damage to university property by a student will be deducted from the caution money before refund. In case the cost of damage exceeds the caution money, the student will have to settle the difference before a final clearance form is approved.

1.3.4 Room and Board Cancellation/Refund Policy

Housing contracts are for a full semester. Refunds of partial or full amounts are made on the basis of the following policies:
a) A student leaving the hostel before the end of the semester without completing the checkout procedure will receive NO REFUND OR CREDIT for room and board and will in addition forfeit the refundable caution money.

b) A student leaving the hostel before the end of the semester for reasons of personal convenience or choice will receive NO REFUND OR CREDIT, even if they complete the checkout procedure.

c) A student leaving the hostel before the end of a term for reasons beyond the student’s control (e.g. verified medical reasons) or who withdraws from the University and completes the required checkout procedure, may receive a refund of the room and board fee based on the number of weeks left in the semester.

d) All withdrawals from the hostel which may result in refunds or credits must be approved by the Head of Housing, or anyone designated to do so, with due consideration given in situations involving medical emergencies or other circumstances beyond the student’s control.

e) There are no refunds or credits during the last 4 weeks of a semester.

f) A resident who is suspended or expelled from the hostel WILL NOT receive any refunds and will forfeit the caution money. A suspended student has to re-apply for a room and pay caution money again.

**1.3.5 Termination by the University**

a) Endangering behavior: In exceptional circumstances involving dangerous behavior or the potential for it to occur, a resident may be asked to leave the USIU Residence Halls. USIU may terminate the resident’s contract prior to its expiry and remove the resident immediately from his/her room in the event the resident’s behavior is or has the serious potential of becoming dangerous to him / herself or others.

b) The reasons for terminating a resident’s housing contract for ‘endangering behavior’ must be set forth in writing and approved by the Dean of Students in consultation with the DVC-Student Affairs. Once approved the resident will be required to leave the Residence Halls immediately and, if necessary, may be removed by campus security officials, even though he/she may appeal the decision subsequent to leaving.

c) A resident whose housing contract has been terminated for ‘endangering behavior’ has ten (10) days after termination to appeal the decision in writing to the DVC-Student Affairs, stating reasons for the appeal as per the Appeal procedure in the Student Handbook.
1.3.6 Liability

a) During check-in, a CHECK-IN/OUT FORM will be filled out by a Resident Assistant and signed by the occupant. It will be used to double check for loss or damage to university property and to assess charges when the occupant vacates the room.

b) Residents MUST carry their keys at all times or leave them in their pigeonhole with the knowledge of the Hostel Receptionist. IT IS THE RESIDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY TO SAFEGUARD HIS/HERS KEYS.

c) All keys to shared facilities in the Common Rooms, Student Center etc, MUST be signed out for. Before using such facilities, it is the responsibility of the student who signs for the key to ensure that the facility has no damage(s) and is fully functional. The key should be returned within the stated time.

d) Residents are not allowed to give their room keys to anyone, except the designated staff.

1.3.7 Community Expectations

a) Residents are expected to be considerate to their neighbors and keep noise levels down at all times. Music and noise must be kept extremely low especially after 10 p.m. and before 10 a.m. Students who persistently violate this rule will receive a written WARNING. After three such warnings, more serious disciplinary action will be taken against them.

b) A resident’s right to sleep or study takes precedence over a roommate’s desire to have guests, watch television, and talk etc. in the room. Denying your roommate’s access to the room or interfering with his/her right to study or sleep is prohibited.

c) Any act, which violates USIU or Housing policies or endangers the health, safety or well being of any person, is prohibited. Intentionally or recklessly causing physical harm to any person, including assault, harassment, or creating a threatening situation is prohibited.

d) Sexual, racial, religious harassment or verbal abuse is prohibited.

e) Providing false information, lying, forgery, or any other types of misrepresentation concerning a violation of policy, when questioned by a Housing Staff member or any other university official, is prohibited.

f) Theft, vandalism and damage to property are prohibited.

g) Any type of solicitations (for donations, raffle tickets etc) without proper registration and approval from the Dean of Students or the Housing Office is prohibited. Any commercial form of business operated anywhere within the hostels is prohibited.
h) Playing sports is not allowed anywhere inside the Residence Halls or the walkways around it except in the designated areas.

i) Each Resident is responsible for cleaning his/her own room, maintaining university items and complying with safety conditions acceptable to the Housing Office. The Housekeeping staff will clean rooms ONCE a week.

j) Furniture SHOULD NOT be removed from rooms or common rooms to which it has been allocated unless authorized by the Housing Office. Unauthorized movements of housing items will result in a Conduct Warning. This includes TVs, VCRs and any other hostel property.

1.3.8 Late Nights and Overnight

a) If you plan to stay out overnight, inform the Hostel Receptionist and your roommate or Resident Assistant when you expect to return on campus and where you can be contacted in case of an emergency. You MUST also leave your immediate contact with the Hostel Receptionist’s Office.

b) You may leave your key with the Hostel Receptionist if you wish, when you stay out overnight.

c) No student is allowed to spend a night in a room that is not assigned to him/her.

1.3.9 Hostels Cleanliness

a) Dustbins are provided in the rooms, along the corridors and at the hostel entrance for your convenience.

b) Personal clothing or laundry is permitted to hang on the laundry lines outside the resident flats. No clothes shall be hung in the bathrooms or on the railings outside the rooms.

c) There is a cleaning schedule for your floor with your Block Resident Assistant. Residents should be available to admit the cleaning staff into their rooms or should leave their keys at the Receptionist’s Office and duly inform the Room Attendant. Brooms and mops are available for use by residents. All students are expected to keep their rooms clean.

d) To prepare rooms for cleaning, residents are expected to clear all surfaces. If you want the area under the bed cleaned, pull the bed away from the wall.

e) It is absolutely prohibited to stick nails or otherwise affix things that can damage the walls or mirrors in the room. Residents will be charged for any damages assessed.
1.3.10 Room Inspection

The Head of Housing and his team- consisting of Receptionists, RA’s, DRAB and any other student leaders in the hostels- in conjunction with the USIU security team is authorized to carry out unannounced room inspections periodically.

Violation of any University and/or Housing policies including sleeping in rooms not assigned to one, cohabitation, possession of alcohol, drugs and/or weapons will attract disciplinary action.

1.4 RESIDENT ASSISTANTS (RAs)

a) Resident Assistants (RAs) are appointed after a rigorous process that involves both written and oral interviews. They serve in different areas including hostel reception, maintenance, entertainment, etc and help in the administration of the hostels. They also:

- Act as a bridge between the administration and the resident students
- Arbitrate in case of disputes between residents
- Officially check residents in and out of the hostels.
- Handle problems and questions in the hostels and work with the Head of Housing.
- Inspect all hostel areas to ensure that proper cleaning is done.

b) To be an RA, one must be a registered student with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above, must be of good character, with no caution or disciplinary memos and possess leadership qualities. The student must also show proof of need for Financial Aid.

c) Resident Assistants serve for a term of one year with a possibility of re-appointment for a final one term. Benefits include university paid for room and board in the university hostels. Qualified candidates are encouraged to apply when the positions are posted.

1.5 (i) DEAN’S – RESIDENTS’ ADVISORY BOARD (DRAB)

a) This is a body composed of three elected students among the resident community. It is a body whose major task is to represent the students on major issues affecting their lives in the hostels by acting as their spokespeople to the administration and vice versa.

b) Committee members serve for a one-year term, but can be re-elected for another term.

Eligibility

(a) To be in DRAB, a resident must have been in the hostels for a period of at least 3 semesters; must not be in his/her final year; have a cumulative GPA of 2.75 and above; must be of good character; with no caution or disciplinary memos and possess leadership qualities. In addition, they should have been active in resident students’ activities.
(b) DRAB Members shall be automatic members of the Entertainment Committee. The DRAB official in charge of entertainment shall be the chair of the Entertainment Committee.
(ii) THE ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE
(a) The Entertainment Committee shall consist of ten members, all elected annually by Residents.
(b) Any vacant positions in DRAB shall be filled by members of the Entertainment Committee, upon consultation between the Head of Housing and the Committee.

1.6 VISITORS

a) Visitors are NOT ALLOWED in the hostels before the hours of 8.00 a.m. and after 10.30 p.m. every day. Any resident entertaining visitors between the hours of 10.30 p.m. and 8.00 a.m. will be subject to disciplinary action

b) Resident students must ensure that their visitors are SIGNED IN and SIGNED OUT at the Hostel Reception.

c) Visitors are expected to observe University rules and be courteous to residents while in the hostel. Any visitors causing a disturbance will be removed from the hostels and may be barred from entering the Hostels.

d) At least one of the occupants of a room must be present in the room when visitors are there. Occupants will be held responsible for any disturbances or damages caused by their visitor(s).

e) The University neither has, nor makes provisions for couples, regardless of their sexual orientations, to live together in the rooms. Sleepovers and/or co-habitation of any type is strictly prohibited

f) Friends and relatives including spouses of residents are not permitted to stay overnight in the Hostels, even in cases of emergency. There are several hotels and hostels nearby with inexpensive accommodations.

g) Registered students who are not residents are considered visitors and may not enter the hostels before 8.00 a.m. and after 10.30 p.m.

h) Students who are not registered for the semester in progress are also considered visitors and must be signed in and out at the hostel reception.

i) The resident who is visited should take responsibility to inform his/her visitor(s) about hostel regulations.

j) No resident is allowed to be in another resident’s room after 12.30 a.m. and before 8.00 a.m.

k) The University reserves the right to regulate admission of visitor(s) to the hostels.
1.7 PARKING

Residents who wish to park a vehicle in the compound must have the car registered with campus security. Residents should park their cars in the designated areas and at their own risk.

1.8 DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND MISBEHAVIOUR

a) Under no circumstances will alcohol, alcoholic beverages or drugs, other than those prescribed by a physician, be permitted on campus.

b) Anyone found drinking, using, possessing alcohol or drugs (including “miraa”), or merely keeping company to drinking group(s) – in other words, sitting in the same room where alcohol or drugs are being consumed on campus – is in violation of this regulation and is liable for disciplinary action as per the Alcohol Use and Drug Policy stipulated in the Student Handbook.

c) If a student is intoxicated and behaves in a disorderly manner while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, (even though it may not have been taken on campus), this will be considered grounds for suspension or expulsion from the Hostels.

d) VERBAL or PHYSICAL threats, INTIMIDATION or PHYSICAL ASSAULTS towards anyone on campus or at university sponsored events off campus, are all grounds for disciplinary actions. CHEATING, PLAGIARISM AND STEALING of any kind are also disallowed.

e) Students are advised to report infractions and grievances, instead of taking the law into their own hands.

f) Students who are suspended or expelled are not entitled to any REFUND of any fees paid for the semester in progress. If they have not paid their fees before the suspension or expulsion, they will be expected to pay the fees for the same semester before they may be considered for re-admission.

g) The University will not be responsible for negotiating for the release of students who have been arrested outside campus.

h) The University can at its own discretion conduct drug/alcohol tests if there is strong suspicion that a student is high on drugs/ alcohol.

1.9 SMOKING

a) Smoking is STRICTLY PROHIBITED in the hostel buildings
1.10 WEAPONS

All types of weapons MUST be deposited with the Security or Housing Office for safekeeping. This includes souvenir weapons such as spears, swords, arrows, etc. WEAPONS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE ROOMS.

2.0 OTHER SERVICES

2.1 Cafeteria Services

For details on Cafeteria services, please refer to the Student Handbook

2.2 Linen and Laundry Services

a) Residents are expected to bring their own beddings.

b) There are laundry facilities available to residents on campus. Personal laundry will be charged per item.

2.3 Health Services

a) All residents are required to submit PRE-ENTRANCE PHYSICAL EXAMINATION and sign up for the university’s HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM that has been established by the university to protect and ensure healthful conditions for all students. For further information, check with the Health Services Coordinator in the Health Centre or the Head of Housing on arrival.

b) All students should submit their medical history to the University health Centre within the first week of arrival.

c) Medical insurance is compulsory for all residents. However, residents who have alternative medical cover will be exempted from the university cover upon documentary proof. Residents must meet the cost of insurance.

d) Whenever a student is ill or injured, he or she should report to the Health Centre, the Resident Assistants and/or Receptionists.

e) PREGNANT students are not permitted to stay in the hostels. The university authorities reserve the right to carry out pregnancy tests in case of a dispute.

f) There is a FIRST AID KIT (available 24 hours) with the Resident Assistants for minor disturbances / injuries. Resident assistants will refer serious cases to the Health Center. What cannot be handled by the Health Centre will be referred to the hospital(s) approved by the insurance company.
g) Please always call the Head of Housing, Resident Assistants or Receptionists in cases of emergencies. UNPRESCRIBED OR SELF-MEDICATION IS ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED

h) Residents are advised to carry their Medical and Student I.D. cards at all times i.e. on and off campus.

2.4 Residents’ Telephone Calls

a) Residents’ in-coming calls are normally put through to the telephone extensions on the corridors.

b) Every effort will be made to locate residents when they are out of their rooms. If you want to receive all your calls, it will help to let the Receptionist and/or the switchboard operator know where you are whenever you are not in your room. Otherwise, messages are left at the Receptionists’ desk or in the pigeonholes.

c) Students wishing to have their private telephones installed in their rooms may obtain permission from the Student Affairs Office after which they must contact the Telephone Services Provider, at their own expense.

2.5 Mail and Message Sheet

Personal mail may be picked up at the Student Affairs Office or in the provided pigeonholes at the hostel reception. If you wish to leave messages for callers when you are out, ask the receptionists on duty for the Message Sheet and fill in your name and the message. Receptionists will not be responsible for transmitting verbal messages to your callers.

3.0 GUIDELINE ON LITERATURE AND POSTERS ON HOSTEL NOTICE BOARDS

a) The Housing Office MUST approve all posters, flyers, advertisements, notices etc., if it is for the notice boards in the Residence Halls.

b) Before you bring these items to the Housing Office, ensure that:

- 75% of all writing is in English or translated.
- These items do not advertise alcohol, drinking or any other information or event prohibited by the University.
- The literature must be dated.
- The information contained must have been approved by the Administration.

Kindly refer to the Student Handbook for guideline on the use of other university facilities for advertisement.
4.0 SAFETY

4.1 Valuables/Lost and Found Items

a) It is risky to leave any valuable items in your room. You may deposit them with the Finance Office or with the Head of Housing.

b) Lost and found items should be taken to, or looked for, at the Receptionists’ Desk, Housing Office or at the Security Desk.

4.2 Increase Your Safety

a) Lock doors. You should not only lock doors when you are away, but also when you are asleep or in the shower.

b) Keep a list of your belongings and give a copy to someone who lives elsewhere. The list should include serial and model numbers and a description of items. Keeping sales receipts and photographing your valuables is also a good idea.

c) Encourage your roommate to help you maintain security.

d) Notify Campus Security immediately you observe someone acting suspiciously or see evidence of possible security risks.

e) Report lost keys, broken locks or outdoor lighting that is not working to the Resident Assistant.

f) Residents are not allowed to give their room keys to anyone, except the designated staff.

g) While the University takes all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety and security of students occupying University-managed accommodation, the University cannot accept responsibility, and expressly excludes liability, for loss or damage to students’ personal property (including computer equipment and software), money or any other consequential loss where such loss or damage is a result of theft, fire, flood, act of God etc.

h) It is recommended that students insure personal property against the risk of loss and damage.

4.3 Fire Safety Tips

a) Do not overload electrical outlets or extension cords.

b) Learn the designated escape routes. Remember that during a fire you may not be able to rely on lights and the main exit may be unusable.

c) Know the location of fire extinguishers. Caution: Use extinguishers only for small fires that don’t involve great risk.
d) Once a fire starts, get out of the building and inform the hostel receptionist. Never go back into a burning building.

e) Sleep with the door tightly closed. Smoke from a fire can travel very rapidly through open passageways.

f) If you suspect fire on the other side of a door feel the door near the top. If it is hot, don’t open it. If you think it is safe, brace your shoulder against the door and open cautiously. Be prepared to slam it if smoke or heat rush in.

g) Because toxic fumes and high temperatures usually fill the higher levels of air, it is best to crawl out of a burning building. Cover your face with a cloth preferably damp.

h) Setting any material on fire, possession or use of flammable or highly combustible material is prohibited.

i) Fire Drills will be conducted regularly and all residents MUST participate. All residents must evacuate during practice fire, bomb or earthquake preparedness drills and at ALL other times when the alarm is disarmed. Failure to participate in a fire drill may lead to disciplinary action.

5.0 ENTERTAINMENT

5.1 Board Games

Board games such as chess, draughts, scrabble and monopoly are available at the hostel reception. Games may not be taken out of the hostels. Residents are expected to return all games in their possession within 24 hours.

5.2 Video Facilities

A. Residents are allowed to use the Entertainment Facilities in the Common Rooms. Arrangements may be made with the Head of Housing or RA to borrow some movies from the Video Library.

B. Videocassettes rented by the university should not be taken off campus.

C. The university reserves the right to accept or reject film for viewing in the hostels. “X” rated films are not appropriate.

D. Playing of electronic games in the common rooms is STRICTLY prohibited.

5.3 Trips/Activities

The Housing team organizes day and overnight trips, and other entertainment options each semester at a minimal cost to students. Information on trips or any other activity will be posted on the notice boards.
6.0 SANCTIONS AND POLICIES

If a resident is reported to have violated any of the rules and regulations of the University, and/or those listed in this housing policy, the disciplinary procedures, disciplinary charges, and hearing procedures followed will be in accordance with the policy of STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT: NON-ACADEMIC in the Student handbook. Please note that disciplinary sanctions comprise disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal, all depending on the seriousness of the violation.

Students placed on any of these sanctions may appeal to the DVC-Student Affairs according to the established procedures stipulated in the Student Handbook.

6.1 Policy of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of USIU to provide equal education and employment opportunities without unlawful discrimination of any kind, including harassment or retaliation for reporting a complaint. For more information on this policy, please refer to the Student Handbook.

6.2 Sexual Harassment Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide notification against sexual harassment as a form of sexual discrimination and to provide notification of available remedies. For more information on this policy, please refer to the Student Handbook.

6.3 Sexual Assault Policy

USIU will not tolerate sexual harassment in any form, including acquaintance rape. Sexual assault is a violent crime and includes all forms of sexual contact carried out against the will and without the consent of the victim. For more information on this policy, please refer to the Student Handbook.

6.4 Disclosure and Release of Student Information

The University affords students certain rights with respect to their records.

- The right to inspect and review the student’s educational or non-educational records, within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.
- The rights to request the amendment of the student’s educational records that the student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy or rights.

For more information on this policy, please refer to the Student Handbook.
6.5 Academic Code of Conduct and Ethics

The University is committed to principles of scholastic honesty. Its members are expected to abide by ethical standards both in their conduct and in their exercise of responsibility towards other members of the community. For more information on this policy, please refer to the Student Handbook.

Enjoy your stay! Your participation and cooperation makes your “home away from home” the place it is.