APARTMENT 101
Off Campus Living 2015
GETTING STARTED

Questions to Ask

Words to Know
Words to Know

- Tenant
- Realtor
- Landlord
- Property Manager
- Co-signer
- Lease
- Addendum
Questions to Ask Yourself

• What’s my monthly budget?
• Who will I live with? (no more than 4!)
• How many bedrooms?
• Do I have a co-signer?
• What neighborhood?
• Need parking? T access?
**Things to Consider**

- Plan finances: First/Last/Security/Realtor fee
- Does your financial aid award apply?
- Pick roommate(s) carefully (*green handout*)
- Consider academic/coop schedule
- Standard Lease: *September 1- August 31*
- Unfurnished is the norm
What’s My BUDGET?

**Monthly Costs**
- Rent
- Utilities - electricity, heat, hot water
- Transportation - gas, T, parking
- Cable, internet
- Groceries

**One Time Expenses**
- First month rent
- Last month rent
- Security deposit
- Realtor fee
- Furniture
- Installation fees
- Moving expenses
BE A SMART TENANT

My Rights & Responsibilities

Be a Good Neighbor
Utilize your Resources

• Off Campus Student Services
  226 Curry Student Center

• Website neu.edu/offcampus

• Off-Campus Housing database
  neu.edu/offcampus/apartment

• Friends, Word of Mouth
On-Line Database

- FREE for NU students
- Find roommates
- Listers with “clean” records based on student feedback
Welcome to the Northeastern University Off-Campus Housing Service!
Know Your Tenant **RIGHTS**

- Inspect the apartment *(yellow checklist)*
  - Clean & Sanitary? Good condition?
- Meet the Landlord
- No more than 4 undergraduates
- ALL names on the lease
Select a SAFE Home

- Clean & Sanitary
- Alarms: Smoke & Carbon Monoxide
- Locks: door & window
- Secure lobby
- Good lighting
- Unsafe roof/alley access
- Walking route to/from campus
- Proximity to T-stop?
Your Tenant RESPONSIBILITIES

• Understand lease & addendum
• Prepared to follow the rules in lease
• Familiar with City housing codes
  www.CityofBoston.gov
• Lack of understanding is not an excuse
Be a **Great Neighbor**

- Living off campus means your neighbors are no longer just students!
  - Families, young professionals and elderly

- Be aware of your impact
  - Noise, parties, loud music
  - Code of Conduct applies off-campus
Be Part of Your Community

• Now you’re a resident of Boston – get involved!
  • Meet your neighbors
  • Neighbor-to-Neighbor
  • Mission Hill Road Race
  • Local cleanups
WHAT MAKES A GOOD REALTOR?

Ethical Behavior, Standards & Expectations
FIND a GOOD REALTOR....

• Listed on Off-Campus Housing database
• Listens to & answers your questions
• Explains fees
• Passes the “gut test”
• Apartment Fair - Feb 4 @ 4-7 pm
GOOD REALTOR Standards
(tan handout)

- Provides list of services/fees/due dates
- Promotes state & local housing codes
- Good standing with Better Business Bureau
- Shows actual, available properties
- Physical office location
RENTAL APPLICATION

- Allows landlord to conduct credit and background check on you & co-signer.

- Basis on which decision is made to rent the property to you.

- Employment
- Income
- Credit Reference
- Social Security
- Driver's Registration
- Past Evictions
- Bank Accounts
- Personal References
REALTOR or Broker FEE

• Most realtors in Boston charge realtor fee
• Maximum of 1 month’s rent
• ASK- fee *may* be negotiable!
• Property managers don’t have realtor fees
• Rental Brokerage Fee Disclosure form
  • Agree to pay fee for apartment shown by specific realtor
Be Aware:

The realtor’s priority is to the landlord or property owner, *not you* (the tenant).

- However, you are paying them – so get the best deal for YOU!
- Check if the agency has a good reputation
FINDING A GOOD LANDLORD

Understand what’s in the Lease
References
What’s a LEASE?

The legal binding contract between you & the landlord.

- **One year contract** – standard is Sept 1-Aug 31
- **Addendum** – other terms & expectations added to lease.
- **Read CAREFULLY**; the lease outlines all terms of your relationship with the landlord
STANDARD FORM APARTMENT LEASE (FIXED TERM)

Date:____________________

Name: ____________________________________________ Address: ____________________________________________

City/State/Zip: ___________________________ Phone Number: ____________________________

Lessor, ____________________________________________ hereby leases to ____________________________

(Name) (Address/City/State/Zip) ____________________________ (Phone Number) ____________________________

Lessee, who hereby hires the following premises, viz (Apartment/Suite) ____________________________ at (Street or Address) ____________________________ MA (Zip) ____________________________ (consisting of) ____________________________

for the term of ____________________________ beginning ____________________________ and terminating on ____________________________

The rent to be paid by the Lessee for the leased premises shall be as follows:

RENT:

A: The term rent shall be $________, payable, except as herein otherwise provided, in installments of $________, on the _________ day of every month, in advance, so long as this lease is in force and effect;

B: However, if in any tax year commencing with the fiscal year _________ the real estate taxes on the land and buildings, of which the leased premises are a part, are in excess of the amount of the real estate taxes thereon for the fiscal year (herein called the “Base Year”, and being the most recent year in which the Lessor has actually received a real estate tax bill for the leased premises) Lessee will pay to Lessor as additional rent hereunder, when and as designated by notice in writing by Lessor, _________ per cent of such excess that may occur in each year of the term of this Lease or any extension or renewal thereof and proportionately for any part of a fiscal year. The Lessor represents to the Lessee that the term rent set forth in the immediately preceding paragraph (A) does not reflect any real estate tax increase subsequent to the said Base Year. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, the Lessee shall be obligated to pay only that proportion of such increased tax as the unit leased by Lessee bears to the whole of the real estate so taxed, and if the Lessor obtains an abatement of the real estate tax levied on the whole of the real estate of which the unit leased by Lessee is a part, a proportionate share of such abatement, less reasonable attorney’s fees, if any, shall be refunded to said Lessee.

LESSEE AND LESSEE FURTHER COVENANT AND AGREE:

1) MAINTENANCE- For maintenance, if other than lessor, contact:

Name: ____________________________________________ Phone Number: ____________________________

Address: ____________________________________________ City/State/Zip: ____________________________

2) ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS -
Components of a LEASE

- Name, address, contact info for repairs
- Amount of rent and date due
- All names on lease
- Addendum - the landlord’s “extra” rules
- Accept or make changes BEFORE signing!
The Security Deposit

- Landlord collects to cover damages, or if you leave owing rent
- Can’t exceed 1 month’s rent
- Due before move in
- If no damages at end of lease, landlord owes 100% of security deposit PLUS INTEREST
SELECTING A NEIGHBORHOOD

Variety of rents, services & “personality”
BOSTON Area Neighborhoods

Close-by:
- Fenway
- Back Bay
- Kenmore/Fens
- Mission Hill
- Roxbury
- South End

Near-by:
- Allston / Brighton
- Brookline
- Cambridge
- Jamaica Plain
- Malden
- Somerville
Fenway

- Neighborhood closest to NU
- Mix of private condos and student apartments
- Convenience and demand = higher rents
- Borders freshman residence halls

Green Line-“E”
5 minute walk
Back Bay

- Named for “back of the bay” of Boston
- Diverse and trendy shopping
- Victorian brownstone architecture, higher rents
Kenmore/Fens

- Home to Red Sox, Citgo sign and “Fens” recreation area.
- Larger apartment buildings; mix of students & young professionals.

Green Line – All except “E”
15 minute walk
South End

Orange Line
10-15 minute walk

- Victorian style brownstones
- Diverse population of residents & young professionals
- Great location for theater, arts & ethnic cuisine
Mission Hill

Green Line - “E”
15-20 minute walk

- Fitzgerald Park offers skyline views; walking & jogging trails.
- Triple deckers, competitive rents & college students.
- Cause for high police presence & friction with long-time residents.
Allston/Brighton

• “Comm Ave” is the main drag.
• The B - Green Line runs down center from Boston University out to Boston College.
• Apartment buildings & many college students.
Jamaica Plain (aka JP)

- Situated between Roxbury and Brookline.
- Variety of housing and strong sense of neighborhood.

Green Line – “E”
Orange Line
30 minute walk or
15 minute commute
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<th>Area</th>
<th>Studio</th>
<th>1-Bedroom</th>
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RECOMMENDED TIMELINE

January-February
- Talk to family/co-signer
- Identify Roommates
- Apply for on-campus housing

February-March
- Attend Apartment Fair
- Select Realtor/Property Manager
- View apartments (10-20)

February- April
- Sign Lease
Advice from NU Huskies (purple handout)

- USE APARTMENT SEARCH TOOLS

- FIND a REALTOR & LANDLORD you TRUST
  If you get a bad feeling, move on!

- TALK TO CURRENT TENANTS
  No one knows more about apartment or landlord than current tenants.
Advice from NU Huskies

✓ THINK ABOUT NEIGHBORS
   Does your lifestyle match the family, professional or elder who may live next door?

✓ CHECK CONDITION OF APARTMENT
   Does it meet safety standards?
Advice from NU Huskies

✓ ALL TENANTS ON THE LEASE
   No name, no rights!

✓ GET EVERYTHING IN WRITING
   Get copy of your signed lease and receipts for ANY money you pay.

✓ LEGAL AND ILLEGAL FEES
   Understand the difference
Advice from NU Huskies

- RENTERS INSURANCE

- UNDERSTAND YOUR RIGHTS

Go to www.cityofboston.gov/rentalhousing
Important Dates

ANNUAL APARTMENT FAIR

Start your search here!

FEBRUARY 4th @ 4 – 7 pm

Curry Student Center – Indoor Quad
Keep up with what’s happening on and off-campus!

Follow Us!

@NUOffCampus  #AptFair

facebook.com/neuoffcampus
QUESTIONS?

Off Campus Student Services
226 Curry Student Center
offcampus@neu.edu
617-373-8480