

PROPOSAL: Student Room, Board, and Apartment Rates 2024-2025

Background

For 2023/24, Western Michigan University operated 14 residence halls, two dining facilities, eight cafés, four retail locations and four apartment-style complexes. In the fall 2023 semester, 4,110 residents lived on-campus, and 84.94% of degree seeking, first time freshmen chose to live in the residence halls. Apartment complexes maintained a very high occupancy rate of 95.5% for fall 2023.

Providing an exceptional student experience is first and foremost for Housing and Dining operations. Many experiences contribute to students' overall educational achievement and wellbeing. Some examples include camaraderie and friendships that develop while sharing a meal, engaging in residence hall programs, gaining meaningful work experience as a student employee in housing or dining, or developing new skills in a student leadership position.

First year students who live on campus are retained at WMU at a rate 11% higher on average than their off-campus peers. In 2023, 78% of students living in the residence halls agreed or strongly agreed that living on campus supports their academic success, and 94% would recommend living on campus to new students.

With the opening of the new Student and Dining Center fall 2023, all dining centers and more than 40% of the current housing portfolio have been constructed since 2011. We are engaged in planning for new housing in the former Valley 3 location. The process to raze the existing Valley 3 residence halls will begin this summer. An integrated planning and budgeting approach provided the resources necessary to accomplish these major facility upgrades.

This year's recommendation continues to support and assist WMU in recruitment, retention, and student success efforts.

Recommended Action

It is recommended the administration be authorized to implement a 5.0% increase to student room and board rates, a 3.0% increase for Stadium Drive Apartments and Spindler Hall, and a 4.0% increase for Western View and Arcadia Flats for 2024/25, effective fall semester 2024.