

On and off-campus housing gets harder to find

By MICHAEL TOOLE
Tar Heel Staff Writer

On-campus housing space is "tight as usual" for the upcoming fall semester, but the difficult process of assigning rooms to freshmen and continuing students is running smoothly, according to an official with the department of University housing.

Collin Rustin, associate director for housing contracts, said a computer program, used for the first time this year, has enabled the housing department to grant 85 percent of the freshmen who submitted their applications prior to May 13 the residence hall or area of their choice.

"The computer probably helped us to do it more effectively than we could of by hand,"

Rustin said.

Despite the computer's aid in speeding room assignments, Rustin said 185 freshmen still have not been assigned housing space, due partly to the necessity of hand-processing applications received after May 13.

These students will be temporarily assigned until contract cancellations and no-shows in the fall open the way for permanent room assignment, Rustin said.

Rustin said about 380 returning students and junior transfers — 150 men and 230 women — who are now on a waiting list for housing also have not yet received space.

These students, most of whom were put on the waiting list last spring after the housing lottery closed out 1,117 residents, will have to wait for spaces to open up, Rustin said.

"If we have a lot of cancellations and no-shows, the waiting lists will go fast," Rustin said.

Last year the women's waiting list was not exhausted until Oct. 15 and the men's list until Dec. 16, but the tuition increase and a later starting date for classes this year could move those dates forward, Rustin said.

"It will be interesting to see what effect the tuition increase will have on the number of cancellations," Rustin said.

Rustin said 125 students have already been assigned off the waiting list.

Another factor which could ease the on-campus housing crunch is the recent practice of not requiring freshmen to live in residence

halls or Granville Towers. Although they are still guaranteed housing on campus, about 85 freshmen chose to live off-campus last year. The number could be over 100 this year, Rustin said.

"But there's really no way we'll know how many decide to live off campus until we go back and count," he added.

Those students seeking off-campus accommodations — both freshmen and upperclassmen alike — also should have it easier than in past years, Rustin said.

While Granville Towers, a privately owned dormitory, has a lengthy waiting list, Rustin said many managers of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro areas 80 apartment complexes report vacancies or short waiting lists.

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