

2019-2020 Theme Housing Application Information

The Theme Housing program at Kenyon College provides a unique living experience that enables a group of students to live together and explore a common interest or theme to positively impact the Kenyon community. This group of students is self-directed and self-governed through the use of goal-setting and a house contract. Theme Houses include apartments, suites, houses, or blocks of residence hall rooms that can house four to eight students.

According to Alexander Astin's report to *the National Institute of Education, Involvement in Learning*, "every institute of higher education should strive to create learning communities organized around specific intellectual themes or tasks." The Theme Housing program at Kenyon College provides an opportunity for faculty, administrators, and students to engage in programs and dialogues that stimulate participation in the living-learning process.

Please read the information below on theme housing. Each organization (new or re-applicant) must complete the attached application and return it to the **Office of Residential Life (ORL) on or before Monday, February 4, 2019 by 4:00 pm.** The Specialty Housing Board will review each application and each applicant organization will be interviewed on Sunday, February 10. Once received, an interview sign-up sheet (google doc) will be sent to the 'Main Contact Person(s)' listed on the application. At the interview, all students wishing to live in the specific area must be present. Selections and notifications will be made the following week. Please feel free to contact ORL at reslife@kenyon.edu or at 740-427-5142.

Details on actual housing assignments and sign-up for members of approved organizations will be emailed at the time of selection. Assignments will be made based upon the organization's needs and will be comparable to housing that members of the applicant group would be able to select during the regular Housing Lottery process.

Purpose:

The purpose of theme housing is to provide an opportunity for students with a common interest to incorporate their interest into the collegiate living experience. Each applicant group should have a purpose consistent with its theme and with the mission of the College. The organization must demonstrate how living together will help them succeed in carrying out areas of cultural, educational, social, and community service in the building/area in which they live. In making decisions about theme housing, the College will give priority to students who provide evidence of an academic reason for living together.

Eligibility:

The group must be a fully recognized student organization and in good standing with the Office of Student Engagement in order to accept theme housing placement. Those organizations which are approved for a Theme House, but whose status as a student organization is still 'provisional' will need to wait until their status is approved by the Student Life Committee in order to accept a theme housing assignment. If the group is denied student organization status, they are ineligible for a Theme House.

Each group must have the necessary number of students to fill the entire space for the entire school year for which they are applying or they will be considered ineligible and their application will not be accepted. Students approved for off-campus study for the entire year are not permitted to sign into theme housing. Each theme housing organization must also have a letter/email of support from a College employee who will serve as their advisor for the year (see Role of Advisor for more information). In addition, each Theme House is selected as a group based on the membership listed on the application and during the interview. **If fifty percent or more of the group's members decide to vacate the Theme House group for any reason between the interview and the theme housing sign-ups in March, the theme housing offer will be rescinded for the 2019-2020 academic year and the all members of the organization will participate in the general Housing Lottery processes.**

Reapplying:

Theme housing is granted for one year only. Organizations must apply each year for theme housing and demonstrate how housing has assisted the group in meeting their organization goals and objectives. An important part of the theme housing program is to be consistently visible on campus. To that end, if you are re-applying for another year of theme housing, your application should reflect the ways in which your organization will strive for more consistent programming and a more visible presence on campus; Theme Houses should improve every year.

Accountability:

Each Theme House accepts the obligation for the maintenance of standards and compliance with College Regulations and Residential Life policies as outlined in the [Student Handbook](#) along with student organization requirements. The proposal, submitted with the application and after being accepted, will become the binding contract and the organization will be held accountable to the proposal.

A workshop will be held for all theme housing organizations on **Wednesday, August 28, 2019 from 3 PM – 5 PM** in order for members to fully understand theme housing expectations as well as develop detailed plans for the 2019-2020 academic year. Members of the group are required to submit a progress report during fall semester detailing their fulfillment of the housing contract, and representatives of the organization must attend a meeting with the Theme Community Advisor, at which they will discuss the organization's use of their housing.

Theme housing programs and effectiveness will be evaluated on community impact and fulfilling the purpose and goals expressed in the application.

Failure to fulfill their contract could result in removal from their theme housing after the first semester, probation, additional duties as assigned, or an inability to return for another year.

2019-2020 Kenyon College Theme Housing Agreement

By making a commitment to live in a Theme House, we understand that there are increased expectations for our housing and the community members with whom we live. These expectations include self-responsibility, peer accountability and open communication with the Office of Residential Life. By signing this agreement, we understand:

- All Theme House members will remain in good standing with Kenyon College and adhere to all requirements of a registered student organization.
- All Theme Houses will participate in the theme housing open house by **September 7, 2019**.
- All Theme House members will follow through with all goals and programs outlined in their contract and application. Theme Houses will hold 3 or more programs each semester. Campus contribution forms will be submitted after each event.
- All Theme Houses will have a Community Advisor who will work directly with them.
- All Theme House members will participate in the training that the CA will provide to educate them about facility matters, safety concerns, and Office of Residential Life protocol.
- All Theme House members will participate in the Theme Housing Workshop held on **Wednesday, August 28, 2019 from 3 PM–5 PM**.
- All Theme House organizations will participate in the Activities Fair held in the fall.
- All Theme House members agree to contact the CA in a timely manner regarding incidents of policy violations, community conflicts, physical or mental crisis, safety and/or facility concerns.
- All Theme House members will be held responsible to all College policies and housing procedures.
- All Theme House members will be held to the College standard of facility cleanliness.
- All Theme House members will meet with a Residential Life staff member as deemed necessary by the Office of Residential Life (ORL).
- All Theme House members understand that the Office of Residential Life may make housing changes as necessary as stated in the Housing Contract and the Student Handbook.
- As a Theme House, we agree to fill any spaces that become vacant.

*If I do not adhere to this agreement or I violate college policy,
the Specialty Housing Board in conjunction with the Office of Residential Life,
has the authority to reassign me to another housing unit.*

2019-2020 Theme Housing Application

1. Name of Organization: _____

2. Is the group a fully recognized student organization recognized? (Circle one): Yes No

**If no, the group cannot accept a theme housing assignment until they are approved as a student organization. Please see the eligibility requirements.*

3. College Employee Advisor (must have attached form and letter completed): _____

4. Main Contact Person(s): Name Title (if applicable) Email Cell Phone

5. Indicate 3 space preferences on the line below. Please indicate general areas, *not specific apartments/houses/residence halls* (example: Apartment, Suite, and Traditional Residence Hall). Also, please provide the number of residential spaces your group would prefer. Theme Housing options are limited. The group must fill the entire space requested. Groups who do not fill the space will immediately lose theme housing rights.

- A.
- B.
- C.

6. Please list residents who will live in the space if it is allocated for each preference and include class year.

Name:	Class Year:
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____

PART B

Please type responses on a separate sheet of paper. Please limit responses to each question to 250 words. The important thing is that your answers reflect the goals of your organization and the individuals who will be living in the Theme House. Funding for your theme programs will be available through applications to the business and finance committee and through the Head Community Advisor working with ORL.

1. What is the theme for your house? Please explain the mission/purpose for your Theme House and what need this mission/purpose fulfills at Kenyon College.
2. Diversity is an important part of life at Kenyon. Keeping in mind that there are many types of diversity, please explain how the individuals living in the Theme House will represent the diversity of Kenyon's student body.
3. How will having a Theme Housing space (listed in Question 5 on the previous page) help your group pursue your goals?
4. What do you hope members/the organization will gain or learn from this living experience? How does a designated residential space help your group further the goals/purpose of your student organization?
5. A large part of the theme housing program is having all-campus programs. What types of programs will your organization offer to campus?
6. This question applies to groups reapplying only. Please answer the following:
 - In what areas were you most successful as a Theme House?
 - What have been some of your biggest challenges/areas for improvement?
 - How will your answers to the first two questions inform your organization goals for the upcoming year?

2019-2020 Theme Housing Advisor Role

Residential Living is vital to life at Kenyon College. The guidance of a college employee advisor is essential for the development of student leaders. This information is intended to explain the role of a Theme Housing advisor. If there are questions in regards to the advisor role, please contact Jonathan Blount, Assistant Director of Residential Life.

Theme Housing Advisor

- Be a member of the College community and employed by the College.
- Understand the goals and objectives of the Theme House group.
- Assist in forming goals for the theme housing group.
- Assist in the evaluation of programs and goals of the Theme House.
- Help the theme members identify college and community resources and assist in planning events.
- Be familiar with the college facilities, procedures and services that affect the group's activities.
- Help to mentor and provide leadership to members of the group with personal situations, as well as during activities of the organization.
- Attend scheduled activities and meetings as available and/or needed.
- Provide written reports before Thanksgiving and at the end of January to be included in the theme housing group review process with the Theme Community Advisor.

Organization's Responsibility to their Advisor

- Inform advisor of the Theme House's purpose, activities and goals for the year.
- Provide notice of meetings and activities to the advisor in a timely manner. Every attempt should be made to set a time that is convenient for members, as well as the advisor.
- Maintain a close relationship with the advisor and provide opportunities for the advisor to meet as many members as possible.
- Provide full disclosure to their advisor of all events and activities sponsored by the Theme House community.

Name of Theme Housing Organization: _____

Advisor Name: _____ Advisor Title: _____

Advisor Department: _____ Advisor Phone Number: _____

Signature of Advisor: _____ Date: _____

Please provide a Letter of Support/Email to the Office of Residential Life at reslife@kenyon.edu, detailing your intended involvement with this Theme group by February 4, 2019. This information will be used by the Specialty Housing Board to help make decisions regarding theme housing.