Off-Campus Student Life Survey

Heather Rees
Western Washington University

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Active Minds Changing Lives
Off-Campus Student Life Survey

Spring 2012 Report

SPONSORED BY THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY COALITION AND WHATCOM FAMILY AND COMMUNITY NETWORK

March 12, 2013
Authored by: Heather Rees
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Acknowledgments

This survey's administration would not have been possible without the sponsorship of Western Washington University's Campus Community Coalition headed by Lyndie Case. Thanks to Diana Jones, Western Washington University, Department of Human Services & Rehabilitation for the motivation to create this survey and assistance with all stages of its creation and analysis. Additional thanks goes to the Whatcom Family & Community Network and the Sehome Neighborhood Association.
Executive Summary

In Spring quarter of academic year 2011-2012, 3,571 students at Western Washington University were emailed to solicit their participation in the Off-Campus WWU Student Life Survey. This survey was sponsored by the Campus Community Coalition and was intended to generate a more accurate picture of the experiences of Western students living off-campus in Bellingham. One thousand twenty four students (28.7%) responded and 901 (25.2%) completed the survey in its entirety. Sixty seven percent of respondents were female, 80% (712) of students self-identified as Caucasian/white and 42.8% were seniors. Eight hundred and forty six (94%) of respondents indicated they were renters.

Key Findings

Neighborhood Community and Safety

Key Issues: low participation in neighborhood community, noise disturbances, theft, illegal parking, walking safety at night.

Ninety five percent of students responded that they had never attended a neighborhood association meeting or event and 69.5% said they rarely or never were informed of meetings and events. Communication among neighbors was also low. Forty nine percent of student respondents talked to their neighbors on either side less than once a month or never and 48.3% talked to their neighbors on their street or in their complex less than once a month or never.

Highest rated neighborhood issues were noise disturbance, theft and illegal parking. Many students also feel unsafe walking in their neighborhoods. Ninety percent felt very or extremely safe during the day however; only 34.1% felt the same way at night.

Unit, Landlord, and Maintenance

Key Issues: mold, holes, leaks, cracks and decay, inability to adequately and affordably heat homes, pests, lack of access to hot water.

Problematic housing unit conditions included mold (30%), holes, leaks, cracks or decay in the floors, walls and/or ceiling (27.7%), inability to adequately and affordably heat the unit (26%), problems with pests (20%), and inconsistent access to hot water (10%). Twenty five percent did not feel that the cost of their housing is fair.

Many students did not have their repair requests addressed within the legal time limits. For repairs involving the supply of hot or cold water, heat, electricity, or a hazardous condition, 38.7% (127) did not have their repair request addressed within the legal 24 hours. One hundred twenty students (22.5%) of students with a repair request involving
Introduction

a refrigerator, range, and oven, or a major plumbing fixture did not have it addressed within the legal time limit of 72 hours.

Party Etiquette
Key Issues: levels of intoxication, calling the police, having hosts stay sober, contacting neighbors ahead of time, education.

Many students were found to be following the suggested practices for safe parties. A majority indicated that they would call EMT if they suspect that someone has overdosed/consumed, try to reduce noise, only invite people that they know and do not sell cups or charge admission. However, there were high levels of intoxication; 63.3% of students surveyed indicated that 61-100% of the people at the last party they attended were intoxicated. Additionally, 30% said they were somewhat-very unlikely to ensure adherence to alcohol laws. Since these numbers are self-reported, there may be some discrepancies between reported and actual behavior.

Student Experience and Community Resources
Key Issues: poor knowledge of rights and responsibilities, poor awareness of resources, lack of education.

Many students were found to lack essential knowledge about living off-campus. Additionally, when faced with conflicts, students did not know how to address them. Seventy five percent of students did not know whom to contact in case of conflict with their landlord. Sixty nine percent of students did not know a resource to contact in case of conflict with their neighbor and 15.6% of students indicated that they had a dispute with any of their neighbors. Of these, 54.6% had the dispute solved in a timely manner while 45.4% did not.

Forty seven percent of students said that they did not receive any information about living off-campus from Western Washington University and 40.1% did not remember if they were given this information.
Introduction

In Spring quarter of academic year 2011-2012, 13,720 students were enrolled at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. Of those, approximately 9,700 were known to reside off-campus and 3,571 students registered their off-campus address with the University. In April 2012, these 3,571 students were emailed to solicit their participation in the Off-Campus WWU Student Life Survey. One thousand twenty four (28.7%) responded and 901 (25.2%) completed the survey in its entirety. Eight hundred forty six (94%) indicated they were renters, while 55 (6%) lived in private or family owned properties.

The Off-Campus Student Life Survey consisted of 67 questions in either open or closed choice format. Questions addressed the topics of: neighborhood experience, housing condition, knowledge of legal rights, experience with maintenance and requests for repairs, party etiquette, knowledge of community resources, and respondent demographics.

The goals of this project were to gain a better understanding of what students do not know about their legal rights and responsibilities so that university and community groups can better work to educate students, to collect data on landlord/tenant legal issues that could help inform city policy makers, to give students a chance to voice their opinions in a constructive way, and to encourage them to seek out assistance for any issues they have regarding housing.

This study was approved by the WWU Office of Research and Sponsored Programs in collaboration with Campus Community Coalition (CCC).

Questions about this survey and its results can be directed to Heather Rees at reesh@students.wwu.edu

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Survey Respondent Demographics

Survey respondents were found to be predominately juniors and seniors, between the ages of 21-22. Approximately two-thirds (67.1%) of respondents were female and nearly one-third (30.6%) were male. A higher percentage of women responded as a proportion of the overall University population (55.9% female and 44.1% male, respectively). Eighty percent (712) of students self-identified as Caucasian/white, 19.9% (177) students of color/mixed race, and 14 students did not answer this question. This is consistent with University statistics of the overall student body (18% recognized ethnic minority identity).

Demographics (n=902)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Year in school</th>
<th>Table 2. Age</th>
<th>Table 3. Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% (n)</strong></td>
<td><strong>% (n)</strong></td>
<td><strong>% (n)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>&lt;20</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 (13)</td>
<td>22.9 (206)</td>
<td>30.6 (274)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>21-22</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.2 (137)</td>
<td>47.4 (424)</td>
<td>67.1 (601)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>23+</td>
<td>Trans/No Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.6 (248)</td>
<td>29.7 (266)</td>
<td>2.3 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.8 (385)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth year student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.7 (96)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 (20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 (U.S. News 2011)
Fifty five percent of survey respondents lived in the Sehome (24.4%), Happy Valley (20.5%), and York (10.2%) neighborhoods (see figure 1), the neighborhoods closest to WWU. When given categories listing neighborhoods in Bellingham, only 83.6% of students were able to identify their neighborhood of residence. Six percent, however, provided an address which allowed data analysts to identify the neighborhood of residence. In total, 89.9% of student’s neighborhoods of residence were identified.

Figure 1. Respondent neighborhood of residence
The majority of respondents reported living in apartments or single-family rental homes (see figure 2) and 39.7% reported living with a total of 4 or more people in their housing unit.

**Figure 2: Respondent type of housing unit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Percent of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single family rental home</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment, townhouse or condominium</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplex</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your personal or family owned property</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single room rental</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triplex, Fourplex, Other</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion**

There are a couple issues of note brought up by this demographic information. First, 16.4% of students were found to be unable to name the neighborhood in which they live. This high percentage, the third largest category, is significant because it indicates that many students might not be aware of, and therefore unable to participate in, their organized neighborhood communities such as political and social groups.

Second, 39.7% of respondents indicated that they live with a total of 4 or more people in their housing unit. According to Bellingham Municipal Code 20.08.020, the lawful living occupation for residences zoned as single-family residential units (which includes the majority of Sehome, York and Happy Valley neighborhoods) is “not more than 3 unrelated persons, living together within a single dwelling unit.” Since a majority of students live in these neighborhoods and almost 40% live with more than 4 people per unit, many students may have leases that break Bellingham zoning codes.

---

Neighborhood Community and Safety

Neighborhood participation

Ninety five percent of students responded that they had never attended a neighborhood association meeting or event and 69.5% said they rarely or never were informed of meetings and events. Figure 3 presents a list of reasons students gave for not attending a neighborhood association meeting.

Figure 3. Reasons for not attending a neighborhood association meeting or event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percent of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meets in a church</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt unwelcome</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing in common with my neighbors</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt like I don't make a difference</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconvenient time or place</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demanding work or school schedule</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No interest</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have never been informed of an event</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given the option to write in a reason for not attending a neighborhood association meeting or event. Samples include:

"Did not specify what the meeting was about - as a newcomer there is no way to know if the meeting is of value to you"

"I felt like there might not be a lot of people my age - mostly families"

"What college kid goes to neighborhood association meetings??"
When asked how often they talk to their neighbors to either side and on their street or in their complex, almost half of students indicated they talk to their neighbors less than once a month or never.

Table 4. Please indicate which best describes how often you do the following...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>2-3 times/week</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>2-3 times/month</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>&lt; Once a month</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talk to your neighbors to either side of you</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to your neighbors on your street or in your complex</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Neighborhood issues

Students were asked to rate a variety of issues that may be considered problematic in some neighborhoods. Respondents rated problems on a scale of not applicable/never experienced, not at all problematic, not very problematic, somewhat problematic, very problematic and extremely problematic. Overall students rated noise disturbances, theft, and illegal parking to be the top three issues in their neighborhoods. The least problematic issue ever experienced was fireworks.

Figure 4. How problematic are these issues in your neighborhood?
When asked to comment on the issues in their neighborhood, 186 responded. Of these, 33 comments referenced theft from a house, 27 discussed theft of a car or from a car, 27 mentioned noise and/or parties, 21 cited parking and 15 mentioned drug use.

Examples from question 24, comments on neighborhood issues:

"Our landlord does not provide recycling bins, so our back alley is constantly littered with paper, plastic bottles, etc."

"I live around mostly families in the Historic Neighborhood. It's pretty quiet and laidback"

"We've had a ton of break in issues and there's been so many issues with safety this year. Although parties might not be ideal for everyone it's a lot safer when people are out being social so the streets aren't as empty dark and sketchy."

"There is not enough space for parking so everyone that has cars fits their cars in where ever they can."

"Theft and crime have been reported in large numbers in my neighborhood; my own house has been broken into and expensive property was stolen."

"I have had 2 bikes stolen from my apartment since moving here 2 years ago."

"A Bike was stolen off our second story balcony!"

"I said I don't feel very safe, not necessarily because of the neighborhood I live in, but because of all the issues that have been happening around Western currently."

"Graffiti is a huge issue around Sehome. Horrible eye sore!"

"My neighborhood is pretty safe and lit up where I live. the street lights definitely help in ensuring my safety."

"Laptops have been stolen on two separate occasions from our house"

"My apartment complex has a parking garage below the building that often gets broken into. Every car in the garage has been broken into at least once."

"Living close to Samish way tends to have its down sides. There are many homeless people who wander down samish and make their way down our street (Grant St). We have had cars broken into, our house broken into and bikes stolen out of our yard"
When asked how safe they feel walking in their neighborhood, 90.2% felt very or extremely safe during the day. Only 34.1%, however, felt the same way at night.

Figure 5. How safe students feel walking in their neighborhood during the day and night

When comparisons were made by gender, female respondents were found to feel significantly less safe than males (p<.05). Figure 6 displays the percent of each gender category responded to each safety rating.

Figure 6. How safe students feel walking in their neighborhood during the nighttime by gender identification
This section of the survey reveals how students feel about safety and other issues in neighborhoods. Only 34.1% of respondents said that they feel safe walking in their neighborhood at night. This means that 65.9% have experienced feelings of fear walking in their neighborhood at night. Because many students living in the neighborhoods surrounding WWU walk to and from campus, feelings of insecurity may contribute negatively to students’ overall sense of well-being. These students might benefit from education on strategies to keeping themselves safe, such as carrying a whistle and not wearing headphones while walking at night. Student feedback might also encourage communities to initiate community-wide measures such as asking for more street lighting and that residents light their alleyways.

One way for communities to come together to address issues, such as safety, is through neighborhood associations. Ninety five percent of students surveyed have never attended a neighborhood association meeting. Fifty seven percent of students, who identified a reason for not attending a meeting, indicated that they have never been informed of one. Comments also indicated that even if students had heard of one, they did not know what they were about.

Some of the top issues that students were concerned about include noise disturbances, theft, and illegal parking, all issues that neighborhood associations care about and address. All three of these issues are ones that are best addressed through community communication. Talking to one’s neighbors before hosting a party and knowing how to address problems before calling the police, can improve noise problems and avoid hostility. Communication can clear up conflicts over parking boundaries and encourage respect of other’s space. Additionally, block watches can prevent thefts and break-ins by teaching people what to look for and how to respond.

As it is, 48.6% of respondents talk to their neighbors on either side less than once a month or never. Forty eight percent talk to their neighbors on their street or in their complex less than once a month or never. There are no Resident Advisors (R.A.s) to monitor students in neighborhoods as there are in dorms, nor can the police be expected to solve all community problems. Survey results indicate a need for better communication and cooperation between the student and permanent residents of Bellingham’s neighborhoods (with the encouragement of Western Washington University), whether that be formally or informally. Students and permanent residents may find that they care about many of the same issues and that they can be much better equipped to deal with them together.
Unit, Landlord, and Maintenance

Unit conditions

Of the 846 students in our survey who indicated that they live in rental housing, 30% had units with mold problems, 27.7% found holes, leaks, cracks, or decay in the floors, walls, and/or ceiling of their unit. Twenty six point five percent of respondents were unable to adequately and affordably heat their housing unit. Twenty percent have had problems with pests in their unit and nearly 10% indicated that they do not always have access to hot water.

Table 5. Unit conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>percent of students who responded disagree or strongly disagree %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The walls and ceiling in my housing unit are free of mold.</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The floors, walls, and ceilings of my housing unit DO NOT have holes, leaks, cracks or decay.</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to adequately and affordably heat my housing unit.</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that the cost of my housing unit is fair.</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have had no problems with pests in my housing unit (e.g., mice, rats, insects).</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interior of my housing unit is structurally sound, well maintained and sanitary.</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the electrical outlets and fixtures in my housing unit are functional and safe.</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is sufficient light, space and ventilation in my housing unit.</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The public areas of my apartment/unit/building/yard are kept clean and sanitary.</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The house/unit that I live in was clean when I moved in.</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is always access to hot water in my housing unit.</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have access to adequate and affordable laundry facilities</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel safe in my unit/house.</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 also shows only the results of students who live in rental housing. Sixty five point five percent of renters do not have functional carbon monoxide detectors in their unit and 9% were not provided with working locks.

### Table 6. Safety features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there functional smoke alarms in your housing unit?</td>
<td>94.4%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there functional carbon monoxide detectors in your housing unit?</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your landlord provide working locks and an adequate number keys?</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

187 comments were made on this section

Examples from question 43, comments on unit conditions:

“All of the windows we can close, but not all of them we can open, and this worries me in the case of a fire.”

“Bugs, windows don’t lock, poorly lit, needs updating in kitchen/bathroom (leaks, flooring is gross), verrrry expensive, poor ventilation, some outlets don’t work, hot water does not usually last long.”

“Floor is becoming progressively less level. I live on the third floor in my complex. Large cracks are becoming visible where the walls are separating from the ceiling in several places.”

“I do not actually know what a carbon monoxide detector looks like, so I really have no idea if we have one or not”

“It’s an old house. The prior landlord did not upkeep the house properly and the current landlord is working on getting things fixed.”

“Lots of mold! There are some rats as well, which we talked to our landlord about, but he pretended they weren’t there.”
“Many of the windows are painted shut, thus cannot be opened. This is problematic in the kitchen area.”

“We’ve had faulty smoke detectors, a water heater that was broken for two weeks. Management does not properly care for facility unless I get the Housing Authority involved.”

“Windows in my house are broken and/or fixed with tape and need replacing; this fact keeps me from feeling safe”

Maintenance*

Eighty six percent of student renters responded that they have had to contact their landlord to make repairs in the last year. These students were then asked to indicate what type of repair this was. Table 7 shows landlord response rates to these repair requests.

Table 7. Landlord response rate to repair requests

| Repair involving supply of hot or cold water, heat, electricity, or a hazardous condition, was NOT completed by landlord within 24 hours | 127 (38.7) |
| Repair involving a refrigerator, range, and oven, or a major plumbing fixture, was NOT completed by landlord within 72 hours | 120 (22.5) |

Seventeen percent of student renters responded that their landlord has made an unannounced visit in the last year.

* All data in this section is based on the results of questions 38-47 as answered by a subset of 846 students who indicated that they live in rental housing unless indicated.
Table 8. Rating of landlord/tenant relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A majority of students rated their relationship with their landlord as average-excellent (above table 8). As illustrated below in table 9, of the students who rated their relationship as poor (22), 59% (13) rent from a rental management company. Of those who rated their relationship as below average, the majority either rented from a private landlord or rental management company. The majority of students who rented from a private landlord rated their relationship as good-excellent (73.6%), students who rented from a rental company average-good (79.2%), and students who rented from a rental management company average-good (74.1%).

Table 9. Relationship with landlord and housing situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you rate your relationship with your landlord?</th>
<th>Which best describes your housing situation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rent from a private landlord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>1.3 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>4.0 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>21.0 (78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>34.4 (128)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>39.2 (146)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who indicated that they rent from a rental management company were asked “Have you ever met or communicated with the owners of the property?” Fifty percent answered “no” and 24.7% answered “not sure.”

17
136 of 846 students (16%) offered comments on their landlord, manager, or rental company:

“Again, my landlords are nice people but they have no idea that they are required by law to do certain things for us such as making repairs within a certain period of time. I feel awkward telling them about these laws in order to have repairs made”

“As stated before, the managers at the complex are very personable. They know both my roommate and myself by name, and are even aware of some of our interests.”

“Half of the heaters in my apartment have not worked since I moved in. I asked her to have them repaired over the phone and in writing in a letter and no one has ever come by to even look at them.”

“I just moved to another apartment due to noise issues. Last year I lived in an apartment that had a sewage problem and the smell was making me sick. Headaches, bloody nose, red eyes from sewer gases.”

“It is extremely difficult to get ahold of the owner!”

“Just that they’re great! I would highly recommend renting from private owners (that are nice and responsible.)”

“My landlords are extremely fair and kind, but as a young couple with small children and many responsibilities, they sometimes neglect responding to us for long periods of time when we have non-urgent issues.”

“Our landlord tells us that we owe a large amount of money and expects us to make payment but does not provide the invoice/bill”

“Since we’re college students, our landlord (like most private landlords) get away with a lot. The place we are living in is old, has old windows that don’t keep in heat, mold grows everywhere, and everything is chipped and dirty.”

“They do as little as possible to collect their paycheck. Apex should be considered professionals at not caring at all about anything but getting your money.”
Discussion

Students were found to experience significant problems with housing conditions and landlord-tenant relationships. According to this survey, 30% of student renters have evidence of mold on the walls and/or ceiling of their housing unit. The issue of mold has been addressed numerous times by the Western Front and was cited as a concern by the Associated Students in their letter to the mayor of Bellingham. According to a study cited by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, indoor exposure to mold can cause upper respiratory tract symptoms, cough, and wheezing in otherwise healthy people.\(^5\)

Twenty six percent of student renters surveyed indicated that they were unable to adequately and affordably heat their housing unit. Living in a cold house can cause health problems, increase mold problems, interfere with efficient studying as well as encourage unsafe heating options such as electric space heaters. In the winter of 2011-2012, two house fires were caused by unsafe use of space heaters and five WWU students were displaced by a house fire on Maple street involving an electric baseboard heater.\(^6\)

Sixty six percent of student renters surveyed said that they did not have a functional carbon monoxide detectors in their housing unit and comments indicated that many did not know what one was or if they had one. Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, deadly gas that can be produced by appliances such as furnaces, space heaters, clothes dryers, ranges, ovens, water heaters, charcoal grills, fireplaces, and wood burning stoves.\(^7\) According to Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 19.27.530, carbon monoxide alarms are required for all new construction, with a permit for alteration, repair, addition or creation of additional sleeping rooms as of April 1, 2012, and since January 1, 2013 are required in all residential occupancies, including rentals.\(^8\) Because of this change, students would benefit from education about the dangers of carbon monoxide and how to make sure that they have a detector.


\(^6\) Hutton, Caleb. "Two Whatcom County house fires sparked by space heaters used to keep pipes from freezing." \textit{Bellingham Herald}, January 19, 2012.


According to RCW 59.18.070, landlords must address repairs involving supply of hot or cold water, heat, electricity, or a hazardous condition in not more than 24 hours. Of students surveyed who made these kinds of repair requests, 38.7% (127) did not have their repair request addressed within the legal 24 hours. Repairs involving a refrigerator, range, and oven, or a major plumbing fixture must be addressed in not more than 72 hours. 22.5% (120) of students with this type of request did not have it addressed within the legal time limit.

RCW 59.18.150 states that “except in the case of emergency or if it is impracticable to do so, the landlord shall give the tenant at least two days' written notice of his or her intent to enter and shall enter only at reasonable times.” Seventeen percent of student renters surveyed indicated that their landlord had made an unannounced visit in the last year.

Despite these problems, a majority of students rated their relationship with their landlord as average-excellent. It could be that many students accept these problems as a part of the experience living off-campus. Seventy four percent of students who rented from a property management company indicated that they had not met the owners of the property or were not sure if they had. This suggests that communication between the owner and tenants is not a high priority among students and owners who use property management companies.

Please see page 25 for information on student’s awareness of legal right/responsibilities and education issues.

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Party Etiquette

This section covers the results of survey questions 59-74 on the topics of party hosting, etiquette, and frequency.

Table 8. Party hosting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes % (n)</th>
<th>No % (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you hosted a party in your current residence?</td>
<td>55.2 (497)</td>
<td>44.8 (404)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four hundred and ninety seven students responded that they have hosted a party in their current residence. Figure 7 (below) displays the responses of these 497 students.

Figure 7. How likely are you to do the following things?

- Somewhat-Very Likely
- Somewhat-Very Unlikely

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Somewhat-Very Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat-Very Unlikely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sell cups/charge admission</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have hosts stay sober</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call police if it gets out of control</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact neighbors ahead of time</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure adherence to alcohol laws</td>
<td>50.1%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage guests who are leaving the party to be quiet while in the neighborhood</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lock-up part of the house</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep guests inside</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to reduce noise</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call EMT if you suspect someone has overdosed/consumed</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only invite people you know</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 9. Recent party attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Within the last week</th>
<th>Within the last month</th>
<th>Within the last 2-3 months</th>
<th>Within the last semester</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which best describes the last time you attended a party at someone's house or apartment off-campus?

Survey respondents who answered that they had attended a party within the last semester (734) were asked to write in their estimate of how many people were at the last party they attended in an off-campus house or apartment. Forty one percent indicated the party was between 15-50 people. Median party size was 25.

A majority of students surveyed indicated that 61-100% of the people at the last party they attended were intoxicated.

**Figure 8. Percent of the people intoxicated?**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of people who were intoxicated at different estimated ranges of attendance.](chart)
Discussion

The goal of this survey section is to evaluate the common behaviors of students who host parties off-campus. In several cases, most students reported themselves to be following the suggested protocols for hosting a safe and considerate party. Of the students who had hosted a party at their current residence, a majority indicated that they would: call for EMTs if they suspect that someone has overdosed/consumed; try to reduce noise; only invite people that they know; and not sell cups or charge admission. Since these numbers are self-reported there may be some discrepancies. For example, 74.6% of students responded that they did know the hosts of the last party they attended, even though 94.6% of people who have hosted a party only invite people that they know.

Some positive behaviors that are not commonly practiced include: calling the police if it gets out of control; having hosts stay sober; and contacting neighbors ahead of time. The Off-Campus WWU website suggests letting neighbors know that you have having a party a couple days in advance and how to contact you if it gets too loud in order to avoid noise complaints and a possible citation. Off-Campus WWU also suggests keeping the number of attendees at below 30 people.\(^\text{11}\) Eleven percent of survey respondents estimated 50 people to be in attendance at the last party they attended. Students also estimated that a majority (61-100%) of people at the last party they went to be intoxicated.

Results from this section indicate mixed behaviors. While some hosts have safe and considerate behaviors, others do not, either by choice or lack of education. This information could be used to target negative behaviors and encourage positive ones by educators and WWU administration.

Student Experience and Community Resources

Most students surveyed chose to live off campus because they wanted more privacy, independence, and lower cost of living (figure 9). When students completed the “other” category, significant responses included “wanted pets,” “wanted kitchen/cook own food,” and “have kids/spouse/family.”

Figure 9. Why did you choose to live off campus? Check all that apply

![Bar chart showing reasons why students chose to live off campus]

Figure 10 (below) shows the most common resources that students used to find their current housing. About 56% used Craigslist or found housing through contact with a friend.

Figure 10. How did you find your current housing unit? Check all that apply

![Pie chart showing how students found their current housing unit]

- Craigslist: 28.06%
- Through a friend: 14.82%
- Other online site: 9.79%
- Through past tenants: 8.29%
- Other: 7.50%
- Flyer or sign: 1.41%
- WWU Off Campus Housing Listing: 0.97%
- Newspaper: 1.23%
- Viking Village: 1.41%
Table 10. Rental application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th align="left">Before you moved into your current residence did you and your roommates do a walkthrough of the unit?</th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td align="left"></td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did your landlord go over the lease with you before you and your roommates signed it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th align="left">Did your landlord go over the lease with you before you and your roommates signed it?</th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td align="left"></td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fourteen percent of student respondents (129) did not do a walkthrough of their current residence before they moved in. Additionally, 14% (126) did not go over their lease with the landlord before they signed it.

Figure 11. Percent of respondents who did not know...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The legal rights and responsibilities of a tenant</th>
<th>14.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The legal rights and responsibilities of their landlord</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A resource to contact in case of conflict with their neighbor</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A resource to contact in case of conflict with their landlord</td>
<td>75.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sixty nine percent of student did not know a resource to contact in case of conflict with their neighbor. Sixteen percent indicated that they had a dispute with any of their neighbors. Of these, 54.6% had the dispute solved in a timely manner while 45.4% did not.
Figure 12. Did you receive any information about living off campus from Western Washington University?

Seventy two percent (713) of respondents answered “no” to the question, “Have you ever visited the Off-Campus WWU site www.wwu.edu/offcampuswwu?”

When asked, “Would you recommend living off-campus in your neighborhood to others?” 30.6% said, “Probably yes,” and 64.7% said, “Definitely yes.”

Figure 13. Overall, how would you rate your off-campus living experience?

Seventy two percent (713) of respondents answered “no” to the question, “Have you ever visited the Off-Campus WWU site www.wwu.edu/offcampuswwu?”

When asked, “Would you recommend living off-campus in your neighborhood to others?” 30.6% said, “Probably yes,” and 64.7% said, “Definitely yes.”

Figure 13. Overall, how would you rate your off-campus living experience?
Four hundred thirty (47.7%) of students offered comments on what they wish they had known before moving off campus. The most common comment topics are displayed in table 11.

Table 11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics of information</th>
<th>Number of student comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bills and utilities (how to set up and keep track)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal tenant and/or landlord rights and responsibilities</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding housing (the process, list of places, options, student feedback on landlords and rental companies)</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood information</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs (rent, utilities, food, deposits)</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation (methods and costs)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roommates and neighbors (finding, conflicts, community)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below are sample responses of students, who were asked, “What do you wish you had known before you moved off campus?”

“Energy saving tips so my bills could be lower.”

“How far in advance to start looking for places.”

“How to better look for places to live. The whole process is very stressful and competitive.”

“How to find the best places to live and how to realistically budget monthly expenses.”

“How to inspect a rental during a walk through; questions to ask and tenant/landlord rights/responsibilities”

“I wish I had known about possible heating or mold issues.”

“I wish I had known how far away from the Western community I would be.”

“I wish I would have known what to look out for with landlords because my experience has shown me that they do not take college students seriously and that they try to take advantage of us.”
"I would have liked to know how to look for houses/apartments—what questions to ask, which rental companies are the best, which students have had problems with in the past, etc."

"It would be great to have a renters rights legal packet with resources and information that is thorough and informative."

"Landlord/Tenant act, Neighborhood associations - How to get involved"

"More information about WWU parking options for off campus living"

"Questions to ask the current tenants and landlord prior to signing a lease, information on crime rates in different neighborhoods, my legal rights as a renter and the responsibilities of the landlord"

"That living with your friends, though fun, is a challenge. You may not be as compatible as roommates as you are friends."

"The different neighborhoods and what they each are like."

"The need to really document your move in and move out procedure."

"What is legal and illegal for the landlord to do. What conditions of the space they are responsible for, and what we are responsible for."

Discussion

This section addressed questions about students’ overall experiences, legal knowledge, and awareness of resources, in order that resources can be better tailored to meet students’ needs.

Survey results indicated that many students did not receive the education that they need about living off-campus. Fourteen percent of survey respondents did not know their legal rights and responsibilities as a tenant and a more substantial percentage (21.2%) do not know the legal rights and responsibilities of their landlord. Forty seven percent of students said that they did not receive any information about living off-campus from Western Washington University and 40.1% did not remember if they were given this information.

This lack of education could lead to problems if conflict arises. Seventy five percent of students did not know who to contact in case of conflict with their landlord and 69.1% in case of conflict with a neighbor. Relatedly, 15.6% of students indicated that they had a dispute with any of their neighbors. Of these, 54.6% had the dispute solved in a timely manner, while 45.4% did not.
Students have many reasons for seeking off-campus housing (see figure 9) and utilize many resources to do so (figure 10). However, they may still not be prepared for the process of entering a lease. Fourteen percent of students did not do a walkthrough of the unit before they moved in and another 14% did not go over the lease with their roommates and landlord before signing it. This shows that many students did not take proper procedures to protect themselves and avoid future conflicts.

The Off-Campus WWU website (www.wwu.edu/offcampuswwu) is a project of Prevention and Wellness Services at WWU and is a resource of information for students about living off-campus, such as how to be a good neighbor, tenant legal rights and responsibilities, and other available community resources. Eighty percent of survey respondents had never visited the Off-Campus WWU website.

Although resources are out there, many students did not know of their existence or how to utilize them. Without adequate knowledge, students may not know how to avoid conflicts or how to protect themselves when they encounter them. With the pressures of academic life and the intense competition to simply find housing due to the desirability of living near campus, many students may not take the initiative to research the complex legal issues that come with being a tenant. Many students might benefit from an education program that targets students in the dorms before they move off-campus.

When asked what they wish they had known before moving off-campus, 430 (47.7%) students responded. The most important issues identified by students were: finding housing (including the process; having a list of places; options for living off-campus; student feedback on landlords and rental companies); and cost (estimates of reasonable rent, utilities, fees and deposits). Other important issues were (in order of importance): finding and dealing with roommates and neighbors; legal tenant and/or landlord rights and responsibilities; transportation methods and costs; bills and utilities; and neighborhood information.
Conclusion

The goal of this survey was to create a picture of the experiences of Western Washington University (WWU) students living off-campus in Bellingham. From this information, we can discover areas in which the community is healthy and thriving, and areas where improvement and education efforts are needed. The following are general recommendations based on survey findings:

- Neighborhood community communication is lacking. Forty nine percent of student respondents talked to their neighbors on either side less than once a month or never and 48.3% talked to their neighbors on their street or in their complex less than once a month or never. Although students experienced problematic issues in their neighborhoods (see figure 4, p. 10) and conflicts with their neighbors (15.6%), they are not talking to their communities about these problems. Efforts from WWU and the neighborhood associations are needed to foster communication with student residents about neighborhood issues such as noise disturbances, theft, illegal parking, and walking safety.

- Many students were found to be living in problematic housing conditions. Student experiences included instances of mold (30%), holes, leaks, cracks or decay in the floors, walls and/or ceiling (27.7%), inability to adequately and affordably heat the unit (26%), problems with pests (20%), and inconsistent access to hot water (10%). Students also faced legal issues related to housing, including illegal response times to repair requests, unannounced visits (16.9%), and leases in violation of the “not more than three” zoning code. Additionally, students lacked the adequate knowledge to deal with these issues. Twenty one percent of respondents did not know the legal rights and responsibilities of their landlord and 75.2% of students did not know who to contact in case of conflict with their landlord. This indicates that efforts to educate students on their rights and responsibilities as well as the resources that are available to them if they do experience a conflict are necessary. Forty seven percent of students said that they did not receive any information about living off-campus from Western Washington University and 40.1% did not remember if they were given this information.

- Education efforts may also be beneficial on the topic of party etiquette. It is the goal that all students, whether hosting or attending parties, are aware of how to keep themselves and other students healthy and safe. While many students reported that they are following suggested safety procedures, many are not. Some areas particularly lacking in practice include calling the police if the party gets out of hand, having hosts stay sober, and contacting neighbors ahead of time. Conversations between students
and more permanent neighborhood residents might also help to reduce party and noise related conflicts.

Landlord licensing

Although both tenants and landlords are protected under state law (RCW 59.18.010 through 59.18.420 and 59.18.900), the law is often being broken and some students were found to be living in substandard conditions. Currently, the City Council of Bellingham, WA is considering the creation of a landlord licensing ordinance. It is hoped that the information presented here (particularly as it relates to student rental conditions and the landlord-tenant law) will be taken into account during this process. Whatever conclusions the legislature comes to, it is important that the law is being enforced so that students have safe and healthy homes to live in during their time at WWU.

Future Research

It is recommended that this survey be repeated in the future. If repeated, this survey could provide information about the success of education efforts, general knowledge of whether housing conditions are improving, and any other community based issues that arise.

Improvements to this survey could include: added questions about how students use other students as a resource; transportation issues; and knowledge about costs and more specific questions about finding a rental. This survey asked students to rate how problematic neighborhood issues were, which measures only opinion not occurrence. It might be useful to also ask students how often they experience those issues as well. For example, they may experience drug activity frequently, but not necessarily find it problematic.

For future analysis, it would also be helpful to separate questions for renters from questions for non-renters. It was expected that students who did not rent would skip questions that were not relevant to them; however, after reviewing comments from respondents, it was found that many participants did not know that they could skip these questions.

It is hoped that, in the future, a survey like this might continue to be used to evaluate the experiences and needs of students living off-campus and that access to this survey might be expanded to include a broader number of these students.
Appendix A

List of questions

Notes: the format of this survey is: section topic in bold, question, answer option in () and skip patterns in [].

This survey is designed to obtain accurate information about Western students’ off campus housing options and experiences. The answers you provide will be anonymous and could help to better inform students, educators and policy makers. The survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete. Your honest participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Where do you live?

1. Are you a Western Washington University student? (Yes/no) [If no skip to end]

2. Do you currently live off campus? (yes/no) [If no skip to end]

3. Do you live within the city of Bellingham? (yes/no) [If no skip to end]

4. Which neighborhood do you live in? (Sehome/South Hill/Fairhaven/Happy Valley/Samish/York/Puget/Whatcom Falls/Lettered Streets/Columbia/Roosevelt/Other-write in)

5. What type of housing do you live in? (Single family rental home/duplex/triplex/apartment, townhouse or condominium/single room rental/your personal or family owned property/other-write in)

6. Including yourself, how many people total live in your housing unit? (write in, whole number only)

Your Neighborhood

Please answer the following questions based on where you live currently

7. How safe do you feel walking in your neighborhood during the day? (not at all safe/not very safe/moderately safe/very safe/extremely safe)

8. How safe do you feel walking in your neighborhood during the night? (not at all safe/not very safe/moderately safe/very safe/extremely safe)

9. Which best describes how often you are informed when your neighborhood association meetings or events take place? (never/rarely/occasionally/often/always)
10. Have you ever attended a neighborhood association meeting or event? (yes/no)

11. If you have never attended a neighborhood association meeting or event what was your reason for not attending? Check all that apply (have never been informed of an event/demanding work or school schedule/felt unwelcome/felt like I don’t make a difference/nothing in common with my neighbors/no interest/inconvenient time or place/other)

12. Please indicate which best describes how often you do the following: see your neighbors to either side of you. (daily/2-3 times per week/weekly/2-3 times per month/monthly/less than once a month/never)

13. Please indicate which best describes how often you do the following: talk to your neighbors to either side of you. (daily/2-3 times per week/weekly/2-3 times per month/monthly/less than once a month/never)

14. How problematic are the following activities in your neighborhood? (Large problem, minor problem, not a problem)
   a. Noise disturbances
   b. Fireworks
   c. Illegal parking (blocking access to sidewalks or driveways, etc)
   d. Loud parties
   e. Garbage / Illegal dumping (couches, appliances, etc)
   f. Drug activity
   g. Vandalism
   h. Theft

15. Have you ever had a dispute with any of your neighbors? (yes/no) [if no skip to question 17]

16. Was your dispute resolved civilly and in a timely manner? (yes/no)

**Housing Conditions**

Please answer the following questions based on where you live currently

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements

17. The house/unit that I live in was clean when I moved in (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

18. The public areas of my apartment/unit/building/yard are kept clean and sanitary (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)
19. I feel save in my unit/house (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

20. I feel that the cost of my housing unit is fair (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

21. The interior of my housing unit is structurally sound, well maintained and sanitary. (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

22. The floors, walls, and ceilings of my housing unit DO NOT have holes, leaks, cracks or decay. (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

23. I have had no problems with pests in my housing unit (ex: mice, rats, insects) (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

24. The walls and ceiling in my housing unit are free of mold (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

25. I am able to adequately and affordably heat my housing unit (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

26. There is always access to hot water in my housing unit (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

27. I have access to adequate and affordable laundry facilities (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

28. All the electrical outlets and fixtures in my housing unit are functional and safe (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

29. There is sufficient light, space and ventilation in my housing unit (Strongly disagree, disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)

30. Are there functional smoke alarms in your housing unit? (yes/no)

31. Are there functional carbon monoxide detectors in your housing unit (yes/no)

32. Which best describes how many of your windows and doors you can close and lock? (all of them/most of them/some of them/none of them)

**Landlord and maintenance**

33. Before you moved into your current residence did you and your roommates do a walkthrough of the unit? (yes/no)
34. Did your landlord go over the lease with you before you and your roommates signed it? (yes/no)

35. Did you landlord provide working locks and an adequate number keys? (yes/no)

36. Please indicate how knowledgeable you are of the following: - your rights and responsibilities as a tenant? (not at all knowledgeable/not very knowledgeable/somewhat knowledgeable/very knowledgeable/extremely knowledgeable)

37. Please indicate how knowledgeable you are of the following: - the legal rights and responsibilities of your landlord? (not at all knowledgeable/not very knowledgeable/somewhat knowledgeable/very knowledgeable/extremely knowledgeable)

38. Have you ever had to contact your landlord to make repairs (yes/no) [if no skip to 43 ]

39. Have you contacted your landlord about repairs for any of the following items? Check all that apply. (Hot or cold water[skip to 40]/Heat[skip to 40]/Electricity[skip to 40]/A hazardous condition [skip to 40]/Refrigerator [skip to 41]/Range[skip to 41]/Oven[skip to 41]/Major plumbing fixture- ex: sink, washer, shower, toilet[skip to 41][if none checked skip to 42]

40. Since the repair involved supply of hot or cold water, heat, or electricity, or a hazardous condition did your landlord make repairs within 24 hours? (yes/no)

41. Since the repair involved a refrigerator, range, and oven, or a major plumbing fixture did your landlord make repairs within 72 hours? (yes/no)

42. Did your landlord make all other repairs within 10 days? (yes/no)

43. Has your landlord ever made an unannounced visit? (yes/no)

44. How would you rate your relationship with your landlord? (Poor/below average/average/good/excellent)

45. Which best describes your housing situation? (rent from a private landlord[skip to 47]/rent from a rental company[skip to 47]/rent from a rental management company/own my housing unit)

46. Have you ever met or communicated with the owners of the property? (yes/no/not sure)

47. Do you have any other issues with your landlord/manager/rental company that you would like to share? (write in)
Parties

48. Have you hosted a party in your current residence? (yes/no) [if no, skip to 50]

49. When you host a party, how likely are you to do the following things? (very unlikely/somewhat unlikely/neither likely nor unlikely/somewhat likely/very likely)
   a. Contact neighbors ahead of time
   b. Only invite people you know
   c. Try to reduce noise
   d. Lock-up part of the house
   e. Have hosts stay sober
   f. Ensure adherence to alcohol laws
   g. Sell cups/charge admission
   h. Keep guests inside
   i. Encourage guests who are leaving the party to be quiet while in the neighborhood
   j. Call police if it gets out of control
   k. Call EMT if you suspect someone has overdosed/consumed

50. The last time you have been at a party someone’s house or apartment off-campus, about how many people do you think were there? (write in number)

51. About what percent of the people at this party do you think might have been intoxicated? (0% no alcohol at the party/1-20%/21-40%/41-60%/61-80%/81-100%)

52. Did you know the hosts of the party? (yes/no)

Community Resources

53. Why did you choose to live off campus? Check all that apply (less expensive/more privacy/more space/closer to campus/wanted to live with friends/independence)

54. How did you find your current housing unit? Check all that apply (Viking Village/WWU Off Campus Housing Listing/Craigslist/other online site/newspaper/flyer or sign/through a friend/through past tenants/other)

55. If you had a conflict with neighbors would you know a community resource that you could contact? (yes/no)

56. If you had a conflict with your landlord would you know a community resource that you could contact? (yes/no)

57. Did you receive any information about living off campus from Western Washington University? (yes/no/do not remember)
58. Have you ever visited the Off-Campus WWU site www.wwu.edu/offcampuswwu? (yes/no)

59. What do you wish you had known before you moved off campus? (write in)

60. What advice would you give to someone considering living off campus? (write in)

Demographic Information

The following are demographic questions meant to help us better understand the surveyed population. This information is confidential and optional.

61. What year are you (Freshman/Sophomore/Junior/Senior/Fifth year student/Graduate student)

62. Please indicate your age (write in, number only)

63. What is your gender? (male/female/transgender/self-identify (write in))

64. What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself? Check all that apply. (Asian American/Black African/African American, or Black/Hispanic or Latino/American Indian or Alaska Native/Multiracial/Caucasian or White/other)
Thank you for taking our survey!