

OUR BROCK NEWSLETTER

Connecting You To Your University And Community



PHOTO: NIKKI WHITEMAN

Searching for off-campus housing: dos and don'ts

Claire Gallagher

Welcome back residence students! The holidays are over and you're back on campus. Although you're happy to be reunited with your friends, you're probably quickly tiring of cafeteria food and communal washrooms. Now is the time of year when students living in residence start thinking about their accommodation for next year.

There are a couple things to keep in mind when looking for an off campus house. Our Brock takes

you through the dos and don'ts of finding your perfect house.

When To Start Your Search

First thing first, there is no rush when it comes to leasing a house. Supply is often greater than demand in the Niagara region with a great number of landlords actively seeking tenants all year long.

Take your time and review all your options. The more properties you see, the more likely it is that you'll find a property that suits you

as well as your needs.

If you're worried about not being able to find a place later in season, Brad Clarke of the Off-Campus Living Office reassures students that there will be no shortage of suitable accommodation off-campus.

"In January, we might see 100 properties available for May or September, that number is usually around 300-400 in February and March," said Clarke.

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"The selection of accommodations available in March is of the same quality as that available earlier.

The accommodations might actually be more suitable, given that you will have a broader selection of accommodations to choose from"

Finding The Perfect Place

While viewing different properties, keep an eye out for house essentials like fire alarms, fire exits and at least one window in every bedroom.

What you're looking for in a house will depend on your individual needs and preferences. Remember, you'll be living there for an extended period of time so you'll want to feel at home.

If you're planning on sharing a house with a group of friends, make a point of discussing practical issues such as study habits, sleep schedules and housekeeping.

When it comes time to sign the lease, be sure that you are comfortable with your future accommodation. If your parents are involved in the decision making process, give them all the information about the lease and ensure that they too are comfortable with the accommodation.

It is important that you carefully read any agreement or lease and make sure you understand the content before signing any document.

Be Aware

"Do not allow yourself to be pressured into making quick decisions by landlords, property managers, or others who claim that they have the 'best place,'" said Clarke.

Some landlords may use pressure tactics in order to close the deal. Remember to be particularly wary "of any landlord or property manager that requires you to sign a lease agreement or pay deposits "on the spot"- you should always have time to fully consider any formal documents prior to agreeing to their terms."

Where To Start Your Search

Brock's Off-Campus Living website (brocku.ca/ocl) is a great place to start looking at off-campus accommodation.

"The website is updated continuously throughout the day and we are in regular contact with many of the landlords who list with us," said Clarke.

The site provides information on housing as well as other resources geared towards your off-campus lifestyle.

Any questions you may have regarding housing, neighbourhood garbage collection or finding out the name of your municipal counselor can be discovered with the help of the Off-Campus Living Office.

Good luck and happy house hunting!



participation passport

weekly prize blitz

Hey Passport Members!

Participation Passport had a FANTASTIC first semester and the Student Life and Community Experience Team wants to thank you for being active members in both the Brock and Niagara communities! Your involvement and participation has made the many Passport events a HUGE success, and we hope that you have been able to meet some new people and gain valuable experience!

We hope that you've settled into your new classes, and that you're on your way to another successful semester. This week, we'll be giving away five Best Buy gift cards valued at \$10.00 each. If you have 5 or more swipes, come to the SLIC (MCA 204) on or after **Wednesday, Feb. 2** between 9:00 am - 5:00 pm to pick one up! Winners can collect their prize based on a first come, first serve basis!

The Student Life & Community Experience Team

Disclaimer: In order to ensure that all Participation Passport members have equal opportunity to benefit from the weekly prizes, individuals are only eligible to win a prize every other week.

What you need to know about the upcoming BUSU elections

Erik Dickson

It's that time of year again! No, it's not quite reading week yet. It's February, and that means BUSU elections are around the corner.

Each year, candidates lobby for your votes in hopes of becoming a part of your student union.

This year will be no different, with the BUSU election campaign happening from Feb. 7-17, with voting stations open from Feb. 15-17.

Why does this matter to you? Well, as a student - whether you're studying full-time or part-time - you pay what are called 'ancillary fees' on top of your tuition.

While you pay roughly \$57 per credit in ancillary fees, \$40 of that goes to pay for a variety of BUSU services and programs. That's about \$200 in total for a full-time student!

With a full-time student population of about 14,000, BUSU is in control of a lot of money each year.

Making sure the most qualified candidates fill the executive positions is up to you, the students.

Once the campaign begins, candidates will have booths set up in two well-trafficked areas. Here, you can meet the candidates, find out about their platforms, and decide if you think they're right for the job.

If you can't make it to their booths, there will be two or three candidate debates where you can hear about their plans.

Most candidates will also have web sites or Facebook pages that

will have their platforms and ideas for students to read and critique.

Like in any election, candidates will be making promises and promoting ideas that will set them apart from their opponents. It's up to the voters to make sure these plans are realistic or even financially possible.

If you feel like you've heard all of this before, and wondering why it's important, this is why.

Although over 17,000 students currently study at Brock, only about 2,500 votes were cast in the race for BUSU President - its most important position.

This means that only about 15 per cent of the student population decided who run their student union.

Despite a two week campaign, which is nearly impossible to ignore with literally hundreds of posters littering the hallways and common areas, BUSU elections have recently had fairly low turnout.

BUSU is responsible for a number of important services that play a role in the day-to-day life of many students.

These include the General Brock and Subcetra stores, the U-Pass, Isaac's, Health and Dental Plans, Foot Patrol, BrockTV, CFBU (Brock Radio), the Student Justice Center and more.

So in the next couple of weeks when you see campaign posters in the halls, keep in mind how important your vote actually is.

For more information on this year's BUSU elections, visit busu.net.

Club Profile: CPCF Society

Claire Gallagher

For the latest trends in pop culture and film, students of the department of Communication, Pop Culture & Film might be surprised to learn that the department has its own club on campus.

The Communication, Pop Culture & Film Society seeks to increase social networking between students in the department of Communication, Pop Culture and Film.

Founded by Paxton Allewell and Amy Graham, the CPCF Society has maintained a popular membership since its inception in 2004.

Now in its sixth year, the Society's tried and true methods and events have garnered a lot of attention from students who hope to network with other students in the department.

"We work to make our department known and do what we can to add

to the Brock experience," said Savanna Schaus, president of the CPCF Society.

As well as providing students with the opportunity to discuss their passions, the CPCF Society brings entertaining and relevant activities to the Brock University campus.

"The best part of my job is bringing together a handful of students, all with different interests and strengths. I enjoy sitting down and pooling our ideas and resources to develop new events and opportunities for the students in our department," said Schaus.

These "new events and opportunities" are well known on campus, as the CPCF Society has established several highly regarded events at Brock.

The club hosts Grad Speaker Nights at which returning Alumni

have the opportunity to share their experience with students from the department of Communication, Pop Culture and Film.

"It gives current students the opportunity to talk to individuals who have been there and are now well into their career," said Schaus.

As always, the highlight of the year is the club's 24 Hour Film Festival. Sponsored by the University and Caters Design Group, students have the opportunity and the challenge of producing a film within a 24-hour span.

This year, filming and production is set to take place on Friday, February 11 at 7 pm. Interested students are to meet at the Welcome Desk in the Schmon Tower where they will be given the mystery topic.

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PHOTO: TASNEEM MOTALA

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From that moment, participants will have 24 hours (until Saturday, February 12 at 7 pm) to produce a film that incorporates and accommodates the given topic.

"I don't know how these competitors do it, but they continually impress us with their creativity and quality," said Schaus.

Once the shooting is a wrap and the films are submitted, the CPCF Society organizes a screening where the up and coming directors will have a chance to showcase their work.

At the event, judges will determine the top three films and cash prizes will be awarded. The screening is set to take place in

March. Keep an eye on the CPCF Facebook group for updates.

The club will also be hosting its annual Year End Soirée. Held in later March, students, alumni and staff are welcome to celebrate the school year.

Although the Society is closed to students outside the department of Communication, Pop Culture & Film, the CPCF Society is always looking for volunteers who are willing to work with club members in order to provide the Society with networking and support opportunities.

For more information about the CPCF Society and for way to get involved, visit cpcfsociety.wordpress.com or email them at cpcfsociety@hotmail.com.

Let us showcase you!

Create your *Both Sides of the Brain Profile*... we'll showcase you on the Student Life website.

What is your other side?

brocku.ca/student-life



**Become
a Brock
Tour
Guide**

Summer and Fall 2011 Positions Available

Recruitment & Liaison Services is hiring:

Campus Experience
Co-ordinator (Spring-Summer)

Campus Experience
Co-ordinators (Fall-Winter)

Job responsibilities include:

- campus tours
- representing Brock at special events
- blogging
- chatting

Check out our postings at brocku.ca/career-services

Upcoming Events

Brock University Film Series (BUFS)

Every Wednesday: 7:00 pm
Empire Theatres, Pen Centre

Wednesday, Feb. 9 - INCENDIES
(Denis Villeneuve, Canada, 2010, rated 14A, 130 min.)

Canada's entry in this year's Oscar race for Best Foreign Language Film. From the director of Polytechnique comes a celebrated adaptation of Wajdi Mouawad's gut-wrenching play. The death of their mother sends the Marwan children from Montreal to the Middle East in search of their roots.

Wednesday, Feb. 16 - SOMEWHERE
(Sofia Coppola, US, 2010, rated 14A, 97 min.)

Fast-living Hollywood star Johnny Marco gets a dose of reality when his daughter Cleo is left in his care unexpectedly. The latest film from writer/director Sofia Coppola (*Lost in Translation*), starring Stephen Dorff and Elle Fanning.

Tickets \$10 at the door (6:00-6:55 pm)
www.brocku.ca/bufs for details.

Sicilian Jazz Project

Friday, Feb. 4: 7:30 p.m.
Sean O'Sullivan Theatre

Cost: \$22.50 for seniors/students; \$28.50 for adults.

The Sicilian Jazz Project has been dazzling audiences since its performance debut at the 2004 Distillery Jazz Festival in Toronto. With its intriguing mix of traditional Sicilian folk songs arranged and presented in modern jazz, it is a musical project like no other! 

Success at Work Workshop

Friday, Feb. 4: 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Community Meeting Place, Decew 208

Learn helpful tips for professional conduct in the workplace. Topics covered will include creating a positive impression, understanding workplace culture, effective communication skills, being a good team player, resolving conflicts, and online communication.

Please confirm your attendance in advance by registering via email at humanrights@brocku.ca 

SDC Workshop: Studying Effectively

Thursday, Feb. 10: 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Learning Commons - Classroom B

Studying is a skill that requires practice. This workshop will provide you with a variety of techniques for studying effectively, and help you discern which strategies work best for you. 

Please register for this workshop online at brocku.ca/sdc/learning/workshops.php

Shinerama Cheque Presentation

Friday, Feb. 11: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Pont Inlet

Join BUSU in celebrating the successful 2010 Shinerama Campaign as they unveil and present the United Way with this year's final total. This event is free and open to anyone! Light snacks and beverages will be available. Please RSVP by February 9, 2011. For more information, contact Nicole Savage, Charities Coordinator at charities@busu.net 

Universities Fighting World Hunger Summit

February 25 - 27
University of Guelph

The 6th Annual Summit of "Universities Fighting World Hunger" will be held outside the United States for the first time February, and will be held at the University of Guelph. The theme for the Summit is "Hunger has no boundaries" and will discuss the current issues around hunger in the local and global community and what we can do to eradicate it. There will be international speakers from the social, academic, corporate, and government sectors. The William J. Clinton Leadership Award will also be awarded at the Clinton Banquet on Saturday February 26th.

Cost for students is only \$70, which includes all meals. There is also accommodation options if required offered at a discount.

Registration and more information can be found at www.uoguelph.ca/worldhunger.

Flora Broley Ball Hockey Tournament

March: More details to come.
Niagara Ball Hockey Club, St. Catharines

The Brock Leader's Citizenship Society is organizing the 2nd Annual Flora Broley Ball Hockey Tournament to raise money for the Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region. Check future issues of Our Brock for more information!