Welcome to Dorchester Hall!

Dorchester Hall was originally constructed in 1958 and has undergone a full renovation over the last 7 months. We hope you will enjoy your new home and all of the amenities the building has to offer!

This guide is meant to provide you information about some of the building systems or features that are not offered in other residence halls. Additionally, we have included tips about how to maintain your room to keep it looking great throughout the year!

While we have Housekeeping and Maintenance staff whom you will get to know as members of your residence hall community, we need to partner with you to keep the building in great shape for everyone!

We hope you are excited about your new home! Living in a renovated residence hall is fantastic, but maintaining your new home requires cooperation between you and your roommates and diligent upkeep. Whether you and your roommate are just getting to know each other or if you are long time friends, take time to discuss how you will share such tasks as sweeping or vacuuming your space, taking out the trash/recycling, promptly wiping up spills and keeping your room neat and clean. If you did not bring cleaning products from home (broom/small vacuum, green cleaning products to wipe up spills, etc.) you can purchase those at the convenience store located in the Stamp Student Union or the South Campus Dining Hall.

During move in or over the next few weeks, you may discover something in your room or elsewhere in the building that needs to be fixed. Call the Residential Facilities 24-hour Service Center at 301.314.9675 (campus extension x49675, known as x4-WORK) to report any problem in your room or building.
Information about a few of the features in your room...

**Heating & Cooling**

Resident bedrooms have what's called a fan coil unit (FCU) below the window. The design of the heating and cooling system in Dorchester is consistent with campus energy standards for modern buildings. All FCUs have pre-set temperatures of 74 degrees for cooling and 70 degrees for heating. The FCUs know this as “Occupied Mode.”

The campus switches over from air conditioning to heating mode each October and back to air conditioning mode each April. The specific date for each switch over is determined by outdoor temperatures and residents are notified in advance of when this switchover will occur as we monitor the weather/temperatures each October and April.

**Fresh Air Vent**

This is an outdoor “fresh air” vent that is required by modern ventilation code. Outside air is always introduced into the building in student rooms and all other public areas, and the air is tempered year-round, so the winter air will be heated and the summer air cooled before it’s pumped through ductwork to the vents above your closet.

**Closet Rod**

In lieu of closet doors, which previous residents kept open more often than closed, we've provided a detachable rod. Some residents may want to hang a curtain (or even a shower curtain!) should they want to have a "closet door".

**Cleaning supplies to have in your room**

To keep your room clean have on hand: disinfecting wipes or spray, sponge, broom/dustpan and/or a vacuum. Set a cleaning schedule with your roommate to keep your room clean! Whether you agree to a weekly cleaning cycle or biweekly schedule, establish your own expectations.
Other Building Features...

Fire Alarm Horns and Strobe Lights

Dorchster Hall's fire alarm system has features: horns and strobe lights. When the fire alarm is activated you will hear a fire alarm horn sound and see strobe lights. You will continue to hear the horn and see the strobe lights until the fire alarm system has been reset by Fire Department personnel. Your RA will instruct you where you should assemble outside when the fire alarm is activated.

Never tamper with the fire alarm and always use the stairs to evacuate the building during a fire alarm. Do not use the elevator in a fire alarm.

Building Kitchen

Your kitchen is located on the ground floor next to the large lounge for all residents to use and prepare a meal. It has a microwave, stove, oven and refrigerator/freezer. You will need to provide your own cooking utensils. Please remember to clean up after yourself and not leave leftover food in the refrigerator to spoil. Never leave unattended food on the stove or in the oven!

Water-Saving Plumbing Fixtures

Sink aerators, shower heads, and toilets are all water-saving fixtures. All restrooms have two-position manual flush valve toilets. To prevent clogs, do not flush feminine hygiene products, disposable wipes, paper towels or napkins down the toilet.

Lounge and Study Room Lighting

Vacancy sensors have been installed in lounges and study rooms to conserve energy. These sensors determine when to power-down some of the lamps in most of the light fixtures in those spaces. Lights must be turned ON manually but will turn off automatically after that room has been vacated for several minutes.

See a maintenance or housekeeping problem? Report it to our Residential Facilities Service Center 24/7! 301-314-9675
Residential Facilities recognizes that residents may want to personalize their rooms with posters or pictures. If you choose to do so, you will be responsible for any and all damage to the paint and/or wall.

Each year after residents move out, we utilize hundreds of labor hours to repair and repaint drywall damage caused by the tape and fasteners residents used. Frankly, some drywall damage – caused by widely-advertised “wall friendly” products – surprised us.

We recommend that residents hang posters, pictures using “blue painter’s tape”, readily found in home improvement stores. Removable poster “putty” is also another option to use. Despite product advertising, products sold as “removable” poster hooks, mounting tape, strips, squares or dots, we have often found to stain the paint or cause damage to wall surfaces when removing the releasable strip, hook, square or dot. If you choose to use these or similar products, we recommend first applying the blue painter’s tape to the wall and then adhering the removable poster hook/tape to the blue painter’s tape to protect the wall surface and make for easier removal. Never use masking tape or duct tape as these leave residue and damage the wall surface.

Examples of wall damage caused by wall friendly “removable” products:

- This type of hook causes drywall paper to tear.
- After a releasable hook is removed, it leaves a bubble. This must be cut out and repaired.
- A releasable hook that doesn’t release tears the drywall paper.
- Adhesive strips bond too tightly and drywall paper tears.
- Adhesive holders should never be applied to wood doors.
- Adhesive squares aren’t wall-friendly.
- Adhesive squares leave a lasting impression on the wall.
- Adhesive from duct tape is always a bad idea!

What Never Works Anywhere…Duct Tape
The sticky adhesive on duct tape invariably stays behind and it cannot be easily cleaned, often requiring wall repairs and repainting. Worse yet, if you use duct tape on our wooden room doors, the finish will most likely be damaged and we may have to replace the door.