



Originally Presented on:	(MM/DD/YY)
Type of Action:	Legislation
Status/Result:	New Business

S.A. Resolution #26
Promoting Justice and Friendship in the Housing Lottery

ABSTRACT: This resolution changes the order in which students receive their time-slots and pick their blocking unit and creates a two-part lottery system to guarantee that students can live with their friends, reduce politicking, and give more time to freshmen to select blocking units.

Sponsored by: Gabriel Kaufman '18

Whereas, according to Article III, Section 1 of the Student Assembly Charter, “the Student Assembly has *legislative authority* over the policies of the Division of Campus Life” and thus by extension the Office of Residential and Event Services (ORES) therein;

Whereas, the Student Assembly has exercised this authority in the past, such as when the Student Assembly passed (AY 2012-2013) Resolution #12: “Adoption of a Gender Inclusive Housing Policy” and (AY 2009- 2010) Resolution #13: “Housing Lottery Time Slots.”

Whereas, the Student Assembly has a compelling interest in reviewing the distribution pattern of the living arrangements of students throughout the campus;

Whereas, the Office of Residential and Event Services manages the housing lottery to which this resolution refers in the following clauses;

Whereas, the housing lottery is the primary means by which returning students obtain residence and thus defines the aforementioned distribution pattern;

Whereas, in the current housing lottery system, students receive time-slots *before* they decide who will comprise their blocking unit of no more than four other students (five students per blocking unit) and those time-slots are allocated randomly to students by class year;

Whereas, this system results in a random group of students (those receiving early time-slots) with the ability to decide *both where and with whom they will live*;

Whereas, such a system allows a student with the better time-slot to exercise complete power over the composition of his or her blocking unit, creating an unfair and unequal dynamic among students who do have early time slots and those who do not;

Whereas, allocating the time-slots before the students choose their blocking unit partners creates a perverse incentive for students to choose *with whom* they will live as a function of *where* they will live, which makes building friendly communities more difficult as those blocking units are chosen not based on the inherent qualities of the students, but on the prospect of receiving better housing;

Whereas, that incentive is removed if participants cannot choose based off another participant's time-slot;

Whereas, a housing lottery system where students choose with whom they will live before they know

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58 where they will live will incentivize students to choose blocking unit partners based only off the
59 value of their friendship (or their compatibility as roommates);
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61 Whereas, such a system which allows students to pool their chances of getting a better time-slot by
62 blocking with other students increases the blocking unit's chance to get better housing
63 proportionally to the number of students in the block (e.g, giving a blocking unit of x number of
64 students x time slots and assigning the blocking unit the best one);
65

66 Whereas, such a system would be fair for large, medium, and small blocking units as larger blocking units
67 would be more likely to get better time-slots but smaller blocking units would have more
68 available blocks from which to choose;
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70 Whereas, the Office of Residential and Event Services would be able to adjust the probability that a
71 blocking unit with x number of participants receive a time-slot sufficient to obtain favorable
72 housing such that there is no advantage to having a larger block,
73

74 Whereas, such as system would give participants far more time to decide who will be in their blocking
75 unit as they would not have to wait for the assignment of the time slot in February to think about
76 who they will block with;
77

78 Whereas, a housing lottery system incorporating all of these features can be created by changing the order
79 of assigning the time-slot and choosing with whom to block, and by switching to a two-part
80 housing lottery outlined in the following clauses;
81

82 Be it therefore resolved, that the Office of Residential and Event Services change the order in which,
83 participants receive their time slots and decide with whom to block, such that participants choose
84 their blocking unit and then, after submitting the blocking unit, collectively receive a time slot to
85 select their residential community (in most cases a building, such as Becker House or Cascadilla
86 Hall), and then, once they have selected their residential community (defined at the discretion of
87 the Office of Residential and Event Services), the residential community shall conduct a second
88 internal lottery with the same group with new timeslots to determine the order in which blocking
89 units select their rooms;
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91 Be it further resolved, that the capacity of residential communities would be determined according to the
92 total number of beds available in a residential community instead of based on individual rooms or
93 blocks;
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95 Be it further resolved, that blocking units *may not break up until there are no suitable blocks remaining in their*
96 *residential community capable of fitting that blocking unit,* as this guarantees that blocking unit members are
97 able to live in the same residential community as their block mates even in the event that in the
98 internal lottery, all of the members are not able to block together;
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100 Be it further resolved, that in the individual residential community lotteries (the second lottery), blocking
101 units would collectively receive a new time slot for which to choose their specific living arrangements
102 in the residential community;
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104 Be it further resolved, that if blocks do break up, the students in those blocks would be able to block in any
105 available rooms in the residential community during the time-slot their blocking unit received

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128 | Be it further resolved, that in the first lottery, blocking units collectively receive the best time-slot of the
129 | time-slots that any of the participants would have received under the current system;
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131 | Be it further resolved, that the Office of Residential and Event Services have otherwise broad discretion
132 | in implementing this policy change to take into account the nuances of the system;
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134 | Be it finally resolved, that the Office of Residential and Event Services report to the Student Assembly
135 | before the conclusion of the 2016 Spring Semester, to give an update on ORES's progress in
136 | implementing the change.
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139 | Respectfully Submitted,

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141 | Gabriel Kaufman '18
142 | *Undesignated At-Large, Student Assembly*

143 |
144 | Christian Welling '17
145 | *Residential Student Congress Liason*

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147 | Erinn Liu '18
148 | *Engineering Representative, Student Assembly*

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150 | Dustin Liu '19
151 | *Freshman Representative, Student Assembly*

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153 | Justin Selig '17
154 | *Engineering Representative, Student Assembly*

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156 | Patricia Mawn-Malhau '18
157 | *Advocacy Director, Residential Student Congress*

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159 | *(Reviewed by: Residential Life Committee, DATE)*

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