

# GONE INTO HISTORY

90 YEARS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA ARCHIVES

## STUDENT HOUSING NEEDS

Student housing represented both persistent and fresh challenges for the University.

**“The University of Minnesota is facing a housing crisis of appalling proportions.”**

-- Report presented to the University Senate May 24, 1945

The report lists four central factors involved in the University housing program:

1. The Main campus is hemmed in by the river and by industrial sections. This circumstance places severe limitations upon the University in its efforts to develop adequate housing facilities now and in the postwar period.
2. The available housing in southeast Minneapolis, to a marked extent, is inadequate because of obsolescence of buildings.
3. The financial capacity of students to pay for adequate and acceptable housing is *generally modest*.
4. The parents of students, particularly those from other sections of the state, expect the University to make every reasonable effort to provide acceptable housing facilities and services.

The University needed to approach student housing in different ways, particularly housing and related services for married students with children.

### How Much Increase in Housing Is Needed?

Where will 21,500 students reside? The answer to this question is best made in terms of an answer to the question: where did students reside before the present war? The following table gives an analysis of the residential status of students as of the school year 1941-42, the first year for which complete statistics are available. Approximately 21 per cent of the students lived in private rooming houses and an additional 55 per cent lived in parents' homes in Minneapolis and St. Paul. University dormitories and Cooperative Houses provided a little more than 10 per cent of the available housing facilities (dormitories 9.5 per cent and Cooperative Houses 0.8 per cent). The other students distributed themselves in relatively small groups among a number of types of residences.

In the last two columns to the right of the following table, the percentages of the year 1941-42 are applied to the predicted enrollment of 21,500 students to arrive at an estimate of the possible housing needs of the future. For example, in 1941-42, a total of 7,642 students, 55.1 per cent of the total of 13,862, lived in parents' homes in Minneapolis or St. Paul. Applying this percentage to 21,500, we conclude that 11,846 students, an increase of 4,204, are expected to live in parents' homes. If students continue, in the postwar period, to distribute themselves among the various types of housing facilities in relatively the same proportions as in the year 1941-42, then the estimated increase of 8,635 students will be housed as indicated in the two columns to the right in the table below.

Residential Status of University Students

Type of Residence	1941-42*		Predicted†	Needed Increases†
	No.	Per cent		
Parents' Homes .....	7,642	55.1	11,846	4,204
Commuters .....	323	2.3	494	171
Dormitories .....	1,316	9.5	2,042	726
Fraternities—Sororities .....	841	6.1	1,311	470
Cooperative Houses (Women) .....	109	0.8	172	63
Apartments .....	233	1.7	365	132
Relatives' Homes .....	277	2.0	430	153
Employers' Homes .....	189	1.4	301	112
Friends' Homes .....	61	0.4	86	25
Private Rooming Houses .....	2,871	20.7	4,450	1,579
Total .....	13,862	100.0	21,500	8,635

\* As of December 21, 1941.

† Based upon a report by Professor R. S. Vaile to the Senate Committee on Education, June 22, 1943. This study anticipates that, within three years of the close of the war, the fall quarter enrollment in the University will increase to 21,500 and the total annual enrollment will increase to 24,500 students. In the above table, the percentages of 1941-42 are applied to the figure 21,500, assuming that increases in housing capacities may be somewhat proportional to the distribution of 1941-42.