To: Muskingum Juniors and Seniors in 2010-11

From: Jeff Zellers, Vice President of Enrollment
       Janet Heeter Bass, Vice President of Student Affairs

Date: December 7, 2009

Subject: Off-campus housing and student financial aid

Muskingum University will be implementing a change in policy pertaining to the awarding of institutional financial assistance for students who choose to live in off-campus housing. This change has been under consideration for several years, and is a common practice among higher education institutions.

Given the challenging financial times we face, it has become very important for Muskingum to continue to provide increased institutional financial aid to enable students to stay in school. We will continue to provide financial assistance toward tuition, fees, room and board charges for students living on-campus. When financial aid is used to support off-campus housing, however, those resources become an actual financial outlay to a third party. We therefore believe an adjustment for students living off-campus, as we have done for many years for commuting students (living at home), is justifiable given limited financial aid resources.

- Beginning with the 2010 fall semester, students moving into off-campus housing will be subject to a $1,500 per year reduction to need-based institutionally-supported grant assistance (Muskingum Grant, PLUS Grant, Endowed Grant or SEOG) which may be part of the financial aid package. Students who were approved to reside in off-campus housing for the 2009 fall semester or before are not affected by the policy change.
- We will be communicating this policy change to your parents if you are considered to be a dependent student for financial aid purposes. We are informing you as early in the year as possible so that you will have time to consider your options before room draw in the spring.
- In some cases it may be possible to obtain additional loan assistance to replace the lost grant aid. Staff in the Student Financial Services Office will be able to give you an idea of whether that opportunity is available to you.
- We will be expanding on-campus housing options next fall. Renovations will be made to the Kappa Sigma Fraternity House and it will be used for residential spaces for the 2010-11 year. We hope that the fraternity will have its charter reinstated and will return to campus within the next five years, but until that occurs, we will be using the facility as an upperclass, coeducational housing unit. This will add new residential spaces to the campus, and there are other plans under discussion to increase bed capacity.

If you have questions about this matter, please feel free to contact us. As always, if your financial circumstances have changed or if you are experiencing particular difficulties, please contact The Office of Student Financial Services.