

# Four dormitories slated for partial closings

## University may start 'hosting' conferences during academic year

By Debbie Howlett  
Of the Emerald

Faced with a projection of nearly 300 fewer residents fall term, the University housing office will close parts of four dormitories and may enter into the conference hosting business year-round.

"Around the first of August we'll be more firm in our projections," says Dan Williams, University housing director. "But I think we'll have about 300 less residents, 15 percent, when it all shakes down."

When asked if he believes, like so many others have stated, that students are simply waiting longer to decide whether they will attend school, Williams responds with an emphatic "no."

"Our decline is directly related to reduced enrollments," Williams says. "I can't make my plans based on wishful thinking."

If the present rate of decline in room reservations holds through the summer, as Williams expects, the University will have to look for alternatives to housing students in the residence halls.

One of the alternatives, "hosting" conferences through the academic year much like the University does during the summer, hasn't yet received "institutional permission," Williams says.

disrupting activities for the students."

He also said that business conferences and the like will be a prime target. "And I want to stress that we will try and preserve the quality of the experience for the student," Williams says.

The conference option would raise more money than the other remedy Williams voiced — leaving parts of some facilities vacant — which is the plan so

University neighborhood have found, fewer tenants mean fewer dollars.

The decline in the dollar amount is high — about \$800,000. But Williams is optimistic about covering the deficit — "We'll solve that," he says — without increasing the cost to the student — "Our prices are set."

The housing office wasn't hit unexpectedly with the decline, Williams says. "We've been underhiring for about two months," he says.

"We can solve the personnel problem through attrition," Williams says, adding that costs for food service and food are basically self-regulating.

And Williams says that the housing office is going to try and "generate demand" for the dormitories.

"I don't think this is a short-term problem," Williams says. "We have to start long-range plans over the next year."

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The conferences scheduled this summer range from academic programs for young people to athletic "camps" for a varying age groups.

"We'd want harmony in activities," Williams says. "We won't include any

far.

Come fall term, half of the Bean Complex and one floor each in Walton, Hamilton and the University Inn will be vacant, Williams says.

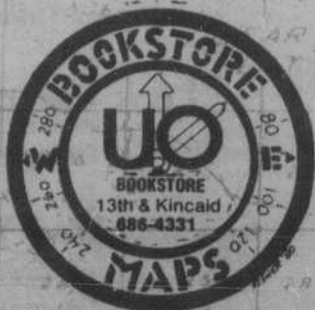
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