It is time to look for an apartment! Remember that the method of finding and renting an apartment in Chicago may be different than what occurs in your country. Searching for an apartment can be time-consuming and frustrating. This handout includes suggestions made by other international students and many other resources to help you in your search:

- Helpful Definitions & What to Keep in Mind
- Introduction to Chicago Neighborhoods
- Getting Started on Your Search
- Connect to DePaul Students: Facebook
- Temporary Housing

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

- **Landlord**
  The landlord is the person from whom you will rent the apartment. The landlord may be a company or an individual. It is important to know the name of your landlord and his/her phone number and address. You will probably be contacting the landlord if there are any problems with the apartment during your lease.

- **Lease**
  A lease is the agreement between you and the landlord. You will sign a lease agreeing to the rent and rules for living in the apartment. In the U.S., most leases are for one year; however, it is possible to rent for a shorter amount of time. It is important to thoroughly read and understand the lease before you sign it. Don't hesitate to ask questions if you don't understand something.

- **Security Deposit**
  You will be required to pay a security deposit in addition to the first month’s rent on a new apartment. The security deposit is an additional sum of money usually the equivalent of the first month’s rent. At the end of your lease you will get this deposit back, provided there is no damage to the apartment. Make sure you understand the terms under which the security deposit will not be returned to you.

- **Studio**
  If you want to live alone, consider renting a studio. A studio is usually one large room, bathroom, and a small kitchen. Studios are almost always cheaper than a one-bedroom apartment.

- **Sublet**
  Since most of the leases in the U.S. are for one year, consider subletting your apartment if you want to live there for less than a year. This will allow someone else to live in the apartment and pay rent. It is the tenants’ responsibility to find someone to sublet.

WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND

- **U.S. Credit History**
  When you sign a lease as a tenant in the U.S., a credit history check is almost always required. As an international student, you probably don't have any U.S. credit history. This shouldn't cause a big problem, since most landlords will be willing to work with you. In order to compensate for this lack of credit history, landlords might require a double security deposit. It might also be helpful to have a letter from the Office for International Students and Scholars.
stating that you are indeed a student and have sufficient funds to cover the cost of living while in the U.S.

- **Roommates**
  There are benefits to sharing the rent with someone! In addition to saving you money, roommates provide welcomed companionship during your time in the U.S. Check the bulletin boards around campus for people looking for roommates (you could even put up a notice yourself).

- **Utilities**
  It is important to realize that some utilities won’t be included with the monthly rent, such as gas or electricity (water will most likely be included). Keep this in mind when you estimate your living expenses.

- **Location**
  It is a good idea to find an apartment in a location that fits your needs. Is it close to public transportation? Is it close to DePaul? Is it a safe neighborhood?

- **Bring a Friend!**
  It is helpful to have a second opinion when looking for an apartment, so bring a friend along! Some students have offered their time to help you, so contact the OISS for their names.

### CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOODS AND ESTIMATED PRICE RANGES

The following are average rent prices for one and two bedroom apartments in several Chicago neighborhoods. Keep in mind as a general rule, the farther away from Lake Michigan, the cheaper the rent. Also, rent will be cheaper in areas further north and west. The estimated rent prices are for decent sized apartments. On a student's budget, you might be able to find something cheaper. Remember, only a few neighborhoods are listed as examples and average prices as well as actual rent may vary.

- **Bucktown:** Located northwest of Lincoln Park; rent is becoming more expensive. One bedroom will start at approximately $800 and a two bedroom will start at $1,200.
- **Downtown / The Loop:** This area is very expensive because of the location. A two bedroom apartment usually starts at $1,600.
- **Gold Coast:** This is a very expensive neighborhood, with one bedrooms starting at $1,000 and two bedroom apartments starting at $1,600.
- **Lincoln Park:** A one bedroom apartment usually starts at $850 and a two bedroom will start at $1,300.
- **Lakeview:** Apartments are usually the same price as Lincoln Park but may be $100-$200 cheaper.
- **Wrigleyville:** A one bedroom apartment usually starts at $800 and a two bedroom will start at $1,200.
- **Rogers Park:** A one bedroom apartment usually starts at $600 and a two bedroom will start at $800.
- **Edgewater:** A one bedroom apartment usually starts at $600 and a two bedroom will start at $850.
CONNECT TO DEPAUL STUDENTS ON FACEBOOK
DePaul Students Living Off Campus: This is a social networking group where students can
connect with one another, post apartment rentals or sublets, or inquire about rentals and
roommates.

OTHER DEPAUL HOUSING RESOURCES:
University Center of Chicago (Loop)
Opened in the fall of 2004, the University Center of Chicago (UCC) (http://www.depaul.edu/ucc/) offers exciting student living in the South Loop—just
steps away from public transportation, art galleries, concert halls, museums, theaters,
nightlife, the famous Chicago skyline, and beautiful Lake Michigan. With particular
appeal to upperclassmen and graduate students, UCC features studios, four-person
apartments, and suite-style units.
Housing on campus is in great demand, and not guaranteed, so we encourage all
students to apply as early as possible to secure a space. For instructions on applying, or
to learn more about on-campus housing and view residence halls, visit Housing Services
online at http://housing.depaul.edu.

☐ 1237 WEST Student Apartments (Lincoln Park)
Located one block from DePaul’s Lincoln Park campus, 1237 West is a 21st century
student apartment community for 580 DePaul University students. The building offers
two-, three-, and four-person units, all with single occupancy bedrooms. Pricing
includes all utilities, 24-hour doorman, private bedrooms (with doors that lock),
Internet, TV, local phone, and furnished units. Financial aid can be used and a meal plan
is optional. The building offers calendar, academic, and short-term contracts, is open
year round (including winter and spring breaks), and you are never responsible for your
roommate’s rent payments. For more information about 1237 West, including costs,
amenities, and the application process, please visit both:

☐ Once in Chicago and at DePaul, you might also check the bulletin boards in the Student
Centers on both the Lincoln Park and Loop campuses. Many times, students who are
looking for roommates or have apartments they are hoping to rent or sublet put flyers
up with descriptions of apartments and contact information.
APARTMENT SEARCH AGENCIES

Apartment search agencies can be very helpful in finding the right apartment. You will tell them your criteria (i.e., size, location, and price range) and they will usually drive you to several apartments that match your needs. This is a great way to find an apartment if you are new to the area. Most of these agencies receive commission from the building owners, so the service to you is free. However, before you begin using their service, make sure to find out if there will be any cost associated with their service.

The following is an alphabetical listing of several apartment search agencies that other students have found helpful. It is intended to give you general information and in no way implies endorsement by the OISS or DePaul University. For more detailed information, including rates and fees, please contact the agencies directly.

- **The Apartment Connection**  
  Specializing in Rogers Park, Edgewater, Andersonville, Gold Coast, Printers Row, River North, Lakeview, Wrigleyville, Lincoln Park, Bucktown, Wicker Park, Ravenswood, Roscoe Village, Ukrainian Village, St. Bens, and East Village.  
  773.525.3888  
  800.546.7800  
  1000 W. Diversey Parkway  
  Chicago, IL 60614

- **The Apartment Source**  
  Specializing in Lincoln Park, Lakeview, Gold Coast, Printers Row, and Bucktown  
  773.404.9900  
  2683 N. Halsted  
  Chicago, IL 60614

- **The Apartment People**  
  Specializing in Lincoln Park, Rogers Park, Edgewater, Andersonville, Lakeview, Ravenswood, Uptown  
  773.248.8800  
  800.447.3684  
  3121 N. Broadway  
  Chicago, IL 60657

- **Planned Property Management**  
  Specializing in Gold Coast, Lincoln Park and Lakeview  
  **Offer DePaul Students a Discount**  
  773.435.9177  
  806 W. Belmont, Chicago, Illinois 60657
ADDITIONAL CHICAGO RESOURCES

--The Chicago Reader
As most Chicagoans know, The Reader (http://www.chicagoreader.com) is an essential source for the apartment search. The Reader is a free weekly paper in Chicago that is distributed on Thursdays. In addition to information about what's going on in Chicago, the Reader offers a comprehensive list of apartments available for rent (check out section four). You can usually find The Reader at local businesses, such as coffee shops, bars, restaurants and grocery stores. The Reader offers a free apartment search service on the internet called SpaceFinder. This is an excellent and efficient way to search through their printed rental advertisements. SpaceFinder allows you to specify the location, size, and price range of the apartment you're looking for and then it compiles a list of apartments that fit your criteria. The database is updated at 7 PM every Tuesday so SpaceFinder can give you an early look at ads that won't be in the paper until Thursday.

--Craigslist
Another list of available apartments-for-rent, sublets, and roommates can be found at http://chicago.craigslist.org (relevant links are located under “Housing”). Ads are placed daily by individuals who are looking to share apartments or who have rooms or entire apartments that they are hoping to rent, in many cases, immediately. As the site is updated daily, it’s a good idea to keep checking it for new listings.

In addition to viewing ads for available apartments, you can even post your own free ad indicating that you are looking for an apartment and/or roommate by using the “post to classifieds” link. Just be sure not to include any of your personal demographic information in the body of the posting (i.e. your full name, phone number, etc.). You may be required to enter that information in order to post, but do not need to include it in your actual advertisement that the public can view. For more information about posting anonymously, please consult: http://www.craigslist.org/about/help/faq.html#postinganonymously

Another common way students find apartments is by walking around neighborhoods in which they would like to live and looking for "For Rent" signs in windows and on doors or outside gates. This method allows you to get a feel for the neighborhood and discover what is within walking distance of the apartment. However, it also assumes that you are in Chicago and have plenty of time to search for an apartment!
TEMPORARY HOUSING
If you need a place to stay while searching for an apartment, hostels are quite often the most affordable option. The following is a list of area hostels that offer, in most cases, both shared and private rooms.

The following is an alphabetical listing of temporary housing that other students have found helpful. It is intended to give you general information and in no way implies endorsement by the OISS or DePaul University. For more detailed information, including rates and fees, please contact the hostels directly.

**Arlington House International Hostel**
Tel. 773.929.5380
Fax 773.665.5485
http://www.arlingtonhouse.com
616 W. Arlington Place, Chicago, Illinois 60614
$29 shared room/$64-$78 private room

**Chicago International Hostel**
Tel. 773.262.1011
Fax 773.262.3673
http://www.chicagointernationalhostel.com
6318 N. Winthrop Avenue, Chicago, IL 60660
$20 shared room /$46-$57 private room

**Hostelling International – Chicago**
(Location – downtown Chicago in the South Loop)
Tel. 312.360.0300
Fax 312.360.0313
http://www.hichicago.org
24 East Congress Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60605
$27-$36 shared room (per person, per night)

**International House at the University of Chicago**
Tel. 773.753.2270
Fax 773.753.1227
http://ihouse.uchicago.edu
1414 East 59th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637
Starting at $60 per night; $371 per week