Students and their families tend to view the housing assignment as a significant part of the first-year experience. We have found that students’ residential experiences depend more on the connections they make with other members in their community rather than the assigned residence hall. When parents help their sons and daughters begin their residential experience with a positive attitude, they have a much greater likelihood of a successful transition. Students quickly discover that each hall has its own positive attributes, and all provide the ability to make plenty of friends, regardless of the location. The campus is fairly compact, with all of the residences within a five to ten minute walk to any other part of campus.

In general, the all first-year student floors tend to be more energetic, while the mixed floors tend to be calmer, and students are able to benefit from the experience of the older students on the floor. Wherever first-year students are housed, at least half the residents will be from their class. All students who have roommates are expected to complete a roommate agreement, which provides an opportunity to discuss community versus personal items, visitors, neatness expectations, hours to be able to sleep or study, etc. These forms will be distributed to students by the Resident Advisors during New Student Orientation.

Wesleyan housing stock is very diverse, with multiple room sizes within each building, so it is difficult to provide room dimensions. Every student receives a desk, chair, dresser, bed, bookcase and closet or wardrobe. The furniture is movable, with the exception of some Foss Hill (West College and Nicolson) rooms that have built-in units. Most beds are adjustable in height, so risers are not needed. At its lowest level, the mattress is 15” from the floor. There are shades or vertical blinds on the windows. Fauver, Clark and 200 Church have sheet rock walls, the others are cinder block. Most of the rooms have tile floors. Should students bring a rug, we find a 5x7 best fits most spaces. Roommates should coordinate who will bring shared items, such as rugs and refrigerators, so as not to end up with duplicates. We encourage all students to limit what they pack and assess their needs upon arrival. There are a number of stores in the area, including Wal-Mart, Target, Home Depot, Staples, and Bed, Bath and Beyond, so additional items can easily be purchased. All students whose belongings are not covered by a parent’s homeowners insurance should purchase a renter’s insurance policy, such as those offered by National Student Services Inc. at https://www.nssi.com/ or Gallagher Koster at https://www.gallagherkoster.com/.

We are very excited about the Butterfield renovations occurring this summer. Each building will have a new kitchen, game room, social lounge, study rooms and laundry facility. In addition, 92 additional beds are being built to create more “all first year” housing locations. More information can be found at http://www.wesleyan.edu/masterplan/butterfield_detail.html.

As parents, you can support your son or daughter’s successful transition to college in a number of ways. You can help them evaluate situations from different perspectives and generate possible solutions, encourage them to address concerns as they arise rather than avoid a situation or have it escalate into a more serious problem, and help them accept responsibility for their actions and learn from the consequences. In addition, a member of the Residential Life staff is always available to assist them or at the least, point them in the right direction.

Wesleyan values the personal growth that the residential experience offers so much that students are required to live on campus throughout their undergraduate career. Residential Life supports this
commitment through offering increasingly independent housing options and focusing on seven learning outcomes, which include developing meaningful relationships, civility, ethical behavior, social justice, civic responsibility, independence and healthy, responsible living. The increasing independence model can be found at https://www.wesleyan.edu/reslife/Increasing%20Independence%20Model.pdf, and our learning outcomes at https://www.wesleyan.edu/reslife/learning_outcomes.html.

Please refer to our website at https://www.wesleyan.edu/reslife/ and our blog at http://reslife.blogs.wesleyan.edu/ for additional information throughout the year, and you can like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. We look forward to welcoming your sons and daughters as they embark on this new, exciting experience.