



Due to record-breaking enrollments, technological demands and students' desire for more amenities, residence halls have evolved over the decades. By refurbishing residence halls such as Mark Twain, Mizzou's living-learning communities are trying to keep up with the demand.





FULL HOUSE

STORY BY DALE SMITH

PHOTO BY NICHOLAS BENNER



When Frankie Minor arrived on campus in 1994, enrollment stood at 22,136, and Mizzou hadn't built a residence hall in nearly 30 years. "Not long before that, people had tossed around the idea of downsizing the university to 16,000 students," says Minor, director of Residential Life. "But look at where we are now." After a decade of record-breaking enrollment, Mizzou has 34,748 students in fall 2012.

Although Minor believes that higher education should be available to the masses, Mizzou's steadily growing enrollments are making it tough for him to shelter all of the freshman class, which is required to live on campus. What's more, the days of "dorm" living — a bed in a cinder-block cube — are over. Today's residence halls are living-learning communities designed and staffed to offer lots of opportunities for social and academic growth. In fall 2012, MU offered 6,281 undergraduate beds on campus.

To accommodate the freshman class, Minor leased 450 beds at Campus View apartments, south of campus off Providence Road, and renamed them Tiger Diggs. The units operate as residence halls, with all the usual staff and programs. Still, more than a thousand upperclassmen who requested on-campus housing were turned away, and transfer students are not even offered rooms. The unmet demand could be as high as 3,600 beds.

\$30.3 million project scheduled for completion in April 2015, is just one step toward meeting students' demand for on-campus housing.

The plan also calls for:

- Renovating Manor House apartments by 2015 into a residence hall layout. The 210 beds would be an addition of 110 beds. Cost: \$8.8 million
- Razing and replacing Jones, Lathrop and Laws residence halls in phases from 2016 to 2020. The 1,269 beds would be an addition of 306 beds. Cost: \$127.1 million

In all, the plan calls for replacing or renovating all residence halls and increasing capacity by approximately 1,000 beds. Those rooms, amenities, staffing and programs for students are a far cry from the bare-bones dorms of yesteryear. Students want more of a "good life" vibe in their surroundings, and the university thinks residence halls should be sites of academic and social learning. It's all calculated to give undergraduates a good start.

Wants and Needs

When many of us went to college, we ate a lot of mac and cheese and sat around on used furniture, Minor says. "It was a rite of passage to sacrifice during college for the payoff of getting the degree and a full-time job. But today, students want it *now* — the smartphone, the 60-inch plasma TV, the high-end furnishings."

The good life comes at a price. Minor projects a 4 percent annual increase in housing costs until the planned construction wraps up in 2020, then 3 percent increases. That compares favorably with peer institutions' increases during the past decade. He says Nebraska's rates went up 5.5 percent, Colorado 6.1 percent, Kentucky 7.1 percent and Alabama 8 percent. "So, yes, our rates are going up 4 percent, but we don't have people calling and complaining about the cost of housing. What they're calling about is, 'Why can't my child live on campus?'"

Minor and his staff keep close tabs on students' desires. All residence halls have wireless Internet access, of course, and students can even arrange to receive a text message when their laundry cycle has ended. But it's a balancing act, Minor says. "The Rolling Stones said it best, 'You can't always get what you want,' but sometimes you get what you need." What do students need to grow?



With future enrollment remaining stable or growing for the foreseeable future, a new version of Residential Life's master plan is kicking into gear. In July 2012, the University of Missouri Board of Curators approved Minor's request to build a 330-bed residence hall east of University Hospital. Virginia Avenue South, a five-story,

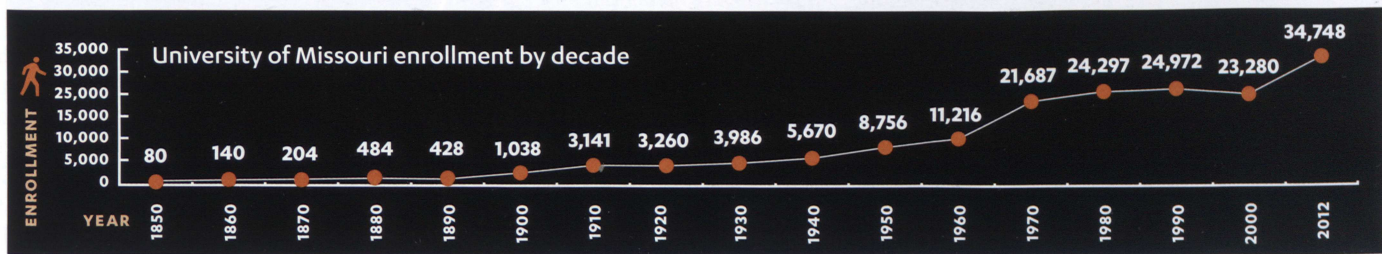
← **Previous page:** Students fill the sidewalks as they head to class, passing by the MU Student Center.

→ Despite the rush-hour appearance of Rollins Street, right, a typical student's move into an MU residence hall is a well-ordered shift from home to college life.

→ **Opposite page:** In the 1950s, campus housing was little more than room and board. A reading lamp, desk and bed were the only necessities needed in Defoe Hall, top right. Social areas such as the parlor in Johnston Hall and rooms in Lewis and Clark halls, built in 1964, were considered an adequate home base for students.



See more photos of residence halls throughout the years.
mizzoumagazine.com/winter2013



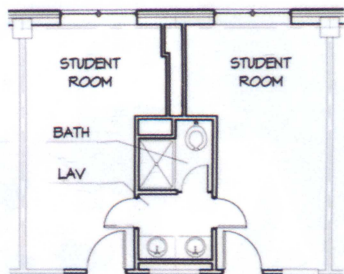
PHOTOS COURTESY OF MU ARCHIVES C-1/81/1 (TOP AND BOTTOM LEFT), UW 4/31/1 (BOTTOM MIDDLE AND RIGHT)



Today's residence hall rooms reflect a variety of occupants' styles. Custom wall color is available such as in the Johnston Hall room of **Lauren Viets**, above. Suite-style living in Dogwood Hall attracted **Chad Phillips** and **Jonathan Hamacker**, below. Community is encouraged in halls such as College Avenue where, from left, **Julia Boudreau**, **Janee Harrell**, **India Wells** and **Jordan Tatman** gather.



→ Revamped room plans for Mark Twain Hall include suite-style living. Once highlighted in a 1960s marketing brochure, below right, the pool was removed in 2012 to make way for expanded dining space.



Living and Learning

Although providing beds is still a critical role for residence halls, administrators also include learning along with the living. Lesson No. 1 is how to get along with others. When speaking with families of incoming freshmen, Minor breaks it to them that single rooms are for upperclassmen. About 97 percent of freshmen had their own room at home, and about 60 percent had their own bathroom. He tells parents that learning to share a space will be a new and valuable experience for their children. “They’ll be learning to compromise, negotiate differences and deal with people who are annoying to you — I joke that it’s good practice for marriage,” Minor says. “But it’s also about how to be part of a larger community. We’re preparing our students to be active, engaged citizens and giving them practice doing that in residence halls.”

In recent years, residence hall living and academics have been linked, Minor says. For instance, students can live in the same hallway with others sharing their academic major, an arrangement that puts like-minded colleagues close by. Other groups of students form around broader themes, such as leadership, or people and culture. The groupings create a sense of community and make it easier to collaborate on studies and projects. The residence halls are designed not only with places for small groups to gather but also regular classrooms. More than 100 sections of various courses meet in these classrooms each year.

What Remains

Residence halls might look fancier than alumni recall, Minor says. But some things haven’t changed. Most alumni think fondly of their time in residence halls. “They enjoy remembering the shenanigans, friends, activities. What hasn’t changed is the sense of friendship and community and camaraderie that alumni experienced back in their Spartan residence halls. Students are still meeting each other, forming relationships. Those things are still going on. They are timeless.” **M**

Mark Twain Hall Gets a Redo

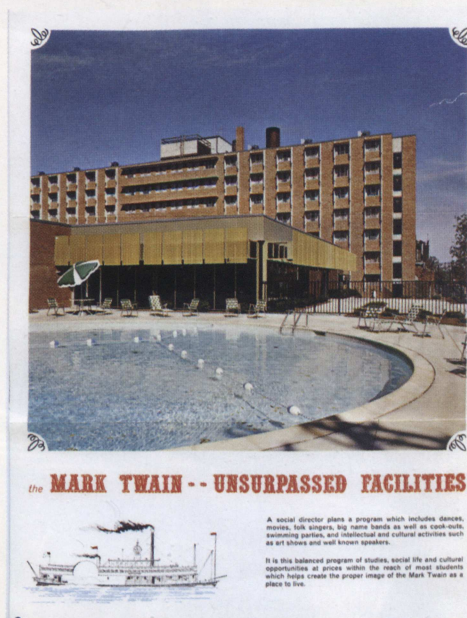
Workers remake Mark Twain Residence Hall inside and out



Mark Twain Hall is getting more than a facelift. The residence hall is getting new terra cotta skin as part of a \$21.7 million renovation scheduled for completion in fall 2013. The Chicago-based University Dormitory Development Inc. built the 400-bed structure in 1963, and Mizzou bought it in 1986 for \$2.7 million. The refurbished building will house 372 students and offer more common space.

In the new-and-improved Mark Twain, suite-style living will continue, and the building will feature better security, two study rooms and a lounge on each floor. The upgrades will meet current building codes for plumbing, electrical and a sprinkler system for fire protection.

Mark Twain’s outdoor pool has been demolished to make room for a larger dining room. Also gone is the riverboat mosaic once located in the lobby. However, planners will honor the building’s eponym with a visual display of the literary Missourian in the lobby and main lounge area.



the MARK TWAIN -- UNSURPASSED FACILITIES

A social director plans a program which includes dance, movies, fish dinners, big game hunts as well as card-rooms, swimming parties, and intellectual and cultural activities both as art shows and well known speakers.

It is this balanced program of studies, social life and cultural opportunities at prices within the reach of most students which helps create the proper image of the Mark Twain as a place to live.