

## **New Vassar First-Year Room-Assignment Action Plan**

### **1. Please describe, in detail, your house's updated room-assignment process for first year students. This should include details of the process over the summer and the process during REX and Orientation.**

New Vassar assigns first-year students based on a lottery system. After receiving a list of first year students assigned to New Vassar, the New Vassar Room Assignment Chairs will decide upon roommate matches and room placements for all first year students based on their listed preferences. Based on the limited amount of singles in New Vassar, first year students can expect to be placed in a double unless a Supplemental Housing request is approved and the dorm has availability. In the case that all requests cannot be satisfied because of space limitation, Room Assignment Chairs will assign priority through a randomized lottery. First year students assigned to doubles will be paired using responses from their housing application regarding topics including sleep schedules, hobbies/ interests, etc. Once all roommates have been assigned, all the first years will be randomly assigned rooms from the pool of remaining rooms.

During REX, first years will have the opportunity to switch rooms/roommates through a new roommate matching system. For first years in doubles who wish to move to a new room, they may either find someone who wishes to mutually exchange rooms, may find a new roommate and be placed together based on room availability, or may receive assistance from Room Assignment Chairs to orchestrate a room switch. Roommate mixer events will be held during Orientation and REX in order to provide opportunities for first years to find a more compatible roommate if they are unhappy with their current roommate. Once new pairs are made, they will be assigned to a room together based on availability and preferences.

### **2. How does the process allow for students who are overwhelmed to opt out of exploration and moving?**

Opting out of moving rooms is considered the default in New Vassar. Students who wish to change their room assignments can feel free to do so through mixer events or switches facilitated by Room Assignment chairs. However, if a student wishes to stay in their originally assigned room, then they do not have to do anything. In the rare situation that a new roommate pair does not have an empty double to move in to because there are many doubles occupied by only one student (usually in the case of the other roommate moving out or finding a more compatible roommate to pair up with), then students occupying a double alone may be asked to consolidate into a single double to make room. However, students who feel strongly about remaining in their current room will not be forced to move. These situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Room Assignment Chairs.

### **3. What is the level of upper-level student involvement? Are the first year students being assigned through an algorithm or another way?**

New Vassar first-year students are assigned by Room Assignment Chairs who will match first years as roommates based on the interests and preferences they've stated on the housing form. Room Assignment Chairs will then

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randomly assign first year roommate pairs or individuals to sections based on the availability of rooms in each section.

**4. Please describe your house's upper-level student room-assignment process. This description should include any information about mid-semester room switches.**

For upper-level students, students are guaranteed to keep their assigned room in New Vassar the whole semester or they have the option to switch to a different room, based on availability. Students are not guaranteed to keep the room they had last school year, but if they wish to be assigned that room again and have high enough priority, the Room Assignment Chairs will do their best to assign them that room again. The room switching process prioritizes seniority (seniors had a higher preference than juniors) and those that currently live in New Vassar (over students who did not live in New Vassar before) with Vassar seniority breaking ties. Each completed year at MIT gives 1 priority point, and each previous year in New Vassar gives 1 priority point, again with Vassar seniority breaking ties. Students were asked to give their top 3 sections in New Vassar in ranked order (2A, 2B, 3A, etc.), preferred room numbers, single v.s. double, people they would like to be near, and additional preferences such as window view. They then ranked these preferences based on importance. Rooms were assigned by these preferences in the previously described priority order.

Requests by students to change rooms within New Vassar during the semester will be honored on a matching, first-come, first-served basis pending space availability. Students may mutually swap rooms with the agreement of both parties at any point in the semester. However, swaps can not be made if one student is about to cancel their housing assignment or move out in order to prevent high-priority rooms from being 'passed down' between friends. Upper-division students assigned to doubles who wish to switch to a different room/roommate will also have roommate/room swap mixers to give them the opportunity to find a more compatible roommate/room. Once a new roommate pair or room swap is agreed upon, Room Assignment Chairs will provide a form for students to request their switch. If enough singles are vacant (past a certain amount reserved for Supplemental Housing accommodations) at any point in the semester, an opt-in, priority-based lottery will be held for residents of that section to be switched into the corresponding single. If multiple students from the section of the open single wish to switch into the room but have the same priority ranking (detailed above), the single will be allocated to one of the students by a random number generator.

**5. What is the role of the AD in these processes?**

The Area Director will be available to assist the Room Assignment Chairs as needed during all parts of the room assignment cycle. In addition to helping with room assignments as needed throughout the year, the Area Director also serves as a point of contact for students seeking room changes.

**6. What forms of evaluation are being considered for assessing the effectiveness of the new process? What**

## **ideas do you have for evaluation?**

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New Vassar Room Assignment Chairs plan to survey all upper-level and first-year students about their experience with the assignment process. This feedback will be particularly important because New Vassar is a new residence hall, and student feedback from 2022 will help shape New Vassar's room assignment process moving forward.