TO: Black Student Organization  
FROM: William G. Long, Dean of Student Affairs  
Re: Black Student Residents in the Residence Halls and the Hiring  
of Black Resident Assistants.

DATE: 3 February 1969

Reply? Yes No

I should like to respond to your recent memorandum by stating the housing policies under which the College operates. In addition I shall address myself to the particular issues you have raised.

Freshman students are assigned to particular residence halls. (Men - Hoben and Harmon; Women - Trowbridge). Upperclassmen are assigned to the remaining halls. (Women - DeWaters; Men - Severn and Crissey and a few spaces in Harmon).

Within this housing policy we can meet your wishes in the following ways:

1. Upperclass students, upon their individual request, will be housed in a common area and with black roommates in Severn and Crissey (Men) and DeWaters (Women). Freshman black students, in so far as possible, will be housed with black roommates, and in a common area, upon their individual request.

It must be noted that federal law precludes our asking on applications for admission any question having to do with race, creed, or color. Nor can we require a photograph prior to admission. Therefore, we cannot know absolutely who among our entering freshmen is black and who is white. Thus, we shall be wholly dependent upon receiving a written request from each entering freshman as to whether or not he or she wishes to room with a black roommate and in a black section. We shall make every effort to accommodate to the wishes of our entering students, black and white, in regard to their roommate choice. It will not be possible for us to contact entering students giving them the option of requesting black or white roommates. Such a message from us would clearly imply that we encourage a segregated campus situation, and we do not. Such word from us could clearly cause a black student wishing to come here to change his or her mind and go elsewhere. Further, since, under no circumstances do we make lists of entering freshmen available to other students, we cannot provide the BSO with a list of entering students whom we believe to be black. However, if we receive notice from individual entering black students that they wish to room with another black student, we will accommodate to that expressed wish if at all possible. Furthermore, if such entering black students add that they also wish to room in black areas within the residence halls, we will make every effort to accommodate to that wish.

With respect to assigning freshmen to upperclass residence halls, the following policy applies. If all upperclassmen have been assigned to upper class residence halls and space remains unassigned, we will permit freshmen so requesting to live with black upperclassmen in the residence halls in question on a first come, first serve basis. (It is very doubtful that we can arrange this during any fall quarter, for we have severe housing problems with the opening of any new school year.)
We will continue to be willing to accede to the requests made by our students that particular housing arrangements be made, provided such requests reach us from the individuals involved and well in advance of the quarter in question. In other words, if the persons listed in your communication personally inform us through the use of the standard room preference card that they wish black roommates and that they wish to live in the black section, we will make full effort to make such arrangements. Of course, we cannot evict any student to accede to such a request.

2. Concerning black resident counselors and resident assistants the following policy applies: No color bar exists in regard to those who may apply for positions on our residence hall staff. The student must have a "C" or better average, his conduct record must be clear, his abilities must commend him to working with and advising other undergraduates, and he must be willing to work under our particular policies. In the past we have hired black counselors and we shall continue to do so. If black counselors join our staff, we shall assign them to areas where the greatest number of black students live; we feel that this is sound practice. We cannot agree, however, that black counselors will always deal only with black students. If the area to which they are assigned houses white students in addition to black students, they will be responsible for all students in their area. On the other hand, if the particular arrangement for the quarter in question has, in fact, created an all black area, the black counselor will be responsible only for black students.

Under present circumstances, since we assign the Resident Assistants each to Severn and Crissey, we cannot assign such a staff person to work with only black students. However, we can assign any Black Assistant Resident who might be hired to the building in which the greatest number of black students is living. Such an Assistant Resident would be responsible for all students in the building in question.

3. I will provide the BSO with all of the written rules of the College to which I have access by the beginning of the Spring Quarter. You are welcome to check with me about this matter.

If you have any question in regard to our position, I will do my best to answer it.

William G. Long, Dean of Student Affairs

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