

UR Housed

An improved housing selection service for the University of Rochester

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Executive Summary

University of Rochester's new online upperclassman housing lottery system has been criticized as having an awkward, tedious interface, and is currently separate from RocRes, the University's interactive residential guide. UR Housed will combine some of the most useful features of both systems into an interactive user interface, while enhancing students' ability to comment on living arrangements, post photos and multimedia of specific rooms and apartments, share past experiences, and post ratings. This ultimately will improve the housing selection process, better inform students about their residential options, and hold the University more accountable for poor living conditions in specific residence halls.

Use Case 1:

A freshman student is preparing for his first housing lottery. Using UR Housed, the student is able to enter his class year and instantly view the housing options available to him. He can sort by type of room, building, and proximity to campus, and view photos and reviews of individual rooms, all while getting familiar with the same interface that he will utilize on lottery day to select his room.

Use Case 2:

A student is signing on UR Housed to make his room selection for the upcoming academic year. He is initially prompted to enter his username and password, and after logged in is able to view floor plans of residence halls that show available and claimed rooms and make his selection.

Required Technology

1. **Server Side Framework:** The site will use PHP on the server to power the lottery system, and access the file database.
2. **Database:** The site will use a database to store housing information, reviews, and user-submitted multimedia.
3. **Web Service:** The site will provide the ability to post living arrangements to Facebook, and may utilize a third-party comment posting system.
4. **Multimedia:** Users will be able to upload photos and videos of residence halls, with moderation by the UR Housed administrators to control the upload of inappropriate content.
5. **Design and Evaluate:** We will collect real world evaluations from fellow students and modify our site accordingly to make it user-friendly.
6. **Server-Side Processing:** Server-side PHP processing will power the content upload system as well as the systems for generating personalized content for individual users.