Checklist for Off-Campus Living

Suitability
☐ Is the location convenient?
☐ Is there enough parking for you and your guests?
☐ Is it within walking distance to campus OR
☐ Is it near public transportation?
☐ Is the dwelling zoned properly for the number of roommates?

Safeguards
☐ Have you viewed the actual rental unit that you will be living in?
☐ Are the conditions in the rental unit acceptable to you?
☐ Has the landlord made any promises to you about improvements or repairs to be made to the rental unit before you move in?
☐ If so, have those promises been put in writing?
☐ Have you asked the landlord about things that are important to you? (e.g. safety, quiet for studying, mold and mildew issues)

Amenities
☐ Does the rental unit have all the amenities you want?
☐ Have you viewed the amenities (e.g. “clubhouse”, workout room) to see if they meet your expectations and are worth the extra cost?
☐ Are pets allowed? If so, are there restrictions on the type or size or weight of the pet?
☐ Does the rental unit have easy access to recycling?

Cost
☐ What is the monthly rent?
☐ What other expenses will you have?
☐ What is the source of heat for the rental unit?
☐ How much do heat and utilities typically cost during the winter months?
☐ Will you be responsible for acquiring propane or other heating fuel for your rental unit? If so, will this involve a deposit or other extra cost to you?

Lease
☐ Have you read your lease carefully?
☐ Have all your questions about your lease been answered?
☐ Have you reviewed all the charges and fees included in the lease?
☐ Do you understand that the lease is a binding contract that lasts for the full period (usually one year)?
☐ Do you have money set aside to pay your deposit and first month’s rent when they are due?
☐ Have you reviewed all the landlord’s rules (sometimes included in a separate document, which is cross-referenced in the lease)?
☐ Are you comfortable with all the rules?
☐ Does your rental company provide snow removal in the parking lots?

Roommates
☐ Have you discussed lifestyle issues and how to share responsibilities for chores?
☐ Do you understand that you can be held responsible for your roommate’s share of the rent?
☐ Have you discussed whose name utility bills will be placed in?
☐ Have you considered entering a “roommate contract” that will spell out what you and your roommate have agreed to?