

GRADUATE

Off-Campus Housing in Chicago

WELCOME TO SAIC! The Residence Life office is located on the 12th floor of the Sullivan Center, at 36 South Wabash Avenue. We provide housing information and offer many services that you may find helpful in making your living arrangements. This short guide contains tips on renting in Chicago, resources for finding roommates and apartments, and details on temporary accommodations. We strive to provide you with ample information to begin your search for housing.

Residence Life does not reserve or complete housing arrangements off-campus. All rental agreements are made between tenants and landlords/homeowners. The School does not inspect or endorse any off-campus housing units. We also do not offer legal assistance, but can refer you to other agencies that offer help. Our office can provide information on a broad range of housing related issues. If you are planning a trip to visit the School, please call ahead to schedule an appointment with a member of the Residence Life staff to discuss your living options.

Our office is open from 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. (CST), Monday through Friday. If we can be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact us at 312.629.6870 or at stulife@saic.edu. We look forward to assisting you in your move to Chicago.

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Intro: Before You Begin Your Search...

Finding the right place to live while you are in school is very important. We have compiled some suggestions to think about as you begin your search.

- Define the “ideal” apartment for yourself. From this “ideal” list, decide what items you can or cannot do without. By differentiating what is essential to you and what is not essential but still important, you will be able to compromise and find a place that suits you. For example, if size is most important to you (need a lot of space for your work), you may consider compromising your location to fit your budget. If location is most important, you may consider compromising the size of the apartment.
- Look for apartments at least four to six weeks before you want to move.
- Consider in which part of town you would like to live. Chicago is a city of neighborhoods. If you are new to the city, look at Chicago travel guidebooks and at websites to gather information. Ask friends, relatives, or neighbors if they could recommend certain areas. It is also ideal to visit the city before deciding on an apartment. There is a brief guide attached with general information about neighborhoods popular with SAIC students.
- Remember that apartment-hunting takes good planning, patience, and persistence. There are great apartments here- you just have to find them. Apartments do go fast, so be open to many options, as something that was available on Friday could be rented Saturday morning.
- Be aware of temporary housing options. If you visit the city before securing housing, or if you do not know anyone in Chicago yet, you may be in need of temporary housing. Check out our list of Temporary Housing for some examples. Hotels are ubiquitous, hostels are more affordable, and there are also some other alternatives.
- Do not compromise on your most important issues. You can be flexible AND get what you want.

Financing: Establishing Your Housing Budget

Moving to a new city can be an exciting, yet intimidating, experience. To help plan your budget and eliminate some surprises along the way, we have developed the following list of possible expenses you may incur during your move:

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATIONS

As we mentioned before, you may need to stay in temporary housing while you are searching for your apartment. Hotel/hostel prices range from \$40 to \$250 per night.

CREDIT CHECK

Landlords will often require that you pay a fee so they can order a credit history report on you. This fee can range from \$30–\$50. To save money, you can also visit the credit agencies' websites, pay a small fee for a month's access, and print out as many copies of your credit report as you need. You may also qualify for a free credit report. There are three main credit agencies: TransUnion (www.transunion.com); Equifax (www.equifax.com); and Experian (www.experian.com).

RENT/SECURITY DEPOSIT

You will probably have to pay rent for at least the first month when you sign your lease or to hold your space, and most landlords require first month's rent and a security deposit (equal to the cost of one or sometimes two months' rent.)

RENTER'S INSURANCE

Few buildings have insurance which covers fire or other damage for their tenants. Be aware that your landlord will not be responsible for your belongings in case of fire or theft. A renter can get a "contents policy" which will cover personal property and injury for an apartment. Check major companies for rates; this can run around \$250 a year for first time insurers.

MOVING EXPENSES

These may include car, van, or truck rental, and food and lodging during the move.

UTILITIES

The cost of heating an apartment might not be included with rent—be careful or you may have huge bills in winter. Your landlord **MUST** disclose accurate estimates of your utility bills. Call all utility companies at least one week before your move-in date for a connection. Keep in mind that renters do not pay for water in the city of Chicago. Don't be impressed when the landlord tells you it's included in the rent.

DIVVY BIKES

Having a Student Annual Membership of \$55 to Divvy means you'll have access to thousands of bikes at hundreds of stations 24/7. Divvy is perfect for short trips from campus to work, from home to run errands, or to just get out and explore the city. To become a SAIC Member of Divvy Bikes, look under Student Membership and fill out a quick application form at www.divvybikes.com/signup/SAIC with the password provided by SAIC. They'll then send you a unique Member key in the mail right away.

CTA FARES

All full-time students receive a Ventra Card to ride the CTA during the fall and spring semester, but prior to the beginning of the semester, CTA rides cost \$2.25 per ride. Ventra Cards can be purchased at all CTA stations.

AUTOMOBILE EXPENSES

Residents of Chicago **MUST** have a "city sticker" on their car windshield or risk being ticketed/towed. The price per sticker is \$85-135 or less per car, depending on the size of the vehicle and time of year purchased. Stickers can be purchased online at www.chicityclerk.com. Some neighborhoods require additional residential parking permits, which can also be found on the previous website. If you live in the Loop, expect to pay monthly for garage parking.

Searching: What to Look for In a Potential Roommate

Finding the right roommate can be one of the hardest tasks you do before coming to the School. When you are considering prospective roommates, you may want to ask the following questions:

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- What is your estimated monthly budget (including utilities)?
- Where would you like to live?
- How long do you plan to stay in the apartment?
- Are you financially secure? Will you be able to pay rent on time?
- Do you want to sign separate leases, if possible? This way, each roommate is responsible for his or her share of the rent.
- What are your expectations in a roommate relationship? Are you looking for a friend, someone to do things with, or just someone to share your space and expenses?

CLEANLINESS EXPECTATIONS

- How often do you clean/do dishes?
- Who will be responsible for common areas/how often will these areas be cleaned?

STUDY HABITS

- How much time will you need to study without interruptions?
- Do you study in evenings or on weekends?
- Can you study/work with music/TV?

PERSONAL HABITS

- How much time per day do you spend at home?
- In what types of entertainment do you most often take part?
- Do you smoke?
- How often will you have guests stay for the evening or night?

FOOD

- Do you eat meat or dairy products?
- Are you allergic to any types of food?
- Will we share food and shopping responsibilities?
- Are you comfortable sharing food?

ART INTERESTS

- What types of art work do you do at home?
- Will you need extra space or special ventilation?

PERSONAL ITEMS

- If you own something (television, stereo, etc.), what would your policy for use be? What type of furniture do you have?
- How do you feel about loaning your things (clothes, art supplies, books, utensils, food, etc.)?

SLEEPING PATTERNS

- What time do you wake up, or go to sleep?
- Are you a light sleeper?

SUGGESTIONS

- Be honest and open about your needs and concerns.
- Communication and respect are essential for a good roommate relationship.

Apartment and Roommate Finding in Chicago

As we mentioned earlier, Chicago is a city of neighborhoods. The attached neighborhood guide can give you a quick idea of the areas where you might like to live. While there are many websites and resources for finding apartment listings in the city, SAIC has partnered with an off-campus housing resource called **Places4Students**.

Places4Students (www.places4students.com) contains apartment listings around Chicago. The website also has a roommate finding feature. You may create a profile to advertise your need for a roommate much like many social networking sites. The profile and any information you post on the website will only be visible to other SAIC community members. We recommend this tool for finding another SAIC student as a roommate!

Apartment Hunting and Renting Tips

You can avoid 90% of apartment related problems with proper planning, inspections of the apartment building, and knowledge about the landlord. If you are renting a space with a lease, make sure to read ALL of the fine print. If possible, have someone else (parent, friend, lawyer) review it with you. It is also helpful to bring someone with you if you are not planning on having a roommate. That way, you have more than one set of eyes and ears.

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN SEARCHING FOR AN APARTMENT

- Is it accessible to and from campus? Use a Google map to find out! Map how long your CTA ride or bike ride will be to campus or other Chicago destinations.
- What's around your apartment? There are websites that can help you find out. Try www.walkscore.com to see how accessible your apartment is.
- Is the landlord an individual or a property management company? Individual landlords may live on site and could be more flexible with lease terms or payment, while larger property management companies can offer more structured maintenance procedures. Understand who you are renting from!
- Can you afford this? Make sure you have an established housing budget. Read the "Establish your housing budget" section of this document – and stick to your bottom line!

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN VIEWING AN APARTMENT

Outside the apartment:

- How well is the exterior maintained? Does it appear clean?
- Is there sufficient exterior lighting?
- How is the main entrance secured? Is there a doorman? A security system?
- Is the main entryway well maintained?

Inside the apartment:

- Open and close all doors. Check for working locks.
- Inspect the shower and/or bathtub for evidence of mold or drainage problems
- Check for adequate water pressure in the shower.
- Flush the toilet.
- Are the bedrooms large enough? If you will have roommates, how will bedrooms be chosen?
- Inspect all windows. Are they secure? Do they have screens? Do they have working blinds?
- Is there sufficient closet space? Does the apartment include any additional storage space? If so, ask to view it!
- Where are the telephone, electrical and cable outlets? Do they appear to be in good condition?
- Where are the carbon monoxide and smoke detectors? Are they working properly?
- Check all kitchen appliances. Open the refrigerator and freezer. Turn on the stove. If there is a garbage disposal or dishwasher, turn it on.
- Is there sufficient counter and cabinet space? Look inside all cabinets for evidence of mold or rodents.

Building amenities:

- Where is the trash room or dumpster? Does the area look well maintained?
- Is there a yard, porch, or other common space? How is the back of the property secured? If there is a porch, how is it supported?
- Is there a bike storage area?
- Is there laundry on the premises? If not, where do the building residents do their laundry? If yes, how much is a wash and dry? Do the machines appear to be in working order?
- Where is mail delivered? How do you access your mail?

Closing the Deal:

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE SIGNING A LEASE

- Know your rights as a tenant. Tenants in Chicago are protected by the Landlord Tenants Ordinance. To learn more about your rights, the Residence Life Office recommends the Chicago Renter's Resource Guide prepared by the Lawyer's Committee for Better Housing and available at www.lcbh.org.
- Do not go with verbal promises made by the landlord or manager. When you need something done for the apartment, GET IT IN WRITING! If it is not in writing, basically, IT DOES NOT EXIST!
- Do not sign a commercial lease for a loft space. If you do not sign a residential lease, you have no basic rights as a tenant. You could be evicted at any time.
- A lease is an agreement between the tenant and landlord. Leases can be amended. If you do not agree with something in the lease, DO NOT sign before changes have been made.

Keep in mind these specific questions:

- Who is signing the lease? If you're renting with roommates, ensure that all parties can and do sign the lease.
- How will rent payments be made? Individual or group checks? How do you submit rent? What is the late payment policy?
- What are the terms of the lease? What are the move-in and move-out dates? As a student, keep in mind that most leases are a yearlong. Will you be living in Chicago for the whole year?
- Does the lease list specific appliances? If you expect an appliance to be in your apartment, make sure it's in the lease.

HAPPY IN YOUR NEW APARTMENT?

Great! Now that you're settled, be a good tenant:

- Make sure you've transferred the utilities to your name.
- Pay rent on time.
- Report apartment and building maintenance issues appropriately.
- Be considerate of your neighbors.

Give you landlord appropriate notice if you plan to resign your lease. Generally, communication about the resigning process should initiate 6-8 weeks prior to the end of the lease.

Resources:

NOT HAPPY IN YOUR APARTMENT?

Approaching your landlord with grievances about your apartment requires forethought and knowledge about your rights as a tenant. If problems arise that require additional follow-up, you should attempt to communicate in writing to create a record of your complaints. At the very least, keep notes of verbal conversations as a reference.

The Chicago Landlord – Tenant Ordinance makes provisions for many problems that come along during a rental period, but understanding it can be tricky. As we said earlier, a great resource is the Lawyer’s Committee for Better Housing. Their guide, which is free at www.lcbh.org, explains your rights and your landlord’s responsibilities.

If a problem escalates, another helpful resource is the Metropolitan Tenants’ Organization. They offer a free hotline (Monday-Friday, 1-5pm) for advice on housing related issues. Call 773.292.4988. If you have a more immediate need, call the Chicago non-emergency city services hotline by dialing 311.

A housing problem can cause significant academic and emotional stress. Please remember that Residence Life at SAIC can provide information on additional housing resources as well as support for other problems that may arise.

Helpful Phone Numbers and Websites

CHICAGO UTILITIES:

Commonwealth Edison (electricity) - 1.800.334-7661 - www.comed.com

People’s Gas (gas/heat) - 1.866.556-6001 - www.peplegasdelivery.com

Comcast/XFINITY (cable/internet/phone) – 1.800.934.6489 - www.xfinity.com/Comcast

RCN (cable/internet/phone) - 1.800.746.4726 - www.rcn.com

AT&T (internet) – 1.800.331.0500 – www.att.com

SAIC SCHOOL OFFICES:

Admissions - 312.629-6100 - admiss@saic.edu

Student Financial Services - 312.629-6600 - finaid@saic.edu

Registration and Records - 312.629-6700 - saic.registrar@saic.edu

Campus Life and Residence Life - 312.629-6870 - stulife@saic.edu

162 North State Street Residences

24-hour Security Desk Phone: 312.846.2100

Hall Desk Phone: 312.846.2121

Jones Hall

24-hour Security Desk Phone: 312.516.5300

Hall Desk Phone: 312.516.5490

The Buckingham

24-hour Security Desk Phone: 312.496.6211

Academic Advising and Student Success - 312.629-6800 - studenthelp@saic.edu

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) - 312.968.7282 for local trips OR
Regional Transit Authority (RTA) – 312.836.7000 for regional trips

CTA and RTA: www.transitchicago.com

The CTA oversees public transportation, both bus and train, within the city. Visit the website for helpful tools such as phone applications, maps, and schedules.

Chicago Department of Housing - 312.744.4190 - www.cityofchicago.org/housing

The City of Chicago's resource page for housing questions including tenant's rights and landlord responsibilities.

Chicago Police Department – 911

Call 911 for off-campus emergencies!

Chicago Non-Emergency– 311

Call 311 for non-emergency situations and city services, 24-hours a day.

Metropolitan Tenants Organization 773.292.4988- www.tenants-rights.org

Call the MTO Tenant's Rights Hotline, Monday-Friday from 1-5pm for free advice on housing related issues. Check out the website for free resources and guides.

Walk-Score – www.walkscore.com

Search your potential new address for a simple rating of its walkability to area resources. The site also offers commuting information and customizable neighborhood maps.

Google Maps – maps.google.com

Map your commute by train, car, and bike. Remember that a 15 minute walk to the train might be nice in August, but not in frigid February!

Chicago Crime Statistics – gis.chicagopolice.com

Enter your address to see where and what type of crimes occurred in your neighborhood.

Crime Reports - www.crimereports.com

Crime Reports works with thousands of law-enforcement agencies to help reduce, prevent and solve crime by enabling officials to easily open and manage a controlled dialog with citizens.

Sexual Assault Awareness with Family Watchdog- <http://www.familywatchdog.us>

Family Watchdog is a free service to help locate registered sex offenders in your area. Sign up for free notifications to keep updated with offenders that move in/out of your area.

Temporary Housing Options

We strive to provide you with the most helpful information for moving to Chicago or moving within the metropolitan area. However, we are not affiliated with any temporary housing accommodations. Prices reflect nightly rates and are subject to change.

Chicago Getaway Hostel

\$30-\$79 (dorms and single rooms)

616 W. Arlington Pl. (Lincoln Park neighborhood, near DePaul University)

773.929.5380

www.getawayhostel.com

Just Passing Through

La Salle Street (Gold Coast) studio - \$1450 - \$1700/month

La Salle Street (Gold Coast) one bedroom - \$1800 - \$2000/month

There is a \$59.95 application fee

312.501.3310

www.justpassingthrough.com

Hosteling International - Chicago

\$32 and up, per person per night (dorm room types)

\$99 and up, per person per night (private room types)

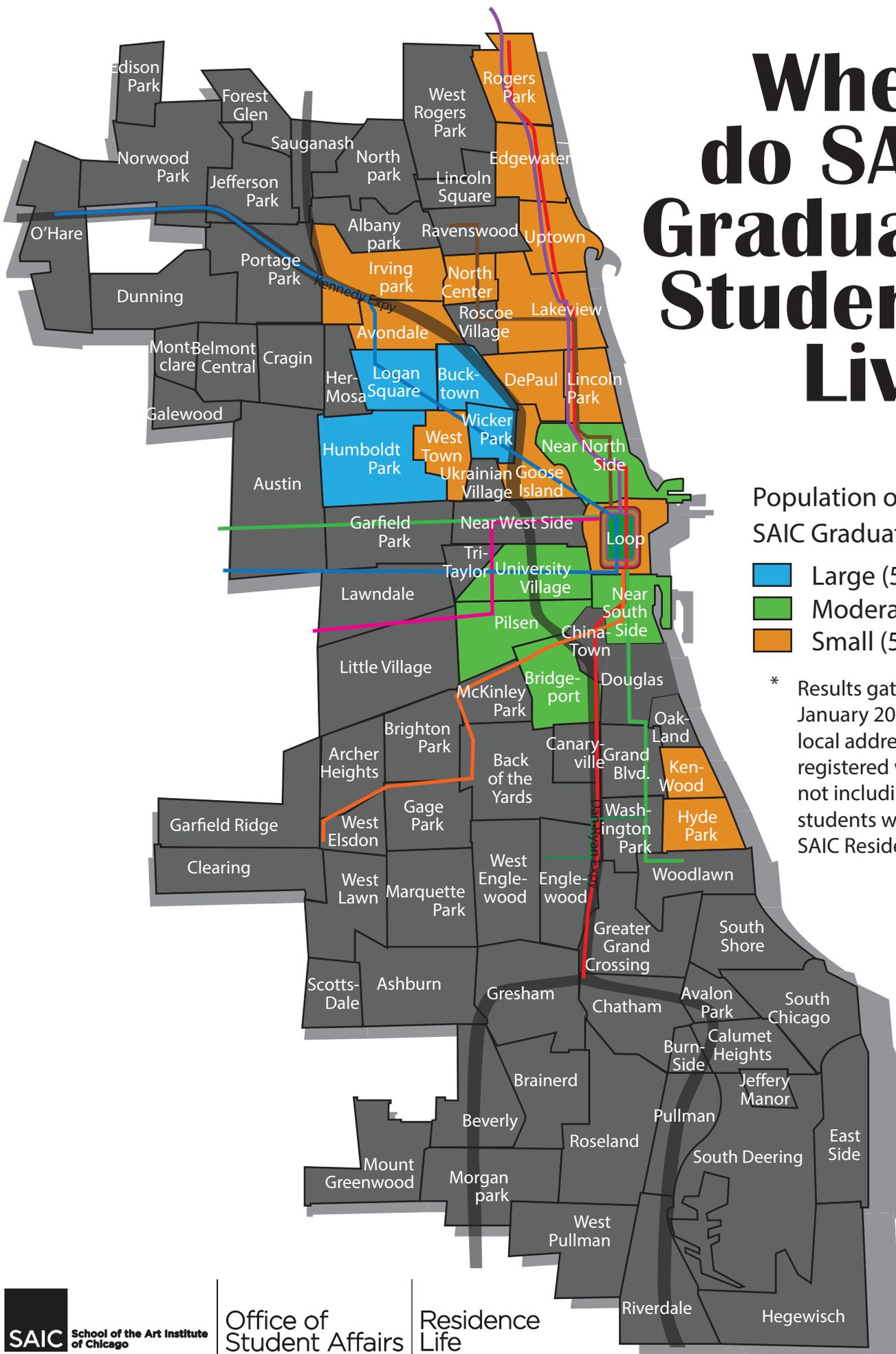
24 East Congress Parkway (South Loop neighborhood)

312.360.0300

www.hichicago.org

You can also find a large list of hotels, bed & breakfasts, and other options at www.saic.edu/housing

Where do SAIC Graduate Students Live?



Population of SAIC Graduate Students

- Large (50 - 74)
- Moderate (25 - 49)
- Small (5-24)

* Results gathered January 2016 from local addresses registered with SAIC; not including students who live in SAIC Residence Halls

SAIC Neighborhood Guide

As the 3rd largest city in America, Chicago has quite a few areas where a person can live. Chicago is made up of numerous neighborhoods, each with its own “feel” or ambiance. The Office of Residence Life can provide you with general information about some different neighborhoods so that you can be more informed about each area.

We say *more* informed, because you will not know a neighborhood until you experience it for yourself. We are not able to tell you if a neighborhood is “good” or “bad.” It is important that you familiarize yourself (use public transit, go to local grocery stores, visit cafes, and stop by a few restaurants) with Chicago before looking at apartments and deciding where you want to live.

In order to assist you, we have gathered information on neighborhoods in which SAIC students currently live in. We have chosen neighborhoods with the largest SAIC student population and additional neighborhoods that are becoming more popular with the SAIC community. Our descriptions and price ranges for these areas are culled from multiple online publications. This list gives a description of neighborhoods including location, public transportation options, distance from SAIC, and average rent. We recommend that you visit a variety of neighborhoods so that you can more fully understand all of your options.

Please note that we have listed price and distance ranges for neighborhoods, not for specific apartments. We hope this will give you a general idea of how location can play a big role in finding the right apartment. We have also listed general transit options from each area to the SAIC campus. To reach a specific location via public transportation, visit transitchicago.com or maps.google.com. These websites will give you specific directions and various routes that you can take to get to your destination, as well as expected travel time.

Size, location, and condition are often the most significant factors in the price of an apartment. You may find a wide range of apartments available which fit your budget in different neighborhoods across the city. The areas closest to SAIC can be more expensive, since it is located in the heart of Chicago.

Finally, the safety of a neighborhood should always be a consideration. Different neighborhoods will feel “safe” to different people. Please visit gis.chicagopolice.com for crime statistics of various neighborhoods.

VERY LARGE CONCENTRATION OF SAIC STUDENTS



As the home of Boystown & Wrigleyville, an abundant nightlife, theater and music venues as well as shopping, Lakeview has no shortage of attractions. In addition to plenty of activities, Lakeview is also home to a wide range of ethnic cuisine. Lakeview is a great area if you want to be in the middle of everything but you still want the feel of a neighborhood. The area is pretty large and houses many smaller neighborhoods within it. Some DePaul students, young professionals, families, the Chicago Cubs, and a section of the LGBT community call Lakeview home.

Distance from the Loop: 3.5 – 5.5 miles

Transit options to the Loop: Red Line – Belmont, Addison; Brown Line – Sheridan, Diversey, Wellington, Belmont; Bus – 9, 151

Prices

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
\$850	\$1150	\$1675	\$2300



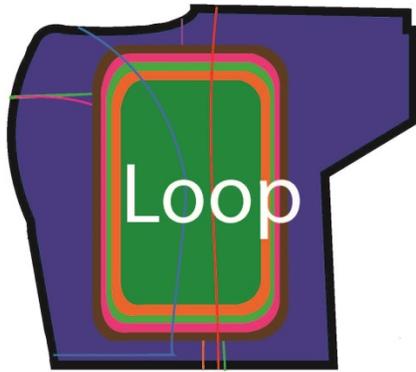
Logan Square is a neighborhood that has experienced rapid change in the last few years. This primarily working class Hispanic populated area has gone through expansive gentrification in the past five years. SAIC students were flocked to this west side neighborhood in the early 2000s because of the cheap rent for large spaces. Since then, small restaurants and bars have been popping up along Milwaukee Ave and attracting people from all over Chicago. Spaces are still large, but the prices have gone up quite a bit in the past decade. Logan Square is a mix of family oriented and young, single people.

Distance from the Loop: 4.5 – 6.5 miles

Transit options to the Loop: Blue Line California and Logan Square stops; Buses – 56

Price

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
\$729	\$889	\$1169	\$1525



Named after the train tracks that circle the downtown area, the Loop is one of the busiest areas of Chicago. The Loop is also the location of the SAIC campus, so your commute to school can be anywhere from a half mile to a few blocks walk. There is no shortage of things to do in the Loop: theaters, parks, museums, lakefront trails, the harbor, and tons of restaurants. It is a central location that is incredibly close to campus, but apartments can be smaller and pricier than surrounding areas.

Distance from the Loop: a few feet to a mile

Transit options to the Loop: accessible by all lines

Price

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
\$1500	\$1775	\$2300	\$4100



Wicker Park is an area initially rehabbed by artists in the last 20 years and has continued to change and evolve. Cafes, galleries, bars, nationally recognized restaurants, and music clubs line Milwaukee Ave and Division Street in this area. Wicker Park can be like the Lakeview of the west side, but with less attention on sports and more emphasis on the arts and good eats. This area of town is comprised mostly of young Chicagoans: both student and professionals.

Distance from the Loop: 3.5 – 4.5 miles

Transit options to the Loop: Blue Line – Division and Damen; Bus – 70, 72, 56

Prices

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
\$830	\$1140	\$1587	\$2074

LARGE CONCENTRATION OF SAIC STUDENTS



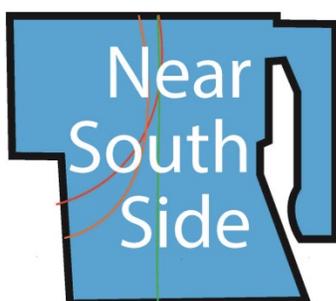
Primarily known for the Magnificent Mile, Near North has many more attractions than the row of high-end shopping on Michigan Avenue. Near North has countless restaurants, tons of shopping (obviously), several beaches, comedy clubs, bars, parks, nightclubs, and is part of the Lakefront Trail. Depending where you are in Near North, you can be just across the river from the Loop, steps away from Lincoln Park, or just a bus ride away from the West Town area of Chicago. The rent in Near North can be a bit high, but you are still close to campus and in the heart of one of downtown’s busiest neighborhoods.

Distance from the Loop: 1 – 2.5 miles

Transit options to the Loop: Red Line – Chicago, Division, Grand; Brown Line – Chicago; Buses 3, 10, 26, 33, 125, 143, 145, 146, 147, 148, 151, 156, x3, x4

Prices

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
\$1400	\$1750	\$2300	\$6100



Also known as South Loop, Near South is another extension of the downtown area. When living in Near South, Grant Park is your backyard, with the Field Museum, Shedd Aquarium, Adler Planetarium, and Soldier Field in walking distance. Also, Near South is located a short bus and train ride away from Chinatown and Pilsen and can be within walking distance of the SAIC campus. Due to its location, rent in Near South is similar to the Loop and Near North.

Distance from the Loop: 1 – 2.5 miles

Transit options to the Loop: Red, Orange, Green – Roosevelt; Bus – 3, x3, 4, x4, 29

Prices

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
\$1124	\$1482	\$1963	\$2501

MODERATE



Though they have different names, Ukrainian Village and Noble Square are practically one and the same with similar boundaries, price ranges, and demographics. Located next to the Kennedy Expressway and Milwaukee Ave, Noble Square is the entry point into the West Town area of Chicago and has many attractions such as restaurants, clubs, and bars. Uke Village also has quite a few restaurants and bars, but they are typically more ethnic and cater to the Ukrainian population that still resides there. Both neighborhoods have a large population of families since apartments are fairly large, but Ukrainian Village has slightly lower prices since it is further from the Blue Line. SAIC students are spread fairly equally between the two neighborhoods with a few more living in Noble Square.

*Please note that Noble Square is noted on the Chicago Neighborhood Map as part of Goose Island. Noble Square is directly east of Ukrainian Village and west of the Kennedy Expressway.

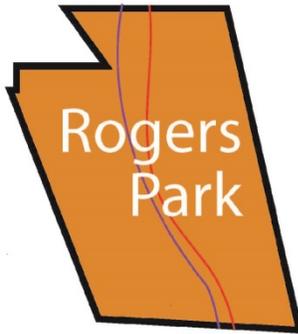
Distance from the Loop: 2 – 3.5 miles

Transit options to the Loop: Blue Line – Division, Chicago, Grand; Bus – 52, 56, 70

Prices

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
\$812	\$933	\$1416	\$1958

UP AND COMING



With eight beaches, lakefront trails, small cafes and restaurants, and various theatres, there is no shortage of things to do in Rogers Park. The area is incredibly diverse both economically and culturally, housing a mix of college students (mostly from Loyola), families, people who have lived in the area for 30 plus years, and a large Asian population. Rogers Park is a little farther from the downtown area than other neighborhoods (about 40 minutes on the Red Line), however the apartments are spacious and the neighborhood quiet.

Distance from the Loop: 8.5 – 10.5 miles

Transit options to the Loop: Red Line – Loyola, Morse, Howard

Prices

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
\$680	\$748	\$1164	\$1486