Theme House Homesteading Application Guidelines
for the 2016-2017 Academic Year

General Expectations
The Theme House Homesteading Application process is an intentional way in which we measure the learning in which Theme House residents are engaging throughout their experience, allowing us to determine whether or not an additional year would be of benefit to current residents and to the University.

In order to best assess learning, we ask that Theme House residents keep the following in mind when reapplying for their house:

1. Your application should be a group effort by all members of the house.
2. Your application should be professional in appearance and presentation.
3. Be creative!

Homesteading Application Components
The process for re-application will involve 3 main components: the Notice of Intent to Homestead (submitted to your assigned hall director), the Portfolio, and the Interview. Brief descriptions of each are offered below. For more detail as to what is required, please read through the entire packet provided.

Portfolio
Students will compile a portfolio that demonstrates the learning they have experienced through involvement in the Theme House program. The completed portfolio is due to the Campus Life Office by 5 PM on Friday, February 19, 2016.

The portfolio should include the following 4 sections:

1) Self-Reflection – Each house will complete a house self-evaluation (approx. 2-3 pages). This should be an honest representation of how members of the house feel as a whole about this year’s experience. A detailed description is below.

2) Demonstration of Learning – Each house will be asked to provide evidence that demonstrates the learning that is occurring. This can be part of or in addition to your self-reflection. A detailed description is below.

3) Theme Proposal – Each house will complete a new theme proposal that describes what the group would like to accomplish by living together in community for the 2016-2017 academic year (similar to what you completed as a new applicant). We expect that returning houses will demonstrate a commitment to the evolution of their theme, making it even stronger and more impactful for their second year.

4) Alcohol Supplement – Each house will provide a statement (no more than one page) that speaks to how the house will address alcohol use throughout the year. As you are aware, the use of alcoholic beverages is allowed in theme houses if a majority of the residents are 21 years of age. It is important that each group be thoughtful in identifying the role that alcohol will play in their living community. This statement should consist of a policy that is agreed upon by the members of your group. Your house policy should be written within the context of the Campus Life/Alcoholic Beverages section of the Student Handbook.
The final component will require that you present a summary of your portfolio to a Theme House review panel. This panel will consist of a Campus Life staff members responsible for the theme house program).

Interviews will last 20-30 minutes. **Interviews will take place during the week of February 8-12, 2016.**

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**Notification**
Theme House Homesteading notification will occur on **Friday, February 26 after 12 noon via your campus mailbox.**

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**Self-Reflection and Demonstration of Learning Details**

**Self-Reflection**
Portfolio – Part I

**Description**
Each house will complete a house self-evaluation (approx. 2-3 pages). This should be an honest representation of how members of the house feel as a whole about this year’s experience. The house self-evaluation should speak to the following:

- Were you able to complete the plan laid out in your application? If so, what made you successful and what have you learned? If not, evaluate the challenges experienced and express how that experience will shape the coming year.
- What have you learned about each other within the context of your living community and your theme? What does it mean to you now to live in a Theme House community?

**Demonstration of Learning**
Portfolio – Part II

**Description**
Each house will be asked to provide evidence that demonstrates the learning that is occurring. This is accomplished through providing documentation that speaks to each of the 6 Theme House Learning Outcomes. This can be part of your self-reflection or in addition to it. Each outcome is listed below, including an explanation of what to include:

**Learning Outcome 1:**
Theme house residents will demonstrate a commitment to community service.

**Evaluation Criterion:** The evaluation team will be paying particular attention to the following questions:

- What types of community service projects has your house completed up to this point? Are there projects you have worked on individually that are noteworthy?
- Have you formed partnerships with on-campus and community organizations? How have those partnerships helped shape your experience?
- How do you perceive the impact of the projects you chose?
Learning Outcome 2:
Theme House residents will demonstrate active learning as they live out their theme.

Evaluation Criterion: The evaluation team will be paying particular attention to the following questions:
- How are you applying other learning that is occurring at Augustana or in your personal lives to your Theme House experience? Are there correlations between your coursework and your Theme House experience?
- How is the Theme House experience impacting other areas of your lives?
- Do you see areas in which your education may be impacted even after the Theme House experience has ended?

Learning Outcome 3:
Theme House residents will demonstrate independent living skills.

Evaluation Criterion: The evaluation team will be paying particular attention to the following questions:
- What have you done as a house to create accountability for each other?
- How have you organized house management activities (i.e. cleaning, grocery and supply shopping etc.)?
- How have you worked to create a comfortable living and learning environment for yourself and your roommates? What has that taught you about living in community with others?

Learning Outcome 4:
Theme House residents will demonstrate effective conflict resolution skills.

Evaluation Criterion: The evaluation team will be paying particular attention to the following questions:
- How are you addressing conflict that arises with each other within the house?
- What have you learned about yourselves and each other throughout this process?
- Have you found conflict to be valuable within a living and learning community and how have your views on communication and conflict resolution been impacted by this experience?

Learning Outcome 5:
Theme House residents will demonstrate effective and appropriate communication of concerns, challenges, and accomplishments.

Evaluation Criterion: The evaluation team will be paying particular attention to the following questions:
- How are you sharing successes or challenges with others (i.e. Residence Life, peers, Theme House Advisor, the Augustana or larger Sioux Falls community, etc.)?
- When has the response to your communication of concerns and challenges been best received? What have you learned about sharing your story as it relates to concerns and challenges?
- Which success or accomplishments have been most impactful to others when shared? What has that told you about the value of the experiences you have shared?

Learning Outcome 6:
Theme House residents will be able to better define and articulate an understanding of their place within larger contexts outside of Augustana.

Evaluation Criterion: The evaluation team will be paying particular attention to the following questions:
- How have you engaged communities outside of Augustana? What modes of engagement have been most meaningful for you? For those communities with which you are engaging?
What is your understanding of your place within the larger Sioux Falls, regional, or global communities? How will you use that knowledge and understanding to impact larger contexts after the Theme House experience has ended?