



## RESIDENTIAL LIFE

*Mission Statement: UConn Residential Life enhances students' personal, interpersonal, and intellectual growth by creating safe and inclusive environments, producing innovative programs and services, and fostering meaningful relationships.*

### Resident Assistant Position Description 2017-2018

#### Position Summary

The Resident Assistant (RA) is a peer educator who facilitates the personal, interpersonal, and intellectual growth of students. The RA plays a key role in developing an inclusive living community that fosters diverse learning. A Resident Assistant is always conscientious, honest, courteous, and professional. The RA respects persons of all backgrounds, including but not limited to abilities, age, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and spirituality. A Resident Assistant is an outstanding role model for other students and is knowledgeable of, enforces, and personally abides by all university policies and procedures, as well as federal and state laws. The Resident Assistant position requires approximately 20 hours per week. The Resident Assistant meaningfully contributes to the mission and goals of the University of Connecticut and Department of Residential Life. The Resident Assistant is responsible for an area of approximately 30-75 resident students on average. The specific scope of responsibilities varies depending on the assignment. The RA is a member of a staff team and is directly supervised by a Community Director, Residence Hall Director, or Assistant Residence Hall Director.

#### Position Qualifications

- A. Qualified applicants for the Resident Assistant position will show evidence of:
  1. An understanding of the needs of and interest in working with resident students.
  2. An understanding of, sensitivity to, and desire to live and work with a diverse student population.
  3. A desire to serve as a resource and provide assistance to students.
  4. Experience communicating and building relationships one-on-one and with groups.
  5. A desire and ability to work as part of a highly functioning team.
  6. Personal, interpersonal, and intellectual growth that has prepared the candidate for the competencies and responsibilities of this position.
- B. Qualified applicants will meet these criteria:
  1. Live on-campus during the semester of application, be eligible for on-campus housing, and submit the appropriate On-Campus Housing application. Students returning from a University-Sponsored Off-Campus program are eligible to apply for the semester immediately following their return provided that they have lived on campus fewer than 8 semesters and were guaranteed housing for the semester they participated in the off-campus program.
  2. Earn at least sophomore status at the time of employment and will be a full-time, degree-seeking student enrolled at the Storrs Campus during the time of employment.
  3. Maintain a 2.50 cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) at the time of application, and throughout the process.
  4. Uphold the university's *Responsibilities of Community Life: The Student Code* and the *On-Campus Housing Contract*. All students with a student conduct history will be subject to review. Students who are on University Probation at the time of application review are not eligible to interview. Students who were found responsible for any incidents in the current academic year or during the application and interviewing process will not be eligible to interview or continue on in the process.

#### Employment Competencies

Resident Assistants must consistently demonstrate the ability to act as a role model and peer educator capable of sound judgment and good decision-making at all times. Serving as a role model applies on and off campus, during and outside of scheduled duty shifts. The RA is always expected to:

1. Support and uphold university and Residential Life policies by example.
2. Maintain privacy when handling resident and community issues.

3. Communicate and engage with others respectfully across difference.
4. Respond to student crises.
5. Care for others in a responsible manner.
6. Care for oneself in a responsible manner.
7. Live as a responsible community member.

## Position Responsibilities

### A. Promote Residential Student Learning and Growth

Resident Assistants are responsible for promoting residential students' personal success, interpersonal competence, and intellectual fulfillment by facilitating the strategies included in Residential Life's intentional, year-long educational plan.

Resident Assistants do this by:

1. Developing individual relationships with all residents in their area of assigned responsibility through regular interactions and intentional conversations.
2. Providing support, resources, and information to residents to assist them in navigating challenges and seeking opportunities.
3. Facilitating community conversations in their area of assigned responsibility for the purposes of sharing information, establishing community expectations, addressing concerns, and creating community interactions.
4. Fostering an engaged community in their area of assigned responsibility by being present in the community and building social connections among community members.
5. Recognizing the work of their residents, peers, supervisory staff, and campus partners.
6. Supporting the planning and delivery of programs and events as part of the larger residential area team.
7. Delivering passive educational and resource materials to residents in their area of assigned responsibility (for example: bulletin boards, newsletters, flyers, door postings, etc).

### B. Develop an Inclusive Living Community

Resident Assistants are responsible for developing inclusive living communities that foster diverse learning within their assigned area of responsibility. An inclusive living community is one in which all members feel welcomed, valued, and respected, and where members are able to engage and learn from each other across their different identities and experiences.

Resident Assistants do this by:

1. Developing a residential community that is supportive and respectful of individual differences and rights of others.
2. Assisting community members in managing conflict between individuals and within groups to reach mutually negotiated resolutions.
3. Upholding and promoting the standards and expectations for behavior as part of the residential community, by:
  - a. Educating community members about the policies and procedures of the University's *Responsibilities of Community: The Student Code* and the On Campus Housing Contract;
  - b. Engaging community members in creating shared standards and expectations;
  - c. Holding community members responsible for their actions by confronting and documenting behavior that violates these standards and expectations.
4. Promoting and maintaining health and safety standards within the community by:
  - a. Educating community members about standards for health and safety
  - b. Conducting routine fire, health, and safety inspections under the direction of supervisors
  - c. Participating in rotating duty shifts during nights and weekend days, during which time the Resident Assistant will be responsible for responding to incidents and concerns within the community, conducting rounds of the community, being available during designated office hours, and at all times during the duty shift, via phone.
  - d. Monitoring the area for safety concerns.

- e. Addressing issues related to safety, well-being, facilities, and emergencies by following Residential Life and university protocols.

### **C. Perform Administrative Tasks**

1. Complete administrative responsibilities in a timely manner under the direction of supervisors.
2. Communicate appropriately with students, staff, faculty and guests, including reading and responding to UConn email messages; usually within 24-48 hours [unless marked 'urgent'].
3. Attend and participate in pre-semester and in-service training sessions.
4. Attend meetings with supervisor(s) on a regular basis.
5. Attend weekly area staff meetings [Wednesday, 7:00-9:00pm].
6. Participate in administrative processes including:
  - a. Tracking and documentation of strategies for student learning and growth
  - b. Submitting incident reports
  - c. Submitting maintenance requests
  - d. Following Check-In and Check-Out procedures
  - e. Documenting Fire, Health, and Safety Inspections
7. Be available during designated required weekends, official residence hall openings, and for 24 hours after official residence hall closings.
8. Participate in interviewing candidates for departmental positions.
9. Participate in interviewing candidates for other positions as requested.

### **D. Perform Other Duties as Assigned**

## **Learning Communities, Honors Communities, and Special Interest Communities**

Residential Life offers learning communities and special interest areas based previous or current experiences related to the program, or academic or social interests. These communities are designed to provide residents additional opportunities to learn and be involved through a specific interest or academic major. The Resident Assistant fulfills the responsibilities outlined previously in the context of the learning community's or special living area's purpose. In many cases, collaboration with a faculty or staff director will guide the special attention directed to the learning needs of the community.

Each learning community or special living area has unique characteristics and the role of the RA may differ somewhat from area to area. Communication between the RA, the supervisor, residents, and the faculty or staff director is essential in determining goals and expectations and ultimately the success of each community.

### **A. Collaboration with the LC/Honors/Special Interest Community Team**

As part of a Team that includes the supervisor(s), faculty or staff director, and other staff or leaders associated with the community, the Resident Assistant will participate in the following:

1. Learning Community RAs will meet (at least) monthly with the supervisor and faculty or staff director[s] to assess progress and plan for the future.
1. Honors RAs will meet 1-1 with a member of the Honors Programming Office at least once per semester.
2. Special Interest Community RAs will meet regularly with the supervisor and faculty or staff director[s] to assess progress and plan for the future.
3. Under direction of the supervisor, work closely with the LC/Honors/Special Interest Community Team in developing strategies to engage the community.
4. Invite the faculty or staff director to community events, as appropriate.
5. Communicate LC/Honors/Special Interest Community updates and information to resident participants.
6. Keep the faculty or staff director informed of community happenings on a regular basis.

### **B. Community-Specific Training and Opportunities**

With direction from the supervisor(s) and as part of their position responsibilities, the Resident Assistant will attend trainings, meetings, or events specific to Learning Communities, Honors, or the special interest community.

## Terms and Conditions of Employment

- A. In order to understand the needs of resident students, all applicants must be living on campus during the semester of application. In addition, students who wish to continue in the application process must be eligible for on-campus housing, and submit the appropriate On-Campus Housing application.
- B. RAs are appointed for one academic year, and will be available for the entire employment period. Additional contract periods are based on job performance. Residential Life reserves the right to change the location of the RA's assignment, if needed. RAs may be assigned a roommate, based on the need for student housing.
- C. Where applicable, RAs who have an apartment or suite/roommate may choose their apartment or suite/roommate. Due to the special nature of this relationship, it is expected that RAs engage in discussions with their apartment or suite/roommate about, but not limited to, the nature of their positions and other issues as outlined in The HuskyMate Agreement. Residential Life encourages potential RAs to engage in this discussion at the time the RA selects their apartment or suite/roommate.
- D. RAs who are hired for the designated apartment areas, and Husky Village, who will not be graduating during the spring semester of their employment period, will continue to be employed for several weeks past the official closing. These dates will be in the RA's offer letter.
- E. RAs may not hold any academic work/learning experiences five (5) days/week [practicum, internships, co-op, student teaching, clinicals, etc.] during their first semester of employment. Five day/week academic commitments are those academic requirements that are in addition to, or substitute for, classes, which may or may not take the RA off-campus 5 days/week.
- F. RAs may request a total of 10 days away from the position each semester. The requested days away may be requested during the fall and spring semester; excluding designated training periods, opening and closings. At all other times, the RA is required to spend each night in their RA assigned room.
- G. RAs must be available on Wednesdays from 7:00-9:00 p.m. for weekly staff meetings and in-service training.
- H. RAs will be available for opening and closing periods and applicable on-duty periods during the stipulated employment period. RAs will remain available through 24 hours after closing of their residential area. These dates include August [typically, the second week in August—the first day of classes], and January [typically the second week in January—first day of classes] pre-service training, Thanksgiving break, Winter Recess, and Spring break, and in the select residential areas that are open past graduation. If the RA wishes to remain in their assignment during break periods, the RA must complete the break housing application. RAs will be asked to volunteer to be on paid duty during break and recess periods.
- I. Newly-hired RAs will enroll in EPSY 3235, a 3-credit course during the first semester of employment.
- J. An applicant will earn sophomore status at the time of employment. The Resident Assistant will be a full-time, degree-seeking undergraduate student enrolled at the Storrs Campus during the time of employment. It is recommended that an RA carry no more than a normal course load as defined by the academic program [typically 15-17 credits]. RAs should carefully review their academic progress and required course load to ensure successful completion of the RA's program.
- K. RAs will maintain a 2.50 cumulative Grade Point Average [GPA] throughout the term of employment. RAs on scholastic probation or subject to dismissal may be ineligible to continue in the position. This determination will be made based upon the actual term grade point average, and prior academic progress. Winter session and summer session[s] coursework will not be figured into the previous semester's grades for the purposes of maintaining the required grade point averages.
- L. Grades will be checked at the conclusion of each semester. Winter session and summer session(s) coursework will not be figured into the previous semester's grades for the purposes of maintaining the required grade point average.
- M. RAs may remain in the position through their eighth semester of living on campus based on successful reappointment at the conclusion of each employment period. RAs whose academic programs require them to continue past their eighth semester living on campus, will not be eligible to remain in the RA position. Semesters accrued are cumulative and are verified by Residential Life's THD software.
- N. Upholding the University's Responsibilities of Community Life: The Student Code and The On-Campus Housing Contract are vital components of the RA position, and represent a minimum expectation for assuming a leadership role in the community. All students with a student conduct history will be subject to review. Students who are on University Probation at the time of application review are not eligible to interview. Students who were found responsible for any incidents in the current academic year, or during the application and interviewing

process, will not be eligible to interview, or continue on in the process. Once hired, RAs who are found responsible for violation of the Code or Contract and are placed on University Probation, will immediately be terminated from their position. RAs found responsible, but issued other decisions will be individually reviewed.

- O. Requests for part-time work and co-curricular activities outside the position require prior approval by the supervisor. RAs may request a combination of course credit hours, additional job, and co-curricular activities as long as the combination requested does not total more than 30 hours per week, in general. Approval of requests is not guaranteed.
- P. International Students will meet the following Special Restrictions Regarding Work Eligibility:
  - a. During the fall and spring semesters, international students may not work more than twenty (20) hours per pay week, Friday through Thursday, in all jobs combined (including graduate assistantships).
  - b. During intersession, spring break and summer, if the international student is eligible and intends to register for courses for the next semester, the student (maintaining F-1 visa status) may work full time, up to, but not more than, forty (40) hours per pay week, in all jobs combined.

*The University of Connecticut encourages minorities, women, and people with disabilities to apply for this position. The University of Connecticut is an EEO/AA employer. Rev. Nov 2016*