

Wayne State College Office of Residence Life: Job Description and Responsibilities for Resident Assistants

Job Description

Resident Assistants are compensated undergraduate or graduate student staff who live in College residence halls to support the academic success, social development, and personal growth of students by creating intentional programs and experiences within a diverse community of learners that involve students, faculty, and staff. RAs are expected to create residential environments that enhance student academic progress and success; to promote the intellectual life of the residence; to create opportunities for students to explore and clarify their interests, values and attitudes; to build inclusive and reflective environments in which differences of background and belief are explored; to provide personal and academic counseling and referral; to participate in housing activities; to know, enforce, and explain WSC policies; to be available to students, and to encourage student responsibility and accountability.

Being an RA means being a supportive member of a staff team. A staff team consists of your fellow RAs, the Senior RA, the Assistant Director of Residence Life and the Director of Residence Life, Student Desk workers, Student Night Security, Campus Security Officers, and Custodial Services. Together the entire staff works as a team to create a responsible living and learning environment.

Job Responsibilities

Leadership

RAs hold leadership positions of responsibility and will need to exercise authority in some situations. As leaders in their residence hall, RAs are expected to do the following:

- Assume the primary leadership role, serving as role models for responsible behavior and personal integrity; exercise good judgment.
- Know and educate residents about all WSC policies, procedures, and regulations
- Develop strong facilitation, effective communication, and other leadership skills by participating in all residence life staff training and development activities and the Spring Leadership Conference.
- Work closely with, support, and advise other leaders in the hall – such as the Assistant Director of Residence Life, Senior RA, Fellow RAs, Desk Staff, Custodial Staff, and Hall Council officers.
- Assume a leadership role in crises – such as fire drills, bomb threats, tornados, and other emergencies.

Supporting the Academic Mission

In support of the academic progress of their residents, RAs are expected to do the following:

- Role model positive academic behavior.
- Be knowledgeable about the general and departmental advising programs.
- Know and be able to direct residents to the academic resources and support services on campus (e.g. learning center, peer tutors, STRIDE, library resources).
- Help create residential environments that promote academics and are conducive to studying.

Building Community

RAs are responsible for creating a residence environment in which all views, popular and unpopular, can be voiced, heard respectfully, and fully explored. RAs are expected to do the following:

- Help establish community norms and ground rules to ensure open and honest communication and responsible student conduct.
- Be sensitive to the needs of all groups in the residence hall, and help residents to be aware of each other's concerns.
- Plan programs exploring various cultural background, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, race, class, gender, and other diversity issues in an attempt to increase community awareness.
- Mediate conflict and help residents to take responsibility for their residence community.
- Plan programs that support the academic success, social development, and personal growth of students.

Advice and Assistance

Residents seek advice from their RAs, and specific RA responsibilities include being able to do the following:

- Develop positive cooperative relationships with students.
- Be an active and effective listener.
- Identify potentially negative student behaviors and help each individual attain academic and personal success.
- Communicate support without assuming responsibility for the problem or for the solution.
- Identify situations that require immediate attention and work with your supervisor and others to resolve them.
- Know campus offices resources and refer students as appropriate.
- Maintain confidentiality of both private conversations and staff discussions.
- An RA is required to immediately report to his/her supervisor any threatening, dangerous, or life-threatening student behaviors.

Administrative Responsibilities

- Participate fully in the opening and closing of the residence halls
- Check mail and e-mail daily
- Distribute and/or post materials about in-hall and campus events in a timely manner.

As members of the Residence Life staff, RAs are expected to complete the following administrative tasks in a timely and efficient manner:

- Complete 6 hours of desk duty per week
- Being available in the hall daily, and working scheduled duty nights as determined by the hall supervisor and the Residence Life Office.
- Assume responsibility for hall security, including the use of master keys.
- Complete all weekly staff reports, programming reports, room reports, rove logs and other paperwork in a timely manner.

Staff Development

Help create and maintain staff relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

- Attend and contribute at all staff meetings.
- Work cooperatively with the staff on team projects and shared tasks
- Offer and accept constructive feedback.
- Act as a liaison between the Residence Life staff and the residents.
- Participate in staff evaluations held with supervisor(s).
- Maintain an open-minded attitude and support the residence Life program, staff, and supervisors.

Personal Conduct

RAs are paid staff and are expected to be professional at all times. RAs serve as role models for the residents and are basically always “on duty”. RAs are expected to do the following:

- Know, abide by and enforce WSC policies.
- Be responsible and professional community leaders.
- Exercise common sense and good judgment in their interactions or relationships with their residents and the rest of the campus community.
- Know and abide by Residence Life expectations for personal conduct.