



## Resident Advisor Position Description 2019-2020

Residence Life is a part of the Department of Student Affairs. Student Affairs is dedicated to helping students determine what matters to them and how they should live together. We foster a community of care that helps students understand the world and how they will interact on campus and in the community as global citizens. We value respect, personal responsibility, communication, service, and social justice.

The Residence Life Office (RLO) strives to establish a community which enables students to grow personally, intellectually and socially. We aspire to create a safe & inviting living community that enhances self-responsibility among students, empowers them to be well-rounded citizens, and fosters an integration of the academic and social arenas. Resident Advisors are student staff members who are committed to serving as role models in an effort to achieve these goals.

### Minimum Qualifications

In order to be employed as a Resident Advisor at Ursinus College, one must:

- be a full-time undergraduate student in good academic and disciplinary standing
- have completed one year of college
- maintain a minimum semester grade point average of 2.00 and cumulative grade point average of 2.50

### The Four Roles of the Resident Advisor

RAs will be called upon to perform a wide variety of tasks, and will be expected to assume four major areas of responsibility. These four areas include roles as peer helpers, community developers, limit setters, and administrators. The information outlined below prescribes minimum expectations of job performance within the four areas of responsibility:

#### **1. The Resident Advisor as a PEER HELPER (Counselor/Advisor):**

- Aids students in their orientation to the residence hall/house and to the college environment. RAs must be available and approachable to the residents in their area to become acquainted with students' interests, abilities, attitudes, needs, and concerns. RAs should note both individual and group dynamics, including roommate relationships and the effect of groups on others within the living area, and respond accordingly.
- Builds and maintains a relationship of trust and respect while assisting students with personal, social, and academic concerns. Notices students who have socially withdrawn, left campus for an extended period of time, or stopped attending classes. This information must be communicated to the Residence Life Office immediately, so that proper referrals may be made.
- Upholds the highest level of integrity while maintaining ethical and professional decorum at all times. Throughout the year, students and staff members will confide in the RA about professional and personal matters. Although an RA cannot promise confidentiality because some situations require referrals, they are expected to respect privacy and not discuss matters with other students. Additionally, RAs should not discuss hall concerns with other RAs. The expectation of integrity, professional decorum, and respect for students' privacy continues even after the RA leaves the position.

#### **2. The Resident Advisor as COMMUNITY DEVELOPER:**

- Identifies unique hall/suite/house needs. In order to do this effectively, RAs must spend significant time in their areas and engaging with their residents. The RA position must be a priority over all other extracurricular activities.
- Fosters a sense of community, togetherness, and belonging through informal and formal events and interactions.

- Promotes educational and social development through formal programs. Each year, RAs will receive detailed information about specific programming requirements at Fall training.
- Becomes knowledgeable about campus organizations, campus services, and local resources. This includes, but is not limited to, a basic understanding of the offerings of each office in Student Affairs, the Academic Dean's Office, and student government.
- Participates in Airband. RAs will have a variety of options for how to participate, but some form of participation is required.
- Assists with college-wide initiatives and events as requested. Throughout the year, RAs may be asked to assist the college with planning or facilitating events.

### **3. The Resident Advisor as a LIMIT SETTER:**

- Knows and adheres to the rules, regulations, and policies of the College.
- Helps students understand the rules, regulations, and policies of the College and how to apply them to their actions.
- Maintains an atmosphere conducive to academic work. RAs work with residents to create a peaceful community.
- Handles disciplinary situations within the hall/suite/floor. RAs are expected to confront and document violations of the Student Handbook. Additionally, RAs serve as part of the Crisis Response Team and are expected to abide by Crisis Protocol procedures.
- Serves as a conflict mediator with individuals and groups. RAs will be required to facilitate roommate mediation meetings.
- Models appropriate behavior at all times. RAs are expected to be role models both on and off campus. This includes adhering to all laws and campus policies, demonstrating appropriate use of social media, and conducting oneself in a way that aligns with the mission of the College.

### **4. The Resident Advisor as an ADMINISTRATOR:**

- Familiarizes self with the staff Canvas materials, including various forms, policies, and procedures.
- Participates in Residence Life Office functions and activities, including RA selection and the room lottery and selection process. It is expected that all RAs volunteer time to various activities when the need arises.
- Serves as a liaison between the students and administration by conveying student concerns to the administration and interpreting the administration's points of view to students.
- Remains mindful to the image conveyed to members of the academic community, visitors, parents, and the general public. RAs should work to create a climate and physical environment in their areas that demonstrates pride and respect.
- Keeps lines of communication open through contact with the SA, AD, and Director. It is the responsibility of the RA to initiate contact as needed. Unexpected events should be reported to professional staff as soon as possible. Depending upon the situation, this type of contact may be made via telephone, email, office or home visit. Failure to keep the staff well-informed may result in disciplinary action or dismissal from the position. The following forms of communication are required:
  1. One-on-Ones -- an individual appointment/discussion to be held between the RA and Assistant Director and the SRA.
  2. Area Meetings -- regularly scheduled weekly staff meetings held on Mondays from 9pm to 11pm
  3. RA Mailboxes -- each RA has an assigned mailbox in RLO which must be checked minimally twice per week or when emailed to do so.
  4. Incident Reporting-- an on-line system used to communicate information to the professional staff. Incidents must be documented within 24 hours.
- Remains in area during duty hours. The staff shares equally in the on-call rotation. Duty coverage begins the night first-year students arrive and occurs every evening through Commencement (except when the College is closed).

- Performs daily checks of their area, both in and outdoors. RAs must report any changes, both accidental and intentional, to both Facilities Services and the AD immediately. When possible, RAs must identify the individual(s) responsible for any damages in their area(s).
- Keeps duty keys and radios in a secure location in one's room while on duty. This location must not be accessible to residents. These keys are to be used for job-related functions only (lock-outs, health or safety emergencies, or upon the directive of a professional staff member). Keys, or access to keys, are never to be given to a resident for any reason, and should never be used for personal means. Losing duty keys can result in disciplinary action or dismissal from the position. Always return duty keys and radios to Campus Safety by 12 p.m. the day after duty.
- Monitors and reflects upon personal progress throughout the academic year. Each individual's progress will be discussed in his/her "one-on-one" sessions. RAs complete a self-assessment, and residents fill-out an evaluation form for their individual RAs. These materials will be summarized by the AD and presented to the RA in a formal evaluation session. Reappointment or continuation in the position is dependent upon satisfactory performance.

### Terms of Employment

- Each RA will receive \$4,500 per year, distributed on a bi-weekly basis in accordance with the student payroll schedule established by the Business Office. The final pay will be held until the completion of assigned tasks at the conclusion of the academic year. Pay may be withheld for failure to complete job responsibilities.
- Each RA must return to campus approximately ten (10) days before the fall semester and approximately three (3) days before the spring semester. Each Resident Advisor is required to remain on campus until all buildings are officially closed at the end of each semester. Training events take priority over all non-academic commitments. **For the 2019-2020 academic year:**
  - Fall training begins on August 15, 2019.
  - RAs assist with closing residence halls and must stay on campus until December 14, 2019.
  - Winter training begins on January 16, 2020.
  - RAs assist with closing residence halls and Commencement activities and must stay on campus until May 16, 2020.
- Each RA is hired for the academic year, unless there is cause for termination or a change in status. In addition to meeting the minimum qualifications, reappointment is contingent upon application, satisfactory performance, and sustained commitment.
- Each RA must be on time to staff functions, including weekly staff meetings which occur on Mondays from 9pm to 11pm.
- Communication to all parts of the organization is vital and needs to occur quickly and efficiently. As a result, it is imperative that all communication (electronic, telephone, written, and interpersonal) receives timely attention.
- Each RA should establish and maintain a positive working relationship with other staff members. It is necessary for the staff to work as a team and support each other. Public criticism of another staff person will not be tolerated. Differences of opinion should be discussed privately and may include the AD or Director.
- An RA may not hold other employment on or off campus without prior permission from the Director. Additional employment is limited to ten (10) hours per week.
- As an undergraduate member of the Ursinus community, all RAs must abide by the policies and expectations set forth in the Student Handbook. Staff members involved in incidents that jeopardize their positive disciplinary standing with the College shall be subject to discipline as a student, as a RA, and/or dismissal from the position.