

Resident Assistant Job Description/Contract 2015-2016

MISSION

The mission of the Office of Residential Education is to support the Wagner College and Campus Life missions through fostering safe, respectful, and inclusive residential community that supports and challenges student growth and development through educational, social, and leadership opportunities.

OVERVIEW

The Resident Assistant (RA) is a Wagner College student living in residence and responsible for a variety of duties pertaining to student and community development in a residential area. The nature of the RA position requires a positive attitude, the ability to create a respectful and safe community, and ability to appropriately represent the Office of Residential Education and Wagner College.

The intent of this document is to guide RAs in the performance of their job responsibilities and to outline expectations from the Office of Residential Education. The Office of Residential Education has the authority and responsibility to interpret this document, as well as to make changes as necessary to ensure the proper functioning of the Office and its staff. Supervisors are permitted to create stricter guidelines for individual staffs.

QUALIFICATIONS

- RAs must be enrolled, with full-time status, at Wagner College. Enrollment as a full-time undergraduate student must be maintained throughout the application process and throughout the term of employment.
- RAs are expected to hold a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.5 or higher. Candidates with a lower GPA will automatically be removed from the applicant pool. Good academic standing must be maintained throughout the term of employment. Transfer students may be offered a position contingent upon a 2.5 GPA from Wagner College at the end of the Spring semester.
- The RA position is a commitment for one full academic year. New candidates who expect to graduate or leave the College in December may not hold the RA position in their last semester so that continuity can be maintained for each floor/area. A re-hire process will occur each year through which current RAs may re-apply for the RA position for the following year. Summer employment may also be available but is not guaranteed.
- RAs must remain in good judicial standing with the College. An RA candidate's disciplinary status will be reviewed and considered during the selection process. Any policy violation during the term of employment may lead to termination from the RA position.
- RAs must be present for the entirety of all meetings, training periods, as well as opening and closing procedures in the residence halls:
 - **The dates for the 2015-2016 academic year are as follows:**
 - Summer Training takes place from August 17th, 2015 to August 30th, 2015
 - Winter Training takes place from January 13th, 2016 to January 15th, 2016
 - Weekly Staff Meetings (9pm every Monday)
 - All-Staff Meetings will occur once monthly at 9pm in place of regular staff meetings
 - RAs must remain on campus until Friday, October 9, 2015 at 5:00pm before Fall Break (returning Tuesday, October 13 by 8pm)
 - RAs must remain on campus until Tuesday, November 24, 2015 at 5:00pm before Thanksgiving Break (returning Sunday, November 29 by 8pm)
 - RAs must remain on campus until Friday, December 11, 2015 at Noon to assist with closing residence halls for Winter Break
 - RAs must be on campus Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 5:00 PM – January 15, 2016 for Winter RA Training & Opening (all mid-year hires will be expected on Monday, January 12, 2016 at 5:00pm – January 15, 2016)
 - RAs must remain on campus until Friday, February 12, 2016 at 5:00pm before President's Day Break (returning February 16 by 8pm)
 - RAs must remain on campus until Friday, March 4, 2016 at 5:00pm before Spring Break (returning March 13 at 8pm)

- RAs must remain on campus until Wednesday, March 23, 2016 at 5:00pm before Holiday Break. RAs are expected to cover office hours on March 23 until 5pm)
- All RAs must remain on campus until Saturday, May 21, 2016 at Noon to assist with closing the residence halls after Commencement

COMPENSATION

- A single room free of charge (room size may vary due to physical layout of buildings)
- A basic meal plan for the duration of employment. The meal plan is only provided when the dining halls are open. When RAs are on-duty during dining hall closures, RAs are reimbursed for meal expenses.
- This compensation equates to approximately \$12,000. Thus, this benefit may impact financial aid packages.
- Academic scholarships or grants are reduced by \$2,000 for all RAs receiving this type of financial aid because room and board are no longer billed to their account. If RAs have any concerns about changes in their financial aid package due to the RA position, please see a counselor in the Office of Financial Aid.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Each Resident Assistant working for Residential Education is expected to conduct themselves maturely, with integrity and be attuned to the goals and objectives of the Residential Education program. The primary goal is the development of an environment conducive to the academic and personal growth of students living in the residential facilities. The following is a summary of the significant expectations for which Resident Assistants are responsible.

1. **Student and Community Development-** Creating environments where we support and encourage individual student growth and the development of personal relationships are an important role of the Resident Assistant. To accomplish this, staff is expected to organize a wide range of educational, cultural, recreational and social activities and contribute actively to them. Increasing a sense of community also includes encouraging residents to assume responsibilities for their actions. Staff members are responsible for interpreting, explaining and enforcing the code of conduct and all Wagner College polices and regulations.
2. **Helping-** A vital function for Resident Assistants is serving in a helping relationship with the students on their floor. Helping involves caring about and being open to the needs of the men and women in the residential facilities, being aware of their concerns and being perceived by them as receptive. Helping also involves staying well informed about the College and conveying appropriate information to the residents. Encouraging academic achievement is also an essential component of the helping function.
3. **Operational-** Working with students and staff to ensure the best possible operation of physical facilities is the third function of a Resident Assistant. RAs work closely with Residential Education in coordinating administrative responsibilities such as check-in, room changes, residential verification and other assigned reports.
4. **Diversity-** Each Resident Assistant will support the Residential Education and Wagner College's commitment to promoting diversity. As such, they will not engage in any type of behavior that is or is perceived to be discriminatory or offensive. Further, they are expected to challenge themselves, their fellow staff members and residents to do the same.

With these 4 topics in mind, Resident Assistants are required to perform the following:

- I. Fulfill Office of Residential Education responsibilities:
 - i. **The RA position must take priority over all other areas of extracurricular involvement. Staff members MAY be excused from trainings, meetings or other RA responsibilities for the following reasons at the discretion of their supervisor: academic coursework (including required internships, student teaching, class sessions, etc), NCAA sanctioned events, or any unforeseen emergencies or conflicts.**
 - ii. Support staff and in-hall team unity
 - a. attend and participate in weekly Monday staff meeting (9pm), Monthly All Staff meetings, one on ones and/or other meetings deemed appropriate by the supervisor;
 - b. be prompt and prepared;
 - c. participate in staff development activities;
 - d. help staff members problem solve;
 - e. assist staff with incidents and problems on individual floors;
 - f. promote and attend programs planned by other staff;
 - g. hold staff and student issues in strictest confidence.
 - iii. Complete all reports (weekly reports, residential verifications, IRs, etc) accurately and on-time;
 - iv. Assist with check-in and check-out procedures;

- v. Maintain safety and security of all residential keys and offices (including room, office and master keys);
 - vi. Sponsor floor meetings at the beginning and end of each semester and provide information outlined in training;
 - vii. Report maintenance problems and follow up as necessary;
 - viii. Conduct Health and Safety room checks each semester;
 - ix. Help facilitate room changes for students entering or leaving the floor and possibly the building;
 - x. Carry out directives from College officials;
 - xi. Assist with staffing for all major events (Housing Selection, Homecoming, Songfest, Wagnerstock, Midnight Breakfast, RA Selection, etc);
 - xii. Attend all official trainings (August, January. etc);
 - xiii. Represent the Office of Residential Education appropriately. This includes maintaining an online profile (i.e. Facebook) in accordance with College policies and promoting a positive self-image online;
 - xiv. Restrict working outside of the RA position to no more than 10 hours per week at an additional on campus or off-campus job. Other significant involvement on campus (athletics, theatre, clubs and organizations, etc.) may necessitate the limitation of outside work hours;
 - xv. Other duties may be assigned as unforeseen situations arise.
2. Possess and express interest in each student assigned to your floor:
- i. Aid students in their orientation to the residence hall and to the College as a whole;
 - ii. Regularly visit each resident and each room;
 - iii. Know the name of each resident on the floor and some general information about each person and be able to successfully complete a floor map or quiz to show this knowledge;
 - iv. Find the balance between being a friend and being friendly;
 - v. Maintain visibility with your residents and your building;
 - vi. Initiate an interaction with each floor/wing resident weekly.
3. Assist students in meeting their academic responsibilities:
- i. Plan and implement programs that focus on study skills and time management;
 - ii. Become aware of students who are experiencing academic problems and act on that information;
 - iii. Become familiar with referral resources for academic concerns (CACE, WITs, etc);
 - iv. Communicate with your supervisor regarding students who are experiencing academic difficulties;
 - v. Model effective study skills and behavior.
4. Develop and maintain helping relationships with students on your floor:
- i. Be available to talk with students one-on-one;
 - ii. Be aware of physical and psychological needs of residents;
 - iii. Become familiar with all College counseling and referral resources;
 - iv. Be an understanding listener without being judgmental;
 - v. Determine your own level of ability to assist someone and be aware of when you need to refer;
 - vi. Act as a mediator in roommate problems and disputes.
5. Promote relationships between residents on your floor and beyond
- i. Facilitate the completion of roommate agreements within the first 2-3 weeks of school and follow up as necessary;
 - ii. Hold regular floor meetings to establish and maintain community living standards;
 - iii. Identify and use the skills of students on your floor (leadership, organization, promotional and interpersonal) and help define formal and informal roles of each resident;
 - iv. Encourage interaction between students to promote understanding of diversity issues;
 - v. Promote informal small group interactions on the floor.
6. Take an active role in programming:
- i. Identify needs of the residents and continue to survey residents;
 - ii. Meet all Community Development Plan requirements;
 - iii. Attend all programs that Res Ed is sponsoring. Also, RAs with a significant role in an event (musical concert, theatre performance, athletic event) may not count such activities as programs;
 - iv. Create a successful plan for weekend programming;
 - v. Complete certain additional types of programming (sexual misconduct, fire safety, personal safety, diversity programming, etc.) as determined by the building supervisor;
 - vi. Meet all deadlines and criteria for approval and paperwork processes;

- vii. Create a new program if a proposal is denied due to any reason (i.e. failure to meet timelines, inappropriate content, excessive costs, and/or poor planning. Any expenses incurred for a denied program will not be reimbursed.);
 - viii. Support and encourage participation in events planned by Academic Departments, Co-Curricular Programs, CACE, Center for Intercultural Advancement, Center for Health and Wellness, Athletics, Public Safety, other College departments and Student Organizations, and events on Staten Island and NYC.
7. Act as an information source:
- i. Use referral techniques when appropriate;
 - ii. Know how to find basic information resources (course descriptions, campus directory, schedule of classes, organizations, contact information for Res Ed, etc.);
 - iii. Be familiar with all College policies and procedures;
 - iv. Keep bulletin boards current.
8. Provide ways to develop the health and safety of the living environment:
- i. Be on duty and hold office hours as required;
 - ii. Be aware of and carry out procedures for emergencies including medical and psychiatric needs and fire drills;
 - iii. Assume duties as assigned for the residence facility under the direction of the supervisor.
9. Enforce all University policies and procedures:
- i. Be familiar with all policies and procedures, understanding the underlying rationale (i.e. Community Standards of Conflict in the Student Handbook and College policies and procedures);
 - ii. Explain and interpret policy, procedures and penalties;
 - iii. Respond to behavior problems and emergencies quickly, calmly, consistently and effectively;
 - iv. Treat all residents and guests fairly and with respect;
 - v. Consult with your supervisor regarding appropriate methods to deal with problems encountered;
 - vi. Document and communicate incidents in an accurate and timely manner;
 - vii. Attend conduct hearings if called upon;
 - viii. Follow and enforce all College policies and procedures.
10. Improve your performance as a Resident Assistant:
- i. Participate in all staff training and staff development workshops;
 - ii. Manage time wisely. Failure to properly plan academic, social, and personal commitments does not reduce or eliminate RA responsibilities;
 - iii. Meet periodically with your supervisor to evaluate your performance and personal growth;
 - iv. Be held accountable to all items within your evaluation;
 - v. Develop a working relationship with other Office of Residential Education staff members;
 - vi. Develop a learning/working contract with your supervisor;
 - vii. Attend all staff and staff related meetings.

COMMUNICATION

1. RAs are required to set up and maintain the college-issued e-mail account. RAs should check their e-mail at least twice a day and are required to respond to messages from staff and students within 24 hours of receiving them. RAs are required to utilize the Gmail calendar function for their class schedule and all Res Ed scheduled meetings and events.
2. RAs are required to check their RA mailbox daily.
3. Flyers distributed to RAs through the RA mailboxes must be posted on their floors three times per week. At certain times, RAs may be required to hand-deliver information to specific residents or to entire floors.
4. RAs are expected to share their cell phone number with members of the Residential Education staff and should respond to messages within 24 hours of receiving them. RAs are required to sign up for the all-campus text messaging system to receive emergency messages from the college.
5. Supervisors may require RAs to utilize other communication methods (website, texts, etc.).
6. Any staff conflicts should be discussed within 48 hours.

DUTY

1. Duty begins every night at 9 pm and concludes at 9 am the following morning. The RAs on duty must check in via text by 9 pm with the Supervisor on Call and remain in the building/area the entire time.
2. Weekend duty begins at 9 pm on Friday/Saturday and concludes at 9 pm on Saturday/Sunday. During weekend duty, each building must be staffed. Duty RAs are allowed to leave the building with the duty phone, but must remain on campus and within 10 minute response time. All duty RAs must be physically in their buildings from 9 pm - 9 am.
3. It is expected that RAs will use duty time to complete Residential Education related tasks. In certain situations, the RA on duty may be given specific assignments by the building supervisor to be completed over the weekend; however, in most cases the RA should be interacting with residents and offering programs.
4. The RA on duty should always carry the building cell phone and other assigned equipment, including during rounds.
5. RAs are responsible for any keys they remove from the key box or other assigned keys at all times. Improper use, loss of keys or failure to return keys to the box immediately after use may result in serious disciplinary sanctions.
6. During the week, the RA on duty is expected to be in either their building of residence or the other building within their duty area. After completion of the final duty round, each duty RA is expected to be in their own room.
7. RAs must answer all phone calls during duty hours. Also, the RA on duty should only have one duty phone in his/her possession at any time. Thus, if an RA on duty needs someone to hold the duty phone, it **MUST** be an RA not already on duty at that time.
8. Alcohol may not be consumed during any duty night or weekend. Alcohol may not be consumed on a day of the individual RA's assigned duty. Alcohol may not be consumed by **anyone** in the RA's room.
9. The Residence Halls must have duty coverage during all breaks. There is a holiday duty rotation that will be set at the beginning of the academic year for the entire year.
10. RAs must maintain weekly office hours between the hours of 9 am – 9 pm on weekdays to assist with administrative tasks, student concerns, maintenance, housekeeping, and power house needs as well as sit the desk in the absence of a DA. The number of hours is determined by building needs but generally varies from 3-5.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

1. Residential Education encourages RAs to consider making low-risk choices in regards to alcohol consumption. RAs under the age of 21, like any other Wagner student, are not permitted to consume, procure or purchase alcohol. RAs over the age of 21 are allowed to consume alcohol with others who are also over 21.
2. No matter their age, RAs may not display obvious signs of alcohol use (i.e., bar set-ups, display of empty containers, alcohol-related signage, etc.)
3. Any alcohol consumption by RAs should adhere to the College's Alcohol Policy, especially in reference to location, serving alcohol to minors, reasonable use standards (type/amount of alcohol, drinking games), public intoxication, etc.
4. Illegal drugs or the illegal use of legal drugs is prohibited.
5. RAs, regardless of age, are not permitted to consume alcohol with graduate or professional staff in Residential Education.
6. Please see the duty expectations to see other expectations regarding alcohol use.

EVALUATIONS

1. **Evaluations-** Evaluations of Student Staff will take place throughout the year. These evaluations will be both formal and informal and are designed to facilitate improvement in the Staff Member's performance.
 - a. Informal evaluation and feedback should be ongoing between the supervisor and the Resident Assistant.
 - b. There will be periodic, formal, written evaluation of the Staff Member by their residents, fellow staff members, and their supervisor. Serious failure to meet expectations of students and/or staff members may require written warning, probation, or release from the position.
 - c. Consult with the supervisor regularly to discuss performance and personal concerns.

DISCIPLINE

- **Disciplinary Process-** As an Office within the Division of Campus Life, Residential Education has a high respect for students who choose to take on the role of a Resident Assistant or Residential Peer Educator. This role carries with it a lot of responsibility to the residents and College. This section was conceived to address and correct performance issues and to make sure the process is predictable, clear and equitable.
 - The Resident Director is responsible for documenting positive and negative staff member behavior.
 - All responsibilities (weekly reports/paperwork, bulletin boards, meeting attendance, programming, etc.) outlined in this position description are tracked by your direct supervisor. Your supervisor will also keep copies of any letters documenting job performance throughout the year. This is for departmental records and performance evaluations.
 - All important dates and times are noted in this position description; along with responsibilities, rules/regulations, and protocol information will be discussed during trainings.
 - This is a progressive documentation system. Once a student staff member is on warning, additional issues with performance MAY result in the next level of discipline. The College or Department may also determine that certain conduct warrants immediate dismissal without first resorting to the first three levels of discipline.

The four levels of our system are:

1. Verbal Warning

- i. This is the initial step in the disciplinary process. The verbal warning is used when a minor problem first occurs. The verbal warning step will still be formally documented.
- ii. The purpose of a verbal warning is to:
 1. Identify and understand the problem;
 2. Alleviate any misunderstandings;
 3. Clarify the direction for successful and necessary correction;
 4. Bring a concern out in the open before it becomes more serious.
- iii. Areas that may trigger a verbal warning include, but are not limited to:
 1. Missing a weekly report, incident reports, or any paperwork
 2. Failing to respond to e-mail or voicemail messages
 3. Missing a scheduled one-on-one meeting without prior notification/valid excuse
 4. Other performance issues outlined by your supervisor

2. Formal Written Warning

- i. A written warning is given when a Staff Member has not satisfactorily corrected a problem as outlined during the verbal warning. A written warning may also be the initial action in cases of a more serious nature.
- ii. The purpose of the written warning is to:
 1. Review any prior related action taken;
 2. Have a conversation about the current situation;
 3. Outline future expectations and responsibilities;
 4. Document the conversation and/or agreement for personnel file;
 5. Talk about consequences of specific behavior.
- iii. Areas that may trigger a written warning include, but are not limited to:
 1. Failing to cover scheduled duty responsibilities
 2. Missing a staff meeting without prior notification
 3. Missing any training session without prior notification
 4. Missing deadlines for programs and bulletin boards without prior notification
 5. Repeating behavior for which the staff member has received a prior verbal warning
 6. Other performance issues outlined by your supervisor

3. Probation

- i. Probation is usually preceded by verbal and written warning; however, probation may be the first step in the disciplinary process for violations that the College or Department deems serious in nature. Probation is a defined period of time in which a staff member must improve upon and fulfill their job expectations. Failure to successfully perform position expectations may result in termination.
- ii. The purpose of probation is to:
 1. Review past and present behavior;

2. Identify expectations for future performance;
 3. Determine a timeline for performance review;
 4. Document the conversation and/or agreement for personnel file.
- iii. Areas that may trigger probation include, but are not limited to:
 1. Missing any training session without prior notification
 2. Placement on academic probation or warning
 3. Ignoring or failing to use emergency protocol and policy
 4. Misuse of master/room/office keys
 5. Violation of College Student Handbook
 6. Other performance issues outlined by your supervisor
4. **Termination**
- i. If a Staff Member's performance has not shown marked improvement, they will be released from their position. If, in the sole discretion of the College or Department, a violation is deemed serious enough, the staff member may be immediately released from their position, bypassing all previous levels of discipline. **All termination appeals must be directed within THREE working days to the Director of Residential Education.**
 - ii. Areas that may trigger termination include, but are not limited to:
 1. More than one semester on academic probation
 2. Violating the Student Handbook and specifically, violating the Drug and Alcohol sections of the Student Handbook.
 3. If a fellow student or community member alleges that you engaged in sexual misconduct, we may suspend you from your position while we investigate the allegations
 4. Loss or misuse of master, sub-master or negligence (as determined by supervisor)
 5. Any type of abuse, harassment, assault, sexual misconduct of residents, guests, or other staff members
 6. Possession and/or use of a weapon or ammunition in the residence facilities
 7. A breach of confidentiality or misuse of information regarding student, staff, departmental or College's information
 8. Misuse or mismanagement of College and/or student funds
 9. Failure to conduct oneself in a respectful and courteous manner at all times
 10. Being aware that an illegal activity is taking place in the residence facility and not acting accordingly
 11. Refusal of supervisor's request
 12. Withholding information from the appropriate individual on a staff or student issue
 13. Other performance issues outlined by your supervisor
 14. *Please note that this list of performance problems is not all inclusive. An effort has been made to be as specific as possible about performance problems viewed as serious; however, it is possible that a staff member's appointment could also be in jeopardy for a reason not stated above*
 - iii. After termination, and if approved to remain in College Housing, the staff member will be relocated to a space other than their present building assignment. All fees associated with room, board, and other services will become the responsibility of the individual released from the Student Staff position.
 - iv. For Staff Members alleged to have violated Residence Hall Policies and/or the Student Code of Conduct, the Office of Residential Education reserves the right to temporarily remove or relocate a staff member from the residence and/or dining facility and suspend the staff member from their duties pending an investigation and/or hearing when, in its sole discretion, the College or Department deems it appropriate to do so.
 - v. Should a Staff Member decide to resign, they **MUST** discuss their resignation with their direct supervisor and will notify, in writing, the Office of Residential Education and Director of Residential Education at least **three** weeks before the resignation (unless an alternative timeline has been approved by the Director of Residential Education. The staff member will be expected to complete all necessary responsibilities during this time and work with the staff to cover any assigned responsibilities (future duty nights, holiday duty, scheduled programs, etc.)

The initiation of the disciplinary process is at the discretion of your direct supervisor. Depending on the severity of the performance problem, the staff member may be placed on probation or be released from their position without a verbal or written warning.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Intra-staff dating is *not* prohibited. However, if such a dating relationship develops, the building supervisor(s) should be notified immediately. The supervisor(s) and RAs involved will work to ensure the relationship (in any stage, including an ended relationship) will not adversely affect staff dynamics. If intra/inter staff dating does occur, this does not diminish RA responsibilities. RAs should at all times role model qualities of a healthy relationship. If necessary, they should seek assistance from a supervisor or another professional staff member at the College.
2. RAs are discouraged from dating residents in their hall. If a dating relationship develops between an RA and any resident of the building, the supervisor(s) must be notified immediately.
3. RAs are *not* permitted to date any graduate or professional staff members in Residential Education.
4. RAs *are* permitted to be members of Greek organizations and may hold leadership positions within the organization while holding the RA position; however, they *may not* serve as President of a residential Greek organization, due to the conflict of interest between the RA position and residential Greek communities. They also *may not* serve as the RA for an organization to which they belong.

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SIGNATURE

Note: The Student Staff Member will carry out, accurately and punctually, all duties as described in this position description. The position description is not an all-inclusive statement of responsibilities. Special circumstances may require the assignment of additional responsibilities for a period of time.

I accept the RA position for the 2015-2016 academic year, and in doing so, I agree to meet the expectations outlined in the Resident Assistant Contract which is available to me via Res Ed's Staff Access webpage.

PRINT NAME

SIGN NAME

DATE