Desk Assistant Position Description

The desk assistant (DA) position consists of working the 24-hour information and security desk in the residence halls. General work responsibilities include facilitating the guest check-in/check-out policy, answering the phone, and other performing other customer service duties. To be considered for the DA position, students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.00, be enrolled full time, and be in good standing with the University. The DA works under the immediate direction of a Senior Resident Assistant (SRA) or Residence Life Coordinator (RLC) who reports to the Assistant Director of Residence Life.

Description of Duties

I. Staff Development
   a. Attend and contribute to DA training and workshop sessions.
   b. Attend and contribute to desk staff meetings and one to ones (as scheduled by the front desk supervisor).
   c. Attend and contribute to periodic department-wide meetings.
   d. Maintain frequent contact with the front desk supervisor.

II. General Expectations
   a. Assist students in maintaining an environment conducive to learning and studying.
   b. Serve as a resource and referral agent.
   c. Read and uphold the Front Desk Operations Manual and ask questions if unclear regarding any issue, policy, expectation, or procedure.
   d. Arrive 10 minutes prior to the start each shift. Furthermore, give proper notice to the supervisor if unable to work; proper notification means 48 hours prior to the scheduled shift. If unable to work a scheduled shift, the DA is expected to identify a replacement and contact their direct supervisor. Unexcused absences from work and/or meetings will result in disciplinary action which may include termination of employment.
   e. Ensure the front desk is not left unattended during assigned shift. DAs must remain at the desk until the replacement DA has arrived.
   f. Understand that employment begins on the first day the residence halls open and extends until the day the halls close. Plan to be available to work the entire semester, including exam week, fall break, Thanksgiving, Mardi Gras, and Easter unless relieved of duties by the front desk supervisor.
   g. Maintain a positive attitude whenever in the proximity of the residence hall front desk, regardless if working or not. The DA is a representative of the University as well as the Department of Housing and Residence Life, please act accordingly.
   h. Support the decisions of the Department of Housing and Residence Life while on duty. When questioned about a policy or regulation you disagree with, instead of voicing that disagreement, refer them to someone who can explain the policy in a positive light.
   i. A DA must be open to the diversity of the residents and staff. Demonstrate respect for those who may be different than you.
   j. Dress appropriately for work; wear nothing that can be considered lewd, crude, crass, or obscene. Staff should wear Southern Miss DA shirt during each shift.
   k. Only residence life staff is allowed behind the desk.
   l. Staff members may not talk on cell phones while working at the front desk.
III. Administration
   a. Supply a copy of class schedule, local address, and cell phone number to supervisor prior to the first
day of class each semester.
   b. Contact the Resident Assistant on Duty and/or University Police in the event of an emergency.
      Always follow the emergency protocol outlined in the Front Desk Operations Manual.
   c. Uphold visitation procedures and do not allow persons without the proper identification to check into
      the building.
   d. Listen to residents who approach the desk in order to serve them as effectively as possible. Be
      attentive, because they might be communicating a problem that the DA may need to share with the
      supervisor.
   e. All information of student, staff, or housing and residence life is considered confidential and is not
      available to others. Exceptions may be made for university officials such as the Residence Life
      Professional Staff and emergency personnel. Disclosing confidential information to unauthorized
      persons will likely result in severe job action such as termination.

IV. Student Discipline
   a. Observe and guide the general behavior of the residents in the lobby in terms of expected levels of
      behavior as established by the hall staff, Department of Housing and Residence Life, and the
      University community.
   b. Document all disciplinary problems and subsequent actions. Refer incidents and policy violations to the
      appropriate staff member.
   c. Use assertive (not aggressive or passive) communication when confronting policy violations or
      disciplinary concerns.
   d. DAs are expected to adhere to university and residence life policies. Violation of such policies will
      likely result in job action.

V. Qualifications
   a. The DA must maintain an overall GPA of 2.00 and maintain full-time academic status throughout the
      entire semester (12 credits fall and spring & 9 credits in the summer) to be considered in good academic
      standing and to keep their DA position with the Department of Housing and Residence Life. In the
      event a DA’s GPA should fall below the 2.00 limit, the DA may be given one semester in which to
      raise his/her overall GPA back to a 2.00. If the DA is unable to raise the cumulative GPA back to the
      2.00 limit, he/she will be ineligible to continue employment.
   b. The DA must be able to work effectively with University students in a residence hall environment
   c. The DA must demonstrate a sense of job responsibility and maturity.
   d. The DA must be a good role model and follow university and residence hall policies.

VI. Contract
The DA contract is for one (1) academic year beginning prior to the residence hall opening (on a date set by the
Department of Housing and Residence Life) and ending 48 hours after the halls close for the spring semester. DAs are
required to work a minimum of 12 hours per week (6-8 of those hours will be worked on a rotating weekend basis) and
may not work more than 20 hours per week.

Retention of the position for multiple school years is NOT guaranteed. It is based on budget, availability and an
individual’s performance evaluation. If a DA fails to meet job requirements/expectations prior to the end of the
contract they may be terminated.

The above position description may be modified throughout the term of employment.

Modified by D. Brooks 7/1/16