The University of Southern Mississippi  
Department of Residence Life

Job Description for the Resident Assistant Position

The position of Resident Assistant (RA) within the Department of Residence Life is a live-in position that requires the RA to reside in his/her area of responsibility. The RA is responsible for maintaining and fostering a community on a floor of 20-70 residents. The RA works under the immediate direction of a Hall Director (HD) or Residence Life Coordinator (RLC) and is indirectly supervised by the Assistant Director (AD).

**Duties and Responsibilities**

I. Administration
   A. Act as a liaison between the University administration and the students residing on the floor on all matters of mutual concern.
   B. Turn-in paperwork assignments by established deadlines and with quality.
   C. Handle administrative paperwork and procedures for residents checking in and out of the residence hall.
   D. Assist the HD/RLC in ensuring accuracy of hall rosters by knowing who is assigned to the floor/section and making sure they are residing in their proper room assignments.
   E. Notify the HD/RLC of any residents who are assigned to the floor but are apparently not living in the assigned space or of residents living on the floor but not assigned.
   F. Assist the HD/RLC in maintaining key inventory for the building/area and to report any discrepancies. Any missing or unaccounted keys that cannot be traced back to students will be the responsibility of all staff members to find the missing keys. Failure to find missing or unaccounted keys will result in the locks being changed and the total cost for this service will be evenly assessed to all RA, AHD, and HD/RLC in that building.
   G. Participate in departmental research projects (ACUHO-I surveys, etc...) and apply the results in practice.

II. Counseling
   A. Contact/communicate with all residents on a weekly basis as a means of establishing friendly relations, identifying problem areas, imparting and obtaining information, and answering questions.
   B. Use of an “open door” policy is strongly encouraged while the RA is in his/her room.
   C. Function as a resource referral person for students with emotional, health, or academic problems by directing them to the appropriate office on campus and follow through with appropriate notification to HD/RLC.

III. Desk Operation
   A. Work a minimum of four hours at the front desk per week and follow all front desk policies (maximum of 16 hours per week).
   B. Work the front desk during hall opening and closing to assist with resident check-in or check-out process. These hours will not be compensated on a hourly basis as they are included in the initial scholarship amount.

IV. General Availability
   A. Be reasonably available to residents in the evening hours and on weekends when in town.
   B. Reside in the building every night of the week, including during duty, and/or closed weekends.
   C. Remain in the residence hall up to 48 hours after closing of each semester to assist with the closing of the residence hall.
   D. There will be certain weekends that will be deemed “closed weekends” and all staff will be required to remain in the halls that weekend. Typically, closed weekends are the weekends prior to hall closing each semester, however the Director holds the right to declare a “closed weekend” at anytime.
   E. Remain in the hall and respond as directed during times of crisis (e.g. hurricanes, tropical storms, etc)
   F. RA’s will be allowed but are not guaranteed a maximum of two weekends off per month. The requests for weekends off must be submitted and pre-approved by the HD/RLC before leave can be taken. There is a 2AM curfew that staff members will be required to meet when they are not on duty and have not declared that day as a “day off.”

V. Hall Duty / Student Discipline
   A. Be present and complete all duty tasks while on assigned hall duty. Duty times consist of 5PM to 8AM of the following day. Weekend duty will be determined by your HD/RLC.
B. Respond to emergency situations quickly, and make regular visual inspections of the condition of the facilities for communication with the HD/RLC, AD, or Maintenance Office.

C. Take action based on training and always follow the chain of command when in doubt.

D. Document all disciplinary problems and subsequent actions and refer particular incidents to the appropriate staff member, HD/RLC.

E. Serve as witness or provide testimony for the validation of judicial documentation, emergencies, and events, if needed.

VI. HELP Model Expectations

A. Successfully complete the minimum departmental HELP expectations by established deadlines each semester:
   a. Organize and facilitate four floor meetings which help residents understand the goals and responsibilities of the RA, HD, RLC and the AD; community standards; Residence Life/University policies and procedures.
   b. Plan and implement four active programs for residents which are intended to educate students and build stronger communities. These programs must be pre-approved with the RLC/HD and cover the following areas: living, academic, educational, diversity, and civility.
   c. Attend three extracurricular departmental/on-campus events or activities.
   d. Design three visually stimulating educational passive programs for residents.
   e. Attend at least three departmental in-service workshops.
   f. Failing to meet any HELP expectations will result in a $25 charge for each occurrence and possible job action. HELP expectations are subject to change anytime as deemed necessary by professional staff.

VII. Staff Development

A. Attend and contribute to Residence Life and area staff meetings.

B. Participate in the residence hall staff selection process which is usually held spring semester.

C. Be supportive and a positive team player while working with hall and professional residence life staff.

D. Maintain regular and ongoing communication with your HD/RLC.

Qualifications

A. The RA candidate must have a 2.40 cumulative Southern Miss G.P.A., as determined by the Registrar’s Office at the University of Southern Mississippi, before completing an application for the position.

B. RA’s must be classified as an upper-class student (sophomore-senior) at the time they begin their job appointment.

C. The RA must maintain an overall G.P.A. of 2.40 and maintain full-time academic status throughout the entire semester to be considered in good academic standing and to keep their RA position with the Department of Residence Life. In the event an RA’s G.P.A. should fall below the 2.40 limit, the RA may be given one semester in which to raise his/her overall G.P.A. back to 2.40. If the RA is unable to raise the cumulative G.P.A. back to the 2.40 limit, he/she will be ineligible to continue employment. Note—Staff members assigned to Century Park must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.85 or higher/semester. Staff members assigned to Scholarship Hall must be Scholarship eligible to live in the hall.

D. The RA must be able to work effectively with University students in a residence hall environment.

E. The RA must demonstrate a sense of job responsibility and maturity.

F. The RA must be a good role model and follow university and residence hall policies.

G. The RA must show evidence of leadership skills.

H. The RA must live in the residence hall room assigned for the duration of employment with the Department of Residence Life. Leaving employment with the Department will result in removal from that room, floor, and that residence hall.

Contracts

The RA contract is for one (1) academic year beginning prior to the Residence Hall opening (on a date set by the Department of Residence Life) and ending 48 hours after the halls close for the spring semester. Village RAs may be required to stay longer based on the needs of each sorority. RAs receive a scholarship equivalent to the cost of a double room and a meal allowance (approximately $1100/semester) as compensation for their responsibilities. The maximum renewal for the Resident Assistant contract will be 5 semesters. An RA can appeal to return for a 6th semester to the Associate Director for Residence Education if they have maintained a constant positive overall job evaluation each semester, have the support of their AD, and show proof of contribution to the department for an additional semester.

*Please note—The Department of Residence Life will require staff to remain in the halls during times of crisis (hurricanes, tropical storms, etc...) to assist with preparations and storm aftermath.
RA’s are also required to work during certain holidays when the residence halls are open. Staff members may have to work during Fall break, Thanksgiving break, Mardi Gras break and other single day holidays throughout the year. Holiday duty will be divided among all staff members and everyone will take their appropriate days of holiday duty.

Staff members will arrive to the halls earlier than resident students for staff training (approximately 10 days) and will remain in the halls after official closing (approximately 2 days). RAs must be present for ALL training requirements and will not be excused for other activities.

The following restrictions apply:

A. An RA is able to hold additional employment during tenure as an RA only if
   a. He/she receives written approval from the AD prior to beginning any employment
   b. He/she works no more than ten (10) hours per week
   c. Staff members are eligible to work off-campus (maximum of 10 hours/week) with AD approval and regular checks on hours worked. Second year staff are eligible to work for a maximum of 16 hours/week.

If additional employment is allowed, the following restrictions/expectations must be met to continue such employment:
   a. Employment includes any other leadership position (SGA, UAC, Eagle Leaders, etc.) that provides any form of remuneration for involvement.
   b. An RA may not have more than one (1) such position.
   c. Additional obligations or employment will NOT be considered during the scheduling of duty responsibilities, programming obligations, and/or staff meetings.
   d. Performance in the RA position must remain above average or additional work is to be discontinued.

B. Staff will be permitted to participate in military obligations (Reserves, National Guard, ROTC, etc.). Conflicts that arise with staff training, check-in, checkout, and other dates will be considered on an individual basis.

C. In the event an RA fails to meet job requirements/expectations prior to the end of the contract, for any reason, the cost for housing and meals for the remainder of the term, should they continue to reside in on-campus housing, is prorated. All RAs who resign from their position prior to the end of their term (academic year), are held liable for their housing contract. In addition, the RA will be assessed (effective date of termination/resignation) the remaining scholarship (housing/food fees), regardless if they reside on or off-campus for that semester. A $250 processing charge may be assessed to the staff member’s University account for termination of the job agreement before the end of the contract period. There are certain circumstances when buying out of the housing contract is waived (graduation, going abroad, medical reasons, or other circumstances approved by the Associate Director or Director of Residence Life).

*Revised—01/10*