

**2009-2010 RESIDENT ASSISTANT POSITION DESCRIPTION – Residence Life**

**GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES:** Resident Assistants (RAs) are live-in, part-time, student staff members in residence halls who are chosen through a departmental selection process. The mission of Residence Life at the University of Massachusetts Amherst is to empower residence hall students and staff to create safe, caring, and inclusive communities. We encourage and support students in their academic, social, and personal growth. We foster student's personal awareness, appreciation of others, and development of skills to succeed in a diverse, global society. Finally, we provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and encourage students to demonstrate responsible and ethical behavior in their communities. As a Resident Assistant, you play a pivotal role in our department and are a vital resource for many members of the campus community.

**SUPERVISION RECEIVED:** RAs report to and work closely with a Residence Director who has primary hiring and supervision responsibility.

**CONTRACT PERIOD for RAs:** The RA position is a one-year student leadership opportunity. The contract period is for one full academic year (consecutive Fall and Spring semesters). The contract period includes all pre-service and in-service training. All RA staff are required to be in-residence and to participate fully in all training and operational activities which commence prior to the opening of the residence halls. RAs are expected to stay through the last day of finals in the Fall and through Commencement in the Spring.

**OPPORTUNITY for NINE-MONTH RAs in CASHIN:** This community will house Graduate and Non-Traditional Undergraduate Students. RAs working within this cluster can have the opportunity to work for nine months, which includes extended breaks such as Thanksgiving, Intercession and Spring Break. RAs will also receive an increase to their regular rate of pay for work during breaks and access to the residence hall.

**COMPENSATION:**

For New RA staff members, the RA position is valued at \$8,207 for the 2009-2010 academic year. New RAs will receive \$5,008 of that amount in a room fee waiver; \$124 in a waiver of the Telecom Fee as assessed by OIT; \$80 in a waiver of the Computing Fee as assessed by OIT; a membership in the Wellness Centers valued at \$95; and a cash stipend totaling \$2,900. For Returning Staff members the RA position is valued at \$8,257 for the 2009-2010 academic year. Returning RAs will receive \$5,008 of that amount in a room fee waiver; \$124 in a waiver of the Telecom Fee as assessed by OIT; \$80 in a waiver of the Computing Fee as assessed by OIT; a membership in the Wellness Centers valued at \$95; and a cash stipend totaling \$2,950. RAs will be compensated for work during Thanksgiving, Intercession, and Spring Breaks at the rate of \$20 - \$35 per day depending on their duties.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

Resident Assistants must be University undergraduate students enrolled in degree granting programs. Resident Assistants must be free of current judicial sanctions. Cashin residence hall has been specifically designated to include graduate housing; therefore, graduate students may be hired as Resident Assistants in that residence hall.

The department of Residence Life will review all RA cumulative and semester grade point averages every semester. A 2.4 cumulative GPA is required at the time of hire and commencement of duties. Returning RAs must maintain a 2.2 cumulative GPA to continue in the position. If an RAs GPA does not meet departmental requirements, the RA is no longer eligible and their contract is terminated. RAs who have a 2.2 or higher cumulative GPA may also not fall below a 2.0 semester GPA for two consecutive semesters or they lose their eligibility and the contract is terminated.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:**

### **I. Community Building:**

- A. Assist and encourage floor members to develop a livable, inclusive, and responsible community through discussions of floor living guidelines, integration of new students, study breaks, quiet hours, floor activities, etc.
- B. Conduct First Week community meetings that cover topics such as community living standards, hall government and involvement opportunities, judicial policies, semester activity plans, etc. RAs should conduct community meetings regularly throughout the semester.
- C. Implement community development activities and First-Year student initiatives as outlined by Residence Life and the cluster community development plan.
- D. Serve as a positive role model.
- E. Assist in educating residents about the Code of Student Conduct, how to care for themselves and for their community. Respond to negative behavior in the community by enforcing all university and housing policies that govern student conduct and, when necessary, document Code of Student Conduct violations.
- F. Develop an inclusive community. This necessitates an awareness of human oppression issues and an ability to respond to bias-related incidents.

### **II. Resource and Referral Agent:**

- A. Communicate information about the University, hall events, regulations to floor members through one-on-one interactions, posted messages, floor meetings, etc.
- B. Refer residents as appropriate to respective campus and community agencies.

### **III. Crisis Intervention:**

- A. Respond appropriately to crisis situations, but in no instance respond in a manner which would escalate a situation that could endanger the RA or resident. Follow crisis protocol guidelines.

### **IV. Administrative duties:**

- A. All staff members need to return to the University prior to the opening of the Residence Halls for training and to assist the ARD and RD in opening the hall.
- B. Ongoing administrative duties to be performed throughout the semester:
  - Distribute and collect keys
  - Distribute mailbox combinations
  - Complete room/suite inventories
  - Inform floor residents of the room selection process.
  - Assist the A/RD in distribution and collection of room assignment info.
  - Assist with student check in and check out processes.
- C. RAs are required to remain in the residence hall prior to extended vacation periods long enough to close the hall. RAs are to remain at the end of each semester to assist with hall closing.

### **V. Staff Meetings and On-duty Coverage:**

- A. Attend all staff meetings. The major functions of staff meetings are to maintain communication channels between staff members, provide a clearinghouse of dissemination of information between floors in the residence hall and throughout the area, foster a forum for problem solving, create additional RA development experiences, and serve as a support system for members. Cluster staff meeting times will be scheduled around the staff's academic schedule. You may schedule other jobs and activities after your cluster's staff meeting time is established.
- B. Meet with the ARD and/or RD for regular supervision.
- C. Each cluster is staffed by a Resident Assistant from 7 p.m. until 7 a.m. the following morning Sunday

through Wednesday and 8 p.m. until 7 a.m. Thursday through Saturday. The RA on duty must remain in the building all night, and must be available by telephone. The Residence Director, in consultation with the Area Director and other RDs in the Area determine the number of staff on duty in a Cluster.

- D. Staff members on duty are required to work in the Cluster Office from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Sunday through Wednesday, from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Thursday, and from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Friday and Saturday. Staff members are required to make rounds through their Cluster. The Residence Director will specify procedures for rounds.
- E. All staff members are expected to be on campus and available for duty during emergencies and the following:
  - Opening Fall Semester and Spring Semester
  - Halloween and the nearest weekend
  - Closing and Opening for Thanksgiving
  - Closing at Intersession
  - Closing and Opening for Spring Break
  - Special Program days (e.g. Southwest Week, Bowl Days, Quad Fest, etc.)
  - Special Community/National events that impact our students (World Series, SuperBowl, etc.)
  - May Closing and Commencement

#### **VI. Training:**

- A. Resident Assistants are required to participate in August and January orientation programs. RAs hired mid-year will attend January training and the spring New RA Seminar. New RAs return for on August 25 between 6-8pm and start training on August 26, 2009.
- B. Resident Assistants will participate in and attend all required Departmental training programs.
- C. Resident Assistants will participate in further in-service training as determined by the Residence Director and Assistant Residence Director.
- D. RAs who have pending Judicial Sanctions against them must be cleared two weeks prior to fall and spring training. Failure to do so will result in not being able to continue in the position.

#### **VII. Performance Appraisal:**

- A. Residence Directors will meet the RAs initially on an individual and a staff basis to review the job description, establish goals, and outline expectations for the semester. RD/ARDs will meet with each RA once every two weeks to review progress, performance, skill development, etc.
- B. Mid-year evaluation focuses on feedback from staff, floor residents, community development surveys, development/completion of goals, and any specialty/committee assignments.
- C. End-of-the-year evaluation focuses on any progress to date and closure.

#### **VIII. General:**

- A. Availability: The RA position is a part-time leadership position. Over the course of an academic year, the position averages out to 20 hours per week. However, some periods of time will require greater staffing demands (such as training, opening, closing, special activities, campus crisis, etc.) and all staff are expected to be available and respond as required.

If RAs have a second job, it should be clearly understood that the RA job is the primary responsibility and must supersede any other additional employment. Second part-time jobs should be undertaken only after consultation with and notification of your RD.

The Resident Assistant position is a live-in position, and RAs are expected to sleep in their own room each night. RAs should generally be in their rooms from 11 p.m. through 7 a.m. daily. As a guideline, RAs are expected to be in their hall by 1 a.m. on weeknights and 2 a.m. on weekend nights (exception: prior approval from RD).

Staff members are encouraged to get away at least one weekend per month. Time away requests must be submitted to the RD in advance, who will insure that no more than 50% of the staff is off each weekend.

- B. RA Substance Use Policy: As employees of Housing Services, RAs are expected to obey all Massachusetts State Laws regarding alcohol and controlled substances. Any evidence of underage drinking or of controlled substance use by an RA will result in automatic dismissal from the position.
- C. The Assistant Residence Director or Residence Director may expect other responsibilities and duties.

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