Resident Adviser Position Description

The Resident Adviser (RA) is a paraprofessional staff member of the Office of Residential Programs who is responsible for facilitating community standards. As such, this position is different than other leadership opportunities at Columbia in that RAs must challenge themselves to achieve higher levels of awareness concerning their own identities and perceptions as well as understanding the identities and perception of others. RAs must also maintain sensitivity to cultural norms and work to be an ally for students in matters of diversity and diversity education. RAs supplement and complement the process of formal education by establishing a strong community, thus enhancing the quality of life in the residence halls. The successful RA is concerned with the growth and development of each individual on their hall and is expected to promote an environment conducive to the overall wellness needs of the residents. RAs must demonstrate sound interpersonal skills, initiative, dependability, and a positive attitude. The RA reports directly to the Graduate Hall Director / Associate Director.

**Personal Development**
A. Willing to engage in conversations and trainings focused on allowing RAs to better understand their own identities;
B. Challenge yourself to achieve higher levels of awareness of people’s perceptions, maintaining appropriate sensitivity and awareness of cultural norms, diversity, and diversity education;
C. Exhibit effective listening and intervention skills that demonstrate and understanding of as well as a sensitive and appreciation for diversity;
D. Maintain positive working relationships with other staff members and offices on campus;
E. Respond to all emergency situations in a calm and responsible manner;
F. Be open to feedback as part of regular supervisory meetings as well as formal evaluation periods;
G. Recognize personal limitations;
H. Recognize the limitations of your role and seek appropriate resources;
I. Take responsibility for the decisions that you have made;
J. Use common sense and good judgment;
K. Consult with your Associate Director/Graduate Hall Director before making decisions as warranted.

**Community Development**
A. Facilitate community standards with your students, and review and/or update the standards throughout the academic year;
B. Initiate individual conversations with residents in an effort to form a relationship and strong connection on the floor;
C. Implement activities as per the community enhancement model;
D. Submit program paperwork within the established timeline;
E. Attend and be active in building, area, and university functions;
F. Serve as a coordinator, motivator, and resource person in encouraging residents to take ownership of their community;
G. Assess the needs of your residents on a continual basis via one-on-one and group conversations.

**Advising and Counseling**
A. Know your residents. Be aware of their personal, social, and academic concerns;
B. Recognize personal limitations;
C. Refer any resident whom you perceive needs professional attention to your Associate Director/Graduate Hall Director;
D. Work with your supervisor to make appropriate referrals;
E. Be visible, available, and approachable to your residents;
F. Continue individual conversations with your residents throughout the year;
G. Respond to and document the range of community situations;
H. Mediate conflicts between roommates and suitemates when necessary;
I. Uphold the established standards of confidentiality.

Information, Communication, and Resource Referral
A. Attend all staff meetings;
B. Check and respond to your email and your campus voicemail at least once per day;
C. Post necessary notices and/or distribute information to residents in a timely fashion;
D. Hold regularly scheduled community meetings as per your supervisor;
E. Be familiar with, communicate, and enforce policies and procedures in a positive fashion;
F. Be familiar with campus and community resources and provide such information to residents;
G. Maintain regular and frequent communication with your Graduate Hall Director;
H. Attend scheduled one-on-one meetings with your Graduate Hall Director.

Maintenance and Safety
A. Understand maintenance reporting, community safety, emergency and fire evacuation procedures;
B. Report needed repairs according to established procedure;
C. Familiarize residents with maintenance reporting, community safety, emergency and fire evacuation procedures;
D. Respond to emergencies on a 24-hour basis;
E. Adhere to fire safety evacuation procedures for the area.

Staff Standards
A. Role model appropriate behavior at all times. An RA is an RA no matter where they are, including on-line communities;
B. Be familiar with, enforce, and be able to explain campus policies/regulations in a positive manner;
C. Establish community standards and emphasize the interplay between community and individual needs;
D. Encourage students to take responsibility for their own actions and increase their consideration for others;
E. Refer disciplinary matters to your Associate Director/Graduate Hall Director;
F. Immediately address and document all incidents and situations that threaten the health, safety, and security of the community.

Administrative Responsibilities
A. Prepare to be the first to arrive and last to leave for each semester, holiday break, etc.;
B. Complete assigned paperwork and administrative tasks as per your Associate Director/Graduate Hall Director.
C. Meet the requests from our university partners, including, but not limited to Housing, Public Safety, etc. as per your Associate Director/Graduate Hall Director;
D. Document damage or vandalism immediately on an Incident Report.

Duty Responsibilities
A. Duty provides an opportunity for RAs to be creative in connecting to residents and maintaining a visible presence in their area;
B. Initiate conversations with residents throughout the community, not just your floor, while On-Duty;
C. Participate in a rotating, on-call duty schedule, determined by area needs:
D. Fall Duty begins at the conclusion of Fall Training and runs through the conclusion of Fall Semester finals, including breaks and holidays;
E. Spring Duty begins when visiting students arrive in January and runs through the day after Commencement, including breaks and holidays;
F. Make rounds of the building (as established by your supervisor or by the department,
G. Address and document any security or behavioral concerns and policy violations while On-Duty;
H. Complete thorough incident reports;
I. Cover additional on-duty hours or assignments when the university is unexpectedly closed or classes are suspended for any reason);
J. Follow all other duty procedures as outlined or requested by the Office of Residential Programs and your supervisor.

**Personal/Paraprofessional Development & Departmental Responsibilities**

A. Attend all meetings and training on time, including in-services, August staff development, January staff development, etc.
B. Support CA programming in your area;
C. Balance time commitments;
D. Recognize limitations and work to improve;
E. Be receptive to paraprofessional and personal development;
F. It is understood that involvement in clubs and organizations may conflict with the RA position from time to time. However, it is expected that the RA position be the first consideration after your academics. Any positions or significant time commitments outside of the RA position must be discussed with and approved by your supervisor BEFORE you commit to the outside activity. Your supervisor may limit time available for any outside commitment;
G. Support department, divisional, or other campus partners during campus crises or emergencies;
H. Challenge yourself to achieve higher levels of awareness of people’s perceptions, maintaining appropriate sensitivity and awareness of cultural norms, diversity, and diversity education.

**Important Dates**

A. Fall Training – Friday, August 16, 2013 through the beginning of classes;
B. Winter Recharge Training – Wednesday, January 15, 2014 through the beginning of classes; and

**Compensation**

A. Free room within one of the undergraduate residence halls or brownstones;
B. $600 annual stipend – stipend is received in 3 installment payments over the course of the academic year.

In accordance with its own values and with federal, state, and city statutes and regulations, Columbia does not discriminate in admissions, employment, programs, or services on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. This job description is intended as a summary of the primary responsibilities of and qualifications for this position. The job description is not intended as inclusive of all duties an individual in this position might be asked to perform or of all qualifications that may be required now or in the future.