Resident Assistants, Residence Life

Position Overview
Resident Assistants plan and facilitate activities and programs and enforce policies and procedures within the residence halls at UMass Boston. Resident Assistants are undergraduate student members in the department of Housing and Residence Life. They report to and are directly supervised by Community Directors. It is our expectation that the Resident Assistant maintains a high level of involvement in support of the Housing and Residence Life programming model and be an excellent social and academic role model for the residents on the floor. This is a leadership opportunity that provides a room in the residence hall and a meal plan. Resident Assistants are required to live in the residence hall in order to successfully fulfill the expectations of the position.

I. Qualifications for Selection
A. Leadership potential as evidenced by previous leadership experiences, references, and skills perceived by the evaluators in the selection process;
B. High level of maturity exhibited in sound judgment, emotional stability, flexibility, and willingness to accept responsibility;
C. Strong interpersonal skills through proven ability to interact effectively with others and as perceived throughout the interview process;
D. Good conduct standing with the University; and
E. Full-time undergraduate (rising sophomores, juniors and seniors are eligible) with both a cumulative 2.25 GPA and a 2.00 GPA from the previous semester.
F. Must be of full time undergraduate student status

II. Responsibilities
A. Student Relationships: Resident Assistants strive to help each resident develop fully as a person, a student, and an active member of the University through their multiple roles as advisor, friend, administrator, and policy enforcer. Resident Assistants demonstrate respect for the health, safety, welfare, and rights of everyone living in the residence halls.

1. Learn the name of each student assigned to their floor;
2. Learn something about each resident’s personal background, special interests, and academic goals;
3. Help students with personal, vocational, social, academic, and general concerns;
4. Associate with all residents of the floor and assess the needs of small groups which might otherwise be underrepresented;
5. Set a good example by exhibiting good academic and study habits and proper personal conduct; and
6. Maintain the confidentiality of information when ethical and appropriate to do so.

B. Time Commitment: The Resident Assistant position is considered to be the RAs principal non-academic activity and they should be able to commit an average of 12 hours per week to the position. The RA commits to the entire academic year and is not permitted to participate in a study abroad or exchange program while engaged in this role. Extracurricular activities or additional employment should not conflict with time needed to perform effectively as an RA through the entire year. Resident Assistants must be available and ready to work additional hours during training periods such as fall training and winter training, and be available as the Department of Housing and Residence Life sees fit for those limited times. Any additional employment or time-intensive extracurricular activities must be approved by the Community Director and/or the Residence Life leadership team. The RA is expected to be available and visible and available to students on the floor on both weekends and week days throughout the academic year. The RA is also required to be on duty on a rotational basis (approximately eight (8) times a semester). RAs are required to meet on a weekly basis with their staff team and individually with their Community Director, as well as complete all required training sessions presented by the department. Weekly staff meetings will be scheduled based on the team member’s course schedules, but will be held in the evening hours sometime during the work week. Prior approval will need to be given to RAs for nights spent outside of the hall by their Community Director and/or the Residence Life leadership team. No more than half of the entire RA staff may be out of the building overnight at any given time unless approved by their Community Director and/or the Residence Life leadership team.

C. Advising and Counseling: The Resident Assistant should be aware of students in need of personal help and provide appropriate consultation and referral. While the RA is expected to maintain the confidentiality of information from other residents and uninvolved parties, the RA should recognize that important information will sometimes need to be shared with the appropriate professionals in order to assist the resident. When faced with such concerns, the RA is expected to:

1. Demonstrate an ability to listen to others and to reflect attitudes of caring and support;
2. Discuss all situations of a referral nature with the Community Director and/or the appropriate central staff member;
3. Demonstrate knowledge of referral options within the University (e.g. University Health Services, Counseling Center, Advising, Career Services, Academic Departments) and be able to explain these options to residents seeking help;
4. Be prepared to academically advise residents and to refer them to the appropriate office when necessary; and
5. Recognize the limits of his/her training and experience as a counselor.

D. Programming: The Resident Advisor is expected to promote an atmosphere for individual and group development by initiating, advising, and implementing social and educational programs in the residence hall. In providing a learning atmosphere, the RA is expected to:

1. Encourage student interactions with faculty, administrators, and other members of the University community by initiating programs involving these groups;
2. Encourage residents to participate in, initiate, and contribute to hall programs;
3. Determine the types of programs that the residents need;
4. Actively promote the components of the program model by assisting in, initiating, advising, and implementing programs; and
5. Meet all programming requirements established by the department.

E. University Policy: The Resident Assistant is expected to support and enforce University policies and regulations, including Community Standards. The RA serves as a role model for others. The RA must assume responsibility for creating an environment in which optimum personal and social growth may occur. RAs will do rounds of the residence halls in sets of two (2) for every night the residence hall houses students to ensure University policies are being followed amounting to approximately eight (8) nights of duty per semester, per RA. The RA is expected to:

1. Encourage by example the principles of individual responsibility and respect for others;
2. Explain, support, and follow the regulations and policies outlined in the Housing License Agreement, Code of Student Conduct, and the Community Standards;
3. Meet the behavioral expectations established in this position description, and any additional performance and behavioral expectations provided by the department;
4. Respond in a positive and helpful manner when confronted with behavior or infractions which disrupt the environment and discuss all violations and infractions with the Community Director;
5. Report any potential violations of University policy and Community Standards.
F. **Emergency Response:** RAs are expected to respond to emergency situations including, but not limited to, fire, blackouts, snow closures, student disturbances, and individual crisis demanding medical attention, hospitalizations, or the need for public safety. In order to respond rationally and appropriately in an emergency, the RA is expected to:

1. Be familiar with instructions provided in the RA manual;
2. Periodically assist in conducting a scheduled fire drill;
3. Report all individual and/or hall emergencies to the Community Director; and
4. Assist Housing and Residence Life staff, as directed, in implementing emergency procedures.

G. **Management:** The Resident Assistant assists in the management functions of the hall, and is expected to report damages or repair needs to the appropriate staff. RAs are expected to:

1. Assist with the opening and closing procedures;
2. Assist in conducting health and safety inspections; and
3. Complete all room and common area inventories.
4. Participate in all University Open Houses and Welcome Days

H. **Administration:** The Resident Assistant is expected to complete the following duties for greater efficiency and communication:

1. Evaluate programs, personal performance, policies, staff relations, etc.;
2. Assist in room assignment and occupancy reports;
3. Communicate the procedures and policies of the Office of Housing and Residence Life to residents;
4. Document and report all alleged violations of the Code of Student Conduct and/or Community Living Standards;
5. Assist with the staff selection process;
6. Assist with check-in and check-out procedures for residents; and
7. Perform other duties as assigned.

### III. Terms of Appointment

A. **Period of Appointment:** The period of appointment begins during fall training and ends 24 hours after spring Commencement. All Resident Assistants are required to assist in the opening and closing of the halls for each academic term and for vacation periods. This requires returning to campus approximately twelve to fourteen days before students return for Fall semester and remaining after the residents leave for vacation. RAs will be expected to provide staff supervision
when the halls remain open. RAs must commit to the position for a full academic year and, therefore, are not permitted to participate in study abroad or exchange programs while employed in this position.

B. Work/Course Loads: It is fully understood that student life work in residence halls is not easily translated into hours worked per day or week because of the nature of the work. An RA can expect to engage in about 12 hours per week and be on duty on a regular basis. RAs should be accessible to students in the halls most evenings. RAs must hold a full time student status and deemed by the University. Any exceptions must have the written approval of the Community Director and/or the Residence Life leadership team. An academic load of less than seventeen (17) hours is recommended for the first semester of appointment. Student teaching or interning must be approved by the Community Director and/or the Residence Life leadership team. No student teaching or interning will be permitted during the first semester of appointment or during the fall semester, unless approved in advance by the Community Director and/or Residence Life leadership team.

C. Time Off: Resident Assistants are permitted one weekend off (away from campus) per month. The time must be arranged for in advance with the Community Director and/or Residence Life leadership team. Restrictions will be made on holiday weekends. A weekend off is defined as extending from Friday noon to 10:00pm on Sunday. No more than half of the staff in any hall will be permitted to leave for any given weekend. If you choose to be gone one night of a weekend, this counts as half your weekend off.

D. Compensation: As compensation, the RA will receive:

1. A private room valued at approximately $5,994 per semester
2. A meal plan valued at approximately $2,695 per semester.

E. Continuation of Appointment: Appointment is for one academic year (or part thereof) only. Continuation of appointment depends upon successful completion of tasks, positive evaluation by the Community Director, and exhibition of growth and continued enthusiasm for the position.