

# Resident Assistant Staff Performance Guidelines 2009-2010

## Belmont University Resident Assistant Position Description

The Resident Assistant (RA) is selected to be an integral member of the Residence Life staff. He/she reports to and is directly accountable to a Residence Director (RD). The RA lives and works with residents in areas of peer advising, community development, discipline, administration, and general operation of the residential community. The specific qualifications, requirements, and responsibilities for the Resident Assistant position are outlined below.

### **I. Qualifications**

1. A minimum of one semester as a full-time Belmont University student.
2. Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.70 at the time of application and maintained during his/her term of service as a Resident Assistant.
3. Maintain full-time student status (12-18 credit hours).
4. Be in good standing with the university (i.e. no disciplinary sanctions currently in effect).

### **II. Requirements**

1. The RA, in consultation with his/her RD, will discuss additional employment or internships situations (paid or unpaid). Any such employment should not exceed 15 hours/week. A statement from the outside employer saying that the RA is working no more than 15 hours is required. Other outside commitments should be discussed with and approved by the Residence Director/Assistant Director of that area.
2. The RA should consult with RD prior to enrolling in more than 18 credit hours in any one semester. Consent is also applicable when internships and/or student teaching are scheduled.
3. The RA is hired for one academic year. The RA is required to begin the position each term on the date specified, including scheduled training, and to remain in the position until the specified closing date.
4. The RA should attempt to limit his/her time away from campus and the residential community to one weekend per month, unless the RA has discussed individual situations with the RD.
5. The RA is required to participate in all regularly scheduled staff meetings and training opportunities.
6. The RA is expected to uphold, enforce, and abide by all University policies and regulations.

### **III. Responsibilities**

1. Time Commitment: The RA position is the principal non-classroom activity. Extra-curricular activities should not conflict with the time needed to effectively perform the assigned duties of the RA throughout the year. The RA is expected to be available and accessible to residents throughout the academic year. In accordance with the Division of Student Affairs Multiple Student Leadership Practice, a student may hold only one concurrent executive leadership position at a time as defined by the Division of Student Affairs below:
  - a. SGA President, Vice President, Treasurer, Director of Leadership Programs, and Director of Campus Communication
  - b. Program Board President and Vice President
  - c. Orientation Council
  - d. Resident Assistant
  - e. IFC & Panhellenic President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer
  - f. Greek Chapter Presidents and Recruitment Chairs
  - g. Beaman Leadership Team
  - h. Towering Traditions Leader
2. Advising and Assisting: The RA should be aware of residents' needs and provide appropriate consultation and referral. The RA is expected to:
  - a. be accessible to residents by spending adequate time in the living area.
  - b. take initiative to know the residents and to be considered approachable.
  - c. develop effective relationships with the residents that will assist the RA in observing subtle changes in behavior, enabling the RA to deal with the various concerns in his/her residential complex.

- d. act as a concerned, non-judgmental peer adviser whose goal is to assist residents in resolving their own concerns or problems by appropriate means.
  - e. maintain confidentiality in dealing with all situations.
  - f. discuss potential referrals with the appropriate RD.
  - g. realize limitations as a peer counselor and act as a referral agent for residents, utilizing appropriate University and/or community resources.
3. Residence Education: The RA is part of a unique community. The main goal of residence education is to foster a sense of community. A sense of community refers to an atmosphere of cooperation or commitment to the residential community, of willingness to communicate openly, and of responsibility to and for others as well as one's self. RAs are responsible for structuring their environments so that these attitudes are nurtured.

Since structured interactions in the residence halls and apartments contribute to a sense of community, RAs are responsible for actively assisting individuals and other staff members with the continual assessment of needs and the successful execution of subsequent interactions. Specifically, the RA is expected to:

- a. promote student interaction with faculty, administrators, and other members of the University community by involving them in planned initiatives and programs within the residential communities.
  - b. encourage residents to contact resource people and assist in developing special interest programs and events.
  - c. encourage leadership among residents and support resident-initiated programs.
  - d. attend as many scheduled University/Residence Life events as possible, such as intramural sports, social events, and educational/academic activities.
  - e. provide updated bulletin boards and information on a monthly basis displaying accurate housing/campus-related information and pertinent educational (informal programming) knowledge.
  - f. plan and complete programs in accordance with direction from the RD.
  - g. complete proper forms in a timely manner in order to receive program credit for scheduled programs. This also pertains to the submission of forms for Convocation credit for RA programs.
4. Staff Training/Development (and Supervision): The RA is expected to participate in staff training programs which are designed to develop the necessary skills to meet RA expectations. Therefore, the RA is expected to:
- a. arrive on campus one week prior to the general resident population in the fall. Each RA is expected to fulfill opening and closing responsibilities (Room Condition Reports, Maintenance reports, Check-In/Check-Out procedures, etc.).
  - b. set position-related and personal goals at the beginning of each semester in consultation with his/her RD.
  - c. attend and participate in all regularly scheduled staff meetings, staff development activities, and one-on-ones.
  - d. read and acquire a working knowledge of the content of the Handbook for Residential Living. Regular reviews of this booklet are strongly recommended.
  - e. participate with the RD in mutual performance evaluations based on position description.
  - f. be knowledgeable of all emergency and safety procedures.
  - g. be familiar with campus resources including, but not limited to, Counseling Services, Health Services, and Campus Security.
5. Discipline and Policy Enforcement: The RA is expected to uphold and enforce University policies and regulations. The RA serves as a role model for others which includes assuming responsibility for creating an environment conducive to personal and social growth. In order to maximize the effects of the residential environment upon student development, the RA is expected to:
- a. encourage, by example, the principles of individual responsibility and respect for others' rights.
  - b. interpret and explain to residents University policies and regulations as outlined in the Student Handbook and the Handbook for Residential Living, and make clear the enforcement responsibilities of all Residence Life Staff.

- c. be consistent and equitable in dealing with discipline in the residence halls and apartments. Report all University violations that the RA encounters to the RD by means of a Community Conduct Form and narrative.
  - d. interpret for students the realistic consequences of their behavior and familiarize them with the purpose, function, and procedures of the judicial system.
6. Administrative Tasks: The RA is expected to perform various administrative duties related to the day-to-day operations of the residential facility. To assist the RD with administrative tasks, the RA is expected to:
- a. remain on campus to assist in the periodic opening and closing of the residence halls (Fall opening, Fall break, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring break, Spring closing, Summer opening and closing). Check residents in and out at the beginning and the end of each semester; which includes administrative paperwork, checking and preparing rooms, key inventory and preparation, and the preparation of common areas.
  - b. report needed maintenance and repair work promptly.
  - c. promote student awareness of fire and safety precautions and regulations, and assist with safety measures. RAs are required to assist with Health & Safety Inspections each semester and follow up as necessary.
  - d. assume weeknight and weekend duty and back-up responsibilities as scheduled by the RD; this includes a 4 hour front desk shift each week.
  - e. effectively and promptly communicate new and/or important information to residents, conduct necessary informational meetings, keep all posted information or bulletin boards up to date.
  - f. communicate regularly with RD concerning incidents and/or situations.
  - g. check assigned RA mailbox and/or duty log on a frequent basis.
  - h. share in the care and condition of common areas in facilities such as clubhouses, lobbies, community baths, and hallways. Conditions of facilities and reported repairs, cleaning, and improvements should be communicated to the RD.
  - i. perform assigned tasks in a timely and professional manner and meet assigned deadlines consistently.
  - j. assist in the Housing Assignment process.
  - k. assist in the RA selection process.
  - l. perform other duties as assigned.

**Each staff member is expected to exercise extreme caution when using Master Keys. These keys are for official use only (lock-outs, end of term closing, emergencies, etc.). Misuse of Master Keys will result in immediate termination from the RA position. Any staff member losing a Master Key will be responsible for the cost of replacing all locks in the affected facilities.**

7. RA Housing Policy
- a. RAs are not required to go through the Housing Assignment process. RAs will occupy the pre-selected RA rooms or apartments to which they are assigned.
  - b. RAs receive room assignments upon employment. Those electing not to return to the staff, or who are not rehired, must go through the regular Housing Assignment process.
  - c. Any staff member who is terminated will vacate the assigned RA space within 48 hours.

The Resident Assistant position is a one academic year commitment. Reappointment is not guaranteed, but is based upon an exemplary performance record and the successful completion of all interviews and applications required for returning staff. The Resident Assistant's performance is under continuous evaluation so as to maintain the highest possible standards. Failure to meet any of the qualifications, requirements, or responsibilities listed in this agreement or specified by the AD/RD may result in personnel sanctions which could include, but are not limited to, verbal or written warnings, probation, or possible termination.