

BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF RESIDENTIAL LIFE
Resident Assistant Performance Program
Fall 2015 - Spring 2016

The Resident Assistant Performance Program serves as an umbrella document that outlines the Department's expectations for all Resident Assistants (RAs). RAs should expect the Assistant Director (AD) and their supervisor to further elaborate on specific area and building expectations. **EACH RA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INFORMATION FOUND IN THIS DOCUMENT AS WELL AS THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE RA STAFF MANUAL.**

I. PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

We are a department of caring and talented educators who strive to challenge and support our students' holistic development. Our collegiate structure furthers the academic mission of the University by providing a seamless learning environment where we value the diversity of our students, staff and faculty. Our quality programs and services seek to meet the ever-changing needs of our students and develop them as the engaged global citizens of tomorrow.

As a part of the educational mission of the University, the residential life program strives to provide environments which:

- foster significant learning experiences for residents;
- provide opportunities for the discovery and development of life skills;
- strive to educate students on the responsibilities of living in a community; and
- create an environment where interaction between people of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as the sharing of divergent opinions and beliefs are respected and welcomed.

To accomplish this, the residential life program facilitates and supports student development. Programs and activities are developed to promote a more well rounded student.

Individuals who possess the attitude, competency and potential skills necessary to accomplish this endeavor are selected to fill the RA position. As a student and a member of the Residential Life staff, an RA must have an overall working knowledge of the University so that he/she can appropriately mediate, assist, advise and serve as a liaison between residents and other members of the University community. He/she must possess good judgment in order to cope with the day-to-day decisions involved in working with the living unit and be able to maintain satisfactory living conditions within the area. The RA must be knowledgeable about, enforce, and personally abide by all University rules and regulations including, but not limited to: the Academic Honesty Code, Rules of Student Conduct, University Housing License, RA Code of Ethics and policies established by Residential Life. He/she must also have a personal and professional commitment that goes beyond specific job responsibilities while being committed to personal growth by taking care to budget personal time for study, work and relaxation.

II. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & EVENT PLANNING

BU Residential Life Staff Manual. III. Personnel, Document X2.

Building community amongst the residents is not only the area of an R.A.'s direct supervision, but the building/hall and the area as well are an important component to the role. Responsibilities within this area include serving as a resource, offering peer support, planning events and activities, encouraging learning beyond the classroom, holding students accountable for community standards and behavior and ensuring and creating an environment where individuals are respected and included.

As a community developer and event planner, you are expected to:

- A. Develop a personal relationship with students within your area of responsibility and become familiar with other students within your living unit. Be cognizant of resident attitudes, academic achievements, academic difficulties and health concerns.
- B. Facilitate a variety of activities that promote engagement in the residential college or community.
- C. Plan and promote activities which encourage formal and informal student interaction with faculty and staff.
- D. Plan and promote opportunities for continuous learning experiences outside the classroom. Such opportunities should be targeted to meet the needs of the residents and approved by your supervisor. Collaborate with area staff and/or the Faculty Master.
- F. Assist residents (within the limits of training and capability) with academic, personal, and social matters; make referrals when appropriate.
 - 1. Develop and utilize the necessary helping and intervention skills to assist residents in resolving their concerns and issues.
 - 2. Be observant of uncharacteristic behaviors or potential crisis, and make referrals when appropriate.
 - 3. Be knowledgeable about the referral services for residents within the university as well as in the surrounding community
 - 4. Communicate all concerns/issues to your supervisor in a timely manner.
 - 5. Assist residents in developing, strengthening and maintaining basic life skills and respond to above matters via intentional event planning where appropriate
- G. Spend a significant amount of quality time within the assigned building being available to assist residents. This is particularly important during the evening hours. Amount and quality of time to be determined by your supervisor in conjunction with the AD.
- H. Establish a close relationship with area/hall government representatives. Support them by attending government-sponsored functions/meetings. Serve as a resource person for these groups.
- I. Attend and support other area/building activities as determined by your supervisor and/or AD (i.e., RA and traditional area events, etc.).
- J. Encourage the development of a community atmosphere in the living unit in which residents have a concern and respect for the rights and responsibilities of others.

- K. Help residents develop methods for effective peer accountability and enforce rules and regulations regarding behavior necessary for an atmosphere conducive to study and community living. In general, educate residents on the purpose, functions, and processes of the campus student conduct system, and review Rules of Student Conduct with residents. Explain to residents that all rules are enforced; help residents to understand the enforcement responsibilities of the staff member (i.e.; when infractions are observed, the staff member must report such an incident through appropriate channels).

III. STAFF MEMBER

All Resident Assistants working as a member of an individual staff, area-wide and departmental team contributes to our successful residential life program. Active participation in trainings and workshops, equal sharing of responsibilities, contributions to hall, area and departmental processes and events and open and timely communication are expected of all R.A.s.

As a staff member, you are expected to:

- A. Give the RA job precedence over all extra-curricular activities. Your academic course work is a recognized priority; however, you must successfully manage your RA responsibilities with your academic commitments.
- B. Be mindful of your responsibility as a staff member to uphold and support the administrative policies and explain administrative viewpoints.
- C. Meet with your supervisor on a regular basis to discuss floor/building/area issues, concerns and needs.
- D. Establish effective and on-going communication with the live-in supervisory staff and discuss any problems that warrant his/her attention.
- E. Establish effective communication and working relationships with other residential life staff members.
- F. Maintain a working relationship with groups such as maintenance and food service personnel working in the residential college or community (where appropriate) as well as with the designated Counseling Center liaisons.
- G. Arrive on campus by the specified date/time prior to the opening of the residential area for the fall and spring semesters for the purpose of staff training.
- H. Participate in weekly staff meetings, scheduled one-on-ones, and other area/building meetings as determined by your supervisor and/or AD.
- I. Participate in pre-service and in-service training programs.
- J. Participate in the process of residential life staff selection and training.
- K. Participate in staff duty schedule and fulfill duty responsibilities (i.e. office duty, back up duty, procedures set in place during emergency situations, etc.) as designated by departmental/area guidelines.
- L. Act as a positive representative of the Residential Life Department in interactions and role model positive behavior on and off-campus.

M. Maintain a positive, helpful attitude as it relates to the spirit of the RA position.

N. **Confidentiality:**

1. Student issues and/or concerns must be shared with your supervisor in a timely manner. Do not guarantee confidentiality to students. Your supervisor, and those at their level and above, are the only persons who will be privy to information regarding said issue.

2. Maintain staff confidences and do not participate in idle gossip about any other staff member.

O. Complete other tasks and assignments as determined by your supervisor and/or AD.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

Necessary to the functioning of the housing of students is RAs' participation in administrative tasks to run the halls and area. These tasks are vital to hall/building upkeep and maintenance, safety and security, as well as notification and communication with residents. Organization, timeliness and attention to detail are very important with regard to this aspect of the RA role.

To complete the administrative process and procedures you are expected to:

A. Utilize and educate residents on the appropriate procedures regarding maintenance/operations/recycling policies.

B. Develop and promote an awareness of fire and safety precautions/regulations among the residents; assist with fire drills and other safety measure procedures, including completion of monthly fire safety reports. Be familiar with the specific evacuation procedures for the building and area.

C. Provide half-staff in-hall presence whenever the halls are open as directed in the staff manual to offer sufficient coverage during any unforeseen circumstances and/or emergencies.

D. Assist in the opening and closing of the buildings at the beginning and ending of each semester, as well as each time the residential areas close for vacation breaks and recess periods. This requires you to arrive early and remain until inventory, check-in, checkout, closing and other assigned duties are completed. RAs that are not assisting with closing/opening must stay until 24 hours prior to closing and must return to the building within 24 hours of opening. Dates will be specified by the Assistant Director and are subject to change if the University's academic calendar is changed.

E. Use and maintain necessary forms and reports (such as hall rosters, inventory cards (RCRs), incident reports, housing surveys, and maintenance reporting procedures) as directed by your supervisor and/or AD in an organized and timely manner.

F. Post notices and maintain bulletin boards; promote and publicize college/community and University events per supervisor's expectations.

G. Follow procedures to deliver official University correspondence to residents in a timely manner.

H. Educate students on the self-service work order system and how to properly submit requests. Promptly forward any common area or continuing maintenance concerns to your supervisor.

I. Investigate room, suite, apartment, and common area damages and report findings to your supervisor.

- J. Conduct health and safety inspections.
- K. Be familiar with and abide by all policies concerning the distribution of keys and access cards. Assist in key distribution and collection.

V. FURTHER CONDITIONS

The further conditions outline below provide information to staff on conditions for successfully serving as a member of the Resident Assistant staff including academic and disciplinary requirements, term of appointment, remuneration, expectations of availability and use of media.

- A. **ACADEMIC STANDING:** You are expected to maintain an overall academic GPA of 2.5. Failure to do so may result in your dismissal from the position. Any exception must be approved by the Assistant Director in consultation with the Associate Director of Residential Life for Staff & Marketing. Your academic standing will be reviewed at the end of each semester. You may not be on academic probation for two consecutive semesters.

You must maintain a minimum enrollment of 12 credit hours. (A graduate RA must be recognized as a full-time student by his/her academic department.) Staff may register for no more than 18 credits due to the extensive time commitment of the RA position.

- B. **APPOINTMENT:** You are expected to make a commitment to the position for a full academic year. However, your status will be reviewed at the end of each semester. Your renewal is contingent on performance, occupancy levels, disciplinary status and academic performance.

Should you leave the position for any reason prior to the end of a semester, you will be required to vacate the room/apartment by the date specified by your supervisor. If you remain in University housing, you will then be responsible for the room/apartment rent for the balance of that semester. Also, you will forfeit board subsidy and will be required to return an amount equal to the anticipated balance as calculated by Dining Services.

- C. **BOARD PLAN:** A meal plan is provided to you for each semester in which you are employed. Once the semester's allotment is depleted, you are responsible for adding additional money to your individual account. Since the balances at the end of the semester WILL NOT roll over, you are encouraged to carefully plan to use all the remaining funds.

- A. **REMUNERATION:** You will receive a single room and all services associated with that room rate at no cost. (RAs assigned to family apartments will be credited for a single bed and are charged for the balance of the apartment at the Family rate.) You will also receive a meal contract and are eligible for priority registration.

- E. **DISCIPLINARY STANDING:** You are expected to remain in good disciplinary standing both on and off campus (i.e., may not be under student conduct sanction such as disciplinary warning or disciplinary probation). Should a report be filed indicating a possible violation of the University Housing License, Rules for Student Conduct and/or State/Federal/Local law, you will be immediately terminated from the position. If no sanctions are administered after the investigation is conducted and the matter resolved, you may choose to have your name placed in the RA hiring pool. However, there is no guarantee that you will be re-hired. Any exception must be approved by the Assistant Director in consultation with the Associate Director of Residential Life for Staff & Marketing. Student conduct standing will be reviewed at the end of each semester.

- F. EVALUATION: You will be evaluated on a formal basis at least once a semester.
- G. FINANCIAL AID: Acceptance of the RA position may affect your total financial-aid package. Contact the Financial Aid Office for further information.
- H. OTHER EMPLOYMENT AND ACTIVITIES: By accepting the RA position, you are not to accept or continue to hold employment or extensive commitments (i.e. credit overload, athletics, peer counseling programs, teaching assistantships, internships, Harpur's Ferry, etc.) until approved by your immediate supervisor (and in some cases - the Financial Aid Office and/or the Graduate Admissions Office). Each supervisor will discuss these outside commitments (which may not surpass a combined total of more than 10 hours per week) with the AD. Final approval will take into consideration other commitments and a variety of factors including your course load, academic standing, other commitments, job performance, years in the RA position and overall ability to meet the RA expectations.
- I. PERFORMANCE REVIEW/ DISMISSAL: This performance program may be reviewed at any time upon the request of you, your supervisor or the AD. You may be suspended or dismissed for cause at any time by your supervisor. Appeals must be in writing and directed to the Director of Residential Life, or his/her designee, within three (3) business days (including days when classes are not in session) after the initial decision is communicated by your supervisor.
- J. PLACEMENT: Your placement within a residential college or community is determined by the area staff members.
- K. TELEPHONE: You are required to maintain a hard-wire telephone (not cordless or cell) in your room, set-up your voicemail before opening and check your room voicemail on a daily basis.
- Additionally, you should use appropriate phone etiquette. This includes answering your University phone politely and professionally both in person and through your voicemail. Keep in mind that any call could be job related and have a serious nature.
- L. ELECTRONIC MEDIA: You are expected to check your Binghamton University e-mail account on a daily basis. You should use appropriate language and respect confidentiality while using electronic media including, but not limited to e-mail, text messages, instant messages, blogs, facebook, twitter, journals, etc. while in your role as an RA. You are expected to refrain from using these communication tools in a manner that would represent the department or institution in an inappropriate manner.
- M. TIME AWAY: You are expected to obtain prior permission from your supervisor for weekend and evenings/nights away from campus and assigned area. You are allowed up to four nights a month away from your residence hall.