Position Description: Resident Assistant
2020-21 Academic Year

Resident Assistants (RAs) are part of the Office of Residential Life and Learning (ORLL). As a department we challenge students to pursue transformative growth by offering mentoring relationships, leadership opportunities and individual attention. Our Resident Assistants are essential personnel who live among their peers in every residential community on campus and play a critical role in the growth, development and safety of our new students.

RAs are divided into teams of 4-18 staff members in designated residential areas and are supervised by a Residence Director (RD). The RDs are supervised by an Assistant Director of Residential Education (AD), and the Associate Director of Residential Education directly supervises the ADs and indirectly provides oversight for the Residential Education team consisting of over 100 student staff members and 9 RDs.

**Resident Assistants (RAs)** live in the residence halls and serve as mentors to students by introducing resources and facilitating their integration into the Tufts community. RAs are the primary point of comprehensive support for students at Tufts. RAs work with the Office of Residential Life & Learning to shape an environment that supports intellectual and personal growth and cultivates a living-learning community. RAs have a responsibility to design inclusive opportunities for engagement, to create learning opportunities for residents, and to empower students to connect to and explore curricular and co-curricular offerings at Tufts. In this leadership role, RAs work together with the Office of Residential Life and Learning and with partners and leaders across campus to support and build positive campus culture.

**QUALIFICATIONS**
The following qualifications must be met in order to serve in the RA position.

- **Commitment to community:** RAs must role model and demonstrate strength of character, good judgment, flexibility, responsibility, involvement and commitment to student life and the University.
- **Course Load:** RAs may carry up to 18 Semester Hour Units (SHUs) per semester but no less than 12 SHUs in any given semester. RAs who wish to take more or less SHUs than noted should seek advice and approval from their supervisor.
- **Grade Point Average:** RAs must hold a cumulative 2.5 Grade Point Average at Tufts University throughout the time of application and appointment. Semester Grade Point Average must also be above a 2.5.
- **Class Standing:** RAs must be full-time matriculating sophomores, juniors or seniors during the academic year. Transfer students in their first semester at Tufts are unable to hold the RA position.
- **Selection Process:** RAs must successfully complete the application and selection process.
- **Training:** All RAs must be available for all components of spring training for incoming staff in April, fall training/move-in/orientation in August, and winter training in January. Specific times will be provided with the position offer. Additionally, the department will schedule a series of ongoing in service trainings throughout the course of the year that will be communicated with at least 2 weeks anticipation. Note that training is a required component of the position and must be
attended in its entirety. Because of the immersive nature of Fall training and volume of information that is shared, any RAs who have not been through fall training in its entirety may not serve as Pre-Orientaion Leaders.

- **University Standing:** RAs must be in good standing at Tufts University prior to and throughout the period of employment. Student conduct and academic standing checks will be conducted prior to the distribution of offers and prior to the start date for the RA position.

**TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

The following terms must be accepted in order to serve in the position.

- **Availability:** All RAs are expected to be sufficiently available in the hall to respond to emergency situations that may arise and to maintain regular contact with residents.

- **Compensation:** In addition to an invaluable experience in peer leadership and teamwork, our student staff receive the following compensation:
  - All Resident Assistants are compensated with a housing grant which is utilized to cover the cost of one single-occupancy room. Note that staff may be moved if needed to accommodate the needs of the department and placements are subject to change at any time on the discretion of the department.

- **Employment Period:** The standard employment period for the RA position is one full academic year, starting on Friday August 21, 2020 and ending on Tuesday May 25, 2021. The period of employment is contingent upon the successful completion of tasks, assignments and responsibilities and positive performance appraisals by their supervisor. Student staff members who leave the position prior to the end of their contract period may be subject to housing fees, and must vacate or move as requested. Staff are not required to remain on campus for winter break, but some staff may be hired (with a small amount of additional compensation) to support our residents who remain on campus during this time.

- **Holidays, Breaks and Vacation Periods:** RAs are expected to remain on campus to support residence hall closing for winter break and/or at the end of the spring semester. Half of staff will be expected to stay through Winter Closing and the other half will be expected to stay through Senior Closing.
  - **WINTER CLOSING:** All staff are expected to be on campus and available to residents until 12 pm on, December 18, 2020. The half that are assigned to close the halls will be expected to stay until 2 pm on December 23, 2020.
  - **SPRING CLOSING:** All staff are expected to be working and assisting with closing through 2 pm on May 15, 2021. The half that were not assigned to stay through winter closing will be expected to stay until 5 pm on May 24, 2021.
  - **ALL OTHER BREAKS:** For all other break periods (Indigenous Peoples’ Day, Veterans Day, President’s Day, Thanksgiving, Spring Break, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day), staff coverage is expected. Specific coverage will be determined by area RDs.

- **Work Load:** RAs should expect to actively work 10-15 hours per week with the exception of training/orientation periods which are substantially more immersive. These hours will be used in staff meetings, one on one meetings, interactions with residents, community development responsibilities, and duty. These hours are based on the need of the hall staff and may include both weekday and weekend hours. Please note that the residence hall work environment does encounter peak times including opening, closing, and transition periods. That said, some weeks
more time may be needed. When this is the case, supervisors will reduce work/responsibilities in non-peak times to balance out time.

**RA Outside Employment / Extracurricular Activities:** Participation in leadership positions and work experiences are an important part of one’s educational experience. It is important to note that the RA position comes with responsibilities and expectations that require priority status among other jobs and extracurricular activities. By accepting the RA position you are agreeing to prioritize the position over other extracurricular activities at the request of the department. It is paramount that participation in aforementioned activities not be excessive in time required outside the hall. The RA position requires a significant time per week of contact within the residence hall during the period of employment. RAs who have been awarded work study money through the Office of Financial Aid will not be barred from taking advantage of this type of aid. RAs to whom this applies should discuss their plans with their supervisor before beginning such work to ensure an appropriate and ongoing balance of their involvement in the hall and to the RA position.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each RA is expected to act as a role model and to be aware of the goals and objectives of the Office of Residential Life and Learning. The primary goal of the RA position is to support and guide residents of the assigned residential community. The following is a limited summary of the responsibilities of the RA. The RA should be aware that other responsibilities may be assigned by supervisors.

**Community Development:**
- Provide opportunities for meaningful interaction for residents
- Demonstrate a positive service orientation while performing one’s duties
- Plan, implement, and assess social & educational programs for the residential community
- Assist residential students in academic, social and personal matters through resource referral
- Provide guidance and support and role model appropriate behaviors as a responsible community member
- Be available to residents as a resource, providing residents with information regarding University activities and events through individual contact and group information sharing
- Be accessible to residents and maintain a presence on the hall or in the community, build intentional relationships with residents on a regular basis, and check in to support growth
- Provide support in roommate and community conflicts through facilitation of roommate/community meetings
- Participate in and facilitate dialogic experiences in alignment with ORLL and University goals
- Take active part in building a culture of respect and empathy within the residential community
- Fully engage with the First Six Weeks Model of student support

**First Year Resident Assistants:**
- Participate fully as a facilitator and staff member during new student orientation, including attending assigned events, providing opportunity for dialogue and discussion within the assigned community, and supporting other University events
Administrative:

- Participate in weekly staff meetings
- Provide staffing support for special projects, collateral assignments and/or departmental committees as needed
- Participate in regular one-on-one meetings and provide regular updates regarding situations in the hall with supervisor
- Serve as an advocate for and a representative of residents by communicating concerns to supervisors
- Understand the needs, goals and objectives of and work in partnership with the Office of Residential Education and residents
- Assist Housing Operations & Residential Facilities staff in identifying facilities in need of repair or attention through the completion of room condition inventories, targeted individual outreach, as well as health & safety inspections.
- Provide hands-on support for move-in, hall closing, and transition for all communities.
- Respond to student lockout requests
- Check and reply to Tufts email daily
- Check department mailbox at least once a week and post flyers in a timely manner
- Participate in other University, departmental and area activities as assigned

Crisis Response & Policy Enforcement:

- Know, communicate, enforce and abide by existing University and ORLL policies and procedures
- Know and be prepared to enact all emergency and crisis procedures
- Know University/community resources and make appropriate referrals
- Keep supervisors informed about all problems and concerns in the hall
- Maintain appropriate private communication while working in coordination with University staff
- Assist with the student conduct process by submitting timely online information reports to document incidents and situations
- Participate in duty rotational coverage during scheduled evenings, weekends, breaks and holidays
  - ALL Resident Assistants participate in a duty rotation that is scheduled weeknights from 9pm-9am the following morning, and all day on weekends and holidays. A staff duty rotation will be coordinated by neighborhood or area depending on the building, so exact number of duty shifts may vary depending on neighborhood and need.

STATEMENT OF ALCOHOL USE
Undergraduate and graduate student staff within the Office of Residential Life and Learning are expected to serve as role models and exhibit mature, responsible and respectful behavior. Student staff members are expected to follow all laws, policies, and procedures of Tufts University and of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Inappropriate alcohol use by RAs, and other staff within the department is taken very seriously and will be addressed. Violation of these policies will result in employment action, and may lead to termination from the staff position. Please consult with your supervisor or with the Associate Director of Residential Education if you have any questions or concerns.
STATEMENT OF ETHICAL STANDARDS
(Adapted from New York University Office of Residential Life and Housing Services)

Student staff members are required to respect the personal integrity of all residents and assure they be treated in a manner that is fundamentally fair. Staff should refrain from engaging in any behaviors, attitudes, relationships, or actions that:

- would impinge on a resident's or another staff member's dignity, moral code, privacy, self-worth, and academic, physical, psychological, and/or emotional well-being;
- would seek unjustified personal gains, unfair advantage, unearned goods or services;
- would be considered harassment on the basis of gender, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, creed, nationality and/or mental disability.