Position Description: FIRST YEAR ASSISTANT / COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT 
2019-20 Academic Year

First Year Assistants (FYAs) and Community Development Assistants (CDAs) 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 student staff members (FYAs & CDAs) 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. FYAs/CDAs serve as a role model, peer support structure, resource and referral agent, advocate, policy enforcer, programmer and leader for residents in their assigned area.

FYAs/CDAs are divided into teams of 4-18 staff members in designated residential areas and are supervised by a Graduate Residence Director (GRD). The GRDs 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 7 GRDs.

**First Year Assistants (FYAs)** live in the residence halls and serve as mentors to new students by introducing resources and facilitating their integration into the Tufts community. FYAs are the primary point of comprehensive support for new undergraduates at Tufts. FYAs work with the Office of Residential Life & Learning to shape an environment that supports intellectual and personal growth and cultivates a living-learning community. FYAs 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.

**Community Development Assistants (CDAs)** live in residence halls as resources and mentors to continuing students at Tufts. CDAs work to support individual residents’ growth and thriving, to shape an environment that supports health and wellness, and to facilitate conversation, connection and learning. In this leadership role, CDAs 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 FYA/CDA position.

- **Commitment to community**: FYAs/CDAs must role model and demonstrate strength of character, good judgment, flexibility, responsibility, involvement and commitment to student life and the University.
- **Course Load**: FYAs/CDAs may carry up to 18 Semester Hour Units (SHUs) per semester but no less than 12 SHUs in any given semester. FYAs/CDAs 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:** FYAs/CDAs 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 FYA/CDA position.

• **Selection Process:** FYAs/CDAs must successfully complete the application and selection process.

• **Training:** All FYAs/CDAs must be available and attend training meetings in the spring and **all** components of fall training in August. Specific times will be provided with the position offer. Note that training is a required component of the position, and must be attended in its entirety.

• **University Standing:** FYAs/CDAs 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 FYA/CDA position.

**TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

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

• **Availability:** All FYAs/CDAs 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:
  - **First Year Assistants** are compensated with a housing grant which is utilized to cover the cost of one single-occupancy room. Additionally, FYAs receive a partial academic year meal plan (80 meals). Note that staff may be moved if needed to accommodate transition.  
    *Please note: Receiving these benefits may impact financial aid. Students are encouraged to contact their financial aid advisor to examine their individual package.*
  - **Community Development Assistants** are compensated with a $1,500 stipend which covers the time of employment. Additionally, CDAs receive a partial academic year meal plan (80 meals). Note that staff may be moved if needed to accommodate transition.  
    *Please note: Receiving these benefits may impact financial aid. Students are encouraged to contact their financial aid advisor to examine their individual package.*

• **Employment Period:** The standard employment period for the FYA/CDA position is one full academic year, starting on Friday August 16, 2019 and ending on Tuesday May 19, 2020. 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:** FYAs/CDAs are expected to remain on campus to support residence hall closing for winter break and at the end of the spring semester.
  - **WINTER CLOSING:** Staff are expected to be working until 3pm on Friday, December 20, 2019.
○ SPRING CLOSING: Staff are expected to be working through Commencement and residence hall closing, and can plan to leave on Tuesday May 19th at any time. Note that staff will be expected to work most of the day on Monday May 18th.

○ 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 GRDs.

- **Work Load:** FYAs/CDAs should expect a significant amount of time in the residence hall engaging with residents and with other aspects of their role. 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.

**FYA/CDA Outside Employment / Additional Work Policy:** Participation in leadership positions and work experiences are an important part of one’s educational experience. It is important to note that the FYA/CDA position comes with responsibilities that require priority status among other activities one may be involved with. It is paramount that participation in aforementioned activities not be excessive in time required outside the hall. The FYA/CDA position requires a significant time per week of contact within the residence hall during the period of employment. FYAs/CDAs 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. FYAs/CDAs 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 FYA/CDA position.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**
Each FYA/CDA 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 FYA/CDA position is to support and guide residents of the assigned residential community. The following is a limited summary of the responsibilities of the FYA/CDA. The FYA/CDA should be aware that other responsibilities may be assigned by supervisors.

**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 e-mail updates regarding situations in the hall with supervisor
- Demonstrate a positive service orientation while performing one’s duties
- Serve as an advocate for and a representative of residents by communicating concerns to supervisors
- Understand the needs, goals and objectives of and act as a liaison between the Office of Residential Education and residents
• Assist Housing Operations & Residential Facilities staff in identifying facilities in need of repair or attention
• Assist in the completion of room condition inventories
• Provide hands-on support for move-in, hall closing, and transition
• Respond to student lockout requests
• Check and reply to Tufts email daily
• Check mailbox at least once a week and post flyers in a timely manner
• Know and implement all operational procedures of the residential area and of the Office of Residential Life and Learning
• Conduct health and safety inspections of resident living spaces at the direction of supervisor(s)
• Participate in other University, departmental and area activities as assigned

Community Development:
• Provide opportunities for meaningful interaction for residents
• Implement social, educational and academic 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
• Build a culture of respect and empathy within the residential community

First Year 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
○ Fully engage with the First Six Weeks model of programming and support the enhancement of student support for new students during this critical transition period

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 incident reports to document incidents and situations
• Participate in on-duty and/or on-call rotational coverage during scheduled evenings, weekends, breaks and holidays
○ **First Year Assistants** are on-duty weeknights from 9pm-9am the following morning, and all day on weekends and holidays. A staff duty rotation will be coordinated by neighborhood, so exact number of duty shifts may vary depending on neighborhood and need.

○ **Community Development Assistants** are on duty only on weekends (9pm on Friday through 9am on Monday) and all day on University holidays. A staff duty rotation will be coordinated by neighborhood, 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. There is a zero-tolerance policy for inappropriate alcohol use by FYAs, CDAs, and other staff within the department. Violation of these policies will result in employment action, likely 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.