

# Faculty-in-Residence (FiR) Position Description



## Program Overview

The Residential Commons (RC) provides an integrated academic and residential experience that incorporates a Faculty-in-Residence (FiR) and a Residential Community Director (RCD) who, together, shape the overall experience of each commons. Each Residential Commons has unique traditions as well as social and educational activities that build community, foster long-term bonds among residents, and strengthen student affiliation with the commons and SMU. This model supports a strong residential community with an emphasis on academic and social balance to enhance personal exploration and growth of students. The Residential Commons is a collaboration between the Office of the Provost, Division of Student Affairs (DSA), and Residence Life & Student Housing (RLSH).

Research shows student interaction with faculty outside of the classroom produces positive outcomes, such as cognitive and personal development, student satisfaction, and improved retention. The FiR program is a cornerstone of the residential experience that creates opportunities for students to interact with faculty outside of the classroom and emphasizes a culture of mentorship, intellectual discourse, and community that is cultivated in all aspects of the collegiate experience.

**Reports day-to-day to:** Director of Academic Initiatives, Residence Life & Student Housing

## Qualifications & Eligibility

- Full-time Instructional Faculty Status or equivalent as determined by the Provost. For staff, a 2-2 teaching load (12 credit hours total) as part of normal duties (no extra compensation) is the minimal teaching load
- Approval from Department Chair
- Approval from Dean or Equivalent
- Prior experience engaging students outside of the classroom
- Demonstrated interest in the undergraduate residential educational experience
- Knowledgeable of general academic requirements, procedures, and campus resources

## FiR Position Outcomes

- Be the intellectual leader and foster the intellectual and academic life of their respective Residential Commons
- Support the SMU academic mission and learning that occurs within the Residential Commons
- Cultivate new, enhance existing, and aid in the execution of RC programs and traditions
- Build individual relationships with residents by interacting with them regularly
- Collaborate and cultivate effective working relationships with stakeholders including but not limited to: Residential Community Director (RCD), Resident Assistants (RA), Commons Council (CC), peer leaders, and affiliates
- Support student success via individual, group, and community advocacy
- Be present in the Residential Commons community and within Residence Life & Student Housing

## Position Requirements

Although this varies by week and by time of year, on average the FiR commitment is 10-15 hours/week. The annual Dates Memorandum outlines mandatory events and important dates for FiRs. The following are required responsibilities of the position unless granted exception by the Director of Academic Initiatives:

### *Academic Support and Learning*

- Plan academic support and learning initiatives that are important to the culture/direction/mission of SMU
- Initiate and engage in educational activities that foster student-faculty relationships
- Involve faculty, as appropriate, in mentoring roles with students and programs in their RC
- Create an academic environment supported by the residential staff and student leaders
- Aid with overall student success, departmental, and retention reporting, as requested

- Coach, advise, and refer students to academic and campus resources
- Contribute to university, divisional, and departmental assessment of student learning and success

### *Programmatic*

- Assist in the planning and participate in community aspects of August and January Student Leader Training
- Participate in FiR planning days prior to the beginning of fall classes
- Infuse your RC's core values and identity markers (Examples: symbols, hand signs, language) within programming and leadership development
- Co-author and distribute a Welcome Letter to incoming residents with the RCD
- Host a weekly FiR event in your Residential Commons (Examples: Sunday Night Snacks, Tuesday Salons, Weekly Smoothie Night)
- Participate in the planning of and attend your RC's large-scale signature event(s)
- Participate in a meet-and-greet Family Weekend event
- Co-facilitate two RC Dinners per semester for residents
- Welcome parents and students during new and returning student move-in days
- Address students at First Year Convocation and lead the RC Procession
- Attend the initial floor meeting in your RC to introduce yourself and orient residents to community and expectations
- Dine and interact with students at campus dining facilities and at various events

### *Communication & Relationships*

- Establish a strong relationship and communicate with the RLSH staff (including RCDs), residents, affiliates, and other Faculty-in-Residence, who are invested in the success of the RCs
- Attend and contribute to student leader meetings with RAs or the Commons Council (this could be weekly, biweekly, and monthly, as established with the RCD)
- Attend programs and events hosted by the residential commons and university; invite residents as applicable
- Serve on relevant departmental, divisional, and university-wide committees, as requested
- Create opportunities to get to know students informally by hosting students in the FiR apartment, holding office hours in the RC, hosting social events, and/or attending programs
- Build relationships with RAs and student leaders, including peer leaders
- Leverage existing university and community relationships to connect students to educational or career opportunities

### *Administrative*

- Complete assigned compliance trainings including but not limited to SMU HR, Office of Risk Management, Title IX, FERPA, and Protection of Minors on Campus
- Develop, track, and reconcile a Residential Commons specific Faculty-in-Residence budget
- Submit monthly Concur reports by the 18<sup>th</sup> of each month for any procurement card purchases
- Attend and actively contribute to monthly FiR meetings and fall all-day retreat
- Complete required university reporting in a timely manner (i.e. CCC, BERT, Title IX, Clery)
- Participate in the recruitment and selection of their Residential Commons Residential Assistants
- Meet weekly with the RCD to communicate regularly related to community program planning, students of concern, and other community needs
- Participate in annual Faculty-in-Residence performance evaluation meeting and reappointment process
- Complete an annual report based on the overall FiR experience and accomplishments, as instructed by the Director of Academic Initiatives

## **Appointment & Evaluation**

The FiR is appointed to an initial three-year term. FiRs may apply for one additional three-year extension, based on exemplary performance and with the approval from the Vice President of Student Affairs and Provost. If the institutional need warrants, either the first or second FiR three-year appointment may be extended for one year to aid RC viability. The Vice President of Student Affairs and Provost reserve the right, at their discretion, to terminate immediately any FiR who violates any terms or conditions of their appointment, fails or neglects to perform satisfactorily the responsibilities of the position, or violates any University rules, regulations, policies, or procedures.

## **Faculty-in-Residence Families**

The Faculty-in-Residence program excitedly brings partners, children, and extended family into the residential community at SMU. RLSH knows that families are often a part of the programming, events, and initiatives offered in the RCs and are often tied/integral to the sense of community. FiR families are welcome to be active members of the community. Therefore, RLSH often will include them in various aspects of the FiR recruitment and selection process.

## **Living Arrangements**

FiRs are required to primarily live on campus and be present in their RC during the academic year. Due to the time commitment of the role, faculty are provided a partially-furnished apartment on campus. The apartments vary in size and amenity but will include:

- At least two bedrooms
- A living room space separate from the personal living quarters, which can be used to host student dinners and socials
- Additional office space in the RC that may be shared
- Two parking spaces (near or adjacent to RC) with two passes paid for by the University
- Basic cable, internet, land-line phone service, and laundry
- Utilities included (water, electric, trash)
- The ability to have a pet(s) living in the residence (see SMU Animals on Campus and RLSH pet policies)

## **Compensation**

Due to the commitment of the role, FiRs are compensated with:

- The amenities of an apartment on campus and other living arrangement benefits provided by Resident Life & Student Housing; SMU reserves the right to reassign the FiR, along with the FiR's family members who occupy the FiR's apartment, in the event of a campus closing, delay of on-campus academic courses, or other condition beyond the control of SMU, including, but not limited to, shutdown, closing, or delay as a result of infectious disease, such as COVID-19, or other pandemic.
- A meal plan comprised of 20 meals and \$100 of flex spending each academic year provided by Residence Life & Student Housing
- Up to \$2,500 in relocation costs to move on campus (not to transition off) provided by the Office of the Provost
- Up to \$4,500 toward living and dining room furniture supplied by Residence Life & Student Housing (RLSH). Furniture purchased through this fund and otherwise provided by RLSH is taxable and must be removed from the unit at the end of the appointment term.

Additionally, the FiR may choose one of the following benefits packages each academic year during the appointment period:

- \$7,500 Compensation (prorated on a monthly basis) OR
- 1 Course Load Reduction/Year negotiated with Department Chair (you may not be compensated for overload teaching for the Fall or Spring semesters if the course reduction is chosen)