

Resident Assistant Position Description

The Resident Assistant (RA) is a student leader within the Department of Residence Life and Student Housing (RLSH) who lives in the residential community and works as part of a team in order to foster a student experience where every student belongs, learns, and connects through their residential community. The RA serves as the link between the residents of the floor and the University. The RA reports directly to the Residential Community Director (RCD).

The RA is expected to know the individual students by name and story and have regular interactions with them. They further advise individuals and groups of students on academic and personal matters. Each RA is expected to create and encourage activities and programs that enhance the sense of community and meet residents' personal and academic needs.

The RA serves as a role model for students in every aspect of university life and is expected to know about the various campus services available to students. Each RA is expected to guide their residents in the understanding of community standards, as well as uphold and follow University policies and procedures.

RAs uphold the values of [SMU](#) and [the Division of Student Affairs](#) to promote the [mission of RLSH](#) and embody the values of their Commons or Community.

Minimum Qualifications

- Sophomore standing (2nd year student).
- Maintain a 2.5 SMU semester and cumulative GPA.
- Must be in good standing with the University (not on any academic or disciplinary probation or suspension). Please note any conduct history may impact your candidacy.
- Current full-time enrollment at SMU and attendance at SMU for at least one full 16-week semester prior to appointment.
- Currently an undergraduate student

Compensation

RAs receive a scholarship for their meal package and room rate as a part of their RA role.

Conditions of the RA Position

- The RA position is a ten-month position (August-May). RAs are required to return before residents arrive and stay after residential communities close.
- The RA position requires an average of 10-20 hours per week. Certain times of year, such as RA training, opening and closing, may require more time.
- RAs are expected to be on call when the University is closed, including, but not limited to, Thanksgiving, Winter Break, Spring Break, and other holidays. This

also includes when the University closes due to inclement weather or other emergencies. This will be determined in advance with the staff and approved by the supervisor.

- RAs are expected to maintain availability and a presence in the community beyond just their on-call assignments.
- For any on or off-campus employment, a request must be submitted to the supervisor for approval. An RA may not work more than 10 hours weekly for approved employment.
- RAs serve as mandated reporters as defined by the [SMU Title IX policy](#).
- RAs are strongly encouraged to limit their academic credit load to no more than 16 hours, especially for the first semester in the position. Any RA enrolling in more than 16 hours must first consult with their RCD and Associate Director of Residential Life to ensure that the increased hours will not negatively impact performance in the RA role. The RCD and RA will carefully review their courseload, degree plan, and extra-curriculars to ensure the RA's ability to maintain availability and visibility throughout the year.
- RAs must be full-time students. Any RA who must drop below full-time status must first consult with their supervisor.
- RAs are expected to maintain a 2.5 SMU semester and cumulative GPA before and during the position. RLSH will routinely check grades.
- Re-hiring for subsequent academic years is contingent upon satisfactory performance and a formal re-appointment process.
- The Resident Assistant is expected to establish the following priorities for their time:
 - a. academic coursework and schedule
 - b. residential community staff responsibilities
 - c. extracurricular activities (including but not limited to other student organizations, jobs, internships, and volunteering)

PRACTITIONERS: RAs fulfill a variety of responsibilities and administrative tasks as prescribed by RLSH and community expectations.

Administrative

- Keep supervisor informed of resident issues and concerns.
- Respond to communications, including but not limited to emails, texts, and phone messages in a timely manner.
- Complete administrative tasks associated with the check-in and check-out of residents, including collecting keys, room inspections, and processing necessary paperwork such as incident reports, semesterly occupancy checks as directed, etc.

- Maintain professional behavior by fulfilling the expectations of supervisor and the department, including but not limited to keeping appointments, meeting deadlines, being on time, and abiding by all departmental and university policies and procedures.
- Maintain the security and appropriate use of access (including keys and ID cards) for the community. Assist students with lockouts.
- Attend to the area desk as assigned. On average, each RA will be assigned two hours a week at the area desk.
- Utilize appropriate software platforms such as StarRez, Zoomshift, eRezLife, Slack/GroupMe, and SMU360 as directed.

Participation/Attendance

- Attend and engage in weekly staff meetings, one-on-one meetings, and others as directed by your supervisor.
- Participate in the annual evaluation process, including self-evaluations, peer evaluations, FiR evaluation, and evaluation of supervisor.
- Attend and participate in mandatory fall and spring training and any ongoing training sessions throughout the semester. This will require returning to campus early. Do **not** make any commitments to employment or other activities during these times.
- Opportunities may exist to further your RA involvement by serving on RLSH committees, assisting during RA training, serving on the RA Advisory Board, or serving as an RA Ambassador.

Facilities

- Report damage or theft of residential community property to supervisor
- Communicate maintenance, repair, and improvement requests in common areas and resident rooms.
- Educate residents on fire safety policy and procedures and educate them on how to report maintenance and custodial concerns
- Conduct room inspection inventories during opening and closing.

COMMUNITY CULTIVATORS: RAs promote and cultivate the growth of their community through intentional interactions, accountability, and collaboration as prescribed by RLSH and community expectations to promote an inclusive and supportive environment for residents from all races, religions, national origins, socioeconomic classes, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, physical and learning abilities, ages, and veteran statuses.

- Create and promote a welcoming community that contributes to a living environment that is conducive to learning, connecting, and belonging through the enforcement of policies and role modeling of appropriate behavior.
- Host events as prescribed by the Making Campus Home plan.
- Proactively engage with residents to encourage them to become active members of both the residential and SMU community. This includes having intentional conversation, knocking on doors, and following up with residents of concern.

- Get to know residents by their name and story in an effort to foster an atmosphere of respect for all individuals and their differences as directed by the Making Campus Home plan.
- Advocate and encourage respect for underrepresented groups in the residential community.
- Conduct floor meetings as needed to build community, set expectations, and communicate important information.
- Coordinate, participate in, and encourage participation in RC or community traditions and events, such as, signature events, programming board events, and HUB Events.
- Create bulletin boards and door decorations as directed by your supervisor.
- Create opportunities for resident interaction by planning and promoting community activities that align with the RLSH Constituent Outcomes.
- Inform residents about the community Programming Board, HUB and programs in communities and encourage them to participate.
- Attend programs as directed.
- Build intentional, individual connections with residents.
- Practice active listening while being sensitive to residents when approached for assistance.
- Ensure residents have the resources to resolve problems.

ACADEMIC ADVOCATES: RAs advocate for and support academic initiatives in their community as prescribed by RLSH and community expectations.

- Support FiRs in their intellectual and social programming as applicable.
- Be aware of and report academic concerns.
- Follow up on academic concerns and retention issues as assigned by RCD.
- Provide meaningful support to the Peer Leader Programs (e.g., encourage attendance, attend events, co-plan events).
- Refer students to academic resources such as the A-LEC, Peer Academic Leaders, librarians, etc.
- Serve as an academic role model and guide residents in creating and maintaining an atmosphere conducive to study.
- Support resident retention efforts.

RESPONDERS: RAs respond to community needs as prescribed by RLSH and community expectations.

- Promote a safe living environment through education, enforcement of policies, and role modeling of appropriate behavior.
- Participate in evening and weekend "on-call" schedules, including rounds of the building(s), completing the on-call log, providing lockout assistance, and performing other related duties.
- Inform residents of their rights and responsibilities in accordance with university and departmental policies and procedures and encourage adherence to policies.
- Address policy violations and encourage responsibility for inappropriate behavior by completing incident reports documenting violations of university policy and

RLSH Community Standards and cooperate with other university personnel in holding students accountable for their actions.

- Assist in emergency preparedness and response such as emergency evacuation drills, floods, power outages, or other crises; in case of crises, all staff members are immediately "on-call."
- Be aware of resident needs and assist them through referrals to appropriate resources while respecting the privacy of the resident and community. Sharing information with your supervisor or other university officials may be necessary.

TEAM MEMBERS: RAs work with a team of individuals in their daily work as prescribed by RLSH and community expectations.

- Appropriately discuss issues and voice concerns or suggestions regarding RLSH policies and procedures with your supervisor.
- Take pride in your work, as it is not only a reflection of you but also your staff, the department, and the University.
- Act as a positive role model for fellow staff members and residents by not participating in questionable/unethical behavior or violating the University Code of Conduct/RLSH Community Standards.
- Refrain from gossiping, complaining, and making negative comments about residents, the RA position, RLSH, and other staff members.
- Keep your supervisor informed about situations and resident concerns.
- Support and collaborate with your RCD, fellow RAs, SPC, HUB Chair, Program Board, FiR, Faculty Affiliates, and Peer Leaders as applicable.
- Cultivate effective working relationships with students and staff.
- Work as a team and do your part.
- Communicate effectively and promptly with your supervisor, residents, and teammates.
- Assist with and participate in research and assessment efforts conducted by RLSH.
- Convey a positive attitude towards the RA position and its duties and support departmental and University decisions and policies.