University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

RESIDENT ASSISTANT POSITION DESCRIPTION & EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT 2020-2021

Job Summary:
The Resident Assistant (RA) is an integral and vital member of the Housing and Residential Education (HRE) staff. The RA lives and works with an immediate group of approximately thirty to fifty students in one of the University's residence halls or apartment style buildings. In addition to being both a student and an academic and behavioral role model, the RA’s responsibilities will be to support the policies and philosophies of the University and those of HRE in all aspects of residence hall and community living at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. The primary roles and responsibilities of the RA are outlined below.

The Resident Assistant (RA) is a full-time undergraduate or graduate student who is selected as a paraprofessional staff member of Housing and Residential Education. Reporting directly to a Resident Director, the RA is a part-time employee who is part of a team of one RD and several RAs responsible for the supervision and community development of a residential community. All Residence Life staff are under the direction of the Associate Director and Assistant Directors of Housing and Residential Education.

RA Requirements upon Employment Appointment:
1) Minimum 2.4 cumulative GPA
2) Have no significant Code of Conduct violations
3) Be enrolled as a full-time student at UMD at the time of employment (at least 12 credits for undergraduate students, 9 credits for graduate students)
4) Complete one full academic semester at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth by January 1, 2021 including prior enrollment at the University.

Appointment Period:
The RA position is a one-year student employment appointment with an agreement of consecutive Fall and Spring semesters, including trainings. The appointment period begins at the start of RA training (online Summer training in June) and concludes on May 11, 2021 at 12 Noon.

Specific Responsibilities:
1) General
   a. Demonstrate responsible behavior to all members of the UMass Dartmouth community and serve as a role model to peers. This includes supporting all University published materials and policies.
   b. Promote the halls as a community with a safe atmosphere through educational and social means that challenge and support the personal development of each resident.
   c. Establish positive rapport with residents. Be viewed as approachable and receptive to all members of the community.
   d. Maintain the RA position as second only to academic pursuits for the academic year.
   e. Work as a leader, advisor, and committed team member with other hall leaders including: fellow RAs, as well as Orientation Leaders, members of the Student Senate, members of the Resident Student Association (RSA), and members of the Hall Council in their building.

2) Community Development
   a. Develop a presence in the hall (notifying RD when away from the floor form than 36 hours & sleeping in their assigned RA room at least 2 weekends per month.)
      i. Get to know residents by being in the RA room with the door open as well as by walking the floor, facilitating interactions among residents and encouraging an overall sense of community on the
ii. Notify residents of important dates and events; schedule and facilitate monthly floor meetings.
iii. Assist in the formation of the Hall Council and consistently support its endeavors.
b. Complete door tags and bulletin boards for the floor community in all instances designated and published annually.
c. Complete all programming requirements through the programming model set forth during RA training.
   i. The RA is expected to aid in the integration of formal and informal learning by establishing an academic atmosphere through the development of programs in the residence hall. The RA is expected to promote an atmosphere for individual and group development of programs by encouraging resident participation at programs in the residence halls.
   ii. The RA is expected to utilize various departments on campus to develop social, academic success, community development, personal growth, open-mindedness, and civic engagement opportunities for residents.
   iii. The RA is expected to encourage interaction among the residents, faculty, administrators, and other staff members of the University Community by involving them in programs within the residence hall.
   iv. The RA is expected to give leadership and active support to residence hall activities and encourage students to participate in programs sponsored by HRE or the University, especially Hall Council.

3) Duty
   a. Duty begins at 7:00pm, with check in for duty at 7:30pm with the Resident Director On Duty (RDOD). Conduct rounds of the building throughout the night while always maintaining a line of communication to the RDOD via the walkie-talkie or phone.
   b. Address, explain, and document all University policy violations in the hall while working with the RDOD and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Police Department when necessary. This should all be done in a timely manner.
   c. RAs are required to remain in their hall while on duty until 7am on the morning of duty unless otherwise directed by an RD.
   d. RAs are required to be on passive duty on Saturdays and Sundays, remaining in their rooms. They should be accessible at all times. RAs on passive duty will receive a one hour break for meals.

4) Policy Enforcement
   a. The RA is considered an employee of the University and should be a role model in all aspects of the University life as outlined by the HRE Staff manual. Although the residence hall is the RA’s primary location of responsibility. The RA should be ready to assume responsibility in other areas of the campus where student leadership may be necessary.
   b. The RA is required to know, support implement, and maintain University policies and regulations as outlined in the UMass Dartmouth Student Housing Handbook.
   c. The RA is expected to establish a community that upholds community standards established by HRE as well as University policies. The RA is expected to be the primary communicator of policies and community standards to their building.
   d. If the RA appointment is within the first year area, the RA is not allowed to have alcohol in the building regardless of their age.

5) Peer Resource
   a. Assume an active role in the orientation and successful transition of all students throughout the year.
   b. Assist residents in their adjustment to having a roommate. Complete roommate agreements with new roommate and provide mediation as needed.
c. Be aware and sensitive to the needs and concerns of residents, while serving as a resource and liaison for those in need of information, guidance, or referrals to University officers on academic, personal, and social issues.
d. Be aware of the limitations of the RA role, and refer residents to the appropriate University staff including Resident Directors, Counselors, Dean’s Faculty Members, and others.

6) **Staff Development and Training**
   a. RAs are required to participate in RA training prior to the start of each semester. The dates for fall and winter training will be published in hiring materials.
   b. Attend in-service training opportunities throughout the academic year.
   c. Attend and participate fully in all weekly residence hall staff meetings.
   d. Attend and participate fully in scheduled department-wide and all-staff meetings.

7) **Administrative Responsibilities**
   a. Set up campus phone extension with a professional message, check voicemail at least twice daily, and check UMass Dartmouth e-mail account at least twice daily.
   b. Attend one-on-one meetings with your RD and complete weekly reports.
   c. Open and close the hall at the beginning and end of each semester or break period. RAs must return from break by the time designated and published annually.
   d. Participate in the selection and training of new Housing & Residential Education staff.
   e. Provide leadership and support for the facilitation of all parts of the room selection process.
   f. Fulfill responsibilities as the RA on Duty and perform front desk duty as needed.
   g. Perform weekly inspections of rooms as well as Health and Safety inspections once a month; report maintenance concerns to the Facilities Office and involve the RD as needed.
   h. Complete occupancy reports.
   i. Participate in and perform designated duties during fire alarms and drills.
   j. Other administrative duties as assigned.

8) **Other Duties and Responsibilities**
   a. All Hands On Deck (AHOD) dates may also be announced by HRE when special community or national events may affect our students. All RAs are expected to clear their calendars and respond to the call of duty as directed.
   b. Other duties as assigned.

9) **Evaluation of the Performance**
   a. The RA’s job performance will be evaluated by the RD on an ongoing basis, no less than twice annually.
   b. An evaluation of the RA will be performed by the RD during each semester.
   c. The RA appointment is for the period of one academic year and renewal is not guaranteed.

10) **Corrective Action & Termination**
   a. HRE will not suspend or discharge an RA without just cause. When any corrective action is taken, HRE will notify the RA in writing of the specific reason for such actions. If a RA is found in violation of any student conduct or HRE-related policy or procedure during the contract period, corrective action will be taken. Note: HRE reserves the right to take action for student conduct-related matters prior to and/or regardless of the conduct conference outcome.
   b. Each RA will be furnished a copy of all performance evaluations or corrective entries in their personal file, and will be permitted to respond to them.
   c. Where appropriate, corrective action or measure will include only the following, regarding staff member status and not student status;
i. Verbal Warning
ii. Written Warning (letter of information or letter of warning)
iii. Employment Probation
iv. Temporary Suspension – pending outcome of a conduct meeting
v. Release

d. Consumption of alcohol or other drugs is prohibited while the RA is on duty. An RA should not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs while on duty.
e. Termination by mutual agreement may be affected at any time.
f. RAs whose employment is terminated must relinquish their designate room assignment, room keys, and any other materials provided to a Resident Assistant, within the time period established by the Assistant Director of Residential Life and/or their designee.

g. Electronic Social Networking Sites: While the department maintains that it will not actively seek out information from social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat or similar sites, if it is presented with information it will respond appropriately. Whereas students may be exempt from such scrutiny, RAs due to the nature of their position within the University, are held to higher standards. Any staff member reported to be in violation of the Code of Conduct will go through the judicial process with the Director of Housing & Residential Education or their designee. If the staff member is found responsible, sanctions may include educational assignments, suspension, or possible termination.

11) Academic Responsibilities and Expectations
a. All RAs must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.4
b. If an RA does not maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.4, progressive measures will be taken including placing an RA on Employment Probation for one semester. Failure to increase cumulative GPA to minimum expectations while on Employment Probation will result in an RA being released from the position in order for the RA to focus on academic success.
c. If an RA earns a semester GPA lower than a 2.4 for two consecutive semesters, HRE reserves the right to place an RA on Employment Probation.

**Important Items to Consider:**
Although it is a part-time position, the RA position requires a large time commitment and needs to be balanced carefully with other time needs: academic, social and recreational. For this reason, RAs:

1) Are expected to inform, discuss, and confirm approval from their Resident Director and Assistant Director before assuming any other student leadership opportunities, including all student organization executive board roles, prior to accepting the position. Based on prior discussion with the Director of Housing (or designee) may a student consider holding an RA appointment while also serving as the SGA President, GSS President, or the Student Trustee.
2) Are expected to inform, discuss and confirm approval from their Resident Director and Assistant Director before assuming any intended additional employment or internships prior to accepting the position.
3) Are NOT allowed to work the days of Commencement. No exceptions will be made.
4) At the discretion of the Resident Director, graduating seniors complete their RA duties on the last Wednesday of finals when their closing duties are considered complete by their RD. Seniors participating in Senior Week must gain approval from their RD and make arrangements to complete their closing responsibilities before participation in Senior Week.
5) RA’s may only participate in Senior Week once.

**Job Compensation:**
Each Ra receives the following compensation for the academic year:
   1) Housing in their assigned residence hall free of charge (via a room waiver)
2) A board allowance
3) Each RA will be paid for four hours of their “RA Lead” responsibilities each full month of the academic year (September, October, November, February, March and April).
4) As a condition of your employment, UMass Dartmouth requires RAs to live in their respective residence halls and the University provides meals to our RA employees as a convenience to us as your employer.

Also, each RA has the ability to register for classes early; dates will be furnished by HRE at the appropriate time each semester.

RAs will not be permitted to stay free of charge over break periods, unless they are working as a Break RA for the Department. If staying over a break period, RAs will be required to pay for Housing or the sponsoring department the RA is working for may pay for Housing.

Please note that this compensation is considered a financial resource and financial aid candidates selected as RAs may have an adjustment made to their aid. We encourage these applicants to consult with the Financial Aid office about the impact of taking the RA position on their financial aid package. Financial status is not considered as a factor in selecting RAs. In the event that a candidate’s financial aid package is adjusted by the Bursar, please know that HRE will not be able to provide the student with compensatory funds dedicated to anything other than Housing and Dining Fees.