

Old Dominion University
Norfolk, Virginia

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT
GRADUATE ASSISTANT in RESIDENCE LIFE
2009-2010

Date: January 2009 (Last Revised)
Position Title: Graduate Assistant in Residence Life
Division: Student Affairs
Department: Office of Housing & Residence Life
Reports To: Residence Hall Director or Area Coordinator

Position Objective:

The Graduate Assistant in Residence Life is a live-in pre-professional position that includes evening and weekend hours and live-in responsibilities. The GA assists the Residence Hall Director in the daily management and development of a residence hall program that fosters an environment that is conducive to personal, academic, and social growth. Principal GA duties include front desk management, supervision of desk receptionists, student/community development, advising hall government, assisting the RHD with management of the residential facility and participation in on call rotation. GAs may also assist with the supervision of the Resident Assistant (RA) staff within a particular complex, but this is contingent upon experience and placement.

Qualifications:

Graduate Assistants must have completed an undergraduate degree and have relevant residence life experience. The GA must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student as defined by Old Dominion University. While a particular graduate program is not required, priority and hiring preference is given to GAs enrolled in a graduate program within the Higher Education and Leadership program.

Dimensions of Position:

Trains, supervises, and evaluates paraprofessional staff. Participates in on call rotation. Serves as an active member of one or more departmental committees. Assists and advises students in matters related to crisis intervention, referral, programming, discipline, routine conflicts, personal development, and leadership opportunities. Assists with advising the hall council, including matters of budget, policy, and programming. Serves as the communication link with students and other areas of the department and University.

Scope of Authority:

In consultation and collaboration with the Residence Hall Director or Area Coordinator, the Graduate Assistant has the authority to act independently and in compliance with departmental and University Policy and state law in the resolution of problems, concerns and goal accomplishment. The position serves as a primary contact for Desk Receptionists (DRs), Hall Council, and residence hall students in a hall or cluster of halls.

Contract Appointment Dates:

1. Appointments for the 2009-2010 academic year begin on Monday, August 10, 2009. GAs must return from the semester break on Monday, January 4, 2010 for participation in Mid-Year Training. The contract period ends on Friday, May 21, 2010.
2. Graduate Assistants will be required to participate in an on-call duty rotation over break periods (i.e. Fall Break, Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, Spring Break, etc).

Compensation:

1. Annual stipend of \$10,000 to be paid bi-monthly (Sept – May)
2. As part of your employment package with the Office of Housing & Residence Life, GAs are provided a furnished residence hall apartment, suite, or room due to their live-in and on-call duty responsibilities.
3. As part of your employment package with the Office of Housing & Residence Life, GAs are provided a meal plan which is available while classes are in session.
4. As part of your employment package with the Office of Housing & Residence Life, GAs are allowed to purchase Faculty/Staff decals.

Outside Employment:

While under continuing appointment to the Office of Housing & Residence Life, no outside employment will be permitted.

Class Load Guidelines:

In order to be eligible for the Graduate Assistant position, a student must be enrolled in a specific degree program. A full-time graduate assistant is expected to enroll for a minimum of six (6) credit hours per semester (fall/spring). GAs are required to maintain their program requirements, which may fall above the OHRL requirement. International GAs are also required to maintain a minimum of nine (9) credit hours per semester.

Graduate Assistants must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or above. GAs who fail to maintain a 3.00 grade point average will be subject to probation and/or termination.

GA Apartment Occupant Policy

The Office of Housing and Residence Life expects to be informed of employment intentions. The Office of Housing & Residence Life provides summer housing (June and July) for returning staff members as a courtesy, since the official contract period ends on May 21, 2010. However, staff members that are not returning to the GA position for the next academic year will be required to move out by Monday, May 31, 2010.

GAs not returning for the next academic year may request approval to rent an apartment for an additional month (June 1-June 30) at the rate of \$500 for the month. The Office of Housing & Residence Life reserves the right to reassign GAs to temporary housing locations if needed in order to accommodate renovation projects or arrival of new staff.

Smoking Policy:

All campus buildings are smoke free; therefore smoking is not permitted in the apartments.

Apartment Occupant Policy

In accordance with state law, spouses, and children, are the only other occupants permitted to reside in the GA apartment. Marriage certificates, birth certificates, or legal guardianship papers will be required prior to occupancy.

Furniture Policy

The apartment furniture provided by the Office of Housing & Residence Life is considered University property and must remain in the residence hall apartment. Staff members are responsible for any changes in the condition of apartment furniture beyond normal wear and tear. Apartment Condition Reports must be completed and signed by the Area Coordinator. The Office of Housing & Residence Life will not remove or provide storage for personal or departmentally issued furniture.

Pet Policy:

Graduate Assistant staff members are not allowed to have pets in the GA apartments with the exception of fish.

Summer Placements and Displacements for GAs

Due to staffing needs for Summer Conferences and Summer School, some GAs may have to be moved from their apartments/office for the summer. If relocation is necessary, alternative, on-campus housing will be provided in the residence halls for those staff members who are displaced. The Office of Housing and Residence Life will attempt to be flexible and sensitive to individual needs during the relocation process.

Summer Responsibilities

Employment information regarding summer positions will be made available to residence hall staff during the spring semester. There is no guarantee that everyone applying can be employed.

Travel, Professional Conferences

The Office of Housing & Residence Life encourages professional staff to participate in conferences. When the budget allows, a designated amount will be allocated towards professional staff conference participation. Prior to pursuing the formal request process, staff members are expected to receive their supervisor's approval for all time away for conferences or professional development. The appropriate paperwork must be completed within the designated deadlines, which will be established by the Office of Housing & Residence Life.

GA Office Hours and Availability:

The following expectations have been set for GA availability as it relates to student contact, staff contact, departmental committees, student conduct hearings, community hours, crisis response and on-call area duty coverage and all-call events. The nature of the GA position does not intrinsically lend itself to traditional methods of measurement. As many traditional GA positions are generally classified as "20 hr/per week" jobs, the GA position is best described in non-traditional terms. This includes and is not limited to opening and closing of halls, breaks, or other critical processes.

The ultimate responsibility charged to live-in staff is to meet the unique needs of our students in a responsible and reasonable manner. Office hours have been developed to formalize specific hours in which GAs are available for traditional interaction with students in the residence hall environment. The notion of office hours for GAs can be best paralleled with faculty office hours. The basic understanding being, office hours comprise a small percentage of the myriad of responsibilities placed upon residence hall directors. GAs can expect to work approximately 20 hours per week, in addition to on-call duty responsibilities.

Duties and Responsibilities:

The principal GA duties are as follows. *Because of the nature of the GA position, it is not possible to list all-inclusive duties.*

1. Graduate Assistants will be required to participate in an on-call duty rotation over break periods (i.e. Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, Spring Break, etc).
2. GAs are also allowed one weekend away per month during the academic year. Weekends away are defined as Friday at 5:00 p.m. through Monday at 8:00 a.m. Approval must be granted from their supervisor. Graduate Assistants will need to work with their respective Residence Hall Director (RHD) and the Area Coordinator (AC) to arrange this time away so as not to disrupt day-to-day activities within the residence hall and the area's duty rotation.
3. Support, implement, enforce, and interpret University policies and procedures.
4. Assist the Residence Hall Director (RHD) in supervision and evaluation of student staff within their assigned hall(s), which may include Desk Receptionist (DRs) and Resident Assistants (RAs).
5. Initiate and implement, with the assistance of the RHD, on-going training and staff development activities for student staff, such as motivation, confrontation, helping skills, handling crisis situations, housing policies, etc.
6. Assist in the development and implementation of programming to address the needs of students in a diverse living-learning environment.
7. Assist in the opening and closing of the residence halls in accordance with outlined procedures and instructions.
8. Assist in maintaining front desk operations, room assignment activities, room and hall changes, and consolidation information for the residence hall. This includes overseeing the desk operations and the desk receptionists.
9. Assist with recruitment and retention presentations to current and prospective students and parents. Marketing presentations may include Open House, Preview, Admitted Students Day, etc.

10. Maintain scheduled office hours and maintain a work schedule designed to maximize accessibility to students and staff. On average, GAs will work 20 hours per week outside of duty responsibilities.
11. Coordinate and supervise timely completion of all appropriate paperwork and reports including, but not limited to, incident reports (IRs), programming paperwork, condition reports, weekly reports, no-show information, room/hall changes, and duty reports.
12. Attend all required meetings, as outlined by the Office of Housing and Residence Life.
13. Participate in all required training initiatives.
14. Participate in on-call area duty coverage. Complete appropriate reports while on-call.
15. Assist with the recruitment and selection of staff as needed.
16. Assist with emergency evacuation procedures. You will be required to relocate with residents if needed.
17. Meeting with residents throughout the year to explain University and departmental policies and procedures.
18. Serve as a pre-hearing officer for the Office of Judicial Affairs.
19. Support departmental programming efforts.
20. Advise students with personal concerns, or refer them to other appropriate campus resources and/or community resources/agencies in a timely manner
21. Assist with establishing goals and priorities for the Office of Housing and Residence Life.
22. Attend weekly meetings with building maintenance supervisors.
23. Assume additional responsibilities and perform special tasks as assigned.
24. Work collaboratively with other internal staff and University Departments.