Resident Assistant

A resident assistant at Columbia College does many things, but the best way to explain the position is by describing the five main roles of the RA.

**Team Member:**
Perhaps the most important role of an RA is to be a team member. This role requires the RA to:

- Participate in all required pre- and in-service training sessions.
- Attend all staff meetings called by the Area Coordinators/Head Residents.
- Assist in the selection process of new staff members.
- Maintain regular contact with the ACs/HRs to keep them apprised of floor/section situations, activities and problems.
- Develop a management plan for his/her floor/section in conjunction with the AC/HR.
- Support other student and professional staff programs and events.

**Programmer:**
The most prolific and time-consuming role of an RA is to be a programmer. In filling this role, the RA will:

- Assist community members in identifying academic and extracurricular interests.
- Work with residents to design and implement programs and projects consistent with assessed interests.
- Support community programs and activities through attendance.
- Assist in the development functional community governance structure, encouraging student participation in community meetings and actively supporting their activities.
- Provide support for social athletic, cultural and academic activities.
- Plan and carry out floor meetings that provide critical information to community members, enable discussion of floor issues and provide the opportunity for program planning.
- Initiate and implement educational programs for the community.
- Serve as a resource and referral agent in the area of program planning.

**Peer Counselor:**
All RAs need to be willing to serve as a peer counselor. This role, which is often however difficult, requires the RA to:

- Develop and maintain good interpersonal relationships with each community member.
- Help residents develop good interpersonal relationships.
- Establish effective communication with residents.
Serve as a referral agent for the College, utilizing the services of such offices as the Counseling Services, Student Development, Student Activities, Career Services, Health Services, Student Support Services and others.

- Respond to personal and medical emergencies with promptness, dependability, and in a manner that secures necessary back-up support.

**Administrator:**
The administrator role is most often overlooked in the RA position. However, it is essential that basic administrative functions occur for the hall to run smoothly. The RA will:

- Have working knowledge of procedures for opening, closing, room changes, assignment verification and placing work orders.
- Perform duty responsibilities.
- Complete all administrative functions with accuracy and promptness.
- Disseminate appropriate information to students (by way of bulletin boards, posters, meetings, etc.) in an effective and timely fashion.

**Shaper of Positive Behavior:**
This role is broad, and success in it is critical in the RA position. The RA will:

- Model positive behavior consistent with departmental expectations.
- Inform residents of College polices as stated in the Residential Life Handbook.
- Respond in a fair, consistent and equitable manner to student behavior concerns and enforce behavioral expectations.
- Follow up in a timely manner with infractions of policies, rules, and regulation.
- Consult with and rely upon guidance of the AC for resolving behavior problems on the floor or in the sections, especially those of an ongoing and complex nature.
- Complete roommate contracts.
- Conduct floor/section discussions intended to develop a community agreement which states commonly held expectations concerning such issues as quiet hours, bathroom use, lounge uses and other necessary to the establishment of an environment characterized by mutual respect and conducive to academic pursuits.
- Teach effective safety and security processes to building residents utilizing existing Department and College resources.
- Model and encourage the responsible use of alcohol.
- Organize community activities in a manner consistent with responsible student behavior.
- Educate students about functions of College staff working with in the hall (i.e. housekeepers), and develop an environment of mutual respect, which supports their efforts.
- Keep a record of community behavior through the use of Incident Reports, Duty Logs and/or informal reporting.
Apartment Manager’s Additional Responsibilities
The Apartment Manager has the same responsibilities as an RA with the following changes:

- Conduct monthly health and safety inspections for each apartment.
- Perform weekly visits to each apartment in lieu of week night duty; these are designed for the Apartment Manager to get to know the residents on a deeper level, build mutual trust, disseminate pertinent information, and gather information necessary to better serve the community.
- Compose and disseminate important information in a monthly newsletter.
- Attend Cougar Village Res Hall Council meetings and serve as a mentor and advisor to the members.
- Communicate facility concerns to Administrative Services and follow up to make sure problems have been adequately addressed.
- Programming will be comprised of one community building program each semester.
- Participate in the weekend RA day duty rotation.
- Attend weekly meetings as part of the Miller Hall Staff