NEW RESIDENCE LIFE ADVISOR
POSITION DESCRIPTION AND EXPECTATIONS
2016-2017

Residence Life Advisors are highly visible upper-class students living within the residence halls that have demonstrated strong leadership capabilities and have taken on increased responsibility for the development of a sense of community within a residence hall.

**Qualifications:**
A candidate for the Residence Life Advisor position must:

- Be a full-time Lawrence student.
- Have sophomore standing or above at time of appointment.
- Make a full 2016-2017 academic year commitment (be here for all three terms) OR Term I commitment with option for Term II or Term III if going abroad.
- Must be in good academic standing and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 as of end of Term 1
- Arrive Sunday, August 28, 2016 for training beginning in the evening.

**Remuneration:**

- $507 a term for first year RLA
- $100 compensation for fall training time period
- Single room at double room rate

RLA remuneration amounts listed above are paid each term of employment. RLAs are permitted to simultaneously hold other paid positions on campus, not to exceed 14 paid hours a week when class is in session.

**Training:**
RLAs strive to create a positive residential community by assisting fellow students as they work to establish friendships, enabling them to feel at home in the halls and by finding their niche on campus. Through programming and positive role modeling, they work to foster a living environment that addresses the basic needs of students within the halls. Often RLAs are the primary source of information regarding campus policy and referrals.

Because the RLA role is very diverse and communities are constantly changing and evolving, training is an ongoing process throughout the academic year. All RLAs are required to be present at all training sessions unless otherwise noted. The following is a general outline of training sessions; specific dates for these sessions will be distributed at a later time.

- **Spring Informational Session:** approximately 2 hours of information and get-to-know you activities during Spring Term 2016
- **RLA Fall Training:** approximately a week of training held before the residence halls open. RLA training begins on Sunday, August 28, 2016 and runs through Welcome Week.
- **Term 2 All Staff Retreat:** 1 day Winter Training held in the evening of Monday, January 2nd, 2017.
- **All-Staff Meetings:** These ongoing training sessions are an opportunity for all RLA staff to talk about current issues on campus and to learn additional skills to bring to the RLA position. RLAs are expected to attend each All-Staff meeting – a schedule will be provided at Fall Training.
Welcome Week:
Welcome Week is an important time for each RLA staff to develop as a team, to discuss community involvement plans, and to continue training as a campus wide RLA staff. All RLAs welcome and assist new students with moving into the halls on move in day (Tuesday, September 6, 2016). It is expected that RLAs participate in Welcome Week activities and implement programs during this time to engage new students in life at Lawrence.

Community Involvement and Programming:
All RLAs should spend time at the beginning of each term creating a community involvement plan. This plan will lay out some programmatic goals for the term, but will mainly focus on developing a floor and hall community. These plans will be discussed with the Residence Hall Director and the rest of the hall staff, and revisited throughout the term. RLAs are expected to complete a report upon the completion of each program in order to evaluate success and identify areas of improvement.

Hall Forums:
Hall forums play an important role in the development of student ownership and community within the residence halls. The HRLA, with support from the RHD, will advise their hall forums. Hall forums take on a variety of projects over the course of the year and tend to focus on community development projects such as hall t-shirts, hall participation in campus events like Trivia weekend or Winter Carnival, new kitchen supplies, etc. RLAs should encourage resident engagement with the community and support the efforts of the various project committees that may form in their hall during the course of the year.

Staff Meetings:
Each Residence Hall Director conducts a regularly scheduled staff meeting. Attendance at all staff meetings is required of all RLAs. In addition, each RLA is expected to meet individually with their Residence Hall Director on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Floor Meetings:
RLAs are expected to conduct a floor meeting at least once per term. Topics that should be covered in regular floor meetings include: introductions (role of the RLA and new floor members), feedback from residents about floor community, ideas or suggestions for floor programs, important info (break, closing, etc.) as well as any hall forum announcements.

Communication:
As an RLA, and a member of a hall staff, prompt and effective communication with residents, other RLAs, RHDs, and other Campus Life Staff is extremely important. RLAs are expected to check their Lawrence e-mail account, voicemail, and campus mailbox on a regular basis.

Role Modeling:
Academic Performance: All RLAs are expected to be in good academic standing and maintain a 2.5 cumulative GPA. If any RLA is struggling academically it may mean that the RLA position is affecting their academic performance. Any RLA that falls below this grade requirement will be asked to review and discuss possible strategies to better their academic performance with a member of the Campus Life staff. Academic difficulty may result in dismissal from the RLA position.

Alcohol: It is important to realize that as an RLA you are constantly being observed, evaluated, and emulated. In addition, as an employee of the university your overall conduct is an important part of your employment. If you are 21 you may consume alcohol according to the policy; however, you should refrain from consuming alcohol with students who are
under the age of 21. RLAs are expected to follow confrontation or referral procedures outlined by their Residence Hall Directors. RLAs are also required to document all situations through the incident report form.

RLAs that are under the age of 21 should not consume alcohol, given that it is illegal to do so in the United States. Underage drinking by members of the RLA staff jeopardizes the credibility of not only the individual’s ability to confront future policy violations, but also the credibility of the entire hall staff and that of the overall department. RLAs who violate the alcohol policy, or other university policies or procedures, should expect employment probation and the possibility of termination from the position.

**Campus Policies:** All RLAs are required to know and uphold campus policies. RLAs will work with their RHDs to communicate policies to the members of their residence hall/house. Furthermore, all RLAs are expected to confront disturbances in the community. From alcohol violations, noise complaints, to roommate problems, it is an RLA’s responsibility to address or to refer these incidents to the Residence Hall Director for action.

**Confidentiality:** Many things that are discussed in staff meetings or that happen on the floor or on campus need to be kept confidential. The Campus Life Office expects a high level of professionalism and confidentiality from all of its staff members. Incidents that affect the health, safety, or well-being of an individual resident need to be communicated to a Residence Hall Director directly.

**Hall Openings-Closings-Break Periods-Special Weekends:**
It is important to have staff available and visible during the opening and closing of the residence halls. All RLAs will work with the RHD to ensure that tasks such as key maintenance, work-orders, check-in paperwork, and storage are appropriately addressed. RLAs with extenuating circumstances should consult with their Residence Hall Director prior to any break periods or special weekends. Outlined below is information related to staff needs during break periods:

- RLA fall training, opening, Welcome Week 8/28/16-9/11/16-All RLAs

- Term I closing-RLAs last day of duty coverage is Tuesday, November 22, 2016. All RLAs are asked to assist with hall closing as much as possible 11/22/16 and 11/23/16.

- ALL RESIDENCES CLOSE NOON ON 11/23/16 (staff is released when building inspections are completed)

- All staff returns by Noon on 1/2/17 to hall opening and attend staff winter retreat from 5-8:30pm.

- ALL RESIDENCES OPEN AT 9am on 1/2/17 (Each staff determines Term II Check in with RHD)

- Spring Break Closing-Half of each staff stay through noon on 3/16/17

- Spring Break Re-Opening - Half of each staff return before noon on 3/26/17

- End of year hall closing through graduation exercises until 6pm 6/11/17 - All RLAs

- Mid Term Reading Periods: Duty coverage will continue as normal during these times.

- Special Weekends: There will be certain weekends when RLA support and presence may be needed. These include Welcome Week (fall opening weekend), fall festival weekend, and other weekends designated by the Campus Life Office. Specific requirements will be provided to all RLAs in advance.
**RLA Departmental Expectations:**
After RLA training, each RLA is expected to:

- Be an active supportive team member of the residence life staff.
- Develop a positive relationship with your floor residents and know every resident on your floor.
- Be a visible presence on the floor. Make yourself and room approachable and accessible for students.
- Understand and abide by all University policies and procedures.
- Complete paperwork/reports in a timely manner - work orders, incident reports, program reports, etc.
- Know emergency procedures and respond to crisis situations. Returners should also serve as a contact or resource for New RLAs serving handling crisis situation.
- Accurately refer students to the appropriate professionals and campus resources.
- Consult with your Residence Hall Director about roommate problems, room changes, room consolidation or room assignment processes.
- Participate in an annual performance evaluation process.
- Additional duties as designated by your direct supervisor or the Campus Life Office.

**Benefits of serving in the Residence Life Advisor position:**
The foundation of any RLA position at Lawrence is the ability for one to display effective leadership on their floor, in their hall, and throughout their campus community; and their willingness to continue to apply and refine these skills.

Within this group of developing campus leaders, the RLA fulfills an important position within our residential community. Students selected for this position have demonstrated their desire to become further engaged with the campus community by directly serving in a visible leadership role. The RLA positions provide opportunities for these student leaders to develop and refine a variety of transferable skills including but not limited to:

- Ability to work on a team (working with your RHD and staff members)
- Communication (disseminating information in a variety of formats, speaking at programs or events, advertising programs, facilitating conversations, actively listening, 1 on 1 meetings, staff meetings, etc.)
- Decision making (being on duty, consulting with co-RLAs and RHDs, making appropriate referrals)
- Event planning (floor and hall programs and community development efforts)
- Mediation/Consensus building (working with your staff, roommate conflicts)
- Role modeling (making appropriate and ethical decisions, meeting expectations of the position, following through on commitments, being consistent in your actions, etc.)
- Time management (balancing demands of academics, RLA position, personal well-being, etc.)

RLAs are encouraged to reflect on the skills listed above and others they may develop during their time in the position and consider how they could be used in future leadership or employment settings.