Position Description: Resident Assistant 2016-2017

Overview:
The Department of Residence Life & Housing (RLH) fosters a safe, supportive, and inclusive community in the residence halls. We strive to provide a living environment where residents are exposed to new people, ideas and issues, are supported to excel personally and academically, and are provided opportunities that build vibrant communities. The Department of Residence Life & Housing is a part of the Division of Student Affairs and is committed to providing student leadership opportunities that promote Suffolk's mission and values. The Resident Assistant (RA) position is integral to the Department and is one of the most important leadership positions on campus.

RAs work together as a team to create a community which is safe; promotes academic achievement; supports personal growth and development; encourages responsible citizenship and community engagement; and respects and appreciates a diverse and inclusive environment. The RA position requires a significant commitment of time, talent, and effort. In order to succeed in the position, RAs must believe in the value of their work, in the importance of a residential community and in their own ability to make a difference.

RAs fulfill many roles while performing their duties. RAs are role models, educators, and peer advisors for residents. They help residents with academic and interpersonal problems, mediate roommate conflicts, and make appropriate referrals to campus resources. RAs plan community development and educational programs, perform administrative tasks, serve in an on-call capacity responding to various crisis and conflicts, and are expected to confront inappropriate behavior and assist in enforcing residence hall and/or University policies. Most importantly, RAs are dedicated to working as a team to build a thriving community in the residence halls.

Qualifications:
RAs must be registered as full-time SBS/CAS undergraduate or graduate student during both the fall and spring semester of the academic year. RAs must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.80 and complete their coursework each semester.

The RA team is incredibly diverse, but RAs share many characteristics such as social and emotional maturity, the ability to develop meaningful relationships, and flexibility and openness to new experiences. RAs must be in good academic, financial, and conduct standing with the University and are subject to a criminal background check (Federal and State).

Compensation:
Most RAs will receive a single room, including local phone service and cable television for the academic year. Due to additional responsibilities, Living Learning Community RAs will receive $150.00 on their RAM cards each semester as additional compensation.

RAs are required to participate in the residence hall meal plan and will not be compensated for this cost. RAs living in apartments in 10 West are not required to purchase a meal plan.

Please be advised that receipt of an RA position may result in a reduction of other financial aid awarded to you. Questions about the impact that the RA position may have on your financial aid
Responsibilities and Expectations

The position description outlines the responsibilities and expectations of the RA position. We have attempted to include as much detail as possible, but it is subject to change and cannot fully describe all possible RA responsibilities, tasks, and expectations.

Community Development:

- Set a positive example for residents by following all residence hall and University policies, while on and off-campus, and role model responsible behavior expected of residents. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining responsible and appropriate social media pages.
- Develop a community, on the RAs floor(s) and in the building, in which residents are able to live in an environment that is respectful of individual differences and supportive of the educational and personal goals.
- Be known by residents as an available, approachable, visible, and resourceful staff member.
- Actively build relationships with the residents on their floor(s) and in their hall.
- Maintain a positive attitude toward others and accepts others whose lifestyles and attitudes are different than their own.
- Work to identify and responds to the academic and personal problems of their residents, which includes making referrals to appropriate University resources such as Counseling, Health & Wellness, Center for Learning & Academic Success, Office of Student Affairs, etc.
- Respect and maintain confidentiality regarding resident issues by not discussing the issues with other students or inappropriate persons.
- Is expected to keep the professional staff members of the RLH team informed about potentially serious and/or dangerous resident issues, including but not limited to: mental health concerns, threats, weapons, physical violence, etc.

Programming:

- Regularly assess the needs of residents by talking with them individually and in groups, responding to current issues in their lives, and recognizing previously unaddressed needs in community.
- Implement programs and activities, both planned and spontaneous, in the halls.
- Carry out the programming expectations as set by the Community Development Model, including but not limited to:
  - Pillar programming
  - Community development programming
  - Departmental and Divisional programs
  - Welcome and educational bulletin boards
  - Passive Programming
- Accurately document and evaluate programming activities in a timely manner and by the established deadlines.
- Encourage residents to participate in Residence Life and University community events.
- Conduct regular floor meetings.
Policy Enforcement:

- Educate residents on Residence Life & Housing policies, as well as University policies and standard of conduct, student rights, and the conduct process.
- Enforce Residence Life & Housing, and/or University policies, by responding to, confronting and documenting inappropriate behavior and all possible violations of policies. RAs also need to report, in detail and immediately after the incident, such incidents to the appropriate professional staff member in accordance with protocol.
- Encourage residents to hold each other accountable for their behavior.
- Confront individuals with respect, consistency, and fairness at all times.
- Complete incident reports (IRs) promptly, concisely, and accurately.

Teamwork:

- Be dedicated to being a contributing member of the RA and RLH teams.
- Respect, support, and work cooperatively with other RLH team members.
- Actively build positive relationships with other RAs and all RLH staff.
- Respect fellow peer RAs and strive for fairness and flexibility in sharing responsibility for duty switches, time off, special coverage needs, etc.
- Directly approach co-workers with whom you have a disagreement and work to positively resolve the issue.
- Join (1) RLH committee (programming, training and development, departmental, etc.)

Maintenance & Facility Administration:

- Respond promptly and appropriately to all safety and health hazards.
- Be aware of and follow procedures for reporting housekeeping and facility problems and follow up with students to see that the requests have been completed.
- Maintain an accurate occupancy report of all students residing in their area at all times.
- Investigate any damage to the building immediately and report it to RLH and Facilities
- Be familiar with, and respond to, all fire alarms and shelter in place procedures as well as other building emergency procedures.

General Administration:

- Complete all paperwork accurately and within established timelines.
- Distribute and collect all Residence Life information to students within established time lines such as room condition forms (RCFs), License Agreements, Roommate Agreements, Census, etc.
- Assist with the check-in and check-out procedures at scheduled move-in and move-out times, including break periods as well as check in/outs for room changes as necessary.
- Perform Health & Safety Inspections at least one time a semester and at break closings.

Living Learning Communities (Select RAs)

A Living Learning Community (LLC) is an intentional residential community for first year students who have elected to live together due to a shared interest or major. At Suffolk, all of our LLCs are centered on a specific major, the Honors program, or are for undeclared students. This year, we also have an LLC focusing on creativity & innovation outside of specific majors. LLCs consist of roughly 15-40 students. LLCs have a dedicated resident assistant (RA) and faculty or staff advisor who are dedicated to the major/special interest area and to helping first year students succeed in and out of
the classroom. The LLC provides co-curricular and extra-curricular programs and learning opportunities for students. The LLC RA and advisor collaborate to plan and implement monthly programs that involve participation from other faculty, alumni, student clubs or organizations, and even others external to the University. First year students choose to live in an LLC for many reasons; they are interested in the major, want to meet faculty, staff, and other students who are knowledgeable about and/or interested in that major/special interest, and want to be a member of a strong community.

**Suffolk University LLCs for 2015-2016**

**CAS**
- Government, Applied Legal Studies, & Prelaw
- CAS Honors
- Science & Health Professions

**SBS**
- Accounting & Finance
- Entrepreneurship
- Global Business
- SBS Honors
- Marketing

**Joint CAS/SBS LLCs**
- Creativity & Innovation
- Theme based
- Explorations

**Potential LLC Additions for 2016-2017**
- Psychology; Communications & Journalism, Management;

**Why LLCs?**
Living Learning Communities provide first year students with the opportunity to share the excitement of learning in an environment that combines the benefits of a small community with the resources of a larger university. We believe that learning is strongly influenced by the climate in which it takes place and have designed LLCs with that philosophy in mind. These communities combine formal and informal learning opportunities, creative programming, and personal support to create an enhanced first-year experience.

**The goals of a Living Learning Community are to:**

- Improve student success and aid in retention through meaningful residential and academic cohort experiences where academic excellence is celebrated and residents are exposed to all that Suffolk and Boston has to offer.
- Create an engaged cohort of students, giving students a sense of belongingness and connectedness to their residence hall, university, and Boston community.
- Connect formal classroom learning to learning that takes place outside the classroom.
- Promote the personal growth and development of students through greater contact with one another, faculty/staff advisors, and other community resources.
- Provide faculty/staff advisors with 1.) an understanding of student life and opportunities to meet with students outside the classroom and 2.) opportunities to meet with students outside the classroom in an informal educational context.

**LLC RAs are expected to:**
- Perform the assigned responsibilities of all RAs
- Be a member of the major or program to which the LLC is dedicated, unless given approval by RLH
Promote and perform LLC goals and objectives
Maintain regular communication with the LLC Faculty/Staff Advisor
Participate and assist with LLC programs which include, but are not limited to:
  o Welcome reception for the LLC
  o LLC specific programming at least once per month
  o End of the year reception for the LLC

Overview of RA Time Commitment & Position Expectations:

- The RA position is for the full academic year. This includes arriving 2 weeks prior to fall opening and up to 5 days prior to spring opening in January 2017. RA training will tentatively start on Monday, August 15, 2016 and end on Monday, August 29, 2016.
- RAs may be required to work some evenings, weekends, and over breaks.
- RAs maintain regular and frequent contact with the Residence Directors, Associate Director of RLH, including checking their email and office mailbox daily.
- RAs maintain regular and frequent contact with all residents on their floor(s).
- RAs attend all staff meetings, trainings and other commitments, as assigned. RAs must not schedule classes during these times.
  - Weekly staff meetings are on Wednesdays from 8pm – 10pm but can be rescheduled at discretion of RLH.
  - Monthly In-Service Trainings. Schedule to be set prior to each semester.
- All RAs are required to remain on-campus for up to four (4) hours after the closing time of the residence areas for Thanksgiving, winter, and spring breaks and may be required to remain on campus through commencement to assist with spring closing.
- First Year RAs are allowed up to 10 hours of involvement per week outside of the RA position. This includes ALL jobs (on/off campus, including work study) and clubs/organizations and other leadership positions/commitments. Outside involvement and other jobs must be approved by your supervisor.
- Returning RAs are allowed up to 15 hours of outside involvement per week. This includes ALL jobs (on/off campus, including work study) and clubs/organizations and other leadership positions/commitments. Outside involvement and other jobs must be approved by your supervisor.
- All RAs must discuss additional jobs, internships, and major co-curricular involvement with their supervisor prior to the start of each semester.
- Returning RAs may have additional responsibilities, such as planning, implementing, and leading RA training sessions and in-service sessions and mentoring new RAs.
- RAs participate in the selection of Residence Life staff, housing selection, and other processes and events as necessary such as Welcome Week, Homecoming, Preview Days and Showcase Events.
- RAs must be available for duty approximately 25 nights/semester. Duty includes being available and accessible to all building residents, conducting rounds, speaking with residents, responding to incidents, monitoring building condition, and maintaining open communication with the RLH professional staff, SUPD, and on-call personnel. RAs are on call from 6:00pm to 9:00am Sundays through Thursdays and must remain in their buildings from 9:00pm - 9:00am while on duty. RAs are on duty for one overnight shift at a time.
- Weekend duty on Fridays and Saturdays is extended because the residence hall offices are not open on Saturdays or Sundays. RAs will be on duty from Friday at 6:00pm to
• Saturday at 6:00pm and Saturday at 6:00pm to Sunday at 6:00pm. RAs are on duty for one overnight shift at a time. This may include some time over break periods.
• RAs must seek approval in advance from the Residence Director for overnight and weekend absences from the hall. Weekends away will be coordinated by each Residence Director in each building to ensure each area has adequate coverage.
• RAs may assume other responsibilities as deemed necessary by the Director, Associate Director, the Assistant Director of RLH, and/or the Residence Directors.