

Resident Assistant Job Description



The Wartburg College Residential Life Program is an integral part of the educational program and academic support services of Wartburg College.

The mission is to provide a living-learning environment for all resident students, in accordance with the nature and goals of the college. The goals of the residential life program include: providing individual and/or group educational and development opportunities, offering well-maintained facilities, and offering responsive, efficient, and effective management of services and resources.

Resident Assistants are undergraduate members of the Residential Life Staff under contract to the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students, who report to and are directly supervised by a Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director of Residential Life and the Associate Dean of Students/Director of Residential Life. Resident Assistants have the most frequent and direct communication with resident students; therefore, they have an outstanding opportunity to contribute to the development and education of these individuals. They also have the significant responsibility for implementing initiatives and policies through which the goals of Residential Life can be accomplished. It is expected that the Resident Assistant will be interested in the welfare of students regardless of their race, gender identity and/or gender expression, ability, political affiliation, veteran status, religion, ancestry, ethnicity, age, or sexual orientation at Wartburg and, consequently, be constructively supportive by actual involvement in the overall Residential Life Program.

I. Qualifications for selection:

- A. Must be enrolled at Wartburg College as a full-time student.
- B. Leadership potential as evidenced by previous leadership experiences, recommendations, staff evaluations, and as observed by the selection process.
- C. Advanced level of maturity exhibited in sound judgment, emotional stability, flexibility, and willingness to accept responsibility. Demonstrated understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures and commitment to equal opportunity and affirmative action.
- D. Strong interpersonal skills through proven ability to interact effectively with others and as observed in the selection process.
- E. Good conduct standing with the College (not currently on disciplinary probation).
- F. The RA must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.50 at the time of assuming his/her duties and is expected to maintain that grade point average throughout the period of employment. If at any time the semester of cumulative grade point averages fall below 2.50, the Resident Assistant may be granted a

probationary period of one semester to achieve a 2.50 GPA. If the cumulative grade point average falls below 2.50 the RA will be terminated.

- G. It is expected that the RA will give his/her hall responsibilities priority over all other extracurricular activities. Therefore, it may be necessary to limit outside involvement in clubs, organizations, and athletic teams so that they will not conflict with residence hall responsibilities. RAs who have additional commitments should discuss these situations with the Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director of Residential Life and Director of Residential Life prior to assuming an RA appointment. This includes commitments such as: student teaching, ETK, Homecoming Chair, International Club President, President or Vice-President of Student Senate, or other paraprofessional positions.
- H. The Department of Residential Life will assign RAs to specific floors/houses. While individual preferences will be considered, the RA should expect to be assigned to the floor/house in which his/her skills best complement the residents and staff.

II. Responsibilities:

There are very different types of tasks a resident assistant completes. For that reason, the position has been categorized into five areas, including administrative, community development, personal development, behavior management and departmental expectations. These define the expectations and the criteria for evaluation.

A. ADMINISTRATIVE

The smooth operation of residence halls for resident students is dependent upon the cooperative efforts of all staff members. Resident Assistants are called upon to provide administrative support, which is important to the operation of the hall and assists in maintaining resident's understanding and involvement in community living expectations. An RA is expected to:

1. Report issues and concerns raised by residents to the Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director of Residential Life.
2. Complete all assigned administrative tasks, such as weekly reports, room inventories, and other material, thoroughly, accurately, and in a timely manner.
3. Assist the students and the Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director with periodic room inspections and the proper check-in and check-out procedures. All room condition paperwork will be completed by the RA.
4. Assist students in identifying and promptly reporting facility needs. Communicate to the Residence Hall Director, Assistant Director of Residential Life and/or the maintenance staff facilities in need of repair or special attention.
5. Return to campus early during breaks to prepare building for residents' return to campus.
6. Complete other duties as assigned.

B. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The goals of community development include creating an environment where residents are comfortable to live, develop personally, and play an active role in the hall. Resident Assistants are responsible for actively assisting the Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director of Residential Life in accomplishing desirable programming objectives. Specifically, each RA is required to:

1. Learn the name of each student assigned to his/her floor section.
2. Learn something about each student's personal background, special interest, academic goals.
3. Help to provide each student a maximum of opportunities for individual development through quality services and initiatives focused on their needs. These needs include the emotional, social, physical, cultural, spiritual, intellectual and occupational environment.
4. Assist the Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director and/or Hall Council with the planning and implementation of activities/events for the hall/house.
5. Spend sufficient time on the floor to get to know the residents.
6. Identify potential student leaders and encourage their involvement in hall programming and campus organizations.
7. Encourage residents to participate and contribute to hall initiatives.
8. Determine, in conjunction with Hall Council and the Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director, the types of initiatives that residents need and are interested in.
9. Assist in promoting an environment conducive to cross-cultural understanding and academic learning. Educate him/herself on issues of racism, sexism, heterosexism, prejudice, and discrimination against targeted groups and challenge residents to understanding and appreciation of diversity and social justice.

C. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Resident Assistants have the opportunity to grow in their positions while on the job. While the RA must assume the major responsibility for self-development, departmental expectations such as the following, will contribute to that growth:

1. Participate in fall training, prior to the opening of school in the fall as well as winter training, prior to the opening of school in the winter. This will require early arrival to campus following the summer vacation and holiday break.
2. Participate in monthly in-service training sessions throughout the year.
3. Attend all weekly staff meetings. Offer ideas or contribute to staff development activities.
4. Participate in regularly scheduled one-on-one meetings with the Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director.
5. A 2.5 cumulative grade point average; if a student's cumulative grade point average falls below 2.5, employment will be terminated. If a student's term

- grade point falls below a 2.5, the continued employment of the RA will be evaluated.
6. Participate in evaluations completed by the Residence Hall Director, peers, and residents.

D. COUNSELING/BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Resident Assistants are responsible for creating an environment where study, privacy, and personal values and beliefs are respected. Resident assistants are responsible for maintaining consistent policies throughout the residence hall and for impressing upon residents their responsibility for their own actions. Another critical part of this role is to offer support to residents and respond to crisis situations as they might occur.

1. Assess concerns and attitudes of residents on the floor by talking with residents, reviewing evaluations, and in some cases formally surveying for feedback on needs, interests, and concerns.
2. Know the procedures for using the services provided by the College, such as referring counseling situations to Office of Student Life, Counseling Services, College Pastor, Career Services, Pathways Center, Financial Aid Office, Wartburg Health Clinic. Utilize these resources when a situation is beyond your experience and counseling limitations.
3. Know the policies and procedures relating to the residents as outlined in the Student Handbook and the Student Staff Manual.
4. Know the procedures for handling violations of college and residence hall regulations and document violations for the conduct process.
5. Respond to behavioral problems calmly and reasonably.
6. Express disapproval of, and challenge, as soon as appropriate, any intentional or unintentional expressions and/or behaviors that represent disrespect, intimidation, or threat against a person or group of people. You are expected to confront inappropriate expressions and behaviors, keeping in mind the values and policies of the college.
7. Consult with the Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director on effective approaches to specific problems.
8. Recognize the importance of making decisions that are consistent with the expectations and procedures of the Student Life Office.
9. Maintain an accurate report of behavioral problems.
10. Abide by and enforce all policies. This means that under no circumstances should a Resident Assistant ignore the violation of a regulation or policy by a resident, nor violate regulations or policies that residents are expected to follow, whether in the same or a different residence hall.
11. Maintain confidentiality of information when ethical and appropriate.

E. DEPARTMENTAL EXPECTATIONS

Resident Assistants play a crucial part in setting the tone for how the College and the Division of Student Life are perceived by students. Resident Assistants should strive to

represent the College and the Residential Life Program positively to students, parents, and the general public. It is recognized that a Resident Assistant position requires a great deal of time, and due to the special nature of the position, no minimum or maximum number of hours can be designated. He/she will be expected to devote the time necessary to fulfill his/her obligation to the position. It is recommended that a Resident Assistant spend at the minimum of 10 hours per week interacting with residents. This includes specific staff duty assignments, weekly staff meetings, in-service training and appropriate time on his/her floor. A Resident Assistant is expected to:

1. Meet regularly with residents to explain and promote an understanding of hall and college policies, to share information, and to discuss issues and concerns.
2. Post all notices and communication from the Residence Hall Director, the Student Life Office, Campus Programming Office, or authorized college and student organizations.
3. Use the following line of communication when transmitting constructive criticism of department policies or practices:

Residence Hall Director > Assistant Director of Residential Life > Associate Dean of Students/Director of Residential Life > Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students

4. Resident Assistants strive to help each resident develop as a person, student, and a citizen of the college community. In their multiple roles as friend, adviser, administrator, and community builder, Resident Assistants demonstrate respect for the health, safety, welfare and rights of everyone living in the residence halls.
5. Associate with all residents on the floor and actively build and maintain an inclusive community on the floor in which differences in age, race, convictions, class culture, sexual orientation, gender and ethnicity are respected, and where diversity is both honored and valued as an opportunity to learn from one another. Wartburg College is an Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action institution.
6. Set a good example by exhibiting good academic habits and proper personal conduct.
7. Resident Assistants may take time away from campus on weekends as arranged in advance with the Residence Hall Director or Assistant Director. One-half of each building's staff must be present in the hall on a given weekend.
8. Resident Assistants will be assigned a single room, in most cases. Placement is determined at the discretion of the Residence Hall Director, Assistant Director of Residential Life, and Associate Dean of Students/Director of Residential Life.
9. Remuneration includes a single room at the cost of a double room. Resident assistants receive a stipend that is equal to the cost of a double room. This stipend is paid on a monthly basis.

10. Any work outside the Resident Assistant position must be approved by the Director of Residential Life in conjunction with the Assistant Director or Residence Hall Director. As a rule, work requests over eight hours per week are not approved.
11. Resident Assistants wishing to continue in the position for the next year, must have a positive recommendation from their Residence Hall Director or the Assistant Director, submit a written application and essay, interview for the position and be hired for continuation with approval of the Director of Residential Life.

Residential Life at Wartburg College maintains an openness to all qualified persons and does not discriminate with regard to race, gender identity and/or gender expression, religion, ancestry, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, ability, political affiliation, or veteran status.

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