

Instructor Recommendation

Instructors have the option to recommend that a student in the course NOT obtain a position. This recommendation is subjective, and has no bearing on the letter grade a candidate will receive in the class. The recommendation is based on lack of commitment to the class and/or position, inability to positively interact with instructor(s) and class members, and overall poor performance in the class. If an instructor has a significant concern with a candidate's performance, a discussion between the candidate and instructor(s) will take place prior to notification of the RA Course Coordinator and the Assistant Director of Resident Life for Human Resources.

Criteria for Appointment as an RA

As noted in the Attendance section, students having more than one unexcused absence may not be eligible for an appointment to the RA position. In addition, class members must achieve a grade of "C" or higher and not receive a negative recommendation from their course instructor(s) in order to be eligible to receive an RA position.

HESI 470: INTRODUCTION TO STUDENT PERSONNEL

Purpose, Scope and Goals

The RA course is an academic course offered by the Counseling and Personnel Services' Department of the College of Education, in conjunction with the Department of Resident Life. Its primary purposes are to orient you to the RA roles, to present new perspectives on the residence hall environment and to provide you with some techniques, skills and knowledge necessary to your successful performance as a Resident Assistant. The RA position is a very comprehensive and demanding one. It requires that you possess a wide variety of knowledge and skills, but more importantly, that you exercise sound judgment in understanding when and how to apply this knowledge and skill. Given the breadth of what you need to know, no one course can cover all the topics in sufficient depth and detail. This course is not designed to make you an expert in the areas covered, but rather give you some of the basics. The RA course will be supplemented with other training programs such as spring semester community training meetings, fall pre-service training, staff meetings, and in-service training. The combination of the RA course and these additional training experiences will provide you with the knowledge and skills you need to be an effective RA.

General Course Objectives

The RA Course Instructors will seek to increase the awareness and basic skill development of class members in order to serve as a basis for undertaking the RA position. The main objectives of the class are as follows:

- Objective One:** Orient RA candidates to the concept of community development as it relates to the individual and the collective community.
- Objective Two:** Orient RA candidates to the Department of Resident Life, the purposes of a residence hall program, and the manner in which they present implications and expectations for the roles of the RA.
- Objective Three:** Provide RA candidates with an understanding of basic growth issues and developmental tasks facing college students and how these impact the RA roles. Particular attention will be paid to working in a multicultural environment.
- Objective Four:** Teach RA Candidates successful skills in fostering and shaping positive residence hall communities. Skills will focus in the areas of communication skills, confrontation, conflict mediation, programming, discipline, and crisis response.

Classroom Expectations

This class serves as both an academic course and as training for the RA position. It presents some rather unique expectations for each student. Mastery of course content is important to your performance as an RA. Just as important, however, is your involvement in the class as a fully contributing member.

Because norms vary from one classroom to another and individuals vary in their perception of what constitutes an appropriate learning environment, we have defined specific expectations for student behavior in the RA Class. You will be expected to respect these guidelines in all of your lectures/discussions. Individual instructors may have additional requirements or conditions within their individual discussion and/or lecture sections.

The ultimate goal of these classroom expectations is to help promote an environment in the classroom that is conducive to learning and maximizes the learning potential of all students.

We acknowledge that many students in the RA class do not need classroom expectations, per se, with the majority of students already possessing excellent interpersonal skills and an understanding of classroom etiquette and protocol. However, we also acknowledge that there are different styles or expectations of classroom protocol that vary from class to class and from professor to professor. In response to this variation, we are attempting to define the standards for our classrooms. These are aimed at helping new RAs quickly understand our culture and expectations for their behavior.

RA Class students will be expected to understand and adhere to the following guidelines for participation and behavior in respect to the classroom environment:

Academic Integrity

In all class work and assignments, we expect the highest personal and professional standards that reflect the objectives of the University of Maryland. Students will be held accountable for violations of standards of academic integrity in writing and presentation of scholarly and professional ideas through University of Maryland procedures. Proper citations, paraphrasing and proper quotations are essential in all work. Also, submitting work that implies participation where none occurred, or where more than one individual worked on an individualized project will be viewed as violations of these standards. Any suspected violations of the *Code of Academic Integrity* such as cheating, fabrication, plagiarism and facilitating academic dishonesty will be reported to the Student Honor Council. Depending on the circumstances, this could have a direct effect on your status as an RA and your academic standing with the University.

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student, you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important that you are aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.shc.umd.edu>.

To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, we strongly encourage you to sign the Honor Pledge on all quizzes and assignments: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment)."

Atmosphere

Class members are encouraged to demonstrate an open attitude toward dealing with views presented by fellow students. Class members are expected to act in a supportive manner with respect to fellow classmates' participation in class activities and discussion and are expected to be open to learning about different cultural perspectives, values, positions, and lifestyles. This open posture to diversity is considered imperative for work in a university residence hall environment.

Students should demonstrate respect for the lecturer/instructor(s) and for fellow students during the lecture/discussion periods. Students will be expected to refrain from potentially distracting behavior such as eating during class, holding side conversations and/or using their laptops to surf the Web, play games, check email or complete assignments. If a student needs to use a laptop in order to take notes during lecture, the

student should inform the Lecture Coordinator. **Students are asked to turn cell phones off during all lectures/discussions.** It is the prerogative of each lecturer/instructor to set the tone for his or her lecture/discussion, and lecturers/instructors may set different standards, if they so choose.

Instructor/lecturer(s) will dismiss the class at the conclusion of each lecture/discussion. Students should avoid packing-up materials while an instructor/lecturer is speaking, regardless of the time.

Preparation for class should be done outside of class time. Students should refrain from reading assigned materials and materials for other classes, magazine articles, and other materials during lectures/discussions.

Guest lecturers are an integral part of the Department of Resident Life's tradition of experiential learning. Students are expected to adhere to classroom decorum during interactions with guest lecturers.

Laptops: When class is in session, students may use their laptop only as directed by their instructor/lecturer(s). Students shall avoid any activities such as checking email, logging into Facebook or other social media or playing games that diminish their – or their classmates' – engagement with the instructional activity. If a student needs to use a laptop in order to take notes during lecture, the student should inform the Lecture Coordinator. In general, students should keep in mind that the use of laptops should add to the classroom environment, not detract from it. If students are unsure whether a given activity is appropriate, they are encouraged to ask their instructor(s). In the spirit of creating a learning environment, students will also be held responsible for any inappropriate laptop usage during lectures/discussion. Grievous misuse or continued abuse that creates a distraction within the intended learning environment will lead to further disciplinary action.

Attendance

Attendance at all lectures and discussion sections is expected. Students having more than one unexcused absence from the lecture or discussion sections may no longer be eligible for placement as an RA. Students are only allowed to sign in for themselves during each Lecture – please refrain from marking others present or writing other students' names on the Attendance sheet. This could lead to serious disciplinary action.

An unexcused absence from a portion of a lecture or discussion section is considered to be an unexcused absence from an entire class period. Once you have signed in for class, you are to remain for the entire period - unless given approval, in advance. If a student is designated as no longer eligible for an RA position due to unexcused absences, he/she may appeal in writing to the RA Class Coordinator. The final decision on this appeal will be made by the RA Class Coordinator with input from the instructor(s) and the Assistant Director of Resident Life for Human Resources.

Because we are a diverse community and enroll students with many spiritual beliefs, we are sensitive to students' requests for excused absences and make-up test requests due to reasons of religious observances. Be mindful that it is the student's responsibility to inform instructors of any intended absences for religious observances in advance. Notice should be provided as soon as possible.

If circumstances arise that a student cannot attend lecture/discussion, the student should notify their instructor(s) in advance. If a student misses a lecture/discussion, it is the student's responsibility to obtain materials and notes covered in class that day and they should not expect instructor(s) to review the material with them individually. Students should make contact with their instructor and/or the Lecture Coordinator (in the case of Lecture) to inform them of any mitigating circumstances surrounding their absence.

Confidentiality

Many issues in the class session are to remain confidential. Class members are expected to remain mindful of this issue with respect to their peers' contributions during class.

Limits to Confidentiality in the classroom:

While receiving instruction, advising, or other services at the University, Maryland state law requires advisors/educators/employers to report any incident of past or current child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services **and** to the University President's Designee, the University's Chief of Police. In addition, if an educator has reason to believe that a vulnerable adult (an adult who lacks the physical or mental capacity to provide for the adult's daily needs) over the age of 18 is in danger, the educator is required to make a report to law enforcement authorities. Health professionals, psychologists, psychotherapists, counselors and mental health professionals are not required to report child abuse neglect to the President's Designee, but are required by law to make reports to Child Protective Services.

Participation

Class members are expected to participate actively in class sessions. Class members will benefit most when the class atmosphere is one characterized by active and honest discussion. Skill development in those areas described in the class objectives is maximized by frequent and active participation in role-plays and group exercises. Since the experiential aspects of the class are important, class members are expected to cooperate and comply with directions and feedback from instructors during these activities.

Students should respect the rights of other students to contribute to discussion and should avoid monopolizing class discussions. Students should be mindful of different levels of skills or abilities of their peers in speaking fluently and confidently during classroom discussions and make efforts to promote a tolerant and fair environment for all class members. Therefore, it is suggested that individuals raise their hands, rather than volunteer answers, to allow everyone in the class an equal opportunity to participate in the discussion. Again, it is the prerogative of instructors to define the tone and process for classroom participation.

Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive for lecture/discussion on time so that the lecturer(s)/instructor(s) can start and end the lecture/discussion according to schedule. It is the instructor(s)'s prerogative to establish guidelines and protocol for those arriving more than five minutes late. Tardiness may impact a student's grade.

Acknowledging that there are sometimes factors beyond one's control that could result in arriving late to class, students arriving late should wait until the end of discussion to get any handouts or course materials passed out before or during discussion. Similarly, students should wait until the end of discussion to hand in required assignments. Students should ensure that they are marked tardy to account for their arrival to class.

Expectations of Instructors

Students can expect that their instructors will arrive on time and be prepared for class, respond in a timely fashion to students' work, and take students' interests and experiences into consideration when preparing for class. Instructors will be available to students outside the class period to discuss a student's concerns, assist in managing a student's transition, and/or address a student's performance in class.

Students should note that all class instructors are either graduate or full-time practitioners in the field of Student Affairs and work with students living in the residence halls. Teaching Assistants are current Resident Assistants who serve as mentors and provide insight to students in HESI 470. These individuals bring extensive experience into the classroom setting and help to shape students' transition into the RA position.

Course Content:

Readings

Class members are expected to complete all readings and assignments on time. Readings consist of the HESI 470 Course Packet, Students Helping Students by Fred Newton & Steven Ender and the Supplemental Packet on Leadership. Class members will be held responsible for text material in formal evaluations or experiential activities in class, including quizzes, presentations and participation.

Assignments

There are several assignments due during the course of the semester, detailed in accompanying documents and described briefly below:

Assignment 1 (The RA Areas of Responsibility): Each student will go on a duty round with a current RA and write an analysis of the experience as per the assignment information sheet. (30 points)

Assignment 2 (Crisis and Emergency Management): Each student will design and present a group poster project focused on a crisis/emergency issue relevant to university students. (20 points) Topics and group presentation dates will be assigned by the instructor. Presentations will be made during the second half of the Spring semester.

Assignment 3 (The Individual and the Community): Each student will choose one of two options: participation in the Common Grounds program or exploration of an identity group. (30 points)

Journals 1 -4: Each student will write four, 2-3 page journals on pre-assigned topics related to the RA areas of responsibility and community building in the residence halls. (5 points each, 20 points total)

All assignments will be graded with the following criteria:

Content:

The degree to which the student responds to all the specific items in the assignment. The degree to which a student indicates his or her recall and understanding of the material and concepts covered in the course. In other words, think of this as the ‘Who, what, when, why and how’ of the paper. Recalling details is important, as is summarizing the actions carried out during the assignment.

Introspection, Elaboration and Synthesis:

The degree to which a student is insightful, thoughtful, innovative and self-aware in the application of course concepts to his or her individual experiences. The degree to which a student provides detail, depth and development in written work. Instructors will be looking for the student’s ability to reason and provide rationales for conclusions, the extent of critical thinking and the development of examples and analogies. The degree to which the student “brings it all together” and incorporates course material in the creation of new insights, unique products and/or creative solutions. In other words, think of this as the ‘So What’ and ‘Now What’ section of the assignment. Be sure to make meaning of the experience, talk about how it has impacted you and how it translates to what you’ll be doing as a Resident Assistant. This is among the most important elements of the paper because it gives you an opportunity to examine potential impacts to you in the RA role.

Form:

The care and clarity with which a student completes papers and presentations. Written assignments should be of very high quality. Grammar, syntax, punctuation and structure of assignments should support and enhance the concepts that the student intends to convey. The organization, clarity and polish of the group presentation should do the same.

Journals

All journals will be graded with the following criteria:

Weekly journals will be graded with two areas in mind: Form and Content. Journal entries submitted on-time will start with a grade of 5 points. The Discussion Leaders may deduct points from the journal entry if

spelling and/or grammar mistakes exist, the overall flow, format and structure are flawed, the entry does not answer the prompt and/or question, the entry does not meet the word count requirement of 650-850 words, or additional criteria covered in the description of Journal Assignments is not reflected in the journal. Journal entries receiving a score between 0 and 2 must be re-written and will be due the week after the grade is received. Resubmitted journal entries may receive a maximum grade of 3.5 points.

Request for Deadline Extensions due to special circumstances

Class members are expected to seek approval for extensions of assignment deadlines well in advance of due dates from the instructor(s). Assignments which are submitted after due dates with no prior authorization (except in cases of a documented family emergency or personal illness) will be penalized one point per calendar day past the due date. All assignments must be submitted in print form. Assignments may not be e-mailed or faxed, unless the instructors give permission well in advance of the due date.

Quizzes

There will be four quizzes during the semester, each worth 15 points. They will cover information from readings, lectures and discussions.

Grading

The following are point totals and associated grade levels for the course:

Assignment One	30 points
Assignment Two	20 points
Assignment Three	30 points
Journals 1 - 4	20 points (5 points per journal)
Quiz I	15 points
Quiz II	15 points
Quiz III	15 points
<u>Quiz IV</u>	<u>15 points</u>
Total Points	160 points

97 – 100% = A+	77 – 79.99% = C+
94 – 96.99% = A	74 – 76.99% = C
90 – 93.99% = A-	70 – 73.99% = C-
87 – 89.99 = B+	67 – 69.99% = D+
84 – 86.99% = B	64 – 66.99% = D
80 – 83.99% = B-	60 – 63.99% = D-
	59.99% and below = F

Please note that there will be no rounding up of grades. Here is the new plus/minus grading system at University:

A+ and A	4.0 points
A-	3.7 points
B+	3.3 points
B	3.0 points
B-	2.7 points
C+	2.3 points
C	2.0 points
C-	1.7 points
D+	1.3 points
D	1.0 points
D-	0.7 points
F	0 points

CANVAS

The CANVAS course management system contains an integrated set of educational tools for constructing and managing an online course environment. CANVAS includes a set of administrative utilities that allow students to take a more active role in the learning community.

While there are many tools available on CANVAS, the following will be used for this course:

Announcements	Students should check this section at least once a week.
Syllabus	The course syllabus will be available to students at any time.
Assignments	Assignments would be available to download.
Course Notes	Summaries of course content will be provided, along with supplemental materials (instructor contacts, supplemental readings, power points from lecture, etc)
My Grades	Allows students to view their grades on line.

By the first day of class, you should be able to log onto CANVAS by using your username and password at www.elms.umd.edu. Assistance with using various tools on the website is available by calling the Division of IT Help Desk at 301-405-1500.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact their instructor(s) and/or the Course Coordinator, Angela Jackson, so that reasonable accommodations can be made to assist learning and evaluation in the class. In addition, the Office of Disability Support Services at the University of Maryland (301-314-7682) provides a variety of services to students with disabilities; staff is available to consult with students at any time.