Role of the College Residential Associate

The Resident Associate (RA) is crucial to the Rice University college system, assisting masters in supporting the social, cultural, and intellectual activities within the college. Living among the students, he or she is in a unique position to be a positive community facilitator, role model and to provide guidance and leadership to college members. The RA, therefore, must be a visible participant in college life, accessible to students, and willing to stand in for the masters, when appropriate.

The primary goal of every RA should be to support the masters in the smooth and effective running of the college. The specific role that any particular RA plays within the college will vary with each individual and college. A successful RA will make continual effort to know the members of his/her college, be accessible to and serve as a point of contact for all students within the college, and help them understand and access university resources. S/he will encourage and contribute actively to the intellectual, cultural, and social life of the college, develop a clear understanding of university policies and procedures, including emergency response protocols, and assist the college master and other university officials in responding to students in need.

In consultation with and under the direction of the masters, Resident Associates will be expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:

Serve as one of the first points of contact for students:
- Establish relationships with a wide range of students, making an effort to know all members of the college by face and name, promoting a sense of community and an environment of civility within the college.
- Make a consistent effort to be aware of daily life in the college by regularly attending: college meals, a wide variety of college functions, and college meetings.

Develop and support programming for students:
- In consultation with masters and other college leaders, RAs should foster and support social, cultural, developmental and educational programs in the college. These programs may include: college courses, speakers, study breaks, wellness workshops, dramatic productions, concerts, art exhibits, etc.

Serve as an agent of the university:
- Attend trainings and information sessions for RAs led by staff in the dean’s office.
- Stay abreast of curriculum changes, academic support programs, scholarship and fellowship competitions, study abroad opportunities.
- Develop an informed and thorough understanding of university policies and procedures affecting student life – Student Handbook, General Announcements.
- Develop a clear and complete understanding of emergency response protocols involving RUPD, EMS, and the RCC. Attend scheduled emergency response trainings.
- RAs are defined as essential personnel. As essential personnel, RAs are expected to be on site in the event of campus emergencies (e.g., hurricane, flood, etc.)
- RAs are agents of the university, and occupy positions of authority, as well as assume corresponding ethical obligations. For example, RAs are never to engage in romantic relationships with undergraduates (refer to amorous relations policy: http://professor.rice.edu/images/professor/facultysenate/Final%20Approved%20Amorous%20Policy-5.pdf), never to provide alcohol to underage students or illegal substances to any students.
- Assist masters and student leaders in promoting:
  * compliance with university alcohol and drug policies
  * civility within the college and university communities
Serve as a member of the college staff team:
- Maintain regular communication with the college masters, HRFs, coordinator, and student leaders
- Stand-in for the masters at meetings, programs, and parent conferences when appropriate
- Be an active presence during O-Week and graduation events and activities
- Work as a team with the masters and other college leaders to pay attention to the well being of individual students
- Get to know the infrastructure of the college and coordinate with the Student Maintenance Representative and Housing & Dining as necessary with evacuations and emergency response protocols
- Communicate and coordinate with RA(s), HRFs, masters in their own college, as well as RAs from other colleges, to learn and share best practices, tips and techniques

RAs will be called on to provider general advising to students. Faculty RAs may be called upon by the college to assist with academic advising. This may include activities such as:

- Academic Advising events within the college during orientation
- Divisional advising system
- Faculty Associates program
- Identification and follow-up of students with academic problems