Student Assistant

The Student Assistant (SA) works in the hub of the quad – the Quad Information Center. Generally, the SA is required to perform various clerical and administrative tasks related to the efficient functioning of the residence halls. SAs possess a drive for exceptional customer service, an ability to calm situations, and a wealth of knowledge so as to serve as a primary reference for on- and off-campus resources. They are key support staff in promoting the department’s mission of providing inviting, intellectual, and inclusive residences.

Student Assistants are required to work approximately 15 hours/week. This includes weekday, weeknight, and weekend duty shifts. Division of hours is at the discretion of the Quad Information Center supervisor (typically a Graduate Assistant) with the consent of the Quad Coordinator.

Quad Information Center Management

The primary role of the SA is to manage the QIC and any associated spaces, systems, and processes. The following list of responsibilities encompasses the general tasks associated with QIC management, but it is in no way exhaustive; additional or variant responsibilities will depend on the needs of the quad.

Student Assistants are required to:

- Have a general knowledge of on- and off-campus resources to which to refer students for the variety of concerns that may arise (academic, mental and physical health, wellness and nutrition, etc.).
- Manage the repair and key request process. This includes filing of hardcopy requests, input into the online request system, tracking requests, communication with physical facilities and other appropriate offices/personnel concerning student needs, and other related responsibilities as described in training or by supervisors.
- Manage the appointment schedules for quad professional staffs. This requires proficiency in the use of Microsoft Outlook.
- Manage the quad office phone line(s) and direct callers to various staff and resources.
- Maintain the orderliness of the quad office and all associated spaces (storage rooms, meeting space, etc.)
- Perform clerical work such as collating, interoffice mail sorting, addressing letters, phone surveys, and other duties reasonably assigned by professional staff.
- Respect students' privacy when addressing concerns while also following all prescribed reporting obligations as outlined in the staff manual and by supervisors. This includes information protected by FERPA and other applicable laws and regulations.
- Maintain a high level of customer service while addressing student needs:
  - Communicates in a respectful, helpful, and friendly tone; displays an inviting attitude.
  - Calms angry and irate individuals; does not add to volatile situations through language, tone, demeanor, or actions.
  - Exercises appropriate follow-through and communicates same to affected parties.
- Work independently or as a member of the QIC Team (other SAs, quad secretary, professional staff members) as appropriate in an efficient and productive manner.
- Maintain and consistently update attractive and informative bulletin boards in the quad office or other designated areas (Flag Hall, lobbies, etc.):
  - Regularly remove outdated materials from bulletin boards.
  - Replace damaged bulletin board decorations and contents within a reasonable timeframe designated by professional staff.
Role Model

As a member of the Residential Life staff, Student Assistants are exceedingly visible members of the campus community especially given their positions in the highly trafficked Quad Office. “Life in a fishbowl,” as it is called, requires SAs to be constantly aware of their actions as their behavior reflects upon their department and University.

Student Assistants are required to:

- Abide by the policies and stipulations outlined in *Community Rights and Responsibilities*; the Residence License; the staff manual; this document; and all local, state, and federal laws.
- Convey a positive attitude toward the Student Assistant position and its duties and responsibilities as well as toward the Department of Residential Life and the University at Albany.
- Show respect for persons of all backgrounds, races, sexual orientations, religions, abilities, genders, etc. The SA will abide by all sexual harassment and non-discrimination policies in his/her relationships with fellow staff members and students.
- Utilize electronic media (e.g. personal websites, online social networking, photographs, video and audio recordings, email, instant messenger, and phone/voicemail) in ways that are consistent with the expectations of the SA position and, in general, the department.
- Actively support quad, departmental, or University programming through advertising, attendance, and by motivating resident students to be involved.

Diversity

The Department of Residential Life is committed to providing environments free from harassment, discrimination, and intolerance in order to fulfill the University’s mission of a diverse campus. Student Assistants serve as key educators for the value of diversity in the residence halls, for it is from a broad range of perspectives that knowledge is expanded and deepened.

Student Assistants are required to:

- Treat all students equally without regard for sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious background, physical ability, veteran status, or any other characteristic as outlined in appropriate non-discrimination policies.
- Report hate or bias-related behaviors, statements, or incidents using protocol established in staff training, departmental policy, and by supervisors. This includes but is not limited to verbal or written statements, derogatory jokes, and graffiti. When reporting, SAs should remain at the scene of the incident (so long as it is safe to do so) until duty staff or other appropriate personnel arrive to manage the incident.

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards are important passive ways to inform residents of resources and upcoming events. Student Assistants are responsible for one of more boards in the quad information center or other areas (lobbies, Flag Rooms, etc.). Boards can be used for passive programming, informational resources, or other uses as described by supervisors.

Student Assistants are required to:

- Maintain and consistently update an attractive and informative bulletin board.
- Regularly remove outdated materials from bulletin boards.
- Replace damaged bulletin board decorations and contents within a reasonable timeframe designated by professional staff.
Incident Reporting

Sometimes, situations occur in or are reported to the quad information center that requires an SA to transmit through official channels the nature and circumstances of the incident. In such an event, the SA may act as the “hub” between the Resident Assistant staff, professional staff, and any other individuals responding to the incident. However, as an agent of the University and Department of Residential Life, the SA is required to report to appropriate personnel potential violations of University policy or any local, state, and federal laws.

Student Assistants are required to:

- Respond to emergency situations in accordance with departmental protocol and instructions of professional staff or first-responders. These situations include, but are not limited to, power outages, floods, weather emergencies, verbal or physical altercations, sexual assault, medical emergencies, mental health crises, suicide, robbery, fire alarms, and building/quad evacuation.
- Report violations of University policy in accordance with departmental protocol and instructions of professional staff. These situations include, but are not limited to, underage consumption or possession of alcohol; illegal drug possession or use; and quiet/courtesy hours violations. When reporting, SAs should remain at the scene of the incident (so long as it is safe to do so) until duty staff or other appropriate personnel arrive to manage the incident.
- Correctly and completely fill out the Incident Report Form (IRF) immediately following an incident and then submit it for review by the Quad Coordinator in the manner dictated by quad staff policy and/or departmental protocol.

Openings & Closings

In order to execute the efficient, safe, and proper opening or closing of the residence halls, SAs are required to perform certain duties and functions that provide for the maximum possible security of the residence halls and during certain breaks, of the belongings of residents.

Student Assistants are required to:

- Report for work prior to residence hall opening and remain at work after residence hall closings for a period described by supervisors. Reporting dates and work assignments are at the discretion of the Department of Residential Life professional staff members.
- Execute all check-in and check-out procedures as described in the student staff manual, training, and by supervisors.
- Prepare the quad office for opening and closing through check-in/out materials preparation, posting of signage, development of efficient processes, and other assignments as described by professional staff.
ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The SA position is expected to be the next priority to academics and family obligations. SAs are expected to plan for at-home family events, tests, papers, and other commitments so that they do not unduly interfere with the requirements of their position. The following policies and expectations are in place to ensure the efficient and uninterrupted management of the residence halls; a high baseline performance of all staff; and, most importantly, that the staff can maintain a healthy balance of academic and nonacademic commitments.

Grades and Academic Commitments

- Student Assistants must maintain at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average in order to be hired for and maintain their positions.
- If an SA’s cumulative grade point average falls between 2.25 and 2.5 while in the position, the SA will be placed on probation for a maximum of one academic semester provided it is mathematically possible to raise the cumulative GPA to 2.5 within that amount of time. Otherwise, the SA will be deemed ineligible for reappointment/continued appointment.
- If an SA’s cumulative grade point average falls below a 2.25, the SA’s continued appointment will be at the discretion of the Quad Coordinator of the SA’s assigned quad and will only be maintained if it is mathematically possible to raise the GPA back to 2.5 within one academic semester while not unduly compromising the SA’s well-being or job performance. Otherwise, the SA will be deemed ineligible for reappointment/continued appointment.
- If an SA’s semester grade point average falls below a 2.5 for two consecutive semesters even if the cumulative GPA stays at or above 2.5, the SA may be placed on probation or deemed ineligible for reappointment/continued appointment at the discretion of the direct supervisor and Quad Coordinator.
- Co-curricular commitments (student organization membership/executive board member, research assistantship, student teaching, teaching assistantship, athletics, etc.) should be discussed with the Quad Coordinator and supervisor. The nature of the Student Assistant position is flexible enough to accommodate many activities, but these commitments must be carefully balanced with the demands of the SA job in order to avoid negative impact on the SA’s performance.

Outside Commitments

- Notification of employment beyond the SA position must be transmitted to both the supervisor and Quad Coordinator prior to beginning said employment (if outside employment is held at the time of SA appointment, said employment should be disclosed at that time). Commitments related to outside employment are not approved reasons to miss Residential Life obligations (meetings, programs, trainings, etc.); missing Residential Life obligations or duty shifts in favor of other employment can be used as justification for termination from Residential Life position.

Hall Assignment

- Residential Life reserves the right to change staff room assignments at any time, especially if it is in the best interest of the SA and/or the residents.
- Transferring to another hall mid-year or between years is not permitted except at the discretion of the appropriate Quad Coordinator(s).

Staff Meetings/Training:

- Attendance and participation at All-Staff meetings is required. All-Staff meetings usually occur monthly.
- Attendance at regularly scheduled staff and one-on-one meetings is required; these usually occur weekly.
- Attendance and participation at all sessions during the Fall and Spring Training is required. SAs will not be excused from training except for UAlbany-specific academic requirements.
- Training of some SAs in specific areas of expertise may be requested. Self-selected workshops may also be required.
Alcohol

- SAs must exercise good judgment when making decisions regarding alcohol use.
- SAs under the age of 21 may not consume or possess alcohol or alcohol paraphernalia (empty containers, funnels, etc.).
- Of-age SAs are prohibited from drinking with or providing alcohol to underage students.
- Of-age SAs should refrain from drinking to excess, storing alcohol in common areas or places reasonably accessible to underage students, and from possessing more than the amount allowed in the Bulk Containers policy as outlined in Community Rights and Responsibilities and the Residence License.
- No staff member may be in the presence of the illegal use of alcohol except in response to a violation of alcohol policy or applicable law.
- SAs may not use alcohol prior to or while on duty.

Drugs

- SAs are prohibited from using and distributing any illegal drug.
- SAs are prohibited from abusing and distributing any prescription medications; SAs are prohibited from abusing over-the-counter medications and may only distribute same at the direction of the department (ex. Flu “Kits”, etc.).
- SAs may not be in the presence of a violation of applicable drug policies or laws except in response to that violation.

Electronic Media and Websites

- SAs may not post items of an offensive or sexual nature.
- Depictions of or comments alluding to policy violations are prohibited.

Key Control

- SAs must gain permission of a member of the professional staff (usually the Director-on-Duty) in order to obtain and use the master key ring or “recess” keys.
- SAs are expected to use master keys/recess keys only in administrative procedures (opening/closing, maintenance procedure) or when necessary in emergency situations.
- SAs are prohibited from using master keys for inappropriate access to student rooms, restricted administrative offices, or mechanical areas including the maintenance tunnels. SAs are expected to follow key control procedures as specified and report any losses.
- SAs are subject to disciplinary action if master keys/recess keys under their supervision are lost or misused. This includes probation, termination of employment, and/or reparations.
- Administrative keys issued to SAs (QIC Key, Storage area key, etc.) are to be used for work-related purposes only. Misusing keys to gain unauthorized access to spaces or granting access of non-staff members (or unauthorized staff members) to restricted spaces as defined by professional staff are prohibited. SAs are subject to disciplinary action if administrative keys are lost or misused.
SAs’ performance will be based on fulfillment of duties as well as the terms and conditions that are included in this document.

SAs judged to be performing below-average; or who fail to fully meet the requirements of the position as outlined in this document or as described in training or by supervisors; or who violate the polices and expectations described in this document, the Residence License, or Community Rights & Responsibilities are subject to disciplinary action. This includes:

- Verbal Warning – given by direct supervisor.
- Written Warning – given by direct supervisor.
- Probation – given by Quad Coordinator.
- Termination – at the discretion of Quad Coordinator.
- Any of the above may include certain conditions such as extra training, additional work assignments, or other reasonable condition as determined by supervisor or quad coordinator.
- The above constitutes a hierarchy of disciplinary statuses; however, assignment of status is at the discretion of professional staff as well as the nature of the condition that leads to disciplinary action.

SAs will participate in an evaluation process, which may include input from residents and co-workers, each semester. Solicitation of and appropriate use of input is at the discretion of professional staff members.

Decisions regarding renewal for an additional academic year will be based on performance evaluations and the SA’s reapplication; renewal for the following academic year is at the discretion of the Quad Coordinator in consultation with the SA’s current supervisor.

Renewal in the position may be contingent upon certain conditions, such as probation, extra training, additional work assignments, or other reasonable conditions as described by the Quad Coordinator.

SAs judged to be at a below-average rating in evaluations; or who commit actions unbecoming the SA position; or whose reapplication is determined to be insufficient for reappointment (as judged by the Quad Coordinator) may not be renewed for the following academic year. This rule applies to all staff members regardless of disciplinary status (warnings, probation).

Termination by Employer:

- Improper performance or non-performance of the duties and responsibilities described in this document, in training, and by professional staff, or any other behavior which in the judgment of professional staff may significantly affect the ability of the SA to discharge the duties of the position may result in termination of employment. Decisions regarding termination will be made by the Quad Coordinator who supervises the area where the SA is employed. The Student Assistant will have the right to a review of the reasons for such termination.

I have read the description of the duties, responsibilities, policies, and expectations related to the Student Assistant position and agree to abide by the stipulations of this document, the terms and conditions of the Residence License, and the code of conduct as outlined in Community Rights and Responsibilities.

Signature: __________________________________________________________ Date: ________________

Print Name: _________________________________________________________