



INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE POSITION OF RESIDENT ASSISTANT (RA)

2020-2021 Academic Year

Resident Assistants, also known as RAs, are assigned to the 39 Houses in the Houses. Simply put, their responsibilities are to assist the Resident Heads in helping to develop House communities that are supportive of the educational mission of the University. This task requires that Resident Heads and Resident Assistants serve in several roles. The most common role involves serving as an informal counselor to residents in academic or personal matters and providing a variety of activities - social, cultural, recreational, and educational - for residents. In addition, Resident Assistants must serve as administrators of University policy and procedure, support House Council, uphold community standards, and be sources of information about the University, the Hyde Park community, and the city of Chicago. Resident Assistants are supervised by their Resident Head(s).

The following information is intended to assist candidates for the position of Resident Assistant by providing a general description of Housing & Residence Life and the roles and responsibilities of Housing Staff members. The description listed here is not exhaustive. In addition, there is a summary of the terms of the Resident Assistant appointment and a description of the Resident Assistant selection process.

All Resident Assistant candidates are *required* to attend one information session in order to apply. This session provides critical information regarding the process and what to expect from the RA position. For further questions, please contact Housing & Residence Life at (773) 702-7366 to speak with or arrange an appointment to meet with one of the Assistant Directors of Residence Life. Questions can also be submitted via email to housingselection@uchicago.edu

Residence Life Staff

- Sophia Chaknis, Executive Director of Housing & Residence Life
- Heath Rossner, Senior Associate Director of Residence Life
- Sean Lee, Senior Assistant Director of Residence Life
- Jessica Beaver-Hollman, Assistant Director of Residence Life
- Chris Hardin, Assistant Director of Residence Life
- Jacqui Payne, Assistant Director of Residence Life



Application Timeline for 2020-2021 Resident Assistant (RA) Candidates

OCTOBER 2019

10/07: RA Application Available online at: <https://housing.uchicago.edu/about-us/staffing-opportunities/>

NOVEMBER 2019

11/4-11/26: Information Sessions: See HRL website for times & locations
*One session each business day

JANUARY 2020

1/06-1/08: Information Sessions: See HRL website for times & locations
*One session each business day
1/10: Last day to turn in RA Application (Application, Written Statement, Resume, Transcript) *due by 3:00pm*
1/24: Reference and RH evaluation due to HRL by 3:00pm
1/30: All first round interviews will be completed

FEBRUARY 2020

2/4: Placement Interviews begin
2/24: Placement Interviews end

MARCH 2020

3/02: Hire Letters and RA Contracts sent to Candidates
3/09: RA acceptance due to HRL by 3:00pm

MAY

TBA: Mandatory meeting for all hired 2020-2021 RAs



Additional Information for Resident Assistant Candidates

Houses

The University provides Housing accommodations for virtually every student who requests housing. The largest component of the University's housing program is the Houses, with a capacity of approximately 3,450 students. For the 2020-2021 academic year, there will be 48 Houses within seven residence halls. Resident Heads and Resident Assistants are assigned to each of the Houses. Resident Assistants are supervised by their Resident Head(s).

All Houses are co-ed. Depending on the architecture of the building, they may have same sex or co-ed floors. House policies, including visitation policies, are the same throughout the Houses. The average House has about eighty undergraduate residents, with the smallest Houses having nearly forty residents, and the largest having more than one hundred. All Houses are four-class houses, although most include many more first- and second-year students than third- and fourth-year students. Each House contains students with a range of academic and co-curricular interests.

Major Functions of the Resident Assistant Position

Successful Resident Assistants must enjoy meeting and spending time with students at mealtimes, at intramural events, at House functions, and in other formal and informal ways. They must serve as positive role models of academic engagement and support residents within the House. They must have a positive attitude about the educational mission of the University of Chicago, and the value of the Houses in fulfilling that mission. Resident Assistants must be available in the residence halls most evenings and weekends during the academic year, and must feel comfortable relating to students as peers, administrators, or enforcers of policy as the situation requires. They must approach the Resident Head/Assistant relationship as a collaborative team effort, and must maintain regular, if not daily, contact with their Resident Head(s). Resident Head(s) supervise the Resident Assistant(s) and will give regular feedback to the Resident Assistant in regards to their job performance (in order to benefit the House and develop the student leader). The Resident Assistants are required to participate in a variety of pre-employment and in-service training programs, must attend regular staff meetings (every other week), and may be called upon to serve on various committees.

Relationship with Students

Resident Assistants fulfill a wide range of roles in their Houses, working as mentors, peer counselors, administrators, policy enforcers, activities and governance advisors, and general resource persons. Effectiveness as a Resident Assistant is greatly enhanced by knowing well the great majority of students in the House. Resident Assistants who know their residents well can offer support, encouragement, counsel, and help to those students, particularly the younger undergraduates



who might profit from the attention of an experienced UChicago student. Specifically, the Housing staff is expected to eat meals with students in the dining halls; spend time with students in the House lounges at night and on weekends; and interact with students in formal and informal settings.

In order to be successful as Resident Assistants, candidates must plan to be active in establishing opportunities for this interaction in both the Resident Assistants' room and in the students' rooms and common spaces. It would not be appropriate, nor is it acceptable at any time for Resident Assistants to become romantically involved with a resident of their House.

House Councils and Activities

Resident Assistants provide leadership to students in creating communities that are supportive of the educational goals of the University. In most Houses, students elect a council of officers who, together with the Resident Heads and Resident Assistants, plan and carry out activities which will appeal to a broad range of residents. House activities include programs that are socially, intellectually, and culturally stimulating and exciting. Typical activities in a House include intramural sports; informal receptions with faculty guests; study breaks (informal gatherings of the House, usually late at night, for refreshments and conversations), and trips off campus to movies, cultural events, sporting events, or restaurants. Each Resident Head is given an expense fund to cover the costs of entertaining students, and to support the activities of the House. Resident Assistants work through the Resident Head to obtain financial support for activities they are organizing.

Conduct and Community Standards

Students at the University of Chicago are expected to take a great measure of responsibility for regulating their own lives. The University does not impose a lengthy list of policies and procedures governing students' conduct. It does, however, prohibit behavior that infringes on the rights of others, is dangerous, or is illegal. As Housing and Residence Life live-in staff, Resident Heads and Resident Assistants are expected to see that students' rights are protected and that conditions in the House support the educational goals of the University. To those ends, Resident Assistants enforce policies, and when appropriate, work with the Resident Heads to uphold conduct sanctions or refer conduct cases to other University administrators.



Relationship to Other Housing Staff

The Resident Heads

A Resident Head or Resident Head couple is assigned to each of the Houses. Resident Heads are typically advanced graduate students, but some are affiliated with the University as faculty or administrative staff. The Resident Assistants are directly responsible to their Resident Head(s), although the Resident Deans and the Assistant Directors of Residence Life also provide direction and support for Resident Assistants and have an interest in their success. Resident Assistants meet regularly with their Resident Heads and maintain frequent contact with the Resident Head(s) outside of scheduled meetings.

The Resident Deans

All Resident Deans are appointed senior members of the College faculty. Resident Deans offer building-wide programs and activities which are aimed at promoting a sense of community on a larger scale than the House level and which cultivate students' involvement in intellectual and cultural programs, particularly those offered throughout the city. In addition, Resident Deans take an interest in the general quality of life in the Houses and work directly with the Assistant Directors of Residence Life in addressing related issues.

Housing & Residence Life

Housing & Residence Life is staffed by the Executive Director, three Associate Directors, one Senior Assistant Director, and ten Assistant Directors who provide overall direction for the Houses and housing staff. Six Assistant Directors have direct oversight for a portion of the Houses and will work closely with the House staff in that area. The Associate Directors manage residence life, occupancy & administration, and operations, and have regular contact with the Resident Heads, but less frequent contact with Resident Assistants.

The Residence Life professional staff, in consultation with the Resident Deans, Resident Heads and Resident Assistants, determines House policies and procedures. Resident Heads report directly to six of the Assistant Directors of Residence Life. The Assistant Directors of Residence Life meet regularly with the Resident Deans, Resident Heads, and Resident Assistants in staff meetings, and occasionally attend meetings of the student hall councils in their areas.



Coordination with Support Staff

Housing & Residence Life functions include oversight of housekeeping, maintenance, and front desk operations. An Assistant Director of Operations (ADO) manages these functions in each residence hall. Housing staff are expected to work closely with each residence hall's Assistant Director of Operations. Housing & Residence Life also supports a residential dining program that requires Resident Assistants to work with the UChicago Campus Dining Managers and their staffs in addressing issues that affect the quality of life in the houses and in the dining halls.

Additional Student Services in the College

Resident Assistants must develop a good working knowledge of the services offered to students by other offices of the University, in particular, Career Advancement, Center for Leadership and Involvement, the University Community Service Center, the Center for Identity and Inclusion, Office of Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Support, Student Counseling Services, and Student Health Services. Students who can benefit from the services of these and other University offices are more likely to use such services when encouraged to do so by their Resident Heads and Resident Assistants.