Residential Community Advisor — Leadership and Development

Position Description

The Office of Residential Life is responsible for translating the overall philosophy and objectives of the Illinois Wesleyan University residence hall program into a practical and meaningful set of services, activities and programs for students living within the university-owned residence halls. Within the framework of the department's stated philosophy and objectives, the Residential Community Advisor — Leadership and Development (RCA-LD) position was created to offer one exemplary returning Residential Community Advisor (RCAs) the opportunity for growth and development within Residential Life that exceeds the scope of the traditional RCA position as a leader of peers. The RCA-LD represents the Office of Residential Life and works to promote an environment that fosters educational and personal growth. Interpretation of the University, its purposes, objectives and standards is a vital function of the Residential Community Advisor position. The RCA-LD will be placed in the small halls, and the position will be filled and placed before other RCA selections are made.

Responsibilities, Spring/Summer 2007:

1. Actively and appropriately participate in two Spring Training Orientations—one three-hour evening session and one day-long retreat. Take advantage of additional opportunities to prepare for Fall 2007.

2. Meet twice monthly with other incoming RCAs and the DRL for the purposes of on-going evaluation and enhancement of the Residential Life program, of assisting with Residence Director search processes, and of acting as a focus group for hall renovation and policy modification. The incoming RCAs will also have primary responsibility for the desk staff selection process.

3. Determine Fall 2007 staff theme. Prepare CA meeting schedule and tentative agendas for Fall 2007.

4. Participate in Fall 2007 housing selection process.

5. Read and reflect upon the Class of 2011 book.

6. Meet with the Director of Residential Life and his/her designee in April for a one-on-one meeting to include an evaluation of performance to date and Fall 2007 contract provisions.

7. Help to facilitate regular Spring ORL processes such as Residential Life staff selection (attendance at the reception, 8 individual interviews and a half-day of group process) and housing selection (one night).

8. Plan (March) and preview (April) for professional staff two training sessions to be offered during Fall Training 2007.

Responsibilities, Fall 2007 — Spring 2008:

1. Serve as a helper and resource to students in fostering growth and development within individual and group contexts, especially assisting students in making wise choices through the development of effective decision-making skills.

2. Implement, with other residence hall staff, the philosophy and objectives of the IWU residence hall program as outlined and explained by the Office of Residential Life.

3. Participate in all staff trainings throughout the year. In conjunction with other Residential Life staff, create, organize and present programs on various topics.

4. Contribute to the success of Fall Festival. RCAs in upperclass halls will serve as Festival Staff, assuming responsibility, with the help of the hall staff, for the planning and execution of a set of festival events; RCAs in first-year halls will provide desk supervision, work to support building staff members and new students, and will work as a team to facilitate several festival activities. All staff members are expected to actively engage the first-year reading.

5. Provide for regular contact and communication with and among Community Assistants. Facilitate a monthly CA staff meeting, provide for developmental activities and information exchange. Coordinate the collection of CA resources and the compilation of the CA CD of staff member resources.

6. Directly supervise two Small Hall CAs, and coordination of mail and equipment within the Small Halls.

7. Participate in weekly staff meetings scheduled throughout the year.

8. Provide a variety of active and passive programming opportunities targeting Small Halls/Magill staff, RHA leaders, Community Assistants and the RCA staff in compliance with the approach and structure of the ORL programming model.

9. Mentor building staff on in-hall responsibilities including, but not limited to, hall desk procedures, duty, rounds and emergency procedures, for the purpose of consistency.

10. Review the hall duty logs on a weekly basis to become current with issues and concerns affecting the hall and staff community. Assume campus-wide on-duty weekend coverage one or two weekends per semester. Facilitate campus-wide key distribution for Fall early arrivals.

11. Work to foster positive relationships and leadership growth with the RHA Executive Committee. Attend Executive Committee Meetings, provide team development activities, social opportunities for group bonding, and recognition of officers. Attend General
Assembly meetings and facilitate positive interactions between exec and general members through the coordination of development activities.

12. Sit on the ORL Advisory Committee for the purposes of on-going evaluation and enhancement of the Residential Life program, of assisting with Residence Director search process, and of acting as a focus group for hall renovation and policy modification. Show group leadership by facilitating opportunities for RCA staff development and group bonding. Coordinate the ABCD Club recognition process

13. Perform necessary functions in the absence of the Residence Director; for example, facilitating staff meetings, coordinating crisis situations, and making appropriate referrals.

14. Attend University Convocations and other campus functions of notable significance.

15. Assume other responsibilities related to the residence hall program as assigned by the Residence Director or the Office of Residential Life.

Requirements: Successful completion of at least one semester as a Resident Assistant or First-Year Resident Advisor for IWU.

Accountability: Residential Community Advisors report directly to the Residence Director of the hall in which they are assigned and ultimately to the Director of Residential Life.

Role Modeling: As a residence hall staff, we function as educators. One of the most effective ways of educating others is through role modeling appropriate behaviors. Examples of behaviors expected of a Residential Community Advisor include: Setting a positive example. Conducting yourself in an honest, conscientious, courteous, and professional manner at all times and showing respect for persons of all backgrounds, ethnicity, races, lifestyles, interests, and abilities. Maintaining appropriate personal and professional decorum. Refraining from becoming involved in activities or encouraging behaviors which are in direct opposition to this principle. Confronting your colleagues who display inappropriate actions or do not show respect for others. Actively supporting, interpreting, enforcing, and abiding by all University policies and procedures as described in the University Catalog, Student Handbook, Residential Life Policies and any other official publications made available to you or to the student body in general.

Be aware of yourself as a role model should you decide to consume alcohol. Do not provide alcohol to any staff or student under the age of 21. Refrain from becoming intoxicated because intoxication does not fall within the framework of an acceptable, positive role model. As a role model, you should: Be aware of personal attitudes regarding alcohol use as demonstrated by your own speech and behavior; Do not encourage through job function or personal action, alcohol related events involving residents; Suggest alternatives to alcohol related events; Look out for the well being of others in drinking situations; Do not emphasize the use of alcohol through your personal behavior or any program you sponsor; Share information regarding students’ use of alcohol and other health related situations with your Residence Director.

Inappropriate role-modeling, given the context above, may be cause for immediate termination of appointment by the Office of Residential Life. Additionally, any Residential Community Advisor who leaves the position (forced or voluntary) will be subject to a hall re-assignment.

Academic Standing: Residential Community Advisors must maintain a minimum 2.00 cumulative grade point average. A Residential Community Advisor will be placed on probation at the time the cumulative average falls below a 2.25. A Residential Community Advisor failing to achieve good academic standing after one semester of probation may be dismissed and the appointment terminated.

Missed Commitments: If you cannot fulfill any part of your Residential Community Advisor responsibilities, you must contact your Residence Director immediately (minimally one week in advance). Regardless if the missed commitment is excused or unexcused, you will need to "make-up" the missed information/responsibility.

Remuneration: The remuneration for this position will be a credit given toward University room charge, ($4824.00 for 2006-2007). Additionally, upon successful completion of the Residential Community Advisor duties and responsibilities, a stipend of $2000.00 per contract term ($200.00 for Spring 2007, $300.00 for Fall 2007 training, $600.00 per semester for Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 and $300.00 for May Term 2008). Stipends are paid out on the first pay period following the completion of the term of service, typically January for Fall, May for Spring and June for May Term. Leaving the position, for any reason, will result in the receipt of only a pro-rated portion of the room allocation at the date of release of service as a Residential Community Advisor.

Contract Provisions: Residential Community Advisors are issued a probationary contract for the Spring 2007 semester. A joint review of the probationary period performance will be held in April 2007 between each RCA and the Director of Residential Life and/or his designee. Based on successful completion of probationary responsibilities, the presence of a spirit of collegiality expected of incoming RCAs, as well as of the completion of responsibilities and expectations of the concurrently held staff position, a contract may be offered for Fall 2007. Residential Community Advisors' contracts are issued for a particular academic term. In the event that the hall of assignment is closed at the end of a semester, it shall be understood that the Residential Community Advisor's contract will be terminated unless a transfer to another hall can be arranged. In the case where a RCA is hired as a mid-term replacement, the contract will be issued at the date of hire and run to the end of the current term.

Contracts are not automatically renewed for subsequent terms of service but will depend upon the evaluation of past performance and future potential as determined by the Residence Director and the Director of Residential Life. Failure to fulfill duties, responsibilities and expectations as outlined by the Office of Residential Life may be grounds for termination. Inappropriate role-modeling, given the context above, may be cause for probation or immediate termination of appointment by the Office of Residential Life. Additionally, any Residential Community Advisor who leaves the position (forced or voluntary) will be subject to a hall re-assignment. In such cases, a move can be expected within 24 hours.