So You Want to Be a RA
In a Focused Community...

Please use this as your guide to becoming a Focused RA at the University of Virginia for the 2012-2013 Academic Year. If you are interested in becoming an RA in a First Year or Upper Class Area, please refer to the First Year/Upperclass Guide that can be found at www.virginia.edu/residence life.

If you have any questions, please email selectionsuva@gmail.com.
ELIGIBILITY

I'm a first year student. Can I apply to be a Focused RA?

Anyone who is enrolled as a student at the University and has been accepted to a Residential College or Language House is eligible to apply. You must be in good academic standing as defined by your school of enrollment and meet our minimum GPA requirement of 2.0. Grades checks are conducted for all applicants before interview offers are extended. Rising first-year students (students currently in high school) are not eligible to apply.

I am a graduate student. Can I apply?

Graduate students with residence life experience at another institution need to have been enrolled at UVA for at least one year to be eligible to apply for a position in Upperclass and Focused areas. Graduate students must also apply and be accepted to the residential college. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis determined by staffing needs.

I am an international student. Can I apply?

Absolutely- we welcome your application. Most international students have a visa status that allows them to work on-grounds. We encourage you to check with the International Studies Office if you are unsure.

I am thinking about studying abroad next year, can I still apply to be an RA?

Yes. Typically students who are offered an RA position for the year they intend to go abroad will defer their spot for a year since eligibility requirements state RAs must be enrolled for the entire year.

If I was previously an RA but went abroad for a semester and want to be an RA again, do I need to re-apply for the position?

No, you do not need to re-apply, but you do need to let the Assistant Dean of Students, Vicki Gist (vgist@virginia.edu) know that you intend to re-claim a position before the Spring Semester. Re-appointment is not guaranteed, and is subject to review of previous performance.
APPLICATION PROCESS

What is the application process like?

Candidates are required to complete two applications on the @UVA Network. A specific supplemental application is required for those interested in applying for Focused communities. Please be sure to indicate on your supplemental application if you would like to be considered for a First Year/Upperclass RA position if not offered a Focused position. Additionally, you will be required to submit a completed recommendation form and a resume. Be aware of the due dates for these materials, which can be found at the end of this document. The link to the application can be found at www.virginia.edu/residence life.

How Do I access the application on @UVA?

Visit www.virginia.edu/residencelife. Click on “Employment” in the top left corner of the page. Click “Submit Application on-line using @UVA”. Log-In using your computing ID, click “Join Organization”. Once you are approved, you will have access to all application materials when they are activated.

How many openings are there for Focused RAs?

This number depends every year on the amount of current RAs living in focused areas who graduate or decide not to come back to the program. Unfortunately, there is no way to predict this from year to year what these numbers will look like, and they will vary between living areas.

I attended an information session during the fall semester; do I need to attend another one?

All of the information sessions contain the same information—you only need to attend one of the sessions.

Can someone other than a current Resident Advisor complete a recommendation form for me?

Anyone who can speak to your successful potential as a Resident Advisor complete your recommendation form.

Where can I get assistance with writing a resume?

Resume writing assistance materials are available on our website or through UCS and we encourage you to use these resources to your advantage!
INTERVIEW PROCESS

After submitting your complete application, you will be required to participate in a group interview and an individual interview. You will interview in front of the Senior Resident of the area you have applied, one RA, and one member of the governance council for that area.

What should I expect and how should I prepare for the group interview?

Group Interviews will take place on January 29, 2012. You will be contacted with details about location. The group interview lasts approximately an hour and a half. As a group, you will work together to address several different scenarios that speak towards your understanding of the Resident Staff program and the role of a Resident Advisor. We evaluate your critical thinking skills in situations commonly faced by RAs.

What should I expect for the individual interview?

Individual interviews will take place from February 1-3. You will be contacted with details about location. You will sign up for a half hour time slot online at the end of January and the actual interview lasts approximately 20 minutes. You will be asked a variety of questions that speak towards your understanding of the Resident Staff Program and your approach to issues commonly faced by Resident Advisors. We encourage you to dress in a professional manner for the individual interview.

How should I prepare for the interview process?

There will be an Interview Techniques Workshop on February 13, 2011 Location TBA. You can best prepare by reviewing the Mission and Purpose, Core Values, and Philosophy of the Office of Residence Life, found at www.virginia.edu/residencelife. You may also speak to current RAs about their understanding of the role of a Resident Advisor and the values of the Residence Life Program. While the resident advisors cannot provide you with specific interview questions, they can provide you insight into what it’s really like to be an RA. Having a solid understanding of the position and the program will help a lot in formulating your responses to the interview questions.
NOTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT

How will I know if I get a position?

You will receive official notification via your UVA email address by the end of Spring Break 2012 informing you of whether you have been offered a position, alternate status or have not been selected for staff. Please be sure to include your UVA Computing ID/email address when you apply, or that your UVA email is forwarded to the email account you regularly use so that you do not miss this notification. Please indicate on your application if you would like to be considered for the First Year/Upperclass communities if you are not offered a position in the Focused community.

What does it mean if I’m chosen to be an alternate?

Alternates who accept “alternate status” will be placed in an alternate pool and will be notified if a position becomes available. More information will be available to alternates when offers are made.

What are the expectations once I am hired?

New RAs are required to attend mandatory orientation events in early/mid April. Specific dates and times for these sessions will be available when offers are made. Resident Advisors must arrive for a mandatory training program (called O-Week) no later than August 17, 2012. No exceptions.

How will I be placed in a position?

For the Focused process, candidates interview for a specific community and are offered a position for that specific community. Staffs will make room assignments during their first staff meeting in the Spring.
REMUNERATIONS

What are the remunerations?

Resident Advisors receive a furnished single room rent-free during the term of employment, local phone, data hookup, and Resident Staff Meal Plan (50 meals per semester, no plus dollars), and all utilities.

RAs in Brown College, Hereford College, Shea House, French House, and Spanish House receive 80 meals per semester + $175 plus dollars.

Compensation for the cost of your housing as well as your meal plan will be made through SIS. You may upgrade your meal plan, but you will be responsible for paying the difference.

What if I’ve already signed a contract to live somewhere else?

If you signed a contract for on-grounds housing and accept a position on Resident Staff, you will be released from your housing contract and your deposit will be refunded. If you have signed a lease for off-grounds housing, you will need to work with the property manager to determine whether/how you can be released from that contract.

Will being an RA affect my financial aid?

Compensation through the Resident Staff program may change your financial aid package. We encourage you to speak with someone from Financial Aid to understand how your package may be impacted. You may email faid@virginia.edu with your questions or concerns.
IMPORTANT DATES

11/29: Erns Commons 233, 7 PM, Fall Information Session

12/5: Minor 125, 6 PM, Fall Information Session

1/19: Clark 18, 7 PM, Spring Information Session

1/20, 11:59 PM: Full Application Due

1/23: Newcomb Kaleidoscope Room, 7 PM, Spring Information Session

1/26: Interview Sign-ups Begin

1/29: Group Interviews, Location/Time TBD

2/1-3: Individual Interviews, Location/Time TBD

By 2.6: Offers extended (date subject to change)

2/10: Acceptances due (date subject to change)