

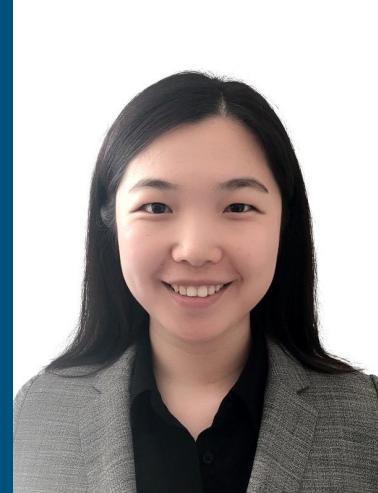
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# A Fresh Look at a Stale Program



Retraining the Trainers



# Bronson University - Mission

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The primary purpose of Bronson University is to empower students, faculty, staff, and the community to achieve their highest potential of intellectual, physical, and human development by offering broad and balanced academic programs. With high expectations for student success, Bronson University seeks to provide its diverse communities with an accessible learning environment through quality teaching. The university is dedicated to serving the community through supporting students in their efforts to learn, discover, create, and improve as global citizens.

(adapted from Northeastern State University mission statement)

# Housing and Residence Life - Vision

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The Office of Residence Life at Bronson University shapes future professionals as leading role models and sets a standard of excellence by serving the diverse on-campus-resident community. We serve and educate our diverse population with a culture of respect and acceptance.

(adapted from Northeastern State University mission statement)

# Bronson University Campus Residence Structure

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Approximately 2000 students live on campus in a variety of residence halls and 10% are international students.

- Traditional floors (semi-private): 1200 students
- Quads (4 private rooms, 2 bathrooms): 500
- Suites (4 bedroom, 2 bathroom, kitchenette): 200
- Family Housing ( 1 & 2 bedroom apartments): 100

# RA Training Structure

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## Online Training

- Description of “RA 101” training program
- Training is divided into 4 modules

## Face to Face

- Description of face to face training program
- Training is divided into 6 topics, including a guest speaker

# Being a Resident Assistant 101

## “RA 101” Online Training

Why this training program?

*“This online course is a robust, expert series of modules and resources developed by a collaborative of professionals from across the association. RA 101 is built to serve as a supplement to your paraprofessional staff training, and consists of four comprehensive modules with defined sets of learning objectives.*

*ACUHO-I is confident that this course will be a valuable asset to you and your departments as you begin to shape your upcoming paraprofessional staff training plan.”*

By using an established training plan, developed by experts in the field, our time can be spent developing in-person training, that is both specific to our campus and covers topics that are more effective face to face.

Source: <https://www.acuho-i.org/online-learning/courses-and-certificates/being-a-resident-assistant-101?portalid=0>

# “RA 101” Course Description

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- 10-15 hour online course
- 4 modules
- Self-paced, one on one online training
- Topics are relevant for new or returning RA's
- Each module is reviewed with a quiz, must have 75% or above to move to the next module
- Professional staff can check the status of each RA's progress
- Every slide of material must be viewed in order to access the test
- Overall final exam is taken online at the completion of the course
- Certificates sent to those who successfully complete and pass the program



# Module 1: The World Around Us

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- Understand job responsibility
- Understand the importance of building a community
- Importance of creating an open atmosphere
- Good role model characteristics

# Module 2: Being an Agent of Your Institution

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- Understand the role of confidentiality as an RA
- Basic understanding of Title IX, FERPA, VAWA, etc.
- Learn effective communication skills
- Learn the 17 qualities of a team player (John Maxwell)
- Identify 5 questions when assessing risks
- Understanding the difference between ethical and unethical decision making

# Module 3: Cool, Clear Head

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- Reviewing the safety and security resources on campus
- What to do in emergency situations
- Understand the process of incident reporting
- When and how to use mediation and resolutions techniques
- Identifying mental health issues and the appropriate referrals

# Module 4: Self & Self-Care

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- RA learn techniques to manage resources with deadlines
- Creating effective boundaries between being an RA and a student
- Develop strategies for self-care as an RA
- Successfully follow through on scheduling programs as well as attending class and extra-curricular activities

# Face to Face Training

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The following topics have been selected as those best suited for face to face training. Many of these topics are campus specific. Others are those best reserved for in person conversations and mock exercises in emergency situations.

The purpose is to have a balance between community development and educational curriculum. The greatest challenge we face with training our students is to find a way to keep them engaged. By combining the self-paced online training with interactive face to face learning, we feel that this is the best aspects of both worlds.

- Social Media
- Programming
- Diversity and Inclusion
  - International Students - RAISE program
- Sexual Assault and Harassment
- Campus Judicial Process
- “Behind Closed Doors”

# Guest Speaker: Bailey Parnell

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Bailey Parnell works in social marketing, particularly in higher education. She speaks about the links between social media and mental health.

We all know how much social media is used and how addictive it is. Parnell gives advice on healthier use of social media.

Her talk will be an excellent segue into discussion about peer pressure, depression, and how to look out for warning signs in our residents.



Retrieved from: [https://youtu.be/Czg\\_9C7gw0o](https://youtu.be/Czg_9C7gw0o)

# Programming

## Why do we need programming?

Programming promotes a sense of community, a feeling of belonging among students. We are their home away from home. Students need to relax and feel as comfortable as if they were with family.

### Topics covered:

- Programming objectives
- Financial planning and paperwork
- Reflection: Outcomes and assessments
- Share programming ideas
  - Past successes and failures
- Create 3 goals for the semester

# Diversity & Inclusion

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These topics will be covered both in online training and during face to face training.

- Covered in “RA 101”
  - Module 1 - Demonstrate respect and courtesy
- In-person Training
  - Group discussion - Identify the dimensions of diversity and stereotypes
  - Discussion about reporting & resources
    - Reporting an identity related concern
    - Diversity peer educators
    - Multicultural lounge
    - Safe zone



# Diversity & Inclusion - International Students

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RA's that will work directly with International Students are recommended to complete a specific online training (9 hours)- [International Student Support](#)

RA's interested in positions working with International Students will apply for a position modeled after the [Resident Assistant for International Student Engagement](#) (RAISE) program.

Those selected will participate in an extended training, covering the following topics:

- Explore the needs of international students living in your halls, including specific areas such as arrival, making friends, integration, academics, intercultural communication, financial, and others.
- Examine services currently offered on your campus and assess those services.
- Learn about best practices related to services for international students.
- Create an action plan to help develop your programs, services, and training.

# Sexual Assault & Harassment

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This important topic will be covered in the online training and further explored during face to face training.

- Covered in “RA 101”
  - Module 2 - Understand and recall basic tenets of Title IX, FERPA and VAWA
  - Module 3 - Identify safety and security resources on campus and make appropriate referrals
- In-person Training
  - Connections made in Campus Judicial procedures
  - Scenarios discussed during “Behind Closed Doors”

# Campus Judicial Procedures

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- The process is a domino effect based on the actions of the student.
  - Step 1- Warning given in writing for minor violations in housing
  - Step 2-A meeting is conducted to talk with the student about the circumstances of the situation
  - Step 3- Student is notified of the ramifications of the decisions based on the incident
- Actions that could be made:
  - Warning is given for minor violations
  - A housing relocation if there are serious issues where the student needs to move for their benefit or the benefit of the roommate
  - Removal from college housing- student loses the privilege to live on campus
  - Fines- Students pay for damages done to housing area

Source: <https://students.dartmouth.edu/residential-life/policy/judicial-process-and-sanctions>

# Behind Closed Doors

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Face to face training will conclude with “Behind Closed Doors” scenarios.

Because every scenario or emergency could never be covered, students will break into small groups, and draw a scenario out of hat to work on. There are many online sources (one is linked above) with pre-existing materials that include the scenario, training guides, follow up questions, etc.

Students will apply the knowledge they learning during the training, incorporating campus specific information into their solutions.

Retrieved from: [http://www.luminstruct.com/uploads/2/5/5/3/25536325/bcd\\_training.pdf](http://www.luminstruct.com/uploads/2/5/5/3/25536325/bcd_training.pdf)

# Resources

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Behind Closed Doors Training. (n.d.). Retrieved February 19, 2019, from <http://www.luminstruct.com/resources.html>

International Student Support. (n.d.). Retrieved February 19, 2019, from <https://www.acuho-i.org/online-learning/courses-and-certificates/international-student-support?portalid=0>

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Resident Assistant for International Student Engagement RAISE Position 2019 - 2020. (n.d.). Retrieved February 19, 2019, from [https://www.geneseo.edu/campus\\_living/international-student-mentor-ism-position-2017-2018](https://www.geneseo.edu/campus_living/international-student-mentor-ism-position-2017-2018)

### A Fresh Look at a Stale Program: Retraining the Trainers

To begin the presentation, we felt it was important to reflect on the mission and vision of Bronson University and the Office of Residence Life. If we begin by thinking about a broad vision of success for the university and its students, we can see how important every aspect of university life is in developing and nurturing student growth and potential. Students that choose to live on campus have a unique experience; they live and learn in the same environment. The campus, and more specifically their residence hall, is the students' home away from home. Our duty is to make them comfortable, safe, and content so their primary focus, obtaining a college degree, is attainable.

Bronson University has approximately 2,000 on-campus residents that live in a variety of living spaces. About 10% of these students are international. Diversity within the student population and growing the international program has been important to the university in the last few years. Further supporting this population of students has been a focus area. These efforts will be apparent later in the presentation.

In order to better serve our Resident Assistant (RA) Staff, we feel that it is time for a new approach to their training. With a combination of new and returning RA's, it is important to cover important mandatory topics in ways that are productive for all staff members. By moving to a combination of online and face to face trainings, we feel this gives more flexibility to both the presentation and learning of necessary information. *Being a Resident Assistant 101*, or RA 101, is a comprehensive online course designed to be used for RA programs at institutions of any size and structure. By covering materials at a go at your own pace, with built-in tests, the course allows RA's the flexibility to review materials at their leisure (in a specified amount of time) while giving the university the peace of mind that the materials have been studied and

understood. There are built-in measures within the course to ensure RA's have viewed all materials and have understood the concepts by requiring a grade of 75% or above on each test in order to move on to the next module. There is also a final test at the completion of the entire training and a certificate of completion is provided. Each of the four modules contains important aspects of RA training that are vital to staff success. Because this training can be completed online, it frees up more time for face to face training that can be more interactive for the staff. The online structure allows students who may need more time with particular concepts to go at their own pace and absorb more of the information. Those that are able to quickly grasp the information or may have been RA's before can move more rapidly through the material giving them the satisfaction of not having to "waste time" on what they may feel they can quickly accomplish on their own. The course was established and endorsed by the Association of College and University Housing Officers - International (ACUHO-I), a well-respected organization in the housing community. Many other institutions have used and benefited from the program.

By using an online medium to present many important topics, face to face training can be reserved for more in-depth conversations and activities that will keep RA's engaged and excited. We have chosen Bailey Parnell as our opening speaker for the face to face training. Parnell has worked in social marketing within higher education and has researched the topic for her master's thesis. As you can see in her Ted Talk, she acknowledges that social media isn't going anywhere. However, there are ways to become healthier in our use of this increasingly popular pastime. Many of the stressors that affect our students today can be attributed, at least in part, to social media. By taking a deeper look at the reasons why we are so affected, and addicted, we can familiarize ourselves with ways to help our residents. You may ask, why are we concerned with residents' social media use? Everyone uses social media, why is it different for students living on

campus? RA's are the ones to see these students day in and day out; they live with them, they are closer to them than their families at this point in their lives. RA's, and the students they live with, will be the first ones that may notice signs of stress, depression, or anxiety, and social media can play a huge role in those areas of our students' lives.

Also covered in our face to face training, we will cover campus-specific topics not covered in the broad online training. Campus programming for residents, diversity and inclusion, sexual assault and harassment, and campus judicial procedures will be explored in depth. As mentioned earlier, Bronson University has put a greater emphasis on growing the international student population in the last few years. We feel that increased attention and support for our on-campus international students have become increasingly important. For RA's that wish to work more closely with international students, we propose creating a more specialized RA training. Resident Assistant for International Student Engagement, or RAISE, positions will be created. A link to the program at Geneseo is provided in the presentation, a model we would like to fashion our positions after. Students selected for these special positions are recommended to complete an additional 9-hour training program, specifically designed for assisting international students. Our RA training will conclude with exercises from "Behind Closed Doors." RA's will divide into smaller groups, select scenarios at random, and work through the situations using the tools they have learned throughout the entirety of the online course and the face to face trainings.

We feel that we have reached a point where an overhaul of our existing training program has become necessary. With the use of technology and a well established and respected online program at our fingertips, we can expand and strengthen our training. Students will feel in control of their time, working at their own pace with the online course. They can see their progress and we can feel comfortable that the RA's have learned the required material because of



the testing component. Our face to face time can be spent on campus-specific training, allow time for more in-depth discussions and will lead to less wasted time overall. The training we have done in the past has worked, but this new training system will lead to even greater success for Bronson University students.