



# **Resident Assistant Training Proposal**

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# Learning Outcomes

Develop supplemental trainings to guide Resident Assistants and their Students through Chickering's Seven Vectors of Development



**Developing Competence:**

The core trainings covered in person

**Managing Emotions:**

Stress & Anxiety in College Students

**Moving through Autonomy:**

When to Take a Back Seat

**Developing Mature Relationships:**

Creating Healthy Boundaries

**Establishing Identity:**

Who are You as a Resident Assistant?

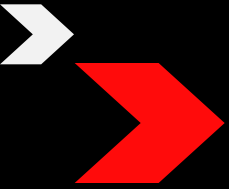
**Developing Purpose:**

Guided Reflections on Work

**Developing Integrity:**

Ethical Decision Making





# THE TRAINERS



MORGAN  
GREEN

Resident Director



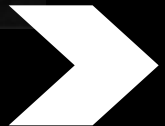
HAILEY  
LARSEN

Resident Director



KRISTY  
SAUNDERS

Resident Director



# Who are you as a Resident Assistant?

## Outline

- What does it mean to be an RA?
- Differences between a Returning vs. new RA .
- Expectations
- Connect to mission and values of the university
- What does being an RA mean to you?
- What is your helping style?
- How do your identities/strengths/characteristics shape your experience?
- Reflection on intersecting identities
- Power dynamics and privilege
- “The real illusion connected to difference is the popular assumption that people are naturally afraid of what they don’t know or understand.” (Johnson, 2006, p. 13)
- Social identities




# Who are you as a Resident Assistant?

## Why?:

There is no one right way to be a Resident Assistant. By identifying personal characteristics, strengths, and identities RAs can develop a clearer self-concept.

## Activity:

RAs will complete the online MMPI Identity Wheel Activity (Jones, 1997) and submit to the online module. If students feel comfortable, encourage to share on the discussion board.



# Stress & Anxiety in College Students

## Outline

- Why it is important to distinguish between stress and anxiety
  - -> Not only in residents, but in RAs too.
- What is stress
  - -> Definition, warning signs
- What is anxiety
  - -> Definition, warning signs
- Action steps
  - -> Mindfulness
  - -> Self-care (see Self-Care Module)




# Stress & Anxiety in College Students

## Why?:

Anxiety is the most prominent concern among college students. (Mistler, Reetz Krylowics, & Barr, 2012)

## Activity:

RAs complete quiz, demonstrating knowledge of the difference between stress and anxiety. Additionally, complete a questionnaire of common sources of stress/anxiety.



# Self Care

## Outline

- Why self-care is important
  - -> Prevents burn out
  - -> Compassion fatigue
- Dimensions of self-care
  - -> Physical, mental, financial, spiritual, emotional
  - -> Healthy habits/support = overall well-being of college students (Nowack, Gibbons & Hanson, 1985)





# Self Care

## Why?:

Self-care looks different for everyone. It's important that RA's discover what their self care routine looks like so they can share it with their staff members and supervisor when life gets stressful.

## Activity:

Post to a discussion board with what you do to help relieve stress. Share your ideas for how to be mindful in a high stress environment.



# Creating Healthy Boundaries

## Outline

- Identifying boundaries
  - -> Boundaries definition
  - -> Importance of establishing boundaries early and often
- Re-establishing and re-evaluating boundaries
  - -> Steps when a boundary has been crossed
- Dual Relationships
  - -> RA & Student, RA & Supervisor
  - -> Be aware of dual relationships with students on your floor where you are both a supervisor and a friend. It could create conflicting responsibilities, confusion or unclear expectations (ACPA, 2012)



**Why?:**

# Creating Healthy Boundaries

Having boundaries is beneficial for RAs to draw the line between student and employee. Because the nature of the Resident Assistant role is so unique, learning how to create boundaries in this role is crucial.

**Activity:**

Create a WAMI (Where am I board)  
Include things like “I’m here, just knock!” or  
“Studying, please do not disturb.”

When you arrive back to campus these boards will be hung outside your door to create a visual representation of some of your boundaries.



# Ethical Decision Making

## Outline

- Common ethical dilemmas in a residence hall
- Foundational Principles in Ethical Decision Making (Forester-Miller & Davis, 2016)
  - -> Autonomy
  - -> Justice
  - -> Beneficence
  - -> Nonmaleficence
  - -> Fidelity
- Ethical Decision-Making Model (Forester-Miller & Davis, 2016)



# Ethical Decision Making

## Why?:

The goals and values of the RA position connect to the mission and goals of the university, including acting as a role model for residents and having personal integrity.

## Activity:

Have RAs complete case studies in an online learning module, discuss results decision making process in one on one meetings with Residence Directors.



# When to Take A Back Seat

## Outline

- Importance of being connected to the university and having knowledge of campus resources
- Tie to other modules
  - -> Ethical Decision Making
  - -> Self Care
  - -> Healthy Boundaries
- Common scenarios
- Application for future work



# When to Take A Back Seat

**Why?:**

Asking for help will help RA's professionally down the road. It's important that as a campus leader you are able to also be a follower. Students develop skills like problem solving, being able to work independently, and an ability to connect with others (Patton, Renn, Guido and Quaye, 2016).

**Activity:**

RA's will complete case studies in the online module and discuss outcomes with RD.

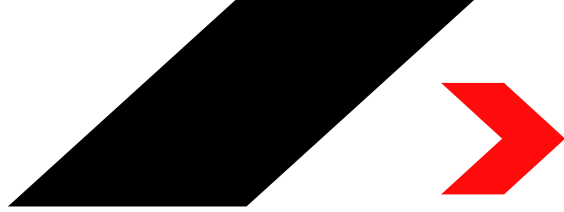


# Working Relationships

## Outline

- Working on a team
  - -> Building rapport
  - -> Communication
- Creating a community with another person, how?
  - -> Strengths
  - -> Creating events across halls/floors
- Shared vision





# Working Relationships

## Why?:

Being an RA means more than just supporting your students, but also working with the RA team.

## Activity:

Have RA's take the CliftonStrengths (CliftonStrengths, 2018) test and share their top 5 in discussion board. Share how your strengths might help or hurt you when working on a team.



# Guided Reflections on Work

## Outline

- What is a Guided Reflection on Work?
- What is the purpose?
- The conversations focus on four key questions about what students are learning and how they are applying their learning. This will start in the online training and carry on during one on ones throughout the year.
  - -> How is this job fitting in with your academics?
  - -> What are you learning here that's helping you in school?
  - -> What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
  - -> Can you give me a couple examples of things you've learned here that you think you'll use in your chosen profession? (“Husker Grow” 2018)



# Guided Reflections on Work

## Why?:

Connecting resident assistants' on the job work to their academics and career goals encourages students to see the connections between school, work, and their future. The visibility of these connections can foster a sense of purpose.

## Activity:

Submit your resume to your RD with a copy of your “dream job” posting. What experiences/opportunities will help you reach this career? How does the RA position play into this career aspiration





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