



Western Carolina University

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Summer Training Improvement Guide

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Institution Information

Bronson university is a regional comprehensive institution that caters towards a low socioeconomic student population. Current enrollment is approximately 10,000 undergraduates. There are 13 residence halls with 162 resident assistants.

Based on Western Carolina University

Residential Staff Information



Ashley Palmer
Residential
Director



Davis Wilson
Residential
Director



Kimber Butler
Residential
Director



Alex Kerns
Residential
Director

Resident Advisor Mission Statement

Every Learning Community at the Bronson University is a thriving environment where students are able to go on a journey of self-discovery to develop awareness of themselves and others as scholars and individuals, and come together with a shared purpose. Resident Advisors (RA) at BU are an essential component of this residential experience, as a residence hall isn't just where you lay your head at night.

As an RA at BU, you play a critical role in actively fostering an inclusive, safe, and healthy community, which allow students to be able to call BU home. Through supporting your peers by building intentional connections, repairing harm within a diverse and inclusive community when it occurs, to helping to create an environment that supports academic and personal development—as an RA, you play a key role in making Bronson University a home for students.

Adapted from The University of Vermont



Learning Outcomes

Through their employment with Residence Life student RAs will:

- Display a clear understanding of crisis management
- Establish educational programming for the community
- Develop interpersonal skills
- Be able to collaborate with Residence Life staff to create budget.



P-Card

- Have Financial Services give a brief walkthrough of the P-Card Allocation Process
- Create fillable PDF where RAs will complete various allocations in their entirety.
- Submit said PDF for approval or rejection

While it is nice to match a face with the name of people the RAs interact with, the info on how to complete a P-Card allocation can be monotonous to listen to or watch. Making the RAs complete practice allocations based on different purchases, will allow them to have tangible practice.

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Managing Conflict

- Partner with the Department of Student Community Ethics (DSCE) to provide resources for managing conflict between students.
- Interactive game for learning conflicts between RA's

We recognize that there are different aspects of communication and conflict that have to be addressed. Having resources provided by the DSCE will allow RA's to know how to handle different scenarios and be able to provide reference points for those students in conflict. There is also a need for RA's to understand the appropriate course of action for matters of conflict between themselves with co-workers, or between co-workers.



Boundaries

- Have current RA's answer survey about different boundary issues they have experienced
- Pick some of these examples to make into video scenarios and have students answer questions in the webinar
- Examples:
 - Driving students around
 - Providing alcohol/drugs
 - Having intimate relationships

We believe that by using video examples, it will allow the students to be engaged by watching the videos and then have open-ended questions to answer. It is important to remember that there are professional and ethical boundaries to be upheld.



Social Media

- Personal vs. Professional aspects of Social Media
- Creating Facebook Communities
- Group me as Communication
- [Look Up Video](#) and reflection

We believe that this needs to be implemented in order create a standard among RA Staff Members because they are a visual representation of the University.

Supporting Diverse Student Populations

- Focus is placed on how RAs can help their students feel more connected to their peers
- Educate RAs that are placed on floors with specific groups (student athletes, living learning communities, honors student) on needs that may be different from other students and resources specifically available for those students.
- How to build community based on the personality of your floor.

Every floor in a residence hall takes on an individual personality based on the students living there. RAs can take what they learn in training and apply it to their jobs, but must personalize that knowledge to their residents for it to be truly effective. This is particularly true for student groups living together. The RAs working with these groups should emphasize meeting the needs of their students, which is easiest to do by getting their input. It is also important to gather information about the population they are serving, in order to provide specific assistance to their residents as well as having knowledge of resources to go to if they do not have the appropriate information.



Students on Autism Spectrum

- Provide resources available from the Office of Accessibility Resources
- Partner with Director and make webinar training and questions
- Have questions that pop up throughout webinar to keep interaction going
- Main things to keep aware for people with autism:
 - Lack of social skills
 - Every person on AS is different

We believe there is a lack of education and understanding around students and people on the autism spectrum. Our RA's need to understand that people with autism are different from each other, and that is why it is called a spectrum. They need to be made aware of the resources we have available to the students around campus, so there is more understanding for situations as they arise. Also this will allow them to educate other students as well.

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Mental Health

- Counseling and Psychological Services office webinar
- How to facilitate programming about mental health
- QPR training through the online QPR Institute

The National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that, “almost 73 percent of students living with a mental health condition experienced a mental health crisis on campus.” The RAs living and working with students need to be equipped with resources and skills to handle situations that might occur in their communities. Through this training they can respond to stressful situations with competency.



Being on Call

- Pair with IT or outsource to creative companies who create interactive software
- Have the interactive module show different scenarios of students breaking housing policies.
- The RAs then have to click on what the various issues are and/or what the steps to deescalate the situation would be

While Behind Closed Doors are beneficial (and should not be replaced) giving every RA the ability to deescalate a number of situations in a virtual space may assist with their confidence in reality.



Judicial Process

- After review the various scenarios above the students will identify one and file proper proceedings
- We will also give them an infraction notice to improve

This will give our student both an opportunity to write their own infractions as well how to correctly write one. This will provide them the chance to do this before they have to do one during a crisis.

Academic Intervention

- *Initial test of RA's knowledge:* RAs will react to scenarios of common struggles residents could face. They must identify which situations are ones they can manage and which should be turned over to a supervisor.
- *Training-* The module will identify the correct answers for how the situations are to be split up
- *Training-* Provide the RAs with training about how to address students in need of academic intervention.
- *Testing what has been learned-* Revisit the scenarios and have RAs come up with action plans to solve the issues and work with those students.

Stepping in when a student is struggling academically can be a difficult situation for RAs to navigate. We believe that by having a training which allows for RAs to practice handling situations they could be faced with will help them to be better prepared when the issue arises.

Taking action can look different depending on the problem. RAs should know how to create an intervention plan with outcomes specific to each student, as well as how to approach students about their academic issues.

There is also an element of knowing when you have reached your limit, and RAs should be aware of how to identify that and know who to turn to when further help is needed.



THANK YOU!

Questions? Comments? Or Concerns?

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References

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