

# Academic Peer Advocates

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## Position Description

Academic Peer Advocate (APA) Position Description  
*2018-2019 Academic Year*

Academic Peer Advocate (APAs) are undergraduate members of the University Housing-Residence Life staff. APAs are students accountable to a supervisor and provide an essential role between University Housing and our residents. Academic Peer Advocates work alongside Resident Assistants, Assistant Hall Directors, Hall Directors, and other housing staff to create a positive living-learning environment, focusing on personal development and academic success.

The APA position requires an individual acutely sensitive to the needs of students; can be flexible regarding time demands; can perform essential administrative tasks; is sensitive to diversity in lifestyles; and has a genuine desire to be of service to others. The Academic Peer Advocate role is to support the mission of University Housing in the process of facilitating a positive living-learning community in the residence halls.

The APA position is comprised of various responsibilities. Meetings, academic interventions, administrative work, assisting with social justice and inclusivity programming, developing large scale academic events, and providing academic-focused intentional interactions to residents are all examples of responsibilities which will require varied time commitments. These time commitments constitute only a part of the time expectations in the APA position and are in addition to the informal time to be spent in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, time spent living in the hall, studying, or doing personal business while still being available to respond to the needs of residents. A unique aspect of the Academic Peer Advocate position is a large portion of both time commitments are carried out during the evening and weekend hours.

## General Responsibilities

### I. Academics

- Assist with Intrusive Early Warning Academic Intervention meetings with residents
- Develop and execute academic initiatives focusing on developing test taking, studying, memorization, note taking, and other academic focused skills
- Foster understanding of academic processes for residents (course withdraw dates, registration, academic advisors, etc.)
- Be a role model and advocate for personal academic success and encourage residents to develop and enhance successful academic skills
- Collaborate with Living Learning Community initiatives and academic units
- Assist residents in identifying, understanding, and utilizing University resources dedicated to developing students' academic success
- Know University academic and personal support services

### II. Administrative

- Assist with move-in and move-out processes during opening, closing, and breaks in residence halls
- Prepare and submit accurate reports for facilitation of HOUSE Model by the deadlines assigned by supervisor, including, but not limited to academic event reports and weekly report records of intrusive Early Warning Academic interventions

- Submit administrative paperwork in accordance with supervisor's expectations of incident unless requested to do so immediately
- Assist maintaining floor/house/hall academic focused bulletin boards in accordance with supervisor's expectations
- Maintain communication with direct supervisor in one on one meetings and through weekly updates
- Check SIU Carbondale email
- Participate in Fall & Spring Residence Life Staff recruitment and staff selection processes
- Perform academic wellness checks with residents through regular and intrusive early warning intervention initiatives
- Understand and utilize emergency procedures appropriately
- Successfully complete semi-annual evaluations each semester of employment

### **III. Educator**

- Demonstrate effective listening and reflection skills
- Demonstrate inclusive attitude towards all lifestyles, backgrounds, identities, and personalities
- Encourage others to celebrate areas of diversity, inclusivity, multiculturalism, and social justice
- Show a high level of self-awareness, be aware of personal strengths and areas of improvement
- Engage in open dialogue and share in perspective taking
- Be aware of, support and represent the rationale for, University, University Housing, and Residence Life policies and procedures
- Develop and implement initiatives focusing on developing an inclusive learning environment
- Know and adhere to the Student Code of Conduct, The Guidebook, and any other University, University Housing, and Residence Life policies

### **IV. Community Facilitator**

- Know and recognize all members of given community
- Assist executing aspects of Community Development Model throughout the academic year, developing building wide academic events, and fostering positive academic intentional interactions with residents
- Maintain and update a physical environment consistent with staff and departmental standards
- Work collaboratively with Academic Peer Advocates and Residence Life staff in your area and across campus

### **V. Team Member/Role Model**

- Demonstrate behavior consistent with departmental and staff expectations
- Respect and maintain confidentiality
- Act as an appropriate referral agent for students
- Give and receive feedback from others in an appropriate manner
- Support and recognize own and other building staff
- Act as an appropriate role model for others in managing time, stress, coursework, academic behaviors, and attitude
- Balance academics, personal relationships, and extracurricular activities with APA position
- Support University Housing Leadership Organizations (Area Council, House Leaders, Black Togetherness Organization, Residence Hall Association, National Residence Hall Honorary) efforts, as well as encourage residents to be involved and active participants

### **VI. Time Commitments**

- Secondary employment is not permitted.
- APAs are expected to be available to in their area and visible in their buildings on a regular basis
- After being hired in Spring attend a four week training course
- Participate in all training, staff meetings and professional development as directed by supervisor or department
- Confront behavior and document when appropriate
- Additional responsibilities may vary depending on placement and needs of department and/or community

#### **VII. Programming/Events**

- Meet House Model expectations each semester
- Assist with campus-wide event efforts including, but not limited to, open houses, scholarship weekends, New Student Orientations, and Dawgs Night Out events.
- Assist with University Housing wide initiatives
- Support Saluki First Year and Week of Welcome programming during the beginning of each semester and support campus wide events throughout year
- Understand and utilize event resources found throughout University Housing
- Create attractive marketing and publications to promote community and University events
- Advertise support, and assist Living Learning Community and academic initiative events
- Meet the needs and interests of residents through intentional academic events

#### **VIII. Miscellaneous**

- Additional meetings or mandatory events will be scheduled. It is an expectation APAs will attend these events
- Perform other duties as assigned
- Have a cumulative GPA of 2.8 or higher at the time of application and commencement of employment
- Maintain a GPA of 2.5 each semester, including semester before employment
- Remain registered as a full time student (Minimum of 12 undergraduate credit hours per semester, 9 graduate credit hours per semester, and up to 16 hours/semester)
- Be a role model and advocate for personal academic success and encourage residents to develop and enhance successful academic skills
- No incomplete classes/grades at commencement of employment or at the conclusion of each semester while employed

#### **IX. Remuneration**

- Part of the APA pay is provided in the form of a furnished private room, when available and a Saluki Anytime Dining plan valued at approximately \$2086.00 per semester
- In addition, APAs are awarded a \$400.00 per semester pre-tax stipend. APAs will receive their stipend checks every month starting in September and ending in June
- As an APA you are allowed to stay in your room over academic breaks, pending no scheduled maintenance and construction, at no additional charge

**IMPORTANT:** Accepting an APA position may affect your eligibility for some financial aid. If you are currently receiving financial aid, you should check with your financial aid advisor before accepting an APA position.

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## Qualifications

Minimum requirements for the Academic Peer Advocate position are the following: 2.8 cumulative GPA and 2.5 semester GPA at the time of application and commencement of employment, 26 credit hours earned by the time employment begins, full-time student status (12 undergraduate credit hours or more or 9 graduate credit hours or more) while employed; in good academic, judicial and financial standing with SIU Carbondale and University Housing. No outside employment may be held during the first semester of the APA position

## Time Commitment/Hours Breakdown

Each Semester (15-25)

- Training before opening
- Assist with opening/closing of residence halls (direct traffic, answer questions, moving assistance)
- Take residence to University Welcome and Kick Off Events
- Have a presence at house meetings
- Assist with Chancellor Scholar and special event days/weekends
- Share timely information related to academic processes (withdraw date, refund checks, advisement and registration, etc.)

Monthly (5-10 hours)

- Follow up with students about academic performances
- Collaborate and develop academic focused building wide events
- Assist with maintaining academic bulletin board(s)
- Assist with large scale housing wide programming efforts with Education and Outreach Staff
- Assist, research, attend academic focused University initiatives (Departmental lead study events, Salukis Finals Finish)

Weekly (10 hours)

- Follow up with residents about academic performances and intrusive academic interventions
- Development and execution of one event per week when intervention meetings are not occurring
- Provide community hours to help residents with academic needs
- Support and take residents to academic resources on campus including but not limited to library, study tables, computers labs, Learning Support Services, Writing Center, professor office hours.
- Have an established presence within community to create connections with residents (door to door programming, attending RA events, hub lounge time, etc.)
- Attend staff meetings
- Attend one-on-one meeting with supervisor