

Graduate Assistantship

Number of positions: 1

Office/Department: Off-Campus Life/University Unions

Dave Barnes, Director, University Unions

Supervisor: Rebecca Carbaugh, Coordinator, Off-Campus Life

Mission/Philosophy: It is the mission of the office of Off-Campus Life (OCL) to assist students in gaining necessary knowledge and skills to make informed decisions within the JMU off-campus community. This also includes helping students through the Community Assistant Program by inspiring and empowering those students living off-campus to be responsible citizens who create safe, values-oriented communities.

Functional areas included in this office:

1. Assisting students with issues related to moving and living off-campus.
2. Offering options for mediation services and conflict resolution for students having conflicts with landlords or roommates.
3. Educational programming: Assisting in teaching students necessary knowledge and skills to be successful in living off-campus through office programs including: Housing Fairs, Roommate Mixers, Sublease Mixers, Mo'Money, Less Problems Budget Workshops, Leasing 101 and Cooking and Shopping on a Budget.
4. Dispersing educational information effectively through the creation of flyers, email marketing, and social media.
5. Managing and supervising student personnel in their roles as Community Assistants (up to 10 undergraduate student staff). This involves conducting weekly meetings with these staff members to discuss their role and work, and supervising their education of other students through social media posts and newsletter articles teaching off campus living skills. These off campus living skills include budgeting, building relationships with roommates and navigating living with roommates, and acclimating to the Harrisonburg community/ making Harrisonburg home.
6. Serving as editor-in-chief of the monthly CA newsletter which provides these educational articles to students off campus, and overseeing distribution of these newsletters to student housing providers.
7. Continuing to develop and implement the Community Assistant (CA) Program, including finding ways to broaden its influence to more of the Harrisonburg community as a whole.

Students who participate in this experience will gain understanding of student affairs as a profession and the influence student affairs has on contemporary higher education through the following tasks and activities:

1. The primary responsibility of this assistantship will be to oversee the Community Assistant (CA) Program. Overseeing this program will include the following tasks:
 - a. Hiring, training, scheduling, supervising, and evaluating student Community Assistants
 - b. Developing and maintaining program documentation including position descriptions, evaluations, training materials, etc.
 - c. Serving as editor-in-chief of the Off-Campus Life CA newsletter created and

distributed by student Community Assistants to students living off-campus

d. Assessing and evaluating the Community Assistant program in terms of how it is and is not achieving its mission, and ways to make it more effective.

2. Secondary responsibilities will include supporting the mission of Off-Campus Life by:
 - a. Assisting student and parent customers with issues related to moving and living off-campus
 - b. Assisting in teaching students necessary knowledge and skills to be successful when living off-campus through office programming
 - c. Assessing and evaluating Off-Campus Life programming to determine how it could better educate and meet the needs of JMU students living off-campus
 - d. Participating in any weekly supervision meetings and staff meetings
 - e. Attending departmental and divisional meetings
 - f. Fostering effective relationships with off-campus student housing providers
3. The Graduate Assistant will also have an enthusiasm and passion for educating students about topics that help them identify and live out their values in a respectful, responsible way in the community.

Students who participate in this experience will be exposed to the purposeful application of the following student development, career development, counseling and/or organizational theories:

1. Psycho-social Development Theory: Chickering
2. Cognitive Development Theory: Perry
3. Involvement Theory: Astins
4. Student Transition Theory: Schlossberg
5. Validation Theory: Rendon
6. Separation Theory: Levy-Warren

Students assigned to this site will be able to participate in the following assessment and/or evaluation projects:

1. Direct responsibility for assessment and evaluation of the CA program.
2. Assisting with evaluations of other OCL programs and services to include Housing Fairs, Roommate Mixers, House Hunters, Leasing 101, Budget Workshops, and the Commuter Student Breakfast.

Students who participate in this experience will be evaluated and provided on-going feedback in the following ways:

1. Weekly supervisor meeting
2. Mid-year evaluation
3. Final evaluation

Specific expectations of the Graduate Assistant include:

1. Support the mission of Off-Campus Life, University Unions, and JMU.

2. Perform tasks in a timely, organized and professional manner.
3. Create and maintain a schedule designed to meet assistantship requirements. This will include working 20 hours weekly, 9 of those hours being on-site at the Off-Campus Life office, and the other 11 hours done independently during the week. Part of these 11 hours will include having a ½ hour weekly to meet with each student CA team for supervision.
4. Be prompt to work, appointments, meetings, etc.
5. Demonstrate a positive attitude.
6. Foster effective working relationships both in and outside the department.
7. Adhere to confidentiality guidelines.
8. Be open to new job experiences.
9. Effectively utilize resources and request assistance from a supervisor as appropriate.
10. Actively participate in office activities, including Off-Campus Life staff trainings. The Off-Campus Life Graduate Assistant is expected to help with creating and presenting a staff training each semester.
11. Meet weekly with your supervisor for feedback and to report on your progress and activities.
12. Participate in August pre-service training prior to start of fall semester (2 weeks before classes).

Contact Person

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