

RESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT-TEACHING ASSISTANT
WILLAMETTE ACADEMY
Willamette University

Revised: April 11, 2011

Status: Student Position, full time for a specified period during summer

Department: Willamette Academy

Supervisor: Program Director, Willamette Academy

PRIMARY PURPOSE

The particular focus of the Residential Assistant-Teaching Assistant (RATA) during the Summer Program is to provide mentoring, to serve as a role model, and to support learning activities during academic sessions, group activities, and informal time with younger Willamette Academy students. Willamette Academy at Willamette University is a college access program committed to empowering youth who have the desire and potential to advance to higher education, targeting those who are historically under-represented at colleges and universities within the U.S. To carry out its mission and accomplish its goals, the Academy's supports center on three interrelated programs:

1. Ongoing academic support and tracking, with particular attention paid to college-preparatory skills including those pertaining to writing, reading, math, science, and technology.
2. Family and school supports that promote the participation of parents and guardians, teachers, and counselors in students' academic lives.
3. Support and assistance in the college application process and obtaining financial aid.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

The Residential Assistant-Teaching Assistant (RATA) supports the Academy's mission while playing two distinct, yet overlapping roles during the summer residential program. Those roles are as residence assistant and teaching assistant. Fulfilling both roles requires staff members to be on-call twenty-four hours a day during the summer camps. Designated time-off will be provided. Staff will be paid for training and planning time before the start of the camps.

RATA staff play an integral role in facilitating the students' activities both inside and outside of academic sessions. Staff is responsible for engaging and supervising students during sessions and outside class hours, ensuring their safety and enforcing regulations. Self-esteem, team building, recreation, and identity formation are important themes of all after-hours activities. Willamette Academy strives to instill a sense of personal responsibility and self-awareness in our students. Our goal is to empower Academy students see themselves as capable, mature, well-rounded individuals. We strive to create a healthy "community of respect" among students and between students and staff. Prior to the start of the session, staff will participate in the planning of various recreational and educational activities.

JOB EXPECTATIONS

The duties and responsibilities of this position include, but are not limited to, the following functions:

1. RATAs are responsible for managing dorm life, sharing “on duty” rotation with other staff.
2. RATAs will be expected to assist teaching staff throughout the Summer Session in a wide variety of subject areas, including during student field trips.
3. Staff will be responsible for escorting students to sessions and events, as well as dining with students.
4. RATAs will plan academic sessions and teach independently under the direction of the teaching staff, dependent on areas of expertise.
5. RATAs will be expected to plan and supervise both day and evening programs and activities. Staff will at times prepare and facilitate group discussions with students on various topics.
6. The RATA staff is expected and required to provide positive leadership that will build the students’ confidence, help develop a supportive peer group for students, and motivate students to attend college.
7. RATAs are expected to have infinite patience and the ability to shift back and forth from supervisory, assisting, classroom management, mentoring, and teaching modes.
8. While maintaining a friendly, respectful demeanor, RATAs are to help students stay “on-task” to complete the assignments given during particular academic sessions, and serve as role models as engaged learners.
9. RATAs will focus on student management and development by engaging with and attending to the diverse needs of students.
10. RATAs are expected and required to attend staff planning meetings at which they will assist in planning activities and preparation for the Summer Residency.
11. Staff will participate in training sessions that will prepare them to assist and supervise in classrooms and residence halls.
12. RATA employment is full time during the Summer Program. During this time, RATA staff may not have any other obligations.

QUALIFICATIONS

RATAs must be University students in good standing and be able to perform the responsibilities listed above. Additionally, RATAs must possess the following qualities:

1. The ability to serve as a positive role model to Willamette Academy students.
2. Patience, flexibility, and dedication.
3. Interest in working with middle school and high school aged students.
4. Reliability and time-management skills.
5. The ability to work in group settings as well as independently under minimal supervision.
6. Demonstrated experience working with people of varying ages and/or backgrounds.
7. Effective verbal and written communication skills.
8. Strong organizational skills.