

BARNARD

RESIDENTIAL LIFE & HOUSING

Next Stop: LEADERSHIP

Thank you for coming to an Information Session and picking up this Information Packet. Residential Life & Housing is very excited that you are considering applying to become a Resident Assistant (RA).



Please read through this packet as it contains important information and be sure to submit your completed application by the deadline. You can also find additional information about RA Recruitment and Selection on our website at <http://barnard.edu/reslife/employment/ra>. If you have any questions, please email the RA Selection Committee at RASelection@barnard.edu.

The RA Selection Committee

Jessica Castro, Resident Assistant

Sophia Mossberg, Resident Assistant

Sarah Stillman, Resident Assistant

Katie Treadwell, 600s/SX Graduate Hall Director

Camille Wilson, FYF Graduate Hall Director

Courtney Bazan Colvin, Associate Director

Process and Timeline Checklist

The RA Selection Process is very straightforward. Follow these 5 simple steps to apply to be an RA!

- 1) Attend an Information Session
- 2) Submit your application materials. These include:
 - ✓ Online Application <http://barnard.edu/reslife/employment/ra/application>
 - ✓ Resume emailed as a PDF document to RASelection@barnard.edu
 - ✓ Two Recommendations <http://barnard.edu/reslife/recommendation/>
- 3) Participate in a group interview
- 4) Schedule and attend a 45 minute individual interview
- 5) Have a positive attitude and enjoy the experience!

Done	Due	Task
	11/16—11/21	Attend RA Information Session
	ASAP	Email references the online form (one must be from an RA)
	12/5 at 4pm	Complete and submit online application
	12/5 at 4pm	Email resume as a PDF document to RASelection@barnard.edu
	12/5—12/9	Sign up for Individual Interview in 110 Sulzberger (Residential Life and Housing Office)
	1/20	Receive confirmation email from RA Selection Committee for Group Interview Time Slot Date: _____ Time: _____
	1/23	Ensure that references submit forms by this date. Thank references for doing so.
	1/27	Group Interview
	1/30—2/10	Individual Interviews by appointment
	2/27	Decision letters will be delivered to student mailboxes
	3/5	Acceptance letters and Room Selection paperwork is due by 1pm in 110 Sulzberger

Eligibility

Minimum Requirements

To be eligible to participate in the RA Selection Process, applicants must be an enrolled, degree seeking, full-time Barnard student who is in good academic standing. Additionally, RAs are expected to maintain a 3.0 G.P.A. while in the position. Candidates whose G.P.A. is below a 3.0 at the time of application are encouraged to apply with the understanding that their G.P.A. must be raised to a 3.0 before beginning the position in the Fall.

Availability

To be considered for the RA Selection Process, candidates must be on campus in the Spring and available to attend all required events. For a full list, please refer to the timeline on the previous page. Unfortunately, if a student is unavailable (including those Studying Abroad in the Spring) for any or all of the process they will not be able to apply.

How to apply

Submit your application materials. These include:

- ✓ Online Application <http://barnard.edu/reslife/employment/ra/application>
- ✓ Resume emailed as a PDF document to RASelection@barnard.edu
- ✓ Two Recommendations <http://barnard.edu/reslife/recommendation/>

Application

You will need to complete and submit the online application form. This will help us get an opportunity for us to learn a little more about you and your experiences/interests. This form is due 12/5/11 by 4pm.

Resume

You will need to submit a current resume. Candidates are strongly encouraged to utilize the Office of Career Development (OCD) in the preparation of their resume. The resume should be one page in length. The resume is to be sent as a PDF attachment to RASelection@barnard.edu by 4pm on 12/5/11.

References

You are required to submit two references. One of these references must be from a current RA (can be any RA, not just the RA on your floor). The second form can be completed by anyone of your choosing including a Residential Life & Housing Staff member, a job supervisor, faculty member, etc.

You will need to give the link listed above to the individuals you are asking to serve as a reference for you. Ask your references to go to this website and complete the reference form for you. Once they have submitted the form, you should automatically receive an email confirmation.

Please follow up with your references to ensure that they have completed and submitted the form on-line by 1/23/12. If you are missing a reference you will not be eligible to participate in the process.

Interviews

Group Interview

The group interview will take place in the late afternoon (1-4pm) or early evening (6-9pm) on Friday, January 27, 2012. Applicants can rank their preference for the respective interview times on their application. The RA Selection Committee will email applicants with their assigned time. In this interview, you will participate with other applicants in a group setting with RAs, Graduate Hall Directors and Associate Directors.

Individual Interview

The individual interview is scheduled for sometime during the week of 1/30 – 2/10 and is approximately 45 minutes long. You will be emailed upon the completion of your application (resume and online application) and will be asked to sign up for a time with our staff in Residential Life and Housing. A mixture of current Resident Assistants, Graduate Hall Directors and Associate Directors will conduct these interviews. You will be asked questions to enable your interviewers to get to know you and your experiences better. There will be time at the end of the interview for you to ask any questions that you may have.

Summer Option

On the application, you will notice that you must check a box to indicate if you are also interested in a summer position. As you may know, Residential Life & Housing hires students to work over the summer. The compensation for this is a single room at no cost for the summer.

If in addition to be an academic year RA, you are interested in working for us this summer, check the box for both positions. This will mean that you will be considered for summer positions and that you will not have to have an additional interview in the Spring Semester for summer hiring.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the benefits of the position?

- RAs are assigned to a single room in a residence hall (worth approximately \$8,600)
- RAs have the ability to impact the lives of many students
- RAs have the opportunity to gain invaluable student leadership experience

I'm currently a First-Year student. Can I apply?

Absolutely! Each year, many First Year students apply and are selected to be RAs for the following year.

Which building can I be an RA in?

Generally speaking, you could be an RA in any of the twelve residence halls. The only exception is that Senior only housing like Sulz Tower or floors in 620 require the RA in that building to be a Senior as well. This means that as a Sophomore or Junior, you could be an RA in any residence hall except Sulzberger Tower. When hiring RAs, much consideration is given to which residence hall they will work in. The placement is based on many factors including the hired RAs strengths and the needs of the building/population.

What is the difference between being an FYF (First Year Focus) RA vs. Upperclass RA?

We have several populations of students on campus. While they all have things in common, each population also has a unique set of needs. As an RA, it is important to recognize the needs of your floor and be able to support your residents accordingly. Below is a brief description of FYF vs. upperclass experiences in the residence halls and how it impacts and shapes the respective RA roles. To get an even better understanding of these populations and the RA experience, you are strongly encouraged to speak with students/RAs who are members of these populations.

FYF

FY students have a lot of energy and seek close relationships with their RA. Especially early in the year, the RA serves as one of the first resources, role models, and friends for a FY at Barnard. FY students typically enjoy coming to RA programs and often come to their RA with problems/questions, so it is important that an FYF RA keeps an open door and outlook to make her residents feel welcomed and supported. The corridor style housing and energy of FY students are conducive to creating a strong sense of community on the floor. All FY students live in the Quad (Sulz, Brooks, Reid) and FYF RAs live among their residents, eat with them in the dining hall, and foster the community around them by working with a larger RA FYF staff.

Upperclass

There are several subset populations within the Upperclass areas (Senior Experience (SIX), Transfers, etc.) but in general upperclass students are more independent from their RAs as they have already gone through First Year Focus and been introduced to Barnard in their First Year (with the exception of Transfers). Generally, upperclass students tend to have less interaction with their RA on a daily basis so it is important that the RA is intentional and stops by to see residents on their floor(s). While it is a challenge to get upperclass students to come to programs, upperclass students provide RAs with a plethora of campus resources to utilize in assessing students' needs and interests as upperclass students are often already campus leaders, organization heads/members, and actively settled into Barnard life. The RA can have a great experience tapping into these resources and using them in programs and activities in the halls. In addition, RAs for upperclass students tend to have meaningful conversations and relationships with their residents as they are often going through similar transitions and challenges themselves. Upperclass students primarily live in Elliott, Hewitt, Sulzberger Tower, 600s, Plimpton, and Cathedral Gardens. Upperclass RAs may pull in friends to live with them in these halls during the Room Selection process in the spring.

How many people will be hired? Is there an alternate list?

The total number of applicants hired depends on the number of current RAs returning for the next academic year (there are currently 53 positions campus wide). We typically hire approximately 20-30 new RAs each year.

We will select some candidates to be on an alternate list, who may be tapped if a position opens up over the summer or mid year. It is common for us to fill 1-3 positions with alternates at some point after making hiring decisions.

Can I be involved with an outside commitment (part-time job, varsity athlete, leadership position, Greek Life, etc) in addition to being an RA?

The expectation of our RAs is that their academics come first; the RA job comes second, and extracurricular activities and outside work comes third. We recognize that as a student leader, you wear many hats including involvement in student organizations, internships, research, working a part-time job, etc. While we encourage our staff to be involved at Barnard and beyond, we expect that our staff be realistic with how many outside commitments they take on. Any outside commitments over 10 hours per week must be approved by our professional staff.

Can I be an RA for one semester and study abroad for the other?

The first year as an RA, you must commit to being in the position for both semesters. If you return to the position for a second year, there are possibilities of being an RA for one semester. Residential Life & Housing is supportive of the Study Abroad program. To do so, there must be another RA that will be studying abroad in the opposite semester for you to “job share” with. Remember, this is not possible for your first year as an RA.

Can I be an RA if I am a Sabbath Observer?

Residential Life & Housing is committed to having a diverse staff, including individuals with varying religious beliefs/practices. We do our best to work with our RAs to be able to observe their religious practices and are very supportive. Ultimately, all 53 of our RAs have to be able to fulfill the requirements of the position. Due to the nature and responsibilities of the RA role, it is not possible for an RA to abstain from performing any work responsibilities/commitments during the Sabbath. These responsibilities include but are not limited to being on Duty (in the weekday evenings and 24 hours on the weekends), attending meetings, preparing the buildings for opening/closing, etc.

When an RA is offered a position, it will be made clear to her what the duty expectations are so she can determine if she can commit to the position based on the requirements of the specific staff.

Additionally, throughout the year there will be times that the RAs will have to meet on a Friday evening and Saturday during the day. This includes but is not limited to RA Training Sessions, Move-in day in August, Move-out day in May, etc. All 53 RAs will have to be present and available during these times. On these days, we are able to work with our RAs who are Sabbath Observers to not have to write or use electricity, but they are expected to actively participate (i.e. during Training the RA will be able to listen and join the discussion, during opening/closing the RA will work the check-in table and be a greeter or hand students paperwork/items but not be the one to highlight a roster or write the information.)

It has been our experience that our RAs who are Sabbath Observers have been able to balance the position with their observance. However, it really comes down to the comfort level of each person individually and their style of observance. In the past, many candidates have been able to have meaningful conversations about the position with their friends/family/Rabbi when making the decision to commit to the position.

How often can I leave campus for the weekend?

While there is no hard and fast rule, it's the expectation that our RAs are here for their residents, building community and are a presence on campus. With that being said, it's healthy and expected for you to be able to take some time away from campus (including a few full weekends). You will find that your commitments to the RA position (Duty, weekend programming, community building, etc) will keep you on campus for the majority of the weekends over the semester. It would be unrealistic for an RA to want to be gone every weekend or every other weekend.

I was found responsible for a housing violation in the past. Can I still apply?

We believe that your experiences make you who you are. We have all made a bad decision from time to time. As long as you're not currently on residence hall probation, you are considered in good standing and are able to apply! The key to your violation is that you were able to learn from the experience and make positive changes.

What is an RA Pull-In?

We enable our RAs to select friends to live with them for the upcoming academic year. RAs living in suites are able to choose who their suitemates will be. RAs living in corridor style housing (i.e. Hewitt) are able to have a set number of friends live in the rooms next to them on the floor. FYF RAs are also able to pull-in friends; their pull-ins will live on the same floor but in a Hewitt room. This is a great perk as an RA (and the friend of the RA). As a result of being pulled-in, the student will not go through the Room Selection Process.

Will being an RA impact my Financial Aid package?

Typically, being an RA does NOT impact your Financial Aid package adversely. Every student's financial package is unique, so you are strongly encouraged to speak with the Financial Aid Office before accepting a position. To schedule an appointment, please visit their website at <http://www.barnard.edu/finaid> to view their Drop-In hours or call Financial Aid at 212-854-2154 to schedule an appointment. Please note that there is a short amount of time between being offered the RA position and the date you need to accept/decline.

How can I better prepare for the interviews?

- Speak with current RAs to learn more of their experiences.
- Set up a time to meet your Graduate Hall Director and/or Associate Director. They can share their experiences with you and encourage you to find ways to get involved in your residence hall and the Barnard community.
- Have conversations with family, friends, and past supervisors about your strengths and weaknesses. This will help you have a better understanding of your abilities.
- Career Development provides opportunities for resume building and interviewing skills. Seek them out!

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF A BARNARD RA

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00		Class		Class	Class	Class	
10:00							
11:00		RA Selection Committee Mtg.		1:1 with Supervisor		Volunteer	
12:00			Class				
1:00		Work at the Diana		Work at the Diana			
2:00							
3:00			Class		Class	Class	
4:00		Class		Class			
5:00							
6:00							
7:00		Study Group		Ceramics	Babysitting		
8:00	Submit RA Report		RA Duty	Staff Meeting			RA Program (fun event)
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							

Every year, students ask what the RA job is really like on a daily basis. While there is no typical week, above is a weekly calendar from a current staff member who is an FYF RA. Here are a few common aspects of the job.

Meetings

Every week, RAs will have a variety of meetings that they need to attend for their job. This ranges from a 45-minute 1:1 meeting with their supervisor to a 90 minute meeting with all the RAs/GHDs who work in their building/area. RAs know these meetings in advance, as they are scheduled at a regular time each week.

Programming and Community Building

A large part of the RA job is to build community on your floor(s) – at the heart of this is programming or hosting events. This is a fun part of the job, but it does take planning and is a time commitment. RAs have a set requirement of the number of programs that they need to host each month. The number of programs required, the types (social, educational, multicultural, etc), and requirements (floor, building, area, campus wide) vary by area the RA works in. These requirements are designed to meet the needs of the students in the building, as First-Year/Transfer/Upper-class/Seniors all have different needs. Additional ways an RA can build community is through lobby hours, spending time with residents in their building/floor common areas, and finding various ways to make connections with each resident.

Duty

As you've noticed in your residence hall, there is an RA on Duty to assist the residents of the building and to make sure everybody is safe. While on Duty, RAs are required to remain in the building and regularly walk through each floor of the building, greet residents, build community, and respond to crisis situations. The duty requirement varies greatly between buildings, as some have duty only on the weekend while others have duty every day of the week. Depending on which building an RA works, she will be on duty between 2-9 days per month.

Administrative

RAs complete a number of administrative responsibilities, including submitting weekly reports, following up with students, conducting Community Safety Inspections (CSI), and completing online forms with respect to their responsibilities. In very few professions do people enjoy paperwork, but as with many jobs we have to do it.

The RA Lifestyle

The most difficult part of the job to explain and/or quantify is the lifestyle of being an RA. Understand that you are going to be an RA 24/7, meaning that your residents will always see you as an RA. As an RA, you'll bump into your residents as you're walking to class and will have a conversation with them, when you're in the dining hall they'll come up to you with a question, and you'll have to confront inappropriate behaviors even when you're not on duty.

Balance

Some students have an easier time balancing the RA position than others. Our staff wear many hats: Student, RA, personal life, part time job or internship, athletics, clubs/organizations, fraternities/sororities, and many more. Each staff member has to work to find a balance in everything they do. Sometimes, this requires staff members to give up some extracurricular activities to be able to balance everything and maintain a healthy lifestyle. All staff members are expected to put academics first, the RA position second, and extracurricular activities and part-time jobs come third.