



Ursinus College

Resident Advisor Application Questions 2024-2025



LEADERSHIP

1. (**What Will I Do?**) Please explain why you have chosen to apply for the Resident Advisor position. What values are currently most significant to you, and how do you exemplify them? How do you see these values translating to the RA position?

I am applying for the RA position because I love helping others, and I want to become more involved and confident as a leader on campus. I am the oldest of four children, and I grew up helping my siblings with things like homework, and cooking. I enjoy using the knowledge and skills that I have to help others learn something new and/or feel more confident in themselves. Since coming to college, I have had less opportunities to do that since I am away from my family and thus, it is something that I realized I am very passionate about. In addition, I did not have the opportunity to be very involved in high school. The RA position would give me the opportunity to have a leadership role for the first time while giving me tangible skills to take into the professional workforce upon graduation such as time management and having challenging but worthwhile conversations. In terms of personal values, patience and hard work are most significant to me right now. Currently, patience is most prevalent in my interactions with family when I am teaching them new skills because they may not understand what I already know as quickly as I may want them to. In addition, I have exercised patience since moving to college as I live in a triple room with two roommates. My roommates since coming to college stay up much later than I do, and I have learned to have patience and talk with them when something in our dynamic is not working rather than be quick to get angry. Regarding hard work, I am grateful for the opportunity to be a student at Ursinus College. I want to make my family proud who are helping me financially with college, so working hard so that I can position myself to get a good job after graduation is very important to me. In the RA position, I would exercise patience with my residents who may not know everything I know with my RA training and in understanding that they may make mistakes that may be difficult for me to confront. I would also put my best hard work ethic forward in the RA position as I know there are many transferable skills to be gained by being vigilant and diligent in following up with resident and facilities concerns. With these considerations in mind, I believe the RA role can help me achieve a better version of my current self.



2. ***(How Should We Live Together?)*** A. Please give an example of a time you cultivated community amongst a group of people. B. How have your experiences at Ursinus influenced your perception of the way members in a community should live together? In what ways will you communicate and encourage these standards/values/ideals with your residents?

One summer, I served as a camp counselor for teenagers at the local community center. The group of teenagers went to several different high schools in our town so while some of them knew each other, there were many of them who did not. In addition, there were a lot of groups and cliques that carried over to camp from the school year. To cultivate community, my fellow camp counselors and I did team builders and friendly competitions that required our group to either work collectively all together or work in groups with people they did not ordinarily hang out with. After a few days, we watched a lot of new friendships form. It was so rewarding to watch my camp group build new connections and a stronger sense of community with one another and I would love to have the opportunity to do that at Ursinus in the RA position.

In terms of my experiences at Ursinus, I have learned that living in the residence halls is truly a cooperative effort and every person has a role in everyone's success living on campus. I have seen this play out in terms of noise and damage. I have learned by living in the residence halls that you need to not only learn to live with your roommates, but your whole hall. Earlier this year, my neighbors down the hall were yelling in the hallway at 1AM. While I knew I could call Campus Safety to address them, I knew I would get back to sleep more quickly if I just did it myself. This taught me that not all conflict needs to be hostile as my hallmates apologized for their behavior and went back to their rooms when I confronted them. In the RA position, I would share this experience with my residents in the beginning of the year, because I think that people avoid addressing small disturbances because they fear they will create a big conflict. I would also ask my residents what their expectations of each other are in our first hall meeting in terms of noise and how to address one another when a conflict arises. I would regularly remind my residents of what we as a hall agreed to during that meeting in an attempt to proactively avoid or address any concerns.



3. ***(How Can We Understand the World?)*** Tell us about a person you admire or an experience you have had that impacted or changed the way in which you understood the world? What about this

person or experience will you keep in mind as you enter the RA role, and how might that help you?

Someone I deeply admire is my High School English teacher, Mr. Tecchi. I loved his class because he always found a way to incorporate humor into what we were learning which made me look forward to going to school every day. More importantly, he took the time to get to know every one of his students on a personal level. Despite teaching a lot of courses and being the advisor to multiple clubs, he always found the time to talk with a student who needed advice, or write a letter of recommendation for a student for college. I had a lot of teachers in high school who taught the content they were expected to each class, but I truthfully do not remember much about their class. Not only did a lot of the content in Mr. Tecchi's class commit to my long-term memory because of his use of humor, but he always made me feel like I mattered as an individual and that is a feeling I will never forget.

As an RA, I would try to emulate the things I learned from Mr. Tecchi in the RA position. He taught me that even when you have a class lesson or something important to do, you can make it fun. This would serve me well as an RA in planning programs that my residents would want to attend, and thinking creatively about how to make hall meetings engaging and fun since I would have to share a lot of information with residents at that time. To make this happen, I would ask my residents what types of programs they would be excited about attending, and also incorporate some type of game into hall meetings to make them more engaging.



4. **(What Should Matter To Me?)** Describe skills you possess that make you an asset to the role and the team. Which aspects of the role do you anticipate will be the most challenging for you and why? What steps might you take to overcome these challenges? Please support your answer with example(s) of how you have overcome challenges in the past.

The skills I possess that would make me a great RA and a good team member are my empathy, my reliability, and my creativity. My empathy will allow me both to connect with my residents because I can sense things that are often left unsaid, and when working on a team, my empathy enables my fellow teammates to feel heard and know that their perspective matters to me. My reliability would be crucial in my success because my residents would know that they can count on me to follow through on the promises that I make them, and my RA teammates would comfortably know that I will always do my assigned tasks when working on an event or project together. Finally, my creativity would allow me to plan events that truly cater to my residents' interests, and when working on a team, my fellow RAs would always be able to count on me to contribute new ideas.

I think that enforcing policy and time management would be the most challenging aspects of the position for me. Enforcing policy is challenging because I worry that my friends would be mad at me if I had to document them for something they are not supposed to be doing. To overcome this challenge, I would talk to my friends in advance about the expectations of my job as an RA and that if I were to encounter them breaking policy, I would need to document the situation as an RA. Being direct proactively is important because without such a conversation, my friends may expect me to look the other way if they were breaking policy since we are friends. I would also talk proactively to other RAs and my supervisor during training about how to balance being a friend and being an RA so that I can learn as much as I can before I am in the role. While I have never had to enforce policy before, I have been uneasy about certain aspects of my camp counselor job such as first aid and mediating conflicts. Talking with camp counselors who had more experience than me and my supervisor helped me learn some tangible skills and thus, put me at ease about these stressful situations. As a result, I was much more prepared for these situations when they happened, so, I think those proactive conversations would be advantageous to me in the RA position. Otherwise, I think time management may be a challenge for me. Being an RA is a big time commitment so I know I would need to be more strategic with my time than I am now if I am offered the position. I would not only utilize my Outlook calendar as an RA for classes and program times, but to make sure I schedule time for errands and administrative tasks so that I do not forget anything I need to do for class, the RA job, or personally. Any time that I have made to do lists and/or scheduled time to complete tasks in the past, I have been a much more organized and efficient person which results in me feeling more confident in my abilities.

Please prepare a collage about yourself on an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper. Be creative! It might include pictures, drawings, music, or quotes. Bring your collage with you to your interview.