

Graduate Resident Assistant (GRA) Description

2025-2026

General Summary

The Graduate Resident Assistant (GRA) is an essential member of the Northwestern Residential Services team whose primary role is to support the social, academic, and personal transition of graduate residential students and their families to the Northwestern community. The GRA is a graduate student leader in Residential Services who is an integral member of the Engelhart Hall, McManus Center, and Garrett Place residential communities. The principal GRA duties involve three main areas: administrative duties, event planning/community development, and on-call responsibilities.

GRAs provide facilitated programs and services designed to both respond to student needs and provide opportunities for education, support, and personal growth. GRAs must be comfortable interacting with university officials, faculty, staff, families, and above all else, students.

GRAs report directly to a Resident Director and Assistant Resident Director, and indirectly to the Residential Experience team. GRAs work collaboratively with all Residential Services staff. This is a 20-hour-a-week position. The position requires staff to live in a provided furnished apartment.

General Responsibilities and Duties

1. Administrative and Operational Responsibilities (25%)
 - a. Serve as a liaison to students and administrative offices and collaborate with campus partners.
 - b. Be available to educate interested applicants about the GRA position and assist with the selection process, as needed.
 - c. Attend bi-weekly GRA team meetings and meet bi-weekly individually with the Resident Director for team and individual development, community development planning, and to receive community and administrative updates.
 - d. Assist with operations processes such as resident check in and check out, administer keys for lockout situations, and conduct room inspections.
 - e. Communicate regularly with the RD, ARD, RA team, and Residential Services staff.

- f. Perform administrative tasks, including submitting duty logs, incident reports, and program planning and evaluation forms in a timely manner.
- 2. Safety and Security/On-Call Responsibilities (50%)
 - a. Serve in a duty rotation to ensure safety, security, and policy enforcement within the residential area during nights and weekends (8:00pm-8:00am) throughout the academic year, as well as weekend day duty (8:00am-8:00pm). There will also be duty responsibilities during designated break periods throughout the academic year.
 - b. Perform duty responsibilities, including rounds of building, apartment lockouts, assisting residents with maintenance concerns, and confronting and documenting policy violations or inappropriate behavior. Enforce rules and regulations such as noise concerns, property damage, fire safety, and other potential policy violations in a consistent and professional manner. GRAs will also assist residents with these items during times when they are not on duty.
 - c. Ensure the security and safety of the building by aiding with fire alarm evacuations, educating residents on security protocol for the building, and maintaining an alert and engaged community.
 - d. Submit all reports (Duty Logs, Incident Reports, and Maintenance Requests) to RD with details of incidents as needed and in a timely manner.
 - e. Appropriately handle building keys.
 - f. Respect the confidentiality of privileged information.
 - g. Build and maintain a good working relationship with all University staff.
 - h. Provide suggestions and recommendations to improve the living experience for residents and their families.
 - i. Other duties as assigned.
 - j. While on duty, the GRA will carry a university-issued cell phone and remain within the assigned area to respond to the needs of the residents. A GRA must be able to be on scene and respond to a situation within ten minutes. Five GRAs serve on the McManus Center duty rotation and six GRAs serve on the Engelhart Hall and Garrett Place duty rotation. This number is subject to change if there are vacancies. GRAs may also be asked to assist with duty coverage at any of the graduate housing buildings (Engelhart, Garrett, or McManus) as needed.
- 3. Community Development Responsibilities (25%)
 - a. Develop relationships through intentional and meaningful interactions with residents in the residential area to build community and create a welcoming environment.

- b. Implement the Residential Experience Framework.
- c. Plan and implement small- and large-scale programs to meet the needs of the residents, support department initiatives, and collaborate with university offices.
- d. Propose, advertise, facilitate, and evaluate building-wide social and educational programs throughout the year.
- e. Support fellow team members through attendance at programs and activities.
- f. Publicize campus events by posting fliers, banners, posters, electronic means, and/or word of mouth.
- g. Other duties as assigned.

Important Dates

- GRA Summer Term Dates: Monday, June 16 – Monday, August 25, 2025
 - Summer Term Training: Monday, June 16 – Wednesday, June 18, 2025*
- GRA Academic Year Dates: Monday, August 25, 2025 – Wednesday, June 17, 2026
 - Academic Year Training: Monday, August 25 – Thursday, August 28, 2025*
 - GRAs will need to work part of one or more breaks in the academic calendar.
 - Thanksgiving Break: Wednesday, November 26 – Sunday, November 30, 2025
 - Winter Break: Friday, December 12, 2025 – Monday, January 5, 2026
 - Spring Break: Friday, March 20 – Sunday, March 29, 2026
- *GRAs are required to be at all training dates for term of appointment.
- Dates are subject to change with advanced communication

GRAs are required to assist with all major check-in and check-out processes, including on evenings and weekends. GRA presence within the residential communities is critical for emergency response. GRAs should discuss plans to be away from their community for extended periods with the RD supervisor. GRAs must not make travel arrangements without consulting with the RD first. This includes university dates around holiday closures and break periods.

Minimum Qualifications

GRA positions are available for graduate students enrolled full-time at Northwestern University. Incoming graduate students (new for the 25-26 academic year) are eligible to apply for the position so long as they are accepted to the university and enrolled by the time of their appointment. GRAs (including applicant candidates) must be in good

academic and conduct standing with Northwestern University. Preference will be given to individuals who have prior residential life (i.e., undergraduate RA) or similar experience.

Kellogg students planning to participate in exchange during the fall, winter, or spring quarters are not eligible for the academic year GRA position. Students who are planning to be away from the Evanston campus for the fall, winter, or spring quarter for other reasons are also not eligible for the academic year GRA position.

A background check will be conducted for all individuals selected during the hiring process. Final acceptance is conditional upon a successful background check.

Physical Requirements

This position requires frequent overnight response to student emergencies, which includes interrupted sleep and ability to wake up from a phone call while sleeping, the ability to lift up to 10 pounds, and the ability to walk up and down stairs.

Compensation

Each GRA will receive an apartment in their assigned community. A one-bedroom apartment will be provided, but another unit type may be assigned (without additional compensation) if a one-bedroom unit is not available. The apartment includes utilities, cable TV access, and wireless internet. A free laundry facility is provided in the building. \$150 per month in compensation is also provided. GRAs are expected to live in their apartment throughout their term.

GRAs requiring a two-bedroom or larger apartment to accommodate dependents will be provided with rent credit comparable to a one-bedroom apartment and are responsible for the difference in rent. Considerations for larger units are made based on the number of occupants and apartment availability.

GRAs who leave the position may be required to vacate the assigned apartment and relocate to a different apartment community within 48 hours of when their termination letter or verbal resignation is received.

Additional Information

Northwestern University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action educator, and employer. Northwestern University does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity,

gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, or other protected group status in matters of admissions, employment, housing, or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates.

Residential Services invites you to approach us early in the application process and to contact the [Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance](#), if you think you may require a housing or position-related accommodation as a GRA.