EDCP 470: Introduction to Student Personnel  
Spring 2012  
Course Syllabus

**Required Text**  
EDCP 470 Course Packet

**Lecture Sections**

01 M........ 4:00pm- 5:15pm (SQH 1120): TAs: Lauriane Stewart, Katie Breen & Garrett Yung   
02 M........ 5:30pm- 6:45pm (SQH 1120): TAs: Akshay Gandhi, Katie Alleva & Kola Omotade

**Discussion Sections**

0101/0201 Instructor(s): Laura Tan & O’Juan Edwards  
Tu........ 3:30pm- 5:00pm (OAK 0311) Discussion  
TA: Sean Gruber

0102/0202 Instructor(s): Tiffany Gaines & Lily Henderson  
Tu........ 4:00pm- 5:30pm (OAK 0315) Discussion  
TA: Deanna Zaucha

0103/0203 Instructor(s): Trish Lay & Jordan Draper  
Tu........ 4:00pm- 5:30pm (ANNA 1108A) Discussion  
TA: Brandon White

0104/0204 Instructor(s): Meredith Carpenter & Laura Matsumoto  
Tu........ 4:30pm- 6:00pm (SCC 7106 Seminar Room) Discussion  
TA: Verayute (Jon) Yahirun

0105/0205 Instructor(s): JaQuan Bryant & Chamika Ellis  
W........ 3:30pm- 5:00pm (OAK 0311) Discussion  
TA: Daniel Kwak

0106/0206 Instructor(s): Hannah Wu & Jacklyn Welsheimer  
W........ 4:00pm- 5:30pm (OAK 0315) Discussion  
TA: Matt Gibbons

0107/0207 Instructor(s): Raymond Ward & Allison Panila  
W........ 4:30pm- 6:00pm (ANNA 1108A) Discussion  
TA: Meghan Riordan

0108/0208 Instructor(s): Lee Hinga & Candace Daniels  
Th........ 3:30pm- 5:00pm (OAK 0311) Discussion  
TA: Jose Fortun

0109/0209 Instructor(s): Angela Jackson  
Th........ 4:00pm- 5:30pm (OAK 0315) Discussion  
TAs: Rachael Kubicek & Scott Kincaid

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**THE RESIDENT ASSISTANT (RA) POSITION:**

**Position Requirements**

The Department of Resident Life requires that all candidates enrolled in EDCP 470 must have a 2.5 cumulative GPA. Your GPA will be checked upon your enrollment in the class. In order to obtain an RA position, a GPA of 2.5 is required by the end of the Spring Semester preceding initial employment and maintenance of at least a 2.50 cumulative GPA while in the Resident Assistant position.
Instructor Recommendation

Instructors have the option to recommend that a student in the course NOT obtain a position. This recommendation is subjective, and has no bearing on the letter grade a candidate will receive in the class. The recommendation is based on lack of commitment to the class and position, inability to positively interact with instructor(s) and class members, and overall poor performance in the class. If an instructor has an issue with a candidate’s performance, a discussion between the candidate and instructor(s) will take place prior to notification of the RA Course Coordinator and the Assistant Director of Resident Life for Human Resources.

Criteria for Appointment as an RA

As previously noted, students having more than one unexcused absence may not be eligible for an appointment to an RA position. In addition, class members must achieve a grade of “C” or higher and not receive a negative recommendation from their course instructor(s) in order to be eligible to receive an RA position.

EDCP 470: INTRODUCTION TO STUDENT PERSONNEL

Purpose, Scope and Goals

The RA course is an academic course offered by the Counseling and Personnel Services Department of the College of Education in conjunction with the Department of Resident Life. Its primary purposes are to orient you to the RA roles, to present new perspectives on the residence hall environment and to provide you with some techniques, skills and knowledge necessary to your successful performance as a Resident Assistant. The RA position is a very comprehensive and demanding one. It requires that you possess a wide variety of knowledge and skill, but more importantly, that you exercise sound judgment in understanding when and how to apply this knowledge and skill. Given the breadth of what you need to know, no one course can cover all the topics in sufficient depth and detail. This course is not designed to make you an expert in the areas covered, but rather give you some of the basics. The RA course will be supplemented with other training programs such as spring semester community training meetings, fall pre-service training, staff meetings, and in-service training. The combination of the RA course and these additional training experiences will provide you with the knowledge and skills you need to be an effective RA.

General Course Objectives

The RA Course Instructors will seek to increase the awareness and basic skill development of class members in order to serve as a basis for undertaking the RA position. The main objectives of the class are as follows:

Objective One: Orient RA candidates to the concepts of community development as it relates to the individual and the collective community.

Objective Two: Orient RA candidates to the Department of Resident Life, the purposes of a residence hall program, and the manner in which they present implications and expectations for the roles of the RA.

Objective Three: Provide RA candidates with an understanding of the basic growth issues and developmental tasks facing college students and how these impact the RA roles. Particular attention will be paid to working in a multicultural environment.

Objective Four: Teach RA Candidates successful skills in fostering and shaping positive residence hall communities. Skills will focus in the areas of communication skills, confrontation, conflict mediation, programming, discipline, and crisis response.

Classroom Expectations

This class serves as both an academic course and as training for the RA position. As a result, there exist some rather unique expectations for you. Mastery of course content is important to your performance as an RA. Just as important, however, is your involvement in the class as a fully contributing member.

Updated 12.15.2011 AJ
Because norms vary from one classroom to another, and individuals vary in their perception of what constitutes an appropriate learning environment, we have defined specific expectations for student behavior in the RA Class. You will be expected to respect these guidelines in all of your lectures/discussions. Individual instructors may have additional requirements or conditions within their individual discussion sections.

The ultimate goal of classroom expectations is to help promote an environment in the classroom that is conducive to learning and maximizes the learning potential of all students.

We acknowledges that many members of the RA class do not need classroom expectations, per se, with the majority of students already possessing excellent interpersonal skills and an understanding of classroom etiquette and protocol. However, we also acknowledge that there are different styles or expectations of classroom protocol, from class to class, and from professor to professor. In response to this variation, we are attempting to define the standards for our classrooms, towards helping new RAs quickly understand our culture and the expectations for their behavior.

RA Class students will be expected to understand and adhere to the following guidelines for their participation and behavior in respect to the classroom environment:

**Academic Integrity**

In all class work and assignments, we expect the highest personal and professional standards that reflect the objectives of the University of Maryland. Students will be held accountable for violations of standards of academic integrity in writing and presentation of scholarly and professional ideas through University of Maryland procedures. Proper citations, paraphrasing and proper quotations are essential in all work. Also, submitting work that implies participation where none occurred, or where more than one individual worked on an individualized project will be viewed as violations of these standards. Any suspected violations of the Code of Academic Integrity such as cheating, fabrication, plagiarism and facilitating academic dishonesty will be reported to the Student Honor Council. Depending on the circumstances, this could have a direct effect on your status as an RA.

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit [http://www.shc.umd.edu](http://www.shc.umd.edu).

To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, we strongly encourage you to sign the Honor Pledge on all examinations and assignments: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment)."

**Atmosphere**

Class members are encouraged to demonstrate an open attitude toward dealing with views presented by fellow students. Class members are expected to act in a supportive manner with respect to fellow class members’ participation in class activities and discussion and are expected to be open to learning the acceptance of alternate cultural perspectives, values, positions, and lifestyles. This open posture to diversity is considered imperative for work in a university residence hall environment.

Students should demonstrate respect for the lecturer/instructor(s) and for fellow students during the lecture/discussion periods. Students will be expected to refrain from potentially distracting behavior such as eating during class, using laptops to surf the Web, play games or check email or holding side conversations. **Students are asked to turn cell phones off during all lectures/discussions.** It is the prerogative of each
lecturer/instructor to set the tone for his or her lecture/discussion, and lecturer/instructors may set different standards, if they so choose.

Instructor/lecturer(s) will dismiss the class at the conclusion of each lecture/discussion. Students should avoid packing-up materials while an instructor/lecturer is speaking, regardless of the time.

Preparation for class should be done outside of class time. Students should refrain from reading assigned materials and materials for other classes, magazine articles, and other materials during lectures/discussions.

Guest lecturers are an integral part of the Department of Resident Life’s tradition of experiential learning. Students are expected to adhere to classroom decorum during interactions with guest lecturers.

**Laptops:** When class is in session, students may use their laptop only as directed by their instructor/lecturer(s). Students shall avoid any activities such as checking email or playing games that diminish their – or their classmates’ – engagement with the instructional activity. In general, students should keep in mind that the use of laptops should add to the classroom environment, not detract from it. If students are unsure whether a given activity is appropriate, they are encouraged to ask their instructor(s). In the spirit of creating learning environment, students will also be held responsible for any inappropriate laptop usage during lectures/discussion. Misuse of laptops will at the very least affect a student's participation grade. Grievous misuse or continued abuse that creates a distraction within the intended learning environment will lead to further disciplinary action.

**Attendance**

Attendance at all lectures and discussion sections is expected. **Students having more than one unexcused absence from the lecture or discussion sections may no longer be eligible for placement as an RA.** An unexcused absence from a portion of a lecture or discussion section is considered to be an unexcused absence from an entire class period. Once a student is designated as no longer eligible for an RA position due to unexcused absences, he/she may appeal in writing to the RA Class Coordinator. The final decision on this appeal will be made by the RA Class Coordinator with input from the instructor(s) and the Assistant Director of Resident Life for Human Resources.

Because we are a diverse community and enroll students with many spiritual beliefs, we will be sensitive to students’ requests for excused absences and make-up test requests due to reasons of religious observances. Be mindful that it is the student’s responsibility to inform instructors of any intended absences for religious observances in advance. Notice should be provided as soon as possible.

If circumstances arise that a student cannot attend lecture/discussion, the student should notify their instructor(s) in advance. If a student misses a lecture/discussion, it is the student's responsibility to obtain materials and notes covered in class that day and they should not expect instructor(s) to go over the material with them individually. Students should make contact with their instructor and/or the Course Coordinator (in the case of Lecture) to inform them of any mitigating circumstances surrounding their absence.

**Confidentiality**

Many issues in the class session are to remain confidential. Class members are expected to remain mindful of this issue with respect to their peers’ contributions during class.

**Participation**

Class members are expected to participate actively in class sessions. Class members will benefit most when the class atmosphere is one characterized by active and honest discussion. Skill development in those areas described in the class objectives is maximized by frequent and active participation in role-plays and group exercises. Since the experiential aspects of the class are important, class members are expected to cooperate and comply with directions and feedback from instructors during these activities. An overall participation grade will be assigned by instructors upon completion of the class, which is based on attendance, engaged
contributions to class discussion, active listening and involvement and other factors that contribute to the positive development of the class community.

Students should respect the rights of other students to contribute to discussion and should avoid monopolizing class discussions. Students should be mindful of different levels of skills or abilities of their peers in speaking fluently and confidently during classroom discussions and make efforts to promote a tolerant and fair environment for all class members. Therefore, it is suggested that individuals raise their hands, rather than volunteer answers, to allow everyone in the class an equal opportunity to participate in the discussion. Again, it is the prerogative of instructors to define the tone and process for classroom participation.

**Punctuality**  
Students are expected to arrive for lecture/discussion on time so that the lecturer/instructor(s) can start and end the lecture/discussion according to schedule. It is the instructor(s)'s prerogative to establish guidelines and protocol for those arriving more than five minutes late.

Acknowledging that there are sometimes factors beyond one's control that will result in arriving late to class, students arriving late should wait until the end of discussion to get any handouts or course materials passed out before or during discussion. Similarly, students should wait until the end of discussion to hand in required assignments.

**Expectations of Instructors**  
Students can expect their instructors will arrive on time and be prepared for class, respond in a timely fashion to student work, and take students' interests and experiences into consideration when preparing for class. Instructors will be available to students outside the class period.

Students should note that all class instructors are either graduate or full-time practitioners in the field of Student Affairs in the residence halls. Teaching Assistants are current Resident Assistants. These individuals bring extensive experience and insight to the RA roles and residence hall living situations which students will hopefully make extensive use of both in and outside class sessions.

**Course Content:**

**Readings**

Class members are expected to complete all outside readings and assignments on time. Class members will be held responsible for text material in formal evaluations or experiential activities in class.

**Assignments**

There will be several assignments during the course of the semester, detailed in accompanying documents and described briefly below:

**Assignment 1 (The RA Areas of Responsibility):** Each student will go on a duty round with a current RA and write an analysis of the experience as per the assignment information sheet. (20 points)

**Assignment 2 (Crisis and Emergency Management):** Each student will design and present a poster project focused on a crisis/emergency issue relevant to university students. (20 points)

**Assignment 3 (The Individual and the Community):** Each student will choose one of two options: participation in the Common Grounds program or exploration of an identity group. (30 points)

**Assignment 4 (Journals):** Each student will write 6, 2-3 page journals on pre-assigned topics related to the RA areas of responsibility and community building in the residence halls. (30 points)
All assignments will be graded with the following criteria:

**Content:**
The degree to which the student responds to all the specific items in the assignment. The degree to which a student indicates his or her recall and understanding of the material and concepts covered in the course.

**Introspection, Elaboration and Synthesis:**
The degree to which a student is insightful, thoughtful, innovative and self-aware in the application of course concepts to his or her individual experiences. The degree to which a student provides detail, depth and development in written work. Instructors will be looking for the student's ability to reason and provide rationales for conclusions, the extent of critical thinking and the development of examples and analogies. The degree to which the student “brings it all together” and incorporates course material in the creation of new insights, unique products and/or creative solutions.

**Form:**
The care and clarity with which a student completes papers and presentations. Written assignments should be of very high quality. Grammar, syntax, punctuation and structure of assignments should support and enhance the concepts that the student intends to convey. The organization, clarity and polish of the group presentation should do the same.

All journals will be graded with the following criteria:

The weekly journals will not be graded for content, but will be reviewed and feedback provided. They will be graded for completion by the due date. At the end of the semester, as long as you have submitted all six journals on time, you will receive full credit (30 points) for this portion of your grade.

Class members are expected to seek approval for extensions of assignment deadlines well in advance of due dates from the instructor(s). Assignments which are submitted after due dates with no prior authorization (except in cases of a documented family emergency or personal illness) will be penalized one point per calendar day past the due date. All assignments must be submitted in print form. Assignments may not be e-mailed or faxed, unless instructor(s) permission is given well in advance of the due date.

**Quizzes**
There will be three quizzes during the semester, each worth 10 points. They will cover information from readings and lectures.

**Grading**
The following point totals and associated grade levels for the course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment One</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment Two</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment Three</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment Four</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz I</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz II</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz II</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>160</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97 - 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 - 79.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94 - 96.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74 - 76.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 - 93.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 - 73.99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Updated 12.15.2011 AJ*
Please note that there will be no rounding up of grades. For example, a score of 179 points out of 200 points (89.5%) will be scored as a B+. While pluses and minuses will appear on your transcripts, UMD will only calculate whole points into your grade point average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87 – 89.99</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 – 69.99</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84 – 86.99%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 – 66.99%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 – 83.99%</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 63.99%</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59.99% and below</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Blackboard**

The Blackboard course management system contains an integrated set of educational tools for constructing and managing an online course environment. Blackboard includes a set of administrative utilities that allow students to take a more active role in the learning community.

While there are many tools available, the following will be used for this course:

- **Announcements**: Students should check this section at least once a week.
- **Syllabus**: The course syllabus will be available to students at any time.
- **Assignments**: Assignments would be available to download.
- **Course Notes**: Summaries of course content will be provided, along with supplemental materials (instructor contacts, supplemental readings, power points from lecture, etc)
- **My Grades**: Allows students to view their grades on line.

By the first day of class, you should be able to logon to the system. Use your logon and password to enter the environment through the Blackboard website (www.elms.umd.edu). Assistance on getting started and using the various tools is available at the website as well.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact their Instructor(s) and/or the Course Coordinator, Angela Jackson, so that reasonable accommodations can be made to assist learning and evaluation in the class. In addition, the Office of Disability Support Services at the University of Maryland (301-314-7682) provides a variety of services to students with disabilities; staff is available to consult with students at any time.