

**Leadership in Residential Communities**  
**Class Meeting Time: Wednesdays 9:30am – 11:20am**  
**Location: Maple C**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This one-credit hour, hands on, discussion-based, elective course that is required for new Resident Assistants/Community Managers is focused on learning leadership skills that can be applied in all leadership positions and then applying them directly to the RA/CM experience. The course will include understanding values, ethics, communication, group dynamics, student and community development. The course also gives new RAs/CMs an opportunity to discuss issues within their position amongst each other and ways to be successful in their role.

**Required Text/Online Access:**

- Resources will be provided as assigned

**Course Goals and Objectives:**

The purpose of this course is to develop skills and competencies to be an effective leader in the residential communities at the University of South Florida. Specifically, students will:

- gain an understanding of self: identity, values and their influence on everyday interactions
  - understand how to incorporate personal values and critical thinking skills to make ethical decisions
  - learn how to develop effective communication skills
  - develop an enhanced understanding and appreciation of multiculturalism and social justice
  - apply practical knowledge learned in the course to build a strong residential community
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**COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance/Participation:**

Just as RAs/CMs develop a community within their halls, this course is meant to develop a community of learners. As with any community, the active participation of its members is necessary. In the case of this course, active participation will be reflected in the grading metric. Students are expected to come to class on time, actively participate in discussions, activities, and complete the assignments on time. Showing up to class but not contributing to discussions or activities will result in a loss of participation points. Participation includes freely expressing your opinions and sharing ideas. However, that freedom also comes with the responsibility to treat other class members with courtesy and respect. Students should be willing to listen to others, as you would want others to listen to you.

Five participation points will be deducted at the instructor's discretion for any inappropriate behavior. This includes, but is not limited to: disrespectful behavior toward your instructor and/or classmates, arriving late to class or leaving early without prior notice, texting, playing games, doing work for another class, excessive talking or other disruptions (such as a ringing cell phone). For more information concerning appropriate student behavior, please refer to the Student Code of Conduct at [http://www.sa.usf.edu/handbook/USF\\_Student\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.sa.usf.edu/handbook/USF_Student_Handbook.pdf).

Class attendance is mandatory. Each unexcused absence from class will result in you dropping one FULL letter grade. **Thus, two unexcused absences will result in a failing grade and termination of employment.** Extenuating circumstances such as a family emergency, extended illness, or observance of a religious holiday will be considered on a case-by-case basis. You are expected to e-mail your instructor in advance if you expect to miss class. If you miss class you are responsible for determining what was covered in class and for completing any assignments that are due. The course is only 8 weeks long; thus, it is important that you make every effort attend each class.

### **Dropping/Withdrawing from Class:**

If you are taking this course **FOR CREDIT**, the last day to drop this class (to receive a refund) is Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The last day to withdraw (with a grade of “w” – no academic penalty, no tuition refund) is Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016. You are strongly advised to consult your academic advisor and the Office of Financial Aid (if applicable) before dropping or withdrawing from any class.

### **Emergency Closure:**

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Skype email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor the Blackboard site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USF, College, and department websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information.

### **Employment Conditions**

Satisfactory completion of this class is required for continued employment as a RA/CM. Satisfactory completion means completing all assignments, as well as obtaining a minimum of 80% of the possible points. Two missed classes (except for those emergency situations as determined by instructor) will automatically result in a failing grade and termination of employment.

### **Student/Instructor Communication:**

Your USF e-mail address is considered the official means of communication among students and instructor. Personal e-mail accounts, such as AOL or Hotmail, should not be used.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with the office of Students with Disabilities Services to arrange appropriate accommodations. Students are required to give reasonable notice prior to requesting an accommodation. See Student Responsibilities at <http://www.asasd.usf.edu/Students.htm> and Faculty Responsibilities at <http://www.asasd.usf.edu/faculty.htm>.

### **USF Policy on Religious Observances:**

All students have a right to expect that the University will reasonably accommodate their religious observances, practices, and beliefs. Please notify your instructor in writing before the second class meeting if you intend to be absent from a class, in accordance with this policy.

### **Academic Honesty:**

You are expected to be familiar with the Academic Dishonesty and Disruption of Academic Process Policy found in the Undergraduate Catalog. Neither cheating nor plagiarism (defined as unattributed quotation of the exact words of a published text or another’s writing, or the unattributed borrowing of original ideas by paraphrase from a published text) will be tolerated. Academic Dishonesty is unacceptable and could result in a failing grade for the course and further disciplinary action from the University. Be sure to properly cite your sources when quoting or referring to someone else’s work.

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## **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Grades are issued based on the total points earned for class attendance, participation, and completion of the assigned readings, self-assessments, papers, and activities. Satisfactory completion of this class is required for your continued employment as a RA/CM. **Satisfactory completion means attending all classes, completing all assignments and projects, and obtaining a minimum of 80% of the possible points. Two missed classes will result in a failing grade and termination of employment.** Grades will not be negotiated or curved. Below are the grading distributions (including the plus/minus system) that will be used for this course:

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**CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

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**Paper Requirements:**

Many of these assignments serve the purpose of individual reflection on an article, topic, or activity presented in class. Assignments should demonstrate critical thinking about the topic, synthesis of ideas, and application to the RA/CM position. All papers must be typed in Times New Roman 11-point font, double-spaced with one-inch margins. Length will vary by topic, but generally will require approximately two full pages for complete analysis. Students may be asked to share thoughts and reflections with the class, but no one will be required to share. Therefore, students should be honest and thoughtful in their reflection.

Overall Percentage	Letter Grade
97 - 100%	A+
90 - 96%	A
87 - 89%	B+
80 - 86%	B
77 - 79%	C+
70 - 76%	C
67 - 69%	D+
60 - 66%	D
59 or below	F

Assignment	Point Value	My Grade
Hot Topic Presentation & Paper	45	
RA/CM Portfolio/Resume Presentation	75	
Final Presentation (Understanding to Practice)	45	
Reflective Journals	60	
Attendance and Participation	75	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	

**Reflective Journals (DUE 8/31, 9/28, 10/5 & 10/12)**

Throughout the duration of the course, you will be challenged to really reflect on both the content of the course and your experience (life and RA role) You will be asked to complete reflective journals, which gives you an opportunity to write about what you have personally learned in a particular class. Your instructor will provide you a prompt to answer at the end of the classes where you are assigned to complete an entry. Each entry will be a part of your RA/CM Portfolio, which will be due at the end of the course (You will turn in a copy & place a copy in your portfolio).

**Diversity and Social Justice: Hot Topic Presentation (DUE 9/14 OR 9/21)**

Students will work in pre-selected teams of two or three to create a presentation based on relevant topics based around diversity and social justice. The instructor will assign topics to each group. The presentation will consist of the following components. Please note that the paper and the presentations will be submitted SEPERATLEY in Canvas.

- Definition of the issue
- How the topic became relevant
- Individuals that have been affected by this topic
- The media's take on this issue
- America's view/World's view on the issue
- Questions to pose for the class bases on the issue

In addition to completing this presentation, you all will individually be responsible for completing a two-page reaction paper, which shares your critical thoughts and views on the topic selected, what you have learned from exploring this topic and idealistic and/or realistic solutions to resolving the issues presented.

**RA/CM Portfolio and Resume (DUE 10/12)**

Each student will maintain an on-going portfolio that documents their first semester as a RA/CM. Items to include in their portfolio include, but are not limited to the following:

- Photos of Hall Theme (and/or examples of door tags if you did any), Door Decorations
- Photos/copies of passive activities
- Copies of Facilitation Guides for events
- Examples of event publicity
- Photos from events
- Blurbs on successful intentional conversation activities
- Up-to-date resume including your RA/CM position
- Reflective Journals

### **Understanding to Practice Presentation (DUE 10/12)**

You will be given the opportunity to practice what you have seen and learned in class. As you have been given the opportunity to learn different aspects of leadership and expand skills needed within the RA/CM role through activities, reflection, and conversations, this assignment will allow you to practice these skills and concepts.

You will work with a group of 2-3 peers and create a 20 minute presentation on one of the following outcomes with a focus on 2 objectives, based from the Residential Curriculum:

- Wellness
  - 1.1 Develop personal habits that contribute to well being
  - 1.3 Develop healthy habits pertaining to issues such as alcohol and other drugs
- Interpersonal Skills
  - 2.1 Explore personal values and beliefs
  - 2.2 Actively communicate to prevent and resolve conflict
- Academic Engagement
  - 3.1 Identify personal strategies for making a successful academic transition
  - 3.2 Utilize university resources available to support student success
- Global Citizenship
  - 4.1 Explore how multiple worldviews are shaped by culture norms, values, beliefs, identity and biases
  - 4.3 Demonstrate an understanding of local and global cultural differences

As a group, you will use several of the educational strategies within the Residential Curriculum to present your assigned outcome and learning objectives. This assignment serves as an opportunity to try something new, to be creative and think of new ways to engage residents in the learning objectives. In the end, this assignment will serve as a small showcase of “EVERYTHING WE DO.”

Your presentation should include the following:

- 4-5 questions you would ask a resident in an **intentional conversation** that is related to the learning objectives
- A **passive activity** that educates students on the learning objectives (not from an online database)
- 5 minutes presenting about a **Building/Floor/Pod/House-Specific Event** and how to engage resident with the learning objectives (This event should be fun and interesting)
  - Include a flyer
  - 10 minutes completing a short version of the program with the RAs/CMs in the class
- A **campus resource** must be included to assist with exposing residents to the learning objectives. The campus resource can be used to create the passive activity and/ or Building/Floor/Pod/House-Specific event.
- 4-5 **reflection** prompts for residents about the learning objectives. The reflection prompts can be included in the passive activity, at the Building/Floor/Pod/House-Specific event, or post-event assessment (Facebook, stall talk, chat & chew, etc.)

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### Class Weekly Schedule

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*Schedule and assignments below are subject to change. Modifications to the class agenda and/or make-up work may be necessary in the event of a University closure. Check Blackboard for updates and announcements.*

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>In Class Activity</b>	<b>Online/Readings &amp; Assignments Due This Week</b>
<b>1</b>	8/24	Maple C	<i>What is Your Purpose?</i> Class Introduction Why, How, What (Sinek)	No assignments due
<b>2</b>	8/31	Maple C	<i>Community Building</i> My Communities Keys to Building Community	<b>DUE: Reflective Journal 1</b>
<b>3</b>	9/7	Maple C	<i>Ethical Decision Making</i>	<b>DUE: Community Building Reflection Worksheet</b>
<b>4</b>	9/14	Maple C	<i>Understanding You and the World Around You</i> Hot Topic Presentations	<b>DUE: Hot Topic Presentations/Reaction Paper</b>
<b>5</b>	9/21	Maple C	<i>Understanding You and the World Around You</i> Hot Topic Presentations	<b>DUE: Hot Topic Presentations/Reaction Paper</b>
<b>6</b>	9/28	Maple C	<i>Managing Confrontation and Conflict</i> Conflict Management Style Assessment Mediation Steps	<b>DUE: Reflective Journal 2</b>
<b>7</b>	10/5	Maple C	<i>Leadership and Social Change</i> Action Plan for Leadership	<b>DUE: Reflective Journal 3</b>
<b>8</b>	10/12	Maple C	<i>Understanding to Practice</i> Final Presentations	<b>DUE: Understanding to Practice Presentation</b> <b>DUE: RA/CM Portfolio &amp; Resume Presentation</b> <b>DUE: Reflective Journal 4</b>

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#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

This syllabus is subject to change. Modifications to the class agenda and/or make-up work may be necessary in the event of a University closure.

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