

PREDICTIVE VALUE OF PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
FOR FIRST-TIME SOPHOMORE RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

By

Dana A. Severance

Dissertation Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

College of Education

Frostburg State University


December 2015

PREDICTIVE VALUE OF PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
FOR FIRST-TIME SOPHOMORE RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

By

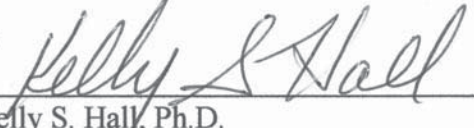
Dana A. Severance

The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the College of Education, have examined and approved this dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

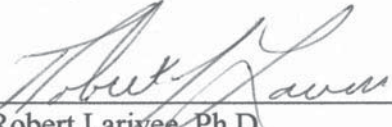


Chair
William P. Childs, Ed.D.
Professor, Department of Educational Professions
Frostburg State University

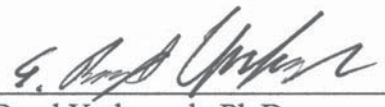
11/23/15
Date



Kelly S. Hall, Ph.D.
Interim Dean of Student Services
Garrett College



Robert Larivee, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair, Department of Chemistry
Frostburg State University



E. Boyd Yarbrough, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs
Cleveland State University

Acknowledgments

A sage advisor conveyed to me that a dissertation should tell a story, and I would like to thank the supporting characters in my life who have made it possible for me to tell this one.

I thank my dissertation committee for generously sharing their expertise and invaluable time with me. As my committee chair through most of this journey, Dr. Kelly Hall has been a teacher, mentor, critic, and friend. She challenged me, inspired me, and supported me at every serpentine turn. She gave me confidence, showed genuine excitement about my study, and, most importantly, kept me laughing. I thank Dr. William Childs for conceiving of, promoting, and delivering this new doctoral program at Frostburg State University, of which I am most grateful to be among the first beneficiaries. I owe Dr. Childs additional gratitude for munificently and adeptly stepping in as committee chair on the very last leg of this journey. I am also thankful for the scholarly challenges and compassionate sponsorship of both Dr. Robert Larivee and Dr. Boyd Yarbrough.

I extend my appreciation to the faculty of the Educational Leadership program for extending their hands and dragging me up the mountain of knowledge so that I might place on it my little nugget of hard data. In particular, special thanks go to Dr. Doris Santamaria-Makang, Dr. Beth Scarloss, and Dr. Glenn Thompson.

My friends and colleagues at FSU have shown patience, love, and great indulgence during this journey. I would especially like to recognize the following: Susie Yates, Bonnie Jackson, Becky Carrington, Corrie Preston, and Paula Livingston for their unwavering emotional support; Theresa Mastrodonato, Rita Thomas, and Brian Wilson for their technical proficiency; Dr. Katie Boone, Sean McNalley, Brian Medina, Katie

Buehner, Anette Melendez, and Susan Magore-Kodzwa for their diagnostic scrutiny of my ideas; and my supervisor-mentors, Dr. Jay Hegeman, Dr. Tom Bowling, and Dr. Jonathan Gibralter.

This dissertation journey may have ended in failure but for the support and kinship of the 2012 Ed.D. cohort. I owe a special debt to two amazing women: Dr. Vickie Mazer for her inside-track knowledge and comradery, and Dr. Terry Kasekamp for helping me keep my eyes on the prize through numerous therapy sessions.

My friends and colleagues of the Mid-Atlantic Association of College and University Housing Officers have granted me innumerable opportunities for professional development, and I owe gratitude to the following individuals who specifically assisted in the gathering of this study's data: Brooke Clayton, Brian Medina, Joanne Goldwater, Shana Alston, Grace Reynolds, Jennifer Thorpe, Liz Holt, Jan Schumacher, Matt Jordan, Courtney Jones, Rosemary Padilla, Nicole DeLiberis, and Dr. Benita Brown-Rashaw.

Every chapter of my story is filled with the love of my family. My adoration and devotion belong to my daughters, Hannah Deprey-Severance and Sarah Deprey-Severance, who fulfilled me with their unconditional support and inspired me with their own educational journeys. And I dedicate this dissertation to my heartening and accommodating partner, Kerry Richard, who has done everything in his substantial power to fortify and invigorate me on this journey of a lifetime.

Abstract

PREDICTIVE VALUE OF PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR FIRST-TIME SOPHOMORE RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

By

Dana A. Severance

Housing professionals are increasingly compelled to consider hiring resident assistants (RAs) from a pool of applicants that includes students with less college experience than has traditionally been expected. The purpose of the study is to determine if the success of first-time sophomore RAs differs from that of first-time upper-class RAs according to performance evaluations by their supervisors. Performance evaluations of first-time resident assistants were compared to determine if any performance evaluation criteria predicted the sophomore or non-sophomore class standing of RAs *post hoc*. Performance evaluation data for first-time RAs were gathered from universities in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. The reported performance criteria were relationships with residents, relationships with staff, residential community development, programming, and administration. The data were analyzed using binary logistic regression. Performance criteria did not predict an RA's class standing. Supervisors of first-time resident assistants evaluated the performance of sophomore resident assistants substantially the same as their upper-class counterparts. This result will give housing professionals more confidence in selecting students to serve as resident assistants regardless of their class standing.

Keywords: Resident assistant, resident advisor, college sophomore, residence

hall, binary logistic regression

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	ii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Tables	ix
Chapter 1 – Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem.....	1
Purpose and Rationale of the Study	2
Significance of Study	2
Theoretical Framework.....	3
Research Question	6
Research Design Overview.....	7
Assumptions.....	9
Limitations	9
Delimitations.....	10
Definitions.....	10
Organization of the Study	11
Chapter 2 – Review of the Literature.....	13
Introduction.....	13
Residence Halls.....	13
Section summary.....	21
Resident Assistants	22
Section summary.....	24

Sophomores.....	25
Section summary.....	30
Sophomore Resident Assistants	31
Section summary.....	35
Chapter 3 – Research Design and Methodology.....	37
Research Design	37
Research Question	38
Sample.....	39
Demographic Variables	40
Gender identification	40
Job status.....	40
Class standing of residents served	40
Dependent Variable	41
Independent Variables	41
Data Source and Collection Procedures.....	41
Instrument design.....	42
Participant recruitment and data collection.....	42
Data preparation and recoding	45
Data Analysis Procedures	46
Hypotheses	49
Validity and Reliability Threats.....	49
Measures of Ethical Protection	50
Chapter 4 – Results	52

Participants.....	52
Demographic Variables	54
Dependent and Independent Variables	55
RA class standing.....	55
Performance variables.....	56
Correlations among independent variables.....	58
Binary logistic regression analysis.....	60
Chapter 5 – Discussion and Implications.....	63
Demographic Variables	63
Gender.....	63
Predominant class standing of residents	64
Job status.....	65
Discussion	66
Implications for theory and practice	69
Other observations	72
Study Limitations.....	73
Future Research	75
Conclusions.....	78
References.....	80
Appendix A – Supporting Documents.....	91
Appendix B – Survey.....	94
Appendix C – Institutional Review Board Approval.....	100
Appendix D – Master Data Set	101

List of Tables

Table 1 <i>Frequencies of Component Criteria: Community Development</i>	43
Table 2 <i>Frequencies of Component Criteria: Relationships with Residents</i>	43
Table 3 <i>Frequencies of Component Criteria: Administration</i>	44
Table 4 <i>Frequencies of Component Criteria: Relationships with Staff</i>	44
Table 5 <i>Frequencies of Component Criteria: Programming</i>	45
Table 6 <i>Frequencies of Institutional Characteristics</i>	54
Table 7 <i>Frequencies of Demographic Variables</i>	55
Table 8 <i>Frequencies of Dependent and Independent Variables</i>	59
Table 9 <i>Spearman's rho Correlations Between Independent Variables</i>	60
Table 10 <i>Logistic Regression Coefficients for Performance Criteria</i>	62

Chapter 1 – Introduction

At residential colleges and universities in the United States, resident assistants are ubiquitous, esteemed, and endangered. Housing professionals, often having served as resident assistants themselves as undergraduates, recognize the value of resident assistants as front line support in the challenging mission to orient, engage, and retain students through graduation. At the same time, a common refrain of housing professionals, regardless of how long ago they served in the position, is that the resident assistant job grows more demanding each year while their compensation has not changed appreciably in decades. Resident assistants are expected to act as counselors, mediators, community builders, campus resources, and group facilitators, all while pursuing their own undergraduate degrees in their primary roles as students (Blimling, 2010). However, students today enter college with a growing number of personal and emotional challenges, and the job of resident assistant has become progressively more stressful as a result (Brandt Brecheisen, 2015). Housing professionals are motivated to hire students who are highly prepared for the challenges resident assistants face, but they find it increasingly difficult to recruit advanced students for the job (Crandall, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

Housing professionals want resident assistants (RAs) who are more mature and experienced than the students they will serve and are therefore reluctant to select students who have not yet made all the necessary transitions to higher education. Because academically and socially mature candidates are harder to find, housing professionals are progressively more compelled to hire first-year students who apply for RA positions due to shrinking numbers of more experienced candidates (Schaller & Wagner, 2007). Selection processes for resident assistants for a given academic year most often take

place in the previous semester. Consequently, students may interview for the job after only one semester of college experience, making housing personnel skeptical about their potential effectiveness and concerned about their ability to handle the challenges of the position. The hiring of first-year students to serve as resident assistants in their sophomore year is a common but not yet validated practice; sophomore RAs experience the complexity of challenges in their own development while concurrently mentoring other students (Foote et. al, 2013; Schaller, 2005). The research literature provides no direct guidance regarding the efficacy of second-year students in the resident assistant role as compared to juniors or seniors.

Purpose and Rationale of the Study

The purpose of this study is to compare the performance of first-time resident assistants (RAs) to determine if any performance criteria can predict the sophomore or non-sophomore class standing of RAs ex post facto. Using such a prediction model would assist housing professionals in making data-informed hiring decisions that maximize the likelihood of an RA's success on the job. The study further aims to assist housing professionals in determining the efficacy of their staff-intensive resident assistant selection processes. As stated by Jaeger and Caison (2006), "Although selection of RA candidates is time-consuming and ultimately determines who will serve in the critical RA role, the research examining the selection process is relatively non-existent" (p. 146).

Significance of Study

The results of this research will prove significant to college and university student affairs staff, especially residence life professionals, as they endeavor to employ student staff who are most likely to perform successfully. Understanding whether sophomore

resident assistants perform differently from more advanced students will help regardless of the direction of the prediction. For those residence life professionals who find themselves compelled to hire sophomore resident assistants due to a sparsity of applicants in their pools, the results of this research may oblige them to increase the compensation for this position in order to solicit applications from more mature students. If the study reveals that no significant differences exist among RAs according to class standing or that sophomore RAs perform better, housing personnel may be considerably less concerned about hiring first-year students to serve in their sophomore year.

Theoretical Framework

Sophomore college students as a population are understudied, even though they have the strongest needs among upper-class students (Gahagan & Hunter, 2006; Pattengale & Schreiner, 2000). While virtually all colleges offer freshman-specific programs explicitly designed to assist with their transition from high school to college including First-Year Experience residence halls, only about one-third of schools report featuring sophomore-specific residence halls (Tobolowsky & Cox, 2007). The lack of sophomore-specific support programs has contributed to what was formerly known as the *sophomore slump*: the period in which second-year students tend to report dissatisfaction with themselves, their relationships, and their institutions (Lemons & Richmond, 1987). The feeling of being untethered and even abandoned following the first college year is likely an unintended result of the withdrawal of the many services and programs that freshmen students enjoy. Schaller (2005) shares a typical quote from a sophomore: “I’m just kind of lost. As far as my friends, that’s all changing, my relationships with other people are changing, my family life is changing, my major’s changed like five times”

(p.17).

While few education scholars have attempted to develop a theory related to sophomore transitions, Schaller posited four stages of exploration for sophomores: random exploration, focused exploration, tentative choices, and commitment (Schaller, 2005). Based on her review of the literature and her own qualitative studies of sophomores, Schaller stated that these stages demonstrate themselves in three distinct issues with which sophomores deal: how they view themselves, their relationships, and their academic experiences and decisions. She discovered in her research a prevalence for sophomores to remain in the random exploration stage that characterizes most students in their first year of college. Sophomores in the random exploration stage were aware that choices they would need to make in their lives were looming. However, they went about their lives in ways that allowed them to delay those decisions. A plurality of sophomores in her study were in the focused exploration stage in addressing areas of their lives; they began doubting their current relationships and academic experiences and began questioning previous choices they had made as freshmen, especially related to choosing a major. For Schaller, this represented the transition among second-year students in realizing that they need to be self-directed, to come up with their own answers, and to leave behind the artificial relationships they had developed with peers. The third stage, tentative choices, follows from this introspection. According to Schaller, students at this stage feel a new level of responsibility and begin to feel good about imagining their futures in more specific terms. Finally, Schaller found that few sophomores had proceeded to the fourth stage, commitment. These students were “planning for the future, clear about what they wanted, and unwavering in their sense of responsibility for their

own future” (Schaller, 2005, p. 20). Schaller concluded that students need encouragement to take responsibility for choices and their learning, to get involved in curricular and extra-curricular activities, and to build new relationships with peers based on intentional rather than superficial characteristics.

The present study uses Bridge’s (1980) transition theory as a theoretical framework, the same employed by Schaller (2005) in designating the stages of commitment. Bridges described transition as the internal, psychological state of reorientation brought about by an external, environmental change. The theorist asserted that, while change is inevitable and can be rather sudden, successful transition is not automatic and is much slower (Bridges, 2009).

According to Bridge’s theory, transition requires individuals to undergo three distinct and gradual processes: saying goodbye, the neutral zone, and moving forward. First, people must step away from what is known and comfortable and let go of the way things were, as well as let go of their own perception of themselves and the way they used to be. They must relinquish old methods of behaving that may have been successful, and possibly relinquish their sense of identity and self-efficacy. As difficult and painful as this process may be, they must let go of the past before they can embrace the future, and experience *endings* in order to move forward.

Once people have acknowledged the new reality brought about by change, they enter the neutral zone, an uncomfortable, disorganized state in which they may be flooded with optional directions to turn but without a clear sense of how to choose among the options. In Bridge’s theory, this neutral zone is a very important time when creative *explorations* can take place (Bridges, 2009). The uncertainty of this period can be

overwhelming and may cause people to give up and try to return to their former ways, even though this option is likely illusory. However, people with the necessary support systems who discover constructive interpersonal connections may use the neutral zone as a time of discovery, leading to an internal experience of *new beginnings* which may bring renewed energy and commitment to the future.

Transition theory is useful as the lens through which to explore implications for educational practice – in this case, the efficacy of hiring sophomore resident assistants. Bridge's theory predicts that sophomore resident assistants in their first semester of service who are unable to navigate through the difficult transition processes of the sophomore year while simultaneously dealing with the multiple challenges of the RA position are likely to perform poorly. Conversely, those who are able to successfully utilize available resources and develop a support network will move through the neutral zone, and are therefore likely to perform equally well compared to their upper-class counterparts.

Research Question

Considering that housing professionals are increasingly forced to consider hiring Resident Assistants from a pool of applicants that includes students with less college experience than was traditionally expected, the researcher seeks to provide evidence of the efficacy of hiring first-year students to serve as RAs in their sophomore year. Specifically, do resident assistants' scores on performance evaluation criteria as determined by their college housing supervisors predict the sophomore class standing of first-time resident assistants?

Research Design Overview

This study explores whether performance evaluation scores of first-time RAs can predict their sophomore or non-sophomore class standing ex post facto. The study employed a survey design to solicit data on first-time RAs in the study population, which is composed of member institutions in the Mid-Atlantic Association of College and University Housing Officers (MACUHO) who chose to report RA performance data specifically for the purpose of this study. Data collected on RAs' class standing served as the dependent variable. First-time RAs' evaluation scores on performance criteria comprised the independent variables. The criteria were derived through a content analysis of evaluation forms used by nine U.S. institutions outside of the Mid-Atlantic region.

Using binary logistic regression analysis, the study sought to determine if there are any performance criteria which predict the status of a college RA as either in their sophomore year or beyond their sophomore year. According to Creswell (2008), the use of survey design is appropriate for assessing the characteristics of a population. Such design cannot explain cause and effect but merely describe trends in the data.

The RAs' success in the position was defined as an RA's performance as documented by an institutionally-determined supervisor via mid-year evaluations after their first semester of service. The number and definition of these performance criteria were determined through content analysis of institutional performance evaluations (as described later), and the data for these predictor variables were scaled ordinal categorical values. The five evaluated categories of performance were relationships with residents, relationships with other staff, administrative skills, community development, and programming skills.

Because no standard set of evaluation criteria for RAs exists, the researcher collected a sample of evaluation forms used by institutions outside of the study population and conducted a content analysis of these evaluation forms to list and categorize the specific performance criteria of each institution's evaluation form. Through an iterative process, the researcher refined the evaluation criteria to establish a list of five criteria which constituted the independent variables for the study. The researcher then constructed a survey instrument which was be used by participating institutions to report the performance of first-time RAs on the performance evaluation categories defined through the content analysis.

The researcher gathered performance evaluation scores of RAs at institutions within the study population. Via email, the researcher invited all residential staff members at each MACUHO member institution to participate in the study by providing the data which constitute the dependent variable and the multiple independent variables. The email briefly described the study's problem, its purpose, and the anticipated value of the results for participant institution and to the field of college housing as a whole. The recruitment email defined the terms involved in the study and provided detailed instructions for the return of the data via the survey. Participating reporters were informed that the data provided about each RA must be free of individual identifiers, such as names or room numbers, to protect the anonymity of the students.

The researcher used IBM SPSS Statistics (version 22.0) to analyze the data. Binary logistic regression was employed to explore the predictive value of the multiple independent variables on the binary dependent variable, sophomore or non-sophomore class standing.

The null hypothesis is that no performance evaluation criteria can predict the sophomore or non-sophomore class standing of first-time resident assistants. The alternative hypothesis is that certain performance evaluation criteria can predict the sophomore or non-sophomore class standing of first-time resident assistants.

Assumptions

One assumption of this study relates to the phenomena of sophomores. With limited previous research on this population, the researcher makes the assumption that there is a common experience among traditional-age second-year college students that can be captured by survey inquiry and reported via a supervisor.

The study depends on accurately gathering data from housing professionals regarding the performance of their staff members. The researcher assumes that housing professionals would not be unduly concerned about whether the reported data could influence the reputation of their department or their institution. This concern will be moderated by assurances of confidentiality by the researcher, along with the coding of responses, the withholding of institutional identifiers, and the careful protection of RAs' individual identities.

Limitations

This study is limited by a number of factors, and therefore the validity of the results must be interpreted accordingly. Any findings relating to the experience of resident assistants are necessarily limited to the individual RAs whose data were gathered for the study; the ability to extrapolate this to other RAs at other institutions is limited due to differences in selection, training, and evaluation of staff members at diverse campuses.

Inherent in a regional sampling approach like this one is the concern that results cannot be assumed to be generalizable to the population of first-time RAs. Residential professionals must therefore carefully consider the entirety of the study's design to decide if the results apply to their setting.

Most significantly, researcher bias must be taken into account as a threat to the validity of this study. For 15 years, I have been the Director of Residence Life at an institution of this type, and my biases may influence my perception of the data collected. In addition, one of my responsibilities is to shape departmental priorities and hiring policies based on incumbency in the director position, and this personal subjectivity may further contribute to researcher bias. While institutional data from my current university is included in the master data set, this data were collected from personnel folders and submitted through the online instrument without any involvement on my part. The study is also limited by the relatively small amount of previous research on the experience of sophomore resident assistants. Finally, since no external audit was involved in the analysis of the data, the potential for researcher bias is also heightened.

Delimitations

In order to be included in the study's data set, resident assistants must be traditional-aged students who began attending college directly after graduating high school. Data for non-traditional resident assistants were excluded from the data set due to the likelihood that life experiences of resident assistants prior to their service may confound the data.

Definitions

A Resident Assistant (RA) is a full-time undergraduate student who lives in a

college or university residence hall to assist other students in their living unit. RAs are responsible for informing residents of the rules and regulations related to living in the residential community and for observing and documenting violations of these policies. RAs also serve as peer counselors on an informal basis, and assist roommates and neighboring residents in mediating interpersonal concerns. In addition, RAs are responsible for informing students of university resources and activities. Blimling (2010) lists ten roles of resident assistants: student, role model, problem solver, conflict mediator, campus resource, trained observer, community builder, group facilitator, counselor, and administrator. Compensation for resident assistants depends on the institution, and can include hourly pay or stipends, waivers of room fees, and waivers of board fees. Also depending on the institution, resident assistants may be referred to as Resident Advisors, Community Assistants, Hall Counselor, or other similar titles. In this study, a *first-time* RA was defined as a traditional-aged (18-21 year old) student who began service in the fall semester of either 2013 or 2014, and had never served as a resident assistant before.

For the purposes of this study, a *sophomore* is defined as a student who has completed two semesters or fewer of full-time college study at the beginning of the fall semester in which the RA began their position at a four-year public or private college or university. This definition is sustainable regardless of the fact that sophomore status at some institutions can be defined based on the number of credit hours the student has achieved, including credit hours earned prior to matriculation or at other institutions.

Organization of the Study

The report of the study is divided into five chapters. The preceding chapter

presented an overview of the research problem related to the efficacy of hiring sophomore resident assistants, the purpose, significance, and methodology of the study, and the underlying theoretical framework. Chapter Two provides a review of the scholarly literature relevant to the study, especially related to resident assistants in general and to sophomores RAs in particular. Chapter Three comprehensively delineates the research methodology and thoroughly explains the operational design of the study. It also describes known threats to validity and reliability and the measures in place for ethical protection. Chapter Four examines and describes the results of statistical analyses of the data, and Chapter Five discusses the implications of those results for theory and practice.

Chapter 2 – Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the literature in higher education to provide context for the study's major focus areas. First, a brief history of residence halls in the United States and their expansion from dormitories to co-curricular learning centers will be described. Next, the evolving phenomenon of resident assistants and their increasing responsibilities will be explored. Third, the literature related to sophomore college students will be reviewed, specifically relating to how the challenges and needs of second-year students differ from students of other class standings. Finally, a review of research findings related to sophomore resident assistants will be presented.

Residence Halls

The model of U.S. residence halls as an integral part of college life had its start in the colonial era, when newly-founded colleges emulated and adapted the Oxford model of residential colleges. Seven of the original nine colonial colonies, including Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth and William and Mary, were founded by graduates of Oxford or Cambridge in England, who sought to model their new institutions on the residential college model in which they had been enculturated (Blimling, 2010). In this model, collegiate systems called upon faculty members to serve as role models and mentors as well as scholars. A primary goal of the English model of higher education at that time was to shape students' moral character as well as their intellect in order to develop both scholars and gentlemen of the English gentry. However, the translation of this model to American soil was difficult for two main reasons. First, colonists had begun to reject the English class system, and educating new generations of aristocracy did not fit as well

with the pioneering and democratic approach of the colonists. Early American colleges drew students as young as 13 from far-flung towns in wide geographic areas of the colonies, and colleges were therefore obligated to offer room and board to students. This is related to the second major reason that the Oxford model did not convert well to the colonies. In England, deans and other staff were hired to address matters like proctoring the dormitories and addressing student conduct violations. In the American model, residential faculty were obligated, scholarly faculty free to attend to all of these duties. While English faculty were free to mentor, guide, and form friendships with their students in a relaxed social atmosphere, colonial faculty became early agents of *in loco parentis*, intentionally shouldering paternalistic control over all aspects of students' lives in order to promote their moral development (Schroeder & Mabel, 1994). The resulting conflict between students and faculty led to untenable relationships. According to W.H. Cowley (1934), "the faculty member living in the dormitory became the student's natural enemy. Circumstances made him a martinet, and conscientiously he lived up to his responsibilities" (p. 712). These factors combined to keep the English residential college model from translating well to the early American setting.

While dormitories were generally provided for students through the nineteenth century, faculty considered them obligatory at best, objectionable and even dangerous at worst. For example, in 1852, the University of Michigan's President Henry Tappen closed one of the university's residence halls, stating: "The dormitory system is objectionable in itself. By withdrawing young men from the influence of domestic circles and separating them from the community, they are often led to contract evil habits and are prone to fall into disorderly conduct" (as cited in Blimling, 2010, p. 6). Tappen and

other college presidents began experimenting with application of the Prussian system of education, which viewed student housing and any other extra-curricular activities to be outside the purview of the college. This coincided with the continued evolution of American colleges away from religious and moral education toward a focus on secular education. This movement to the secular was aided both by the gradual suspension of religious affiliations among private colleges and the passing of the Land Grant College Act, which helped established non-affiliated state-funded schools focused on agricultural and industrial innovations in the growing nation. According to Blimling (2010), “With the lessened concern for student welfare and a freeing of students from the control of clerics, much of the violence associated with student behavior vanished” (p. 7).

Into the late 1800s, the value of the residential college model still held the interest of progressive educators, who believed that college could pursue both intellectual and character education. For reasons of the demand for housing, the desire to standardize students’ social settings and behavior, and the appeal of building college spirit, presidents like Arthur Hadley at Yale and Woodrow Wilson at Princeton began to revive the old Oxford model. College began to cite the civilizing influence of living among a culturally diverse student population and the socializing influence of group living as reasons to revitalize residential facilities. Residence halls again began to take a core position in the education program by the beginning of the twentieth century. (Blimling, 2010).

Though regulation of student behavior, especially that of women, remained a necessary aspect of residence hall governance, the societal changes following World War I and changes in faculty priorities led student services in general to be increasingly provided by non-faculty administrators. U.S. courts began to codify the tenet that college

staff should act in loco parentis concerning “the physical and moral welfare and mental training of pupils,” allowing college personnel to “make any rule or regulation for the government or betterment of their pupils that a parent could for the same purpose” (Blimling, 2010, p. 14). The interest of colleges in molding student behavior and administrators’ goals in that regard were described in a treatise first produced in 1937 by the American Council on Education entitled *The Student Personnel Point of View*. Extolling the critical role of colleges and universities in perpetuating and enriching western culture, the document enumerated the 23 services to be provided by institutions through professional, non-faculty employees. These included: “Orienting the student to his educational environment,... assisting the student to clarify his occupational aims and his educational plans in relation to them,... supervising, evaluating, and developing the extra-curricular activities of students,... (and) providing and supervising an adequate housing program (American Council on Education, 1937, p. 3).

After World War II, the field of public education found itself under siege from multiple directions due to the significant changes occurring in U.S. and international politics. The spread of influence by the Soviets and the Chinese led Americans to fear the expansion of communism and the loss of freedom among nations that Allied troops had fought to defend. The return of veterans from the war led to concerns about the burgeoning workforce and the risk of economic disaster that could be caused by mass unemployment. The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act, better known as the G. I. Bill, helped address these concerns by providing numerous benefits to returning veterans. These included payments for college tuition and living expenses, which drove a boom in college housing construction in the 1950s and 1960s (Schroeder & Mabel, 1994).

During this period, the prospect of atomic war generated fear about the potential loss of the America's status as a world power and cultivated widespread apprehension about whether America could stay ahead in the arms race. In attempting to address each of these foreboding challenges, the consensus was that public education was critical. However, with the possible exception of the educators themselves, nearly everyone agreed that the current approaches to public education were, at best, insufficient to address these challenges and, at worst, a causal agent in America's pending ruin as the leader of the free world. Critics from all sides challenged the progressive approach and methods of contemporary education, but the consensus held that public instruction of youth was crucial in a variety of ways in helping to meet America's defense needs in the face of threats to national security. The convergence of these two challenges ultimately led to significant changes in the federal role in public education, including the proliferation of interest in public higher education (Schroeder & Mabel, 1994).

In early 1957, President Eisenhower formed the Committee on Education Beyond the High School. In its recommendations, the group, comprising college and university leaders, called for a modern revolution in education. They endorsed increasing the number and qualifications of high school and college teachers, increasing opportunity for all students to attend college, and providing more federal financial aid. This nascent movement toward federal funding of public education was accelerated by the news in October, 1957, that the Soviets had succeeded in launching a satellite into orbit. In 1958, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act, which provided loans for college students and established a fellowship program with special preference for those wishing to become college teachers (Spring, 2003).

Through the 1960s, as the desirability of an undergraduate degree became more prevalent for U.S. high school graduates, students, their parents, and even their prospective employers grew to expect college faculty to give more attention to the undergraduate teaching mission. Along with this movement came a renewed appreciation for the value of student learning outside the classroom. Progressive educators of the past such as John Dewey promoted student activity, group work, and cooperation over rote learning, and advocated for a close relationship between students and teachers (Spring, 2003). The pragmatic approach of early progressives is reflected in the revival of residential learning community initiatives starting in the 1970s. As Terenzini and Pascarella (1994) noted,

If undergraduate education is to be enhanced, faculty members, joined by academic and student affairs administrators, must devise ways to deliver undergraduate education that are as comprehensive and integrated as the ways students actually learn. A whole new mindset is needed to capitalize on the interrelatedness of the in- and out-of-class influences on student learning, and the functional interconnectedness of academic and student affairs divisions. (p. 32)

There was a growing recognition that residence halls offered an ideal setting for delivery of programs and services designed to improve both academic success and social adjustment of students, especially those in their first year (Luna, 2008). New designs for residence halls began including classroom space, and the live-in staff members were increasingly seen as integral to supporting students' developmental goals, such as establishing academic competence and expanding positive interpersonal relationships (Shapiro & Levine, 1999). As for positive outcomes for students, Brower and Inkelas

(2010) cited the following: “the more often students interacted with peers and faculty, and the more strongly they felt supported academically and socially by their residence hall environment, the stronger was the likelihood that they achieved the learning outcomes” (p.41). Effective living-learning programs were characterized by a strong partnership between academic and student affairs professionals and by clear academic learning objectives, and aimed to profit most from the community-based setting to consistently create learning opportunities for students.

Starting in the 1980s, researchers sought to determine the long-term value of living-learning programs in assisting with retention of students beyond their first year (Pike, 1999; Stassen, 2003). According to Vincent Tinto, a preeminent voice in persistence theory, “When students fail to successfully integrate into the institutional environment, they are less likely to be engaged by it and are more likely to succumb to any number of factors that will increase the chance that they leave the institution without successful degree completion” (as cited in Purdie & Rosser, 2011, p. 98). Alexander Astin (1993) found students’ place of residence to be “probably the most important and pervasive environmental influence on the student's persistence in school” (p.4). Accordingly, the relationship of living-learning programs to student retention is a key area of study.

Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, (2008) sought to determine the relationship between student engagement, academic achievement and persistence beyond the freshman year. They found student engagement was the second strongest determinant, following prior academic achievement. In addition, they discovered that living on campus was significantly related to academic achievement and retention into the sophomore year.

This followed a previous literature review by Kuh and associates which determined that “living on campus had the greatest total effect (i.e., the combination of direct and indirect effects) on learning outcomes of any institutional characteristic” (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek., 2006, p. 53). These authors conclude that “residence halls can be a powerful vehicle for incorporating students into college... This research corroborates that educational interventions in residence halls can have a positive effect on the quality of students’ interaction with peers and faculty, which in turn enhances achievement and persistence” (Kuh et al., 2006, p. 63).

Considerable research has led student affairs professionals to conclude that living in a campus residence hall has a positive impact on student outcomes. Thompson, Samiratedu, and Rafter (1993) found that academic progress and college retention are significantly greater if students reside on campus, regardless of race or gender. They also observed that the effect was strongest for students who were admitted conditionally due to the need for remedial courses.

Shushok, Scales, Sriram and Kidd (2011) cite the seminal work of Ernest Pascarella and Patrick Terenzini (2005), *How College Affects Students*, which supports claims of other benefits of living on campus. These authors list the differences that first-year students experience while living on campus:

Such differences include more participation in extracurricular activities, more frequent interactions with peers and faculty members, more positive perceptions of the campus climate, higher satisfaction with the college experience, greater personal growth and development, more effort and involvement in both the academic and social experiences in college, and a higher rate of persistence and

degree completion. (Shushok, Scales, Sriram and Kidd, 2011, p. 14)

Requiring first-year students to reside on campus has been shown to positively affect student and university outcomes. Schudde (2011) compared national student data from two large U.S. Department of Education databases and used propensity score matching to evaluate the causal effect of living on campus on retention of students at their institutions. Her conclusion was that there was a 3.3 % increase in probability of persisting to the sophomore year for freshmen who lived on campus, and that campus initiatives requiring freshman to live on campus increase the likelihood of their retention. Schudde also notes the work of Thompson et al. (1993), who found that on-campus living improves academic outcomes for students regardless of race, gender, or admission type, but that the effect is largest for high-risk developmental students who were admitted with lower academic credentials. A study of the impact of on-campus living conducted by the Office of Research and Evaluation at the University of California, Irvine, found that residential students reported greater satisfaction with their overall social experience and their sense of belonging. They were more likely to study with peers outside of class and were more likely to persist to their sophomore year. In addition, the researchers noted that commuter students at the university were more likely to work off-campus than residential students, a factor shown to have a negative impact in general on student retention. Their report summarizes a frequent theme in the study of student persistence: “Retention to the second year does not appear to be a function of students’ academic performance but rather a function of the degree to which they feel connected to the University and part of the social network” (University of California Irvine, 2007, p. 8).

Section summary. Residence halls have been a prominent feature of U.S. college

life since the colonial period and have become an integral component of traditional college campuses. According to the relevant literature, living on campus is positively associated with four-year completion of degree, higher GPA, higher levels of contact with faculty outside of class, greater participation in campus activities, and a higher level of satisfaction with students' overall college experience (Kauffman, 2008).

Resident Assistants

For student affairs professionals today, it is difficult to imagine residence halls without the ever-present, steadfast, and much-loved resident assistant (RA). Key human resources, students in this role have been called “front-line troops” (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982, p. 2), “the cornerstone of the operation of residence life departments” (Bailey and Grandpre, 1997, p. 40), “staff in the trenches” (Arvidson, 2003, p. 31) and “the vanguard of the field of student development” (Blimling, 2010, p. 31). The resident assistant position helps fulfill many of the major goals and values of student affairs professionals. Resident assistants live and serve in the midst of other residents, offer guidance and support to their peers, are vigilant in upholding community standards and personal safety, and maintain accountability for the university through reporting inappropriate or dangerous behavior. By the same token, the residence hall environment serves as a living laboratory for mature students to learn and practice problem-solving, mediation, and leadership skills that they may transfer to their lives and careers after graduation.

The military allusions found in the descriptions of the resident assistant position are fitting. While the RA position is a valuable educational opportunity, it can also prove exceedingly stressful and unsettling for students. Blimling (2010) lists the broad customary roles of resident assistants: problem solver, conflict mediator, role model,

campus resource, trained observer, community builder, group facilitator, counselor, administrator, and student. While these roles have evolved little since the 1980s, professionals in the field generally acknowledge that the implementation of these roles has grown considerably more complicated. Even a generation ago, professionals were alarmed about student staff having to deal with social issues such as alcoholism, suicide, homophobia, racism, and date rape (Dodge, 1990). Arvidson (2003) described the evolution of RA responsibilities: "... the understanding of the nature of RA roles appears in the last 30 years to have shifted from clerical assistant to paraprofessional and from cop to counselor" (p. 34).

College personnel widely recognize that first-year students enter college with a growing number of personal and emotional challenges (American College Personnel Association, 2001), and the job of resident assistant has become progressively more stressful as a result. Horvath and Stack (2013) note that today's entering students bring with them increasingly complex and grave behavioral issues and a diminished ability to resolve interpersonal conflicts. The RA job is further complicated by rapid changes in technology and social media, over-involvement of parents in the mundane minutiae of their young adult students, and steadily increasing responsibilities brought about by new legislation and government regulation (McKuskey, 2013). Though residence life professionals typically prepare resident assistants for the demands of the position through supervision and extensive pre-service and in-service training, the job is indeed stressful and fraught with hazards, both personal and institutional.

Beginning in the 1970s, Alexander Astin, who has written extensively about what matters in college, extolled the benefits of living on campus, reinforced the practice of

hiring student peers to serve as resident assistants, and advocated for an increase in their responsibilities (Astin, 1977; 1993). Other key authorities in higher education such as Pascarella & Terenzini (2005) found, like Astin, that involvement in leadership positions is positively related to student retention and academic achievement. On the other hand, emotional burnout caused by the stressors of the resident assistant position are also well-documented (Hetherington, Oliver & Phelps, 1989; Miller & Conyne, 1980; Nowack, Gibbons, & Hanson, 1985; Paladino, Murray, Nugent, & Gohn, 2005).

Some researchers have explored the characteristics of a successful resident assistant. Denzine & Anderson (1999) found these to include academic ability, leadership experience, high levels of motivation, and group communication skills. More recently, Jaeger and Caison (2006) acknowledged the deficiency of research around predicting at the time of selection who will be successful in filling the position. They also note that college students and their environments are rapidly changing: “What we knew five and ten years ago may no longer be considered the necessary characteristics of an effective RA today” (p. 146). Using a multivariate research design and logistic regression analysis, the researchers investigated the predictive ability of emotional intelligence and competence variables in selecting successful resident assistants. Emotional intelligence is characterized by the ability to perceive, evaluate, and manage one’s emotions (Jaeger & Caison, 2006). According to their findings, problem solving ability and flexibility were significant indicators of RA performance. More compellingly, those RAs with high emotional intelligence scores were 11 times more likely to be identified as outstanding RAs.

Section summary. For more than 40 years, resident assistants have been essential

constituents in the experience of life in the residence halls, both as human resources for the provision of service to other residents as well as beneficiaries themselves in the educational living laboratories of leadership and life-skill development. The existing literature regarding resident assistants portrays both the benefits and drawbacks of these paraprofessional student positions, though the general conclusion is that students who are employed in these positions are more likely to achieve academically and to be retained by the university through graduation. While considerable attention has been paid to understanding the roles of resident assistants and their collective experience, very little research has been documented regarding effective selection of students who will ultimately prove successful in the position. Research concerning differences in performance of RAs according to their class standing is absent from the literature.

Sophomores

While the experience and retention of first-year students has been addressed thoroughly in the literature, sophomores are understudied, even though they have the strongest needs among upper-class students (Gahagan & Hunter, 2006; Juillerat, 2000; Kawczynski, 2009; Pattengale & Schreiner, 2000). At most institutions, sophomore status is considered to be achieved only once a student reaches a certain number of earned credits, usually 30. However, the scholarly literature related to sophomores generally defines them more broadly as students in the second year of college because students at this level are likely to face similar issues (Gardner, 2000; Hunter, Tobolowsky & Gardner, 2010; Keup, Gahagan, & Goodwin, 2010).

Gahagan and Hunter (2010) cited recent data from the American Council on Education that nearly two-thirds of first-time college students choose to live in campus

housing. While virtually all colleges offer freshman-specific programs specifically designed to assist with the transition from high school to college, including first-year experience residence halls, less than one third of schools report featuring sophomore-specific residence halls. In fact, the enrichment of the first-year experience may leave second-year students with a feeling of abandonment by the institution (Powers, 2008). Schaller (2005) shares a quotation from a typical sophomore: “I’m just kind of lost. As far as my friends, that’s all changing; my relationships with other people are changing, my family life is changing, my major’s changed like five times” (p.17). This may contribute to what was previously described as the *sophomore slump*: the period in which second-year students tend to report dissatisfaction with themselves, their relationships, and their institutions, leading to the increased likelihood that they will fail to persist in their college education (Lemons & Richmond, 1987; Morgan & Davis, 1981). The feeling of being untethered and even neglected following the first college year is likely an unintended result of the withdrawal of the many services and programs that freshmen students enjoy (Schaller, 2007). As Hunter et al. (2010) stated, “there is no reason to believe that students who survive the first year of college are suddenly successful in their second year” (p.15).

According to Lemons and Richmond (1987), the concept of the sophomore slump was first introduced by Freedman (1956), who noted the appearance that sophomores were the least satisfied of all students. This perception of the dissatisfied sophomore was reinforced by others, including Margolis, who called the sophomore slump “an identity crisis involving a student’s social, academic, and personal self” (as cited in Lemons & Richmond, 1987, p. 15). Lemons and Richmond considered the existing literature and

concluded that the sophomore slump was a validated phenomenon and recommended that student affairs staff recognize the unique nature of the sophomore experience and plan accordingly.

Wilder (1993) addressed the issue of college attrition among sophomores by identifying two subpopulations of students based on the trajectory of their grades following their freshman year. Wilder identified students who achieved at least a 2.75 grade point average in their first year, and she divided the population into *decliners* whose grade point averages dropped by at least 20% by the end of their second year and *maintainers* whose grades were sustained or improved during that time. Using discriminant analysis, Wilder found that the greatest discriminating factors between decliners and maintainers were commitment to academics, absenteeism, educational goals, extra-curricular activities, and quality of interactions with academic advisors. Wilder noted that the strongest relationship was found between sophomores' academic success and their level of commitment, though this concept was left poorly defined or differentiated. Wilder's recommendations for practice have since met with general concurrence among professionals advocating for retention of sophomores, including early academic alert systems, special academic and social programs intended specifically for sophomores, and improvement of academic advising through training of faculty.

Schaller (2000) acknowledged that the developmental and transitional goals of first-year students were well-established in the literature, while those of sophomores were defined only obliquely through anecdotal evidence and transition theory in general. Schaller conducted a study of second-year college students using hermeneutic phenomenology, seeking for the first time to describe their experience as sophomores and

to find experiences that distinguish students in that stage from other students. She conducted focus groups and individual interviews with 19 second-semester sophomores at a private, four-year, residential college. She concluded that the sophomore year experience was distinguished by a diminished sense of excitement and novelty, career-oriented stress, and a sense of being on the cusp of a transition between childhood and adulthood. She found four major themes in what sophomores seek: healthy relationships, a sense of self, a connection to academics, and a sense of balance. Schaller's study was characterized by a small sample size, a limited study population, and a fairly subjective methodology. It has served as an exploratory study to generate additional research around the experience of sophomores, and it should be broadly replicated in order to test and further explore the conclusion that Schaller drew.

Using the data from her study, Schaller (2005) posited four stages of exploration for sophomores: random exploration, focused exploration, tentative choices, and commitment. These stages demonstrated themselves in three distinct issues that sophomores deal with: how they view themselves, their relationships, and their academic experiences and decisions. She noted from her research that a number of sophomores remain in the random exploration stage, which also characterizes most students in their first year of college (Schaller, 2010). Students in this stage were aware that life choices they would need to make were looming, but they went about their lives in ways that allowed them to delay those decisions. Most of the sophomores in Schaller's study were in the focused exploration stage; they began doubting their current relationships and academic experiences and questioning previous choices they had made as freshmen, especially related to choosing a major. For Schaller, this represented the transition among

second-year students to realizing that they need to be self-directed, to come up with their own answers, and to leave behind the artificial relationships they had developed with peers. The third stage, tentative choices, follows from students' introspection in stage two; according to Schaller, students at this stage feel a new level of responsibility and begin to feel good about imagining their future in more specific terms. Finally, Schaller found that few sophomores had proceeded to the fourth stage, commitment. These students were "planning for the future, clear about what they wanted, and unwavering in their sense of responsibility for their own future" (Schaller, 2005, p. 20). Schaller concluded that students need encouragement to take responsibility for choices and their learning, to get involved in curricular and extra-curricular activities, and to build new relationships with peers based on intentional rather than superficial characteristics.

Graunke and Woolsey (2005) conducted a survey of second-semester sophomores to investigate the effects of their experiences and attitudes on academic success as measured by grade point average (GPA). They found that a sophomore's sense of commitment to an academic major, their satisfaction with faculty interaction, and their belief that faculty cared about their success were all significant predictors of GPA. The authors concluded that institutions should invest in programs focused on major and career decision-making and increase faculty interaction with sophomores to improve students' chances of success. Though the researchers had a return rate of 48% from among a large sample of over 2200 sophomores, the reliability of this study is diminished by a sample representing only one Midwestern university.

In 2007, the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition conducted a survey of sophomores at 26 four-year institutions and

achieved a sample size of over 2,800 student respondents (Schreiner, 2010). Schreiner describes numerous findings of The Sophomore Experience Survey. Aside from satisfaction with their overall college experience, the strongest indicator of intent to graduate among the participants was a belief that tuition was a worthwhile investment, followed by frequency of satisfaction with faculty interaction. In addition, engaged learning, characterized by focused attention and active involvement in learning, was highly indicative of student satisfaction, success, and retention. Schreiner also noted that satisfaction with peers was the strongest predictor of overall satisfaction, and that students' involvement in campus activities was most highly correlated with high levels of peer satisfaction.

Kennedy and Upcraft (2010) took a critical look at the extant research and broadened the scope of the so-called sophomore slump. They asserted the position that it was a multidimensional phenomenon involving one or more of the following characteristics: academic deficiency, often due to low grade point average from the freshman year; academic disengagement from faculty, classmates, and major; dissatisfaction with a lack of caring from advisors and a feeling of isolation from the campus community; indecision about major and career choice and experiencing resultant anxiety; and developmental confusion centering on shifts in sense of identity, spirituality, values, and purpose.

Section summary. Sophomores are the subject of much less research than first-year students, though they have been shown to have the strongest needs among upper-class students. Sophomores find themselves faced with precarious transitions with fewer institutional support mechanisms provided for them. A major focus of existing research

has been the issue of retention of sophomores (Xueli & Kennedy-Phillips, 2013).

Findings point to the critical role of sophomores' commitment, especially to their major field of study and to their relationships with faculty and staff. Other studies point to sophomores' overall satisfaction with their college experience, which has been found to be shaped most strongly by involvement in campus activities and satisfaction with their peers. Questions remain about the impact of serving as an RA on sophomores' overall sense of commitment and satisfaction.

Sophomore Resident Assistants

The resident assistant (RA) position has been a popular option with students who wanted to stay engaged in campus life, develop their leadership skills, and reduce their college expenses. Traditionally, applicant pools were large enough to garner a staff of juniors and seniors with a few sophomores who were deemed especially mature (Brandt Brecheisen, 2015). Schaller & Wagner (2007) note a number of factors that help to explain the necessity of housing professionals to select more sophomores as resident assistants. Other leadership positions and hourly on-campus jobs have become more readily available. Also, on many campuses, off-campus apartments hold more appeal than deteriorating on-campus facilities. Contemporary student lifestyles tend toward more freedom over responsibility, and older students are likely to want to avoid becoming a resident assistant due to what is commonly called "life in a fishbowl," the feeling expressed by RAs that everyone knows their business and that RAs cannot even appear to breach university policy without risking the loss of their position. Finally, fewer upper-class students may apply for the RA position because they do not need the limited financial aid that the position offers.

An exhaustive literature review yielded three studies focused on the experience of sophomore RAs. Schaller and Wagner (2007) noted the recent tendency for housing professionals to find themselves hiring more sophomores for resident assistant positions. The authors conducted a phenomenological study of sophomore RAs at a private university to determine how the hiring of sophomores impacts them. Using qualitative methods, the researchers interviewed sophomore resident assistants over the course of two years. Noting prior research by Benedict and Mondoloch (1989) as well as responses of their own study participants, the authors note that the class standing of a sophomore RA's floor residents can have negative implications: "working exclusively with first year students can provide a toxic environment for sophomore RAs" (Schaller & Wagner, 2007, p. 49). The authors found that the demands placed on sophomore RAs in the first six weeks to support freshmen disrupt the RA in making the transition to their own sophomore year. In this study, female-identified students reported experiencing the position differently from those male-identified. Specifically, women reported interpersonal issues related to having too many connections to maintain and a subsequent difficulty meeting everyone's expectations, while men found the job to be a barrier to building new relationships. Schaller and Wagner reported that, as applicants for the position, respondents knew that the job involved confronting their peers but acknowledged that they underestimated how this would shape their relationships with other residents. Sophomore RAs reported addressing these issues by simplifying their relationships through using self-imposed rules to guide their behavior, such as distancing themselves from residents who violated policy. As a practical matter, the authors state that, though supervisors may be reluctant to encourage RAs to get involved in other

organizations due to time management issues inherent in extra-curricular over-involvement, sophomore RAs who felt isolated from their peers also found themselves challenged in meeting their own sophomore developmental goals.

Though representing seminal work in describing the experience of sophomore RAs, the results of Schaller and Wagner's study are moderated by a number of demographic limitations, including a very small sample size. Their participants identified as 90% Caucasian and only 7% African-American or Latino, and the sample was drawn from a single private, four-year institution. In addition, the institution representing the study population had a requirement that all first-year and second-year students to live on campus with few exceptions. This policy may have bearing on the size of the institution's RA applicant pool and perhaps the overall performance of sophomore RAs because rising sophomores were not permitted to explore off-campus living options after their first year.

Kauffman (2008) conducted a qualitative study of traditional-aged sophomore RAs at three Midwestern universities. Kauffman conducted 27 interviews in an effort to describe the experience of sophomore RAs. All subjects reported an overall positive experience, listing benefits such as better time and priority management, improved leadership skills, and enhanced confidence. Participants described challenges including lack of respect from other students and having to deal with the administrative tasks of the job, along with personal aspects such as loss of sleep and less time for family and friends. Sophomore RAs noted an overwhelming sense of being on the job 24 hours a day, as well as a feeling of "living in a fishbowl" which necessitated making changes to their social lives to avoid compromising positions. The author noted a number of limitations to the study, including the fact that participants volunteered to take part and that perhaps non-

participants would have reported negative experiences at a higher rate. The author also noted that the design of the study offered no opportunity to compare the experience of sophomore RAs to that of students in other class standings.

Brandt Brecheisen (2015) observed that the previous studies of the sophomore RA experience noted above were strictly qualitative with a limited study population. She used existing data from a national survey instrument to look for associations among attributes found in prior studies of sophomores and of RAs in general. Specifically, she considered attributes ascribed to sophomores (gender, GPA, and expectations), RA position attributes (training, work-life conditions, and the role of the supervisor) and outcomes (job satisfaction, turnover intention, and RA self-efficacy). The data were drawn from the results of the 2004-2005 RA Survey, an annual project of the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) and Educational Benchmarking Incorporated (EBI). The sample included 1,443 sophomore RAs from 61 institutions across the U.S. Brandt Brecheisen found that gender was a non-significant factor and that data for student GPA was skewed positively, with 75% of students reporting at least a 3.0 average. This last finding is unsurprising, considering that high academic achievement is typically a prerequisite for selection as an RA. The author noted a higher rate of intention to return to the position in this study compared to the two previous studies of sophomore RAs. Nearly 69% of participants reported planning to return to the position, compared to only 56% found previously (Kauffman, 2008; Schaller & Wagner, 2007). Of those RAs not returning, nearly 16% indicated that they were able to return but chose not to. Among these “voluntary leavers,” Brandt Brecheisen noted that they were significantly less satisfied with the position than those who intended to

return but reported a higher mean grade point average than those returning. It is not possible to conclude whether the stressful realities of the job or some other factors led students to voluntarily leave the position, and the author suggests this question as a subject for future research. Finding “voluntary leavers” with higher GPAs than returners runs counter to the literature regarding overall sophomore retention by institutions (Graunke & Woolsey, 2005; Pattengale & Schreiner, 2000). Brandt Brecheisen (2015) speculated that retention of sophomore RAs may be more dependent on students’ prediction of their future academic performance, on the basis of the time and effort required by the position conflicting with the curricular and extra-curricular demands of one’s major.

Similar to the limitations of other studies of sophomore RAs, Brandt Brecheisen (2015) acknowledges that future research should gather data from non-sophomore RAs as well in order to isolate the experience of sophomores. In addition, the respondents in the study comprised primarily satisfied RAs, and the author suggests that engaging input from unsatisfied sophomore RAs would also be worthwhile in future research.

Section summary. Taken together, the three studies relating to sophomore RAs demonstrate common elements, many of which overlap with the literature regarding sophomore students in general. For example, students in these studies who were not yet committed to a particular major were more likely to report that the RA position was a distraction to their academics, while high achieving students, as measured by grade point average, reported that the demands of the position made them struggle to keep up with their schoolwork demands and career-oriented extracurricular activities. Those who successfully addressed the dual pressures of the job responsibilities and their academics

reported improving their time and priority management skills and thus improving academically (Brandt Brecheisen, 2015).

Another common theme is the difficulty of maintaining peer relationships outside of position. While this is a general concern among sophomores (Gahagan & Hunter, 2006; Schaller, 2000), RAs tend to blame this in part on the time constraints of the position and to a desire to avoid social settings that may include alcohol and therefore put their jobs at risk. Brandt Brecheisen (2015) points out, however, that RAs often form new and lasting relationships with fellow staff members, perhaps mitigating some of the relationship adjustment issues commonly reported by sophomores. The authors in all three studies also recommend specialized supervision of and personalized support of sophomore RAs beyond what is provided to RAs in general.

Sophomore RAs in these studies reported discomfort and difficulty with confronting their peers, especially confrontation regarding alcohol-related behavior. Furthermore, sophomore RAs tend to report feeling that training programs were not sufficient to prepare them for this part of the job. Brandt Brecheisen (2014) found a strong correlation between satisfaction with training and reported self-efficacy on the part of sophomore RAs. Training of resident assistants includes topics such as campus resources and referrals, interpersonal relationship skills, time management and leadership. Brandt Brecheisen suggests that “RA training for a sophomore RA evolves into preparation to navigate their sophomore year” (p. 134).

Chapter 3 – Research Design and Methodology

This study sought to determine if sophomore/non-sophomore class standing among first-time resident assistants (RAs) could be predicted by RAs' performance evaluation scores. For housing professionals, it is increasingly difficult to identify students who are academically and socially mature enough to handle the challenges of the high-profile student leadership position. However, housing professionals are progressively compelled to hire first-year students who apply for resident assistant positions due to shrinking numbers of more experienced candidates (Schaller & Wagner, 2007). Selection processes for resident assistants for a given academic year most often take place in the semester previous to their starting the position. The hiring of first-year students to serve as resident assistants in their sophomore year is not yet a validated practice; sophomore RAs experience the complexity of challenges in their own development while concurrently mentoring other students (Foote, et al., 2013; Schaller, 2005). The research literature provides no direct guidance regarding the efficacy of second-year students in the RA role as compared to upper-class junior and senior students. The purpose of the study is to determine if the success of first-time sophomore resident assistants differs from that of first-time upper-class resident assistants according to performance evaluations by their supervisors.

Research Design

The study employed a survey design to solicit census data of RA performance scores from supervisors to compare the performance of sophomore RAs to that of upper-class RAs. Using logistic regression, the study ascertained if there were any performance criteria which predicted the status of a college RA as either in their sophomore year or

beyond their sophomore year. According to McMillan (2004), the use of survey design is appropriate for identifying the characteristics of a population and describing relationships in the data. Unlike experimental design, survey research design does not involve manipulating conditions. Therefore, analysis of resulting data can describe trends and relationships but not provide explanations for what is observed (Creswell, 2008).

The class standing of first-time RAs served as the dichotomous, categorical dependent variable of the study. The construct *RA success* was defined as an RA's performance as documented by an institutionally-determined supervisor: Independent variables included in the multi-variate construct were the individual criteria of an RA's performance. The number and definition of these performance criteria was determined in the course of the study, and the data for these individual performance criteria were categorically scaled score measures. Data for three other variables were collected for demographic purposes only: the RA's gender identification, the job status of the RA following the first semester of service, and the predominant class standing of the community of resident students served by the RA. Each of these variables is described in later sections.

Research Question

What is the relationship between the binary dependent variable (sophomore/non-sophomore class standing) of resident assistants and five independent variables of post hoc supervisor evaluation scores (relationships with residents, relationships with staff, community development, programming, and administration)? More specifically, do resident assistants' scores on performance evaluation criteria as determined by their college housing supervisors predict the sophomore class standing of first-time resident

assistants?

Sample

The research population of the study was all first-time resident assistants at U.S. colleges and universities. The study sample entailed conducting a census of first-time RA evaluation scores. Taking a census tends to improve the likelihood of receiving enough responses to allow detailed cross-tabulations of sample characteristics (Creswell, 2008). Characteristics of responding institutions can be used to test how closely respondent institutions' characteristics match all institutions in the U.S. using goodness-of-fit chi-square tests.

The study sample was colleges and universities within the membership of the Mid-Atlantic Association of College and University Housing Officers (MACUHO). This association comprises all institutions of higher education in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. MACUHO encompasses a wide distribution of institutional types and sizes which reasonably and practically can represent all U.S. higher education institutions (<http://www.macuho.org>, 2014). According to Krathwohl & Smith (2005), when choosing a setting, "to study a proposition that is presumed to be universally applicable, you can use anyone... except where the choice of participants... might favor or disfavor it" (p. 89). Surveying MACUHO institutions was also a matter of some convenience. Because the researcher has been a member and leader in the association for 15 years, choosing this setting increased the likelihood of surveys returns and thereby improved the study's validity.

A delimiting feature of the study's population, first-time RAs, is their status as a traditional-aged student who began attending college directly after graduating high

school. Data for non-traditional resident assistants were excluded from the data set due to the likelihood that life experiences of resident assistants prior to their service may confound the data. The sampling frame is the set of supervisory housing professionals who rated the mid-year performance of first-time resident assistants. The first-year RAs themselves serve as the units of observation.

Demographic Variables

Demographic variables used to describe first-time Resident Assistants included their gender identification, their job status following their initial evaluation, and the predominant class standing of the residents that they served.

Gender identification. The gender identification of each resident assistant was a categorical demographic variable with three possible values: female, male, and transgender.

Job status. The job status of each RA following the first semester of service was collected as a categorical demographic variable. Institution reporters were asked to list the RA's job status as one of four values: terminated, resigned, probationary, or continuing.

Class standing of residents served. On college campuses, resident assistants may be assigned to a floor community of residents who are first-year students, upper-class students, or some blend of the two. Respondents reported the predominant class standing of the residents on the RA's floor community, defined as the simple majority of the floor's residents. Therefore, class standing of residents served was a dichotomous categorical variable, listed as either predominantly first-year residents or predominantly upper-class residents.

Dependent Variable

The single dichotomous categorical dependent variable was the class standing of first-time resident assistants. RAs with sophomore class standing were assigned a value of 1, while those with non-sophomore class standing were assigned a value of 0.

Sophomore class standing was defined as having completed two semesters or fewer of full-time college study at the beginning of the fall semester in which the RA began their position. Non-sophomores were those who had completed three or more semesters of study at that time.

Independent Variables

Respondents reported the evaluation scores of each first-time RA on five categories of expected performance. These performance categories were determined through a content analysis of evaluation forms used by nine institutions outside of the Mid-Atlantic region. The procedure for determining these performance criteria is described at length below. The content analysis resulted in the following five performance criteria: relationships with residents, community development, programming, administration, and relationships with staff. Each performance criterion was reported on a four-point ordinal scale with a range of 0 to 3.

Data Source and Collection Procedures

The source for the study's data were the performance scores of first-time RAs as previously documented by the professional supervisory staff of each institution and the independent variables described above. Specific procedures for collection and assignment of data are described in the sub-sections below. The data from each institution were compiled into a master database by the researcher. The researcher collected this data

through a census survey of institutions in the study population, and recoded and standardized the raw data to prepare for data analysis.

Instrument design. To prepare the survey instrument, the researcher collected a sample of evaluation forms used by student housing personnel to score their new RAs' performance at the end of the first semester of service. The researcher collected nine evaluation forms from institutions outside of the Mid-Atlantic region. The researcher listed and categorized the specific criterion headings of each institution's evaluation form. Through an iterative process, the specific categories were combined and reduced to a list of five primary performance criteria: relationships with residents, community development, programming, administration, and relationships with staff. Tables 1-5 list the evaluation criteria that appeared on at least two of the sample evaluation forms, and also show the frequency with which each criterion appeared.

Participant recruitment and data collection. The researcher contacted the MACUHO Director of Strategic Initiatives and the current President to get permission to send the invitation to participate to all of the members in the MACUHO membership directory database. The database includes the names and addresses of all housing professionals in the region who registered as members of the association. The President sent an email invitation to the professional staff at each member institution. The email first expressed support and approval for the study, encouraging members to participate as part of MACUHO's commitment to advancing academic scholarship in the field of college housing. Next, the invitation briefly described the study's problem, its purpose and the anticipated value of the results for participant institution and to the field of

Table 1

Frequencies of Component Criteria: Community Development

Component Criterion	<i>F</i>
community development	6
acts as a role model	6
balances responsibilities	4
academic development	3
is known to students	2

Table 2

Frequencies of Component Criteria: Relationships with Residents

Component Criterion	<i>F</i>
duty rounds/on call	8
availability	6
resolves conflicts	6
communication	6
student conduct involvement	6
confrontation	6
individual contact	5
relationships with students	4
helping skills	4
enforces policy	4
adheres to policy	4
crisis management	4
stays calm	4
knows residents	3
inclusive	3
welcomes diversity	3
emergency procedures	3
outreach	2
accessibility	2
approachability	2
counseling skills	2
listening skills	2

Table 3

Frequencies of Component Characteristics: Administration

Component Criterion	<i>F</i>
administration	9
timeliness	9
attendance at meetings	6
time management	4
accuracy	3
check in/check out procedures	3
front desk expectations	3
punctuality	3
organizational skills	3
follow through	3
paperwork	2
incident report writing	2

Table 4

Frequencies of Component Criteria: Relationships with Staff

Component Criterion	<i>F</i>
keeps supervisor informed	9
positive attitude	9
mentors other staff	6
relationships with staff	5
supports other staff	5
active engagement in meetings	4
accepts feedback	4
responds to requests	3
training involvement	3
supports mission of department	3
leadership on staff	2

Table 5

Frequencies of Component Criteria: Programming

Component Criterion	<i>F</i>
programming	9
distributes information	5
makes referrals	4
campus resource	4
bulletin boards	4
hall council support	3
posts notices	3
collaboration	2
creativity	2
passive programming	2

college housing as a whole. The recruitment email also stated the necessary caveats as prescribed by the researcher's institutional review board relating to confidentiality and informed consent. Appendix A contains the invitation letter.

The survey instrument was designed and implemented using the online application Survey Monkey. The invitation email included a unique link associated with description of the study and its purpose as well as the necessary disclaimers regarding the voluntary nature of participation. The second page of the survey included a definition of the terms involved along with full instructions on submitting data. Records for up to 100 RAs could be submitted by any responding participant supervisor. Appendix B contains the full document soliciting institutional participation in the study, distributed June 24, 2015.

Data preparation and recoding. The researcher used IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 22.0) to analyze the data. In order to conduct analyses on the combined

institutional data sets using IBM SPSS, the data were exported from the Survey Monkey application into a single Microsoft Excel file that constituted the master data set. The variable names were changed to conform to IBM SPSS rules. All text values imported from Survey Monkey were recoded with numerical values as described below. The data set was then screened for errors and missing data.

Using SPSS, the researcher employed the Enter method, selecting the variable Class as the dependent variable and the five performance criteria as the covariates (Relate_Res, Comm_Dev, Program, Admin, and Relate_Staff). Because each of these five predictors is a categorical variable with four possible values, each was properly entered into the Categorical covariates box. Options selected for the analysis were classification plots, Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness of fit, casewise listing of residuals, and CI for Exp(B).

Data Analysis Procedures

Binary logistic regression was employed to explore the predictive value of the multiple independent variables, which were the performance criteria used by institutions to evaluate RAs, on the binary dependent variable — the class standing (sophomore or non-sophomore) of first-time RAs at the time of their service.

Binary logistic regression is a nonparametric procedure used for predicting the outcome of a binary dependent variable based on multiple explanatory or predictor variables. Logistic regression determines how much variance, if any, is explained on a dichotomous variable by a set of independent variables (Agresti, 2007). In this study, logistic regression was used to determine if evaluation criteria of first-time RAs can predict sophomore/non-sophomore class standing ex post facto. It also determined which

if any criteria have more magnitude or matter more in predictability.

Logistic regression is suitable for studying the probability of membership in two mutually exclusive groups from a set of predictors (Hair, Anderson, Tathan, & Black, 1998; Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000). While multiple regression is appropriate for prediction involving continuous independent variables, binary logistic regression should be used in analysis of data as in this study in which the independent variable is dichotomous and categorical (Rovai, Baker, & Ponton, 2013). According to Peng, Lee, & Ingersoll (2002), researchers until recently used ordinary least squares regression or discriminant function analysis to address research questions like the one, where the goal is the prediction of a dichotomous outcome. Logistical regression is preferable due to the strict statistical assumptions of ordinary least squares and discriminant function analysis, such as linearity and normality (Peng, Lee, & Ingersoll, 2002). When linearity and normality assumptions are not met, logistic regression is more robust. Even when linearity and normality assumptions are met, logistic regression may be preferable due to the wide range of diagnostics available with its use (Hair et al., 1998).

The use of logistic regression itself depends upon a number of assumptions that must be met (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003). First, the dependent variable must be binary and the outcome discrete (one or the other); in this study, the dependent variable is sophomore or non-sophomore class standing of first-time RAs. Second, use of logistic regression assumes no outliers in the data. Because the independent variables in this study were treated as either dichotomous or ordinal in nature, outliers were not a factor in the data. Third, there must be a lack of multicollinearity, or high intercorrelations, among the predictor variables, which was assessed through production of a Spearman's rank

order correlation matrix (Rovai et al., 2013). The non-multicollinearity assumption was met, for the purposes of this study, because Spearman bi-variate correlations were less than .90 as is appropriate according to Tabachnick & Fidell (2012). Hair, Anderson, Tathan, & Black (1998) recommend at least five observations per independent variable. Because the number of independent variables in the present study was five, the minimum sample size was set at 25 units of observation.

The odds ratio used in the logistic regression analysis was defined as the ratio of the probability that sophomore class standing occurred divided by the probability that non-sophomore standing occurred. The two outcomes of this dichotomous dependent variable were represented by 1 (sophomore standing) and 0 (non-sophomore standing). As described by Peng et al. (2002), the natural logarithm of any odds ratio is called the logit. For this study, the mathematical model of the simple logistic regression is:

$$\text{logit}(Y) = \ln[\pi/1-\pi] = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + \dots B_nX_n$$

where π is the probability of sophomore class standing of a first-time RA, B_0 is the Y intercept, B_s are regression coefficients, and X_s are the multiple independent variables (Peng et al., 2002).

Once the researcher conducted the necessary test of assumptions for use of logistic regression and tested the null hypothesis, appropriate post-hoc analyses were also performed. The Wald test was used to index the statistical significance of the individual predictor variables. The Hosmer-Lemeshow test was used to examine the goodness-of-fit of the models. The Nagelkerke R^2 and Cox & Snell R^2 tests were employed to examine the practical significance and power of the resulting models. The exponential regression coefficients (odds ratios) were examined to interpret the individual predictors which

would define the models. The Likelihood-Ratio Chi-Square was used to test for the statistical significance of prediction models. The a priori level of significance was set at .05.

Hypotheses. H₀: No performance evaluation criteria can predict the sophomore or non-sophomore class standing of first-time resident assistants.

H₁: Performance evaluation criteria can predict the sophomore or non-sophomore class standing of first-time resident assistants.

Validity and Reliability Threats

The reliability of the study's data rests upon their accuracy and consistency. One threat to the validity of this study is the reliance upon housing professionals to accurately report the evaluation scores of their RAs. Requesting these professional participants to essentially self-report their RAs scores minimizes the potential harm to the RA subjects, since the researcher therefore had no direct means of identifying any particular subject. However, this approach correspondingly weakens the study's validity because the professional participants were asked to report their own conclusions of performance by each RA on each of the five performance criteria. Similarly, the method used for this study raises issues of inter-rater reliability because different performance raters may interpret differently the rating scale of the report form instrument. The researcher took care to provide a clear and unambiguous definition of terms because failure to distinguish these criterion variables threatens the study's validity. Even with such attention to the construct definitions, human and measurement error still threaten the reliability and validity of the data.

Measures of Ethical Protection

The risk to participating institutional data reporters was minimal. No personal self-disclosure was necessary, and the researcher provided full disclosure regarding the use of the data. There was a slight risk of institutional participants feeling that they were wasting their time in supplying the requested data; therefore, the researcher made clear to them the specific use of the data and its value to them as housing professionals, and they were assured that the collection of data was limited to only data to be specifically used for the purposes of this study. In recognition of their efforts, reporters of participating institutions were told that the study results would be shared with them immediately at the conclusion of the study. For those who wished to receive the results, the researcher placed their names on a distribution list to be used solely for this purpose. Once the results were sent, the researcher immediately destroyed the list.

Due to the anonymous nature of the data from each individual RA, the risk to these students is also minimal. Only the reporting professionals were able to connect RA names with their scores on each of the performance criteria. Additionally, these performance scores were not new evaluations of their performance but rather re-recordings of their prior scores, of which they had already been made aware by their supervisors. This minimized the chance of perception by the RA that having their scores reported by their institutional representatives for the study leaves them subject to any additional performance scrutiny.

Finally, in order to minimize the potential for student identifiers to be included with the institutional data, respondents were reminded that common identifiers, such as RAs' names or their room assignments on campus, must not be included in the data

spreadsheets and must be thoroughly redacted from individual RAs' evaluation forms if provided to the researcher. Considering that some may not have understood this interdiction, the researcher alone carefully scrutinized institutional data sets and found that no such identifiers were present in any of the institutional data sets.

Chapter 4 – Results

The purpose of this study was to determine if sophomore/non-sophomore class standing among first-time Resident Assistants (RAs) could be predicted by RAs' scores on performance evaluations completed by their supervisors. This study sought to fill a gap in knowledge about the performance efficacy of sophomores and non-sophomore in the RA position. The study used existing performance evaluation data gathered from institutions of higher education in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 22.0), binary logistic regression procedures as well as associated *post hoc* tests were conducted to determine if any performance evaluation criteria could predict the class standing of first-time RAs. Logistic regression is the suitable method for assessing the probability of membership in two mutually exclusive groups, in this case, sophomore and non-sophomore class standing, from a set of predictors, such as performance criteria.

The Wald test was used to index the statistical significance of the individual predictor variables. The Hosmer-Lemeshow test was used to examine the goodness-of-fit of the models. The Nagelkerke R^2 and Cox & Snell R^2 tests were employed to examine the practical significance and power of the resulting models. The exponential regression coefficients (odds ratios) were examined to interpret the individual predictors which would define the models. The Likelihood-Ratio Chi-Square was used to test for the statistical significance of prediction models. The a priori level of significance was set at $p < .05$.

Participants

The survey instrument was designed and implemented using the online

application Survey Monkey. The invitation email included a unique link associated with the study, labelled *Study of First-Time RA Performance*. The online link for the survey instrument was accessed a total of 43 times between June 24, 2015 and September 23, 2015. These webpage hits were made from 30 distinct IP addresses, and a total of 10 data sets were submitted and completed. One institutional data set consisting of five records was excluded from the final data set because the resident assistants whose records were provided were all graduate students and therefore were not within the prescribed parameters of a traditional-aged first-time resident assistant.

Nine institutions of higher education in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. submitted a total of 316 RA records. Fourteen records were removed from the data set due to the absence of performance data in those records. This left a total of 302 records to be analyzed. In all other individual cases of missing data, the researcher calculated the average of non-missing values for any RA with an empty cell, and then imputed the missing value with this computed value. When the imputed value resulted in a decimal, the value was rounded to a whole number. Imputations were made in 40 cells out of the total of 2,718 cells.

All of the reporting institutions were four-year colleges or universities. Four were private institutions, and five were public institutions. The researcher requested housing capacity information from institutional reporters according to the ranges used by the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International (ACUHO-I). Most of the institutions reporting have housing capacity for between 1,501 and 2,000 residents. The largest reporting institution has a housing capacity of over 6,000 residents, while the smallest can house between 1,001 and 1,500 residents. Table 6 shows the reported

characteristics of the reporting institutions.

Table 6

Frequencies of Institutional Characteristics

	<i>F</i>	%
Institution Type		
public	165	54.6
private	137	45.4
Institution Housing Capacity		
less than 500	0	0.0
501-751	0	0.0
751-1,000	0	0.0
1,001-1,500	44	14.6
1,501-2,000	94	31.1
2,001-3,000	71	23.5
3,001-4,000	0	0.0
4,001-6,000	61	20.2
greater than 6,000	32	10.6

Demographic Variables

Institutional reporters were asked to submit data on three variables that were included for demographic purposes but which were not manipulated as part of the study. These variables were gender of the resident assistant, the predominant class standing of the residents served by the resident assistant, and the job status of the resident assistant following the first semester of service. Overall, institutions reported data for 165 female RAs (55%) and 137 male RAs (44%). No institution indicated that they hired any transgender students as RAs for either the Fall 2013 or Fall 2014. Institutions indicated that first-time resident assistants were assigned to work with primarily first-year students by nearly a two-to-one margin. The percentage of first-year floor communities reported was 62%, while that of upper-class communities was 37%. Finally, according to

institutional reports overall, a large majority of first-time resident assistants continued in the position into the second semester (88%). A total of 8% of first-time RAs reportedly resigned after their first semester, while 2% were terminated from the position. Finally, 2% of first-time RAs were placed on probationary status following their first semester in the position. Table 7 depicts the frequencies and percentages of each of these demographic variables.

Table 7

Frequencies of Demographic Variables

Variables	<i>F</i>	%
Gender		
male	137	45
female	165	55
transgender	0	0
Predominant Class Standing of Residents		
mostly first-year students	188	62
mostly upper-class students	114	38
Job Status		
terminated	6	2
resigned	24	8
probation	6	2
continuing	266	88

Dependent and Independent Variables

RA class standing. For the dependent variable, RA class standing, *sophomore* was assigned a dummy variable of 1, since it is the category of interest, while *non-sophomore* class standing was designated as 0. Of the 302 RAs whose records were used in the study analyses, 190 were sophomores and 112 were non-sophomores. Table 8 shows the frequencies of the values reported and the percentages of the total response for

each of the values.

Performance variables. Five performance criteria comprised the independent variables for this study. As described in Chapter 3, the researcher arrived at these five evaluation criteria through a content analysis of a set of evaluation forms currently in use at various institutions. Residence life and housing staff design their own evaluation criteria and evaluation forms because there is currently no industry standard for staff performance criteria. The researcher collected a sample of nine evaluation forms used by student housing personnel to score their new RAs' performance at the end of the first semester of service. These nine evaluation forms were gathered from institutions outside of the Mid-Atlantic region. The researcher listed and categorized the specific criterion headings of each institution's evaluation form. This process yielded a count of 59 performance criteria which appeared on at least two of the nine institutional evaluation forms. Through an iterative process, the specific categories were combined and reduced to a list of five primary performance criteria: relationships with residents, community development, programming, administration, and relationships with staff. For these independent variables, each RA was rated on whether they had met the expectations of their supervisors. The possible ratings for each criterion were 0 (did not meet expectations), 1 (needs improvement), 2 (meets expectations), or 3 (exceeds expectations). The modal rating for each of the five performance criteria was 2 (meets expectations).

Relations with residents. The data showed that 59% of first-time resident assistants were reported to have met the expectations of this performance criterion, which included behaviors such as communication skills, conflict resolutions skills, and

conducting duty rounds in their assigned building. Nearly one-third (33%) of resident assistants exceeded their supervisors' expectations in this category, while 8% of RAs were observed to need improvement in their performance. Less than 1% of RAs were noted for not having met the expectations in this category.

Community development. The data showed that 58% of first-time resident assistants were reported to have met the expectations of this performance criterion, which included behaviors such as acting as a role model and being well-known among the residents on their floor. Over two-thirds (35%) of RAs exceeded their supervisors' expectations in this category, while 6% of RAs were observed to need improvement in their performance. Less than 1% of RAs were noted for not having met the expectations in this category.

Programming. In 60% of cases, first-time resident assistants were reported to have met the expectations of this performance criterion, which included behaviors such as communication skills, conflict resolutions skills, and conducting duty rounds in their assigned building. Just under 30% of resident assistants exceeded their supervisors' expectations in this category, while just under 10% of RAs were seen as needing improvement. Finally, 1% of RAs were scored as not having met the expectations in this category.

Administration. The data showed that 59% of first-time resident assistants were noted to have met the expectations of this performance criterion, which included qualities such as timeliness, accuracy, and organization. In 29% of cases, resident assistants exceeded their supervisors' expectations in this category, while 11% of RAs were observed to need improvement in their performance. Finally, 1% of RAs were noted for

not having met the expectations in this category.

Relations with staff. In 56% of cases, first-time resident assistants were determined to have met the expectations of this performance criterion, which included demonstrating a positive attitude, mentoring and supporting fellow staff members, and being actively engaged in staff meetings. In 37% of cases, resident assistants exceeded expectations in this category, while 6% of RAs were observed to need improvement. Finally, 1% of RAs were noted for not having met these expectations.

Table 8 contains the frequencies and percentages of each of the dependent and independent variables described above.

Correlations among independent variables. One of the assumptions that must be met in order for logistic regression analysis to be the correct statistical procedure is the absence of multicollinearity, wherein independent variables are highly inter-correlated (Rovai, Baker & Ponton, 2013). According to Pallant (2013), independent variables used in regression analysis should show some correlation (r^2 above 0.3), but two variables showing too great a relationship (r^2 above 0.9) should not be used in the same analysis. Multicollinearity can occur when a large number of independent variables are used in a regression analysis and some of the variables are actually measuring the same phenomenon or concept (Rovai, Baker & Ponton, 2013). Prior to performing binary logistic regression, multicollinearity among variables must be ruled out because it can result in suppressor effects among the variables (Pallant, 2013).

In this study, the researcher used the non-parametric correlation bivariate option in SPSS to determine correlations among the five independent variables. The results of the Spearman's rank correlation analysis (Spearman's ρ) was the finding that all of the

Table 8

Frequencies of Dependent and Independent Variables

Variables and Coding	<i>F</i>	%
Class Standing		
0 = non-sophomore	190	37
1 = sophomore	112	63
Relations with Residents		
0 = did not meet expectation	1	0
1 = needs improvement	23	8
2 = meets expectation	179	59
3 = exceeds expectation	99	33
Community Development		
0 = did not meet expectation	2	0
1 = needs improvement	19	6
2 = meets expectation	175	58
3 = exceeds expectation	106	35
Programming		
0 = did not meet expectation	4	1
1 = needs improvement	29	10
2 = meets expectation	180	60
3 = exceeds expectation	89	30
Administration		
0 = did not meet expectation	4	1
1 = needs improvement	33	11
2 = meets expectation	179	59
3 = exceeds expectation	86	29
Relations with Staff		
0 = did not meet expectation	3	1
1 = needs improvement	18	6
2 = meets expectation	168	56
3 = exceeds expectation	113	37

Note. *N* = 302.

bivariate correlations showed only moderate collinearity and were within the acceptable range. Therefore, all five of the independent variables were deemed appropriate to include in the model.

The two performance criteria that were found to be least correlated were relations with staff and programming ($\rho = .334$). The two performance criteria with the highest correlation were relations with residents and community development ($\rho = .662$). All other correlations among performance variables registered between .401 and .507. Table 9 lists all of the correlations among the independent variables.

Table 9

Spearman's rho Correlations Between Independent Variables

	Relate_Res	Comm_Dev	Program	Admin	Relate_Staff
Relate_Res	1.000				
Comm_Dev	.662	1.000			
Program	.401	.495	1.000		
Admin	.425	.486	.447	1.000	
Relate_Staff	.640	.507	.334	.442	1.000

Note. $N = 302$.

Binary logistic regression analysis. Binary logistic regression analysis was performed to assess the impact of each one of the five performance criteria on the likelihood that first-time resident assistant could be identified as a sophomore. Using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 22.0), the researcher consulted *The SPSS Survival Guide 5th Edition* (Pallant, 2013) to determine the necessary steps in preparing the protocols for the analysis.

Results. The full model containing all predictors was not statistically significant,

$\chi^2 (15, N = 302) = 10.33; p = .79$. This result is meaningful in the context of a logistic regression analysis because it indicates that the logit model was not able to distinguish between sophomore and non-sophomore Resident Assistants on the basis of their performance in the position. That is, no combination of performance criteria predictor variables was able to predict the sophomore or non-sophomore class standing of a first-time RA. In effect, this result indicates that knowing how well an RA has performed in their first semester on the job is of no value in predicting that RA's class standing ex post facto.

The Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test was not significant, $\chi^2 (7, N = 302) = 3.17; p = .87$. The model itself explained only between 3% (Cox & Snell R^2 square) and 5% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in class standing of RAs. The model correctly classified 63% of the cases, which is the same percentage predicted without the five independent variables added to the equation. In other words, the performance criteria used by housing professionals to evaluate first-time resident assistants are useless in predicting whether any RA is a sophomore or a non-sophomore.

Table 10 lists the full results of the binary logistic regression analysis.

Table 10

Logistic Regression Coefficients for Performance Criteria

Criterion	<i>B</i>	Wald	<i>p</i>	Odds Ratio	95% C.I. for Odds Ratio	
					Lower	Upper
Relationships with Residents		.695	.874			
(1) ^a	1.034	.000	1.000	2.813	.000	
(2)	0.165	.057	.811	1.179	.305	4.557
(3)	.317	.644	.422	1.374	.633	2.982
Community Development		.593	.898			
(1)	-1.435	.000	1.000	.238	.000	
(2)	-0.462	.435	.510	.630	.160	2.488
(3)	.026	.005	.943	1.026	.505	2.084
Programming		1.146	.766			
(1)	20.856	.000	1.000	1.142e9	.000	
(2)	-0.87	.027	.868	.916	.326	2.574
(3)	-.325	1.035	.309	.723	.386	1.351
Administration		.212	.976			
(1)	-22.072	.000	1.000	.000	.000	
(2)	.219	.177	.674	1.245	.449	3.449
(3)	.013	.002	.968	1.013	.531	1.936
Relationships with Staff		2.572	.462			
(1)	41.831	.000	.999	1.469e18	.000	
(2)	1.042	2.065	.151	2.836	.684	11.751
(3)	-.046	.016	.898	.955	.475	1.922
Constant	.471	3.176	.075	1.601		

^a Numbers in parentheses represent the designation of the dummy variable for the categorical performance criteria codings.

Chapter 5 – Discussion and Implications

Housing professionals are increasingly compelled to hire first-year students as resident assistants (RAs) due to shrinking numbers of more experienced candidates. The existing literature provides no evidence regarding any difference in the performance of RAs according to class standing. The purpose of this study was to cast light on the question of whether sophomore RAs perform differently from students who have spent more than a single year in college. The study compared the performance evaluation scores of first-time resident assistants to determine if any performance criteria can predict the sophomore or non-sophomore class standing of RAs ex post facto. Using such a prediction model would assist housing professionals in making data-informed hiring decisions that maximize the likelihood of an RA's success on the job.

Considering that housing professionals are increasingly forced to hire resident assistants from a pool of applicants that includes students with less college experience than was traditionally expected, the researcher sought to provide some evidence of the efficacy or effect of hiring first-year students to serve as RAs in their sophomore year. Specifically, do performance evaluation scores of resident assistants as determined by their college housing supervisors predict the sophomore class standing of first-time resident assistants? Can class standing of an RA be correctly predicted given a set of evaluation scores?

Demographic Variables

Gender. Nearly 55% of the resident assistants whose performance evaluation scores were reported for this study were identified as female. This aligns with data regarding the gender distribution of the general population of college students. In 2012,

the latest year for which data are available, 57% of college students were female (Chronicle of Higher Education). Although the survey for the current study gave the option to report the number of transgender RAs, none were reported.

Predominant class standing of residents. Institutional reporters were asked to provide data on the predominant class standing of the residents in the communities served by the first-time resident assistants in the study. Alexander Astin (1993) found students' place of residence to be "probably the most important and pervasive environmental influence on the student's persistence in school" (p.4). On nearly all campuses across the United States, residential programs specifically designed for first-year students have become commonplace (Inkelas, Soldner, & Szelenyi, 2008). This movement toward so called living-learning programs developed as a means to improve the persistence rates of first-year students into their sophomore year. Therefore, it is typically the case that residence hall communities are set aside for first-year students to be assigned together, often with a special focus on academic major or other special interest.

In this study, nearly two-thirds of RAs (62%) reportedly served in primarily first-year communities. Upper-class resident communities were served by 61 of the sophomore RAs (54%) and by 53 of the non-sophomore RAs (46%). However, sophomore RAs were more likely to be assigned to primarily first-year resident communities than upper-class RAs by a two to one margin. Only 31% of first-year communities were served by upper-class RAs, while 69% were served by sophomore RAs. While the determining factors for assignment of a given RA to a particular floor community are well beyond the scope of this study, it is likely that sophomore RAs tend to be assigned with first-year residents due to their being closer to the age or maturity

level of first-year student and because they have successfully negotiated the first-year experience themselves most recently. This finding is meaningful for future research because researchers in other studies have concluded that working with first-year students can be a more difficult assignment for RAs due to the relatively high demands that come with serving first-year students (Schaller & Wagner, 2007).

Job status. Over 90% of first-time resident assistants were reported to have continued their employment in the position into the second semester of their first year of service. Of this group, six RAs (2%) were reportedly placed on probation for the second semester, though no information was requested or provided on the reason for this job action. Among the RAs placed on probation, five out of six were reportedly sophomore RAs. This finding of a 90% retention rate after one semester among first-time RAs aligns with the findings of Brandt Brecheisen (2015). In a national study, Brandt Brecheisen discovered that 15.9% of sophomore RAs chose not to return to the job after their first full year, while the current finding refers only to retention in the position after only one semester of service.

Of the remaining RAs whose performance ratings were reported, 24 (8%) resigned after their first semester of service, while six (2%) were terminated by their supervisors. Roughly equal numbers of sophomore and non-sophomore RAs (13 and 11, respectively) were noted as having resigned. However, all six of the RAs who were terminated were sophomores.

While reliable conclusions may not be drawn from this job status data, it is worth noting that, of the 12 RAs who had been placed on probation or were terminated, fully 11 of them were sophomores. At first glance, this result would indicate that sophomore RAs

were more likely than non-sophomores to be terminated from their positions after their first semester. However, further research would need to be conducted before any such conclusion should be drawn. For example, were these sophomore RAs terminated at the end of the first semester as a result of poor job or academic performance or were they terminated prior to the end of the first semester due to misbehavior or violation of college policy? Even though this study showed that sophomore RAs performed just as well as their older peers, this observation that evaluation of sophomore RAs was more likely to result in termination from the position clearly calls for further exploration.

Discussion

The results of this study show that second-year traditional-age college students who serve as resident assistants are evaluated as performing just as well as other RAs who have more experience in college. While the hiring of sophomore resident assistants is a very common but previously unsubstantiated custom, this study provides confirmation for this practice. Sophomore RAs perform at the same level as their junior and senior peers when it comes to the major responsibilities of the position. This finding has far-reaching implications for housing professionals who hire undergraduates to serve in these important leadership posts.

College housing professionals are generally apprehensive about hiring sophomores as resident assistants. They seek candidates for the position who are more mature and more experienced than the students that they will serve. They are therefore reluctant to select students who have not yet made all the necessary transitions in higher education. This study finds that sophomores perform just as well as their upper-class counterparts, even when they are assigned to communities of first-year students with

greater needs for support and attention. This finding challenges the misperception that sophomore RAs offer something less to the position than juniors or seniors when it comes to performance. Selection processes for resident assistants need not begin with the prejudice that sophomores are inherently less capable than other upper-class candidates. Housing professionals can stop giving preference to non-sophomores candidates, and in fact they can begin actively recruiting sophomores for the resident assistant position.

According to the criteria set forth for eligibility for this study, the resident assistants who made up the data set were selected for their positions in the spring semester prior to their service, at the time when they were still first-year students. The findings of this study change how housing professionals may view first-year candidates, regardless of the size of a campus's pool of applicants. For schools with larger pools or with a high ratio of upper-class to first-year applicants, housing professionals may have traditionally set aside first-year applicants for peremptory exclusion. Anecdotally, housing professionals will often preemptively discredit first-year students by assuming that these students need more time to mature and can benefit from another academic year to mature before they are hired. Given the current results, housing professional can reject this traditional discrimination, specifically when it comes to concerns about the applicant's potential performance. For schools with smaller housing capacity and concomitant smaller applicant pools, understanding that sophomore RAs perform as well as upper-class RAs will allow housing professionals to discard class standing as a discriminating factor. Hence, this can help to significantly increase the pool of applicants who are considered sufficiently qualified.

Once professionals come to embrace the parity of performance to be expected

from sophomore and non-sophomore resident assistants, they may begin to address the unnecessary lack of confidence on the part of first-year applicants for the position.

Understandably, first-year applicants may enter the RA application process with a lack of confidence that they are competent to take on the position. Indeed, many first-year students may choose not to apply for the position for this reason. Once housing staff embrace the finding that sophomore RAs score no differently on performance criteria than upper-class RAs, they may challenge their own anticipatory bias, and they may begin to more broadly support, encourage, and recruit first-year students to apply.

Since sophomores have been shown in this study to be evaluated just as highly as their upper-class counterparts, the hiring of sophomore resident assistants can be viewed as a means of increasing the likelihood that these sophomore students will be retained and will graduate. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) asserted that “students living on campus are more likely to persist and graduate than students who commute” (p. 421). However, rising sophomores do not necessarily choose to come back to on-campus living for their second year. According to the American Council on Education, almost two-thirds of beginning students live on campus, but, by their sophomore year, many students choose to move off campus for myriad reasons (Gahagan & Hunter, 2006). Hiring first-year students to serve as residential leaders for their sophomore year contributes to the likelihood that these on-campus students will be retained by the institution and that they will attain a degree.

Based on the results of this study, housing professionals should view the RA position as advantageous for sophomores, not a burden but a benediction. In view of recent research findings on improving retention, college campuses are increasingly

moving toward requiring sophomores to live on campus, and the housing staff on these campuses are concomitantly designing intentional residential learning communities for these second-year students. Housing professionals should view the RA position as just such an intentional program, rather than limiting the selection of sophomores for these positions. Sophomore resident assistants who succeed in the RA job, performing at the level of upper-class colleagues, can carry away a sense of accomplishment, of autonomy, and of purpose, all of which are milestones for successfully completing their undergraduate degrees.

Implications for theory and practice. There remain some institutions whose housing professionals intentionally hire only juniors and seniors. Those institutions that have an ample pool of applicants among their more experienced students may be doing an injustice to both their programs and to the first-year students by overlooking the opportunity to select sophomore RAs.

The results of this study indicate that institutions need not discriminate against RA applicants merely on the basis of their first-year class standing. It should be noted that the RAs in this study represented only those students who applied for the position and were selected. It seems reasonable to expect that the sophomore RAs in this study did not include all of the applicants who applied during their freshman year at any of the participating institutions. There are undoubtedly many applicants at each of the participating institutions who applied but were not hired, just as the cadre of qualified upper-class candidates was likely condensed from a somewhat larger pool.

The findings that sophomores perform just as well as upper-class RAs may have profound implications for the way that housing professionals train first-time resident

assistants. Since there is no longer any reason to assume that sophomore RAs will perform more poorly than upper-class RAs once they are hired, professionals responsible for training newly-hired staff can now focus on more specific training sessions with sophomores in mind. Brandt Brecheisen (2014) suggests that “RA training for a sophomore RA evolves into preparation to navigate their sophomore year” (p.134). Brandt Brecheisen found a strong correlation between satisfaction with training and reported self-efficacy among sophomore RAs. The present finding lends support to the idea that specific training sessions designed for sophomores can improve the experience of such students in the RA job. Training of resident assistants includes topics such as campus resources and referrals, interpersonal relationship skills, time management and confrontation of peers. Addressing these developmental issues during RA training, especially prior to the beginning of their service and with sophomore RAs in mind, can result in improvement in their satisfaction with training and consequently in their sense of confidence in their ability to perform on the job.

The results of this study lend general support to Brandt Brecheisen’s hypothesis that serving as a sophomore RA effectively becomes a sophomore year experience program. That is, while serving as an RA during the sophomore year may be challenging, it serves as a positive growth experience that actually assists sophomores in making the necessary adjustments as they confront the changing academic and social landscape that lies ahead of them. As noted above, once students are hired for the job, they are generally presented with extensive pre-service and in-service training programs which include topics such as identifying campus resources and making referrals, building interpersonal relationship and time management skills, and developing their leadership. In addition,

RAs often form relationships with fellow staff members in the context of team development, and perhaps this alleviates some of the relationship adjustment issues commonly reported by sophomores. As Brandt Brecheisen suggests, RA training for a sophomore RA develops into a preparation program for their successful transition through the sophomore year (Brandt Brecheisen, 2015).

Similarly, the finding that sophomore RAs perform as well as upper-class RAs is consistent with Schaller's model of the stages of commitment through which sophomores progress. As others have pointed out, the typical sophomore's feeling of being neglected following the first college year is likely an unintended result of the withdrawal of the many services and programs that freshmen students enjoy (Hunter et al., 2010). For a sophomore RA, the support mechanisms and positive staff contact put in place by virtue of their student employment may serve to neutralize the *sophomore slump*. Schaller's research on sophomores led her to conclude that students need encouragement to take responsibility for choices and for their learning, to get involved in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and to build new relationships with peers based on intentional rather than superficial characteristics. According to the results of the present study, sophomore RAs seem to be benefiting from the position in exactly this way, moving into and beyond Schaller's third stage of commitment, tentative choices (Schaller, 2005). For sophomore RAs, training can help transport them more promptly and effectively through their development as a student. Transition to the third stage of commitment may be aided through a sophomore RA's sense of accomplishment, first through being hired for the position, then through successfully traversing the challenges of the position and succeeding in it. On the other hand, the results of this study do not

seem to support Schaller's conclusion that the demands placed on sophomore RAs in the first six weeks to induct new freshmen disrupts the RA in making the transition to their own sophomore year. Were this the case, it seems reasonable that this disruption would become apparent in the performance evaluations of sophomore RAs.

Other observations. One unintended consequence of preparing to conduct this study was the observation of the multitude of performance expectations placed on RAs. The design of this study called for content analysis of performance evaluation forms from various colleges to arrive at the five performance criteria studied. The raw number of specific expectations placed on RAs is astounding. The count of performance criteria which appeared on at least two of the nine evaluation forms came to a daunting 59. Though many of these 59 performance criteria were different only semantically from others, it must still be formidable for a resident assistant to grasp the enormous number of behaviors they must exhibit in order to be assessed as competent in the position.

The researcher also made observations regarding the predominant class standing of residents served by the first-time resident assistants reported in this study. Of the 190 sophomore RAs whose performance data were reported, 130 (68%) of them had been assigned to work on a floor or community housing primarily first-year students. Meanwhile, non-sophomore RAs were assigned to first-year communities at approximately the same rate as they were to upper-class communities (52% versus 48%, respectively). This observation points to the notion stated earlier that housing professionals tend to assign sophomore RAs with first-year residents due to their having more recently progressed through the transitions characteristic of first-year students. This observation merits further exploration in future studies.

A surprising discovery within the full data set relates to the characteristics of those first-time Resident Assistants who were either terminated or placed on probation following their first evaluation period at the end of the first semester of their service. Only six first-time RAs (2% of the population) were terminated from the position, and another six were placed on probationary status, meaning that return to the position was contingent upon the completion of specific tasks or sanctions in the coming semester. The surprising observation of note is that, of these 12 first-time RAs, fully 11 of them were sophomore RAs. Because this result was not reflected in a predication model among any of the performance criteria through the logistic regression analysis, the effect on sophomore RAs' performance was either too small or too diffuse to register in the statistical analysis. However, this demographic finding justifies further exploration in future research to determine if the consequences of marginal performance may be more severe for sophomore RAs.

Study Limitations

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether first-time sophomore RAs perform differently from first-time upper-class RAs. As described above, housing professionals may now be less apprehensive about employing sophomores since there is now reason to expect that the RAs' supervisors will evaluate their performance as equal to that of their older peers. However, it is worth noting that there are numerous other ways to measure the success of RAs. For example, this study did not address the evaluation of RAs' performance from the point of view of the residents that they serve. Similarly, this study did not address the RAs' self-assessment of their performance nor their satisfaction with the position. Other studies need to be conducted to address these

criteria for successful service as a resident assistant.

This study may have been limited in a number of ways by the methodology employed. Rather than collect sample evaluation forms and perform a content analysis to establish the five performance criteria, the researcher could have made the choice to collect raw evaluation data from each participating institution and subsequently conduct a content analysis of the various performance criteria provided by the participating institutions. This approach would have relieved those reporting the data for the study from having to recode their own existing evaluations into the five performance criteria defined by the researcher. It would also have led to greater confidence that the information provided by participating institutions was truly reflective of RAs performance and not a regression toward the mean. However, this approach would also have contributed to doubts about the validity of the results, due to the fact that the researcher would have been exposed to the raw data and would have had greater difficulty removing bias that could have affected the content analysis of the evaluation forms.

Another limitation of the methodology of this study was the use of data reflecting evaluations of RAs following only one semester of service. This decision was driven by the existing literature, which supports the belief that transition challenges among sophomores are more difficult during the first semester after their freshman year (Benedict & Mondoloch, 1989; Schaller & Wagner, 2007). This also contributed to the researcher's decision to accept data from either Fall 2013 or Fall 2014, but not to accept data for Spring-only new RAs. Though performance evaluation data gathered after first-time RAs' full year of service might have resulted in a better set of predictors, this method

would have been less likely to reflect the significant challenges faced by RAs in the first semester.

Future Research

This study provides numerous avenues for further examination in the area of resident assistants. The results of this study show that, from the perspective of their supervisors, the performance of sophomore RAs does not differ from that of upper-class RAs. Sophomore RAs perform no worse than junior or senior RAs when it comes to relating to their residents and fellow staff members, conducting educational and social programs to engage residents, building a floor community, or tending to the administrative formalities of the position. Future research on the success of sophomore RAs should be directed at prediction factors other than the evaluation of their performance by their supervisors. For example, many colleges and universities conduct periodic satisfaction surveys to assess the delivery of services to their residents, and comprehensive surveys of this sort include questions about the residents' satisfaction with their own floor RA. One way to augment the findings of this study would be to gather existing data from multiple institutions and use resident satisfaction with RAs as an independent variable to determine if it can predict the class standing of the RA.

Another potential gauge of sophomore RA success is the RAs' self-assessment of their performance, independent of their supervisor's feedback. Prior studies of sophomore RAs have used primarily qualitative methodology to explore the experience of sophomore RAs. Kauffman (2008) interviewed sophomore RAs and discovered that all subjects reported a positive experience overall while describing significant challenges including the lack of respect from other students, the administrative tasks of the job, and

the feeling of “living in a fishbowl.” Sophomore RAs reported that these challenges necessitated their making changes to their social lives to avoid compromising positions. Schaller & Wagner (2007) found that female sophomore RAs reported having difficulty meeting everyone’s expectations, while males reported finding the job to be a barrier to building new relationships. However, these studies used intention to return to the RA position as a proxy for RAs’ self-evaluation of success in the job rather than gauging this measurement of success through any quantitative method. Assessing sophomore RAs’ self-assessment of success in the position would also be served by future researchers including non-continuing or dissatisfied RAs in their samples. Levels of self-reported satisfaction on the part of sophomore RAs could also be defined as a measure of their success. As Brandt Brecheisen (2015) points out, the 1,443 sophomore RA respondents in her study comprised primarily satisfied RAs, as did most of the sophomore RAs in the two other studies described above. As Brandt Brecheisen suggests, engaging input from unsatisfied sophomore RAs would be worthwhile in future research.

Future research in the area of RAs may further shed light on their efficacy by comparing class standing beyond the dichotomous variable created for the present study (sophomore or non-sophomore). Prior to conducting this study, as the researcher described the research question and the population of interest, many housing practitioners expressed their anecdotal impression that sophomore RAs tend to perform just as well as junior RAs, but that senior RAs are often the population that does not perform according to their supervisors’ expectations. While sophomore RAs, by definition, are first-time RAs, senior RAs can have any level of direct experience in the job. That is, senior RAs may be in their third year in the position, having been hired originally as a sophomore

RA. On the other extreme, senior RAs may be first-time staff members themselves, being hired only in their fourth college year. Just as this study aimed to find if any performance criteria could distinguish sophomore RAs from their advanced peers, future studies may try to isolate the success of senior RAs using the same criteria. Clearly, research in this direction would need to first discriminate between types of senior RAs, as described above. Though senior RAs have had the opportunity to progress beyond the necessary transitions of the mid-college years, their level of experience in the RA job should be considered a confounding variable.

Another fertile area for future research in the realm of sophomore RAs is to measure their success and development longitudinally, especially using Schaller's commitment model. As described above, senior RAs in many cases represent students who were first-time RAs in their sophomore year and who continued to serve as an RA for a third year. Research on the experience and success of these third year RAs would be valuable for housing professionals. A longitudinal mixed-methods study of sophomore RAs would be most valuable if it gathered both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the experience and success of RAs over the course of three years, from their first year on the job as sophomores through their third year as a senior. Such a study would be further enriched by following the experience of these sophomore RAs whether or not they persisted in the position into the second or third year. In this way, housing professionals would have a much-improved sense of the beneficial and disruptive aspects of the RA position on sophomore students in the long term.

Finally, the housing profession would be further served by more research in the area of RA selection processes. As stated by Jaeger and Caison (2006), "Although

selection of RA candidates is time-consuming and ultimately determines who will serve in the critical RA role, the research examining the selection process is relatively non-existent” (p. 146). The present study sheds light on the viability of sophomores in the RA position compared to non-sophomores. However, there remains very little scholarly research that focuses on assisting housing professions in choosing candidates who will ultimately prove successful in the position. Additional research should aim to assist practitioners in data-informed decision making to determine the efficacy of their thorough and staff-intensive selection processes in regard to RAs’ performance, their satisfaction, and their development as students.

Conclusions

Though housing professionals are increasingly induced to offer resident assistant positions to first-year students due to shrinking numbers of more experienced candidates, the present study provides evidence regarding their performance, finding that first-time sophomore RAs are evaluated by their supervisors to be equally successful in the position as their older counterparts. This study shed light on the question of whether sophomore RAs perform differently from upper-class RAs. The finding that no performance criteria can predict the class standing of first-time RAs liberates housing professionals from any apprehension that hiring sophomore RAs will result in substandard performance. This finding frees housing professionals not only to interview and evaluate sophomore applicants for the RA position, but to actively recruit them and to promote the long-term value of the position. Housing professional may now view the selection of sophomore resident assistants as a contribution to their institution’s efforts to retain students and guide them through to graduation. In sum, residential staff should no longer blindly

discriminate against sophomores in their hiring practices, nor fear that hiring second-year students will necessarily result in second-rate performance.

References

- Agresti, A. (2007). *An introduction to categorical data analysis* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley. doi: 10.1002/sim.3564
- American College Personnel Association (2001). *Critical issues task force*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.myacpa.org>
- American Council on Education (1937). *The student personnel point of view*. Retrieved from <http://www.myacpa.org/sites/default/files/student-personnel-point-of-view-1937.pdf>
- Arvidson, C. (2003). A new role emerging? Reviewing the literature on RA roles. *Journal of College and University Student Housing*, 31(2), 31-35. Retrieved from <http://www.acuho-i.org/resources/publications/journal?portalid=0?portalid=0>
- Astin, A. W. (1977). *Four critical years: Effects of college on beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Astin, A. W. (1993). What matters in college? *Liberal Education*, 79(4), 4. Retrieved from <http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation>
- Bailey, E.A., & Grandpre, E.A. (1997). A performance evaluation of resident assistants in student housing. *Journal of College and University Housing*, 26(2), 40-46. Retrieved from <http://www.acuho-i.org/resources/publications/journal?portalid=0?portalid=0>
- Benedict, J., & Mondoloch, G. (1989). Factors affecting burnout in paraprofessional residence hall staff members. *Journal of College Student Development*, 30, 293-297. Retrieved from <http://www.myacpa.org/journal-college-student-development>
- Blimling, G. (2010). *The resident assistant: Applications & strategies for working with*

- college students in residence halls*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.
- Brandt Brecheisen, S. M. (2014). *The sophomore RA experience: An examination of job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and RA self-efficacy* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations (Accession No. 1530478043)
- Brandt Brecheisen, S. M. (2015). Paraprofessional staff in transition: The sophomore RA experience. *The Journal of College and University Student Housing*, 42(1), 194-210. Retrieved from <http://www.acuho-i.org/resources/publications/journal?portalid=0?portalid=0>
- Bridges, W. (1980). *Transitions: Making sense of life's changes*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Bridges, W. (2009). *Managing transitions: Making the most of change* (3rd ed). Philadelphia, PA: Da Capo Press.
- Brower, A. M., & Inkelas, K. K. (2010). Living-learning: One high-impact educational practice. *Liberal Education*, 96(2), 36-43. Retrieved from <http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation>
- Chronicle of Higher Education (2015). *Student diversity at 4,725 institutions*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/interactives/student-diversity>
- Crandall, P. D. (2004). *Future role of resident assistants in housing programs at public, four-year colleges and universities* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations (Accession No. 305185108)
- Creswell, J. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.

- Cowley, W. H. (1934). The history of student residential housing. *School and Society*, 40, 705-712, 758-764. Retrieved from <http://www.johndeweyociety.org/our-journals/school-and-society>
- Denzine, G., & Anderson, C. (1999). I can do it: Resident assistant sense of self-efficacy. *Journal of College Student Development*, 40(3), 247-156. Retrieved from <http://www.myacpa.org/journal-college-student-development>
- Dodge, S. (1990). The demanding job of resident assistant: Has it grown too big for students? *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 36(23), A39-41. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com>
- Foote, S. M., Hinkle, S. E., Kranzow, J., Pistilli, M. D., Rease Miles, L., & Simmons, J. G. (2013). *College students in transition: An annotated bibliography*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- Freedman, M. (1956). The passage through college. *Journal of Social Issues*. 12, 13-27. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.1956.tb00385
- Gahagan, J., & Hunter, S. (2006). The second-year experience: Turning attention to the academy's middle children. *About Campus*, 11(3), 17-22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/abc.168>
- Gahagan, J., & Hunter, M. (2010). Residential learning in the sophomore year. In M. Hunter, B. Tobolowsky, & J. Gardner (Eds.). *Helping sophomores succeed: Understanding and improving the second-year experience* (pp. 189-202). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gardner, E. (2000). From drift to engagement: Finding purpose and making career

- connections in the sophomore year. In L. Schreiner, & J. Pattengale (Eds.). *Visible solutions for invisible students: Helping sophomores succeed* (Monograph No. 31) (pp. 67-77). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- Graunke, S. A., & Woolsey, S. A. (2005). An exploration of the factors that affect the academic success of college sophomores. *College Student Journal*, 39(2), 367-376. Retrieved from <http://www.projectinnovation.com/college-student-journal.html>
- Hair, J., Anderson, R., Tatham, R., & Black, W. (1998) *Multivariate data analysis*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Simon & Schuster.
- Hetherington, C., Oliver, M., Phelps, C. (1989). Resident assistant burnout: Factors of job and gender. *Journal of College Student Development*, 30, 266-269. Retrieved from <http://www.myacpa.org/journal-college-student-development>
- Hinkle, D., Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S. (2003). *Applied statistics for the behavioral sciences* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Centage Learning.
- Horvath, T., & Stack, G. (2013). Staffing patterns. In N. Dunkel, & J. Baumann (Eds.). *Campus Housing Management* (pp. 2-30). Columbus, OH: Thompson-Shore.
- Hosmer, D., & Lemeshow, S. (2000). *Applied logistic regression* (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley.
- Hunter, M., Tobolowsky, B., & Gardner, J. (2010). *Helping sophomores succeed: Understanding and improving the second-year experience*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Inkelas, K. K., Soldner, M., & Szelenyi, K. (2008). Living-learning programs for first-

- year students. In W. J. Zeller (Ed.) *Residence life programs & the new student experience* (Monograph No. 5, 3rd ed.). (pp. 53-65). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- Jaeger, A., & Caison, A. (2006). Rethinking criteria for training and selection: An inquiry into the emotional intelligence of resident assistants. *NASPA Journal*, 43(1), 144-165. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2202/0027-6014.1575>
- Juillerat, S. (2000). Assessing the expectations and satisfactions of sophomores. In L. Schreiner, & J. Pattengale (Eds.). *Visible solutions for invisible students: Helping sophomores succeed* (Monograph No. 31) (pp. 19-29). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- Kauffman, D. J. (2008). *The experience of sophomore resident advisors* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations and Theses (Accession No. 304457376).
- Kawczynski, K. A. (2009). *The college sophomore student experience: A phenomenological study of a second year program* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (Accession No. 304893686).
- Kennedy, K., & Upcraft, M .L. (2010). Keys to student success: A look at the literature. In M. Hunter, B. Tobolowsky, & J. Gardner (Eds.). *Helping sophomores succeed: Understanding and improving the second-year experience* (pp.30-42). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Keup, J. R., Gahagan, J., & Goodwin, R. (2010). *2008 National survey of sophomore-*

- year initiatives: Curricular and cocurricular structures supporting the success of second-year college students* (Research Reports on College Transitions No. 1). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- Krathwohl, D., & Smith, N. (2005). *How to prepare a dissertation proposal*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Kuh, G. M., Cruce, T., Shoup, R., Kinzie, J., & Gonyea, R. (2008). Unmasking the effects of student engagement on first-year college grades and persistence. *Journal of Higher Education*, 79(5), 540-563. Retrieved from <https://ohiostatepress.org/index.htm?journals/jhe/jhemain.htm>
- Kuh, G., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2006). *What matters to student success?: A review of the literature*. Commissioned Report for the National Symposium on Postsecondary Student Success: Spearheading a Dialog on Student Success. Retrieved from nces.ed.gov/npec/pdf/Kuh_Team_Report.pdf
- Lemons, L. J., & Richmond, D. R. (1987). A developmental perspective of the sophomore slump. *NASPA Journal*, 24(3), 15-19. Retrieved from <http://www.naspa.org/publications/journals>
- Luna, G. (2008). Residential programs promoting students' academic success. In W. J. Zeller (Ed.) *Residence life programs & the new student experience* (Monograph No. 5, 3rd ed.). (pp. 75-82). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- McKuskey, B. (2013). The future of campus housing. In N. Dunkel, & J. Baumann

- (Eds.). *Campus Housing Management* (pp. 102-134). Columbus, OH: Thompson-Shore.
- McMillan, J. (2004). *Educational research: Fundamentals for the consumer*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Miller, C., & Conyne, R. (1980). Paraprofessional problems: A comparison of residence hall paraprofessionals and regular students. *Journal of College and University Student Housing*, 10(1), 10-12. Retrieved from <http://www.acuho-i.org>
- Morgan, J., & Davis, D. (1981). Sophomore students: They are special, too. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 22, 170-171. Retrieved from <http://www.myacpa.org/journal-college-student-development>
- Nowack, K., Gibbons, J., & Hanson, A. (1985). Factors affecting burnout and job performance of resident assistants. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 24, 545-550. Retrieved from <http://www.myacpa.org/journal-college-student-development>
- Paladino, D., Murray, T., Newgent, R., & Gohn, L. (2005). Resident assistant burn-out: Factors impacting depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, and personal accomplishment. *Journal of College and University Student Housing*, 33, 18-27. Retrieved from <http://www.acuho-i.org>
- Pallant, J. (2103). *SPSS survival manual* (5th ed). Berkshire, England: Open University Press.
- Pascarella, E., & Terenzini, P. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research* (2nd ed). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Pattengale, J., & Schreiner, L. (2000). What is the sophomore slump and why should we care? In L. Schreiner, & J. Pattengale (Eds.). *Visible solutions for invisible*

- students: Helping sophomores succeed* (Monograph No. 31) (pp. 1-18).
Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the
First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- Peng, C., Lee, K., & Ingersoll, G. (2002). An introduction to logistic regression analysis
and reporting. *Journal of Educational Research*, 96(1), 3-14. doi:
10.1080/00220670209598786
- Pike, G. R. (1999). The effects of residential learning communities and traditional
residence hall learning arrangements on educational gains during the first year of
college. *Journal of College Student Development*. 40(3), 269-84. Retrieved from
<http://www.myacpa.org/journal-college-student-development>
- Powers, E. (2008, January 31). Targeting ‘the lost year.’ *Inside Higher Ed.*. Retrieved
from www.insidehighered.com
- Purdie, J. R., & Rosser, V. J. (2011). Examining the academic performance and retention
of first-year students in living-learning communities and first-year experience
courses. *College Student Affairs Journal*. 29(2), 95-112. Retrieved from
<http://www.infoagepub.com/college-student-affairs-journal>
- Rovai, A., Baker, J., & Ponton, M. (2013). *Social science research design and statistics*
(1st ed.). Chesapeake, VA: Watertree Press LLC.
- Schaller, M. A. (2000). *A phenomenological study of the traditional-aged college
sophomore experience at a four-year, residential university* (Doctoral
dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (Accession No.
304611269).
- Schaller, M. A. (2005). Wandering and wondering: Traversing the uneven terrain of the

- second college year. *About Campus*, 10(3), 17-24. doi: 10.1002/abc.131
- Schaller, M. A. (2007). The development of college sophomores. In B. Tobolowsky, & B. Cox (Eds.). *Shedding light on sophomores: An exploration of the second college year*. (Monograph No. 47, pp. 1-11). Columbia, S.C.: The University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- Schaller, M. A. (2010). College sophomores: The journey into self. In M. Hunter, B. Tobolowsky, & J. Gardner (Eds.). *Helping sophomores succeed: Understanding and improving the second-year experience* (pp.66-79). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Schaller, M. A., & Wagner, R. L. (2007). Indecision and an avalanche of expectations: Challenges facing sophomore resident assistants. *NASPA Journal*, 44(1), 32-56. Retrieved from <http://www.naspa.org/publications/journals>
- Schreiner, L. A. (2010). Factors that contribute to sophomore success and satisfaction. In M. Hunter, B. Tobolowsky, & J. Gardner (Eds.). *Helping sophomores succeed: Understanding and improving the second-year experience* (pp.43-65). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Schroeder, C., & Mabel, P. (1994). *Realizing the educational potential of residence halls*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Schudde, L. T. (2011). The causal effect of campus residency on college student retention. *Review of Higher Education*, 34(4), 581-610. doi: 10.1353/rhe.2011.0023
- Shapiro, N. S., & Levine, J. H. (1999). *Creating learning communities: A practical guide*

- to winning support, organizing for change, and implementing programs.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Shushok, F., Scales, T., Sriram, R., & Kidd, V. (2011). A tale of three campuses: Unearthing theories of residential life that shape the student learning experience. *About Campus*, 16(3), 13-21. doi: 10.1002/abc.20063
- Spring, J. (2003). *The American school: A global context from the puritans to the Obama era.* New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Stassen, M. (2003). Student outcomes: The impact of varying living-learning community models. *Research in Higher Education*. 44(5), 581-613. Retrieved from <http://link.springer.com/journal/11162>
- Tabachnick, B., & Fidell, L. (2012). *Using multivariate statistics* (6th ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Terenzini, P. T., & Pascarella, E. T. (1994). Living with myths: Undergraduate education in America. *Change*, 26(1), 28-32. doi: 10.1080/00091383.1994.9938488
- Thompson, J., Samiratedu, V., & Rafter, J. (1993). The effects of on-campus residence on first-time college students. *NASPA Journal*, 31(1), 41-47. Retrieved from <http://www.naspa.org/publications/journals>
- Tobolowsky, B., & Cox, B. (2007). *Shedding light on sophomores: An exploration of the second college year.* Columbia, SC.: The University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- University of California Irvine Office of Research and Evaluation (2007). *The impact of living on or off campus in freshman year.* Retrieved from <http://www.assessment.uci.edu/undergraduate/ documents/Commuterreport->

Upcraft, M. L., & Pilato, G. T. (1982). *Residence hall assistants in college: A guide to selection, training, and supervision* (1st ed). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wilder, J. S. (1993). The sophomore slump: A complex developmental period that contributes to attrition. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 12(2), 18-27. Retrieved from <http://www.infoagepub.com/college-student-affairs-journal>

Xueli, W., & Kennedy-Phillips, L. (2013). Focusing on the sophomores: Characteristics associated with the academic and social involvement of second-year college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 54(5), 541-548. Retrieved from <http://www.myacpa.org/journal-college-student-development>

Appendix A – Supporting Documents

MACUHO letter soliciting institutional participation, distributed June 24, 2015.

Supporting MACUHO's Commitment to Research

Supporting MACUHO's commitment to advancing academic scholarship within the field of campus housing, the association occasionally permits researchers to conduct both quantitative and qualitative studies of the association's membership with prior approval.

Should We Be Hiring Sophomore RAs?

In the Winter 2015 edition of the *MACUHO Magazine*, I asked that question. Now is your opportunity to help us all answer this question.

Statement of the Problem: Many of us are hiring more and more rising sophomore RAs, but we wonder if they'll be able to handle the challenges and perform as well as upper-class RAs. The research literature is void of evidence regarding the efficacy of second-year students in the RA role, though we know that sophomores have their own important academic and social transitions to make.

Significance: The results of this study will ultimately help us all to make *data-informed* hiring decisions that will maximize the likelihood of an RA's success on the job, for their sake and the sake of their residents. Understanding whether sophomore RAs perform differently from other first-time RAs will help regardless of the magnitude or direction of difference. *Your participation in this study will help fill a gap in our knowledge.* The results of this study will be publically disseminated to MACUHO members to help inform our future hiring decisions.

Though all members on the MACUHO listserv are receiving this invitation, data is requested only from institutional representatives who are in a position to access first-time RA files or records. Participation is voluntary, and you may stop participating at any point without any penalty to yourself or your institution. The amount of time involved for you to participate will vary according to ease of access to your institutional data and the number of first-time RAs employed during the semesters being studied. In order to protect your confidentiality, you may opt to submit your response anonymously. In order to maintain the anonymity of your RAs, no part of this survey requests information that could be used to personally identify any individual RA. No additional personal identifiers of RAs should be returned to the researcher in any form, and no personal identifiers of RAs will be included in the master database I will compile. By responding to this survey, you are voluntarily consenting to participate and agree that you understand the study.

In recognition of efforts of those who respond, the study results will be shared immediately at the conclusion of the study with those who request them. Results for individual institutions will be provided to respondents only and to no other institution or individual, and aggregate results will be disseminated without identification of participating or non-participating institutions.

If you are ready to dive in and provide data from your institution, you can get started here. To request more information about participating, complete a very brief survey here and I will respond to your request immediately.

This study has been reviewed by the Frostburg State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB); a copy of the approval form is available on request. Any questions or concerns about the conduct of the research may be directed to Dr. Beth Scarloss, Chair of the IRB at 301-687-4472 or IRB@frostburg.edu, or to Dr. Kelly Hall, Faculty/Research Advisor, at kshall@frostburg.edu or 301-687-7419.

Dana A. Severance, Doctoral Candidate

Director of Residence Life

Frostburg State University

dseverance@frostburg.edu

301-697-9157

Appendix B – Survey

[Exit this survey](#)

STUDY OF FIRST-TIME RA PERFORMANCE

Introduction

Thank you for joining your MACUHO colleagues in a study of first-time RA performance. The results of this study will ultimately assist housing professionals in making data-informed hiring decisions that will maximize the likelihood of an RA's success on the job.

The study will explore differences between the performance evaluations of first-time sophomore and non-sophomore resident assistants following their first semester of service. Data may be provided from Fall 2013, Fall 2014 or both. Submissions are requested by July 29, 2015 (except by special request for extension).

Beware: This is not your everyday survey and requires some preparation. I'll be asking you to gather information, either from your hard-copy filing cabinet or your electronic storage, about your recent first-time RAs and their first-semester evaluation scores. This preparation may take some time but is crucial to the value of your data submission.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may exit the survey at any time without penalty. As a respondent, you are not required to provide any personally identifying information about yourself. However, this leaves some risk that duplicate evaluations of first-time RAs could be submitted by an institution. Please safeguard against this by consulting with your institutional colleagues before submitting data.


*** What would you like to do next?**

☐ Exit the survey

☐ Continue with the survey

☐ Contact the researcher for clarification

Next



Exit this survey

STUDY OF FIRST-TIME RA PERFORMANCE

Preparing to Respond

Gather your RA evaluation data prior to beginning your response

The study requests performance evaluation scores for first-time resident assistants following their first semester of service in either Fall, 2013 or Fall, 2014. If your institution does not record evaluation scores following only one semester of service, you are ineligible to participate.

First, locate the file folder or electronic location containing the first-time RAs' evaluation data. You will be asked for the following information:

- 1) RA's **class standing** at the start of service - specifically, sophomore or non-sophomore (junior, senior, or graduate student);
- 2) RA's **self-identified gender** at the time of the evaluation period - specifically, female, male, or transgender;
- 3) The **predominant class standing of the residents** served by the RA during the evaluation period - specifically, 50% or more first-year students or 50% or more upper-class students;
- 4) RA's **employment status** following the evaluation period:
 - o *terminated* (left the RA position due to poor performance, either before or after the evaluation period);
 - o *resigned* (did not complete the first semester of service, or resigned immediately after the first semester of their own accord);
 - o *probation* (served as an RA under specific academic or performance-related conditions); or
 - o *continuing* (served as an RA for all or part of the following semester).

Please click "next" for more information about the data needed to complete this survey

Prev

Next

STUDY OF FIRST-TIME RA PERFORMANCE

Preparing to Respond, continued

In addition to the demographic information for each RA, you'll be asked for performance evaluation for each first-time RA in five categories: Relationship with residents, community development, programming, administration, and relationships with staff.

Your evaluation forms are *probably* not categorized *exactly* that way. Therefore, you will need to look over each RA's evaluation and use your judgement to determine an overall score in *each* of these categories. Below, I list synonyms for each of the five categories to assist you in recoding your evaluation form headings:

- o **Relationships with residents** (communication skills, resolves conflicts, makes individual contact with residents, availability, helping skills, knows residents, inclusive, welcomes diversity, listening skills, accessibility, approachability, counseling skills, outreach, student conduct, confrontation, enforces policy, adheres to policies, duty rounds/on call, crisis management, stays calm, emergency procedures);
- o **Community development** (role model, balances responsibilities, academic development, is known to students);
- o **Programming** (distributes information, bulletin boards, campus resource, referrals, posts notices, hall council/activity board support, creativity, collaboration, passive programming);
- o **Administration** (timeliness, attendance at meetings, time management, accuracy, check in/check out, front desk expectations, punctuality, organizational skills, follow through, paperwork, incident report writing), and
- o **Relationships with staff** (informs supervisor, positive attitude, supports/mentors other staff, active engagement in meetings, accepts feedback, supports other staff, supports department mission, responds to requests, training involvement, leadership).

These criteria require you to report the RA's performance score according to a four-point scale: did not meet expectations; needs improvement, meets expectations, or exceeds expectations. If you used a different scale on your evaluation forms, please use your best judgement to select one of these four options in each case.

If your records do not contain the requested information, you may skip any drop-down question for any or all RAs.

You may come back and refer these descriptions at any time, without losing any data that you enter (until you come to the end of the survey and click "Done").

*** Now that you know what you'll need, what would you like to do next?**

- ☐ I have my RA data ready. Take me to the survey!
- ☐ I'm going to need more time to get my RA data ready. I'll come back when I have it together.
- ☐ I would like clarification from the researcher.

Prev

Next



Exit this survey

STUDY OF FIRST-TIME RA PERFORMANCE

Your Institutional Characteristics

Institution Type

Capacity of on-campus housing

* What would you like to do next?

- ☐ Exit the survey
- ☐ Continue with the survey
- ☐ Contact the researcher for clarification

Prev

Next

Please enter information requested for as many first-time RAs as you hired for Fall 2013 and/or Fall 2014. If your records do not contain the requested information, you may skip any drop-down question for any or all RAs. Please note: If an RA was not evaluated due to early termination for any reason, please complete only the first four columns, leaving the other columns blank.

	RA's class standing	RA's Gender identity	Predominant class standing of RA's residents	Employment status following first evaluation period	Performance rating: Relationships with residents	Performance rating: Community Development	Performance rating: Programming	Performance rating: Administration	Performance rating: Relationships with staff
RA 1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 5	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 6	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 7	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 8	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 9	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 10	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 11	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 12	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 13	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 14	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 15	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 16	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 17	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 18	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 19	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
RA 20	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Though you may *not* save this survey once you have begun, you may submit what data you have entered and return to complete an additional survey at a later time, as long as you are extremely careful not to report any individual RA's data more than once.

* Do you have data for additional RAs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Prev

Next

STUDY OF FIRST-TIME RA PERFORMANCE

Thank you for your time and effort



MACUHO

National Association of Colleges & University Housing Officers

Thank you for your time and effort!

If you need more time to collect your RA information, you may return at any time.

If you have requested more information about the study, I will contact you shortly.

If you have submitted data and wish to receive an analysis of the results for your institution's RAs, please add your name, institution, and email address to the comment box below.

Any additional comments?

Prev

Done

SurveyMonkey®

PREVIEW & TEST

Get Feedback

Appendix C – Institutional Review Board Approval



One University. A World of Experiences.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)
PORT LIBRARY
101 BRADDOCK ROAD
FROSTBURG, MD 21532-2303
T 301.687.7097
F 301.687.7098
E-MAIL: irb@frostburg.edu

To: Dana Severance
From: Beth Scarloss, IRB Chair
Date: Tuesday, June 09, 2015
Subject: Notice of Protocol Review

We have received your human research protocol application and reviewed it.
Thank you for submitting this proposal in compliance with FSU and USM policy.

Title: : Predictive value of performance criteria for first-time sophomore resident assistants

Number Assigned: H2015-030

Received on: 4/16/2015

The Institutional Review Board has determined that the research you describe in your application qualifies as research that is exempt from the Code of Federal Regulations (45 CFR 46) under §46.101(b). As long as you follow the protocol described in your submission, no further action on your part is necessary at this time. You will be reminded annually to submit a statement confirming that this research a) is ongoing or b) has been terminated.

If you make substantial changes to this project or begin another research project involving human participants, the IRB will be required to review that project, as well.

We greatly appreciate your cooperation with the IRB. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at IRB@Frostburg.edu.

Reviewer Comments:
(None)

Appendix D – Master Data Set

Coding of Variables

Class	RA class standing	0 = non-sophomore 1 = sophomore
Gender	Includes transgender, but no records	0 = female 1 = male
Commun	Predominant class standing of residents on RA's assigned floor/community	0 = mostly first year 1 = mostly upper-class
Job_Status	Job status of RA following first semester of service	0 = terminated 1 = resigned 2 = probation 3 = continuing

Relate_Res	relationship with residents	0 = did not meet requirement
Comm_Dev	community development	1 = needs improvement
Program	programming	2 = meets requirement
Admin	administration	3 = exceeds requirement
Relate_Staff	relationship with staff	

Inst_Type	Type of four-year institution	0 = public
		1 = private

Inst_Occ	On-campus housing capacity	0 = less than 500
		1 = 501-751
		2 = 751-1000
		3 = 1001-1500
		4 = 1501-2000
		5 = 2001-3000
		6 = 3001-4000
		7 = 4001-6000
		8 = greater than 6000

<i>RA</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Commun</i>	<i>Job_Status</i>	<i>Relate_Res</i>	<i>Comm_Dev</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Relate_Staff</i>	<i>Inst_Type</i>	<i>Inst_Occ</i>
101	1	1	0	3	2	3	2	3	2	0	7
104	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
105	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	0	7
106	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	0	7
107	1	1	0	3	2	2	3	3	2	0	7
109	1	0	0	3	1	2	2	2	1	0	7
110	1	0	0	3	3	3	2	2	1	0	7
111	1	1	0	3	2	2	1	2	2	0	7
112	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
113	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
114	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
115	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
119	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
123	1	1	0	3	2	2	1	1	2	0	7
125	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
127	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
128	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	0	7
130	1	0	0	3	2	2	3	2	2	0	7
131	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	1	0	7
132	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
133	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
134	1	0	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	0	7
135	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	0	7
136	1	0	0	3	3	3	2	2	2	0	7
137	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	3	3	0	7
138	1	1	0	3	2	2	3	2	2	0	7
139	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	3	3	0	7
140	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
141	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
142	1	1	0	3	2	3	3	3	3	0	7
145	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
146	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	3	2	0	7
147	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	3	2	0	7
149	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
150	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
151	1	1	0	3	2	2	3	3	2	0	7
152	1	1	0	3	2	2	3	3	2	0	7
153	1	0	0	3	1	2	2	1	2	0	7
154	1	0	0	3	3	3	2	3	3	0	7
155	1	1	0	3	2	2	1	2	2	0	7
156	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
157	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
158	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
159	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
202	1	0	0	3	2	3	3	3	3	0	8
205	1	1	0	3	2	3	3	3	3	0	8

RA	Class	Gender	Commun	Job_Status	Relate_Res	Comm_Dev	Program	Admin	Relate_Staff	Inst_Type	Inst_Occ
207	1	0	0	3	3	2	2	3	3	0	8
208	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	8
209	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	0	8
210	1	0	0	1	3	3	3	2	2	0	8
211	1	0	1	3	2	1	2	2	2	0	8
304	1	0	0	3	3	3	2	2	3	0	8
306	1	1	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	8
307	1	1	0	3	1	2	2	2	2	0	8
310	1	1	0	3	3	3	2	2	3	0	8
314	1	1	0	3	3	2	2	2	3	0	8
316	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	8
318	1	0	0	2	2	2	1	2	2	0	8
401	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	4
402	1	0	0	3	2	2	3	2	2	0	4
403	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
404	1	0	1	3	1	2	2	2	2	0	4
405	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
406	1	1	0	1	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
408	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	4
409	1	1	0	1	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
411	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	4
412	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
414	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
416	1	0	1	3	1	2	2	2	2	0	4
418	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	0	4
419	1	0	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	0	4
420	1	0	1	3	2	3	3	3	2	0	4
421	1	0	1	3	2	3	2	2	2	0	4
424	1	0	0	3	1	2	2	2	1	0	4
425	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
426	1	1	0	3	1	2	2	2	2	0	4
429	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
430	1	0	1	3	3	2	2	2	2	0	4
431	1	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
432	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
433	1	1	0	1	2	1	1	2	2	0	4
434	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
435	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
436	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
439	1	0	1	3	3	3	2	3	2	0	4
440	1	0	1	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	4
503	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
505	1	1	0	3	1	1	0	0	1	1	5
506	1	1	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	5
508	1	1	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	1	5
509	1	0	0	3	2	3	3	3	2	1	5

<i>RA</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Commun</i>	<i>Job_Status</i>	<i>Relate_Res</i>	<i>Comm_Dev</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Relate_Staff</i>	<i>Inst_Type</i>	<i>Inst_Occ</i>
510	1	1	0	3	2	3	3	2	2	1	5
511	1	0	0	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	5
512	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
514	1	0	0	3	2	3	3	3	2	1	5
520	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	5
523	1	0	0	3	3	3	2	3	3	1	5
525	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	5
527	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	5
528	1	0	0	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	5
532	1	1	1	3	2	2	3	1	2	1	5
533	1	1	1	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	5
534	1	0	0	3	3	2	3	2	3	1	5
535	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	1	2	1	5
539	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
540	1	1	1	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	5
543	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
549	1	1	0	3	3	3	2	3	3	1	5
550	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
556	1	1	0	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
561	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	5
570	1	0	0	3	2	3	3	3	3	1	5
571	1	1	0	3	3	3	1	3	3	1	5
574	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
601	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	4
603	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	4
607	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	4
608	1	1	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	4
609	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	4
610	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	4
611	1	0	1	3	3	2	2	2	3	1	4
612	1	1	1	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	4
613	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	4
614	1	1	0	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	4
615	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	4
616	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	4
617	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	4
619	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	4
620	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	4
621	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	4
622	1	1	0	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	4
701	1	0	0	3	3	3	2	3	3	0	4
702	1	0	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	0	4
703	1	0	0	3	3	2	3	2	3	0	4
704	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	0	4
706	1	0	1	3	3	3	2	3	3	0	4
708	1	1	0	3	2	1	1	2	2	0	4

<i>RA</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Commun</i>	<i>Job_Status</i>	<i>Relate_Res</i>	<i>Comm_Dev</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Relate_Staff</i>	<i>Inst_Type</i>	<i>Inst_Occ</i>
709	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	1	3	0	4
710	1	0	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	0	4
711	1	0	1	3	2	1	2	2	3	0	4
713	1	1	1	3	2	3	2	2	3	0	4
714	1	1	0	3	2	3	3	2	2	0	4
715	1	1	0	3	2	2	3	2	2	0	4
716	1	0	0	3	2	2	1	1	2	0	4
717	1	1	0	3	3	2	2	2	1	0	4
719	1	0	1	3	2	3	3	3	2	0	4
722	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
723	1	1	1	0	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
724	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	0	4
725	1	0	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
726	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
727	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	1	2	0	4
801	1	1	0	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	5
802	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	1	5
806	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
809	1	0	0	3	3	2	3	3	3	1	5
810	1	0	0	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	5
901	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	5
902	1	0	0	3	1	2	2	1	2	0	5
903	1	1	0	2	3	3	3	0	0	0	5
904	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	0	5
905	1	0	0	1	2	2	2	1	3	0	5
1006	1	0	0	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	5
1007	1	0	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	1	5
1008	1	1	0	3	3	3	2	3	3	1	5
1009	1	1	0	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	5
1010	1	1	0	3	2	3	2	3	3	1	5
1011	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	3	1	1	5
1012	1	1	0	0	3	3	2	1	1	1	5
1013	1	0	0	0	3	3	3	2	2	1	5
1014	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	5
1015	1	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1016	1	1	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1017	1	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1018	1	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1019	1	1	0	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	5
1025	1	0	0	3	3	2	3	3	3	1	5
1026	1	0	1	3	2	2	3	3	3	1	5
1027	1	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1029	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
1030	1	1	0	0	1	1	3	1	1	1	5
1031	1	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1034	1	1	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5

<i>RA</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Commun</i>	<i>Job_Status</i>	<i>Relate_Res</i>	<i>Comm_Dev</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Relate_Staff</i>	<i>Inst_Type</i>	<i>Inst_Occ</i>
1036	1	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1037	1	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	1	5
1041	1	1	0	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	5
1042	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1043	1	1	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1044	1	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
102	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
103	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
108	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
116	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
117	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	0	7
118	0	0	0	3	2	2	1	2	2	0	7
120	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	3	2	0	7
121	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	3	3	0	7
122	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
124	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
126	0	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	0	7
129	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
143	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
144	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	7
148	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	3	2	0	7
160	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	3	3	0	7
161	0	0	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	0	7
201	0	0	1	3	2	3	3	3	3	0	8
203	0	0	0	3	2	3	3	3	3	0	8
204	0	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	8
206	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	8
212	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	8
213	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	8
301	0	0	0	1	3	2	2	3	3	0	8
302	0	1	0	3	2	1	1	2	3	0	8
303	0	0	0	3	1	2	1	2	2	0	8
305	0	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	8
308	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	2	0	8
309	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	3	2	0	8
311	0	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	8
312	0	1	0	3	1	2	2	2	1	0	8
313	0	0	0	3	3	2	2	2	2	0	8
315	0	1	0	3	3	3	3	2	3	0	8
317	0	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	8
319	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	0	8
407	0	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
410	0	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	0	4
413	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
415	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
417	0	0	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	0	4

<i>RA</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Commun</i>	<i>Job_Status</i>	<i>Relate_Res</i>	<i>Comm_Dev</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Relate_Staff</i>	<i>Inst_Type</i>	<i>Inst_Occ</i>
422	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
423	0	0	0	3	2	3	3	2	2	0	4
427	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
428	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4
437	0	1	0	3	3	3	2	3	2	0	4
438	0	0	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	0	4
501	0	1	0	1	3	3	1	3	2	1	5
502	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	3	2	1	5
504	0	0	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	5
507	0	1	1	1	3	3	3	2	3	1	5
513	0	0	1	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	5
516	0	1	0	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	5
517	0	0	1	3	3	2	2	2	3	1	5
518	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
519	0	0	0	3	2	3	3	1	2	1	5
524	0	0	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	5
526	0	0	1	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	5
529	0	1	0	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	5
530	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
531	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	3	2	1	5
536	0	1	0	1	3	1	2	1	3	1	5
537	0	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
541	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
544	0	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
546	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
547	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
548	0	1	0	3	3	3	1	3	3	1	5
551	0	0	0	1	3	3	2	2	3	1	5
552	0	0	1	3	2	3	2	2	3	1	5
555	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
557	0	1	0	3	3	2	2	2	3	1	5
558	0	1	0	3	3	2	3	2	3	1	5
559	0	0	1	1	2	3	3	3	2	1	5
560	0	1	0	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	5
562	0	0	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	5
563	0	0	1	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	5
564	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	1	2	1	5
565	0	0	0	3	3	3	1	2	3	1	5
566	0	1	1	3	3	2	2	3	3	1	5
569	0	1	1	3	2	3	2	3	2	1	5
572	0	1	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
602	0	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	4
604	0	1	0	3	3	3	2	1	3	1	4
606	0	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	4
618	0	0	0	3	3	2	2	3	3	1	4
705	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	4

<i>RA</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Commun</i>	<i>Job_Status</i>	<i>Relate_Res</i>	<i>Comm_Dev</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Relate_Staff</i>	<i>Inst_Type</i>	<i>Inst_Occ</i>
707	0	0	0	3	1	1	2	1	2	0	4
712	0	0	1	3	1	3	3	2	2	0	4
718	0	0	1	3	3	3	2	2	3	0	4
720	0	1	1	3	3	2	3	2	2	0	4
721	0	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	0	4
804	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	5
805	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
808	0	1	0	3	3	2	3	3	3	1	5
811	0	1	0	3	2	2	3	2	3	1	5
1001	0	1	1	3	2	3	1	2	3	1	5
1002	0	0	1	3	3	2	1	1	3	1	5
1003	0	1	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1004	0	1	0	3	1	1	0	0	1	1	5
1005	0	1	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1020	0	1	1	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	5
1021	0	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1022	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	3	3	1	5
1023	0	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1024	0	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1028	0	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1032	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
1033	0	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	5
1035	0	1	1	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	5
1038	0	1	1	3	3	3	2	3	3	1	5
1039	0	0	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	5
1040	0	1	0	3	3	3	2	3	3	1	5