

**Peer Academic Leader Agreement**  
Residence Life • Oglethorpe University

**Introduction: What are the Terms of Employment?**

The position of Peer Academic Leader is vital for the Oglethorpe campus community in promoting academic success, personal development, and retention of resident and commuter students. In addition to the information listed below, specific expectations for your community may be set during Peer Academic Leader Training in August.

The following information and dates are what you are accepting as conditions of your employment as a Resident Assistant.

**Calendar of Major Dates in Employment**

In general, Peer Academic Leaders must have no other commitments during residence hall opening and closing, training throughout the year and certain university events.

The major dates for 2013-2014 have been included as an example below. For 2014-2015 new dates will be communicated through the updated PAL agreement.

<b>Training and Recruitment Dates</b>	
Residence Life Student Staff Spring Orientation	April 19-20, 2013
Fall Training	August 11-13, 2013
New Student Move-In	August 15, 2013
Returner Student Move-In	August 17, 2013
Winter Training	January 10-11, 2014
Spring PAL Recruitment	February 1, 2014
<b>Breaks</b>	
Residence Halls close during winter break and all residents including peer academic leaders are expected to vacate the residence halls. Residence Halls remain open during Fall Break, Thanksgiving Break, and Spring Break, but Peer Academic Leaders are not required to remain on campus during these breaks.	

**Residence Life Mission**

<b>Expectation</b>
<b>Residence Life Mission:</b> Read, understand and support the mission of Residence Life at Oglethorpe University. <i>The Office of Residence Life at Oglethorpe University fosters the academic, social, cultural, and personal growth of students in a caring, comfortable, and challenging residential community of diverse students.</i>

**Personal Academic Success**

<b>Expectation</b>
<b>Agreement:</b> Maintain the PAL position as the primary responsibility outside of academic pursuits
<b>Academic Good Standing:</b> Peer Academic Leaders must maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA in order to remain employed. If the semester Grade Point Average falls below a 3.0 and the cumulative Grade Point Average stays above a 3.0 then the staff member will be required to complete an academic plan with his/her supervisor and will be placed on probationary status. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the cumulative Grade Point Average falls below a 3.0 then the staff member will not be allowed to be on staff.</li> <li>Students hired with a GPA below a 3.3 will be required to complete an academic action plan with his/her supervisor and will be placed on probationary status.</li> </ul>
<b>Grade Checks:</b> Student staff's grades will be checked at the end of each semester to make sure that the staff is in good standing according to the academic requirements held by the department. Should a student not reach the minimum GPA either semester or cumulative he/she will be placed on academic probation. If a staff member fails to raise his/her cumulative and semester GPA above the minimum GPA requirement, he/she may be terminated.
<b>Other Job/Other Commitment Policy:</b> A Peer Academic Leader may not hold other employment off campus or engage in any type of solicitation or sale for any profit-making organization or business without permission from his/her supervisor. The supervisor may approve a maximum of 10 hours per week of on campus employment. While involvement in other campus activities is encouraged, it is expected that the PAL position be your first priority outside of your direct academic program. In other words we expect your priorities to be in this order... 1) Academics 2) PAL Position 3) Other activities.

**Academic Development and Retention**

<b>Expectation</b>
<b>Community:</b> Take primary responsibility for providing academic advising and assistance for students in the residential



<p>community and commuter students, creating educational programming, and addressing academic issues, needs, or concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is aware of students who may need assistance in their academics. Communicates with Residence Life and Campus Life professional staff about all such situations.</li> <li>• Takes initiative in establishing relationships and in communicating with all students, especially new residents and commuter students.</li> <li>• Checks in with students in residence community to track their academic progress</li> <li>• Provides academic programs for residence and commuter students. Each staff members will be responsible for programming as stipulated by the programing model outlined in the staff manual.</li> <li>• Attends and assists with campus wide programs. This includes, but is not limited to, New Student Orientation, Oglethorpe Day, Boar’s Head, Honors and Awards, and Homecoming.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relationship Building and Availability:</b> Ensure residents understand my role and function as a PAL and establish a relationship that makes residents feel comfortable approaching me with thoughts and concerns. Be available and accessible to residents, spend adequate time in assigned buildings, and regularly interact with the building community.</p>
<p><b>Role model:</b> Serve as a role model at all times and will not participate in any activity that would disrupt the harmonious environment, both the staff and in the community as a whole. Will use all internet and computer related communications (ie. Facebook) in an appropriate manner.</p>
<p><b>Confidentiality:</b> Assist residents with personal, relational, social, cultural, emotional, and academic concerns while ensuring confidentiality, sharing with Assistant Director, and referring students to appropriate resources. This includes recognizing current and potential problems.</p>
<p><b>Programming:</b> Plan and implement programs as outlined by the programming model in the Residence Life Student Staff Manual and as a part of community development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempt to recognize the academic needs and issues of residents and commuter students, encourage engagement in academic studies, and promote interaction with Academic Success Center</li> </ul>
<p><b>Academic Mentor:</b> Serve as an academic mentor for residents and commuter students. Listen to concerns, refer to appropriate resources on campus, encourage residents to develop appropriate study habits, and empower them to find solutions for academic issues.</p>
<p><b>Residence Hall Association:</b> Support and attend programs planned by Residence Hall Association.</p>

**Role Modeling**

Expectation
<p><b>Behavioral Good Standing:</b> Maintain good conduct standing with Oglethorpe University as reported through Student Conduct. Understand that Residence Life may conduct checks on my status through the conduct system. Agree to inform residence life immediately if facing student conduct or legal proceedings that could affect my employment.</p>
<p><b>Respect:</b> Take a responsible and active role in the hall and campus community and treat all members of the community and others with respect. Demonstrate investment in the overall growth and welfare of each resident.</p>
<p><b>Multiculturalism:</b> Be respectful of others’ difference and ethnic/cultural backgrounds.</p>
<p><b>Community Safety:</b> Will not be involved in any actions that may cause harm or potential harm to another individual or cause an individual to believe that harm may come to her/him and/or disrupt the Oglethorpe Community.</p>
<p><b>Alcohol and Other Drugs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will not consume alcohol or other drugs while on duty or performing other duties in relation to my PAL position.</li> <li>• Will not consume alcohol or other drugs with underage staff members or students</li> <li>• Role model appropriate behavior for all student and other staff members when consuming alcohol; if of legal drinking age.</li> <li>• Illegal and/or irresponsible behaviors that include the use of alcohol or drugs on or off campus may affect my status as a Peer Academic Leader and lead to termination.</li> </ul>

**Policy Enforcement and Crisis Management**

Expectation
<p><b>Confronting Behavior:</b> Assists the Division of Campus Life and Campus Safety in the prevention, investigation, and reporting of misconduct and damage to property. Incident reports must be filed the following morning by 8:30 a.m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confront inappropriate behavior in a respectful, assertive, and responsible manner.</li> <li>• Make students aware of their roles and responsibilities in the community, explaining and utilizing the Residence Life Policies and other relevant information found in the Honor Code and the University Bulletin.</li> <li>• Protects the rights and freedoms of individuals against violations, i.e. noise and disturbances, unauthorized persons in residence life areas, etc.</li> <li>• Uphold all laws, policies, and procedures of the State of Georgia, Oglethorpe University, and Residence Life</li> </ul>



Policies consistently, and without bias or malice.

**Communication and Administration**

**Expectation**

**Open Communication:** Serves as a liaison between residential students and other University areas (Academic Success Center, Counseling, Campus Safety, etc.) and makes referrals to appropriate campus resources.

- Maintain ongoing communication with your supervisor, fellow staff members, and other residence life staff members. This includes, but is not limited to, checking your staff mailbox, phone messages, and campus e-mail messages on a daily basis.
- Submits material to be included in the monthly Residence Life newsletter
- Communicates feelings and desires of Residence Life Staff to the students in a positive manner.

**Positive Attitude:** Maintain a positive and open relationship with my supervisor, fellow staff members and residence life staff. Address any conflict directly, openly and honestly.

**Meetings:** Attend all meetings required by supervisor and participate in each with a positive attitude and openness to learning.

- Attend bi-weekly one-on-one meetings with supervisor.
- Attend weekly Residence Life Area Staff meetings
- Attend Monthly Residence Life All Staff Meetings

**Academic Reporting:** Communicates any issue of academic concerns to supervisor in order to enhance academic success and retention of all students. Report all students that are at high risk of being put on academic probation to Residence Life supervisor.

**Training**

Training for Peer Academic Leaders is comprehensive and varied. Additional on-the-job training occurs all year long.

**Expectation**

**Fall PAL Training:** All Peer Academic Leaders are required to participate in Fall PAL training. PALs will return to the assigned community by the designated time indicated in this agreement and participate fully in all training activity. Fall training will be a very busy time with early morning, day, and late evening commitments.

**Spring 2015 Mid-Year Training:** Will return on the dates outlined in this agreement to participate in training workshops facilitated by the Assistant Director and professional residence life staff.

**Staff Meetings:** Will attend Staff Meetings and additional training opportunities that occur during the All Staff Meeting Time on Monday's from 6:30pm-8:30pm.

**Remuneration**

**Expectation**

**Peer Academic Leader:** Compensation is \$1,000 towards room and board

**\*\*This list is subject to be changed or updated as needed (especially during the summer as the Department of Residence Life plans for the upcoming year).  
PALs will be Notified of All updates in advance.**