

# Community Academic Mentor Position Description

University Student Housing  
Texas Tech University

## General Description

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University Student Housing Promotes *Each Student's Learning Experience* by creating supporting living environments for academic and personal success. University Student Housing will be a catalyst for student success that provides valuable learning experiences that recruit, retain, and support students through graduation. Our services, programs, activities, facilities, and staff will provide the foundation for learning and success.

A Community Academic Mentor (CAM), as an educator, works to provide direction for student learning and academic success while assisting with the coordination of the administrative and programmatic facets for a living learning community. A CAM will have direct responsibility for approximately 20 students and indirect responsibility for a community from 50-100 students. A CAM focuses on the development of a comfortable living and learning community that fosters academic success and community living. In addition, the CAM assists individuals with their personal needs and concerns.

The CAM is primarily involved in the facilitation of the IS 1100 or other seminar course attached to the Freshmen Interest Group (FIG). The CAM works directly with the faculty co-facilitator to develop the curriculum of the seminar. The curriculum should focus on the theme of the FIG and the needs of first-year students. They collaborate with students, professional staff, co-facilitators and stakeholders within the learning community.

The CAM is a student who is employed by University Student Housing to serve as a live-in member of the Residence Life staff. The CAM works with the Residence Life Professional Staff in establishing a positive living and learning environment for students. The CAM's immediate supervisor is a Professional staff member in their area or building. The CAM is expected to work an average of 20 hours per week, including, but not limited to preparing and assisting with IS 1100, academic programming, participation in stakeholder meetings and participation with the Academic Initiatives committee. How the CAM fulfills the requirement varies and is based upon a number of factors such as community needs, level of community activity and leadership, the number of staff members in the community and departmental processes.

## Essential Functions

The essential functions of the CAM position include the ability to: read reports; gather and compile information for reports, including assessments; perform cash transactions; distribute mail and packages; issue keys and equipment; communicate effectively with residents, staff, and guests; prepare written memorandums, documents, and forms; direct and respond to fire alarms; monitor physical conditions of all residence hall facilities; ascend and descend multiple flights of stairs; and operate a manual key lock system.

## Responsibilities

The CAM is responsible to a Residence Life Professional Staff Member and is expected to fulfill duties as assigned. Following are some of the specific responsibilities a CAM assumes while working within a particular residence hall or complex:

During the fall semester the CAM is expected to work an average of 20 hours per week, including, but not limited to preparing and assisting with IS 1100, academic programming, participating in stakeholder meetings and participating in Academic Initiatives committee meetings. During the spring semester, the CAM is expected to work an average of 20 hours per week, including but not limited to academic programming, fulfilling Educational Curriculum requirements, participating in stakeholder meetings and

Achievement • Civility • Character • Engagement • Independence

Academic Initiatives committee meetings, fulfilling dedication responsibilities, working 3 hours at the hall office, and 3 hours of tutoring for FIG and residence hall students.

**Achievement** is central to the student experience in college in order to be successful in their academic learning. CAM's will help students develop a sense of pride, excellence, and aspiration in order to help students take charge of their own learning throughout college and life. The CAM will strive to create opportunities, experiences, and resources to assist students in areas of academic and personal achievement such as study skills, career development, goal setting, and time management. The CAM will accomplish this through:

- Collaborating with the Community Advisor (CA) to assess and meet the needs of residents
- Collaborating with faculty to teach a first-year experience course (IS 1100) focusing on skills that will help students become successful in their college careers
- Becoming familiar with the FIG co-enrolled course curriculum and the faculty members (attend co-enrolled courses at least once per semester, introduce themselves to the faculty member, etc)
- Creating and presenting activities relating to their FIG theme and learning community inclusive of faculty and academic support staff (study groups, review sessions, etc)
- Providing learning experience to identify skills, strengths, and interests (Strengths Quest)
- Promoting a living-learning environment that is safe, supportive and conducive to student learning
- Meeting with students to develop personal, academic and career goals
- Planning programs/events for residents of the complex focusing on achievement.

**Civility** is important for college students to develop in order to participate as positive, active members of any community. CAM's will provide experiences and skill development for students in their FIG that will further develop them as a civil minded person. The CAM, in collaboration with the CA, will accomplish this through:

- Developing a community that is inclusive of all members where students can engage in respectful dialogue with one other and live in a learning supportive environment
- Demonstrating, teaching and facilitating appropriate conflict management skills
- Creating and presenting activities regarding different lifestyles, racial and ethnic backgrounds, morals, and genders
- Promoting a living environment that is respectful of diverse ideas and perspectives
- Identifying and addressing issues of stereotyping, discrimination, and inequality
- Upholding residence hall policies and promoting community standards

**Character** enables students to build the strong foundation necessary to make decisions based upon their values and beliefs. The CAM is instrumental in helping students develop a strong character focused on integrity and ethics through identifying an individual's values and beliefs. The college experience offers many opportunities for students to define who they are and what they want to become. The CAM will help provide opportunities to identify principles that will help guide their future decisions and develop a strong character. The CAM, in collaboration with the CA, will accomplish this through:

- Facilitating activities and discussion regarding ethical behavior within particular professional fields and society
- Assisting students in identifying, understanding, and articulating their values, beliefs, and morals
- Encouraging student involvement in valuing and upholding academic integrity within themselves and their peers in and outside the classroom
- Serving as a positive academic role model
- Understanding and promoting the University's Code of Conduct and University Student Housing policies and procedures

- Encouraging student responsibility in understanding and accepting the consequences of one's own actions and decisions
- Preparing and assisting students in setting reasonable goals
- Providing experiences and feedback to assist students in developing a student's decision making skills

**Engagement** within one's community is important in order to learn the skills that are necessary to be an active citizen of any community. The CAM is instrumental in promoting a positive environment that provides residents with opportunities to acquire the most from residence life, their academics and their Texas Tech experience. The college experience is a partnership between the student and the University to increase knowledge but also develop essential skills to be a positive member of society. The ideal hall environment cannot be dictated by anyone, but must be brought about through engagement and mutual cooperation of the residents. Providing opportunities for students to become engaged will enhance the experience and transition as an active member of the University, residence hall and floor community. The CAM, in collaboration with the CA, will accomplish this through:

- Providing social and educational activities that align with the educational curriculum
- Promoting campus activities
- Aiding students in seeking out service and leadership opportunities
- Supporting and attending complex council events
- Teaching campus and hall traditions
- Building community on the floor
- Referring and sharing how to utilize campus resources
- Serving as a member of the Learning Community Stakeholder group

**Independence** is an essential skill to develop while in the university environment. The CAM will assist students in developing the skills to make responsible decisions and choices regarding one's health, safety, and personal well-being. CAM's should be a strong role model personally and academically promoting a positive outlook and balanced lifestyle. The CAM, in collaboration with the CA, will accomplish this through:

- Providing assistance to students regarding personal and academic issues
- Empowering and guiding students to make healthy decisions
- Providing support, guidance, and encouragement to student in order to independently resolve personal problems and conflicts
- Being familiar with campus resources and appropriate referral of students in order to make responsible decisions regarding their health, safety, and personal well being.
- Adapting a "friendly but firm" customer service policy, which supports students but helps them gain experience that will help them outside the residence hall (contributes to their developmental growth)
- Advocating and role modeling safe personal behaviors and actions

**Administrative Tasks and Procedures:** The CAM is required to assist in the various administrative functions of the residence hall and the IS 1100 course. It is essential to the residence hall operations and support of students to keep the Residence Life Professional Staff informed of any significant incidents or plans and to assist them in certain administrative details. These may include:

- Preparing and maintaining reports and records as required by the Professional Staff
- Participating in required meetings and staff development activities
- Holding office hours in room/study lounge
- Assisting with dedication rounds on a rotating basis in hall/complex.
- Reporting necessary maintenance issues to facilities management

- Responding to and following up on disciplinary and emergency/crisis situations.
- Knowing and communicating proper emergency procedures for resident safety
- Participating in departmental processes such as Student Staff Selection Processes, Professional Staff Selection Process, and Housing Contract Renewals
- Performing and assisting with other duties as assigned, requested, and delegated

### Qualifications

CAM applicants should have experience in a university group living environment. Applicants should be capable of handling responsibility and have demonstrated high academic ability. Sensitivity to students' growth and developmental needs in the university and residence halls setting is considered essential. At the time of application, the minimum required employment criteria will include:

- Upon application, a Texas Tech Police Department Criminal Background Check will be performed. Initial employment will be based upon this check.
- CAM's must currently hold a minimum 2.75 semester and 3.0 cumulative grade point average as a full-time student at the time of application.
- They must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 hour undergraduate, 9 hours graduate during their employment.
- Must be in academic and judicial good standing with the University and University Student Housing
- Preference will be given to those with prior Residence Life experience

The CAM must maintain the standards and minimum requirements associated with the CAM position. Should the CAM fail to maintain these standards, the CAM will not be permitted to transfer into the CA position. At the time of hire, the newly hired CAM must maintain the minimum required employment criteria, which include:

- Must have completed a minimum of 24 total credit hours, with 12 credit hours at Texas Tech.
- Must hold and maintain a 2.75 semester and 3.0 cumulative grade point average as a full-time student enrolled for a minimum of 12 hours undergraduate, 9 hours graduate.
- Must be part of the academic college, department, or program sponsoring the FIG.
- Maximum enrolled credit hours per semester are 16 hours undergraduate and 9 hours graduate. (Exceptions for over 16 undergraduate and 9 graduate hours must be approved by the CAM's immediate supervisor and the Assistant Director).

### Requirements

1. Academic Standing: The CAM must maintain the standards and minimum requirements associated with the CAM position. Should the CAM fail to maintain these standards, the CAM will not be permitted to transfer into the CA position. A CAM must be enrolled as a full-time student and must be in good academic standing. Should a CAM's *semester* grade point average fall below 2.75, while the *cumulative* grade point average is 3.0 or above, the CAM may be placed on probation for one semester. At the end of that semester, the grade requirement must be met to be considered for re-hire. If the *semester* grade point average falls below 2.75 or the *cumulative* GPA falls below 3.0, the CAM will be removed from their position.
2. Student Staff Training: CAM's will be required to return to school and report to their assigned Residence hall/complex for orientation, training and work sessions prior to the beginning of classes each Fall and Spring semester. All CAM's are expected to attend all orientation activities that may occur before their official reporting date. This training takes precedence over any and all extracurricular activities with which a CAM is involved. The CAM is required to be present and on

the job until the halls have been properly closed, inventoried and secured between university breaks, semester and end of the academic year closings.

3. Outside Involvement: Frequently, members of the Residence Life Staff are individuals who are involved in many facets of campus life, leadership, sports, and their student staff position. A University Student Housing staff position demands a significant time and energy commitment that should not detract from student academic performance. Involvement in Residence Life activities such as dedication nights, staff meetings, floor and hall activities, staff training, and quality time with the residents must take priority over other social activities. Normal academic pursuit plus employment as a student staff member is considered a full-time commitment. Therefore, with few exceptions, it is required that CAM's not hold other significant leadership positions, employment or internships outside or within the University and must be approved by the CAM's immediate supervisor.
4. Continuing Education Requirement:
  - a) Weekly Hall Staff Administrative/Development Meetings. On a rotating basis, the staff from each hall will have evening and weekend dedication. Furthermore, the staff of each hall will have weekly meetings with their hall or area professional and student staff. CAM's will also have regular one-on-one meetings with their immediate supervisor and community team members.
  - b) Developments: The CAM's will be required to attend continuing education programs as determined by the their immediate supervisor.
  - c) Meetings/Committees: The CAM's may have the opportunity to serve on committees and departmental task forces.
5. Terms of Employment:
  - a) CAM's are hired on a year-to-year basis: Bi-annual review of job performance by individual supervisors will determine continued employment from one year to the next.
  - b) Resignation of Employment: If at any time during a CAM's employment, he/she chooses to resign his/her position, he/she becomes responsible for his/her housing contract. The board plan cannot be spent more than the prorated amount given during the time of employment.

#### Remuneration

CAM's receive their room and board (when dining halls are in operation) for the academic year. In addition, CAM's receive a stipend each month. This stipend varies according number of years of service (\$140.00, \$155.00, \$170.00) per month. Whenever possible, each CAM will be permitted to occupy a double room as a single. However, University Student Housing may assign roommates if the need arises. Meal plan and housing amounts are prorated should a CAM resign or be separated.

Texas Tech University is committed to the principle that in no aspect of its programs shall there be differences in treatment of persons because of race, creed, national origin, age, sex, or disability, and that equal opportunity and access to facilities shall be available to all.