RESIDENT ADVISOR SELECTION: IS A BROAD MEASURE OF PERSONALITY A GOOD PREDICTOR OF RESIDENT ADVISOR PERFORMANCE?

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ABSTRACT

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Resident advisors (RAs) are the foundation of nearly every residence hall program in the United States (Blimling, 2010). RAs play a pivotal role in the development of the whole student and supporting the educational mission of higher education and selection of the most qualified applicants is imperative to the success of the residence hall program. Although residence life professionals attempt to improve RA selection in hopes of identifying the most qualified students for these roles, researchers have found few proven systematic techniques to select the most qualified candidates for the RA positions. This study sought to examine if the five-factor model of personality was a good predictor of RA performance at one large, rural, public, four-year university in the Midwest. Secondary purposes were to determine if demographic variables affected RA performance. The major variables for this study included gender, class rank, experience as a RA, grade point average, academic major, type of residents, residential learning community, RA evaluation overall and sub-scores, and IPIP-NEO scores. RAs were surveyed to gather demographic and personality information while RA performance data were gathered from existing performance evaluations from their supervisors at the participant institution.

Multiple regressions were conducted using both the International Personality Item Pool – Neuroticism, Openness to Experience, and Extraversion scale and RA performance data. Only openness to experience significantly predicted overall fall RA performance; however, none of the five factors predicted overall spring RA performance. Despite insignificant results related to overall performance, the five-factor model was related significantly to several of the sub-

categories of RA performance (e.g., fall policies and procedures scores). Only grade point average, class rank, RA experience, and the number of residents living on the floor had a large effect size on RA performance after performing several ANOVAs and *t*-tests.

This study differs from past literature that supported the five-factor model as a significant predictor and/or relationship with RA performance because none of the past studies found openness to experience to have a significant relationship with RA performance. Implications of the findings and recommendations for future research are discussed.

This dissertation is dedicated to all of the individuals who have or will take on the resident advisor role.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The founders of Harvard were graduates of the universities at Oxford and Cambridge and they borrowed the concept of residence halls from the British model of higher education (Blimling, 2003). They unfortunately realized early on that they could not afford to replicate the living-learning environments of Oxford and Cambridge. They instead built "dormitories" primarily to provide students with a place to eat and sleep (Greenleaf, Forysthe, Godfrey, Hudson, & Thompson, 1967; Thomas, 1979). It was not until sometime between the late 1940s and mid-1970s that faculty and administrators began to re-examine the role and relationship of residence hall programs play in the total development of the student (Blimling & Miltenberger, 1981). Consequently, residence halls for the first time in the United States were considered a key part in the educational environment for learning. Blimling (2003) argued there are five educational goals for residence halls:

1. to assist students with their personal growth and development;
2. to provide appealing places to live;
3. to offer students as much freedom as possible to allow their room to represent themselves;
4. to teach students tolerance for others, the skills needed for group living, and a sense of responsibility to the community; and
5. to focus the administration's effort towards primarily educational endeavors. (p. 60)

Residence life professionals realized the educational potential of residence halls and increasingly became reliant on student staff to achieve these goals. RAs today still play an instrumental role in achieving the educational potential of residence halls. Wilson and Hirschy (2003) confirmed, "Throughout the United States, resident assistants manage residence hall environments, develop

communities, and contribute to the educational mission of student affairs" (p. 22). Resident advisors (RAs)[1] were and continue to be an essential part of the success of the educational mission of student affairs and higher education.

RAs are the foundation of nearly every residence hall program in the United States (Blimling, 2003). Upcraft, Pilato, and Peterman (1982) confirmed, "The most critical human resource in developing the educational potential of residence halls is the resident assistant, the front-line troops who interact with students and deliver to them direct services, programs, and general assistance" (p. 4). RAs assist resident students through some of the most hectic and emotionally charged situations they may encounter during their college experience (e.g., medical emergency, bad breakup with a significant other, failing grade in a course, or fight with a roommate). They are often the first person many students approach on a college campus when they need emotional support (Elleven, Allen, & Wircenski, 2001). With the pivotal role RAs play in the development of the whole student and supporting the educational mission of higher education, the selection of the most qualified applicants is imperative to the success of the residence hall program.

Statement of Problem

The primary role of the RA is to foster an atmosphere for academic, social, cultural, and emotional growth. The importance of this position is widely accepted by student affairs administrators and selection of the most qualified students to serve in the RA role is a perpetual goal of most residence life practitioners (Jaeger & Caison, 2006). Selection of RAs, nonetheless, is one of the most difficult and time consuming tasks for the majority of residence life

[1] Resident assistant and resident advisor are both common terms for students serving in this role. For the purposes of this paper, resident advisor will be used unless directly quoting from a source.

professionals (German, 1979; Jaeger & Caison, 2006; Ostroth, 1981a; Tibbits, 1977). Jaeger and Caison (2006) explained, "we are still not able to clearly identify, through selection processes, those RAs that will be successful in fulfilling the responsibilities set forth in the RA job description" (p. 146). Delworth, Sherwood, and Casaburri (1974), in particular, stated, "Staffing in college and university residence halls is a primary variable in determining the educational worth of the structure itself" (p. 49). With RAs being an essential part of achieving the educational worth of residence halls, it is imperative that residence life professionals choose effective individuals to serve in these roles.

Wu and Stemler (2008) noted, "Investigating the factors associated with RA performance is critical to help residence life staff in selecting the best candidates for this important position (p. 554). RA selection is essential to the success of these programs. Researchers have studied RA selection for over 60 years. Recent literature on RA selection has been relatively non-existent (Jaeger & Caison, 2006) and conclusions of past research on the topic were inconsistent (Aamodt, Keller, Crawford, & Kimbrough, 1981). Having little conclusive research to reference, residence life professionals have used a trial and error method when selecting RAs. Upcraft and Pilato (1982) agreed, "there are probably as many resident assistant selection processes as there are institutions with resident assistants, and no one institution selects its RAs in the same way from year to year" (p. 16). With no proven method of RA selection across the United States or on any particular campus, the process often changes from year to year.

Purpose of the Study

Those researchers who have explored RA selection have produced studies that are inconsistent at best (see Appendix A for summary). Despite the lack of recent research on RA selection, two methods utilizing measures of personality have shown initial promise on

accurately predicting RA performance. These methods include emotional intelligence (Jaeger & Caison, 2006; Wu & Stemler, 2008) and the five-factor model (Deluga & Masson, 2000; Wu & Stemler, 2008). These two methods both utilize a broad measure of personality as a factor in predicting RA performance. Wu and Stemler (2008), in particular, argued that the International Personality Item Pool-Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Openness to Experience (IPIP-NEO) personality scale better predicted RA performance at one small liberal arts college than emotional intelligence or any other method previously studied in the past. Thus, the five-factor model has potential of predicting RA performance.

The purpose of this study was to examine whether the five-factor model is a good predictor of RA performance at one public four-year university. If IPIP-NEO personality scale is a good predictor of RA performance at one public four-year university, residence life professionals could utilize it as a screening method for selecting the most qualified students for the RA positions at similar departments. At the conclusion of this study, I make recommendations for improving practice for RA selection.

Definitions

For the purpose of this study, I used the following terms and definitions:

Emotional Intelligence - a set of competencies associated with an individual's "ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions, and to effectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 5).

Five-factor model of personality – a broad measure of personality. This model focuses five domains: openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Job performance – behavior that is relevant to the goals of the organization and can be measured in terms of the level of the individuals' contribution to those goals (Campbell, McCoy, Oppler, & Sager, 1993).

Personality – "consistent behavior patterns and intrapersonal processes originating within the individuals" (Burger, 2008, p. 4). "Personality is composed of a variety of traits, or dispositions to behave in certain ways, on which people differ and that these individual differences may be organized hierarchically" (Tokar, Fischer, & Scubich, 1998, p. 116).

Resident advisor or resident assistant – undergraduate or, on occasion graduate, students who serve as role models, counselors, and junior administrators among their peers (Waldeck, 1993). RAs are a crucial point of contact between the university or college student affairs administration and resident students. In common practice, residence life professionals refer to their RAs as the "front line" or the staff "in the trenches," as well as the "best of the best" among student peers (Arvidson, 2003). RAs perform a variety of roles including: (a) policy enforcer, (b) programmer, (c) community builder, (d) administrator, (e) resource referral, (f) role model, (g) friend, (h) mediator, (i) liaison, (j) university representative, (k) transitional agent, (l) academic interventionist, (m) tour guide, (n) advisor to student groups, (o) sibling substitute or surrogate sibling, and (p) agent of the state at public institutions (Blimling, 2010; Crandall, 2004).

Hall director – responsible for the program within a residence hall or more than one residence hall and is, therefore, the immediate supervisors of the RA (Winston & Fitch, 1993).

Residence hall – buildings designed to provide students with affordable, safe, sanitary, and comfortable living accommodations and to promote students' intellectual, social, moral, and physical development (Frederiksen, 1993).

Selection – the process of collecting and evaluating information about an individual in order to extend an offer of employment. Such employment could be either a first position for a new employee or a different position for a current employee. The selection process is performed under legal and environmental constraints and addresses the future of the organization and of the individual (Gatewood & Feild, 2001).

Suite-style residence halls – facilities typically offering three to six bedrooms opening into a small common space and where only the students residing in those bedrooms share a bathroom (Brandon, Hirt, & Cameron, 2008).

Traditional residence halls – housing facilities where typically 30 or more residents share a common bathroom (Brandon et al., 2008).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. Are there significant relationships between fall and spring RA evaluation scores?
2. Is IPIP-NEO a good predictor of RA performance (i.e., fall and spring RA evaluation scores) at one public four-year university?
3. Are there statistically significant differences in fall RA performance evaluation and RAs' IPIP-NEO scores based on descriptive data (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity, class rank, RA experience, self-reported cumulative grade point average, major, type of residents, residential learning communities, hall configuration, and number of residents)?

4. Are there statistically significant differences in spring RA performance evaluations and RAs' IPIP-NEO scores based on descriptive data (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity, class rank, RA experience, self-reported cumulative grade point average, major, type of residents, residential learning communities, hall configuration, and number of residents)?

Significance of the Study

This study provided residence life professionals with insight into a possible method to select the most qualified students for RA positions. Some residence hall programs already utilize personality measures in their selection of RAs and have had varying degrees of success. In doing so, the study identified characteristics that influence fall and spring RA evaluations based upon a variety of descriptive variables. This study helped to fill a gap in literature on RA selection.

Overview of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction to the research project. Chapter two reviews literature related to the history and philosophy of residence halls, the RA position, RA selection and evaluation methods, and the five-factor model. Chapter three describes the methods employed for this quantitative study. I present the results of the study in chapter four. Lastly, chapter five includes conclusions based upon the findings, recommendations, and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Living in residence halls influences students' satisfaction with the collegiate experience (Chickering & Reisser, 1993); academic persistence and completion of the bachelor's degree (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005); and enhancement of academic and social integration (Pascarella, Terenzini, & Blimling, 1994). Berger (1997), in particular, discovered that having a positive sense of residence hall community is an essential precursor to a student's connection to the campus social system as a whole. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) also argued:

> Place of residence has a clear bearing on the extent to which students participate in extracurricular activities, engage in more frequent interactions with peers and faculty members, and report positive perceptions of the campus social climate, satisfaction with their college experience, and greater personal growth and development. (p. 604)

With the RA role being so vital to the success of residential programs enhancing students' academic and interpersonal lives (Aamodt et al., 1981), researchers have studied the RA selection process for over 60 years with inconsistent results. Researchers have found few proven systematic techniques to select the most qualified candidates for RA positions.

History of Residence Hall Programs

Before examining the RA position, some historical influences on the position must be explored to comprehend the nature of these student staff positions. "Residence halls owe their origin to the housing problem created during the Middle Ages by thousands of 'wandering students' flocking to universities in Bologna, Paris, and Oxford" (Blimling, 2010, p. 35). These institutions were in localities that could not provide accommodations for all of the students resulting in students themselves developing the first residence hall programs. "In fact, it is said of more than one university that the number of students was so much in excess of any possible

provision for them that they lived in tents, they camped in the fields, in fact in some places they burrowed into the side of hills" (James, 1917, p. 101). These programs at Bologna and Paris by the 14th century disappeared while Oxford and Cambridge continued the college and residence hall tradition as it became a central aspect of their educational environments.

As graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, the founders of Harvard borrowed from the only model that they were familiar with – the British model of higher education (Blimling, 2003). Despite the British influence on higher education, the founders of Harvard realized mixing extracurricular and classroom experiences were financially impractical (Thomas, 1979). Instead, the fundamental component to the educational experience within Oxford and Cambridge residence halls was missing from early colonial colleges (Delworth et al., 1974; Greenleaf et al., 1967). The localities similar to those in Europe in the 13th century could not accommodate the demand for student housing so universities had to provide housing for students (James, 1917).

As many students during the colonial period were only 13 or 14 years old, faculty who staffed residence halls focused on controlling behavior (Williamson, 1958). Prior to the 1900s, faculty members were legally required to make decisions for students because they were not considered adults. Jackson (1995) confirmed, "Neither children nor men, the students of [early] Harvard hung in a developmental limbo" (p. 10). Early Harvard students required the guidance of administrators and/or faculty because they were considered to be in a developmental limbo. Clarke (1796) noted, "Too young for reflection, and too old for the restraints of fear, they require all the wisdom of [college] government to keep them in tolerable subjection" (p. 27). Williamson (1958) pointed out that the use of residence halls as a means of suppression and behavior control through policing techniques has always produced failure. The use of control of students at early Harvard created a strain on the relationship between students and college

administrators. Gatell (1963) exclaimed, "Academic life became so fraught, that one college proctor took to sleeping with a loaded pistol under his bed in dread anticipation of attempts on his life" (p. 37). Blimling (2010) further argued that the disciplinary conflict between faculty and students was cited as one of the primary reasons residence halls in American colleges never came to serve as the core of the educational programs as they did in England.

Following the Civil War, many German scholars and Americans who trained at German universities joined the faculties of American colleges and universities influencing residence hall programs (Blimling, 2003). By the late 1800s, scholars who trained in German brought back the German model of higher education and began altering the nature of higher education in United States and the humanistic elements of companionship and community attachment that many associate with college life today were absent from most college campuses (Blimling & Miltenberger, 1981). In particular, state universities established by the first *Morrill Act* (1862) "did not accept the responsibility for the domestic interests of students" (Thwing, 1909, p. 34). No longer were residence hall programs an essential part of every college or university because it was the responsibility of students to find their own housing, not the university administration or faculty.

Despite the decline in residence hall programs in the United States during the late 1800s to early 1900s, a few college presidents advocated that residence hall programs maintain what they referred to as the "college spirit" through the first learning communities. Thwing (1909) asserted:

> College spirit, what is it? This is the formula: love of the teacher and student for the college *plus* submission of the individual to the general academic good, *plus* submission by students of the highest ideals, *plus* songs and sports as expressing college devotion –

> those constitute college spirit. College spirit represents men living in close association. To make the fire of college spirit all the pieces of the kindling wood of the student life must lie close together. College spirits make college spirit. (p. 35)

In other words, residence halls were essential to developing college spirit as students lived in close approximately to one another. Those presidents who advocated for the "college spirit" through living learning communities and continued the residence hall tradition included William Rainey Harper at Chicago, Jacob Schurman at Cornell, Woodrow Wilson at Princeton, Abbott Lawrence Lowell at Harvard, and Arthur Hadley at Yale. The efforts of Hadley and Harper, in particular, and the establishment of housing for female students revitalized residence hall programs in early 1900s.

Hadley, despite the decline of residence hall programs, never relinquished the claim that residence halls and their staff influence the high educational value of communal life (Blimling, 2003). Similarly, Harper at the University of Chicago in 1893 constructed four new residence halls at a time when this comprised 53% of the campus buildings (Blimling & Miltenberger, 1981). With the increase in female students attending higher education and concerns for their safety in off-campus housing, college officials started the movement toward building new residence halls (Williamson, 1958). Following World War I, in particular, campus administrators uncovered the deplorable, unsanitary conditions in which students lived at rooming houses adjacent to campus that ultimately resulted in the increase of on-campus housing (Blimling, 2003; Williamson, 1958). Residence hall programs began to emerge once again as a fundamental aspect for most institutions of higher education in the United States.

By the 1920s, many institutions were experiencing overcrowding due to increases in enrollment and as a result, institutional leaders built an extraordinary number of residence halls

to accommodate the increased need for student housing (Blimling, 2003). The educational value of residence halls borrowed from the British model of higher education once again became an essential role of residence hall programs in the United States. Blimling and Miltenberger (1981) explained:

> Though some institutions of higher education attempted to unite the in-class and out-of-class experiences, most never realized this goal. Before 1930, dormitories in America were only living places that provided little more than shelter and varying degrees of social interaction. (p. 15)

Despite the early attempts to create the learning environments of Oxford and Cambridge at early colonial colleges, they were only able to provide shelter. The lack of private gifts and public taxation hindered the goal of a seamless living-learning environment because the focus was on the cost of operations over the educational value of residence halls (Williamson, 1958). Although cost hindered the success of the educational value of many residence hall programs, some made significant progress toward character development and the total education of the student.

Residence hall programs organized around recreational activities began focusing on student life while providing a low cost option for student housing during the 1930s (Williamson, 1958). Between the 1940s and the mid-1970s, higher education reexamined its role and its relationship to the total development of the student (Blimling & Miltenberger, 1981). The end of the proctor system focused on the establishment of the RA role to assist students in the development of desirable social and personality traits (Chapman, 1946). Some residence hall professionals developed leisure-time libraries, offered faculty-led discussions in the halls, and

developed other educational events (McCarn, 1941) that represented elements of a modern day living-learning program.

After World War II, the influx of veterans attending higher education coupled with passage of the *Lanham Act* (1946) and the *Housing Act* (1950) pushed educational leaders to design buildings with a total living-learning concept in mind (Blimling, 2003; McClellan, Cawthon, & Tice, 2001; Thomas, 1979). After the decline of *in loco parentis* ushered by the court ruling in *Dixon v. Alabama State Board of Education* (1961) establishing the due process rights of students, the relationship between students and institutional constituents became essentially contractual (McClellan et al., 2001). Residence life professionals began to become concerned about housing amenities when students started to be treated as consumers rather than children. "As consumers, students could 'vote with their feet' by deciding to live off campus or go to institutions with policies and services they liked better" (McClellan et al., 2001, p. 4). As a result, room temperature, cooking options, and other amenities became increasingly important for housing professionals (McClellan et al., 2001). Residence life professionals as a result began publishing the amenities and policies of residence hall programs so students as adults could make educated decisions about where they wanted to live while at college.

Blimling (2003) noted that in the 1960s, the federal government played a large role in residence hall programs. With the *Higher Education Facilities Act* (1963), colleges and universities gained access to low-interest governmental loans to build residence halls. College officials built many of the high-rise buildings that exist today because of this federal program. These facilities were affordable but were not developed with the total development of the student or facilitation of community in mind. "Among the items that could be funded under this act were building fixtures, defined as any items built-in or otherwise permanently attached to the building

structure" (Blimling, 2010, p. 22). Dressers and even beds were built into the walls and floors because of this act. To repay these federal loans, colleges and universities gained the right to require students to live on-campus during their first two-years with the ruling of *Prostrollo v. University of South Dakota* (1974). Officials at the University of South Dakota originally unsuccessfully argued that students during the first two-years of college must reside on campus to ensure that enough money was generated to pay the bond obligations. It was not until the appeal hearing when the university emphasized the educational programs and benefits of living within the residence halls that the court reversed the decision (Blimling, 2003).

By the late 1960s, student development theorists (e.g., Chickering, Perry, and Kohlberg) influenced the nature of residence hall programs (McClellan et al., 2001). Student-centered programs were created as a result of residence life professionals treating students as adults and focusing on the development of the total student (McClellan et al., 2001). Some of the programs that were developed or altered during this time included peer conduct boards, room and hall personalization programs, residence hall governments, and RA programming. Student-run conduct boards, specifically, were recast as educational in nature rather than punitive; room and hall personalization programs emerged; residence hall governments focused on social programs, managing budgets, and establishing policies; and the RAs focused on educational programming and students' personal growth (McClellan et al., 2001). Blimling (2010) further explained, residence life professionals and RAs assisted with developing interpersonal confidence, part of the first vector (i.e., developing competence) of Chickering's Theory of Psychosocial Development. Residence life professionals and RAs, in particular, help to develop students' interpersonal competence through creating opportunities for participation in residence hall government, student-run conduct boards, and social programs. These programs help students

develop relationships with others in their hall. In doing so, they can understand how they fit into the environment and develop a sense of control or competency (Blimling, 2010). This is only one example of how student development was incorporated into residence life programs during the late 1960s.

The development of several instrumental documents within the field of student affairs in the 1990s further influenced residence hall programs. These documents included the *Student Learning Imperative* (ACPA, 1996) and *Principles of Good Practice in Student Affairs* (ACPA\NASPA, 1996). The authors of these documents focused on the concept of learning, and in particular, active learning and emphasized university housing as a key part of the total student-learning environment. In the wake of these documents, McClellan et al. (2001) asserted:

1. residential learning communities re-emerged;
2. RAs began focusing more of their attention on enforcing quiet hours;
3. academic staff began holding more office hours in residence halls;
4. faculty-in-residence programs were established; and
5. classrooms, libraries, and computer laboratories were incorporated into construction of the majority of new residence halls.

Residence hall programs, furthermore, most recently began to utilize learning outcomes when developing programs and assessment, in general, to increase the learning potential for on-campus students.

Philosophies or Approaches to Residence Hall Programs

In addition to the historical influences of residence hall programs and the RA position, the philosophical approaches to residence hall programs also influence the RA role. Upcraft et al. (1982) endorsed this claim by arguing that the RA position varies according to the type of

institution and the goals or philosophy of each residence hall program. Blimling (2010) also argued, "No matter how laudable the director's intentions may be, or how educationally directed he or she wishes to be, a large part of what occurs in residence halls is dictated by the financial stability of the residence hall program as a whole" (p. 92). The financial stability of a residence hall program, therefore, impacts the philosophy or approach directors use for their residence hall programs. The four philosophies or approaches (i.e., custodial care and moral development, student services, student development, and student learning) that influence each residence hall program in the United States to varying degrees depends on the department's mission, vision, values, and priorities.

The first philosophy or approach to residence hall programs is the custodial care or moral development approach. This approach developed during the colonial period out of necessity due to *in loco parentis*. Blimling (2010) noted, "The idea behind this philosophy is that by controlling behavior of the residents, residence halls instill or model values consistent with the values of the institution" (p. 93). Williamson (1958), contrary to Blimling, pointed out that professionals' use of residence halls as a means of suppression and behavior control through policing techniques has always produced failure. Blimling, taking a modern twist, argued, "The rules by which students live create a social environment that supports and fosters what the institution believes to be a healthy environment for students" (p. 93). Some modern examples of behavior control include prohibiting smoking cigarettes and/or drinking alcohol on campus and no visitation periods within the residence halls (Blimling, 2010). Through these policies, residence life staff tries to instill values to create positive environments for students.

The second philosophy or approach to residence hall programs is the student services approach. As students began to be considered as consumers beginning in the 1960s, this

philosophy was developed as another approach to managing residence hall programs. Blimling (2010) advocated, "As a service, residence halls must be managed effectively and efficiently. This may also be referred to as a business approach because it views residence halls first as a business, appropriately managed in the best interest of the students" (p. 93). This approach to residence halls focused on marketing services to students and only providing services that students demand from their programs. Examples of this philosophy include the increased number of single rooms and suite-style housing offered on campuses in the 21st century due to student demand for increased privacy. According to this philosophy, campus officials must provide appealing housing for students; otherwise, they may choose to attend another college or university.

The third philosophy or approach to residence hall programs is the student learning approach. This philosophy "has been part of residents' education for many years; however, the *Student Learning Imperative* (ACPA, 1996) provides a recent framework that allows this approach to be more clearly articulated" (Blimling, 2010, p. 93). The authors of the *Student Learning Imperative* (ACPA, 1996) focused on the concept of learning, and in particular, personal development, student development, and active learning. This philosophy emphasizes university housing as a key part of the total student-learning environment. "For example, training helps RAs develop a variety of skills so that they can respond to the demands placed on them by residents and maintain an environment on their residence hall floors that will support the learning objectives of the institution" (Blimling, 2010, p. 94). Another example would be enforcing quite hours to create an environment where students are able to study and sleep. All aspects of the residence hall program, in other words, relate directly to the educational mission of the institution.

The fourth philosophy or approach to residence hall programs is the student development approach. This philosophy developed in the 1960s was in response to the theoretical classics of the student affairs profession (e.g., Chickering, Perry, and Kohlberg) that became a major influence on residence hall programs (McClellan et al., 2001). Student development theories became imperative to those institutions that incorporate this residence hall philosophy. "RAs generally help implement educational programs, counsel students, and give feedback to professional staff on the progress of individual students and groups" (Blimling, 2010, p. 95). This approach grounded in the seamless living-learning environment occurs when professionals believe that students' education must include their intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral, and emotional development (Blimling, 2010). This approach also focuses on the notion that learning does not stop once a student leaves the classroom. The student learning philosophy focuses on creating an environment conducive to learning while the student development philosophy focuses on individual student learning and development. Students learn valuable life lessons in other campus environments than classroom (e.g., student unions) and thus residence life professionals should focus on how to facilitate student development.

Residence life professionals use a variety of approaches to managing residence halls. McClellan et al. (2001) confirmed most college campuses use a mixture of these philosophies or approaches rather than selecting one approach for working with students in residence halls. Blimling (2010) further noted:

> The approaches reflect the orientation or attitude of the people operating the residence halls. A residence hall philosophy combines the experiences that the student population and professional staff bring to that campus environment. It is a blend with the tradition

> and heritage of the residence hall system on the campus and with the educational philosophy and mission of the institution. (p. 95)

Keeling (2007) agreed with Blimling when he noted that students have to have a good time at events; otherwise, even if they achieved the learning outcomes from the program it would be unlikely that they would return for another program. Keeling (2007) further claimed, "Students will grow from learning while they appreciate quality; we should not believe that one ever excludes the other" (p. 4). The combination of philosophies or approaches to residence hall programs provides purpose or direction to residence life programs and the RA positions.

Resident Advisor Position

RAs are primarily undergraduate students who serve as role models, counselors, and junior administrators among their peers (Waldeck, 1993). RAs are a crucial point of contact between the university or college student affairs administration and resident students. "No student problem escapes the RA involvement. This job is one of the most difficult student positions to hold and to perform well" (Blimling, 2010, p. 49). With the vital role RAs play in residence hall programs, the following section addresses the development of the RA position, characteristics that may affect RA performance, and the selection of RAs.

Development of the RA Role

Students have a long history in being involved in residence life programs as they established the first dormitories in Bologna, Paris, and Oxford. Blimling and Miltenberger (1981), furthermore, explained that in the mid-1400s, faculty chose upper-level students at Oxford as the first staff in residence halls to exert control over the hostels that housed poor students. Soon after establishing the student positions, faculty decided that they should oversee the residence hall programs and eliminated these student positions.

Faculty, tutors, seminarians, and other students controlled student behavior in residence hall facilities at colonial colleges because colonial students were young and having travel a far distance needed the supervision of college officials (Frederickson, 1993). Colonial college's residence hall programs in the United States were at the center of both informal and formal education as these institutions were first modeled after Oxford and Cambridge (Frederickson, 1993; Upcraft et al., 1982). With the student control philosophy, proctors (i.e., upper-level students employed in residence halls) patrolled the halls and forced entry into rooms without knocking or notifying students (Delworth et al., 1974; Powell, Plyler, Dickerson, & McClellan, 1969; Upcraft et al., 1982). During the decline of student housing brought on by the German influence on higher education in the United States, faculty left residence hall programs and appointed housemothers and coaches to take over the responsibility of governing the halls (Frederiksen, 1993). "Up until the late 1950s and early 1960s, most in-house supervisors lacked any specialized educational preparation or training for performing their duties" (Winston & Fitch, 1993, p. 316). Housemothers and coaches served in these roles until the first resident advisor positions were established on college and university campuses and new professional staff who had formal training replaced many housemothers and coaches after the revitalization of residence halls following World War II.

With increasing emphasis placed on the use of residence halls as centers for student development and education, housemothers were replaced by professionals and student staff (Williams, Reilley, & Zgliczynski, 1980). Paraprofessionals in residence hall programs were an effective and economical solution to staffing residence halls (Aceto, 1962; Brown & Zunker, 1966; Eichenfield, Graves, Slief, & Haslund, 1988; Upcraft et al., 1982; Winston & Ender,

1988). Students first employed in residence halls maintained order and served as liaisons between the administration and the students (Winston, Ullom, & Werring, 1984).

Between the 1940s and mid-1970s, resident advisors were first used as they are today as student educators and role models (Blimling & Miltenberger, 1981). Until the 1970s, the disciplinarian role, however, was at the forefront of job descriptions and the usage of the term "control" was commonly used when referring to the RA role (Arvidson, 2003). With the decline of *in loco parentis*, more residence hall programs altered their focus toward the education of the total student. After the 1970s, "the resident assistant's role [was] changing from one of disciplinarian to one of counseling, programming, and generally assisting students as they pursue[d] their academic and personal goals" (Upcraft et al., 1982, p. 4). Although the disciplinarian role of the RA position did not disappear, it became less important. RAs became the first person at an institution a student with a problem would approach for emotional support (Elleven et al., 2001). Although many residents still view RAs primarily as disciplinarians, some do not. Students' perceptions of RAs are based almost entirely on individual interactions and experiences (Crandall, 2004; Kozlowski, 2008).

By the end of the 1980s, the responsibilities of residence hall programs were "turned over" to student personnel officials and then delegated to the RAs (Boyer, 1987). More and more, RAs began dealing with difficult issues and problems to the degree that Dodge (1990) asked whether the RA position had grown too big for students. RAs today deal with a variety of student problems and issues (see Table 1). RAs, furthermore, have to deal with the lack of student accountability, troubling student attitudes, and poor facilities that result in very stressful situations (Blimling, 2003). Despite this position being one of the most difficult roles a student can hold while in college, many students take on this challenge each year.

Characteristics that May Affect RA Performance

Many personal and structural factors can influence the performance of RAs. Several RA characteristics have been studied to determine the impact these factors have on RA performance. Residence life professionals have overrated some factors, such as prior leadership, as valid measures of RA performance (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982). Upcraft and Pilato (1982) explained:

> Prior leadership is overrated. Although the RA position is one of leadership, it is very different from being the president of a campus organization or the captain of a football team. The RA position is not democratically elected, and the RA is accountable to the institution, not the residents. (p. 197)

In contrast to prior leadership ability, several other factors may determine RA performance (e.g., gender, grade point average, race/ethnicity, class rank, prior RA experience, type of residents, residential philosophy, residential learning community floors, hall configuration, and institutional type). The following subsections examine the impact these characteristics have on RA performance.

Table 1

Common Problems and Issues RAs Encounter

Problem	Research Studies
Adjustment Issues	Blimling (2010); Crandall (2004); McKenzie Willenbrook - (2008)
AIDS/HIV	Blimling (2010); Lindsey (1997)
Alcohol and Drugs	Boekeloo, Bush, & Novik (2009); Blimling (2003, 2010); Crandall (2004); Dupre, Miller, & Rospenda (1995);

(continued)

Problem	Research Studies
Alcohol and Drugs	Page & O'Hegarty (2006); Paschall & Saltz (2007); Rubington (1990); Willoughby & Carroll (2009)
Bereaved Students	Blimling (2010); Servaty-Seib & Taub (2008)
Campus Violence	Blimling (1993, 2003, 2010); McKenzie-Willenbrook (2008); Palmer (1996); Palmer & Devine (2000)
Disordered Eating	Blimling (2010); Dodge (1990); Fulcher & Janosik (2008)
Mental Health	Blimling (1993, 2003, 2010); Crandall (2004); McKenzie-Willenbrook (2008)
Pregnancy	Blimling (2010)
Race/Culture/Gender/ Sexual Orientation	Blimling (2010); Crandall (2004); Dodge (1990); Evans & Broido (2002); Horne, Rice, & Israel (2004); McKenzie-Willenbrook (2008); Shook & Fazio (2008)
Sexual Assault/Battery	Blimling (1993, 2003, 2010); Dodge (1990)
Sexually Transmitted Disease	Blimling (2010)
Stress	Blimling (2010); Dodge (1990); Dusselier, Dunn, Wang, Shelley, & Whalen (2005)
Suicide	Blimling (2003, 2010); Dodge (1990); Tompkins & Witt (2009)
Technology (e.g., Internet addiction, bandwidth issues)	Crandall (2004)
Theft	Blimling (2010)

Gender. Men and women experience the RA role differently. Schaller and Wagner (2007) found female RAs struggled with maintaining connections and meeting the expectations of all the people in their lives. Male RAs, in contrast, had difficulty in balancing their own need for friends and connections with the obligations of enforcing policies (Schaller & Wagner, 2007). The issues RAs encountered further explained the gender differences in how students experienced the RA role. Twale and Muse (1996) explained male RAs with male residents faced more disciplinary matters and policy violations compared to female RAs with female residents who encountered more roommate conflicts as well as personal, social, and interpersonal problems (Twale & Muse, 1996). Bowman and Bowman (1995b), in particular, noted the gender differences in their findings as female RAs more often encountered health related concerns while male RAs more often encountered damage to facilities and alcohol abuse. Gender seemed to have played an important role in the various experiences of RAs.

Similar to the inconclusive results of RA selection, in general, the influence of gender on RA performance is not clear. Several researchers found no significant gender differences in RA performance among high performers as identified by housing professionals (Jaeger & Caison, 2006), resident student evaluations (Clark, 2008; Hayes & Burke, 1981), and RA self-evaluation (Denzine & Anderson, 1999). Researchers in three different studies, in contrast, found significant difference by gender in RA performance based on student evaluations (Wyrick & Mitchell, 1971), self-ratings (Wu & Stemler, 2008), and supervisor evaluations (Barnes, 1972). Unfortunately, after reviewing the sample size and institutional type of each of the studies there were no logical reasons for the discrepancies in finding regarding gender differences based on RA performance. Although Clark (2008) found no significant difference in RA performance in his study, he noted “sex differences should be considered in identifying valid predictors of RA

effectiveness" (p. 107). Further research is warranted given the gender differences found in how RAs experience the position and RA performance.

Race/ethnicity. Unlike the vast research on gender, few researchers have included race/ethnicity as a variable that could affect RA performance. Only two studies, unfortunately, have included race/ethnicity as part of the researchers' analysis. The researchers' results may have differed from one another because of the use of two different forms of evaluations. Wu and Stemler (2008), in particular, found no significant difference in self-evaluation scores by race/ethnicity of RAs at a small liberal arts university in the Northeast. Clark (2008), in contrast, found that the RA's race/ethnicity was a statistically significant predictor of performance for two of the three years in his study. Clark, in particular, discovered that White RAs scored higher on their resident evaluations than their student of color peers at a private institution in the Southeast (Clark, 2008). Due to the lack of research on race/ethnicity and RA performance, it is not possible to determine if there is a relationship between these two variables.

Class rank. Similar to race/ethnicity, few researchers have considered class rank as a variable in RA performance. Despite the lack of research on class rank, it is a common qualification in RA selection on many college campuses (Blimling, 2010; Clark, 2008; Delworth et al., 1974; Greenleaf et al., 1967; Powell et al., 1969). Clark (2008) discovered that sophomore RAs were rated higher by residents than junior and senior RAs. Clark attributed the higher scores of sophomore RAs to having first-year floors rather than upper-class floors. In general, according to Clark, first-year residents rate RAs' performance higher compared to upper-class students. Similar to the sample in Clark's study, some residence life professionals prefer using sophomores (Wotruba & Crawley, 1967) for first-year floors because sophomores are closer in class rank and are better able to support first-year students because they recently faced similar

experiences (Powell et al., 1969). Blimling (2010) confirmed, "Appropriate role models are ones with which students can easily identify. If the role models are too far removed from what the individuals believe they can become, the role models have less influence" (p. 35). Twale and Muse (1996), furthermore, argued that sophomore RAs enforced written policies and procedures more than juniors and seniors.

Although sophomore RAs tend to enforce written policies and procedures more than juniors and seniors, they tended to, in retrospect, feel as though they could have been more sensitive to the conditions that caused the tension at an earlier stage (Twale & Muse, 2001). According to Schaller and Wagner (2007) sophomore RAs experience unique challenges as they struggle developmentally with finding themselves, selecting a major, developing support systems, and maintaining and developing relationships. These factors could possibly affect their performance as RAs. With the additional challenges sophomore RAs face, some residence life professionals prefer to give priority to the RA positions to juniors or seniors. RA supervisors preferred these students to sophomore RAs because they had presumed maturity; experience; and academic stability and proficiency as these are essential for being a role model for resident students (Delworth et al., 1974). Blimling (2010) further noted some residence hall professionals do not permit graduating seniors to be RAs because they may be intolerant to certain activities. Thus, senior RAs intolerance of certain activities is a result of their differences in their level of interest in education, a subsequent career, and maturity level that exceeds students living in their unit.

The rationale utilized by residence life professionals for choosing RAs from different class levels is based upon practical experience and/or personal preference rather than research. The researchers who utilized class rank in their analysis of RA performance found no statistically

significant difference between class years among higher performers as identified by housing professionals (Jaeger & Caison, 2006) and supervisor evaluations (Madson, 1966). Class rank, a common variable for residence life professionals in determining selection and placement of RAs on many campuses, continues to be included in many RA selection processes.

Experience as a RA. Similar to class rank, residence life professionals tend to utilize experience in the RA position as a factor in the selection process. Many college and university housing professionals will hire returning staff prior to considering new applicants thus showing preference for those with experience in the position. Second-year RAs are more comfortable confronting situations (Twale & Muse, 1996), are more consistent and collegial, and assist first-year RAs to transition to the RA role (Kozlowski, 2008). Additionally, Deluga (1989) found that inexperienced RAs are more likely to enforce the letter of the law (i.e., dualistic thinking) compared to experienced RAs who realize the various situational determinants that require greater judgment (i.e., relativistic thinking). Madson (1966) in a large study at a large public university found that length of time in the RA role made for a better RA. Deluga (1989), however, noted, "senior males with two years of experience are also most likely targets of influencing activity by senior males" (p. 10). Deluga's study illustrated why several RA characteristics must be taken into consideration when evaluating the complexity of RA performance.

Despite benefits of hiring experienced RAs, Denzine and Anderson (1999) argued that the selection of RAs should not be based solely on experience alone. In fact, Barnes (1972) found that RA performance based on student and self-evaluations was negatively correlated with experience. Durden and Neimeyer (1986) concluded that experienced RAs had positive views of counseling and somewhat less positive views about live-in status and programming due to

outside factors (e.g., peers living off-campus). With the varying insights into hiring experienced RAs over new applicants, RA experience and RA performance needs further research.

Grade point average. Grade point average (GPA) is also a typical consideration in RA selection processes. In fact, Winston and Ender (1988) reported that 86.2% of respondents from the 118 colleges and universities who returned their survey reported using grades in their selection process of RAs. The rationale for utilizing grades in the selection process is the substantial time commitment the RA position requires of the student (Greenleaf et al., 1967; Powell et al., 1969), the idea of being an academic role model, and the RAs' ability to assist students struggling academically (Greenleaf et al., 1967). Despite the rationale for utilizing GPA as a predictor or qualification of RA success, it has not always been a good indicator of job performance.

Cooper, Robertson, and Tinline (2003) revealed that there is no significant linkage between educational qualifications and job performance in most occupations. The GPA of an applicant, in other words, does not necessitate how well a person will perform on the job. Although educational qualifications rarely relate to job performance, several studies regarding RA performance and GPA found significant difference between high and low performing RAs (i.e., those RAs with higher GPAs were more effective as RAs) at a variety of institutional types (Brown & Zunker, 1966; Clark, 2008; Fedorovich, Boyle, & Hare, 1994; Kidd, 1951; Madson, 1966; Ostroth, 1981a; Wyrick & Mitchell, 1971). Despite the large number of researchers who found a significant relationship between GPA and RA performance (Brown & Zunker, 1966; Clark, 2008; Fedorovich et al., 1994; Kidd, 1951; Madson, 1966; Ostroth, 1981a; Wyrick & Mitchell, 1971), some did not (Frazer, 1983; Jaeger & Caison, 2006; LaCamera, 1970; Schroeder & Dowse, 1968). Although the research on RA performance and GPA has produced mixed

results, even researchers who found no significant difference encouraged other professionals to include GPA in their RA selection processes (Frazer, 1983). The rationale for including GPA in selection processes according to Frazer was that "applicants who have low GPAs . . . are not generally hired for fear that they would not provide positive role models for others, or would be unable to succeed academically while meeting the heavy demand of the RA position" (p. 106). Researchers advocated for the use of GPA in selection processes because they found it to be a significant predictor of RA performance and it is a factor in most RA selection processes (Brown & Zunker, 1966; Clark, 2008; Fedorovich et al., 1994; Kidd, 1951; Madson, 1966; Ostroth, 1981a; Wyrick & Mitchell, 1971).

Major. Unlike GPA, few researchers have considered the RA candidates' academic major as a factor in RA selection; however, researchers of three studies discovered academic major to be a significant factor in performance (Madson, 1966; Twale & Muse, 1996; Winston & Ender, 1988). Winston and Ender (1988) surveyed 118 institutions of higher education in the United States and found that only three institutions utilized academic major as a factor in selection. Madson (1966) evaluated 145 male RAs at Ohio University and found that social science and education majors performed better as RAs than male students majoring in other disciplines. He, unfortunately, did not provide any insight into why these students performed better than other students. Twale and Muse (1996), nevertheless, found that RAs from academic fields such as nursing, psychology, social work, and communications performed better as RAs in resolving conflict because they received training in counseling and communication skills through their academic programs. These unique skills are beneficial to students serving in the RA role. Further research is clearly needed to verify these researchers' results; however, academic major may be an important determinant in RA performance.

Type of residents. Similar to a student's academic major, few studies have analyzed the impact of the type of residents on RA performance. The RA position varies by the type of students on the floor (Upcraft et al., 1982); however, few studies have focused on how this affects their performance. In fact, Clark (2008) found that RAs placed on first-year floors received higher resident students' evaluation scores than those RAs who served upper-level students. RAs of first-year students reported significantly greater depersonalization and slightly greater emotional exhaustion than RAs on mixed year floors (Hardy & Dodd, 1998) probably due to the extra attention first-year students' need compared to upper level students. Bierman and Carpenter (1994), furthermore, found that RAs assigned to all-male halls showed significantly lower means for the potential of personal challenge and development than did RAs in all female or co-educational residence halls. Additional research is needed related to the type of residents a RA serves to determine the impact on RA performance.

Residential learning communities. Residential learning community (RLC) students have different expectations of their RAs than non-RLC students. St. Onge, Peckskamp, and McIntosh (2003), in particular, discovered that RLC students described their RAs as playing a larger role as an educator as opposed to non-RLC students who described their RA as more of a friend. Some of the differences in how RLC students described the RA role were related to the differences in programming responsibilities (St. Onge et al., 2003) and their expectation to be a liaison with faculty (Blimling, 2003). Faculty members naturally have a greater role in RLC floors to the extent that they may attend RA meetings and participate in the RA selection processes (Blimling, 2003). Although there seem to be differences in RA performance scores between RLC and non-RLC RAs, only one study has focused on this topic.

Hall configuration. RAs may have different programming requirements for suite-style and apartment communities similar to the unique programming requirements of RLCs. Brandon et al. (2008) in a small study of 62 residents discovered the design of suite-style halls limited the extent of interaction students have with one another. Blimling (2010) noted the lack of interaction within suite-style halls making the RAs' role of community development extremely difficult. Brandon et al., in particular, found that students have to work harder to get to know one another (Brandon et al., 2008). In a larger sample of 693 students living in suites, Null (1982) indicated that students found it was more difficult to interact with other students in suite-style halls than in traditional residence halls. Students living in apartments also noted their living environments created interaction with other students but not to the extent of traditional halls (Furbeck & Whalen, 2002). Crandall (2004), furthermore, found that the RA's role of building community very difficult in suite and apartment style housing because these environments allow students to isolate themselves. Few residence life professionals, according to Crandall, teach RAs through training or manuals how to address the community building problems that RAs, specifically, encounter within each of the different housing configurations (e.g., apartments, suite-style housing). The unique challenges RAs face with working in the various housing configurations may affect RA performance.

Number of residents. Similar to hall configuration, few researchers have studied the relationship between the number of residents and RA performance. According to the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International (2000), the average number of residents per RA is 39.6. Educational Benchmarking, Incorporated provided ACUHO-I with the RA-student ratio based on data from 78 schools of varying sizes (ACUHO-I, 2000). Blimling (1993) argued that high contact between RAs and residents is one of the most

important functions of the RA position. Clark (2008) noted a greater number of students on the floor would result in less contact between the RA and residents as well as lower resident evaluation scores of RAs. He noted, in particular, that RAs with 20 or fewer residents on their floor were able to spend more time with their residents and performed better in the eyes of their residents than those RAs with more resident students. Clark also found that the number of residents an RA had on the floor was negatively correlated with the residents' RA evaluation scores. Despite the correlation between RA performance and the number of residents, only one study focused on this phenomenon. To verify the relationship between the number of residents and RA performance, it is imperative that researchers conduct additional research on this topic.

Institutional type. The roles of the RA vary from institution to institution (Upcraft et al., 1982; Winston et al., 1984) because of the different expectations supervisors place upon them. Residence life professionals as a result evaluate RAs differently based upon these various RA roles. Residence life professionals at community colleges, for instance, noted their RAs may be expected to perform more academic roles (e.g., holding study group sessions) than RAs at four-year institutions (Daniels, Doskal-Scaffido, Crudup, & Stevensen, 2011). These professionals at community colleges may evaluate their RAs on their success of holding study group sessions, for instance, while this would probably fall outside the purview of the RA position at another college. Individual institutions are influenced by factors such as their mission, history, philosophical orientation, leadership, location, institutional control, and student population (McClellan et al., 2001). These factors may also indirectly influence individual residence life programs and translate into different expectations of the RAs.

Past researchers who studied the differences in the RA role at different institutions noted variations based upon (a) the institutional size (Bierman & Carpenter, 1994; Paladino, Murray,

Newgent, & Gohn, 2005; Elleven et al., 2001), (b) the institutional type (Daniels et al., 2011; Elleven et al., 2001), and (c) the campus setting (Johnson & Kang, 2006). The smaller the department or the institution, for instance, the more contact RAs are expected to have with their residents (Bierman & Carpenter, 1994) and the more support they will have from fellow RAs outside their residence hall or complex (Paladino et al., 2005). RA supervisors at private institutions, furthermore, seek students who are involved in extracurricular activities to become RAs and focus more on administrative tasks while RA supervisors at public institutions focus on student conduct and referrals (Elleven et al., 2001). The different expectations of the RA role, however, are probably related to the size rather than factors related to institutional control (Elleven et al., 2001). Daniels et al. (2011), as previously noted, described the specific expectations of RAs at community colleges that differ from four-year institutions. Johnson and Kang (2006) also noted the expectation from RA supervisors on their interpretation and implementation of diversity depends on the campus environment. Clearly, there are differences in the RAs roles at different institutions.

Evaluation of performance

Residence life professionals can utilize a variety of evaluations (i.e., supervisor, self, peer, and resident evaluations) to evaluate RA performance; however, a great deal of variance exists in the responses from these various evaluators. Harris and Schaubroeck (1988) explained, "It is important to note that a number of scholars have asserted that the general lack of convergence between different raters is neither surprising nor problematic" (p. 44). The differences in how evaluators rate RA performance was based upon how they perceive the RA positions. Student evaluations of RAs are complicated further by the fact that students' perception of the RA role changes over the academic year. How students determine good RA

performance, in other words, at the beginning of the year differs from how residents evaluate RAs at the middle and end of the academic year. Students, according to Kuh and Schuh (1983), perceived encouragement and policy enforcement (e.g., quiet hours) as more important at the end of the academic term than the beginning. Despite the variance in resident evaluations of RAs, Bailey and Grandpre (1996) advocated for resident student evaluations at least once a year.

Supervisor evaluation. Supervisor evaluations of RAs may not accurately portray RA performance. In order for supervisors to provide adequate evaluations of RAs, they must have direct contact with the RAs and the students who live on their floors to make adequate evaluations of their RAs' performance (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982). Supervisors may not be in the best position to evaluate many of the tasks RAs perform (Barnes, 1972; Hayes & Burke, 1981; Winston & Fitch, 1993). Supervisors may want to concentrate on evaluating those behaviors and aspects of RA performances that they are in the best position to judge and allow resident students to evaluate them on the other items (Barnes, 1972). Due to the evaluator variance in RA performance, Delworth et al. (1974) recommended that supervisors obtain feedback from a variety of sources. Residents, on the other hand, may not be in the best position to evaluate residents based upon their inability to provide an objective evaluation of their RA based upon the actual RA role. Peers and RAs self-evaluations have been significantly correlated with supervisor's evaluations in several studies (Bailey & Grandpre, 1996; Forysthe, 1983; Fullerton, 1966). Barnes (1972), however, in a study of 122 RAs at a large public university reported that supervisors provided the lowest evaluation score when compared to peers and self-evaluation scores.

RA self-evaluation. Another common method of evaluating RA performance is RA self-evaluations. Cooper et al. (2003) argued, "Self assessment is essentially the same as any other

self-report, except that applicants are asked to make direct estimates of their own abilities as competencies" (p. 147). Self-evaluations, according to Upcraft and Pilato (1982), should be administered to RAs so they have the opportunity to make some general comments about their job performance. One of the most powerful tools a supervisor can use for evaluating RA performance is to compare at least one other source of information about performance (i.e., resident students, RA self-evaluation, RA peers, or supervisor) (Delworth et al., 1974; Upcraft & Pilato, 1982).

When comparing RA self-evaluation scores to other evaluation methods, there were some differences. In a study of 122 RAs, Barnes (1972) revealed that RAs rated themselves significantly higher than both supervisor and resident mean scores. RAs perceived their role as a counselor and leader to be more important than their residents on their floors did in a study of 73 male RAs and 350 male residents. Unlike the students, the RAs had a similar perception of the RA role as their supervisors (Forysthe, 1983). One would anticipate that the RAs and supervisors could have similar perception of the RA role because of the vast training RAs receive from their supervisors, while many students do not have an adequate comprehension of these positions.

Resident student evaluation. RA evaluations by residents were common practices on most campuses; however, there were differing opinions as to the validity of the data. Orseno (1967) argued that resident evaluations of RAs were not appropriate and often inaccurate. Supervisors should review evaluations by students, even if done properly, with caution (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982; Winston & Fitch, 1993). It was natural for a "halo" effect to emerge among some residents' evaluations because they cannot discriminate among various job functions (Thomas, 1979) or were not even aware of all of the functions RAs perform (Sacrey, Klas, &

Boak, 1977). "This [problem with validity] is further complicated by the unreliability of residents' evaluations [of RAs], which are almost always greatly colored by the frequency of disciplinary problems in a unit and the nature of personal relations with the RA" (Winston & Ender, 1993, p. 338). Resident students, in fact, viewed RAs in broad terms, good or bad, not good in some areas and bad in other areas (Bailey & Grandpre, 1996).

Only resident students, on the other hand, were able to evaluate RAs on certain items (e.g., their interactions with residents on their floors) (Barnes, 1972; Winston et al., 1984). Delworth et al. (1974), furthermore, confirmed that students were in the best position to evaluate RAs if two conditions existed: (a) personal friendships did not interfere in the process and (b) there was a good understanding of the job functions by residents. These conditions, unfortunately, rarely occur in student evaluations. Eichenfield et al. (1988) further explained student responses tend to vary throughout the year so collecting student data should occur several times a year to gain an accurate picture of the RA's performance.

When comparing resident student evaluations to other forms of evaluation several differences become apparent. Bailey and Grandpre (1996), in particular, discovered only a small relationship was found between resident students and peer RA evaluations as well as resident and supervisors' evaluations on the RAs' roles (i.e., crisis management, administration, counseling, and education). Resident students and supervisors, in contrast, agreed on the RA's role of community building activities (Bailey & Grandpre, 1996). Overall, resident evaluations can provide supervisors with valuable information about RA performance; however, supervisors must use discretion when reviewing the results.

Peer evaluation. Although few studies utilized peer evaluations by other RAs, McKenna (2006) argued, "peers are in a good position to observe a colleague's performance in a variety of

situations over long periods of time" (p. 579). Fullerton (1966) insisted other RAs were able to observe not only how responsible a fellow RA appeared to be, but also how well they performed on administrative tasks. Peer RAs focused their attention on the personal behavior and conduct of their fellow RAs (Fullerton, 1966) as well as levels of mutual support and team player abilities (Bailey & Grandpre, 1996). Bailey and Grandpre (1996) found no significant relationship between the RA peers and resident evaluations, but a significant relationship between peer RAs and their supervisors on evaluations of team member behavior.

Resident Advisor Selection

The selection of the most qualified students to serve in the RA role is one of the most difficult tasks for student affairs professionals (German, 1979; Ostroth, 1981a). Researchers, unfortunately, have provided little support as to the effective means of selection of RAs and little is known about how effective other processes are in identifying successful RAs (Jaeger & Caison, 2006). Some progress, however, has occurred because of the research on RA selection over the past 60 years. Leaderless discussion groups (Bass, 1949; Banta & McCormick, 1969; Mullozzi & Spees, 1971) and the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), in particular, have shown some initial promise as effective methods of selection. Yet, these tools only predict a small amount (i.e., less than 25%) of the variance attributed to RA performance. With no proven method of selecting RAs, researchers and residence life professionals will continue to search for a valid, systematic method for RA selection.

RA selection processes vary by institution; however, most include a lengthy application, references, multiple interviews, and small group interactions (i.e., group process activities) (Blimling, 2010; Hamilton, Calhoun, & Brouillard-Bruce, 2009; Jaeger & Caison, 2006). With the application, residence life professionals typically inquire about an applicant's GPA and

experience in leadership positions or extracurricular activities (Ostroth, 1981b). Winston and Fitch (1993) explained experience in leadership positions or extracurricular activities was included in selection processes to provide selection committees with information about other time commitments and the candidates' ability to interact with peers, contribute to group assignments, and communicate effectively with others. Group process activities allow professionals to see how candidates work in groups, their leadership style, and what unique characteristics they can bring to the RA position (Steinberg, n.d.). Residence life practitioners change their RA selection process each year to improve their ability to select the best candidates for these positions (Hamilton et al., 2009). As the residence life professions continue to seek the most effective means of selecting RAs, researchers and residence life practitioners continue to explore different methods of selection. Some of the methods utilized in the past included: (a) interviews; (b) letters of recommendation; (c) leaderless group discussions; (d) resumes; (e) standardized instruments; (f) peer ratings; (g) sociodrama/role plays; and (h) apprenticeships, courses, and pre-selection seminars.

Interviews

Interviews continue to be a cornerstone of most RA selection processes despite their low reliability. Winston et al. (1984) explained:

> Interviews are the traditional way of getting to know candidates. However, as a selection tool, interviews are only as good as the interviewer's skills and the objectivity of selection criteria. Since the situation is somewhat contrived, some students become overly nervous and do not give an accurate picture of their skills. (p. 57)

It is very difficult to achieve success with interviews (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982). Interviewers tend to approve of applicants with the same temperament as their own, and disapprove of those with

opposite temperament (Motley & Smith, 1989). This technique, however, was effective in isolating the motivation behind why candidates were applying for the RA positions (Thomas, 1979).

Interview processes are further complicated as student staff members participate in the RA interviews despite the concerns about their objectivity in the process. Residence life professionals commented that student involvement in RA interviews is essential because they are able to ascertain those qualities that are important to students (Hamilton et al., 2009). Panel interviews can be ineffective (Dessler, 2005); nevertheless, to avoid the concern for personality clashes more than one interviewer should be included in each interview to increase the objectivity of the process. Interviews continue to be a part of selection processes despite all of the problems with this technique (e.g., personality bias, faking). Residence life professionals continue to interview candidates to become acquainted with applicants and to determine their motivation for applying for the positions.

Letters of Recommendation

Similar to interviews, there are concerns about the objectivity of recommendation letters (Dessler, 2005) and evaluators' lack of understanding of the RA position (Greenleaf et al., 1967). References, nonetheless, are designed by employers to provide professionals with someone (i.e., former employers, professors, or colleagues) who knows the applicant well enough to provide an adequate evaluation of the candidate (Gatewood & Feild, 2001). To overcome some of these issues, Greenleaf et al. (1967) recommended utilizing a combination of a rating scale with an open reference format as this was ideal for RA references. Frazer (1983), nevertheless, refuted Greenleaf et al.'s claim by arguing that RA references were not significant predictors of RA effectiveness.

Leaderless Group Discussions

Unlike references, leaderless group discussions are one of the effective methods of selecting RAs (Bass, 1949; Banta & McCormick, 1969; Mullozzi & Spees, 1971). Bass (1949) argued that this technique has been used to aid in selecting candidates for positions involving leadership. Mullozzi and Spees (1971), specifically, found that leadership discussion groups accounted for 23.5% of the variance as to whether or not a student received an employment offer for a RA position.

With this method of selection, RA applicants are divided into groups of six and each group is given 20-30 minutes to discuss a problem while they are observed and evaluated by six experienced residence hall staff members. Bass and Norton (1951) noted that groups that contained more than six participants decreased observer agreement so it was recommended that groups do not exceed six participants. Discussion topics included "(a) everyday situations which all counselors face at one time or another and (b) problems which may occur only once, but which put the counselor's judgment to a critical test" (Banta & McCormick, 1969, p.32). The evaluators rotated among four topics for the participant to discuss during the session. Evaluators attended rater training where they were introduced to and discussed the rating scale, pointed out common rating errors, and participated in an actual leaderless group discussion that the trainees observed and rated for practice (Banta & McCormick, 1969). Raters evaluated participants using a five point scale (with 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest score) on the following aspects: (a) ability to communicate with others, (b) self-confidence and emotional control, (c) initiative, (d) maturity of perception and judgment, and (e) ability to motivate others to participate (Banta & McCormick, 1969). An overall score was achieved by summing together the scores. Scores from the leaderless discussion groups ranged from 5 to 25.

Although this method is an exemplary tool to select RAs, Upcraft and Pilato (1982) expressed concern about students evaluating other students due to their lack of ability to be objective. Professional staff, not students, should make decisions regarding RA selection (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982). Although Upcraft and Pilato expressed some concerns about students involvement in leaderless discussion groups as a part of RA selection processes, this particular tool has shown to be a valid predictor of RA performance. Variations of leadership group discussions, furthermore, are still included in RA selection processes today (e.g., see Fischer, 2008; Steinberg, n.d.).

Resume

Another common component of RA selection is the resume. Resumes, nevertheless, are biased and an unreliable source of information for RA selection processes (Ostroth, 1981a). In particular, Half (1988) stated, "A remarkable number of resumes aren't honest or – to put it kindly – they misrepresent an applicant's . . . work history and skills" (p. 130). Rather, employers obtained face validity from them rather than empirical validity of employers' inferences from resume information (Gatewood & Feild, 2001). Employers, in other words, discover surface level information about applicants from the resume; however, this selection tool is not a scientifically proven way of selecting candidates. The resume, nevertheless, has a long history of being included in selection processes and it would almost seem taboo not to include it as part of the selection process.

Standardized Instruments

Over 25 different standardized instruments have been used as possible methods of RA selection; however, the results are inconclusive (see Appendix A). The California Personality Inventory (CPI) is one of the more popular methods of RA selection despite the lack of

consistency in its effectiveness to predict performance (Barnes, 1972; Dolan, 1965; Gregory, 1966; Hall & Creed, 1979; Madson, 1966; Schroeder & Drowse, 1968). The majority of the studies conducted regarding RA selection and the CPI were not statistically significant and only Hall and Creed (1979) found a significant relationship with the flexibility scale of the CPI and RA performance. Despite the popularity of this scale, it has not been shown to be an accurate method of RA selection.

Personality Orientation Inventory (POI) is another popular standardized instrument that was used in RA selection studies in the 1970s (Anthony, 1973; Atkinson, Williams, & Garb, 1973; Graff & Bradshaw, 1970; Graff, Bradshaw, Danish, Austin, & Atekruse, 1970; Kipp, 1979; Mullozzi & Spees, 1971; Schroeder & Willis, 1973; Thomas, 1979). The majority of POI studies focused on RA selection showed a significant positive relationship between this scale and RA performance; however, not all researchers found a significant relationship. The research on the POI and RA selection is unclear making it difficult to determine if the POI is an effective tool for RA selection.

Lastly, the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) was another popular method for RA selection (Dolan, 1965; Holbrook, 1972; LaCamera, 1970; Murphy & Ortenzi, 1966; Schroeder & Dowse, 1968; Wotruba, 1969). These researchers found mixed results. For instance, Dolan (1965) only found significance for females, while Holbrook (1972) only found significant results for males. Wotruba (1969), nevertheless, found significant results for all RAs, while the majority of researchers (LaCamera, 1970; Murphy & Ortenzi, 1966; Schroeder & Dowse, 1968) found no significance between the EPPS and RA performance. Researchers, in conclusion, did not recommend the EPPS scale as a tool in RA selection processes (LaCamera, 1970; Murphy & Ortenzi, 1966; Schroeder & Dowse, 1968).

Researchers, however, have found three scales that have shown some initial potential as predictors of RA selection: (a) the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (Jaeger & Caison, 2006; Wu & Stemler, 2008); (b) the Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience-Five-Factor Instrument (NEO-FFI) measure of the five-factor model (Deluga & Masson, 2000); and (c) the International Personality Item Pool- Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience (IPIP-NEO) measure of the five-factor model (Wu & Stemler, 2008). More research is required to confirm the results of these instruments in their ability to predict RA performance. All three of these standardized instruments include aspects related to personality and two of the three scales measure the five-factor model of personality.

Peer Ratings

A less common method of RA selection is peer ratings. Tibbits (1977) summed up the conclusion of peer ratings – "No staff selection method is perfect" (p. 68). Peer ratings occur when residents rated their peers (i.e., fellow residents) on their ability to be RAs. Student ratings could be used to select new staff; however, unless every applicant received an adequate number of student evaluations the method was useless (Tibbits, 1977). Students, furthermore, generally were not good predictors of RA performance because they lacked the experience and theoretical background of professionals and tend to select RAs based on how much they were like themselves (Winston et al., 1984). Based on the research, it is not advisable to utilize this selection method because of bias.

Sociodrama/Role Play

Similar to peer ratings, another less common method of selection includes sociodrama and role-playing. Only two studies have evaluated sociodrama and role-plays as methods of selection and these techniques are typically associated with training rather than selection

processes. In role-playing or sociodramas, applicants act out or verbally describe how they would respond to various situations RAs typically encounter (e.g., roommate conflicts or encountering an alcohol violation). Nair and Sonder (1969), however, claimed that selection and training were one activity. They made this claim because the most qualified candidates can be hired for the RA positions but if these students are not provided with adequate training they will not be effective in their RA roles. Based on these studies, it is difficult to determine how effective these methods really are in selecting the most qualified candidates. Sheeder (1963), nonetheless, did argue that sociodrama and role-playing methods of selection were preferred over only interviews of male candidates.

Apprenticeships, Courses, and Pre-selection Seminars

Although apprenticeships, courses, and pre-selection seminars were found to be ineffective for RA selection (Bumba, Heyl, Miller & Schuh, 1980; Eichenfield et al., 1988), they did provide valuable information for RA applicants (Bumba et al., 1980; Correnti & Turtle, 1972). Even if these methods were valid predictors of performance, Bowman and Bowman (1995a) discovered that there were significant differences in content of these programs making it difficult to make comparisons among them. Most residence hall programs, nevertheless, offer some type of session for applicants to learn about the RA positions. One of the most effective means of advertising for RA selection programs, for example, was to sponsor a series of open forums to discuss the RA role (Powell et al., 1969). Despite the uselessness of these sessions to select RAs, residence life professionals continue to offer them to applicants because they are valuable to the candidates' understanding the positions.

The Five-Factor Model

The five-factor model, also known as the "Big Five," is a broad measure of personality (Ones & Viswesvaran, 2003) that focuses on central human concerns (e.g., power, love, work, affect, and intellect) (McAdams, 1992). These factors have shown to be fairly stable traits over time (Costa & McCrae, 1994; Eder & Mangeldsdorf, 1997; McCrae & Costa, 1988; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2003); however, a personality structure becomes more stable later in life and is most impressionable during childhood (Boudreau, Boswell, Judge, & Bretz, 1999). In other words, although individuals inherit their personality, individuals alter it slightly during childhood and it becomes a stable variable as a person progresses throughout his/her life. The five-factor model is sensitive to a person's educational level (Rammstedt, Goldberg, & Borg, 2010), gender (e.g., males are more extraverted), and age (e.g., the older the person, the more self-discipline they have) (Goldberg, Sweeney, Merenda, & Hughes, 1988). Race or ethnicity has not been a factor in differences related to the "Big Five" (Collins & Gleaves, 1998; Goldberg et al., 1998). Despite the relationship between these variables and the model, the five-factor model has successfully predicted a variety of personal attributes, outcomes, and behaviors (see Table 2). Prior to exploring the five-factor model, it is essential to first comprehend how the construct was developed by the work of several researchers over a span of 100 years.

Table 2

The Five-Factor Model Predicts Attributes, Outcomes, and Behaviors

Attributes, Outcomes, & Behaviors	Studies
Absenteeism	Judge, Martochio, & Thoresen (1997)
Academic Success/Performance	Mussel, Winter, Gelleri, & Schuler (2011); Smith (1967)
Coping Skills	Watson & Hubbard (1996)
Deviant Behavior	Salgado (2002)
First-Year GPA	Cucina, Vasilopoulos, & Sehgal (2005)
Healthy Personality	Betz & Borgen (2010)
Job Performance	Barrick & Mount (1991); Barrick, Mount, & Judge (2001); Behling (1998); Borman (2004); Douglas, Frink, & Ferris (2004); Foster & Macan (2006); Mussel et al. (2011); Salgado (1998); Tett, Jackson, & Rothstein (1991)
Leadership	Antonakis (2004); Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt (2002)
Life Outcomes	Digman (1989)
Personal Growth	Hensel, Meijers, van der Leeden, & Kessels (2009)
Technology Use and Acceptance	Devaraj, Easley, & Crant (2008)
Temperament	Watson & Clark (1992)
Web Usage	Tuten & Bosnjak (2001)
Willingness to Share Knowledge	Matzler, Renzl, Muller, Herting, & Mooradian (2008)

Historical overview

The first person to try to measure personality through some form of classification was Francis Galton in the late 1800s. He tried to measure the character of men and women to determine how people differ according to their temperament (Galton, 1884). In 1910, Partridge offered the first partial list of English terms that described mental ability traits, a list of approximately 750 adjectives (Partridge, 1910). A little less than 30 years later, Perkins (1926) estimated approximately 3,000 "traits and ideals" using the *Webster International Dictionary*. Following Perkins work, Baumgarten (1933) developed the only classification of trait-names according to psychological principles. Her list contained 941 adjectives and 688 nouns in the German language; however, after examining the list she determined many of the nouns appeared in both forms. As a result, she deleted the duplicated forms of trait-names and dwindled down the list to 1,093 separate forms. Only one year later, Thurstone (1934) became the first scientist to hypothesize the use of lexical materials in English but failed to test his theory. Thurstone, however, concluded that to develop a scientific description of personality was not hopeless.

Because of Thurstone's confidence in creating a scientific description of personality, Allport and Odbert (1936) utilized the 1935 edition of Webster's *New International Dictionary* and determined that 17,953 terms were found relating to personality, and categorized the terms into four alpha lists. Allport and Odbert did not attempt to eliminate or to classify synonyms explaining why many terms were included within their results. Cattell (1943, 1946) reviewed Allport and Odert's list of terms, narrowed them down to 171 items by the method of semantic reduction, and then dwindled down to 67 traits using 35 clusters. Fiske (1949) further narrowed down Cattell's results into only five factors based upon a study with 128 men. Fiske's five factors were similar to the final set of five factors and included: (a) confident self-expression,

(b) social-adaptability, (c) conformity, (d) emotional control, and (e) inquiry intellect (Fiske, 1949). Although Fiske developed a five-factor model, Tupes and Christal's (1961) United States Air Force technical report was given credit for the widely accepted form of the five-factor model. These five factors included surgency (i.e., trying to influence or control others; concern with getting ahead), agreeableness, dependability, emotional stability, and culture.

After the success of Tupes and Christal (1961) model, Norman (1963), due to some controversy over the number of factors that should be included in the personality model, confirmed the reliability of the five-factor model. Goldberg (1981) furthermore expanded Fiske's work to include other systems and inventories; revived the interest in the lexical approach; and reintroduced as well as popularized the five-factor model into mainstream personality psychology in the 1980s. Costa and McCrae (1985) developed and operationalized the Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Openness to Experience (NEO) personality inventory. Costa and McCrae's inventory was the predecessor of the personality measure utilized in most studies to predict performance.

The Five Factors

The five-factor model of personality includes: (a) openness to experience, (b) conscientiousness, (c) extraversion, (d) agreeableness, and (e) neuroticism (OCEAN). Although there is consensus on three out of the five factors, there are some disagreements about two of the factors: openness to experience and conscientiousness. These two factors were referred to in the past by a variety of different terms. The variation in how these factors were defined explains why several individuals questioned the number of terms that should be included in the model. For the purpose of this study, however, openness to experience and conscientiousness will be utilized because these are the most commonly agreed upon terms

(Barrick & Mount, 1991). To comprehend what traits were included in the five factors, it is essential to describe each of them.

Openness to experience. The first factor, openness to experience, has produced the most controversy (McCrae & John, 1991). This factor has been described in a number of ways including: (a) intellectual or intelligent, (b) openness to experience, or (c) culture. Digman (1990) conceded that the factor most likely included all of these variables. This variable has been defined in different ways because when Fiske contrived the model in 1949, all of the traits that did not fit into the other four factors were automatically placed into this last factor. "Traits commonly associated with this dimension include being imaginative, cultured, curious, original, broad-minded, intelligent, and artistically sensitive" (Barrick & Mount, 1991, p. 5). Although intellect has been included within this factor, it does not measure intelligence; it is a dimension of personality, not intellectual ability, and many people score high in openness to experience without having corresponding high scores on intellect scales (McCrae & John, 1991). This factor, in the end, focuses on the appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, curiosity, and variety of experiences.

Conscientiousness. Similar to openness to experience, there have been some disagreements surrounding the second factor, conscientiousness. This term has been described in a number of ways in the past including: (a) conscience, (b) conformity, (c) dependability, (d) will to achieve, (e) will, and (f) work. Disagreements surrounding this factor have been based upon what traits were included as a part of conscientiousness. In the past, some researchers have argued that the factor focused on dependability and included traits such as: (a) cautious, (b) thorough, (c) responsible, (d) organized, and (e) deliberate. In contrast, others incorporated volitional traits such as: (a) hard working, (b) achievement-oriented, and (c) preserving. Barrick

and Mount (1991) argued this factor included both dependability and volitional traits. In the end, this factor centers on a tendency to show self-discipline, act dutifully, and aim for achievement through planned actions.

Extraversion. Although most have agreed about the construction of the third factor, extraversion, there have been some disagreements about whether it should be one factor or split into two separate factors. Hogan (1986) argued the factor should be divided into two components: ambition (i.e., initiative, surgency, ambition, and impetuous) and sociability (i.e., sociability, exhibitionist, and expressive). Although there has been disagreement surrounding the number of factors that should be included in this model (Block, 1995; Eysenck, 1992; Peabody & Goldberg, 1989), researchers maintain only five factors are needed in the personality model (Digman, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 1987; McCrae & John, 1991; Norman, 1963). The factor has also been referred to as "surgency." The traits associated with extraversion include: (a) social, (b) gregarious, (c) talkative, and (d) active (Barrick & Mount, 1991). In summary, this factor encompasses the tendency of individuals to seek stimulation in the company of others.

Agreeableness. Although the fourth factor has been identified by a variety of different names there has been no disagreement regarding either the traits included or the construct of the factor. This factor, agreeableness, has also been referred to as likability, friendliness, social conformity, compliance versus hostile noncompliance, and love. "Traits associated with this dimension include being courteous, flexible, trusting, good natured, cooperative, forgiving, soft-hearted, and tolerant" (Barrick & Mount, 1991, p. 4). This factor, in other words, focuses on the tendency for individuals to be compassionate and cooperative.

Neuroticism. The fifth factor, neuroticism, is one of the more stable constructs of the factors. This factor, nonetheless, has also been referred to in a variety of ways, which include

emotional instability, instability, and emotionality. "Common traits associated with this factor include anxious, depressed, angry, embarrassed, emotional, worried, and insecure" (Barrick & Mount, 1991, p. 4). This factor focuses on a tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily, such as anger, anxiety, depression, or vulnerability.

The Five-Factor Model and Job Performance

Until the 1980s, personality was not considered a valid measure of performance. Guion and Gottier (1965) maintained that research on personality needed clearer evidence of validity before it should be used to make employment decisions. The five-factor model did not become popular until Goldberg's (1981) study while Barrick and Mount's (1991) as well as Tett, Jackson, Rothstein, and Reddon's (1994) studies confirmed the utility of this model as a valid measure of job performance. Schmidt and Ryan (1993) explained that in the past researchers lacked any well accepted taxonomy for the classification of personality measures and thus did not find a significant relationship between measures of personality and job performance. Ones and Viswesvaran (1996) further argued that the five-factor model was related to job performance because it is a broad measure of personality. They noted that narrower measures of personality although conceptually distinct are not operationally defined for practical application. Ones and Viswesvaran concluded that broad measures of personality are better predictors of performance than narrower measures (Ones & Viswesvaran, 1996).

Several researchers began determining if measures of the five-factor model were related to job performance because of their initial success. The five-factor model of personality utilizing a variety of different scales has predicted performance for several different occupations (see Table 3). Conscientiousness, specifically, is the most common factor related to job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Barrick et al., 2001; Behling, 1998; Borman, 2004; Douglas et al.,

2004; Foster & Macan, 2006; Salgado, 1998; Tett et al., 1991). Conscientiousness, in fact, predicts up to 20% of the variance of job performance (Borman, 2004). Although contentiousness is the most common factor in relationship to job performance, it does not predict job performance of all occupations. Conscientiousness is not a valid predictor of artistic jobs (Hough, 1998) and positions requiring quick decision-making (Tett, 1998). This factor, however, does predict performance involving interactions with others (Mount, Barrick, & Stewart, 1998) and sales performance (Mount, Barrick, & Strauss, 1994).

Table 3

The Five-Factor Predicts Job Performance for Different Occupations

Occupation	Study
Airplane Pilots	Hormann & Maschke (1996)
Army Soldiers	McHenry, Hough, Toquam, Hanson, & Ashworth (1990)
Bus Drivers	Jacobs, Conte, Day, Silva, & Harris (1996)
Clerical or Service Workers	Ghiselli & Barthol (1953); Stewart & Carson (1995)
Managers	Barrick & Mount (1993); Oh & Berry (2009)
Musicians	Bunce & West (1995)
Pharmaceuticals	Rothmann & Coetzer (2003)
Sales	Gray (1973); Stewart (1996)
Textile Employees	Krilowicz & Lowery (1996)
Total Quality Manufacturing	Hayes, Roehm, & Castellano (1994)
Work Teams	Barrick et al. (2001); Barrick, Stewart, Neubert, & Mount (1998)

The other four factors were valid predictors of certain types or aspects of job performance. Openness to experience, for instance, predicts jobs requiring creativity (Feist, 1998; George & Zhou, 2001; Hogan & Hogan, 1995) and team creativity (Schilpzand, Herold, & Shalley, 2011). Extraversion was a valid predictor of sales and management (Barrick et al., 2001; Mount et al., 1994) as well as competitive environments (Barrick, Mitchell, & Stewart, 2003). Neuroticism has a strong negative correlation with team performance (Mount et al., 1998) meaning individuals who were emotionally stable work well in teams. Lastly, agreeableness has been reported to be a good predictor of performance for jobs requiring cooperation (Barrick et al., 2003), sales (Barrick et al., 2001), management positions (Barrick et al., 2001), jobs involving interactions with others (Mount et al., 1998), and work teams (Mount et al., 1998).

The Five-Factor Model and Resident Advisor Performance

After the five-factor model of personality was verified as a valid predictor of performance for most positions, researchers of two separate studies sought to determine if the five-factor model of personality was a valid measure of RA performance (Deluga & Masson, 2006; Wu & Stemler, 2008). Deluga and Masson (2006) noted that the NEO-FFI (i.e., a short form of the NEO-PI) was a valid predictor of RA performance. They, in particular, found extraversion had a significant relationship with resident evaluations of RAs accounting for 40% of the variance of RA performance. Although not statistically significant, conscientiousness was related to 2% of the variance of RA performance (Deluga & Masson, 2006). Hough (1998) and Tett (1989) discovered that conscientiousness was not related to all types of job performance. Conscientiousness, in particular, is not a valid predictor of performance for jobs requiring creativity or quick decision-making (Hough, 1998; Tett, 1998). The RA position can be

characterized as one that requires both creativity and quick decision-making possibly explaining why conscientiousness was not related to RA performance. Although creativity was a benefit for the RA position, conscientiousness probably was not related to resident evaluations of job performance because of their need to make quick decisions.

Dissimilar to the results from Deluga and Masson's (2006) study, Wu and Stemler (2008) discovered that conscientiousness and emotional stability (i.e., the reverse scoring of neuroticism) was significantly related to RA self-reported performance scores. The difference between the two studies has to do with the differences in how RA performance was measured by resident students and RAs themselves. Each of these groups utilized different criterion in evaluating RAs. In fact, Wu and Stemler (2008) argued "conscientiousness was found to be a significant positive predictor of RA performance, even after controlling for general intelligence, emotional intelligence, and factors of internal beliefs" (p. 547). The five-factor model, according Wu and Stemler, holds great promise for predicting RA performance.

Multiple Regression Model

The multiple regression model in industrial/organizational psychology provides a method of determining the ability of each of the predictors to be added together to forecast job performance in employee selection. This model utilizes a linear relationship between the predictors and the criterion (Riggio, 2003). The criterion or dependent variable was the standard by which performance was judged while the predictors or independent variables were hypothesized to predict performance on the dependent variable (Smither, 1997). Riggio (2003) further explained this model is a compensatory model meaning that high scores in one of the predictors can compensate for low scores on another predictor. Riggio also noted:

> Take, for example, the screening of applicants for a job as an inspector of micro-circuitry, a position that requires the visual inspection of very tiny computer circuits under a microscope. From her scores on a test of cognitive ability, an applicant might show great potential for performing the job. However, the applicant might have an uncorrectable visual problem that leads her to score poorly on a test of visual prediction. Here the compensatory regression model would not lead to a good prediction, for the visual problem would mean that the applicant would fail, regardless of her potential for handling the cognitive abilities of the job. (p. 115)

On the other hand, if a student applying for an RA position has a low GPA and high scores on leadership ability, if leadership ability scores were seen as more important than GPA, it could balance the low GPA potentially making this person a good candidate for the RA position. Depending on the emphasis placed on each of the criteria, low scores on one measure can determine the success of a candidate despite high scores on another test. As illustrated by Riggio, a multiple regression model takes into account various aspects in predicting job performance.

Summary

RAs are the foundation of nearly every residence hall program in the United States (Blimling, 2010). The selection of RAs continues to be a challenge for residence life professionals. Researchers, unfortunately, have only found support for three means of selection: (a) leaderless discussion groups, (b) emotional intelligence, and (c) the five-factor model of personality. The five-factor model of personality has shown the greatest initial promise in selecting the most qualified students for the RA positions. The five-factor model of personality has successfully predicted job performance, in general. Deluga and Masson (2000), in particular,

found that extraversion was a significant predictor of RA performance using the NEO-FFI scale in predicting resident evaluation scores. Wu and Stemler (2008) using the IPIP-NEO found that conscientiousness and emotional stability (i.e., the reverse scoring of neuroticism) were significant predictors of RA self-reported performance scores. The five-factor model has shown some initial promise in predicting RA performance at two different campuses.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the five-factor model of personality as a screening device in predicting the success of resident assistants (RAs) at one public four-year university in the Midwest. Secondary purposes of this study were to determine if there is a significant difference between other descriptive characteristics and RA performance. This chapter will describe the population for the study, the data gathering procedures, and the procedures used to analyze the data.

Institutional Setting and Population

This public, four-year institution is located in a college town with a population of approximately 30,000. About 15,000 undergraduate students enrolled at the participant institution during the 2010-2011 academic year. Of the 15,000 undergraduate students, 11,700 self-identified as White, 1,650 self-identified as Black or African American, 450 self-identified as Hispanic/Latino, 450 self-identified as race/ethnicity unknown, 300 self-identified as non-resident alien, 150 self-identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native, 150 self-identified as Asian, and 150 self-identified as belonging to two or more races. More than half (i.e., 8,100) students were female and 6,900 were male.

Only 6,500 students out of the 15,000 resided on campus in a variety of university-owned living environments (e.g., traditional, suite-style, and apartment living). There were approximately 15 residence halls and 31 small group-housing facilities at the participant institution at the time study was conducted. The university also hosts approximately 15 residential or thematic communities within the residence halls and small group housing facilities. The participant department does have a live-on requirement for the first two years for undergraduate students.

The population for this study was 147 students employed as RAs at a four-year, public university located in the Midwest during the 2010-2011 academic year. Demographic information for all 147 RAs employed during the 2010-2011 academic year at the participant department; however, was not available.

Instrumentation

A survey was created utilizing Snap survey software. The survey included the IPIP-NEO scale (see Appendix B), descriptive questions (see Appendix C) and the Marlowe-Crowne social desirability scale (see Appendix D). The IPIP-NEO scale is an open source scale available online that does not require permission to use (see Appendix E). The researcher created descriptive questions based upon past RA performance and selection studies to determine if scores of the IPIP-NEO personality scale had a significant relationship to a variety of variables (e.g., class level, major, and type of residents). In addition to the survey, the researcher used supervisor evaluations of RAs as a measure of RA performance.

IPIP-NEO personality scale

The International Personality Item Pool – Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Openness to Experience (IPIP-NEO) was designed to measure the five domain constructs included in the commercial NEO-PI-R. The NEO-PI-R is one of the most widely utilized and validated commercial inventories in the world (Johnson, 2005). The NEO PI-R is based on the five-factor model of personality (John & Srivastava, 1999; McCrae, 2011). The average correlation between corresponding scales of the extensively validated NEO-PI-R and the IPIP-NEO was .73, which suggests promising validity for the IPIP-NEO scales (Goldberg, 1999). According to Lim and Ployhart (2006), alpha coefficients varied from .74 (conscientiousness) to .90 (extraversion), with a mean of .82. The IPIP-NEO scale, therefore, was found to be a reliable and valid scale.

This scale contains 50 items (out of the original 100) that correspond with the five factors of personality with 10 questions for each sub-scale (Goldberg et al., 2006). Participants were asked to indicate the degree of accuracy of each of the statements using a scale from very inaccurate to very accurate. For each question, a value of 1 is assigned to each "Very Inaccurate," a 2 to each "Moderately Inaccurate," a 3 to each "Neither Inaccurate nor Accurate," a 4 to each "Moderately Accurate," and a 5 each to "Very Accurate" response. For each of the factors, there were five statements that were reverse-scored and scores on all 10 statements were summed together to create an overall score for each factor. Scores for each factor range from 10 to 50.

The IPIP-NEO is an open source version of the commercial NEO-PI-R instrument and is a short, free alternative (Johnson, 2005) that has been determined to be a valid measure for use on the Internet (Buchanan, Johnson, & Goldberg, 2005). Researchers have found no differences in this instrument in scoring based on race and gender (Ehrhart, Roesch, Ehrhart, & Kilian, 2008). Other researchers focusing on employment selection have shown the most support for measures of general intelligence (e.g., SAT scores) as a predictor of job performance (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998); however, these measures have a significant differences based on race or ethnicity and socioeconomic status (McClelland, 1973; Young, 2004). This scale, furthermore, was used in a previous study to predict RA performance with initial positive results (Wu & Stemler, 2008).

Two faults that are commonly associated with Internet instruments (e.g., the IPIP-NEO scale) include: (a) ease of responses and possibility of students rushing through the survey answering all one answer and (b) repeat participation (Johnson, 2005). Repeat participation was eliminated by the use of each RA's student identification number. By reviewing the data, the researcher also determined those students who rushed through the survey and deleted their responses. If a participant, for instance, answered the same answer more than once or skipped

over the majority (i.e., over 51%) of the answers, their case would be deleted. In addition to those two common faults, "faking" was also addressed by using a social desirability scale.

Crowne and Marlowe Social Desirability Scale

One of the major reasons that self-reported personality scales may be considered as unreliable measures for employment is "faking." Cooper et al. (2003) explained:

> Faking is a usually termed "social desirability" and is thought to comprise two elements: self-deception and impression management. Self-deception refers to applicants' being overly optimistic in their perception of positive personality features while simultaneously trying to play down their perceived negative aspects. Impression management is most concerned with applicants trying to appear 'nice' because they fear social disapproval. (p. 134)

In other words, "faking" occurs when applicants try to act in a desirable manner and hide negative attributes in order to obtain an offer of employment for a desired position. Social desirability scales are incorporated into the self-reported instruments to determine if applicants are faking when completing the instruments. According to Robertson and Smith (2001), "Although distortion by candidates does not appear to create major problems for criterion-related validity, it may still be valuable to include 'social desirability' scales in personality instruments" (p. 455). For this study, a social desirability scale was used to determine if a participant was "faking" when completing the self-reported personality scale. Wu and Stemler (2008), in particular, recommended the use of the Crowne and Marlowe desirability scale with future studies using the IPIP-NEO scale.

Crowne and Marlowe (1960) desired to develop a reliable social desirability scale. They wanted to be able to determine if college students were only trying to answer questions in a

socially desirable way. Consequently, Crowne and Marlowe developed a new social desirability scale that is both reliable and valid. The Kuder-Richardson formula 20 score was .88, which is a high score for survey reliability (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The Kuder-Richardson formula is another measure of reliability that measures the averages of all possible split-half reliabilities (Mertler & Charles, 2003). "For inclusion in the scale, an item had to meet the criterion of cultural approval (i.e., behaviors which are culturally sanctioned and approved but which are improbable of occurrence) and was required to have minimal pathological or abnormal implications if responded to in either the socially desirable or undesirable directions" (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960, p. 350). The original scale had 33 statements that could be answered using a true or false response.

Reynolds (2002) revised the Crowne and Marlowe Social Desirability Scale and condensed the original scale down to 13 items. The scale is comprised of five reverse-scored questions and all 13 statements were summed together to create an overall score. After reversing all the reversed-score statements, a value of 0 were assigned to each "False" and a 1 to each "True" response. Scores ranged from 0 to 13 with low (0-3), medium (4-7), and high (8-13) scores. The Kuder-Richardson formula 20 score for the revised version was also .76, which is also a relatively high score of reliability (Reynolds, 2002). The 13 items included in the revised instrument used the same wording as the original scale. The correlation between the 13-item and the original forms was .93, which is extremely high. Reynolds (2002) argued, "The 13-item form is recommended as a viable short form for use in the assessment of social desirability response tendencies" (p. 124). As a result, the Reynolds' revised version of the instrument was used in this study due to the shorter length, reliability, and strong correlation with the original scale.

RA Performance Evaluation

The RA performance evaluation is a five-page document used by the supervisor (i.e., graduate student or full-time professional hall director) to assess RAs' job performance, provide reinforcement and/or feedback for improvement (see Appendix F). It is completed at the end of fall and spring semesters. Despite the extensive data provided within this document, only the Likert-scale and dichotomously rated items were used for analysis. These scales focus on four domains of the RA position: (a) resident interaction and communication, (b) policies and procedures, (c) administrative skills, and (d) floor environment, education, and programming.

Each Likert-scale item is rated based on a five-point scale (i.e., exceeds expectations, meets expectations, needs improvement, does not meet expectations, or not observed). For each Likert-scaled item, a value of 4 was assigned to "exceeds expectations," a 3 to "meets expectations," a 2 to "needs improvement," a 1 to "does not meet expectations," and the average value of the scores in the domain to "not observed" (e.g., if the scores were 2, 3, 3, 3, and 3 for the domain then the value for the item marked as "not observed" would be 3). As the instructions of the RA evaluation prohibited supervisors from not responding to specific questions, the "not observed" option was available to evaluators. The "not observed" responses were as missing data as "not observed" translated into not being able to provide an answer for the question. Mertler & Vannatta (2002) explained:

> When no other information is available to the researcher, the mean is the best estimate for the value on a given variable. This is somewhat of a conservative procedure since the overall mean does not change by inserting the mean value for a case, and no guessing on the part of the researcher is required. (p. 26)

This technique, furthermore, was a valid method of dealing with missing data since less than 15% of the data was missing (Mertler & Vannatta, 2002). Because the total scores is the sum of each of the scores for all of the questions for each domain, a missing score would artificially decrease the total score.

The dichotomous rating system consists of two options: yes or no. For each dichotomously rated item, a value of 1 was assigned to "yes" and a 0 to "no" responses. The four domains contain a different number of questions using both Likert-scaled and dichotomously rated items. Each domain contains one to ten Likert-scale items and zero to nine dichotomously rated items for a total of 10 to 11 questions for each domain. A total score for each domain was calculated by summing all of the items. Resident interactions and communication scores range from 10 to 40; policies and procedure scores range from 1 to 13; administrative scores range from 6 to 29; floor environment, education, and programming range from 8 to 34; and the overall performance score range from 25 to 116.

Major Variables

Independent variables are the conditions or characteristics that researchers utilize to manipulate or control other variables in attempt to determine their relationship to observed phenomena (Best & Kahn, 2003). Researchers, in other words, use independent variables to determine their relationship with other variables in a particular situation. For this study, the IPIP-NEO scores were the independent variable in this study when determining if IPIP-NEO scores were good predictors of RA performance at one large, public four-year university in the Midwest. Gender, race/ethnicity, class rank, years of service as an RA, self-reported GPA, academic major, type of residents, residential learning community floors, and number of residents were independent variables in this study when determining the statistical differences in

the fall and spring semester RA performance scores. IPIP-NEO scores were also independent variables when considering the difference between the fall and spring RA performance scores. Lastly, the RAs' fall and spring evaluation scores were independent variables when comparing the relationship between one another.

Dependent variables are the conditions or characteristics that appear, disappear, or change as the researcher includes, excludes, or alters independent variables in a particular situation (Best & Kuhn, 2003). RA performance scores (i.e., fall and spring RA evaluation scores), in particular, were dependent variables for this study when considering if IPIP-NEO scores were good predictors of performance at one large, public four-year university. RA performance scores and IPIP-NEO scores were dependent variables when determining if there were statistically significant differences in RA performance scores (i.e., fall and spring RA evaluation scores) and IPIP-NEO scores based upon descriptive variables (e.g., age, gender, and race/ethnicity). Lastly, the two RA performance scores (i.e., fall and spring RA evaluation scores) were dependent variables when determining if there was a difference between two scores based on descriptive variables (e.g., age, gender, years of service as a RA).

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher first obtained approval to conduct the study from a senior residence life professional at the institution. After seeking human subjects review board approval (Appendix G), the residence life staff member at the institution forwarded an e-mail invitation (Appendix H) to the RAs employed at that institution. This person also sent e-mail reminders (see Appendices I, J) seven and fourteen days after the initial e-mail to all of the RAs. The researcher was unable to determine who responded so the residence life staff member sent reminders to all of the participants. The researcher administered the survey from April 27, 2011 to May 13, 2011. The

researcher at the conclusion of the study downloaded the data from the SNAP program and kept one copy on a password protected USB drive dedicated solely for the study. He kept it in a locked box while not in use for the study. The locked box was located in the researcher's apartment and no one except the researcher had access to it.

The researcher sought informed consent through an online form that each participant had to complete prior to being able to fill out the survey. The consent form allowed the researcher to obtain a copy of the participants' 2010-2011 RA performance evaluations. At the conclusion of administering the online survey, the researcher forwarded a list of student identification numbers to the Office of Institutional Research at the participant institution. An institutional research staff member merged the list of student identification numbers with names from institutional databases and sent the list of names and identification numbers to a senior residence life staff member at the participant institution. This residence life staff member then had a student worker photocopy the participants' 2010-2011 RA performance evaluations. This student worker wrote each RAs' student identification number on the top of the first page of the copied evaluation. The student identification numbers were used only to compare the survey data with the RA performance information.

After obtaining the copies of the participants' 2010-2011 RA performance evaluations, the researcher redacted all of the qualitative data. The researcher then typed all of the data from the RA performance evaluations into the SPSS 17 file, merged it with the survey data, and deleted the student identification numbers from the document leaving no personally identifiable information. The researcher then cleaned the data by removing all invalid information and then performed data analysis using SPSS 17. After merging the data from the surveys with the evaluation data, all of the paper RA performance evaluations were shredded.

Data Analysis Procedures

Several analyses were conducted to answer the research questions (See page 6 for questions). A Pearson correlation, in particular, was used to answer question one to determine if there is a relationship between fall and spring RA evaluations. A Pearson correlation was also used to determine if there is a relationships between RA performance (i.e., fall and spring RA evaluation scores) and the IPIP-NEO scores. Pearson correlations are used to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). If a relationship did exist, then a multiple or bivariate regression was used to answer question two to determine if the IPIP-NEO scores were valid predictors of RA performance. In multiple regressions, all of the independent (or predictor) variables are entered into the equation simultaneously. Each independent variable is evaluated in terms of its predictive power, over and above that offered by the other independent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). "In bivariate (two-variable) regression (simple linear regression) where *Y* is predicted from *X*, a straight line between two variables is found" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p. 57). Both bivariate and multiple regressions were used to answer question two.

T-tests and analyses of variances (ANOVAs) were used to analyze data for questions three and four. ANOVAs were used to compare groups and indicate whether the mean difference between groups on the dependent variables were likely to have occurred by chance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). RAs, for instance, were divided into groups according to their demographic characteristics (see Appendix C). Questions three and four, for example, utilized several *t*-tests to compare mean differences of males and females on the evaluation scores. Similarly, question three and four also used several ANOVAs to compare the mean differences

of the number of resident groups (i.e., less than 31, 31 to 40, more than 40), for example, on the fall and spring RA performance evaluation scores.

This study used a 0.05 level of significance for all inferential tests throughout the project. Best and Kahn (2003) supported the use of a .05 alpha level. "In psychology and educational circles, the 5% (.05) alpha level of significance is often used as a standard rejection" (Best & Kahn, 2003, p. 394). Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) further confirmed "Tradition and journal editors decree that it is .05 or smaller, meaning that the null hypothesis is rejected no more than 5% of the time when it is true" (p. 34). If the sample size is larger than 30, then it is acceptable to use a .05 alpha level (Best & Kahn, 2003). The .05 alpha level used for all analysis in this study was .05 since there were more than 30 participants and this is an acceptable level of significance for psychology and educational studies.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

In this chapter, the findings of this RA selection study are presented in the sequence of the four research questions. These questions are listed in chapters one. Prior to exploring the results of this study, it is imperative to understand the resident assistants who responded to the survey and the impact the nature of the department had on the results.

Participant Demographic Characteristics

The population for this study consisted of students who were employed as RAs at one large, public four-year university in the Midwest during the 2010-2011 academic year. The university's department of residence life employed 147 students as RAs during this academic year. Of the 147 students, there were 48 individual responses to the survey; however, one case was deleted based upon duplicate student identification numbers for a response rate of 32%. Only 41 cases were included in analysis of fall data because six participants were only employed during the spring semester while all 47 cases were used in the analysis of spring data. None of the responses were deleted due to rushing through the survey or "faking" despite the large number of respondents answering the questions in a socially desirable manner (i.e., 37 students answered the questions in a highly socially desirable way). If the IPIP-NEO scale was included in a RA selection process, residence life professions would still use the results of these 37 cases despite the fact "faking" was an issue. Hough (1998) explained, "The magnitude of validities of personality tests obtained in predictive validity studies indicates that personality tests are useful predictors of important criteria even when individuals are tested under conditions in which they are motivated to, and do, distort their responses" (p. 148). Residence life professionals should not discredit personality scales, such as the IPIP-NEO, even if applicants are "faking" in order to obtain employment.

The data were screened for missing information and outliers using frequency distributions, histograms, and box plots. Race/ethnicity, class rank, RA experience (i.e., semesters as an RA), major, residents' class rank, and the number of RAs on floor were truncated due to the small number of heterogeneous responses to participate in the study. One participant did not respond to the demographic questions for class rank and RA experience so this case was removed from all analyses with class rank and RA experience.

Of those 47 RAs who responded to the survey, 14 were male and 33 were female. Fifteen students were first-year students or sophomores, 17 were juniors, 14 were seniors, and one person did not respond to the question. Regarding academic major, 19 RAs were majoring in arts and sciences fields, 10 RAs were majoring in business, health, human services, human development, and technology fields, and 18 RAs were majoring in education fields. Eight students self-identified as students of color while 39 self-identified as White. Only 19 RAs had a cumulative GPA below a 3.5 (with the majority of them over a 3.00 GPA) and 28 RAs self-reported their GPA was above a 3.5. The participant institution required the RAs to maintain a minimum of a 2.5 cumulative GPA.

Of the 47 participants, 27 students were considered new RAs (i.e., RAs in the 1st or 2nd semester), 19 were considered returning RAs (i.e., RAs with at least three semesters of experience), and one participant chose not to answer the question. While 29 RAs had primarily mixed-class floor communities, 18 RAs had primarily first-year floors. Fifteen RAs lived on a floor that hosted a residential learning community, 32 did not. Fifteen RAs had fewer than 31 residents, 10 RAs had 31-40 residents, and 22 had more than 40 residents. Of the respondents, 42 worked and lived in traditional halls while only five RAs lived and worked in suite-style housing.

Relationship between Fall and Spring Evaluations

The first research question explored whether there was a relationship between fall and spring RA performance evaluation scores. The relationships between fall and spring RA performance evaluation total and sub-scores were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. Preliminary analyses using scatterplots were performed to ensure there were no violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. No irregularities were discovered from the scatterplots. As shown in Table 4, there was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables with higher total fall RA performance scores associated with higher total spring RA performance scores ($r = .67$, $n = 41$, $p < .01$). Table 4 also illustrates strong, positive correlations between fall and spring sub-scores except fall and spring policies and procedures scores which had a medium, positive correlation ($r = .40$, $n = 41$, $p < .05$). I concluded that there were a strong to moderate relationships between corresponding fall and spring total performance scores and sub-scores.

Predictions of RA Performance

Bivariate and multiple regressions were conducted to assess the ability of the IPIP-NEO scale to predict scores of fall and spring RA performance. Preliminary analyses (i.e., collinearity diagnostics, scatterplots, and Mahalanobis distances) were conducted to ensure no violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Prior to conducting any type of regression, it is imperative to conduct correlations to assess the relationship between the variables prior to assessing the ability of the IPIP-NEO scale in predicting scores of RA performance. As shown in Table 5, statistically significant relationships existed between openness to experience and total fall RA performance; fall and spring floor environment, education, and programming; and fall policies and procedure scores.

Conscientiousness only had a statistically significant relationship with fall policies and procedures. Similarly, extraversion only had a statistically significant relationship to spring administrative skills. Agreeableness, on the other hand, had a statistically significant relationship with spring resident interactions and communication as well as fall policies and procedures.

Table 4

Pearson Product-Moment Correlations Between Fall and Spring RA Performance

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Total Fall	--	.67**	.85**	.46**	.80**	.56**	.51**	.27	.85**	.65**
2. Total Spring		--	.56**	.79*	.68**	.83**	.43**	.56**	.47**	.87**
3. Fall FEEP			--	.55*	.61**	.41**	.60*	.29	.54**	.46**
4. Spring FEEP				--	.42**	.55**	.35*	.58**	.24	.50**
5. Fall AS					--	.74*	.39*	.18	.48**	.55**
6. Spring AS						--	.22	.28	.33*	.57**
7. Fall PP							--	.40*	.23	.46**
8. Spring PP								--	.18	.45**
9. Fall RIC									--	.57**
10. Spring RIC										--

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 41.
Total = total RA performance score, FEEP = floor environment, education and programming score; AS = administrative skills scores; PP = policies and procedures scores; RIC = resident interaction and communication scores.

Also shown in Table 5, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism were not significantly related to fall RA performance while conscientiousness and neuroticism were not statistically related to spring RA performance data. None of the IPIP-NEO scores were significantly related to total spring performance or spring policies and procedure scores while at least one of the scores from the IPIP-NEO scale was significantly related to each of the other performance scores. As a result, the regression model only incorporated those variables with statistically significant relationships.

Table 5

Pearson Product-Moment Correlations Between RA Performance and IPIP-NEO

Scale	O	C	E	A	N
Total Fall	.33*	.22	.00	.00	.09
Total Spring	.24	.14	-.14	.21	-.01
Fall FEEP	.48**	.22	.05	-.06	.16
Spring FEEP	.33*	.00	-.09	.05	.05
Fall AS	.20	.31	.00	.05	.07
Spring AS	.08	.20	-.30*	.12	.08
Fall PP	.44**	.43**	.26	.05	-.05
Spring PP	.21	.10	-.00	.18	-.07
Fall RIC	.15	.04	-.07	.01	.03
Spring RIC	.21	.13	-.01	.31*	-.11

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 41 for fall data. N = 47 for spring data.
Total = total RA performance score; FEEP = floor environment; education and programming score; AS = administrative skills scores; PP = policies and procedures scores; RIC = resident interaction and communication scores.
O = openness to experience; C = conscientiousness; E = extraversion; A = Agreeableness; N = Neuroticism.

After conducting several correlation tests to determine the relationship between the IPIP-NEO and the RA performance scores, it became apparent that only one of the five possible independent variables (e.g., openness to experience) had a significant relationship with the some of the RA performance overall and sub-scores. Multiple regressions were no longer an appropriate statistical technique for the analysis because at least two independent variables must be used in the equation. Bivariate regressions, therefore, were performed to answer part of research question two. Mertler and Vannatta (2002) explained, "Bivariate regression utilizes the relationship between the independent and dependent variables to predict the scores of the dependent variable from the independent variable (e.g., To what degree do SAT scores [IV] predict freshman college GPA [DV]?)" (p. 13). Several bivariate regressions were performed as well as one multiple regression to answer question two because only one of the independent variables was significant for the several of the relationships with RA performance as described in Table 5. A post hoc power analysis was also conducted for each test using the software package, GPower (Faul & Erdfelder, 2009).

The first bivariate regression was conducted to determine the ability of openness to experience to predict total fall performance scores. Openness to experience, according to beta coefficients, predicted overall fall performance scores. The total variance explained by openness to experience scores was 10.9% (F (1, 39) = 4.77, $p < .05$). Openness to experience was statistically significant ($\beta = .330$, $p < .05$); however, the amount of variance explained by this model was small indicating that other variables might be better able to predict fall RA performance. A post hoc power analysis revealed that the statistical power for the regression model in prediction of overall fall total RA performance at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta = .22$). Cohen (1992) noted, "the only specification for power is .80 (so $\beta = .20$), a convention

proposed for general use" (p. 156). A post hoc power analysis revealed that an n of approximately 67 was needed to obtain statistical power at the recommended .80 level (Cohen, 1988). A value of 0.22, in other words, translates into a 78% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. A type II error is an "erroneous retention of the null hypothesis, which leads to the conclusion that a difference or relationship does not exist among variables, when in fact one does" (Mertler & Charles, 2008, p.368).

Two additional bivariate regressions were performed to determine the ability of openness to experience to predict fall and spring floor environment, education, and programming. Beta coefficients indicated that openness to experience predicted 23.3% of the total variance of fall floor environment, education, and programming (F (1, 39) = 11.83, $p < .05$). Openness to experience was statistically significant in predicting fall floor environment, education, and programming ($\beta = .482$, $p < .05$). A post hoc power analysis revealed that the statistical power for the regression model in prediction of fall floor environment, education, and programming at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta = .19$). A value of 0.19, in other words, translates into a 81% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

Similar to the results for the fall semester, openness to experience, according to beta coefficients, significantly predicted spring floor environment, education, and programming. Openness to experience; however, only explained 10.6% of the variance of spring floor environment, education, and programming (F (1, 45) = 5.34, $p <.05$). This variable, nonetheless, was statistically significant in predicting this aspect of spring RA performance ($\beta =. 326$, $p <.05$). A post hoc power analysis revealed that the statistical power for the regression model in

prediction of spring floor environment, education and programming at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta = .10$). A value of 0.10, in other words, translates into a 90% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. A post hoc power analysis revealed that an n of approximately 67 was needed to obtain statistical power at the recommended .80 level (Cohen, 1988).

A multiple regression was conducted to determine the ability of both openness to experience and conscientiousness to predict fall policies and procedure scores. Openness to experience and conscientiousness significantly predicted fall policies and procedures scores. This regression model explained 32.3% of the variance of fall policies and procedures scores (F (2, 38) = 9.06, $p < .05$). Openness to experience uniquely explained 13.5% of the variance of fall policies and procedures. Openness to experience scores were statistically significant ($\beta = .372$, $p < .05$) in predicting these scores. Conscientiousness, on the other hand, uniquely explained 13.3% of the total variance of fall policies and procedure scores. Similar to openness to experience, RA conscientiousness scores were significant in predicting this sub-score of RA performance data ($\beta = .370$, $p < .05$). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this model and the statistical power for this regression model in prediction of fall policies and procedures at the .05 level was adequate ($1 - \beta = .99$). A value of 0.99, in other words, translates into a 1% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

Another bivariate regression was performed to determine how much of the variance of spring resident interaction and communication was predicted by agreeableness. According to beta coefficients, agreeableness scores significantly predicted only one aspect of RA performance, spring resident interaction and communication. Agreeableness, in particular,

explained 9.8% of the total variance of spring resident interaction and communication (F (1, 45) = 4.90, p <.05). This IPIP-NEO scale was significant in predicting spring resident interaction and communication (β = .313, p < .05). Although agreeableness predicted spring resident interaction and communication, none of the IPIP-NEO scores predicted fall resident interaction and communication scores. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this regression model and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta$ = .25). A post hoc power analysis revealed that an n of approximately 67 was needed to obtain statistical power at the recommended .80 level (Cohen, 1988). A value of 0.25, in other words, translates into a 75% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

A bivariate regression was conducted to determine the ability of extraversion to predict spring administrative skills. Extraversion, according to beta coefficients, explained 8.9% of the total variance of spring administrative skills (F (1, 45) = 4.39, p < .05). This IPIP-NEO scale was significant in predicting spring administrative skills (β = -0.30, p < .05). Although extraversion predicted administrative skills in the spring, none of the five factors were significant predictors of RA performance in the fall. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this regression model and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta$ = .11). A post hoc power analysis revealed that an n of approximately 67 was needed to obtain statistical power at the recommended .80 level (Cohen, 1988). A value of 0.11, in other words, translates into a 89% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

Group Differences in IPIP-NEO and Fall RA Performance

The third research question sought to determine if there were statistically significant group differences in demographic variables in relationship to IPIP-NEO and fall RA performance scores. *T*-tests and ANOVAs were performed to determine if there were statistically significant group differences in IPIP-NEO and fall RA performance scores. Several *t*-tests were performed; however, there were no statistically significant differences in gender (see Table 6); residents' class rank (see Table 7); or whether or not a RA worked within a residential learning community (see Table 8) on any of the fall RA evaluation and IPIP-NEO scores. Due to the low number of students of color, race/ethnicity was not considered in the fall analysis. There were, however, statistically significant differences according to *t*-tests in RA experience and self-reported GPA on some of the fall RA performance and IPIP-NEO scores (see Tables 9 & 10). As noted previously, scores for resident interactions and communication scores range from 10 to 40; policies and procedure scores range from 1 to 13; administrative scores range from 6 to 29; floor environment, education, and programming range from 8 to 34; and the overall performance scores range from 25 to 116. Scores for the five factors range from 10 to 50.

Table 6

Group Differences in Gender for IPIP-NEO and Fall RA Performance

Variable	Male		Female				95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(39)	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	30.90	3.57	32.23	3.10	-1.14	.26	-3.69	1.04	-0.36
PP	12.00	0.47	12.10	0.40	-0.64	.53	-0.40	0.21	-0.20
AS	22.80	1.62	24.13	2.19	-1.77	.09	-2.85	0.19	-0.57
FEEP	26.40	2.59	26.81	2.14	-0.50	.62	-2.06	1.25	-0.16
Total Fall	92.10	7.70	95.26	6.03	-1.35	.19	-7.90	1.59	-0.43
Neuroticism	18.00	5.14	21.42	6.57	-1.50	.14	-8.03	1.19	-0.48
Extraversion	36.80	5.20	36.00	6.95	0.33	.74	-4.05	5.65	0.11
Openness	37.60	6.28	39.35	6.36	-0.76	.45	-6.42	2.91	-0.24
Conscientiousness	39.20	3.16	40.77	5.30	-0.89	.38	-5.17	2.02	-0.29
Agreeableness	40.70	3.13	41.90	4.42	-0.80	.43	-4.26	1.85	-0.26

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 41.

CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit.

RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills; FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming; Total Fall = total fall RA performance; Openness = openness to experience.

Table 7

Group Differences in Residents' Class Rank for IPIP-NEO and Fall RA Performance

Variable	First		Mixed				95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(39)	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	32.87	3.50	31.35	0.98	1.48	.15	-0.56	3.60	0.47
PP	12.13	0.52	12.04	0.34	0.71	.49	-0.18	0.37	0.23
AS	24.27	1.67	23.54	2.34	1.06	.30	-0.66	2.12	0.34
FEEP	27.33	2.61	26.35	1.94	1.38	.18	-0.46	2.43	0.44
Total Fall	96.60	6.19	93.27	6.50	1.61	.12	-0.86	7.52	0.52
Neuroticism	19.53	4.19	21.19	7.34	-0.80	.43	-5.85	2.53	-0.26
Extraversion	34.60	6.94	37.12	6.21	-1.20	.24	-6.77	1.74	-0.38
Openness	39.67	5.07	38.50	6.98	0.57	.58	-3.01	5.34	0.18
Conscientiousness	40.27	5.56	40.46	4.55	-0.12	.90	-3.43	3.04	-0.04
Agreeableness	42.53	3.62	41.08	4.38	1.09	.28	-1.25	4.16	0.03

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 41.
CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit.
RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills; FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming; Total Fall = total fall RA performance; Openness = openness to experience.
First = all first-years; Mixed = mixed class years.

Table 8

Group Differences in RLC and Non-RLC floors for IPIP-NEO and Fall RA Performance

Variable	RLC		Non-RLC				95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(39)	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	32.33	3.60	31.65	3.03	0.65	.52	-1.45	2.81	0.21
PP	12.00	0.38	12.12	0.43	-0.86	.39	-0.39	0.16	-0.27
AS	23.73	2.60	23.85	1.85	-0.16	.87	-1.52	1.30	-0.05
FEEP	26.40	2.47	26.88	2.10	-0.67	.51	-1.96	0.99	-0.21
Total Fall	94.47	6.85	94.50	6.45	-0.02	.99	-4.36	4.30	-0.01
Neuroticism	19.00	5.75	21.50	6.63	-1.22	.23	-6.65	1.65	-0.39
Extraversion	35.33	5.79	36.69	6.96	-0.64	.53	-5.66	2.95	-0.20
Openness	38.67	6.11	39.08	6.53	-0.20	.84	-4.60	3.78	-0.06
Conscientiousness	40.53	5.15	40.31	4.81	0.14	.89	-3.01	3.46	0.04
Agreeableness	42.47	3.98	41.12	4.22	1.01	.32	-1.36	4.06	0.32

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 41. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit.
RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills;
FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming.; Total Fall = total fall RA performance;
Openness = openness to experience;
RLC = residential learning community floor; Non-RLC = not a residential learning community floor.

Table 9

Group Differences in RA Experience for IPIP-NEO and Fall RA Performance

Variable	New		Returning				95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(38)	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	31.19	2.79	32.79	0.82	-1.58	.12	-3.64	0.45	-0.51
PP	12.00	0.32	12.16	0.50	-1.18[a]	.25	-0.43	0.12	-0.43
AS	23.05	1.36	24.58	2.57	-2.32*[b]	.03	-2.89	-0.18	-0.90
FEEP	26.14	1.62	27.32	2.71	-1.68	.10	-2.59	0.24	-0.55
Total Fall	92.38	5.33	96.84	7.19	-2.24*	.03	-8.49	-0.44	-0.73
Neuroticism	22.29	7.30	18.58	4.79	1.88	.07	-0.29	7.70	0.61
Extraversion	35.62	5.84	37.21	7.22	-0.77[c]	.45	-5.78	2.59	-0.25
Openness	37.67	6.72	40.21	5.87	-1.27	.21	-6.60	1.51	-0.41
Conscientiousness	39.76	5.04	41.05	4.86	-0.82	.42	-4.47	1.89	-0.27
Agreeableness	39.95	4.13	43.00	3.15	-2.61*	.01	-5.42	-0.68	-0.85

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 40. [a] $df = 30$; [b] $df = 27$; [c] $df = 34$. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit.
RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills; FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming; RA Fall = total fall RA performance; Openness = openness to experience.

Table 10

Group Differences in GPA for IPIP-NEO and Fall RA Performance

Variable	GPA Below 3.5		GPA Above 3.5				95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(39)	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	30.89	3.46	32.70	2.85	-1.83	.07	-3.80	0.19	-0.59
PP	12.00	0.49	12.13	0.34	-1.01	.32	-0.39	0.13	-0.32
AS	23.06	1.98	24.39	2.08	-2.08*	.04	-2.64	-0.04	-0.67
FEEP	25.89	2.30	27.35	1.99	-2.18*	.04	-2.82	-0.10	-0.70
Total Fall	91.83	6.45	96.57	5.90	-2.45*	.02	-8.64	-0.82	-0.78
Neuroticism	20.61	6.67	20.57	6.27	0.02	.98	-4.06	4.15	0.01
Extraversion	35.94	6.87	36.39	6.37	-0.22	.83	-4.65	3.75	-0.07
Openness	36.89	6.80	40.52	5.53	-1.89	.07	-7.52	0.26	-0.61
Conscientiousness	39.72	4.48	40.91	5.20	-0.77	.44	-4.31	1.93	-0.25
Agreeableness	41.89	4.21	41.39	4.15	0.38	.71	-2.16	3.16	0.12

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 41. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit.
RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills; FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming; Total Fall = total fall RA performance; Openness = openness to experience.

Several independent-samples *t*-tests were conducted to evaluate if there were group differences based on RA experience for fall RA performance and IPIP-NEO scores. Levine's test for equality of variance was conducted to ensure there was an equal variance between the two scores for the two groups (Pallant, 2007). Cohen's d was used to determine the effect size for each t-test. Cohen's d, a type of effect size, presents the difference between groups in terms of standard deviation units (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Cohen's (1988) standards were used as guidelines for interpreting the strength of the effect size (small = .2, medium .5, large = .8). As

presented in Table 9, only three scores were significantly different based upon RA experience: (a) fall administrative skills, (b) total fall RA evaluation scores, and (c) agreeableness. There was a statistically significant group difference for new and returning RAs for fall administrative skills ($p = .03$). The magnitude of the differences of fall administrative skills based on new and returning RAs, as reported in Table 9, was very large ($d = -.90$). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was adequate ($1 - \beta = .79$). A value of 0.79, in other words, translates into a 21% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

A significant group difference for new and returning RAs in total fall RA performance evaluation scores ($p = .03$). The magnitude of the mean differences of total fall RA performance evaluation scores was medium ($d = .73$). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta = .61$). A value of 0.61, in other words, translates into a 39% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. Overall, returning RAs had statistically significant higher overall performance scores than new RAs in the fall semester.

In addition to administrative skills and total fall RA evaluation scores, agreeableness was statistically different based upon RA experience. As shown in Table 9, there was also a statistically significant group difference for new and returning RAs for agreeableness ($p = .01$). The magnitude of the group difference of agreeableness based on new and returning RAs was large ($d = -.85$). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta = .74$). A value of 0.74 translates into a 26% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. In other words, returning RAs were more agreeable than new RAs.

Similar to RA experience, several independent-samples *t*-tests were conducted to compare fall RA performance and IPIP-NEO scores for self-reported GPAs above and below a 3.5. As shown in Table 10, there was a significant difference in self-reported GPAs above and below a 3.5 for fall administrative skills ($p = .04$). RAs who self-reported their GPAs being above a 3.5, in other words, had a significantly higher fall RA performance group mean score than RAs with GPAs below a 3.5. The magnitude of the differences in the means of administrative skills based on self-reported GPAs was large ($d = -.99$). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was adequate ($1 - \beta = .87$). A value of 0.87, in other words, translates into a 13% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

A significant group difference in self-reported GPAs above and below a 3.5 existed for fall floor environment, education, and programming ($p = .04$). RAs who self-reported their GPAs were over a 3.5 had a higher group mean score than RAs with a self-reported GPA below a 3.5 on fall floor environment, education, and programming. The magnitude of the differences in the means of floor environment, education, and programming scores based on the RAs' grade point average was moderate ($d = -.70$). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta = .58$). A value of 0.58, in other words, translates into a 42% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. RAs with GPAs above a 3.5 were better administratively and better at the floor environment, education, and programming aspects of the RA role than RAs with GPAs lower than a 3.5.

Also reported in Table 10, there was a statistically significant difference in self-reported GPAs above and below a 3.5 for total fall RA performance evaluation scores ($p = .02$). The

magnitude of the differences in the means of total fall RA performance evaluation scores based on self-reported GPAs was large (d = -.78). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β = .68). A value of 0.68, in other words, translates into a 32% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. Overall those RAs who reported their GPAs were higher than a 3.5 performed better as a group than RAs who reported their GPAs were lower than a 3.5 in the total and sub-scores for all of the fall RA performance data.

In addition to independent *t*-tests, several ANOVAs were conducted to determine the group differences for the variables: the RAs' class rank, the RAs' academic major, and the number of residents on the RAs' floor community on fall RA performance and IPIP-NEO scores. Levine's test for homogeneity of variance was conducted to ensure equal variance for each of the groups. If a violation of the homogeneity of variance assumption existed, the asymptotically *F* distributed values were reported. Partial eta squared effect size was used for each ANOVA "to determine the proportion of variance of the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable" (Pallant, 2007, p. 208). The commonly used guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988) for partial eta squared effect size were used for this study (small = .01, moderate = .06, large = .14). There were no statistically significant group differences in the number of residents on the RAs' floor community; the RAs' academic major; and RAs' class rank on fall floor environment, education and programming (see Table 11), fall policies and procedures (see Table 12), agreeableness (see Table 13), conscientiousness (see Table 14), extraversion (see Table 15), neuroticism (see Table 16), and openness to experience (see Table 17).

Table 11

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Fall Floor Environment, Education, and Programming

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	15.25	7.63	1.54
Within groups	37	183.15	4.95	
Total	39	198.40		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	1.62	0.81	0.21[c]
Within groups	19	196.87	5.18	
Total	21	198.49		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	28.13	14.07	3.14
Within groups	38	170.36	4.48	
Total	40	198.49		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41. [c] Welch statistic reported (Asymptotically F distributed).

Table 12

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Fall Policies and Procedures

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	0.41	0.20	1.18
Within groups	37	6.37	0.17	
Total	39	6.78		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	0.48	0.24	1.45
Within groups	38	6.30	0.17	
Total	40	6.78		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	0.51	0.25	1.54
Within groups	38	6.27	0.17	
Total	40	6.78		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41.

Table 13

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Agreeableness

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	17.90	8.95	0.56
Within groups	37	593.70	16.05	
Total	39	611.60		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	40.66	20.33	1.20
Within groups	38	643.09	16.92	
Total	39	683.76		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	22.33	11.17	0.64
Within groups	38	661.42	17.41	
Total	39	683.76		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41.

Table 14

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Conscientiousness

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	45.47	22.73	0.93
Within groups	37	903.91	24.43	
Total	39	949.38		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	73.88	36.94	1.60
Within groups	38	875.88	23.05	
Total	40	949.76		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	43.89	21.95	0.92
Within groups	38	905.87	23.84	
Total	40	949.76		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41.

Table 15

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Extraversion

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	161.14	80.57	2.01
Within groups	37	1484.24	40.11	
Total	39	1645.38		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	114.73	57.36	1.38
Within groups	38	1583.71	41.68	
Total	40	1698.44		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	21.17	10.58	0.33[c]
Within groups	38	1677.27	44.14	
Total	40	1698.44		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41. [c] Welch statistic reported (Asymptotically F distributed).

Table 16

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Neuroticism

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	37.38	18.69	0.44
Within groups	37	1576.59	42.61	
Total	39	1613.98		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	50.52	25.26	0.61
Within groups	38	1569.43	41.30	
Total	40	1619.95		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	22.93	11.46	0.27
Within groups	38	1597.02	42.14	
Total	40	1619.95		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41.

Table 17

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Openness to Experience

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	235.73	117.86	3.23
Within groups	37	1350.65	36.50	
Total	39	1586.38		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	234.43	117.22	3.28
Within groups	38	1356.35	35.69	
Total	40	1590.78		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	56.76	28.38	0.70
Within groups	38	1534.02	40.37	
Total	40	1590.78		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41.

Fall resident interaction and communication scores also had statistically significant group differences based on the RAs' class rank (see Table 18). There were statistically significant group differences for class rank and the effect size was large (F (2, 37) = 5.08, p = .01, η^2 = 0.22). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the first-year students or sophomores (M = 29.56, SD = 2.51) was significantly lower than the junior participants (M = 33.41, SD =3.39). Seniors (M = 31.71, SD = 2.61) were not significantly different from either the first-year and sophomore or junior RA groups. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this ANOVA and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β = 0.07). A value of 0.07, in other words, translates into a 93% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. Similar to fall total IPIP-NEO scores, the RAs' class rank had a large effect on fall resident interaction and communication. Also shown in Table 18, there were no significant group differences in the RAs' major and the number of residents on fall resident interaction and communication.

Table 18

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major and Number of Residents on Fall Resident Interaction and Communication

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*ES*
Class[a]					
Between groups	2	88.70	44.35	5.08**	0.22
Within groups	37	323.20	8.74		
Total	39	411.90			
Major[b]					
Between groups	2	7.24	3.62	0.20[c]	
Within groups	19	408.37	10.75		
Total	21	415.61			
Number of Residents[b]					
Between groups	2	25.74	12.87	1.26	
Within groups	38	389.87	10.26		
Total	40	415.61			

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41. [c] Welch statistic reported (Asymptotically F distributed).

As shown in Table 19, fall administrative skill scores have statistically significant group differences based on the RAs' class rank. There were statistically significant group differences for class rank and the effect size was large (F (2, 37) = 4.73, p = .02, η^2 = 0.20). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the first-year students or sophomore RAs (M = 22.33, SD = 1.32) was significantly lower than junior RAs (M = 24.76, SD = 1.32). Senior RA scores (M = 23.50, SD = 1.95) were not significantly different from first-year students and sophomores or junior RAs. The effect of RAs' class rank on fall administrative skills was large. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this ANOVA and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β = .06). A value of 0.06, in other words, translates into a 94% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

Table 19

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and the Number of Residents on Fall Administrative Skills

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*ES*
Class[a]					
Between groups	2	36.42	18.21	4.73*	0.20
Within groups	37	142.56	3.85		
Total	39	178.98			
Major[b]					
Between groups	2	0.56	0.28	0.06	
Within groups	38	179.88	4.73		
Total	40	180.44			
Number of Residents[b]					
Between groups	2	31.60	15.80	4.03*	0.18
Within groups	38	148.84	3.92		
Total	40	180.44			

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41.

The number of residents living on a floor community also had statistically significant group differences based on fall administrative skills (see Table 19). There were statistically significant group differences for the number of resident students and the effect size was large (F (2, 38) = 3.46, p = .04, $\eta^2 = 0.18$). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for RAs with fewer than 31 residents (M = 91.83, SD = 3.38) was significantly lower than RAs' with 31 to 40 residents (M = 98.89, SD = 6.72). RAs with 31 to 40 students on their floors was also statistically significantly higher than RAs with more than 40 residents (M = 94.10, SD = 6.72). The relationship between RAs with more than 40 residents and RAs with fewer than 31 resident students was not significant. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this ANOVA and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β

= 0.06). A value of 0.06, in other words, translates into a 94% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. Similar to total fall performance, the number of residents living on the floor community, however, only had a small effect on fall administrative skills scores.

The total fall RA performance scores also had statistically significant group differences based on the RAs' class rank (see Table 20). There were statistically significant group differences for class rank and the effect size was large (F (2, 37) = 5.21, p = .01, η^2 = 0.22). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the first-year students or sophomore RAs (M = 89.33, SD = 4.90) was significantly lower than junior RAs (M = 97.29, SD = 6.81). Senior scores (M = 94.43, SD = 5.49) were not significantly different from either the first-year students or sophomores group or the junior group. Similar to the other variables that were significantly different according to the RAs' class rank, the effect of RAs' class rank on total fall RA performance was large. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this ANOVA and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β = 0.07). A value of 0.07, in other words, translates into a 97% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. Also shown in Table 20, there were no statistically significant group differences in the RAs' major on fall administrative skills.

Similar to RAs' class rank, total fall performance scores also had statistically significant group differences based on the number of residents on the floor community (see Table 20). Participant RAs were grouped into one of three groups (i.e., fewer than 31 resident students, 31 to 40 resident students, more than 40 resident students). There were statistically significant group differences for the number of resident students and the effect size was large (F (2, 38) =

3.46, $p = .04$, $\eta^2 = 0.15$). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for RAs with fewer than 31 residents ($M = 91.83$, $SD = 3.38$) was significantly lower than RAs with 31 to 40 residents ($M = 98.89$, $SD = 6.72$). RAs with more than 40 residents ($M = 94.10$, $SD = 6.72$) were not significantly different from either RAs' with fewer than 31 residents or RAs' with 31 to 40 residents. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this ANOVA and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta = 0.06$). A value of 0.06, in other words, translates into a 94% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

Table 20

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major and Number of Residents on Fall Total RA Performance

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*ES*
Class[a]					
Between groups	2	373.04	186.52	5.21*	0.22
Within groups	37	1324.96	35.81		
Total	39	1698.00			
Major[b]					
Between groups	2	10.52	5.26	0.12	
Within groups	38	1687.73	44.41		
Total	40	1698.24			
Number of Residents[b]					
Between groups	2	261.89	130.94	3.46*	0.15
Within groups	38	1436.36	37.80		
Total	40	1698.25			

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. [a] N = 40. [b] N = 41.

Group Differences in IPIP-NEO and Spring RA Performance

The fourth research question sought to answer if there were statistically significant group differences in demographic variables in relationship to IPIP-NEO and spring RA performance scores. The researcher performed *t*-tests and ANOVAs to determine if there were statistically significant group differences in IPIP-NEO and spring RA performance scores. Due to the low numbers of students of color, race/ethnicity was also not considered in the spring analysis. Several *t*-tests were performed; however, there were no statistically significant differences in gender (see Table 21), resident students' class year (see Table 22) or if an RA lived within a residential learning community floor (see Table 23) on any of the spring RA performance and IPIP-NEO scores. There were, however, according to *t*-tests, statistically significant group differences in RA experience and GPA for the spring performance and the IPIP-NEO data.

Table 21

Group Differences in Gender for IPIP-NEO and Spring RA Performance

Variable	Male		Female				95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t* (45)	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	31.57	3.13	32.64	2.41	-1.27	.21	-2.76	0.63	-0.38
PP	12.21	0.43	12.09	0.38	0.98	.34	-0.13	0.38	0.29
AS	23.14	2.07	24.27	2.13	-1.68	.10	-2.49	0.23	-0.50
FEEP	27.14	2.60	26.91	1.49	0.32[a]	.76	-1.33	1.80	0.16
Total Spring	94.07	7.33	95.91	5.12	-0.99	.33	-5.59	1.92	-0.30
Neuroticism	19.50	5.35	21.39	6.36	-0.98	.34	-5.80	2.02	-0.29
Extraversion	37.21	4.51	36.00	6.74	0.62	.54	-2.75	5.18	0.18
Openness	35.71	6.40	39.33	6.18	-1.82	.08	-7.63	0.39	-0.54
Conscientiousness	38.29	3.97	40.94	5.18	-1.71	.09	-5.78	0.47	-0.51
Agreeableness	39.79	4.32	41.76	4.33	-1.43	.16	-4.75	0.81	-0.43

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 47. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit. [a] *df* = 17. RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills; FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming; Total Spring = total spring RA performance; Openness = openness to experience.

Table 22

Group Differences in Residents' Class Rank for IPIP-NEO and Spring RA Performance

Variable	First		Mixed					95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t* (45)	*df*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	33.33	2.99	31.69	2.25	2.01	29	.05	-0.03	3.32	0.75
PP	12.17	0.51	12.10	0.31	0.47	25	.64	-0.21	0.34	0.19
AS	24.22	2.07	23.76	2.21	0.71	45	.48	-0.84	1.77	0.21
FEEP	27.72	2.32	26.52	1.35	2.00	24	.06	-0.04	2.45	0.82
Total Spring	97.44	6.58	94.07	5.03	1.99	45	.05	-0.05	6.80	0.59
Neuroticism	20.06	4.35	21.31	6.98	-0.68	45	.50	-4.95	2.44	-0.20
Extraversion	35.00	6.40	37.21	5.92	-1.21	45	.24	-5.90	1.48	-0.36
Openness	38.17	6.07	38.31	6.70	-0.07	45	.94	-4.05	3.77	-0.02
Conscientiousness	39.56	5.76	40.52	4.47	-0.64	45	.53	-3.98	2.06	-0.19
Agreeableness	42.17	3.47	40.55	4.81	1.24	45	.22	-1.01	4.24	0.37

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 47. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit.
RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills; FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming; Total Spring = total spring RA performance; Openness = openness to experience.
First = all first-years; Mixed = mixed class years.

Table 23

Group Differences in Residential Learning Communities for IPIP-NEO and Spring RA Performance

Variable	RLC		Non-RLC				95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(45)	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	32.67	2.72	32.16	2.65	0.61	.55	-1.17	2.20	0.18
PP	12.13	0.35	12.13	0.42	0.07	.95	-0.24	0.26	0.02
AS	24.60	2.38	23.63	2.00	1.47	.15	-0.36	2.31	0.44
FEEP	27.40	1.35	26.78	2.04	1.07	.29	-0.55	1.79	0.32
Total Spring	96.80	5.85	94.69	5.81	1.16	.25	-1.56	5.78	0.35
Neuroticism	19.00	5.75	21.69	6.14	-1.43	.16	-6.48	1.10	-0.43
Extraversion	35.33	5.79	36.84	6.32	-0.78	.44	-5.39	2.37	-0.23
Openness	38.67	6.11	38.06	6.61	0.30	.77	-3.47	4.68	0.89
Conscientiousness	40.53	5.15	39.97	4.95	0.36	.72	-2.60	3.72	0.11
Agreeableness	42.47	3.98	40.56	4.48	1.41	.17	-0.83	4.63	0.42

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 47. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit.
RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills; FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming; Total Spring = total spring RA performance; Openness = openness to experience.
RLC = residential learning community floor; Non-RLC = not a residential learning community floor.

Several *t*-tests were performed to determine if there were statistically significant group differences between the RAs' self-reported GPAs and the scores for spring RA performance and the IPIP-NEO scale. Levine's test for equality of variance was conducted to ensure there was an equal variance between the two scores for the two groups (Pallant, 2007). As shown in Table 24, there were statistically significant group differences in spring administrative skills between RAs

with self-reported grade point averages above and below a 3.5 (p = .03). The magnitude of the differences of spring administrative skills based on self-reported GPAs above and below a 3.5 was moderate (d = -0.68). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β = .72). A value of 0.72, in other words, translates into a 28% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. RAs who reported that their GPAs were above a 3.5, in other words, had significantly higher spring RA performance group mean scores for administrative skills than RAs who reported that their GPAs were below a 3.5.

Table 24

Group Differences in GPA for IPIP-NEO and Spring RA Performance

Variable	GPA Below 3.5		GPA Above 3.5				95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(45)	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	31.68	2.31	32.75	2.82	-1.36	.18	-2.64	0.51	-0.41
PP	12.11	0.46	12.14	0.36	-0.32	.75	-0.28	0.20	-0.42
AS	23.11	1.60	24.50	2.32	-2.28*	.03	-2.63	-0.16	-0.68
FEEP	26.74	2.23	27.14	1.58	-0.73	.47	-1.53	0.71	-0.22
Total Spring	93.63	5.35	96.54	5.97	-1.71	.10	-6.33	0.52	-0.51
Neuroticism	20.47	6.51	21.07	5.89	-0.33	.75	-4.28	3.08	-0.10
Extraversion	36.11	6.72	36.54	5.83	-0.23	.82	-4.14	3.28	-0.07
Openness	36.47	6.85	39.46	5.89	-1.60	.12	-6.76	0.78	-0.48
Conscientiousness	39.16	5.00	40.82	4.91	-1.13	.26	-4.63	1.30	-0.34
Agreeableness	41.89	4.01	40.68	4.56	0.93	.36	-1.41	3.84	0.28

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 47. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit.
RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills; FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming; Total Spring = total spring RA performance; Openness = openness to experience.

Several *t*-tests were also performed to determine if there were statistically significant group differences between RA experience and scores for spring RA performance and the IPIP-NEO scale. As shown in Table 25, there were several statistically significant group differences in spring RA performance and the IPIP-NEO scores. There were, in particular, statistically significant group differences in spring resident interaction and communication between new and returning RAs ($p = .00$). The magnitude of the differences of spring administrative skills based

on RAs experience was very large (d = -1.13). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was adequate (1 - β = .96). A value of 0.96, in other words, translates into a 4% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. Returning RAs as a group had significantly higher mean scores than new RAs for spring resident interaction and communication. There were statistically significant group differences in administrative skills between new and returning RAs (p = .03). The magnitude of the differences of spring administrative skills based on RAs experience was large (d = -0.90). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was adequate (1 - β = .84). A value of 0.84, in other words, translates into a 16% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. In other words, returning RAs as a group also had higher scores than new RAs for spring administrative skills and RA experience had a large effect on spring administrative skills.

Table 25

Group Differences in RA Experience for IPIP-NEO and Spring RA Performance

Variable	New		Returning					95% CI		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t* (44)	*df*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
RIC	31.30	2.04	33.68	2.89	-3.10 **	30	.00	-3.96	-0.82	-1.13
PP	12.07	0.27	12.21	0.54	-1.03	24	.32	-0.41	0.14	-0.42
AS	23.26	1.53	24.79	2.59	-2.30*	26	.03	-2.89	-0.17	-0.90
FEEP	26.59	1.76	27.53	1.95	-1.69	44	.09	-2.04	0.18	-0.51
Total Spring	93.22	4.54	98.21	6.43	-3.09**	44	.00	-8.24	0.73	-0.93
Neuroticism	22.33	6.59	18.58	4.79	2.12*	44	.04	0.18	7.33	0.64
Extraversion	36.04	5.27	37.21	7.22	-0.60	44	.55	-5.14	2.79	-0.22
Openness	36.78	6.58	40.21	5.87	-1.82	44	.08	-7.23	0.37	-1.82
Conscientiousness	39.48	5.12	41.05	4.86	-1.05	44	.30	-4.60	1.45	-0.32
Agreeableness	39.56	4.34	43.00	3.15	-2.95*	44	.01	-5.80	-1.09	-0.89

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. N = 47. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit.
RIC = resident interaction and communication; PP = policies and procedures; AS = administrative skills; FEEP = floor environment, education, and programming; Total Spring = total spring RA performance; Openness = openness to experience.

As shown in Table 25, the total spring RA performance had statistically significant group differences based on new and returning RAs ($p = .00$). The magnitude of the differences of spring RA performance based on new and returning RAs was very large ($d = -0.93$). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was adequate ($1 - \beta = .86$). A value of 0.86, in other words, translates into a 14% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. Returning RAs as a group had higher total spring performance scores than new RAs and

the effect of RA experience on total spring performance was very large. The neuroticism score was the last scale that had statistically significant group differences between new and returning RAs based on *t*-tests ($p = .01$). The magnitude of the differences of neuroticism was moderate ($d = 0.64$). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate ($1 - \beta = .55$). A value of 0.55, in other words, translates into a 45% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. In other words, new RAs, as a group, had statistically significant higher scores on neuroticism than returning RAs and the effect of RA experience on neuroticism was moderate. The total spring agreeableness score also had statistically significant group differences based on RA experience ($p = .01$). As shown in Table 25, the magnitude of the differences of agreeableness was large ($d = -0.89$). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this t-test and the statistical power at the .05 level was adequate ($1 - \beta = .83$). A value of 0.83, in other words, translates into a 17% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. Returning RAs scored significantly higher mean scores as a group for spring agreeableness than new RAs.

In addition to independent *t*-tests, several ANOVAs were conducted to determine the group differences for the variables the number of residents on the RAs' floor, the RAs' academic major, and the RAs' class rank with scores on spring RA performance and IPIP-NEO data. Levine's test for homogeneity of variance was conducted to ensure equal variance for each of the groups. If a violation of the homogeneity of variance assumption existed, the asymptotically *F* distributed values were reported. There were statistically significant group differences in the spring RA performance and IPIP-NEO for the following: (a) the total IPIP-NEO scores based on the RAs' academic major and the RAs' class rank, (b) openness to experience based on the RAs'

class rank, (c) the resident interaction and communication score based on the RAs' class rank, and (d) the total spring RA performance score based on class rank. There were no statistically significant group differences in the number of residents on the floor community, the RAs' academic major and the RAs' class rank on spring policies and procedures (see Table 26); spring floor environment, education, and programming (see Table 27); neuroticism (see Table 28); extraversion (see Table 29); conscientiousness (see Table 30); or agreeableness (see Table 31).

Table 26

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Spring Policies and Procedures

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	0.10	0.05	0.30
Within groups	43	7.12	0.17	
Total	45	7.22		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	0.05	0.02	0.14
Within groups	44	7.19	0.16	
Total	46	7.23		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	0.28	0.14	0.88
Within groups	44	6.96	0.16	
Total	46	7.23		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47.

Table 27

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Spring Floor Environment, Education, and Programming

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	7.49	3.75	1.06
Within groups	43	151.49	3.52	
Total	45	158.98		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	0.99	0.49	0.14
Within groups	44	157.99	3.59	
Total	46	158.98		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	17.93	8.96	2.80
Within groups	44	141.05	3.21	
Total	46	158.98		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47.

Table 28

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Neuroticism

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	56.83	28.42	1.05[c]
Within groups	30	1640.99	38.16	
Total	32	1697.83		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	33.07	16.53	0.44
Within groups	44	1669.57	37.95	
Total	46	1702.64		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	4.21	2.11	0.06
Within groups	44	1698.42	38.60	
Total	46	1702.64		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47.[c] Welch statistic reported (i.e., Asymptotically F distributed).

Table 29

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Extraversion

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	123.64	61.82	1.71
Within groups	43	1551.84	36.09	
Total	45	1675.48		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	122.07	61.03	1.67
Within groups	44	1608.78	36.56	
Total	46	1730.85		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	26.65	13.32	0.49[c]
Within groups	26	1704.21	38.73	
Total	28	1730.85		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47. [c] Welch statistic reported (i.e., Asymptotically F distributed).

Table 30

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Conscientiousness

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	63.80	31.90	1.28
Within groups	43	1069.42	24.87	
Total	45	1133.22		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	99.27	49.63	2.11
Within groups	44	1034.69	23.52	
Total	46	1133.96		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	76.56	38.28	1.59
Within groups	44	1057.40	24.03	
Total	46	1133.96		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47.

Table 31

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Agreeableness

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Class[a]				
Between groups	2	53.77	26.88	1.55
Within groups	43	747.21	17.38	
Total	45	800.98		
Major[b]				
Between groups	2	70.92	35.46	1.93
Within groups	44	809.72	18.40	
Total	46	880.64		
Number of Residents[b]				
Between groups	2	8.14	4.07	0.21
Within groups	44	872.50	19.83	
Total	46	880.64		

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47.

Table 32

One-Way Analyses of Variance for Class, Major, and Number of Residents on Spring Administrative Skills

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*ES*
Class[a]					
Between groups	2	34.96	17.48	3.48* [c]	0.17
Within groups	29	173.50	4.04		
Total	32	208.46			
Major[b]					
Between groups	2	4.83	2.42	0.51	
Within groups	44	207.98	4.73		
Total	46	212.81			
Number of Residents[b]					
Between groups	2	20.82	10.41	2.39	
Within groups	44	191.99	4.36		
Total	46	212.81			

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47. [c] Welch statistic reported (i.e., Asymptotically F distributed).

The first significant group difference for the spring semester was administrative skills based on RAs' class rank. As shown in Table 32, a one-way analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of the RAs' class rank on the administrative score. There were statistically significant group differences for RAs' class rank and the effect size was large (F (2, 29) = 3.48, p = .04, η^2 = 0.17). Post-hoc comparisons using the Games-Howell test indicated that the mean score for juniors (M = 25.00, SD = 2.48) was significantly higher than first-year or sophomores (M = 23.00, SD =1.81). Seniors (M = 23.50, SD = 1.51) did not differ significantly from either of the other groups. Juniors, in other words, scored the highest as a group on administrative skills based on spring data and the effect of RAs' class rank on administrative skills was large.). A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this ANOVA and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β = .06). A value of 0.06, in other words, translates into a 94% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

The second significant group difference for the spring semester was openness to experience based on RAs' class rank. As shown in Table 33, a one-way analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of the RAs' class rank on the openness to experience score. There were statistically significant group differences for RAs' class rank and the effect size was large (F (2, 43) = 5.26, p = .01, η^2 = 0.19). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for first years or sophomores (M = 34.60, SD = 5.62) was significantly lower than seniors (M = 41.71, SD = 4.58). Juniors (M = 38.46, SD = 7.04) did not differ significantly from either of the other groups. Seniors, in other words, scored the highest as a group on openness to experience based on spring data and the effect of RAs' class rank on openness to experience was large. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this ANOVA

and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β = 0.06). A value of 0.06, in other words, translates into a 94% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again.

The third significant group difference for the spring semester was spring resident interaction and communication based on the RAs' class rank. As shown in Table 34, a one-way analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of the RAs' class rank on spring interaction and communication scores. Subjects were divided into three groups according to three categories based upon their class rank (i.e., first years or sophomores, juniors, seniors). There were statistically significant group differences for RAs' class rank and the effect size was large (F (2, 43) = 4.89, p = .01, η^2 = 0.18). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for first years or sophomores (M = 30.67, SD = 2.06) was significantly lower than juniors (M = 33.24, SD = 4.84). Seniors (M = 32.86, SD = 2.38) did not differ significantly from either of the other groups. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this ANOVA and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β = 0.06). A value of 0.06, in other words, translates into a 94% chance that a Type II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. In other words, juniors scored the highest as a group on spring resident interaction and communication scores and the effect of RAs' class rank on spring resident interaction and communication was large. Also shown in Table 34, there were no group differences in the number of residents and academic major on spring resident interaction and communication scores.

Table 33

One-Way Analyses Variance for Class, Major and Number of Residents on Openness to Experience

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*ES*
Class[a]					
Between groups	2	368.55	184.27	5.26*	0.19
Within groups	43	1506.69	35.04		
Total	45	1875.24			
Major[b]					
Between groups	2	241.81	120.91	3.24	
Within groups	44	1641.13	37.30		
Total	46	1882.94			
Number of Residents[b]					
Between groups	2	93.27	46.64	1.15	
Within groups	44	1789.66	40.67		
Total	46	1882.94			

Note.* $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47.

Table 34

One-Way Analyses Variance for Class, Major and Number of Residents on Spring Resident Interaction and Communication

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*ES*
Class[a]					
Between groups	2	59.22	29.61	4.89*	0.18
Within groups	43	262.11	6.10		
Total	45	321.33			
Major[b]					
Between groups	2	6.55	3.28	0.44[c]	
Within groups	21	317.66	7.22		
Total	23	324.21			
Number of Residents[b]					
Between groups	2	16.14	8.07	1.15	
Within groups	44	308.07	7.00		
Total	46	324.21			

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47. [c] Welch statistic reported (i.e., Asymptotically F distributed).

Table 35

One-Way Analyses Variance for Class, Major and Number of Residents on Spring Total RA Performance

Variable	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*ES*
Class[a]					
Between groups	2	251.21	125.60	4.14*	0.16
Within groups	43	1306.12	30.38		
Total	45	1557.33			
Major[b]					
Between groups	2	17.40	8.70	0.25	
Within groups	44	1553.45	35.31		
Total	46	1570.85			
Number of Residents[b]					
Between groups	2	153.02	76.51	2.37	
Within groups	44	1417.83	32.22		
Total	46	1570.85			

Note. * $p < .05$. [a] N = 46. [b] N = 47.

The fourth significant group difference for the spring semester was the total spring RA performance based on RAs' class rank. As shown in Table 35, a one-way analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of the RAs' class rank on total RA spring performance scores. There were statistically significant group differences for RAs' class rank and the effect size was large (F (2, 43) = 4.14, p = .02, $\eta^2 = 0.16$). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for first years or sophomores (M = 92.13, SD = 5.40) was significantly lower than juniors (M = 97.71, SD = 6.30). Seniors (M = 95.71, SD = 6.30) did not differ significantly from either of the other groups. Juniors scored the highest on the total spring RA and the effect of RAs' class rank on total spring RA performance was large. A post hoc power analysis was conducted for this ANOVA and the statistical power at the .05 level was not adequate (1 - β = 0.06. A value of 0.06, in other words, translates into a 94% chance that a Type

II error will occur and that a significant result will not be found if this study was conducted again. There were no group differences in the number of residents on the floor and the RAs' academic major on spring total RA performance (see Table 35).

Summary of Results

There were significant correlations between fall and spring RA performance scores. Only RAs' openness to experience significantly predicted fall total RA performance while none of the personality factors significantly predicted spring total RA performance. Openness to experience was also a significant predictor of the sub-scores of RA performance on fall and spring floor environment, education, and programming as well as fall policies and procedures. Extraversion only predicted spring administrative skills while agreeableness only predicted spring resident interaction and communication while conscientiousness significantly predicted fall policies and procedures.

As a group, the overall highest performing RAs for the fall and spring semesters were female, junior, White, returning RAs with a self-reported GPA above a 3.5. They had on average 31 to 40 first-year students. A few differences did exist between the fall and spring semesters regarding the highest performing RAs (i.e., the RAs' academic major and whether the RA lived on a residential learning community floor). The highest performing RAs in the fall semester majored in business, health, human services, human development, and technology fields while the highest performing RAs in the spring semester majored in education fields. The highest performing RAs in the fall semester did not live on a residential learning community floor although they did in the spring semester. All of these characteristics for the fall and spring semesters had higher mean scores while only the RAs' class rank (i.e., first-year students or sophomores, juniors, seniors) and the RAs' experience (i.e., new RAs, returning RAs) had

statistically significant differences for the fall and spring semesters. The RAs with self-reported GPAs above a 3.5 had statistically higher mean scores than those RAs with below a 3.5 GPA for the fall semester.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine if the five factor model of personality was a good predictor of RA performance at one large, public, four-year university. For the purposes of this study, the IPIP-NEO scale served as the measure of the five-factor model of personality. Secondary purposes were to determine if there were significant differences in RA performance between the fall and spring semesters. I discuss the results of the study in this chapter, present implications for practice, and the limitations for the study.

Previous research on RA performance indicated that the five-factor model of personality was a significant predictor of RA performance (Deluga & Masson, 2000; Wu & Stemler, 2008). Deluga and Masson (2000), specifically, found that RA extraversion was related to RA performance based on resident evaluations in the fall semester while Wu and Stemler (2008) maintained that RA conscientiousness and emotional stability (i.e., the opposite of neuroticism) predicted self-reported RA performance data and resident evaluations in the fall or spring semester. Neither of these two studies addressed the ability of the five-factor model of personality to predict RA performance at a public four-year university nor if there were differences between fall and spring RA supervisors' performance scores.

Relationship between Fall and Spring RA Performance

The first question sought to explore if there was a relationship between fall and spring RA performance data. The fall RA performance scores were highly or moderately correlated with spring RA performance scores. These results were not surprising as the questions on the evaluation remained the same between semesters and the supervisors did not change during the academic year for the participant RAs. Ployhart, Schneider, and Schmitt (2006) revealed that performance evaluations must be stable over time to be able to identify the types of performance

to predict. The consistency of the evaluator, furthermore, provided a reliable comparison of RA performance between the semesters. The variations in evaluator scores could be related to individual differences in rater ability and motivation (Hauenstein, 1998) or may be explicitly political (Ployhart et al., 2006). Due to the consistency of the evaluator and the evaluation between semesters, it was not surprising that there were statistically significant relationships between the fall and spring RA performance scores.

IPIP-NEO Personality Scale Prediction of RA Performance

The second question sought to determine if the five-factor model of personality was a good predictor of RA performance at one large, public, four-year university in the Midwest. Despite past research indicating that conscientiousness was related to job performance across all occupations (Barrick & Mount, 1991), this study only found openness to experience as a significant predictor of overall fall RA performance. None of the "Big Five" predicted spring overall RA performance at the participant institution. This study diverged from past research on RA performance and the five-factor model of personality as neither of the other two studies found openness to experience as a significant predictor of RA performance. Prior to exploring why openness to experience was related to RA performance at this large public university, it is imperative to discover why there were differences related to RA performance between the three studies.

There are two potential explanations for the differences in the results between the three studies that focused on RA performance and the five-factor model of personality. First, each of the three studies used different methodologies to explore the relationship between RA performance and the five-factor model of personality making a direct comparison difficult. There are clear differences based upon who rated performance as well as the importance of particular aspects of RA performance between public and private institutions (Barnes, 1972;

Elleven et al., 2001). Deluga and Masson (2000), for instance, used the NEO-FFI, the commercial equivalent of the IPIP-NEO scale, to measure the five-factor model of personality. They collected resident student evaluations during the fall term at a large, private university in the Northeast. Wu and Stemler (2008), on the other hand, after Deluga and Masson's success used the IPIP-NEO scale to measure the five-factor model. Wu and Stemler gathered both self-evaluations as well as resident evaluations of RAs during either the fall or the spring semester at one small, private, liberal arts university also located in the Northeast. This study, in comparison, used the IPIP-NEO scale to measure the five-factor model and gathered hall director evaluations of the RAs for both the fall and spring semesters.

Given the use of a variety of methodologies for each of these studies, it is also essential to explore why conscientiousness (i.e., a tendency to show self discipline, act dutifully, and aim for achievement through planned actions) was not a significant predictor for this study or in Deluga and Masson's (2000) study. Deluga and Masson concluded that conscientiousness was not a significant predictor of RA performance because students were required to be creative and to make quick decisions as part of the RA positions. Feist (1998) and Hough (1998) supported the claim that conscientiousness did not predict job performance for highly creative positions. George and Zhou (2001), however, noted that conscientious individuals were likely to be creative if both their supervisors did not engage in close monitoring and their co-workers were supportive. George and Zhou further claimed:

> Importantly, it is not conscientiousness per se that appears to be detrimental. Rather it is the combination of high conscientiousness and a situation that simultaneously encourages conformity, being self-controlled, meeting predetermined expectations, and lacks support for creative behavior. (p. 521)

Highly conscientious people, in other words, can be creative if supervisors allow them to be creative and co-workers are supportive of it. The relationship between supervisors, co-RAs, and RAs were not explored in this study so it is difficult to determine how these factors affected RA performance and creativity. One could speculate that creativity is not important to supervisors for all aspects of the RA position (e.g., policies and procedures and administrative skills).

In addition to creativity, Deluga and Masson (2000) also noted that conscientiousness might not be a significant predictor of overall RA performance because RAs are required to make quick decisions. Hough (1992) and Tett (1989) supported the claim that conscientiousness can hinder job performance in positions requiring quick decisions or those involving innovation. Barrick and Mount (1991), for instance, noted that police in emergency situations are not afforded the luxury of carefully planned responses. Conscientiousness was significantly related to fall policies and procedures and aspects of the RA position that require quick decision making; therefore, making it difficult to conclude that overall RA performance was not significantly related to conscientiousness because the RA position requires quick decision making. These conclusions from Deluga and Masson's study may no longer explain why conscientiousness was not a significant predictor of RA performance.

Driskell, Hogan, Salas, and Hoskins (1994) provided an additional interpretation of conscientiousness that might explain why it did not predict RA performance for this study. They discovered that conscientiousness instead translated into fewer tasks being accomplished and/or increasing the amount of time required in accomplishing a group of tasks. Driskell et al. may provide a valid explanation as to why conscientiousness was not related to RA performance in this study. RAs are required to complete a variety of tasks while maintaining a balance between academic work, a personal life, and the growing number of RA responsibilities (Blimling, 2010).

Highly conscientious RAs then might not be able to accomplish everything that is required of them or take more time and could result in being rated lower by their supervisors.

Openness to experience (i.e., an appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, curiosity, and a variety of experiences) was related to only fall RA performance. Mussel et al. (2011) declared that epistemic openness (i.e., openness to actions, ideas, and values) was a valid predictor of job and academic performance. The ability to identify additional options for resolving students' problems; be open to learning and providing accurate information about campus resources and policies; and be open to understanding others' values, opinions, and actions are all valuable skills for RAs (Blimling, 2010). Another argument could be made that openness to experience was significant due to the importance of creativity with programming. Blimling noted the importance of creativity when creating publicity and developing spontaneous programs. Openness to experience is a common characteristic of creative people (McCrae, 1987; Walker, Koestner, & Hum, 1995). Schilpzand et al. (2011) further revealed that openness to experience was important for creative teams. George and Zhou (2001) noted; however, an environment must be conducive to creativity. The environmental characteristics affecting creativity were not explored within the parameters of this study. To comprehend further why openness to experience was related to RA performance, it is imperative to explore the two aspects of fall RA performance and their relationship with the five-factor model of personality.

In addition to overall fall RA performance, openness to experience predicted fall and spring environment, education, and programming. This area of RA performance focuses on aspects related to creating a supportive, accepting, positive community environment through policy enforcement, role modeling, and programming (see Appendix F). RAs who score high on openness to experience are able to create positive, accepting floor communities and creative

programs for resident students. Blimling (2010) confirmed, "Although RAs do not have absolute control over the social climate of a living unit, they do play a significant role in how relationships are built and the atmosphere of trust that exists among residents" (p. 39). RAs, in other words, are essential to creating a positive, accepting environment based upon trust. Homan et al. (2008) further noted individuals who score high on openness to experience are better at working in diverse groups and appreciate diversity more than those who score low on openness to experience. Blimling further noted:

> RAs must commit to being open and accessible to all students. They should accept students for who they are and not judge them based on their race, culture, religion, or sexual orientation. This commitment should embrace the educational value of multiculturalism and help other students to do the same. (p. 62)

In addition to being open and accepting of all students, RAs through programming may need to be creative when reaching college students today. Open individuals are described as imaginative, original, broad-minded, and artistically sensitive (Barrick & Mount, 1991). These characteristics would all be valuable assets for RAs when developing and implementing programs. Open RAs have the ability to create floor environments through programming and other interactions with residents to develop an atmosphere of trust among them.

In addition to floor environment, education, and programming, openness to experience was able to predict fall policies and procedures. This area of RA performance focuses on how RAs addressed policy violations; if policy violations were confronted fairly and consistently; and how RAs followed-up after the incident and student issue reports (see Appendix F). Open individuals are receptive to learning, different perspectives, values, and actions (Mussel et al., 2011). Open RAs, in particular, value unusual ideas, actions, and values. They would likely be

willing to discuss with fellow students campus policies and procedures during the fall semester and would not be upset by unusual interpretations and/or the rationale as to why certain students chose not to follow certain polices. Open RAs, for example, may be able to maintain the relationship with students after an incident occurs while at the same time preserving the trusting environment on the floor community.

Open individuals, in addition, are able to tolerate ambiguity (McCrae & Costa, 1997) so open RAs would be well suited for the RA roles. Kozlowski (2008) explained the RA position presents situations for which staff cannot always be prepared, even when given the proper training. Openness to experience, in other words, may be a strong predictor of fall policies and procedures because of the necessity during the fall semester to educate students, especially first-year students, about residence hall and university policies as well as handle the ambiguity of the RA role.

Conscientiousness, on the other hand, may be a predictor of fall policies and procedures due to the need to be consistent when enforcing policies. Individuals who score high on conscientiousness are dependable, reliable, and self-controlled; work hard to achieve their goals; obey rules and conform to norms; desire to achieve; and are responsible and scrupulous (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Hogan & Ones, 1997; Tett et al., 1991). Conscientiousness is important to RAs to create an environment through established policies and procedures while deliberately aiming to achieve a specific type of floor community. RAs also need to be thorough and deliberate due to the legality of confronting issues such as drug use and abuse and suicide. If RAs do not follow procedures properly, there could be legal ramifications because of the way they handled a situation. Blimling (2010) further noted, “It is much easier to set reasonable limits at the start of the year than to stop excessive behavior once it has begun” (p. 43). RAs should set reasonable

limits, especially at the beginning of the year, and students should know the policies by the second term. This could help explain why conscientiousness and openness to experience were only significant during the fall but not in the spring semester.

Agreeableness would naturally be a strong predictor of spring resident interaction and communication, as resident students need to be treated with compassion. Resident interaction and communication, specifically, focuses on aspects of the RA position related to how a staff member has used retention and community development tools as well as in what ways the RAs attempted to serve students and meet their needs (see Appendix F). Agreeableness had statistically significant relationships with jobs involving cooperation (Barrick et al., 2003), interaction with others (Mount et al., 1998), and group cohesion (Barrick et al., 1998). The more compassionate RAs are with resident students, the more likely they may be able to have a strong relationship with resident students and be able to communicate effectively with them. Tjosvold (1984) and Stogdill (1974), furthermore, noted that team leaders who are person-oriented and agreeable with others tend to enhance social cohesion. The goal of the RAs, according to Blimling (2010), is to inform everyone that they are concerned about them as individuals, that they are willing to help, have information and training to help them if they choose to take advantage of it, and are available to them. The respect of residents is an essential element in RAs performing their jobs well (Blimling, 2010). Twale and Muse (1996) further commented, "Used less for resolving disciplinary and hall policy violations, compassion proves more effective for RAs dealing with one-on-one personal, social, sexual, and health issues" (p. 32). Agreeable RAs are able to have positive interactions and communication with residents; however, it is difficult to determine why agreeableness was only significant during the spring semester.

Extraversion, on the other hand, was negatively correlated with spring administrative skills. Administrative skills focus on aspects of the RA position related to how well a RA balances job responsibilities, maintains the level of commitment to the position, adapts to change, follows through on tasks, and updates supervisors on program assignments and focus area groups (see Appendix F). The more extraverted RAs were during the spring semester, the lower they performed on spring administrative skills. This conclusion was not surprising and was confirmed by past literature on extraversion and job performance. Walker-Hepner (1944), in particular, noted that introverted individuals perform better on administrative tasks, such as completing paperwork, compared to extroverted individuals. Blimling (2010) noted that doing poorly on administrative tasks is typically a result of poor time management. Extraverts, for example, may be late or unprepared for a staff meeting because they were talking to their residents. Costa and McCrae (1985) noted that gregariousness (i.e., the desiring the company of others) was another aspect of extraversion. It could be that extraverted RAs prefer other aspects of their job (e.g., interacting with residents or developing programs) than those aspects of the position that require them to spend time alone and away from others. It is unclear as to why extraversion was a significant predictor of administrative skills for the spring semester but not in the fall semester. It is possible another variable influences administrative skills more than extraversion as less than 10% of the variance was explained by this factor.

Relationship between RA Performance and Demographic Data

Questions three and four explored the relationship between fall and spring RA performance based on demographic data. There were no statistically significant differences based on the RAs' gender, the class rank of residents (i.e., all first-year students or mixed class floors), or whether or not a RA lived on a residential learning community floor. There were

statistically significant differences for the RAs' self-reported GPAs, the RAs' class rank, the number of residents who lived on the floor community, the RAs' academic major, and the amount of experience as an RA. The variables, race/ethnicity and housing type, were not used in this study due to the homogenous nature of the RA population and the housing system at the participant institution.

Many residence life professionals hire returning RAs prior to considering new applicants for the RA positions connoting a value of experience in the position. At this particular, four-year, public university, there were significant differences between returning and new RAs for fall and spring overall performance; fall and spring administrative skills; and spring resident interaction and communication. This study confirmed the value of experience as an RA on performance. In other words, returning RAs had higher mean scores, in general, according to RA supervisors than new RAs. Madson (1966) agreed and provided further reliability for these results when he found that hall directors rated returning RAs higher than new RAs at another public university in the Midwest.

The rationale behind why experience as an RA was so valuable to performance could be attributed to the ambiguity and the complex nature of the position. Blimling (2010) elaborated:

> To be called to do so many tasks, to hold so many responsibilities, and to be accountable for so many other people during the time when you are shaping your own education is one of the greatest challenges you will face during early adulthood. (p. 50)

RA experience, furthermore, may lend itself to being able to handle the unknown while using creativity and/or logic to come up with solutions to problems. Deluga (1989) confirmed, experienced RAs might employ pluralistic thinking and recognize that many residence hall

situations are ambiguous and therefore negotiable. The ability to negotiate the ambiguity of the RA position may explain why returning RAs were rated higher than new RAs.

The ambiguity of the RA position also provides RAs with the opportunity, to some extent, to determine how they will interact and communicate with residents. With experience, RAs learn the value of being sensitive to conditions while being compassionate. Returning RAs, in particular, were more agreeable, in general, than new RAs indicating that returning RAs were more courteous, flexible, cooperative, forgiving, and tolerant than new RAs. Returning RAs, therefore, may be more sensitive to student issues and compassionate with dealing with student concerns and problems. Twale and Muse (1996) confirmed, "A first year RA felt he could have been more sensitive to the conditions that caused the tension at an earlier stage of its development" (p. 30). They further revealed the value of RA experience by knowing how to foresee future issues and resolve them prior to them escalating into a major problem and creating a more positive floor environment. Delworth et al. (1974) further confirmed, "Previous residence hall experience also provides the applicant with some means of predicting patterns of group behavior that is essential to effective staff functioning" (p. 50). Returning staff tend to draw upon a variety of other experiences beyond those covered during RA training to solve problems (Twale & Muse, 1996). Returning RAs with at least one year of experience perform better according to their supervisors than new RAs because they are better prepared to take on the RA role.

Similar to spring resident interaction and communication, fall and spring administrative skills were rated higher for returning staff than new RAs. Blimling (2010) argued:

> Good administration is a matter of organization, discipline, and the application of knowledge about structures and procedures for specific situations . . . . RAs who are poor administrators usually are poor time managers and are poorly organized. (p. 40)

Due to the vexing nature of the RA position on students' time, it is logical to note that more experience in the position lends itself to being better capable of handling the administrative aspects of the RA role. RAs learn how to juggle the many roles and expectations that are placed upon them stemming from not only the RA position but also classes, friends, and family. Due to the different activities that occur throughout the academic year, it may take an entire year to adjust to the administrative aspects of the RA role explaining why this particular dimension of RA performance was significant for both the fall and spring semesters.

It is important to comment on neuroticism to explain further the differences of RA performance based on RA experience. New RAs, in general, scored statistically higher than returning RAs on neuroticism. Neurotic individuals have a tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily, such as anger, anxiety, depression, or vulnerability (Barrick & Mount, 1991). In other words, as RAs obtain more experience, the less neurotic they become as they adjust to the complexity of the RA position. The ambiguity and complex nature of the RA position could also explain why these students tend to be neurotic and become more emotionally stable as they learn how to handle the various roles expected of RAs at the participant institution.

Similar to RA experience, GPA has been included in RA selection processes at the majority of campuses in the United States (Blimling, 2010; Winston & Ender, 1988). Delworth et al. (1974) further confirmed the importance of GPA on RA performance. They stated, "some degree of academic stability and proficiency are needed in order to set aside time to handle the position in addition to serving as an academic role model" (p. 50). RAs with a GPA above a 3.5,

in general, performed statistically higher than RAs with a GPA below a 3.5 on overall fall RA performance; fall and spring administrative skills; and fall floor environment, education, and programming. Greenleaf et al. (1962) attributed differences in GPA as reflecting the mission of higher education and the ability of the students to handle the position in addition to their academic course load. If the GPA requirement is a little above the minimum, the demands of the RA position on their time can jeopardize their continued scholastic success (Greenleaf et al., 1967, p. 22). The differences based upon GPA confirmed the results from Clark (2008), Fedorovich et al. (1994), Kidd (1951), and Ostroth (1981a) who all discovered that RAs with higher GPA performed statistically higher on measures of RA performance.

Similar to RA experience and GPA, class rank has been a common qualification on many college campuses (Blimling, 2010; Clark, 2008; Delworth et al., 1974; Greenleaf et al., 1967; Powell et al., 1969). Junior RAs, in particular, were rated statistically higher than first-year and sophomore RAs on fall and spring resident interaction and communication; fall and spring administrative skills; and fall and spring overall RA performance. There is a long history of residence life professionals preferring juniors and seniors to first-year students and sophomores for the RA positions (Delworth et al., 1974; Greenleaf et al., 1967; Powell et al., 1969). The preference is typically given to juniors and seniors because of their presumed maturity (Powell et al., 1969), experience with university life (Delworth et al., 1974; Greenleaf et al., 1967), and some degree of academic stability (Delworth et al., 1974). Despite the preference given to juniors and seniors, residence life professionals have lowered the class-standing requirement on many campuses in order to fill all of the available positions. Schaller and Wagner (2007) explained:

> On many campuses, recruitment for the RA position is a difficult job. While the position was once an attractive way for students to pay for their housing and develop leadership skills, students can meet these goals through a variety of other positions on their campuses and often do not need additional financial support. On-campus housing options are aging and often less appealing; as a result, off-campus housing and its many freedoms are particularly attractive to many students. As the potential candidate pool diminishes, residence life professionals often feel no choice but to hire at least some sophomore RAs. (p. 34)

Although there has always been a preference for junior and senior RAs, it is imperative to explore why juniors, specifically, were rated higher the first-year students and sophomores as well as seniors.

The results of this study contradict Clark (2008) who found that sophomores were rated higher than either juniors or seniors. Clark used resident evaluations rather than supervisor evaluations possibly explaining why there were differences in the results. Because sophomore RAs face several unique challenges as they struggle developmentally with finding themselves, selecting a major, developing support systems, and maintaining and developing relationships (Blimling, 2010; Schaller & Wagner, 2007), juniors may be better suited for the RA role overall as expressed in this study. Seniors and first-year students, furthermore, are going through a transitional point in their lives. Blimling (2010) explained that seniors typically have different levels of interest in their education and subsequent career as well as a maturity level that typically surpass that of the students living on the floor community. It would only make sense with the unique challenges sophomores and seniors face that juniors would make the best RAs.

Although the number of residents on the floor is not a variable related to RA selection, there was a significant difference between RA performance and the number of residents on the floor at the participant institution. RAs with 31 to 40 resident students, in particular, were rated statistically higher on fall administrative skills than RAs with less than 31 residents on their floors. The results of this study contradict past research on resident-student ratios where the fewer number of residents on the floor resulted in more contact and better performance by the RA (Blimling, 2010; Clark, 2008). It is unclear why RAs with 31 to 40 residents had higher scores on administrative skills and total RA performance compared to those with less than 31 residents. Further research is needed to explore why RAs with 31 to 40 residents were rated higher in the fall semester on administrative skills and total performance scores compared to those with less than 31 and more than 40 residents on their floors.

Implications for Practice

For this one public, four-year university in the Midwest, the five-factor model was not a strong predictor of overall fall RA performance with less than 11% of the variance explained by openness to experience. None of the factors, furthermore, were significant predictors of spring RA performance. Openness to experience and conscientiousness were, nonetheless, able to predict 32.3% of the variance of fall policies and procedures. Residence life professionals at the participant institution may want to utilize the openness to experience and conscientiousness scales to determine which RA candidates are likely to perform better on aspects of the RA role related to policies and procedures. They could also utilize the openness to experience scale to determine which candidates will likely perform better on fall floor environment, education, and programming aspects of the RA role. Openness to experience, in particular, was also able to predict 23.3% of the variance of fall floor environment, education, and programming. Based

upon the results of this study, it would not be recommended that the IPIP-NEO scores be utilized for RA selection as a means to predict overall RA performance at this one public, four-year university. Due to the low power of the regression models to predict overall performance scores, further research with a larger sample is needed to determine accurately if this tool should be utilized for RA selection processes at the participant institution.

The demographic variables gathered for this study did provide some additional insight into RA performance at this public, four-year university. It is imperative to discuss first how non-significant and other factors not explored in this study may need to be considered in RA selection processes. Powell et al. (1969) explained, "Staff can also be selected on the basis of specific needs and characteristics of a given residence hall, its population, and the objectives of the students and staff in that area" (p. 198). Some additional criteria that relate to the specific needs and characteristics of residence halls could include gender and academic major. Gender is one criterion that most residence life professionals take into consideration prior to even meeting the candidates. They need to know based upon anticipated housing occupancy rates how many males and how many females to hire to staff the residence halls if RAs are hired to serve students of their same gender. Gender, furthermore, could be a consideration for residence life programs with single gender housing (e.g., all female halls).

In addition to gender, academic major may also influence who will be hired based upon the needs of special interest groups or hall programs. Residential learning communities or special interest housing, for instance, may require a student staff member to have similar interests or the same academic major as those who reside in the community. A variety of other factors beyond gender, academic major, or other variables not explored in this study may influence which candidates are selected for these student positions. Anchors and Hay (1990)

further advocated, "Our [RA] staff should reflect a range of cultural, ethnic, gender, and personality differences" (p. 20). Residence life professionals, in other words, should place a high value on having a diverse group of students serving as RAs. Watt, Howard-Hamilton, and Fairchild (2008) agreed, "The [RA] selection committee must be aware that there is not only a need for a diverse staff, but also the resident advisor must be willing to engage in the process of becoming more self-aware and multiculturally competent" (p. 35). Residence life professionals use additional criteria beyond those explored in this study explaining why decisions to hire students for the RA position may contradict the results of this study. This information should be considered before making any policy and/or procedural changes in a RA selection process based upon these findings regarding RA experience, class rank, and GPA.

This study, in particular, found that RA experience, class rank, and GPA were the only three factors that had a moderate or large effect on RA performance scores. RAs with above a 3.5 self-reported GPA, in particular, scored higher on fall and spring administrative skills; total fall RA performance; and fall floor environment, education, and programming. RAs with experience in the position, furthermore, had higher fall and spring performance; fall administrative skills; and spring resident interaction and communication scores. Junior RAs performed better on fall and spring resident interaction and communication; fall and spring administrative skills; and fall and spring overall RA performance. This study provides further support for residence life professionals who may want to continue to use GPA, class rank, and RA experience as factors in their RA selection processes. Residence life professionals, in other words, may want to hire returning RAs prior to considering new candidates as well as hire junior candidates with GPAs above a 3.5; however, it is imperative to take into consideration the values

and needs of the department prior to making any decisions about whom to hire for the RA positions.

Recommendations for Future Research

Due to the housing options available at the participant institution, further research should focus on a more diverse housing system to be able to explore the relationship between housing type and RA performance. Due to the small number of responses and low power, a larger study should further explore if the IPIP-NEO scale is a good predictor of RA performance. It is also recommended that a multi-institution study be conducted to have the ability to compare results from different institutional types to be able to generalize confidently the results. The number of residents on the floor in relationship to fall administrative RA performance should also be explored to determine why those RAs with fewer than 31 residents scored higher than those RAs with less than 30 resident students. Lastly, it is recommended that a qualitative study explore the relationship of creativity on RA performance and, specifically, the value supervisors and RAs place on creativity at the participant institution.

Limitations

The original data collection plan was to use the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) membership to survey anyone with the title "hall director" and then have them evaluate the performance of one to two RAs who they directly supervise. After the supervisors provided information about the RAs, the RAs would then complete a survey that included the personality scale, a self-evaluation, demographic information, and a social desirability scale. The ACUHO-I research committee noted that RAs are not members of ACUHO-I and human subjects review board (HSRB) approval would be required from each of participating institutions. The ACUHO-I research committee

recommended that I refocus the scope of my study and only focus on one institution. The current methodology was the result of my dissertation committee taking into consideration the recommendation from the ACUHO-I research committee to create a study that allowed me the opportunity to complete this project within a more manageable timeframe. Several limitations; however, arose because of the new methodology chosen for this study.

The retrospective, non-experimental design of using RA performance to predict RA selection has its limitations. These students were previously selected making this prediction somewhat limited in practical application. The particular institution used for this study did not result in generalizability to other four-year public universities due to the small number of participants. The power, furthermore, for the regression equations was not adequate so results should be interpreted with caution. The limited statistical power for several of the regression equations was the result of the modest sample size of this study, which may have played a role in limiting the significance of some of the statistical comparisons and predictions conducted for analysis. A post hoc power analysis revealed that an n of approximately 67 was needed to obtain statistical power at the recommended .80 level (Cohen, 1988). In addition to the low power for the regression analysis, the low number of respondents who self-identified as students of color and/or who were not living and working in traditional residence halls prohibited the use of race/ethnicity and housing type in any of the analyses for this study.

The data collection dates and the use of an electronic survey may have also affected the response rate. The data collection dates occurring during the last week of classes, the exam week, and the week after classes of the spring semester could have resulted in a lower response rate. Lynn (2008) agreed, “People might be more willing to take part [in survey research] at certain times than others” (p. 48). If the data collection, in other words, took place prior to the

end of the semester the response rate may have been higher for the study. The use of an electronic survey instead of a paper-based survey could have also affected the response rate. Mertler and Charles (2008) confirmed that web-based and e-mail surveys have low response rates because many people are uncomfortable with sending personal information over the Internet.

In addition to a lower response rate, the use of incentives and a senior residence life staff member could have affected the manner in which participants responded to the survey data. "Incentives may also affect response quality, such as more missing items, shorter open-ended responses, and filling in rubbish data" (Manfreda & Vehovar, 2008, p. 275). The use of an electronic survey, in other words, could also have affected the quality of the participant's responses. Manfreda and Vehovar (2008) further commented, "In addition, Internet users tend to read more quickly, are more impatient, and they scan rather than carefully read the text" (p. 276). Internet surveys also produce concerns for participants about privacy that may affect the quality of the responses. Manfreda and Vehovar (2008) argued, "Privacy concerns may also influence data quality and concerned respondents may give different answers online than they give offline" (p. 280). The use of the senior residence life officer may have also affected how participant RAs responded despite the fact this person did not have access to the survey or individual results.

The self-reported nature of the personality scale and the indication that social desirability was a factor for the majority of the participants could have also slightly skewed the results. RAs who participated in this study answered the questions in a socially desirable way, indicating "faking" may be an issue. Hough, Eaton, Dunnette, Kamp, and McCloy (1990) found that "intentional distortion of self-descriptors in an overly desirable way does not appear to be a serious problem" for the five factor model of personality. Converse Peterson, and Griffith

(2009), furthermore, noted, "For single-predictor selection, overall decision consistency was approximately 70%, indicating most individuals hired in absence of faking would be hired in the presence of faking" (p. 57). They also noted for multiple-predictor selection processes the decision consistency raises to 90% despite the presence of "faking" and the manipulated parameters became less influential (Converse et. al., 2009). As most RA selection processes use more than a single predictor to select RAs, in other words, there is a less than 10% chance that a candidate was offered a position that should not have been selected because of faking.

Summary

There is little recent research on RA selection (Jaeger & Caison, 2006) and those researchers who have studied it in the past have produced inconclusive results at best. Although past research indicated that the IPIP-NEO model was a strong predictor of RA performance, this study does not support its use in RA selection processes. The purpose, specifically, was to examine whether the five-factor model of personality was a good predictor of RA performance at one large, public university in the Midwest. The IPIP-NEO scale, in particular, was used as the measure of the five-factor model for this study. Secondary purposes were to explore how descriptive characteristics affected RA performance at the participant institution.

The results of this study indicated overall the five-factor model of personality, and specifically, the IPIP-NEO, was not a significant predictor of overall RA performance despite past researchers supporting the model. As Guion (1998) stated, "Like winning horses, psychometric traditions are not immediately traditions; they must win many competitions against many competitors" (p. 7). The five-factor model, unfortunately, did not become a winning horse for RA performance according to this study. The study did, however, provide further support for the long tradition of using GPA, class rank, and RA experience in the selection of RAs as these

factors were significantly related to RA performance at this one large, public, four-year university in the Midwest. The race for a valid, systematic, unbiased method of RA selection continues. It is plausible that the ambiguous and complex nature of the RA position prevents it from being predicted by any single standardized instrument.

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Appendix A

Standardized Instruments Used in RA Selection

Instrument	Study	Valid Predictor of RA Performance
Accurate Empathy Scale	Wyrick & Mitchell (1971)	Yes, only females
Acquiescence Scale	Bodden & Walsh (1968)	Yes, self-control scale
Affective Sensitivity Scale	Mullozzi & Spees (1971)	No
Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values	Dolan (1965)	No
	Simons (1957)	Inconclusive
Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory	Jaeger & Caison (2006)	Yes
	Wu & Stemler (2008)	Yes
Bell's Adjustment Inventory	Wortuba (1969)	Inconclusive
California and Authoritarian F-Scale	Hoyt & Davidson (1967)	No
	Bodden & Walsh (1968)	No
California Personality Inventory	Barnes (1972)	No
	Dolan (1965)	No
	Gregory (1966)	No
	Hall & Creed (1979)	Yes, flexibility scale
	Madson (1966)	No
	Schroeder & Drowse (1968)	No
Diagnostic Analysis of Nonverbal Accuracy Scale 2	Gentry, Harris, & Nowicki (2007)	No
Edwards Personal Preference Schedule	Dolan (1965)	Yes, females only
	Holbrook (1972)	Yes, males only
	LaCamera (1970)	No
	Murphy & Ortenzi (1966)	No
	Schroeder & Dowse (1968)	No
	Wortuba (1969)	Yes
Eleven Motivational Factors	Thomas (1979)	Inconclusive

(continued)

Instrument	Study	Valid Predictor of RA Performance
Furst Questionnaire on Teacher Practices	Kirkpatrick (1968)	No
Gordon Personality Inventory	Hayes & Burke (1981)	No
Guilford-Zimmerman	Cook (1955)	Yes
	Simons (1957)	Yes
	Thomas (1979)	Inconclusive
Hutchins Behavior Inventory	Mueller & Hutchins (1991)	No
IPIP-NEO Five Factor Model	Wu & Stemler (2008)	Yes
Lifestyle Assessment Questionnaire	Fedorovich et al. (1994)	Inconclusive
Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory	Simons (1957)	No
Myers-Briggs Type Inventory	Anchors & Hay (1990)	Inconclusive
	Wachowiak & Bauer (1977)	Inconclusive
	Wilson (1971)	No
NEO-FFI Five Factor Model	Deluga & Masson (2000)	Yes
Perceived Self-Questionnaires	Zirkle & Hudson (1975)	Yes
Personality Orientation Inventory	Anthony (1973)	
	Atkinson et al. (1973)	No
	Graff & Bradshaw (1970)	Yes, males only
	Graff et al. (1970)	Yes, males only
	Kipp (1979)	Yes
	Mullozzi & Spees (1971)	Yes
	Schroeder & Willis (1973)	No
	Thomas (1979)	Yes
Personality Research Form	Frazer (1983)	Yes
Resident Assistant Stress Inventory	Dickson & Thayer (1983)	No

(continued)

Instrument	Study	Valid Predictor of RA Performance
Self-reporting Assertive Schedule	Wetzel (1991)	No
Six Factor test of Social Intelligence	Orseno (1967)	No
Social Response Inventory	Watt, Howard-Hamilton, & Fairchild (2003)	Inconclusive
Socio-metric questionnaire	Wotruba & Crawley (1967)	Inconclusive
Stern Activities Index	Kirkpatrick (1968)	Yes
Strong Vocational Interest Bank	Murphy & Ortenzi (1966) Schroeder & Dowse (1968)	No No
Survey of Interpersonal Values	Barnes (1972)	No
Tennessee Self-Concept Scale	Wetzel (1991)	Yes
Viewpoints Inventory	Biggs (1971)	Yes

Appendix B

50-Item International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) Short Form of NEO-PI

From International Personality Item Pool: A Scientific Collaboratory for the Development of Advanced Measures of Personality Traits and Other Individual Differences (http://ipip.ori.org/) Website.

Instructions:

On the following pages, there are phrases describing people's behaviors. Please use the rating scale below to describe how accurately each statement describes ***you***. Describe yourself as you generally are now, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you honestly see yourself, in relation to other people you know of the same gender as you are, and roughly your same age. So that you can describe yourself in an honest manner, your responses will be kept in absolute confidence. Please read each statement carefully, and then select a response on the scale.

Response Options:

1- Very Inaccurate, 2- Moderately Inaccurate, 3- Neither Inaccurate nor Accurate, 4- Moderately Accurate, 5- Very Accurate

I…

		Factor, and Positively (+) or Negatively (-)Keyed
1.	Often feel blue.	Neuroticism (+)
2.	Make friends easily.	Extraversion (+)
3.	Panic easily.	Neuroticism (+)
4.	Keep in the background.	Extraversion (-)
5.	Tend to vote for liberal political candidates.	Openness to Experience (+)
6.	Get back at others.	Agreeableness (-)
7.	Have little to say.	Extraversion (-)
8.	Rarely get irritated.	Neuroticism (-)
9.	Feel comfortable with myself.	Neuroticism (-)
10.	Am not easily bothered by things.	Neuroticism (-)
11.	Am very pleased with myself.	Neuroticism (-)
12.	Am skilled in handling social situations.	Extraversion (+)
13.	Do not enjoy going to art museums.	Openness to Experience (-)
14.	Know how to captivate people.	Extraversion (+)
15.	Insult people.	Agreeableness (-)
16.	Don't like to draw attention to myself.	Extraversion (-)
17.	Carry the conversation to a higher level.	Openness to Experience (+)
18.	Am often down in the dumps.	Neuroticism (+)
19.	Don't talk a lot.	Extraversion (-)
20.	Make people feel at ease.	Agreeableness (+)

21.	Believe in the importance of art.	Openness to Experience (+)
22.	Dislike myself.	Neuroticism (+)
23.	Have a vivid imagination.	Openness to Experience (+)
24.	Would describe my experiences as somewhat dull.	Extraversion (-)
25.	Have a sharp tongue.	Agreeableness (-)
26.	Enjoy hearing new ideas.	Openness to Experience (+)
27.	Get chores done right away.	Conscientiousness (+)
28.	Have frequent mood swings.	Neuroticism (+)
29.	Am not interested in abstract ideas.	Openness to Experience (-)
30.	Feel comfortable around people.	Extraversion (+)
31.	Carry out my plans.	Conscientiousness (+)
32.	Accept people as they are.	Agreeableness (+)
33.	Cut others to pieces.	Agreeableness (-)
34.	Pay attention to details.	Conscientiousness (+)
35.	Do not like art.	Openness to Experience (-)
36.	Avoid philosophical discussions.	Openness to Experience (-)
37.	Suspect hidden motives in others.	Agreeableness (-)
38.	Find it difficult to get down to work.	Conscientiousness (-)
39.	Seldom feel blue.	Neuroticism (-)
40.	Shirk my duties.	Conscientiousness (-)
41.	Have a good word for everyone.	Agreeableness (+)
42.	Make plans and stick to them.	Conscientiousness (+)
43.	Respect others.	Agreeableness (+)
44.	Am the life of the party.	Extraversion (+)
45.	Tend to vote for conservative political candidates.	Openness to Experience (-)
46.	Am always prepared.	Conscientiousness (+)
47.	Waste my time.	Conscientiousness (-)
48.	Do just enough work to get by.	Conscientiousness (-)
49.	Believe that others have good intentions.	Agreeableness (+)
50.	Don’t see things through.	Conscientiousness (-)

Appendix C

Descriptive Variables

1. What is your gender?
   A) Male
   B) Female
   C) Transgender

2. What is your race/ethnicity?
   A) American Indian/Alaskan native
   B) Asian/Pacific Islander
   C) Black/Non-Hispanic
   D) Multiracial
   E) White/Non-Hispanic
   F) Other

   If other, please explain: (open-ended)

3. What is your class standing?
   A) First-year
   B) Sophomore
   C) Junior
   D) Senior
   E) Graduate Student

4. Including the current quarter/semester, how many quarters/semesters have you been an RA?
   A) 1
   B) 2
   C) 3
   D) 4
   E) 5
   F) 6
   G) 7 or more

5. What is your grade point average?
   A) 0.00 to 2.00
   B) 2.01 to 2.50
   C) 2.51 to 3.00
   D) 3.01 to 3.50
   E) 3.51 to 4.00

6. What is your major? (open-ended)

7. What is the class standing of your residents?
   A) All first-year students
   B) Mixed class years (i.e., first-year students, sophomores, juniors, seniors)
   C) Upper-class students (i.e., sophomores, juniors, seniors)
   D) Graduate students
   E) Other

   If other, please explain: (open-ended)

8. Are you an RA on a floor that hosts a residential learning community?
   A) Yes
   B) No

9. How many residents live on your floor?
   A) 0 to 10
   B) 11 to 20
   C) 21 to 30
   D) 31 to 40
   E) 41 to 50
   F) More than 51

10. In what type of housing do you live?
    A) Traditional hall (rooms with common bathroom)
    B) Suites (rooms with private bathrooms)
    C) Apartments (rooms, private bath, living room, kitchen)
    D) Other

    If other, please explain: (open-ended)

Appendix D

Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale – Short Form
(Marlowe & Crowne, 1960; Reynolds, 2002)

Instructions:

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and decide whether the statement is *true* or *false* as it pertains to you personally.

1. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged. (F)
2. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way. (F)
3. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability. (F)
4. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right. (F)
5. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener. (T)
6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone. (F)
7. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake. (T)
8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget. (F)
9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable. (T)
10. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own. (T)
11. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others. (F)
12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me. (F)
13. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings. (T)

Appendix E

IPIP-NEO Permission

Asking Permission

Please don't!

One neat thing about the world of public domain is that NOTHING is a problem. You are free to use the IPIP items and/or scales in any way you want. You don't have to ask permission.

Cool, huh?

Return Home

Appendix F

RA Performance Evaluation Questions

This evaluation is designed to assess Resident Advisor job performance, provide reinforcement and/or opportunity for improvement, and is completed at the end of each semester in order to provide feedback and allow for growth and challenge.

Completion of Form: Using information provided on the EBI or a floor survey and from personal observations of performance by the supervising hall director, place into writing a formal performance evaluation of how this resident advisor performed within this position. Using the Likert and dichotomous rating systems (see scales below), gauge performance in each evaluation area. Mark the box that corresponds with the chosen raking.

Performance Evaluation Rating Scale

Likert Scaled Items

Exceeds Expectations – Work performance is exceptional with the staff member exceeding written employment expectations. Serves as a role model and has mastered the required competencies.

Meets Expectations – Effectively fulfills written employment expectations with performance that is consistently within written employment expectations.

Needs Improvement - Work quality is marginal and is in need of additional supervisory mentoring in order to refine skills. RA requires additional training to help meet written employment expectations. Staff member shows a desire to improve.

Does Not Meet Expectations – Quality of work is weak, reflects little effort, or does not meet written employment expectations.

Not Observed – No opportunity to observe this staff member in this specific evaluation area or the evaluative item listed is not a part of the job description of this staff member.

Dichotomously Scaled Items

Yes – Demonstrates proficiency in the specified evaluative area or followed established procedure when completing a specific job related task within the Resident Advisor position.

No – Failed to follow established procedure when completing this task or is lacking proficiency in this evaluative area.

Section 1: Resident Interaction & Communication

Items to include are how this staff member has used the retention program tools and the community development tools; in what ways this staff member attempts to serve students and meet their needs.

The Resident Advisor…

1. Effectively using the retention program tools (Likert)
2. Effectively using the community development program tools (Likert)
3. Develops individual relationships with residents (Likert)
4. Has a visible presence on the floor (Likert)
5. Aware of and responsive to the needs of residents (Likert)
6. Responds to resident concerns and feedback (Likert)
7. Knows names and basic background of all residents on floor (Likert)
8. Effectively communicates information and resources to residents (Likert)
9. Handles student information and resources to residents (Likert)
10. Keeps supervisors informed of student issues and referrals (Likert)

Section 2: Policies and Procedures

Items to include are how this staff member addresses policy violations; if policy violations are consistently and fairly confronted; and follow-up after incident and student issue reports.

The Resident Advisor…

11. Confronts discipline issues professionally (Likert)
12. Behaves in a manner consistent with the law and university policies
13. Refers students to policies/procedures in the Student Handbook (dichotomous)
14. Possesses adequate knowledge of University policies (dichotomous)
15. Keeps supervisor aware of all disciplinary issues (dichotomous)
16. Addresses emergencies and crisis situations professionally (dichotomous)
17. Submits accurately written incident reports within 24 hours (dichotomous)
18. Completes fire safety inspections as trained by the hall director (dichotomous)
19. Responds appropriately floor issues when not on duty (dichotomous)
20. Uses keep key/master key as directed by hall director (dichotomous)

Section 3: Administrative Skills

Items to include are how this staff member balances job responsibilities; level of commitment to the position; ability to adapt to change; follow through on tasks; updates on program assignment and focus area groups.

The Resident Advisor…

21. Actively participants in and is attentive at staff meetings (Likert)
22. Fulfills program assignment requirements as directed (Likert)
23. Accurately submits paperwork and reports within deadlines (Likert)
24. Fulfills duty responsibilities as trained by the hall director (Likert)
25. Keeps bulletin boards updated; posts fillers and resources (Likert)
26. Completes other duties as assigned by the hall director (Likert)
27. Maintains at least a 2.5 cumulative and semester grade point average (dichotomous)
28. Maintains confidentiality of student records and interactions (dichotomous)
29. Arrives for meetings prepared and in a timely manner (dichotomous)
30. Checks and empties mailboxes on a daily basis (dichotomous)
31. Fulfills front desk expectations while on duty (inventory system, packages, etc…) (dichotomous)

Section 4: Floor Environment, Education and Programming

Items to include are how this staff member interacts with residents within the floor community; types and quality of social programs on the floor; give examples of where this staff member has encouraged student success; and examples where the staff member has promoted diversity.

The Resident Advisor…

32. Programs according to the Community Development Program and hall expectations (Likert)
33. Encourages student leadership and involvement (i.e., Hall Council floor reps) (Likert)
34. Promotes an environment that is open and accepting of diversity (Likert)
35. Creates an environment supportive of student academic success (Likert)
36. Encourages residents to hold each other accountable (Likert)
37. Utilizes community development program tool to monitor and understand floor community (Likert)
38. Effectively mediates roommate and other student conflicts (Likert)
39. Serves as a role model for the campus community (Likert)
40. Enforces courtesy hours and quiet hours policies (dichotomous)
41. Works to remedy custodial and maintenance needs on the floor (dichotomous)

Appendix G

Human Subjects Review Board Approval Letter

BGSU
Bowling Green State University

Office of Research Compliance
309A University Hall
Bowling Green, OH 43403-0183
Phone: (419) 372-7716
E-mail: hsrb@bgsu.edu

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2010-2011

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April 21, 2011

TO: Andrew Patrick Sadouskas
HESA

FROM: Hillary Harms, Ph.D.
HSRB Administrator

RE: HSRB Project No.: H11D188GE7

TITLE: *Resident Advisor Selection: Is a Broad Measure of Personality a Good Predictor of RA Performance?*

You have met the conditions for approval for your project involving human subjects. **As of April 21, 2011, your project has been granted final approval by the Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB). This approval expires on March 27, 2012.** You may proceed with subject recruitment and data collection.

The final approved version of the consent document(s) is attached. Consistent with federal OHRP guidance to IRBs, **the consent document(s) bearing the HSRB approval/expiration date stamp is the only valid version and you must use copies of the date-stamped document(s) in obtaining consent from research subjects.**

You are responsible to conduct the study as approved by the HSRB and to use only approved forms. If you seek to make any changes in your project activities or procedures, send a request for modifications to the HSRB via this office. Those changes must be approved by the HSRB prior to their implementation.

You have been approved to enroll 1,112 participants. If you want to enroll additional participants you must seek approval from the HSRB.

Good luck with your work. Let me know if this office or the HSRB can be of assistance as your project proceeds.

Comments/ Modifications:
Please add text equivalent to the BGSU HSRB approval/expiration date stamp to the "footer" area of the electronic consent form (see attached for specific text).

c: Dr. Maureen Wilson

Research Category: EXPEDITED #7

Appendix H

RA Invitation E-mail

Dear RA,

As a Ph.D. candidate in higher education administration at Bowling Green State University, I am seeking approximately **15-20 minutes** of your time to complete a survey for my dissertation. This survey will be administered from April 27th through May 13th.

This research is being conducted to determine if a broad personality scale is a good predictor of RA performance. As a RA, I am asking you to rate yourself on 62 statements and 11 demographic questions. Additionally, I would ask your permission to obtain your RA evaluation that will be completed by your supervisor. If you consent, the Office of Residence Life will provide a copy to me. Once the Likert-scale items on the evaluation are matched with your survey responses, your name and written comments will be removed and no record of them will be kept.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks involved in this study; however, if you decide to withdraw your participation you may do so at any time by simply leaving the website.

Your e-mail contact information will be kept separately from your responses. All of your survey responses and research records will be kept confidential. No individual responses will be disclosed at any time. Please note that e-mail is not 100% secure, so it is possible that someone intercepting your e-mail will gain knowledge of your possible interest in the study.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact me at 419-327-2623 or by e-mail at asadous@bgsu.edu. You may also contact my dissertation chair Dr. Maureen E. Wilson, Department of Higher Education and Student Affairs, Bowling Green State University at 419-372-7321 (mewilso@bgsu.edu). If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the chair of Bowling Green University's Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgsu.edu).

The link below will take you to the survey. By clicking the link, you are confirming that you are at least 18 years old.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
Andy Sadouskas

Follow this link to the Survey:

http://survey.bgsu.edu/surveys/HESA/RA/RA.htm

Appendix I

First RA Reminder E-mail

Dear RA,

You should have received an e-mail on April 27th inviting you to participate in a study to determine if a broad personality scale is a good predictor of RA performance. If you previously completed the survey, thank you for your time. I am unable to determine who did or did not respond to the survey so this e-mail is being sent all INSTITUTION RAs. If you have not previously completed the survey, I again want to request your participation. It will only take approximately **15-20 minutes** of your time.

As a RA, I am asking you to rate yourself on 62 statements and 11 demographic questions.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks involved in this study; however, if you decide to withdraw your participation you may do so at any time by simply leaving the website.

Your name and e-mail contact information will be kept separately from your responses. All of your survey responses and research records will be kept confidential. No individual responses will be disclosed at any time. Please note that e-mail is not 100% secure, so it is possible that someone intercepting your e-mail will gain knowledge of your possible interest in the study.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact me at 419-327-2623 or by e-mail at asadous@bgsu.edu. You may also contact my dissertation chair Dr. Maureen E. Wilson, Department of Higher Education and Student Affairs, Bowling Green State University at 419-372-7321 (mewilso@bgsu.edu). If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the chair of Bowling Green's University's Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgsu.edu).

The link below will take you to the survey. By clicking the link, you are confirming that you are at least 18 years old.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
Andy Sadouskas

Follow this link to the Survey:
http://survey.bgsu.edu/surveys/HESA/RA/RA.htm

Appendix J

Second RA Reminder

Dear RA,

This is your last chance to participate in my study to determine if a broad personality scale is a good predictor of RA performance. If you previously completed the survey, thank you for your time. I am unable to determine who did or did not respond to the survey so this e-mail is being sent all INSTITUTION RAs. If you have not previously completed the survey, it will only take approximately **15-20 minutes** of your time. Please consider completing the survey by May 13th at 5p.m.

As a RA, I am asking you to rate yourself on 62 statements and 11 demographic questions.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks involved in this study; however, if you decide to withdraw your participation you may do so at any time by simply leaving the website.

Your e-mail contact information will be kept separately from your responses. All of your survey responses and research records will be kept confidential. No individual responses will be disclosed at any time. Please note that e-mail is not 100% secure, so it is possible that someone intercepting your e-mail will gain knowledge of your possible interest in the study.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact me at 419-327-2623 or by e-mail at asadous@bgsu.edu. You may also contact my dissertation chair Dr. Maureen E. Wilson, Department of Higher Education and Student Affairs, Bowling Green State University at 419-372-7321 (mewilso@bgsu.edu). If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the chair of Bowling Green's University's Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgsu.edu).

The link below will take you to the survey. By clicking the link, you are confirming that you are at least 18 years old.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
Andy Sadouskas

Follow this link to the Survey:

http://survey.bgsu.edu/surveys/HESA/RA/RA.htm