

Graduate Essay – Sample 1

I did not know higher education existed as a field until I came to college. Despite this, it has surprisingly been the field that has had the largest impact on my college experience. It has given me direction going forward.

College has been my most important experience so far, in that it has allowed me to better understand how I interact with my environment and how others experience the world around them. Without the Student Affairs professionals I have interacted with over the past four years, I would not be where I am today. I hope that in my future as a Student Affairs professional I can give students the great experience I have been privileged to receive. I will take the lessons I have learned and those that I will learn in the future to improve the college experience for many future generations going forward.

I have enjoyed being a Resident Advisor, a Parent Orientation Leader, and an Assistant Resident Director while attending the University of Massachusetts Lowell for the past four years. All of these jobs fall under the Office of Residence Life. These opportunities have been cornerstones of my college education. They have taught me the long-term and transferrable skills of organization, conflict management, and supervision.

I have most enjoyed being an Assistant Resident Director, as I get to work with the Resident Advisors and Resident Director in a more administrative capacity. The ARD works closely with the RD to get the work done and hold RAs accountable. I think my favorite part of being an ARD this year has been working with the RAs to make sure they have the best experience they can, while at the same time making sure they complete their work well and on time. I enjoy helping RAs and other students reach their full potential, and I feel that it is a learning process for me too. The ARD position has shown me how much I value helping others on the path I have set for myself through my experiences with the RAs I supervise.

Because of the ARD role I have been afforded, I have had the opportunity to see how this potential career may play out. I feel confident about my ability to transition to the professional side of the field because the ARD position has already forced me to take on many of these steps. I tested the waters of the potential career in my RA role last year; this year as an ARD has shown me that I know I can succeed.

I am passionate about student affairs and higher education because it is an opportunity to work with college students and help them grow and develop. I truly believe that there isn't a more rewarding career than one that allows you to help others. This field allows me to assist others

every day at a time in their lives when many students need it most. It was my developmental path, and I want to give that support to others.

So far my academics and daily practice have not been linked nor intentional. I am excited to be able to make this so by starting a graduate program in higher education. Understanding my former responsibilities in terms of theory and learn how to turn new theories into practice is a process I cannot wait to begin.

I know the Lynch School of Education can assist me in achieving this goal through their program in Higher Education Administration. The opportunity to study in the Boston area will give me a multitude of professional development opportunities that would be hard to find anywhere else. If I am admitted, I will work hard to maximize my time at the Lynch School and become a young professional who can innovate and improve upon current practices in the field.

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