PA Applications for 2026

Mahlet Tesfaye, MSOM

Lee Coleman, Ph.D., ABPP

PA Job Description
Serving as a community educator

- Advocate for residents' needs and concerns

- Collaborate with campus resources to develop and implement educational programs and community programs based on residents' needs

- Participate in rotation/welcome activities, and help students adjust to a new living situation

- Promote community, connection, and self-care among residents

PA Job Description
Assisting with crisis support

- Function as an initial point of contact and a referral agent for students in need

- Be available, while recognizing your personal and positional limitations, to listen, advise, and support residents who may be experiencing difficulty

- Appropriately consult with other Peer Advocates, SFE, and Counseling Services, when potential problems have been identified

- Collaborate and communicate with OSE, Counseling Services, and other campus agencies around students of concern and during emergency planning and campus crisis response

- PAs are not confidential resources but are expected to keep information private

PA Job Description

Encourage the honor code and personal accountability

- Be a positive role model with regards to the Honor Code and personally uphold Institute/housing policy

- Actively ensure the wellbeing of residents (intervene when necessary, refer to resources)

- Act as a positive role model on campus by respecting Institute policies and fostering a sense of community and respect

PA Job Description
Completing administrative tasks

- Be regularly available and accessible to residents and members of the house/area

- Respond to all communication in a timely manner and follow up with resident concerns

- Hold a welcome meeting for the community at the start of term (explain role, set community expectations)

- Develop regular community building events for residents

- Communicate with FSE about PA budgets; submit receipts for programming

- Meet biweekly with your RAs about students of concern

- Meet 3x / term for a lunch meeting with the program coordinators

PA Job Description
Fostering personal and group development

- Understand and use basic counseling skills (empathic listening, basic emotion regulation skills) to help students

- Maintain good academic/behavioral standing and progress toward degree completion

- Attend the weekly one-term training class during Spring term and earn a passing grade (P/F, 3 units)

- Attend biweekly meetings with Lee and Mahlet for ongoing training and to discuss issues of concern

Other Important Qualities

- Maintaining the privacy of your peers' personal information

- Remembering that PAs are a private, but not confidential, resource

- Knowing when to consult and reach out for additional help and support

Class Information

- The 3-unit course meets on Thursdays from 7-9 PM each week during Spring term. It's Pass/Fail. We generally have one hour of teaching material and one hour of discussion and role-plays to practice the peer counseling skills you learned in lecture. There is a final exam that covers the entire course.

- This course will teach you the basic skills necessary to engage in a supportive consultation with a peer in distress. You will learn about basic listening and attending skills and will even learn how to engage with someone who endorses suicidal thoughts. This course will also expose you to different mental health concerns common to the university students in general and to Caltech in particular.

- Other common course topics include learning emotion regulation skills, how to plan effective programming for your house or residence, knowing your limits and boundaries, and taking the Caltech Connect suicide prevention course.

Application Information and Link

- Applications are open until Monday, January 26th at 5:00 p.m. *sharp*.

Interview Dates:

- If you are selected for an in-person interview, they will be held between Wednesday, 2/18 - Wednesday, 3/4. Location - Hameetman Club rooms

- All interviews will be held in 15 minute slots between 12:00 noon - 1:00 pm or 4:00 - 5:00 pm; you will meet with at least one of the PA program coordinators, and several of the Head PAs.

Final Decisions

- Final decisions will be announced on **Wednesday, March 11th at 5:00 pm.**

2026 Candidate Timeline at a glance

- January 16th : Information Session

- January 26th: Candidate Application Deadline

- January 28th: Candidate Reference Form Due

- February 16th: Interview Sign-up Period

- February 18th – March 4th: In-Person Interviews

- March 11th: Offer letters go out

Questions?
Feel free to reach out!

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