

September 2024 eLearning Challenge: Managing College Roommate Conflicts

Share

Fall is in the air, so many college students are packing up and moving back to campus. Beckman College provides traditional on-campus housing in double rooms for first-year students. At Beckman, a residence hall is a community—not just a building where students sleep. The relationships students build with their roommates and other residents play a crucial role in their personal development.

Incoming first-year students must master the ins and outs of their coursework while sharing space with a complete stranger. The transition to living independently with a new person quite often results in minor growing pains but can blossom into major friction. A slight difference in personal preferences (like early bird versus night owl) quickly escalates into conflict if not addressed.

The Challenge

The Dean of Student Affairs at Beckman has received an overwhelming amount of requests to switch housing assignments due to roommate conflict. These changes result in a backlog of moving belongings, charging reassignment fees, and potentially losing board revenue when students leave for alternatives like apartments. From a developmental perspective, students who switch rooms without resolving conflict miss the opportunity to work on interpersonal skills such as empathy building that will serve them in adulthood.

Resident Assistants (RAs) were trained in person on facilities management, hosting activities, and relationship building in their halls. They are the student eyes and ears of each residence hall and play an active role in moderating conflict between roommates, but RAs often are brought in during the height of conflict. The dean needs RAs to nip roommate conflict in the bud to keep students in their original housing assignments, which will reduce administrative costs and potential lost board revenue as well as help residents grow in their communities.

As the Instructional Technologist at Beckman College, you have been asked to create an eLearning course to enhance RAs' conflict management skills. The goal of this course is to train RAs in resolving conflict between roommates before it escalates and leads to a housing switch.

After completing your course, learners should be able to complete one or more of the following objectives:

- Identify common causes of roommate conflict (such as hygiene, night/day preferences, partying, etc.) and diagnose the root cause.
- Practice active listening skills when engaging in dialogue with roommates.
- Ask facilitative (open-ended) questions of both roommates to gather details on their respective positions.
- Work with roommates to propose a solution and commit to an action plan.
- Maintain neutrality when facilitating the conversation and guiding the roommates toward compromise.
- When needed, enforce community standards (including no alcohol in rooms, quiet hours after 9 PM, etc.).



Requirements & Constraints

As you design and develop your course, keep the following requirements and constraints in mind:

Interactivity & Content Presentation: Ideally, your solution will include decision-based interactions or scenarios to reinforce the skills being taught. Here are some ideas for how you might present your content and make it interactive:

- Add hotspots to a residence hall room to encourage the learner to explore various root causes in the room.
- Build a tabbed interaction to provide an overview of common causes of roommate conflict.
- Include dialogue (on-screen text, audio, or video cutscenes) depicting the roommates' current state of conflict brewing.
- Create a branching scenario involving the RA discussing the conflict with the roommates; include choices for the learner to explore with

consequences that lead to an outcome (staying in the room, moving out, etc.).

- Use a dial or a slider as a conflict meter to demonstrate progress for the RA's negotiation.
- Build a rating system (using buttons showing layers, a dial, a slider, etc.) to rate the RA on remaining neutral.
- Mock up a smartphone/tablet with a text exchange or social media post (using style guide emojis) representing roommate gossip, complaining, etc.

Authoring Tools: You are free to use any eLearning authoring tool you'd like; however, Articulate Storyline or Rise are recommended. If you're new to Articulate Storyline, [check out this playlist of videos](#) to help you get started.

Visual Design: You are free to design the course in any way you'd like; however, it should demonstrate good visual design best practices with a cohesive and consistent use of font, colors, images, and graphics. If you're new to visual design, [check out this playlist of videos](#) to help you get started.

Style Guide

To help in the design of your eLearning course, you can view and download the client style guide and brand assets below. You are free to use these to design a branded course template, or you can create your own design.

Reference Materials

As you design and develop your course, you can create your own content from scratch or source your content from the following references:

- [Community Development Model](#)
- [RA to RA: Managing Conflict Amount Residents](#)
- [Roommate Mediation](#)
- [Facilitating Roommate Conflicts](#)
- [Roommate Agreements & Managing Conflicts](#)
- [Roommate Conflicts: When Things Escalate](#)

Submission Guidelines & Contest Rules

Once you're done building your course, you can submit it by commenting below and sharing a link to your finished project. If you're using Articulate Storyline or Rise, you can publish and **share a link from Articulate Review or on the web using Google Cloud**. Along with a link to your published course, share a few words explaining your design decisions, challenges, inspiration, etc.

To be eligible to win the \$100 Amazon gift card, your submission must be posted no later than Friday, September 27th, at 11:59 PM ET.

You can learn more about the **contest rules and criteria here**.

If you'd like to get more eyes on your submission and encourage others to participate in the challenges, you might also consider...

- **Writing a Blog Post:** If you happen to have a blog or online portfolio, write a post about your submission and share it on social media. Make sure to link to it in the comments below for others to see!
- **Record a Video:** If you want to share how you went about designing your submission, record and share a screen recording video (via Loom, Camtasia, SnagIt, or YouTube) to showcase and explain your process. And, of course, don't forget to share a link to it in the comments below!
- **Share on Social Media:** If you're active on LinkedIn, Twitter, or another social media platform, create a post to share your submission. If possible, make sure to link back to this page and tag The eLearning Designer's Academy on **LinkedIn** or **Twitter** in your post.



Give & Get Feedback

After you've shared your submission, make sure to review what others have submitted and provide constructive feedback. Remember, the monthly challenges (and this community as a whole) are meant to provide an inclusive and supportive environment. As you provide feedback, make sure to keep our **Code of Conduct** in mind.

As you work to develop your project, also consider sharing your work-in-progress for community feedback in our **Get Feedback space here**.



Challenge Recap, Submissions & Winner

Congrats to this month's eLearning challenge winner, **Victoria Ghilardi**, for her winning submission for this month's challenge: **The Secrets of the Beckman**

RAs! 🎉

Check out all of the submissions for this month's eLearning challenge below:

- **Managing College Roommate Conflicts** by **Stephanie Lajoie**
- **Mastering Roommate Mediation** by **Alexandria Majors**
- **Dealing with Conflict as a RA** by **Bethany Souza**
- **Conflict Prevention & Resolution** by **Christina Connor**
- **Managing Roommate Conflict** by **Erin Sappington**
- **Conflict Management Skills for RAs** by **Fran Lanier**
- **Residential Conflict Management** by **Heather Reed**
- **Managing College Roommate Conflicts** by **Aromokhame Williams**
- **Resolving Conflict & Building Community** by **Alannah Roberson**