

Classification & Compensation

Position Description Format Instructions

Purpose of the Position Description:

The position description provides the employee and supervisor with a common understanding of the work that is to be currently performed and the standards by which the employee's performance will be evaluated. It specifies which duties are essential to the position. It also provides information such as the competencies (skills, knowledge and abilities) necessary to perform the job and environmental demands of the position.

Position descriptions are reviewed and approved by Staff Human Resources.

The Americans with Disabilities Act, signed into law July 26, 1990, protects any "qualified" individual with a disability from employment discrimination on the basis of the disability. Under the Act, a qualified individual is one who, *with or without reasonable accommodations, can perform the essential functions* of the position.

Essential Duties are those which are fundamental to the position. A duty may be considered essential if:

- **the reason the position exists is to perform the function;**
 - there are a **limited number** of employees available who may perform the position function; and
 - the function is so **highly specialized** that the person is hired for his or her expertise.
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POSITION DESCRIPTION FORMAT

Each section, including the required information listed under each, must be included on the position description unless it is indicated as "*Optional*." If preferred, other information that the department uses internally may also be included (i.e. Date of Hire, C-FOAPAL).

Important to Note:

- **Position descriptions cannot conflict with applicable policies and laws.**
- **Performance-related concerns are not addressed on the position description. Address these separately with unit HR staff or Labor & Employee Relations.**
- **Besides signatures and signature dates, the position description cannot include any other handwritten text (e.g. position number, employee name, employee/supervisor comments). If employees want to include additional information, they may submit a separate document with the position description.**

[Click here for Sample Position Descriptions](#)

I. Identifying Information:

- Date (Reflects creation, updates or changes)
Position No. (ex. U12345 or UA1234 - assigned when the position is first established)
Incumbent..... (if any)
Department
Current Classification
Requested Classification (Applicable only if different than above; such as for an audit)
Reason for Position Description ... (Select one of the options below)
-New position/Vacancy
-Reclassification request
-Update
-Other (e.g. submitting a signed copy only)

II. Function:

State the main purpose of the position in **one** clear, concise sentence. (The specific duties to carry out the function should be listed in the Duties & Responsibilities section.)

III. Organizational Relationship:

Describe how the position relates to its immediate supervisor, co-workers and any other positions it may supervise or attach a current organizational chart. Identify by title the following:

- Supervisor's supervisor
- Supervisor
- Others who report to the same supervisor
- Persons who report to the incumbent

IV. Duties and Responsibilities:

Each unit/department is unique, therefore it is expected that the duties assigned to each position are determined by the organization's operational needs. The class specifications may then be used as a guide to determine the appropriate classification based on the nature, level, and concentration of the duties and responsibilities appearing on the position description. While it is unnecessary for every characteristic duty listed on the class specification to occur in any single job, it is acceptable that not every job duty appearing on the position description be listed as a characteristic duty on the class specification.

1. Identify the duties and responsibilities of the position.
 - a. List only those duties that are appropriate (scope, nature, level) for the classification. For example, facility maintenance duties that are typical of the Building Custodial Service classification are inappropriate to assign to a clerical occupation, such as an Account Technician.
 - b. List only those duties that are current and permanently assigned to the position.
 - c. Duties that are incidental and non-recurring should not be listed on the position description (e.g., the central mail unit is understaffed and not able to make pickups so your supervisor requests if you can deliver a bulk mailing for an upcoming conference to the post office).
2. Describe the duties and responsibilities concisely, factually and in enough detail so the activity can be clearly understood.
 - a. Write descriptive statements. Describe the duties to be performed, focusing on results required.
 - b. Keep it to the task. Focus on "what" is to be accomplished, not "how" a task or job is to be accomplished.
 - c. Use action or descriptive verbs.
 - d. When describing tasks and responsibilities, be as specific and concise as possible. You want to avoid writing a procedures manual.
 - e. Describe duties that are not required to be performed on a regular basis by the use of descriptive words such as "occasionally" (e.g., occasionally perform snow removal, when conditions call for it).

[Click here for Sample Position Descriptions](#)

*Important: #3 and #4 are **required** when submitting the job description for a Reclassification Request.*

3. Estimate the percentage of time spent in each duty. **Include the percentage amount next to the duty.** The summary should total 100%.
 - a. Consider that essential duties, as defined above, typically require larger percentages of time than duties that are of lesser priority.
 - b. Keep in mind that a task that is not required to be performed on a regular basis or that could be reallocated to another staff member may or may not be considered an essential duty of the position (e.g., “Develop the annual budget for staff travel” or “Monitor the section’s phone line when both the main office and Director office’s receptionists are out of the office”).
4. List the duties in decreasing order of percentages.

The following right and wrong examples may be used for guidance:

Be specific and descriptive

Wrong: Make sure people in the area are okay.

Right: Make the scene of incidents safe by taking possible verbal and physical action and administering first aid

Wrong: Provide good customer service

Right: Meets agreed-upon deadlines for faculty members with established two-week deadline for submission

Keep it to the task

Wrong: Walk paperwork to Payroll each Tuesday by 8:00 a.m.

Right: Ensure timesheets are received by Payroll by assigned deadlines.

Use action/descriptive verbs

Wrong: Ability to design and produce event programs, posters and formal invitations.

Right: Designs and produces event programs, posters and formal invitations.

Wrong: Understanding of university and department policies and procedures.

Right: Adhere to current university and department policies and procedures.

Be concise

Wrong: At 2:00 p.m., get the mail from the mailroom. At own desk, open, date stamp, put department mail in J's box, get the files for letters of reference received and give to R., make a new file if new application received, give to J. to begin processing.

Right: Retrieve departmental mail. Open, date stamp, sort and disseminate to appropriate staff, providing any additional information/materials required.

V. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Minimum requirements are established within Class Specifications and thus, are not included on the position description. Describe any additional knowledge, skills, and abilities that are beneficial to the performance of the work such as supervisory ability, proficiency with software used in the unit, knowledge of basic accounting principles, etc. These should directly relate to the duties and responsibilities listed and must not conflict with the Civil Service minimum requirements.

[Click here for Sample Position Descriptions](#)

VI. Difficulty: *(Optional)*

Describe the complexities and the scope and effect of the job such as attention to detail, multiple priorities, working under pressure, etc.

VII. Personal Relationships: *(Optional)*

Describe interactions necessary for the job such as contact with campus/university administrators, faculty, external agencies, public (customer service), etc.

VIII. Environmental Demands: *(Optional)*

Describe the working conditions and any physical demands that the employee should expect to encounter, for example, normal office setting, standing long periods, exposure to biohazards, changing weather conditions, occasional overtime, etc. If a classification is not subject to [Pre-Employment Testing](#), duties and responsibilities involving a person's level of strength or endurance cannot be indicated as a requirement. Simply describe what the work entails, for example, frequently lifting boxes that weigh in excess of 20 lbs.

IX. Signatures and Dates

1. The incumbent must sign and date
2. The immediate supervisor must sign and date
3. Departmental authorization signs only as required by the department

Related Links

[University Policy and Rules 3.01 - Position Descriptions](#)

[Civil Service System, Procedure Manuals, Rule 2.2 - Job Descriptions](#)

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