POSITION DESCRIPTION GUIDE

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Position Description

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It is the practice of the California State University (CSU) that a position description is provided to Staff and Management Personnel Plan (MPP) employees upon initial hire and subsequently when there is a substantial change in the essential functions of the position. In the event this guideline conflicts with a collective bargaining agreement, the collective bargaining agreement shall supersede this guide.

A position description serves as the foundation for many functions and activities related to successful human resources operations, such as: recruitment and selection, job classification and compensation, performance appraisal, and disability accommodation.

A copy of the Position Description should be placed in an employee's official personnel file.

Understanding Position Descriptions

Position descriptions help employees get a sense of their job responsibilities, what's expected of them, and the standards by which they'll be evaluated. Position descriptions may also help you develop recruiting materials and ensure consistency and equity among positions.

Position Description vs. Classification Standards

A position description is a detailed document that outlines the specific duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required for a particular position. Every position in your department should have a separate position description which outlines the essential functions of that specific position.

A classification standard, which is designed and maintained by the CSU and shared among all 23 campuses, is used to determine the grade level /classification of a job based on its complexity, responsibility, and scope of work. A classification standard evaluates a position's worth relative to other positions and ensures consistency and fairness in the job classifications across the CSU.

Always remember, the position description describes "what the job is", while the classification standards describe "where the job fits".

Position descriptions differ from Classification Standards in the following ways:

- Position descriptions identify essential functions of a position to meet your departmental needs, whereas Classification Standards are official CSU documents that state general duties.
- Position descriptions are used to manage performance, whereas Classification Standards are used for classification purposes and job audits.

How to Write a Position Description
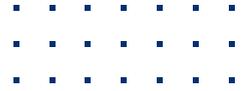
<table>
<tr><td>**1**</td><td>**Choose your Method of Developing Position Descriptions**</td></tr>
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You can take several approaches to crafting position descriptions. Depending on your department and your style, you may choose any of the following methods:

- Talk with employees and/or their managers about their work, soliciting their input to incorporate into your ideas about how to describe the position.
- Draft position descriptions for your employees' jobs. Discuss your drafts with them to ensure they understand your expectations and standards for the position.
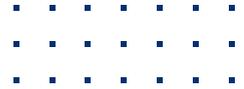
How to Write a Position Description
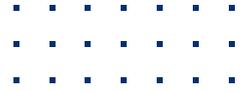
2	**Think Structurally**

It's important to think about the position structurally, rather than describing the unique qualities of the individual currently holding the position. Try the following tactics:

- Think broadly in terms of outcomes, responsibilities and accountabilities, rather than simply listing tasks and duties.
- Cluster responsibilities into broad functional areas, such as project management, customer contact, supervisory responsibilities, etc.
- List activities or tasks underneath each broad functional area.

How to Write a Position Description

3	**Write Behaviorally**

Position descriptions will be used to monitor and evaluate employees, and they will be written behaviorally with action verbs. You should do the following:

- Begin each task-oriented sentence with an action verb (i.e., analyze, coordinate, plan).
- Be as specific as possible when describing tasks and responsibilities, using the following right and wrong examples for guidance:
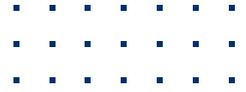
Wrong: "Be professional"

Right: "Observes work rules and practices covered during the orientation process concerning punctuality and breaks"

Wrong: "Provide good customer service"

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

How to Write a Position Description

4 | **Constantly Update and Assess**

In the spirit of continuous improvement and process review, position descriptions should evolve based on emerging priorities or shifts in organizational and departmental needs. Be sure to assess and update position descriptions in the following ways regularly:

- Let employees know that their position descriptions are always subject to change.
- Ensure that employees understand the difference between their Classification Standard and their position description—although it may be valid when someone says, "That's not in my position description," it may indeed be in their classification standard.
- Review position descriptions when you discuss the performance expectations and development plans for the coming year with employees.

How to Write a Position Description
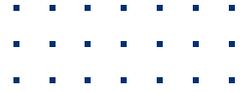
4	Constantly Update and Assess

- If changes identified in your annual plan involve fundamental additions or deletions to the existing functions described in position descriptions, you may need to incorporate those changes into your employees' position descriptions.

The draft position description should be submitted to Employment Services for a final review, revision and approval. Once approved, the position description will be routed for approvals.

Nuts and Bolts of a Position Description

Job Summary

The job summary briefly summarizes the overall purpose of the position in a few specific statements or a brief paragraph. The summary provides the general nature of the responsibilities of the position plus additional information including scope, context and the general environment under which it functions. It should include who the position reports to and, if applicable, from whom the position receives work lead direction.

Example: Reporting to the Operations Manager, and working under general supervision, the incumbent creates and modifies accessible forms and documents for posting on the department website, utilizing technology when appropriate. The incumbent ensures consistency in formatting and timely completion and posting of forms and documents.

Significant Changes from Previous Job Duties if Applicable

List the changes that have been made to the position since it was last reviewed by Human Resources. This helps members of the Employment Services team review against classification standards to verify if the changes made warrant any changes to the current classification.

Supervision of Others

If the position requires providing lead work responsibility, list the position classifications. Include the working title if applicable.

Example: Administrative Support Coordinator I, Department Support Coordinator

<u>Job Responsibilities and Duties Associated (essential functions)</u>

As defined by the U.S. Equal Employee Opportunity Commission, essential functions are the basic job duties that an employee must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodation. Factors to consider in determining if a function is essential include:

- whether the reason the position exists is to perform that function,
- the number of other employees available to perform the function or among whom the performance of the function can be distributed, and
- the degree of expertise or skill required to perform the function.

<u>% of Time</u>

The percentages associated with Essential Functions must equal 100%. Percentages are used to classify the position. Actual amount of time spent on each Essential Function may vary based on department cycles and priorities.

Start by grouping the major functions of the position by major job responsibility and indicate the percent of time for each.

Example:
35% Project coordination
40% Form and Documentation Support

Using each major job responsibility listed above as a heading, list examples of the individual duties and/or responsibilities associated with each major job responsibility. Each list does not have to be all-inclusive; it should provide clear examples of the typical work performed.

Example:
Form and Documentation Support 40%

- Create and update forms, ensuring consistent formats throughout the department
- Collaborate with department management, department webmaster, and department form & documentation committee on prioritization of updates
- Convert existing forms to online forms as appropriate
- Update existing documentation to ensure consistent formatting throughout the department

Qualifications

The Essential Qualifications for Education and Experience will be set by Employment Services for non-MPP positions based on CSU Classification Standards. For MPP positions, enter the minimum Education and Experience for review by Employment Services. Preferred Qualifications should be entered for all positions and will be used for recruitment purposes only.

Essential Qualifications:

Briefly describe the minimum job related experience and/ or education and equivalents that would provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities that an incumbent must posses to satisfactorily perform the duties and responsibilities of the position consistent with the minimum qualifications described in the CSU System Classification and Qualification Standards.

Employment Services will include all standard essential qualifications based on CSU Classification Standards and CSUF practice.

Preferred Qualifications:

List additional knowledge, skills, and abilities that would enhance an incumbent's ability to perform the work of the position. Provide examples of level of education and types of certifications and their equivalents where appropriate.

License or Certifications Required

List any job-related certificate(s) and/or license(s) that the incumbent must possess to be appointed into the position. Provide a brief explanation for each requirement listed.

Example: Valid California Driver's License. Position requires the use of a state vehicle to transport to events and visit schools and other outside constituents at variable hours.

Special Working Conditions
List any special or unusual working conditions to which the incumbent will be exposed.

Example: Works on uneven surfaces such as gravel covered and pitched roofs.

Compliance and Regulations

Identification of compliance and regulatory items for a position are required. If you are not sure how to designate the position in each of the following areas, reach out to Employment Services for assistance.

Sensitive Positions:

The CSU designs sensitive positions as requiring heightened scrutiny of individuals holding the position based on the potential for harm to children, concerns for the safety and security of the people, animals, or property, or heightened risk for financial loss to the CSU or individuals in the university community. These positions require additional background checks through LiveScan.

Campus Security Authority

Under the Clery Act, a consumer protection law that aims to provide transparency around campus crime policy and statistics, the University must identify those positions on campus that qualify as a "Campus Security Authority" (CSA). CSAs are expected to report all Clery crimes via the CSUF CSA Reporting Form. The following positions are identified as campus security authority positions:

- All Student Affairs employees, except Confidential Advocates and licensed counselors in CAPS
- All employees who are director-level and above
- All Labor and Employee relations employees
- All Risk Management employees
- All Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs employees
- All CSUF Police Department employees

Conflict Of Interest

If the position job responsibilities reflect that the incumbent will be making, participating in or influencing decisions regarding any of the categories listed here it is a Conflict of Interest position.

- The physical master plan of the University;
- The total enrollment of the University;
- The license, lease, purchase, or sale of real property of the University or for the University;

- Purchase of supplies, materials, commodities, machinery, equipment, services, or work for the University, school, department or area; and/or
- Entering into amending construction contracts or service contracts in connection with construction contracts for the University.

Mandated Reporter

There are two types of a 'mandated reporter' under the California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, a general reporter or a limited reporter. If a position is identified in either area it is required to comply with the requirements set forth in California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act and CSU Executive Order 1083 Revised July 21, 2017 as a condition of employment.

Specific training and forms are required from the employee and will be assigned once in the position.
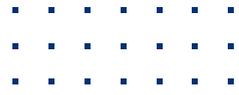
General Reporters

If the answer to any question below is "yes," then that employee or volunteer is a general reporter under the CSU's Mandated Reporting Policy. If the answer to each question is "no," then proceed to the questions under Section II.

A **Does the employee or volunteer work in one of the following departments?**

- UPD
- Housing & Residential Engagement (not including custodial or maintenance staff)
- Student Life & Leadership
- Student Outreach (Summer Bridge), Orientation, Recruitment

B **Does the employee or volunteer work in one of the following programs?**

- Trio Programs (Upward Bound, Talent Search)
- Gear Up
- ESL programs

C Does the employee hold one of the CSUF following positions (including faculty if licensed by or registered in California)

- Childcare/community care/day care administrator
- Childcare/community care/day care staff
- Teaching Associate
- ELP Instructor
- Physician
- Physician Assistant
- Nurse
- Psychologist
- Registered Psychological Assistant
- Social Worker
- Marriage/Family/Child counselor, therapist, trainee (assistant)
- Alcohol counselor
- Drug counselor
- Clinical counselor
- Title IX Coordinator, Director, Officer or Investigator
- DHR Administrator
- Head, Associate or Assistant Coach
- Coach assistant or advisor
- Coaching specialist
- Athletic trainer
- Strength/Conditioning staff
- Athletic Equipment Attendant

D **Does the employee or volunteer perform one of the following functions:**

- Have direct contact with and supervise minors in the performance of the minors' duties in the workplace.
- Accept complaints of unlawful discrimination.
- Staff camps, workshops or clinics open to minors that either take place at the University or are operated by the University.

Limited Reporters

If the answer to any question below is "yes," then that employee or volunteer is a limited reporter under the CSU's Mandated Reporting Policy. If the answer to each question is "no," then the employee or volunteer is neither a general nor a limited reporter.

- Faculty who teach or are likely to teach lower-decision undergraduate courses.
- Custodial, maintenance, facilities and trades employees who service buildings where minors are likely to be present.
- Employees whose position responsibilities require them to be in close physical proximity with minors once a week or more on average and their supervisors.
- MPPs and volunteers not designated as General Reporters.

Physical & Work Environment Requirements

Describe the physical demands required of this position (e.g. lifting, sitting, standing) and the work environment (e.g. typical office environment, moderate noise level).

Acknowledgments

A completed position description includes acknowledgment from the Employee, the Appropriate Administrator and Employment Services. When submitting a position description for review, enter the names only. Once the position description is finalized, Employment Services will obtain the appropriate approvals.

Working Titles

The Working Titles Guidelines provide guidance for hiring managers to accurately represent the scope of a position to potential candidates and other units on campus, providing a consistent understanding for recruitment, classification, and operational decisions.

General Description:

A. Working titles for staff indicate an employee's functional responsibility, particularly when the classification title alone is not sufficiently descriptive. Classification titles are broad and are used to distinguish a grouping of similar positions across a variety of settings, whereas a working title is specific to an actual position in an identifiable work unit. For example, the classification "Administrative Support Assistant II" may not be sufficiently descriptive, particularly if there are several positions with the same classification title in the same work unit and each has a different function. A working title such as Receptionist, Front Counter Representative, Customer Service Representative, Administrative Assistant (department/program) or Assistant may be appropriate if this is the case.

B. Working titles are commonly used on business cards and in directories and in other correspondence with constituents, such as individuals from outside the University, who would not have knowledge of the CSU classification structure. B. Working titles may be used to better communicate an employee's area of responsibility; they have no impact on wages, benefits or working conditions. Working titles should be consistent with the classification title and should not be indicative of a range of responsibilities or level of authority that is not consistent with the classification title.

C. Use of "inflated" working titles can blur lines of responsibility and lead staff to take on responsibilities that are not appropriate to their positions or, conversely, they can confuse staff as to who is the appropriate supervisor or administrator. For these reasons, words such as manager, director, assistant/associate director and administrator are to be used for management positions only.

D. Examples of words that may be included in a staff title are: (program/department) coordinator, analyst, assistant, specialist, or technician. If higher status is to be designated, the word "senior", i.e., senior coordinator, senior analyst, etc. may be added.

E. Management Personal Plan (MPP) Titles
- Working titles for MPP administrators indicate level of authority. Normally, administrators at the Administrator I level use the title, Assistant Manager or Manager; Administrator II level, Director, or Assistant/Associate Director; at the Administrator III level use the title, Assistant /Associate VP or Associate Dean; Administrators at the Administrator IV level use the title, Dean or Vice President,. Occasionally, the word "executive" or "senior" will be added to a title to signify higher status.
- The President or his designee (VP HR) must approve all MPP administrator titles.

APPENDIX

The following list of action verbs is designed to assist in finding the strongest and most descriptive verb. The verbs are grouped together by broad categories. This list is followed by some common working definitions to provide consistency in interpreting key verbs at CSU.

Accept	Approve	Calibrate	Control
Accumulate	Arrange for Assemble	Check	Coordinate
Acquire	Ascertain	Collect	Counsel
Action	Assemble	Communicate	Create
Activate	Assess	Communication /Interactive	Decide
Adapt	Assign	Compare	Decision maker
Advise	Audit	Compile	Direct
Allocate	Authorize	Conduct	Delegate
Analyze/Evaluate	Balance	Conserve	Deliver
Appoint	Buy	Consider	Design
Appraise	Calculate	Consult	Detect

APPENDIX

Determine	Forecast	Maintain
Develop	Forward	Manage
Devise	Furnish	Measure
Diagnose	Gather	Monitor
Distinguish	Guarantee	Motivate
Distribute	Identify	Negotiate
Edit	Implement	Notify
Encourage	Improve	Operate
Enforce	Inform	Organize
Ensure	Initiate	Originate
Establish	Inquire	Oversee
Estimate	Inspect	Plan
Evaluate	Install	Prepare
Examine	Interpret	Present
Exchange	Interview	Prevent
Execute	Investigate	Process
Expedite	Issue	Procure
Explain	Judge	Propose
Express	Lead	Protect
Fabricate	Mail	Provide

APPENDIX

Purchase	Solicit
Rate	Solve
Receive	Study
Receive/Provide	Submit
Recommend	Summarize
Reconcile	Supervise
Recruit	Supply
Refer	Survey
Regulate	Taking Action
Report	Teach
Request	Test
Research	Track
Resolve	Train
Restrict	Transfer
Retool	Troubleshoot
Review	Update
Schedule	Validate
Secure	Verify
Select	Withdraw
Send	Write

Employment Services
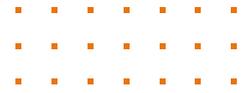
Compensation Services

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