Staffing and Classification Procedures

Preface

These procedures apply to staff employed by the University of Southern California. In the event of a discrepancy between procedures, guidelines and a collective bargaining agreement, the terms of the collective bargaining agreement will govern.

Questions regarding these procedures should be directed to the Compensation Office in Human Resources Administration at (213) 821-8111.

Roles and Responsibilities

Department

Department administrators, senior business officers, human resource directors and managers, home department coordinators and supervisors are responsible for assuring their department’s compliance with staffing and classification procedures and staff wage and salary guidelines, including approval and recordkeeping requirements.

Schools and divisions are encouraged to establish additional departmental procedures to clarify senior management’s expectation for requests, review, approval and documentation of employment actions. These Staffing and Classification Procedures provide departments with a framework around which those internal procedures must be developed and executed.

Schools and divisions also have a responsibility to review and evaluate, at least on an annual basis, their mission statement, short-term and long-term goals and objectives, operation, organizational structure, budget availability, and business needs in terms of staffing levels for new or existing positions. Review and evaluation of the organizational structure should include hierarchy, job classifications, distribution of duties and responsibilities, supervisorial responsibility and impact of creating, filling or eliminating positions.

From time to time, the Staffing and Classification Procedures may be modified because of special circumstances that require additional restrictions or changes in procedure or levels of approval. Failure to comply with the requirements set forth in university and department policies and procedures will be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Compensation Office

The Compensation Office in Human Resources Administration is responsible for the following:

- establishing university compensation principles, determining salary/wage guidelines, and staffing and classification procedures;
- reviewing and recommending/approving all proposed pay increases based solely on equity or that include a component of equity;
● creating job descriptions in accordance with university business practices that comply with state and federal law;
● determining the classification of positions;
● ensuring departments utilize job descriptions that most appropriately match work performed;
● conducting job audits to confirm appropriateness of job descriptions;
● conducting and participating in compensation surveys on behalf of the university;
● advising departments on various compensation matters including market comparisons based on both internal and external benchmarking; and
● monitoring departmental compliance with staff wage and salary guidelines, staffing and classification procedures and related federal and state law.

Overview of Review and Approval Requirements

1. “One Level Up” Support – The employee’s supervisor, as well as the person to whom the supervisor reports, must both personally review all requests. A designee’s signature will not be accepted for the “one level up” review and recommendation requirement.

2. School/Division Review and Recommendation or Approval – The most senior position in the school or division (e.g., Dean, Vice President, Associate Senior Vice President, Vice Provost, etc.) must personally review and recommend requests for all personnel requisitions, reclassifications, internal department promotions, resource employees and executive positions before submission to the next level.

3. University Officer Review and Approval – Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (for all schools/divisions reporting to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs) or the Senior Vice President for Administration (for all other departments) or their designee reviews requests and determines final approval.

   Compensation will facilitate the review and approval process for those transactions requiring additional approval beyond the most senior position in the school or division, and notify the school/division if the request has been approved or denied. Compensation will also audit compliance with these guidelines, payroll entries as needed, and will keep related records.

Approval Process to Open a Personnel Requisition for a Staff Position

Justification to Open a Personnel Requisition

A. Complete a “Justification to Open a Personnel Requisition” form (available on this site) for the following positions: full-time, part-time, fixed-term, fixed-term extension, per diem, and positions funded by agency or gift accounts. Exceptions are noted below under B. The justification should address the following:

   ● why the position is critical to the mission and operation of the school/division, demonstrating that not creating or filling the position would significantly,
negatively and irreparably impact continued operations or remove revenue streams, and addressing those negative long-term effects;
- why the duties/responsibilities cannot be distributed among existing staff; and
- whether or not a restructuring has been considered that would reduce overall headcount or redeploy existing resources, and why or why not.

B. Obtain the appropriate signatures on the “Justification to Open a Personnel Requisition” form including:

- “one level up”; and
- school/division review and recommendation or approval.

Compensation will coordinate the university officer review/approval process (see Overview of Review and Approval Requirements, above). Exceptions to the university officer review and approval include:

- all positions that are funded 100% by a sponsored project account;
- positions for staff leased to and funded by separate corporations; and
- other exceptions designated by Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Senior Vice President for Administration.

Creating a Personnel Requisition

A. Complete the online personnel requisition using the PeopleAdmin system.
   1. Scan and attach the fully completed “Justification to Open a Personnel Requisition” form (including signatures) and the organizational chart to the online personnel requisition
   2. Submit to Compensation using PeopleAdmin.

B. Compensation may contact departments for additional information regarding the personnel requisition or to clarify material submitted.

C. Departments may determine if Compensation has reviewed and approved the appropriateness of the selected job description for the new or existing position and whether the personnel requisition was sent to Employee Recruitment Services for posting by viewing the “action history” section of the personnel requisition in the PeopleAdmin system.

Approval Process for a Resource Employee

Resource employees are typically utilized when there is a temporary need due to seasonal work flow; specialized skills, expertise or licensure required for a limited or recurring time period; or limited number of evenings or weekend hours required on a regular basis. Resource employees are part time, hourly non-exempt staff who may not work more than 1,000 hours in a rolling 12-month period. A resource employee is not eligible for benefits and the position does not require a personnel requisition or need to be posted. Human Resource Administration monitors use of the classification.
A. Complete a “Request for Resource Employee” form (located on this site), including the appropriate school/division signatures, and submit to Human Resources Administration for review and recommendation/approval.

B. Human Resource Administration has authority to approve requests to hire employees who would earn up to and including $10,000 in a rolling 12-month period.

C. Appointments for resource employees who would earn in excess of $10,000 in a rolling 12-month period must be approved by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (for all schools/divisions reporting to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs) or the Senior Vice President for Administration (for all other departments) or their designee. Compensation will coordinate the review and approval process.

**Promotion**

A promotion is the advancement of a current university employee to a position at a higher level that may have greater authority. The two recognized university methods for promoting employees are “competitive hire” promotions and “internal department” promotions.

“Competitive hire” and “internal department” promotions for positions funded by sponsored project accounts need to ensure compliance with the contract/grant.

**A. Competitive Hire Promotion**

A “competitive hire” promotion occurs when a current university employee submits an application through Talent Management for an open **posted** position at a higher level with increased duties and responsibilities that may also include greater authority, is interviewed along with other qualified candidates, is selected as the final candidate, is offered and accepts the position. The value of using the “competitive hire” promotion is that it may provide a fairly large pool of qualified candidates to choose from, which is why it is the most common type of promotion.

All applicable paperwork required by Payroll Services for new employees applies to a “competitive hire” promotion including a signed offer letter, successful completion of background screening, signed at-will and arbitration agreements, signed job description and Job Information Questionnaire. The new rate of pay is determined on the same basis as any candidate newly hired into a posted position.

**B. Internal Department Promotion**

An “internal department” promotion occurs when a uniquely qualified employee who has demonstrated increased skill level, knowledge and experience is offered and accepts a new, different position at a higher level, in most cases within the same job family and same department, with increased duties and responsibilities that may have greater authority. An “internal department” promotion may or may not involve a change in exemption status. In order to be considered eligible for an “internal department” promotion, an employee should be in his/her current position for at least
one year and not presently performing the majority of the duties and responsibilities of the new position. Promotions may be considered at any time.

Human Resources Administration must review and approve all internal promotions prior to any communication to the employee; note that all internal promotion requests should be discussed with and supported by the appropriate management within the school/department before submission to Human Resources Administration/Compensation for review and approval.

Once the proposed internal promotion is discussed with and supported by the appropriate management, submit the following to Human Resources Administration/Compensation:

- rationale/justification for internal promotion, which should:
  - demonstrate why the candidate’s knowledge, experience and skill level uniquely qualify him or her for the position
  - explain why others within the school or division are not similarly qualified and were not or would not be considered
  - explain why external candidates would not be considered
- proposed job description
- proposed organizational chart or explain the new reporting structure

Attach the following to employee’s worker documents in Workday if they are not already attached:

- current job description
- resume

Departments may not make a commitment to the employee until Compensation staff has reviewed and approved the promotion. The effective date of the promotion may not be retroactive.

The promoted employee is not guaranteed any increase in pay because of the change in responsibilities; however a wage or salary increase is typically a fair response to an “internal department” promotion. The rate of pay for the position is determined on the same basis as any candidate newly hired into a posted position. A pay increase for an “internal department” promotion requires the supervisor to follow the guidelines outlined in the “Staff Wage and Salary Guidelines” (see “Market Pay Adjustments”). The effective date of the pay increase may not be retroactive.

**Demotion**

A demotion occurs when an employee is moved from his or her current position to a position at a lower level of responsibility as part of a disciplinary action. A demotion must have the approval of Human Resources Administration prior to any action being taken or the employee being notified. Employees who are demoted are not guaranteed the rate of pay associated with their previous position. An employee’s voluntary election to accept a different position at a lower level is considered a transfer, not a demotion.
Employee Reclassification

The reclassification of a staff employee to a different position is a corrective action that typically occurs when it is determined by Compensation staff (through the position reassessment process) that an employee is utilizing a job description that does not appropriately reflect current duties and responsibilities. This review could be initiated by Compensation or at the request of the department. Reclassifications are not the result of changes in an individual’s performance or in anticipation of future changes in duties. Compensation staff is available, upon request, for advice and consultation for all position reassessments and will determine if it would be more appropriate to process changes as a reclassification, promotion, demotion or transfer.

Supervisors should continuously evaluate the appropriateness of job duties and responsibilities for all positions and may request a position reassessment at any time.

A request for position reassessment must include the following:

- **“Request for Position Reassessment” form**, which must be completed by the department’s human resources professional, director, manager or home department coordinator; it must also be reviewed and supported by “one level up” as well as the most senior position in the school/division (e.g., Dean, Vice President, Associate Senior Vice President, Vice Provost, etc.). This form is located on this site.

- **Position Questionnaire**, located on this site, which must be completed by employee, listing the primary job duties performed, described in his or her own words (not verbiage from the job description). The supervisor must confirm the information provided by the employee and may amend it. The final version of the questionnaire must be signed by both the employee and his or her supervisor acknowledging the accuracy of the information.

- **Organizational Chart for the unit**, which should include names and job titles/codes for all positions and clearly identify where this position fits into the organization. The chart should name all employees, including student workers, reporting to the employee under consideration for reclassification, as well as the employees’ percentage of effort and the number of weekly hours worked by each student worker, if applicable.

- **Current job description for the position**, which must be the most recent one on file, signed by both employee and supervisor.

- **Proposed job description for the position**, which must be completed with the percentage of time, essential, marginal and not applicable designations. The employee should not sign the submitted proposed job description until after Compensation has approved the reclassification.

Upon receipt of the Request for Position Reassessment form and all the accompanying documents, Compensation staff will begin the review process. Departments should anticipate
a review period of four to eight weeks. During this period, Compensation staff may conduct
interviews to clarify duties and responsibilities.

No commitment of a change should be made to the employee until after Compensation staff
notifies the department of their decision. The effective date may not be retroactive. If the
reclassification is approved, the employee and supervisor will be required to sign the new job
description and Job Information Questionnaire.

Rates of pay for employees who are reclassified to a lower level of responsibility will remain
at their existing pay. A staff employee who is reclassified to a higher level of responsibility
may be eligible for a pay increase, initiated at the discretion of the unit, but an increase is not
required. Increases in pay require the supervisor to follow the guidelines outlined in the “Staff
Wage and Salary Guidelines” (see “Equity Pay Adjustments”).

**Positions Classified as Executive**

Positions are classified as executive when responsibilities include the ability and level of
authority to make decisions on behalf of the university, a school, hospital or large division.
“Executive” positions include positions such as the university officers as identified in the
university bylaws (President, Provost, Senior Vice President), Deans, Hospital CEO, Vice
Presidents, Associate Senior Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, Assistant Vice
Presidents, Executive Vice Provosts, Vice Provosts, Associate Vice Provosts, Associate
Provosts, Assistant Provosts, University Comptroller, Senior Associate Deans, Athletic
Director and other positions classified as executive by Compensation.

Executive positions typically fall into the following two categories:

- Central university-wide executive leadership (e.g., President, Provost, Senior Vice
  Presidents, University Comptroller)
- School or division administrative leadership (e.g., Deans, Senior Associate Deans,
  Athletic Director, Hospital CEO)

Positions that are defined under the central university-wide category typically have the ability
and authority to make independent, high-level decisions on matters that have significant and
considerable impact on the university as a whole affecting all schools, divisions and external
constituents. The decisions made by executives in this category have institutional influence
and a long-term effect on the university’s governance, operations and services.

The school or division category is typically designated for positions such as the top-level
administrator of a school, large division, or hospital responsible for a key administrative
function(s). The executives have the ability and authority to make independent, extensive, and
significant decisions on matters that impact the school, hospital or large division.

Compensation determines the appropriateness of the executive classification for new positions
or promotions by performing analyses, and makes recommendations for approval/denial to the
Senior Vice President for Administration.

Requests to Compensation for new executive positions must be accompanied by:
• a job summary noting job duties, responsibilities and qualifications;
• an organizational chart;
• the current job description; and
• the Dean, Vice President or Senior Vice President rationale as to how the position meets the definition of an “executive” described above.

Opening a personnel requisition is required for an executive position, but posting is not. Talent Management is available to assist with advertising and recruiting.

All offers of employment to any candidates (internal or external) for new or existing executive positions or for employees promoted to executive positions that provide compensation, benefits or terms of employment that are not reflected in the standard template offer letters in the HR Partner toolkit (on the HRA website) must be reviewed by Compensation prior to the offer being extended. There are no standard additional benefits or perquisites offered to positions classified as executive. Offer letters for new executives or commitments made to employees promoted to executive positions that include additional benefits not reflected in the standard template offer letter must be approved by the Senior Vice President for Administration.

**Department Internal Titles**

Departments have the authority to establish an internal title or change an employee’s internal title in order to recognize an employee’s role and hierarchical placement within the school/division/department and be more descriptive of his or her responsibilities. To avoid overinflating internal titles, consideration must be given to the generic and internal job titles of superiors, peers and subordinates in the school/division/department and throughout the university community. Departments may not establish an internal title that has been assigned by Compensation to an established job description. For internal titles, departments should not be utilizing titles such as “supervisor, manager, or director” if it is not utilized in the employee’s generic job title. The establishment or change in an internal title does not require approval by Compensation, but departments are encouraged to implement departmental approval requirements. Compensation staff is available to assist schools, divisions and departments with the selection of an appropriate internal title for a position. Compensation will audit department internal titles.