AP & Un/Un Classification Compensation Study

Frequently Asked Questions

Please check back frequently. Responses to many questions will expand as more information is know.

Topic Area: CLASSIFICATION

What is a classification study?
A classification study involves a review of the university’s non-faculty positions to determine the proper grouping or allocation of jobs into classifications. It also allows us to update all of our job descriptions. The analysis is based on a number of factors including job duties, qualification, accountability, the impact of the job and others. The process also involves defining classification “levels.” For job families that have many positions like administrative assistants, we should end up with multiple levels like Admin Assistant 1, Admin Assistant 2, etc. This helps us demonstrate a logical career path.

What is meant by “classification?”
A job classification is a generalized set of duties and responsibilities. While no two people do exactly the same thing in their positions, two people in the same classification generally do work at the same level and in some cases, the same type of work. Positions within particular classifications wind up in the same grade and range resulting in pay equity.

What factors go into analyzing and grouping jobs?
These factors will be developed and refined during the initial process. Typically, they include the level of responsibility, decisions made, impact of a position, minimum qualifications, type of work performed and more.

Why is a classification study necessary now?
Over time, many job descriptions and our classification and compensation structure have moved out of alignment. For example, one issue is that we have too many job titles that are “in their own classification” making managing our class system and reclassifications more difficult to maintain both internal and external equity.

Reasons to do the study

- Makes managing the class systems more defensible and equitable.
- Creates a new compensation structure that is more easily understood by both, managers and employees.
- Makes comparing our wages to external markets possible – something we want to do with reliability and validity.
- Creates equities between individuals performing similar work at different classification levels and pay rates.

Outcomes

- Create a system that will group positions performing work at similar levels.
- The subsequent compensation study will allow us to fairly evaluate our compensation levels compared to relevant labor markets and put a plan in place to make adjustments and improvements in the coming years with respect to both external and internal equity and the University’s compensation philosophy.

- Provide the opportunity to clean up a large number of conflicting and confusing policies and processes and write better, more understandable procedures – hopefully simplifying wherever possible which in turn should speed up reclass or market study situations.

- Leave us with updated job descriptions better reflecting work actually performed.

- The Compensation study will tell us where we stand in relation to our relevant labor markets.

- Help us recruit and retain professional talent and in some cases, create a logical career path within a particular type of work.

- The university community has been asking for review of many of our administrative processes to ultimately help make the business of each of our departments more efficient and effective.

I have heard that one of the problems is we currently have too many job titles. Why is that a problem? Too many job titles mean more and more very fine distinctions between jobs. This may lead to two people performing similar levels of work while paid differently. Or, two people could also have similar titles but do completely different scope of work.

What is a job grouping (job family)?
Job groupings (families) are grouping of similar type jobs. Examples include financial, administrative support, information technology, etc. There are often multiple job series with levels of positions within each job family, sometimes differentiated by numbers e.g. admin assistant 1, 2, 3 etc.

What are some of the things a classification study does not address?
Workload and an individual’s work performance are not part of this process.

Are faculty positions included in these studies?
No. This study is focused on Academic Professionals and Unclassified/Unrepresented employees.

Who is conducting this study?
Sibson Consulting is conducting this study with the assistance of the AP and Un/Un Advisory Committees and Executive Committee. Sibson is a Human Resources consulting firm that is nationally recognized in Higher Education.

What do the Advisory Committees do during this study?
The Advisory Committees’ members (names on our website) act as sponsors and champions of the study, provide the consultants with institutional knowledge and perspective, provide insight into the program design and implementations, react to and provide feedback on recommendations and advise on program communications.

How long does the study take?
The first phase currently scheduled to be completed by fall 2017.