

RWU

Roger Williams University

Position Classification

Roger Williams University's POSITION CLASSIFICATION POLICY & PROCEDURE

PREFACE

University positions are carefully and deliberately created in response to mature organizational planning in furtherance of the university's mission. The resulting position roster will be measured as a concise statement of organizational acumen, utilizing identified and available budget to improve upon measurable outcomes from the full array of assigned responsibilities that together constitute the university's staffing patterns.

POLICY STATEMENT

Position Classification:

University positions are created and classified at the outset, with significant task, responsibility and volume latitude, representing a position roster derived from prudent attention to short and long term employment initiatives. Positions and position families are classified to accurately reflect comparable differences in scope and complexity of responsibility, expertise (including continually changing levels of expertise demanded by the discipline), accountability of performance, impact of performance upon the university's successful operation and market pricing. Growth and alteration of assignments and focus within a position are planned, expected and accordingly classified. It is not a reason to reclassify a position.

Position Reclassification:

Position reclassification is a deliberate, significant and authorized adjustment to the character of the university's diversified position roster. Whether arising from the slow but authorized evolution of a position to accommodate increasing departmental demands or as a result of planned restructuring of responsibilities in furtherance of effective, efficient delivery of service, the decision to reclassify a position is nevertheless a decision to adopt and fund a newly recognized position. Therefore, reclassification shall occur only when the university determines, incumbency aside, that the good faith submission (1) is founded in fact, (2) defines adjustments in prior position responsibilities that are so significant that a new position has been or need be created (3) is fiscally prudent, and (4) best meets the university's needs.

A reclassification is neither an acceptable alternative compensation program nor a proper response to a mere increase in volume of work, but a concise measure of prudent managerial planning and commitment toward university excellence. As such, it is a decision reserved to university senior staff, will be exercised with full and deliberate accountability and is considered an exception to the regular compensation and classification program of the university. Except and only when classification, consistent with this policy, is planned at the outset to evolve into one or more reclassifications as operations and affiliated personnel needs mature, reclassifications, by definition, will be infrequent and not driven by informal work level adjustments, but by formal, approved

personnel planning. A pattern of unscheduled reclassification requests indicates, at least, a lack of managerial prudence and planning.

The basis of proposed reclassification must then be founded in a good faith submission that the position's characteristic responsibilities, accountability, complexity, difficulty, impact and ultimately, its value to the university have changed significantly as the necessary evolution of a cohesive, productive, fiscally responsible, staffing pattern.

PROCESS

1. Both initial position classification and position reclassification demand the same type and level of construction and review. All position authorization and initial classification or reclassification review will commence only upon the directive of the university's President or appropriate Vice President (Initiator) following consultation with the Vice President for Human Resources and those members of the university's managerial staff responsible for proper administration of the position and its expectation and attributes. Reclassification review may be requested no more than once per year by the incumbent of a position with at least one full year of appointment to the position, prior to the request and the interval between requests must be at least one year. However, reclassification review will be commenced only upon the express endorsement of the applicable Initiator.
 - a. The Vice President for Human Resources, where program review indicates a significant, unannounced and continuing position adjustment, may, following consultation with the appropriate Vice President, commence a review in accordance with this policy and procedure.
2. The process is initiated by the completion and submission of a Classification/Reclassification Request Form to the Department of Human Resources. The form must be signed as a formal proposal by the relevant Initiator and the submission must include the following documentation:
 - a. Formal, detailed business and organizational rationale for the position creation or change (even if supporting a temporary adjustment).
 - b. Organization impact statement. This must include organization charts prior to and following the proposed action. Additionally, an explanation must be provided of how, or if, the proposed action will (or has) significantly affected other positions within the department, division or operations area.
 - c. Completed position questionnaire or proposed job description in authorized format, concerning the position for which evaluation is being requested.

3. A classification or reclassification request will then be reviewed and the position analyzed by the Department of Human Resources. Those meeting all of the above prerequisites will be evaluated against the following, relevant criteria:
 - a. Standardized Compensation Evaluation Tool (e.g., Hay Pt. Factor, Paired Comparison)
 - b. External, validated, market data and survey studies
 - c. Reciprocal impact on proper classification where other positions holding similar responsibilities exist.

Notification to and consultation with the Initiator and/or the Initiator's express managerial designee, directly responsible for the position's performance delivery, will occur if documentation is incomplete, or additional discussion is warranted.

4. In consultation with, consistent with and following the evaluation by the Department of Human Resources, the final determination to adopt or reject the proposed classification/reclassification shall be made by the Initiator responsible for position authorization, in accordance with the university's Employment Processing Policy and Procedure and budgetary constraints. The following will then occur:

Classification: The position(s) will be populated and salary(ies) initially set within the position's compensation parameters and as further restricted by such applicable salary policy(ies) governing the particular position. As a general rule, newly hired employees will not be placed in a position above the midpoint of the wage range of the position. Placement above the midpoint denotes an assessment by the Initiator that the person selected to fill the position is both fully credentialed and predicts immediate, significant, superior performance results.

Reclassification: Notification to the incumbent of the final decision will be made by either the Department of Human Resources or the Initiator as directed by the Initiator. The incumbent of the proposed reclassification will then experience one of the following resolutions:

Salary Base Adjustment:

- a. Remain in the recertified position with salary adjustment upward or downward, consistent with governing policy(ies). This will occur where the incumbent is found qualified for the reclassified position holding a different salary grade than the prior position.

Non-Base Adjustment:

- b. Remain in the recertified position, with or without adjustment in responsibilities and without adjustment in base salary, but with a fixed value, non-base adjustment in pay to reflect temporary, authorized performance at a

higher salary level than determined to be warranted by the recertified position. This will occur where the submission is founded in fact and defines a level of compensably elevated responsibilities for a defined period of time but is either not fiscally prudent or determined by the university not to best meet its continuing needs.

Preferred Candidate Status:

- c. Preferred candidate status and pending layoff if not selected as the successor to the reclassified position. This will occur where either the incumbent's measured qualifications are deemed reasonably uncertain for that demanded by the reclassified position, or the reclassified position is in an area of employment where there is both significant under-utilization of women and/or minority candidates (as measured and reported by the Department of Human Resources and concerning the university's equal employment opportunity program) and an identifiable pool of underutilized prospective candidates. During the pendency of final determination as to the successor to the reclassified position, the incumbent will be afforded that compensation determined appropriate to the reclassification, as set out herein.

No Change:

- d. Incumbent will remain in the position as recertified, being deemed qualified for the recertified position, but will not receive any compensation adjustment. This will occur when the job as reviewed warrants no increase in pay whether or not job duties are altered.

5. **Compensation Adjustments Following Reclassification:** There shall be no expectation of a positive salary adjustment accompanying a reclassification. Compensation adjustments will occur only when the effective administration of the university's salary structure and program demand it.

- a. All positive adjustments shall be implemented as of the date that the university finds that positional changes became both significant enough and of a permanent nature to warrant reclassification, but in no event earlier than the date the formal authorization to proceed with a classification review is either received or initiated by the Vice President of Human Resources.

Positive salary adjustments shall be effected such that:

- (1) **General Rule:** Except and only under the circumstance set out immediately below, all salary increases shall be limited to a maximum increase of 5% or that increase necessary to achieve placement at the base of the reclassified salary range, whichever is greater. To illustrate, if an employee's salary is \$40,000 and at the 50th percentile, and the reclassified salary

range is \$40,000 to \$60,000, the employee will receive up to a \$2,000 increase to \$42,000.

- (2) **Performance Certified Alternative:** If and when the incumbent has, of record, been previously identified in a fully executed annual performance evaluation as highly successful in performance of the position, specifically including performance of those responsibilities that resulted in the reclassification, the increase may exceed that set out by the “General Rule” above, but under no circumstance shall the increase exceed that amount that will maintain the employee’s relative position in the salary range of the deleted position. To illustrate, if an employee’s salary is at the 60th percentile of the deleted position’s salary range and it is determined that the employee was performing those duties that resulted in reclassification at a highly successful level, that employee may be placed on the new position’s salary range at a salary no higher than the 60th percentile of the new position’s salary range. The final, fully accountable decision as to the proper increase will be made by the Initiator, after considering, in addition to positive performance of the reclassified position responsibilities, position valuation, market competitiveness, and fiscal responsibilities.

- b. All negative adjustments shall be implemented in the first full pay period following the date that the university formally notifies the reclassified position incumbent of the university decision. Negative salary adjustment shall be effected such that:

- (1) Incumbents shall be placed no lower than their relative position in salary scheme. Conversely, incumbents will be placed no higher than either their former salary or the ceiling of the new range whichever is less. To illustrate, if an employee’s salary is \$50,000 and at the 60th percentile of the deleted position and the salary range of the successor position is \$20,000-\$40,000 (60th percentile equals \$32,000), the employee will be placed no lower than \$32,000 and no higher than \$40,000. The final, fully accountable decision will be made by the Initiator, following consultation with the Department of Human Resources and after having considered relative position valuation, market competitiveness, prior performance and fiscal responsibilities.

6. **Reclassification Appeals:** An employee, either denied reclassification or whose request for reclassification initiation is rejected two consecutive times by the Initiator, may forward an appeal of the determination as follows.

- a. Within thirty (30) calendar days of written notification of the university's reclassification determination, the incumbent (Appellant) or the Initiator on behalf of the Appellant, may file a written appeal to the University Classification Appeal Committee (UCAC). The appeal must set out the basis for the appeal and the facts in support of the appeal.

– or –

Within fifteen (15) calendar days of written notification to the position's incumbent, of the Initiator's second rejection of a reclassification request, the Appellant may file a written appeal to the UCAC. The appeal must set out all facts in support of the appeal with requisite detail to enable a credible review of the record.

The UCAC is comprised of the Vice President for Human Resources as chair and two other Vice Presidents; one selected by the Appellant and one selected by the VP of Human Resources. The Initiator may not serve on the UCAC.

- b. The UCAC shall convene, review the written appeal and upon either a specific request of the Initiator, or the Appellant or at its discretion, shall hold a hearing wherein the evidence is tested and the appealed decision reexamined. The UCAC shall issue a written response to the Appellant, with rationale for its determination to either uphold the original decision(s) or modify same, in accordance with governing policy and its findings of fact. This response will issue within thirty (30) days of the hearing or forty-five (45) days of the UCAC's receipt of the written appeal, whichever is later. This decision by the UCAC shall be final and binding.
- c. The basis for an appeal of a reclassification decision shall be limited to:
 - (1) The position has not been accurately described and therefore a reasonable evaluation could not be accurately completed.
 - (2) The evaluation of the position was conducted inaccurately. The standard of review is whether there was a reasonable basis for the classification of the appealed position. There need not be a reevaluation of the position by the UCAC.
- d. The basis for an appeal of a rejection of a reclassification request may only be that the determination was arbitrary and capricious and that the employee was actually required to continuously work outside the scope of the classified position. The burden of proof rests with the employee. A successful appeal will result in a reclassification review.

- e. All salary actions are held in suspense pending resolution of the appeal. Effective dates of any compensation adjustment are as described above. An unsuccessful appeal will result in a disqualification of the Appellant's right to request reclassification review for two years from date of UCAC finding.

EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to policy and procedure herein set out are strictly reserved for the President.

PRACTICES & PROTOCOLS

The internal practices and protocols attendant to administration of the Classification/Reclassification Policy and Procedure of the university are in accordance with and found in the University's Employment Processing Policy and Procedure, herein incorporated by reference, and are otherwise to be interpreted as consistent with standing protocols as same are amended and announced from time to time.