

UWT Guidance for Updating Job Descriptions

Context:

Each year, we recommend that employees work with their supervisors to review their job descriptions and update them if there have been changes. This ensures that both supervisor and employee are in agreement about the duties and expectations for the position. This year, we are taking the extra step to collect the updated job descriptions for filing in our central HR files. Why are we doing this?

- In response to the Gallup Employee Engagement survey, UWT is focusing on the first question: “I know what is expected of me at work.” Updating job descriptions as part of the annual performance evaluation will ensure employees and supervisors are aligned on expectations.
- By collecting the job descriptions, we ensure our own central files are up to date.
- We do not anticipate most jobs to have changed significantly enough that a position review or reclassification will be necessary, but going through this process will catch any positions that do need to be reassessed for either a reclass or a readjustment in duties if the duties have moved beyond the scope of the position.

Process:

1. Find the most recent copy of a position’s job description. If you cannot find one in your local files, please ask HR
2. If you have a full PSPD (Professional Staff Position Description), you only need to update the duties section, so you can copy/paste this to a separate word document.
3. We recommend the employee take the first pass at updating the job description using “track changes”. Please refer below for best practices for this stage. The supervisor may review the document first if desired, but both supervisor and employee must have an opportunity to view and edit the document.

Guidance for employee:

As you review your job description, consider the following:

- Are there any duties listed that you no longer do? If so, cross them out using track changes and indicate what happened to this work. For example: this work is no longer done by anyone because____, or this work is now done by X position.
- Are there new duties you are now doing that aren’t listed? If so, add them to the appropriate category/major job function using track changes. Indicate in a comment when you started doing these duties and why. Indicate who was doing these duties before you.
- Do you need to adjust the percentages for each category/major job function? If so, modify them using track changes.
- You do not need to list specific tasks or details about how exactly each job duty is accomplished
- Are there any systems or ways of working that need to be updated in the description?
- Think about your work throughout the year, are there cyclical processes that should be called out that affect workload at different times?
- If you are not sure about the percentages, consider tracking your time during a typical week: how many hours do you spend on work in each category? Keep in mind cyclical work that might come later in the year.

Guidance for supervisor:

When you receive an updated version of your team member's job description with their tracked changes, here are some things to keep in mind when reviewing the document:

- Does the edited version reflect your expectations for the position?
- If you see additional edits that need to be made – duties that your team member no longer performs or duties you believe are missing, make these changes with track changes or add comments
- Are there any duties that have been added that are out of scope for the position? If so, is it necessary that these out-of-scope duties are done by the person in this position in order to meet business needs? Or is there another team member who is supposed to be doing them?
- If these out-of-scope duties are necessary for business needs or part of the team member's professional development plan, is a reclass or in-grade increase appropriate? Are you able to fund the associated increase in pay?

After your review and edits, have a conversation with the employee with these suggested talking points:

- Summarize the edits they made back to them, so you are sure you understand
- Ask any clarifying questions you have about their edits
- Discuss any misalignments and resolve them – this may mean you need to clearly reset expectations and reassign duties that were not clear
- If there are significant changes that are beyond the scope of the current job profile, and you and the employee agree that these significant changes are necessary to meet business needs, please consult with HR for guidance. Do not imply or promise that a compensation or job profile change will result from this conversation. (Additional documentation and approvals will be required.)

Retain the track-changes version as a record and create a final clean version. Send both copies to HR for employee files and to the employee. Retain copies in your file as well.

Support from HR:

The UWT HR team is available to help in the following ways:

- Share the most up-to-date job description in HR's files
- Provide guidance for conversations when there is misalignment of duties
- Collect the updated job descriptions for filing in UWT HR personnel files
- Advise on any compensation changes that are proposed as a result of the updates

Helpful links:

- [Professional Staff Job Profiles](#)
- [Classified Staff Job Profiles](#)