

EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

PROPOSED

FOCUS FRAMEWORK FOR THE COLLEGE'S CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION SYSTEM

PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of the College's classification and compensation system for Exempt Employees is to support the recruitment, success, and retention of qualified and productive employees and to encourage and reward activities that promote the College's vision and mission, demonstrate leadership, and promote quality learning, diversity, responsiveness, and collaboration. To that end, the College desires to recruit and retain individuals who demonstrate initiative, are team players, accept responsibility, authority and accountability for work performance, and demonstrate high ethical standards. Once employed, the College believes that numerous factors motivate employees to be successful in achieving the mission, goals and objectives of the College. As appropriate, the College will offer appropriate professional development and advancement opportunities to facilitate employee success and retention. The College will administer this in an open, fair, and equitable fashion.

GOAL 1 – ORGANIZE THE WORK (BECAUSE THE CURRENT FOCUS IS ON INDIVIDUAL POSITION DESCRIPTIONS RATHER THAN BROADER JOB CLASSIFICATIONS, THIS GOAL WILL REQUIRE THAT THE COLLEGE ADDRESS THE OVERALL CLASSIFICATION STRUCTURE IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE STATED OBJECTIVES.)

To provide for a simplified classification system for Exempt positions within the College that defines the general scope and complexity of the work required. The classification system will also facilitate internal equity across all Exempt jobs within all work units of Evergreen State College.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Develop broad job classes.

To establish a classification structure that reflects meaningful and measurable differences in the level of work within each occupational group.

STRATEGIES

- a) The classification system will consist of broadly defined classes that reflect the essential duties and responsibilities performed by incumbents in each class. This approach will facilitate flexibility in the assignment of duties to individual employees within the job classification. While the duties for individual positions may vary, the focus on job classifications will relate to the type and level of work performed. Level distinctions within a job family (see definition in the glossary of terms at the end of this document) should be based on the level of responsibility assigned to the job so that the differences in levels can be clearly defined. Where levels are based on criteria other than responsibility, the criteria should be clearly defined to ensure that the differences are both clear and meaningful.
- b) Where practical and feasible within each occupational group, there will be an opportunity for career advancement and the differences in job levels will be clearly defined and legally defensible. However, not all occupational groups will have multiple levels. The number of levels will be based solely on the needs of the College.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Develop and maintain an Exempt Classification Structure with job descriptions.

The Exempt Classification Plan will meet the current needs of work units while providing maximum flexibility to manage and organize the work in a changing environment.

- a) The existing classification system will be reviewed to identify current requirements that may inhibit flexibility and recommendations will be made to make the system consistent with the College's goals and objectives and positions the College to be responsive to change.
- b) The job descriptions, including the statements of essential duties, minimum qualifications and physical requirements, will reflect the current needs of the College while providing sufficient latitude to reflect potential future needs. The goal is to ensure that new hires are qualified and capable of performing the work required and that the work being performed is reflected by an appropriate title. Incumbents who currently do not meet the minimum qualifications will be given two years to meet the minimum qualifications.

OBJECTIVE 3 – Create a process for requesting reclassification of jobs.

The reclassification process will be administered by the Human Resources Department, in conjunction with a reclassification committee comprised of a cross-section of employees, in an efficient, cost effective, responsive, fair, and equitable manner to meet the needs of both the College and its employees.

STRATEGIES

- a) Timetables will be established which will set the time the reclassifications will be reviewed and acted upon. As a general practice, this review should occur annually.
- b) Responsibilities for each step of the reclassification process will be established to include the employee, work unit head, and Human Resources Department.
- c) Employees will be notified in writing of the results of the reclassification process and the reasons for approval or denial.
- d) A formal process will be established to handle cases appealed by either an employee or work unit.

OBJECTIVE 4 – Develop a process for creating new job classes

The classification system will be responsive to organizational and environmental change through the creation of new classes and redefinition of job responsibilities as defined by the College and its work units.

STRATEGIES

- a) Job descriptions will be reviewed by the work units on an annual basis to ensure they meet current needs. The Human Resources Department will facilitate the review process.
- b) The Human Resources Department will respond to work unit requests for individual reclassification, and will assist with the revision of class specifications and/or development of new class specifications within the broad class concept, as

necessary to meet the on-going operational requirements of the Evergreen State College.

- c) Newly created job classifications will be slotted into the classification and pay structures using the College's established (method to be determined) job evaluation methodology (see strategies outlined in Goal 2 - Distribute Pay.)

GOAL 2 – DISTRIBUTE PAY (THIS WILL BE DEPENDENT ON HAVING A JOB CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM THAT REFLECTS THE ACTUAL WORK PERFORMED BY EMPLOYEES IN EACH JOB CLASSIFICATION.)

The compensation system will reflect both internal equity and external parity within the various labor markets in which the College must compete.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Determine the competitive market and benchmark positions.

Compensation levels will reflect the multiple and varied labor markets covering all College jobs.

STRATEGY

- a) For executive and senior staff level positions, the labor market will include higher education institutional organizations in major metropolitan areas throughout Washington. The Colleges will be similar in character and serve a similar size population as the Evergreen State College (Peer Institutions).
- b) For professional level positions (as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act), the labor market will include public and private sector employers in the state of Washington with whom the College competes for such employees. For positions that are educationally focused, the primary market will be higher educational organizations. For jobs that are not educationally focused, the market will include other public sector organizations including the State of Washington, other public sector employers in the Puget Sound area and, to the extent that such information is available, major private sector employers in the Puget Sound area.

- c) For defined and operational job classes (those that are non-exempt under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act), the labor market will consist of public and private sector employers in the greater Olympia area.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Determine job value.

The College will define and determine different levels of job value using a formal method of job evaluation.

STRATEGY

A structured job evaluation tool will be used to establish the relative internal value and relationship of all jobs within Evergreen State College. The tool should be consistent with the broad job classification structure outlined in Goal 1. Choices include traditional approaches such as point factor evaluation or other approaches such as Decision Banding (see more detailed explanation in the glossary of terms at the back of this document. Selection of the specific methodology goes beyond the scope of this initial strategy review.)

OBJECTIVE 3 – Establish Pay Grades for Each Broad Class.

Pay grades will generally reflect actual average salaries paid to comparable positions in the relevant labor market(s) as reported in salary survey results in order to recruit and retain qualified employees as outlined in the purpose and philosophy statement. Pay grade minimums and maximums will be established from survey results.

STRATEGIES

- a) The salary structure will provide sufficient breadth to recognize the increased value to the College based on performance or other criteria that meets or exceeds standards for the job. Accordingly, range spans (the difference between the minimum of the salary grade or band and the maximum of the salary grade or band) will progress from approximately 25% to approximately 75%, depending on the level of job and salary range or grade for the job classification. For example, if the lowest rate of pay in the salary range or grade is \$20,000 per year and the spread is 25%, then the salary grade maximum would be \$25,000. The salary structure will provide sufficient depth to ensure that each salary range or band reflects a meaningful and measurable distance between each salary

grade. Accordingly, vertical progression between salary range midpoints will be at least five percent. The actual mid-point difference will depend on the overall slope of the College's pay structure (the ratio between the lowest level job and the highest level job) and the number of salary grades that are ultimately established.

- b) The length of time for progression from the bottom of the salary range to the job rate of the established salary range will increase as jobs move up the salary grade structure. The normal progression rate will range from three to eight years, depending on the level of the job within the organizational structure, and the nature of the work. Progression above the job rate will be based solely on performance that is above standard. Merit compensation may or may not be added to the base compensation.
- c) Each job classification will have a job rate set at the top of the third quartile of the salary range.
- d) The hiring range will be from the range minimum for minimally acceptable qualified candidates to the job rate for well-qualified individuals. Appointment above the job rate, but not to exceed the maximum, will be allowed, subject to the approval of the President or his/her designee.
- e) When a market comparison rate for a specific job/class exceeds the salary grade midpoint by at least 15%, a market premium may be applied to the specific job/class and paid to all employees in the job/class. The market premium amount shall be applied to the full salary range for the job/class. The market premium shall be subject to review, no less frequently than every two years, and shall be adjusted as appropriate based on the market review. At such time as the market differential becomes less than 15%, it (the market differential or premium) will be eliminated.
- f) Reclassification/promotion policies will be administered so that resulting salaries are competitive with average salaries in the relevant labor market.

OBJECTIVE 4 – Ensure equity.

Classifications not used in development of the salary structure will be placed in the salary structure based upon their internal relationship as determined through the College’s standardized job evaluation process.

STRATEGY

- a. The compensation structure will be based on market salary data for benchmark job classifications compiled through a salary survey. Placement of individual job classifications within the overall salary grade structure will be based on their relative internal value using the College’s adopted job evaluation methodology.

OBJECTIVE 5 – Communicate the compensation package to employees.

To keep employees informed regarding their compensation and benefits.

STRATEGY

- a) The Human Resources Department will annually issue a statement to all employees reflecting the total value of the compensation and benefits package.

Note: The goals, objectives and strategies set forth in this plan are subject to budgetary limitations. Nothing contained herein is to be construed as a binding contract.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Advancement Opportunity

An opportunity for an employee to earn additional compensation beyond the level of his/her current position. Advancement can result either from a change in job classification or an increase in salary within an established salary range.

Career Ladder

A number of classes to which an employee may progress based on increasing knowledge, experience, skill and/or competencies. The progression may be either vertical or horizontal.

Class Series

A group of jobs that are related in terms of work performed but differ in terms of level of work and minimum qualifications. In a class series, an individual employee will typically have the opportunity to progress to the higher level or levels as (s)he develops increased capabilities and the organization has the need for work at the higher level. Not all jobs are part of a series. Some jobs are very narrow and the College does not need more than one level.

Employment Category

Employment categories reflect groups within the College that have unique terms and conditions of employment. Examples include: classified non-exempt, classified exempt, administrative, professional, and faculty.

Job Evaluation

A process to determine the relative value of jobs within the organization. There are different approaches to job evaluation ranging from informal methods such as whole job ranking and market pricing to formal approaches such as point factor, factor comparison, scored questionnaires and the Decision Band™ method. The informal methods do not use any specific or structured criteria in determining job value. The formal approaches use pre-established criteria and all jobs are measured against the same set of standards resulting in a job hierarchy that is normally more understandable and defensible. The College will need to select a specific job evaluation tool once the overall classification and compensation philosophy and strategies are agreed upon.

Market Premium

A differential that is paid to employees within a specific job/class when the labor market value of the job exceeds the College's established salary range midpoint by at least 15%.

Occupational Group

A group of jobs that fall within a single occupation. Occupational groups may include one or more class series' and individual job classes that are not part of a series. The various series' and jobs are normally related by the type of work performed, such as administrative, but each series or job will have unique requirements. Typically, jobs in an occupational group fall within the same employment category and would, therefore, be treated in a similar manner.

Salary Range or Salary Grade

The minimum and maximum dollar value of a job or group of jobs that have similar economic value to Evergreen State College. Each job classification will be assigned to a salary range or grade. Each position within the job classification will be paid at a rate that is no less than the minimum of the salary range and no more than the maximum of the salary range assigned to the job classification. The salary range or grade is based on a combination of internal equity as determined through job evaluation ratings and external (market) value of the job.

Work Unit

A department within the central office, or an independent business unit within the College.