

Staff Compensation Study 2008-2009 and Beyond

WHAT

The College is undertaking a study of staff compensation this year to ensure that staff positions are evaluated fairly and objectively, that salary grades include comparable jobs, and that Saint Mary's staff salary ranges benchmark competitively with salary survey data from similar institutions.

WHY

- The College undertook a comp study in 2000 that developed salary grades for each position, established a new grade structure and identified market pricing targets. The salary ranges have been adjusted each year. In the past few years in particular, the College made substantial progress bringing staff to appropriate salaries relative to the midpoints of their salary ranges. However, the content of many jobs has changed over time, and it is a good practice to periodically and methodically reevaluate all positions, and to do a more formal benchmarking based on better position descriptions.
- In preparation for July 1, 2008 increases, Human Resources worked with a Watson Wyatt compensation consultant who reviewed staff salaries based on job title only, and told us our salaries overall looked competitive, but that is difficult to accurately determine without good and uniform position description data.
- In the spring of 2007 the College's Building on Strengths Strategic Plan (BOSS) provided strategic initiatives for 2007 – 2012. One of the initiatives was to undertake this study of staff compensation. Another was to study the staff performance review process.
- The spring 2008 campus climate survey results for staff were that 30% felt their job descriptions did not actually describe their responsibilities, and nearly 50% felt they were not being compensated fairly.

HOW

- Using a new form, the **POSITION SOURCE DOCUMENT (PSD)**, staff employees will have an opportunity to describe their position's purpose and major (essential) responsibilities, plus other factors such as level of analysis, decision making and impact of those decisions, budget responsibilities, communications, independence, and supervisory responsibilities. The PSD gives Human Resources standard data on each position so positions can be evaluated fairly.

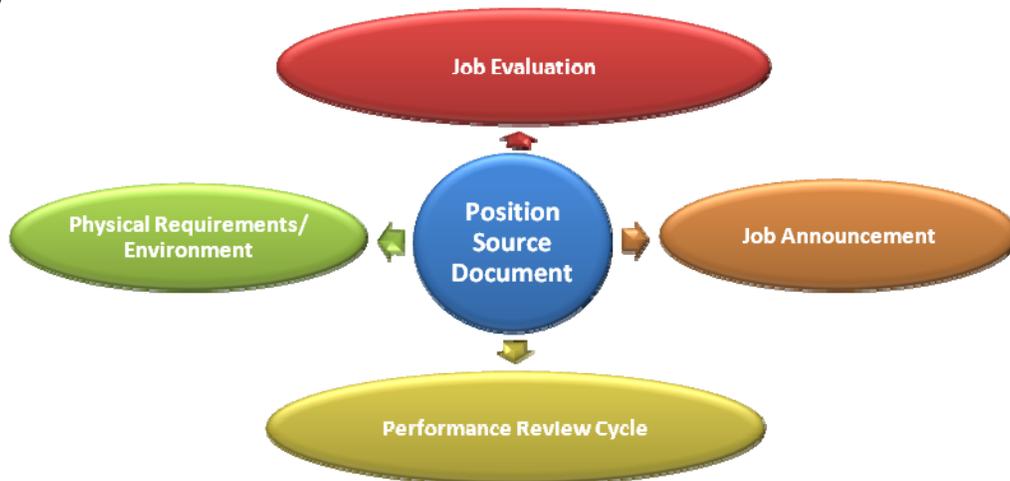


Figure 1 The Position Source Document Informs Multiple Dimensions of Employment

- Employees and their supervisors can separately complete a PSD for the employee's job and then interactively discuss the position to finalize the PSD, or they can write the PSD together. In addition, most schools or departments will have their own internal review process.
- Once a department or school has completed PSDs for each position including vacant positions, the school or department will electronically submit their Position Source Documents to Human Resources to be evaluated.

HOW continued

- HR will be using an updated job evaluation tool provided by compensation consulting firm Watson Wyatt that has been used in other institutions of higher education. This updated tool will allow HR to evaluate all staff positions in a manner that is consistent and fair. The job evaluation process is designed to assess which positions have similar or like scope, level of responsibilities and impact even though they exist in different departments and schools.
- Once all or most positions have been evaluated, Human Resources, with the assistance of Watson Wyatt, will assess salaries for internal and external equity, using benchmark positions to market price our salary ranges. Employees' exempt/nonexempt status will also be reviewed.
- Human Resources, the Controller and the Budget Officer, in consultation with the Staff Compensation Task Force (see below), will determine the implementation cost over one or more fiscal years, including increased cost for benefits tied to salaries (TIAA-CREF, FICA, etc.).
- The results will be reported to the President's Cabinet and to the campus.
- Implementation will begin on July 1, 2009.
- When the job evaluation and salaries part of this study have concluded, other aspects of compensation will be reviewed and recommendations made, specifically:
 - other forms of acknowledging excellence, including recognition programs and merit pay
 - the staff performance review process and forms
 - upward feedback to those who supervise, up to and including members of senior leadership (Cabinet).

WHO

The work on this compensation study is being done by Human Resources working closely with a task force selected by the Staff Council from its representatives. The College is also supported by Watson Wyatt compensation consultants who have worked with similar institutions such as Loyola Marymount University and the University of San Francisco.

The Staff Compensation Task Force includes:

- Kate Bowers, Staff Council member
- Emily Elliott, Director of Human Resources – Chair
- Kory Hayden, Staff Council member
- Mel Hunt, current chair of the Staff Council
- Ann Kelly, Director of Benefits and Compensation – Advisor
- Pete Michell, Vice President for Finance
- Marty Storti, immediate past chair of the Staff Council
- Michael Viola, chair elect of the Staff Council

WHEN – Projected Timeline

August-September 2008

- Director of HR meets with vice presidents, staff department directors, the provost, vice provosts and deans of schools to define expectations and establish project plans for completing job descriptions for all of their staff employees.
- Task force and Human Resources develop **Position Source Document (PSD)**, tools, instructions, communications and training.
- New **POSITION SOURCE DOCUMENT (PSD)** available NOW on Human Resources website https://smcnet.stmarys-ca.edu/college_services/human_resources/docs/positionsourcedocument.doc along with instructions for completing the PSD https://smcnet.stmarys-ca.edu/college_services/human_resources/docs/GuidetoPositionSourceDoc.doc (also available now) so staff employees can begin to draft the description of their position.

October-December 2008

- **Workshops on *Writing Position Source Documents*** will be provided by HR and the Staff Council members of the task force beginning on October 15, 2008.
- Each employee completes a Document for their position. Where there are several with same job title, jobs may subsequently be combined into one *PSD*.
- Supervisors work with their employees so the *PSD* realistically describes the position's responsibilities as both understand them.
- HR staff provides assistance helping employees and supervisors describe their positions.
- Department heads and senior leadership monitor completion of *Position Source Documents* so deadline can be met
- **Each school or department's package *PSD* s should be delivered electronically to Human Resources by January 2, 2009.**

January-May 2009

- **Due date for each school or department's *Position Source Documents* is January 2, 2009.**
- *PSD* s are evaluated by Human Resources Staff using updated job evaluation tool, with major focus on internal equity and consistency.
- HR reviews staff positions' status as exempt or nonexempt
- Benchmark jobs are identified and market pricing for those positions is completed by HR staff with assistance from Watson Wyatt compensation consultant.
- Externally competitive salary ranges are established and populated by newly-evaluated positions
- Cost of equity adjustments is established and considered relative to salary pool available for increases July 1, 2009.
- Overall results of study and implementation plan are communicated to staff employees

June-September 2009

- For staff employees who completed a PSD which was submitted to Human Resources by the deadline of January 2, 2009: individual results are communicated to staff employees and their supervisors
- Employees who disagree with the salary grade assigned to their position following job evaluation can present their appeal to the Staff Compensation Task Force (more on this later). The decision made by the Staff Compensation Task Force will be final.
- For staff employees who completed a PSD which was submitted to Human Resources by the deadline of January 2, 2009: initial salary adjustments implemented per plan will be effective (or retroactive to) July 1, 2009.

Academic Year 2009-2010

- When the job evaluation and salaries part of this study has concluded, the Task Force will turn to the study of staff performance review forms and process (including upward feedback to those who supervise), and the study of merit pay and other forms of recognition,. The study, recommendations and implementation on these related aspects of compensation will continue through 2009-2010, and perhaps through 2010-2011.
- Staff will have opportunities to provide ideas and feedback during the staff performance review study, including the CCIE (College Committee for Inclusive Excellence) Strategic Partners who have expressed interest in working on Performance Management Systems.
- Staff will also have opportunities to provide ideas and feedback during the study of merit pay and other forms of recognition, including the CCIE Strategic Partners have expressed interest in working on Creating Rewards Systems.

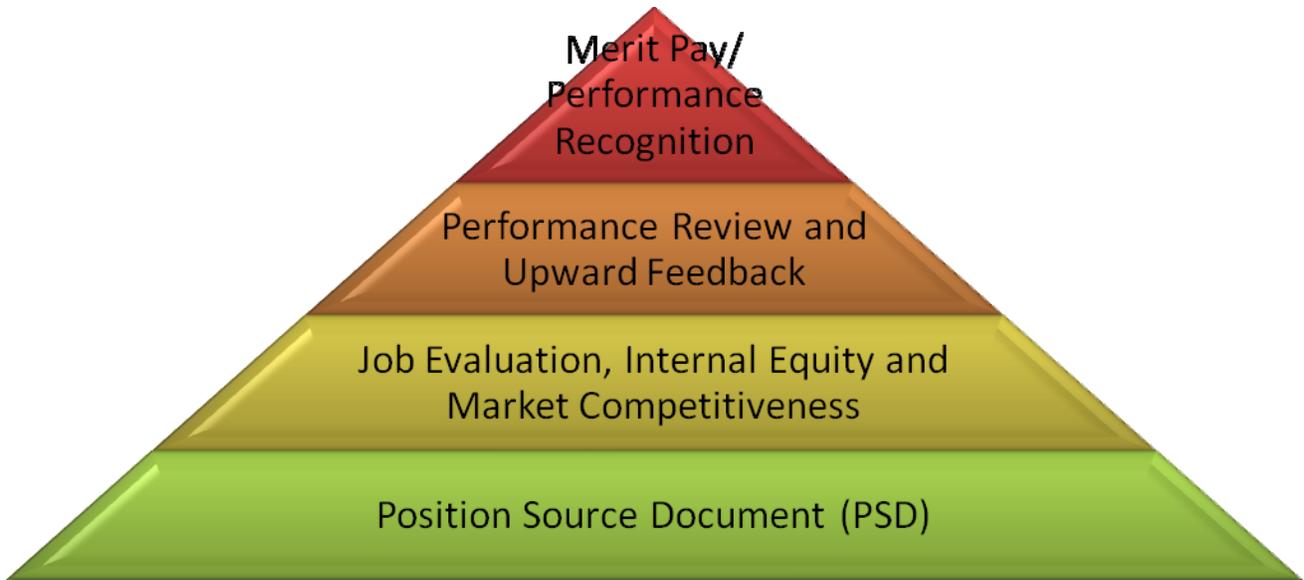


Figure 2 The Position Source Document is the Foundation for all Phases of the Staff Compensation Study

Short List of Things to Know and Do

You will be receiving more information on this project during the coming weeks and months.

- During the next week you will receive an email from Human Resources with the training schedule for two-hour sessions October 14-29, 2008 You will be able to enroll online.
- You can follow these links now to the HR website to download the most up to date copy of the Guide to Writing a Position Source Document https://smcnet.stmarys-ca.edu/college_services/human_resources/docs/GuidetoPositionSourceDoc.doc, and the
 - Position Source Document which can be saved to your computer and completed on your computer https://smcnet.stmarys-ca.edu/college_services/human_resources/docs/positionsourcedocument.doc
Tip for employees: start today to capture your job on this form, and then keep your draft handy to update during your work week.
- Completed PSD's are due in Human Resources by January 2, 2009

Q&A

(note: feel free to ask general questions and answers will be added over time viewable on the HR site)

The Staff Compensation Study

What types of staff positions will be evaluated during this study?

Staff positions from current salary grade 1 to salary grade 12. Positions in the President's Cabinet are not evaluated on this scale. As with staff salary ranges, salary surveys data from similar institutions is used to assess external competitiveness of Cabinet-level salaries.

I am a tenured faculty member working as a dean. I'm not included in this process, right?

Wrong – you are in a staff position, and it is the position that is being evaluated, not the person who currently holds that position.

Completing the Position Source Document

I have already done a lot of work on my job description using another format. Do I have to start all over?

No, you don't have to start all over. You can use the work you've already done by copying or cutting and pasting paragraphs from other documents into this form.

The Position Source Document asks me to check the box next to the level of problem solving/analysis, decision making, communication/contacts and supervision I do. Are these levels listed in any order?

Yes, they are listed left to right in increasing order.

What happens if I don't get my Position Source Document completed?

Your supervisor or someone else in your department will complete the PSD for your position.

Are there certain "buzz words" I can use so my position will get as high a salary grade as possible?

The short answer is "no." In the past, some employees have used words or terms from the template or job evaluation tool, hoping that their position would be graded as high as possible. An employee may genuinely believe that the decisions his position routinely makes have strategic impact on the College, but that level of impact is typically more appropriately decisions made by her/his supervisor, or to her/his supervisor's supervisor.

What happens if my supervisor and I don't agree on the PSD for my position?

Both of you should work together to describe the position. If you don't agree, the supervisor's supervisor should be brought into the discussion.

I have a Master's Degree and I feel that the position I hold requires that level of education.

While you may have a Master's degree, that level of education may or may not be a requirement; it may be desirable but not required.

Other employees know how to write up their jobs using fancy words that make participating in a project sound like leading it. I have a plainer way of describing things – will that count against me when my job is evaluated?

The evaluation process is designed to be able to "see through" adjectives and adverbs to see what the position actually does, and decisions a position typically makes, not the default decision a position may make on rare occasion. If we have questions we will seek clarification.

The Job Evaluation Phase

What is this job evaluation tool you describe?

This type of job evaluation is called a multi-factor or point-factor analysis tool that was provided to Saint Mary's by Watson Wyatt Compensation Consulting, It is an updated version of the tool Saint Mary's uses today, and it is a widely-recognized job evaluation tool both within and beyond Higher Education.

What if my job evaluates at a lower level?

If during this study your position is evaluated as being in a salary grade lower than your current salary grade, your position's salary grade will be changed effective July 1, 2009 but you will keep your current salary. Remember, the job evaluation process evaluates the position, not the person in the job.

Will the current staff salary grade structure stay the same?

We anticipate we will keep the current salary grade structure but may increase or decrease the number of salary grades depending on the results of this study.

After the Job Evaluation Phase

Is the Position Source Document now my job description?

The PSD includes most if not all of the information needed for job descriptions used for job announcements, job evaluation, the performance review cycle and for determining the physical and mental requirements of the position. It is a "source document" for your position, and can be used as a job description either as is, or by copying and pasting the relevant sections into a new document titled "Job Description."

To be continued....