

UI Staff Classification Study Process

Duties, qualifications and responsibilities vary from position to position. The way to evaluate seemingly diverse positions is to identify, analyze and compare their common factors – what we call Job Value Factors. These factors include **Knowledge and Skills** (difficulty of tasks performed, complexity and problem solving, required knowledge, skills education and work experience); **Scope of Responsibility** (variety of work, breadth of responsibility e.g. department-wide, university-wide), diversity of deadlines and priorities, management responsibilities, resource and budget accountability; **Range of Impact** (autonomy, independence of action, level and types of decisions, communications, consequences of an error). These are common to most classification systems and to almost every job.

The Classification Process

1. Each staff member, with their supervisor's assistance, completed a position description questionnaire (PDQ) in December 2012. The Classification Task force and Leadership Review team provided guidance along the way.
2. The PDQs went to Sibson Consulting, who with the help of UI's HR department, identified 271 benchmark position for which we could seek market data. These positions were selected based on the likelihood of finding a good match in the marketplace. We also made sure we had a good representation from all position levels and that the positions selected encompassed at least 50% of the incumbents. No individual position benefited from or was hurt by its selection into the benchmark group or not.
3. Sibson found matches for most benchmarked jobs and conducted their market analysis. They grouped positions based on relatively similar market pay rates for those positions. Sibson determined that the median salary data naturally fell in to 13 pay grades. Subsequently, the VPS, who were in grade 13, were removed from the classification system at President Nellis' request.
4. The market analysis stage is how the market is tied to our positions and it gave Sibson the data to demonstrate to the University our current position in relation to the relevant labor markets and option for structuring our salary tables.
5. For the benchmarked positions with good matches in the market, Sibson determined the market median salaries and slotted the benchmarked position into the grade that best matched that market median.
6. Sibson Consulting trained the Employment Services Staff in Human Resources how to apply the job value factors to the process and match non-benchmarked jobs to the benchmarked jobs.
7. The Employment Services staff carefully read 1500 PDQs and became familiar with all of them. The PDQs were divided into groups of similar positions e.g. technology-related, finance-related, administrative support, scientific-related. This allowed the Employment Services team to compare similar positions to the benchmarked jobs and to each other.

8. The Employment Services staff looked at each non-benchmarked job and matched it to the most similar benchmark position. They compared the job value factors to determine if the non-benchmarked job should be at a higher, lower or the same level as the benchmarked jobs.
9. Once initially slotted or graded, HR then re-reviewed all of the initial grading placements against all of the jobs performing similar work as a check and balance to see if we graded two similar positions at different levels.
10. HR then looked at all the placements by department for anomalies within each department e.g. a supervisor being graded below current supervisees, the relative relationship between all the positions based on the existing organizational structure.
11. HR then engaged the Deans and division leaders by asking them to review the positions within their department to determine if there were any “out-of-whack” based on their general understanding of the job value factors and their intimate knowledge of their positions. Adjustments were made when appropriate.
12. HR then grouped similar positions into job classifications. This allowed us to reduce the number of job classifications from 1180 to approximately 254. Classifications are primarily an internal control tool to group similarly situated positions for relative consistency in minimum qualification levels and for future market analysis. Having positions correctly grouped also allows for consistency in reclassifications and helps with multiple other administrative and compliance-related responsibilities.
13. HR then sent updated information back to Sibson Consulting. Upon their review, Sibson’s primary questions were about the classification groupings (perhaps breaking them into smaller, more homogenous groups – something HR will probably do over time as the system settles in) and to point out to us how varied our salaries are within each existing classification – a non-classification related issue.
14. The final step is the appeals process.