

Updated July 8, 2014

Basic Principles of Student Assistant Hiring, Management and Evaluation

1. When considering a possible student assistant hire, it is important to keep in mind that a student assistant position is like any other position in The Tseng College (ExL). That is, there should be a specified need for the additional help; it should be discussed with the unit supervisor; and the cost of a student assistant must be included in the unit's budget plan and approved from a fiscal and HR point of view by the ExL Executive Director of Business as any other position would be.
2. Like all other positions in ExL, a student assistant position must have a clear and detailed position description that defines the work to be done and the qualifications required for success in the position. As with all other positions in ExL, the position description serves as the basis for a fair and open search and for setting the performance expectations and evaluating performance once a hire is made. In addition, since student assistants are also at CSUN to learn and gain experience, there are other reasons to ensure that each student assistant position is defined and managed as any other position in ExL. Among the special considerations for student assistants are:
 - To the extent possible, we are giving the student a real job that helps them build work experience, understand what kind of performance is expected in a real working context, and have a record for their future job searches of a job with specified duties and the like.
 - It allows us to agree within a work group what it is we expect the student assistant to be doing and, in that light, what knowledge, skills, experience we are looking for (and what the right starting compensation is for that skill level and what the reporting line should be) before going forward with a hire.
 - It allows us to post a student assistant job and get candidates who have done some self-selection and at least believe they meet the qualifications and can do the job in question.
3. The position description should include application information appropriate for the position in question (to whom to send applications, what is required – cover letter of application, resume, list of references, etc. – deadline date, start date, reporting Basic Principles of Student Assistant Hiring, Management and Evaluation Page 1 of 4 line, and starting pay for the position). Again, this gives student assistants some experience in applying for a job at a more professional level.

4. As with any ExL position of any kind, ExL hires student assistants based on the position requirements only (as outlined in the position description) and without inappropriate discrimination of any kind in keeping with CSUN equity and diversity policies and practices. Work with the ExL Coordinator of Human Resources to post student assistant positions. Create a small unit-level search group (no more than two or three members) to interview qualified student assistants for each position to ensure we find the most qualified candidate for each position (and give student assistants some practice in interviewing for a position).
5. Each student assistant in ExL should have a performance review at least once a year at the time when all other staff in ExL are evaluated, but student assistants should also be evaluated before any decision is made to renew the hire and/or grant a pay increase. As with all other performance evaluations in ExL, the position description is key to setting performance expectations, setting priorities, and giving performance feedback.
6. In ExL, we treat student assistants like other members of the ExL team whose work impacts our students, the productivity of a work group, and the reputation of ExL for quality and service excellence. We have had some really highly talented people working with us as student assistants and it is important that ExL both expects that high level of performance and provides the respect for the role needed to make the experience a positive step forward in the career of a student gaining work experience with us.
7. Whenever possible, a student assistant position should be working for a unit as a whole or a program group as a whole (rather than for just one program or just one person). This approach gives us added flexibility. There are often problems of effective use of time if a student assistant is supporting just one individual rather than a unit, program, or functional group. Such broader unit-level and/or program-level responsibility should be captured in the original position description and the reporting line should be appropriate to ensure that flexibility of assignments within a unit does not lead to many different individuals piling work on a student assistant with no one setting priorities or ensuring that the demands are reasonable for the hours the student assistant has on the job each week.
8. Student assistants should be included in the working life of the unit and ExL overall to the extent possible since this is a learning experience as well as a working experience. We need to make sure student assistants feel they have a real job and that the expectations are as high as they will be when they get their next full time job as a graduate.

Position Description for Student Assistant Position

Job Title: Student Assistant for _____

Tseng College Unit: _____

Supervisor: _____ Classification Level: _____

Hours per Week (maximum of 20 during academic terms): _____

Hourly Rate: _____

General Information about this Position:

Duties and Responsibilities of the Position:

-
-
-
-
-
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications/Skills Required for this Position:

Note: Many of the student assistant positions in The Tseng College have special requirements such as technical and/or design skills, language skills, events planning, student services experience, financial and accounting skills, etc. Be sure to capture the knowledge skills and abilities really needed for a first-level performance in this position.

Note: When defining qualifications for the student assistant position in questions don't forget to include the general requirements for nearly all positions in ExL such as: Strong oral and written English communication skills; ability to work with diverse populations; ability to work effectively with others and maintain a respectful and productive professional working culture in the unit and the College; general technical skills for email and internet searches, ability to understand and effectively present to the public Tseng College programs and policies; and the like as appropriate for your positions.

Send Application to:

Application Deadline: _____ Effective Date of Hire: _____