



Georgetown University Student Employment Office
3520 Prospect Street, NW | Car Barn, Suite 304 | Washington, DC 20057
Phone: (202) 687-4187 | Fax: (202) 784-4877 | finseo@georgetown.edu

Why do I need a job description?

All student employees must have a current job description as a written record of job duties and responsibilities to which all parties can refer. An accurate job description is important for students, employers, and the SEO: it provides students with the information they need to determine if they qualify for the job, and whether the job is of interest to them; it serves as a point of reference for employers during performance evaluations; and it helps the SEO to determine whether or not the work the student will be performing is appropriate for an hourly student position and suitable for FWS funding.

Step 1: Brainstorm Job Duties and Requirements

The first step is to identify job duties. Try to answer the following questions:

- What would the student do on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis?
 - What administrative duties, if any, will the student perform?
 - What big-picture initiatives will the student be involved in?
 - Will the student interact with internal and/or external contacts? What is the nature of these interactions?
 - How much decision making will the student be expected to do?
 - To whom will the student report?
- What responsibilities are given to this position?
- What goals have been assigned to this position?
- What needs does this position fill within the department and/or within the university?

In addition, you should include information about the job requirements.

- *Minimum knowledge, skills, and abilities* – What skills are needed to perform the duties listed? What knowledge do you expect the student to have prior to training?
- *Hour requirements and schedule* – Are certain shifts required? Will the student need a flexible schedule?
- *Location* – Where will the work take place? Will the student need to travel?
- *Minimum level of education and experience* – Are you looking for students of a certain major? Will you hire an undergraduate or a graduate student?
- *Physical requirements* – Does the job require heavy lifting? Will the student need to spend extended periods of time standing?

Note: Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, “essential functions” are the basic job duties that an employee must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodation. You can find out more on the IDEAA website: <http://ideaa.georgetown.edu/ada/externalresources>.

Step 2: Summarize Job Duties and Requirements

Now that the job duties and requirements have been identified, it is time to write a sentence for each. You should keep each sentence crisp and clear. Here are some tips for writing about the job duties:

- Start with an active verb and a description of the task. Always use the present tense of verbs.
- Use unbiased terminology. For example, use “he/she” or construct sentences in such a way that gender pronouns are not required (i.e., use “the student”).
- Use nontechnical language whenever possible.
- Spell out all acronyms and avoid using office jargon that might be unfamiliar to applicants.
- Refrain from using imprecise words such as assist, prepare, etc. The statement “assists in organizing meetings and conferences” may have different meanings to different people.
- Add a job title – be specific and avoid using the phrase “student worker.”

If there are any unusual aspects to the job, make note of this. Unusual aspects would include work on the weekends, routine or occasional overtime, specific availability requirements, etc.

For Reference: Samples and Additional Resources

Student Teaching Assistant

The XYZ Class is designed as a community-based research (CBR) seminar. The teaching assistant is expected to support the professor in facilitating student research projects: each student will work in a research internship with a community-based organization (CBO), as well as attend regular class seminars. Specific job duties include:

- Evaluating and grading assignments and papers and recording grades;
- Scheduling and maintaining regular office hours to meet with students;
- Notifying instructors of errors or problems with assignments; and
- Meeting with supervisors to discuss students’ grades or to complete required grade-related paperwork.

The teaching assistant must be available Monday and Wednesday, 3:15pm - 5:15pm.

Student Clerical Assistant

The employment office assists students in their job search for part-time job opportunities and provides on-campus departments with a centralized hiring system. The clerical assistant will work in the employment office and serve as the initial contact for walk-in and telephone callers. Responsibilities include:

- Communicating with customers to answer questions, disseminate information, and address complaints;
- Maintaining human resources documents, such as employee handbooks or performance evaluation forms; and
- Performing special projects as assigned (e.g., creating how-to-guides for the website, doing research on employment topics, and scanning paperwork into our digital library).

Student must be have advanced knowledge of Microsoft Word and intermediate knowledge of Microsoft Excel.

For information on other job types, please reference the [Selecting Job Profiles & Compensation Grades](#) document on our website. You can also utilize the O*NET Online database, <http://www.onetonline.org/>, which is a free resource sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. Both of these resources have compiled basic job description information for a variety of job types.

Note: When using additional resources, remember that you should not submit a job description with the entire contents copied and pasted. Every job is different!