Frequently Asked Questions
2019 Fourth Quarter

TITLES/STANDARD JOB DESCRIPTIONS (SJDs)

What is the process for mapping the SJD, creating the position description (PD), and holding the conversation?

Information about the mapping and job title process is available online at the TTC Project Resource Library go.wisc.edu/ttcproject. The Job Title Process video explains this process in full detail.

What if primary job responsibilities fall into two SJDs?
Many staff have roles that are complex. One way to determine the best SJD for a role is to consider which SJD would best fit the job if you were to open a new recruitment. If you have a specific question that you need guidance on, please email ttcstudy@ohr.wisc.edu.

Will employees be given their new titles/SJDs prior to their conversation with supervisors/managers so they can review it in advance and prepare for the meeting?

The process for sharing the new titles/SJDs with employees is being established by HR at the school, college, and division level. These HR groups have been encouraged to provide a preview of the title and SJD before the employee conversation. Please contact your HR representatives to learn more.

Can you speak to the education section of the SJD where it says “preferred” instead of “required?”
Why do some of the preferred SJD’s seem lower than what is standard? What if my educational experience doesn’t meet the preferred minimum requirement?

The preferred education assignment is a minimum preferred recommendation by the Office of Human Resources (OHR). These minimum preferred recommendations are for future recruitments, and final determinations are made at the school, college, and division level. These assignments do not apply to employees currently working in the position.

What happens when staff doing the same job in different schools/colleges/divisions are mapped differently?

The University’s Quality Assurance (QA) step of this process has been established to align titles across campus prior to the employee conversations. In instances when this alignment is not consistent, compensation analysts on the TTC Project team will collaborate with HR representatives across campus to make changes. They will then determine if an SJD needs to be modified or added to the Title and SJD Library.

How will secondary and tertiary appointments be handled? What about maintaining two-year rolling and horizon appointments?

Regardless of how many appointments an employee has, the TTC Project will affect all titles that are considered in scope. The TTC Project does not affect the duration of an appointment, therefore rolling horizon contracts will still remain, even if the job title itself changes.
Why are the most important job responsibilities listed as the last item in my SJD?

A SJD describes work at a high level and applies to multiple employees who perform the same work. Responsibilities are not listed in order of importance in the SJD because it is not specific to an individual employee. A position description (PD) will be unique to an employee. A PD will include percentages of effort for each responsibility an employee performs.

EXEMPTION STATUS

What will happen if my job title switches me from exempt to non-exempt or from Academic to University Staff and vice versa in terms of salary, pay schedule, vacation/sick leave?

Employee categories (University Staff, Academic Staff) and benefit packages associated with each category will not change based on the TTC Project. Exemption status changes are based on the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and assignment to either category is determined by federal government regulations, which UW will follow.

MARKET/SALARIES

Where is the market data coming from? Can we see a list of institutions/organization we compared to and the models used to set the rates?

Market data includes public and private higher education peer institutions, as well as private companies. This data was compiled by one of our partners in the project, Mercer Consulting, who is also supporting our long-term benefits strategy in partnership with UW stakeholders and leadership.

If salaries are based on the market and the market comparison includes gender/racial inequities, how will it be adjusted at UW or will it just continue to perpetuate the inequities?

One of the goals of the TTC Project is to have current and market-driven salary data across all groups at UW-Madison so that gender and racial inequities can be addressed. Without this data, the university cannot compare salaries between groups or develop a plan to provide equitable compensation across them.

To have an informed conversation, why is salary range not discussed? Wouldn’t we know what the range is before confirming our SJD and PD?

The TTC Project is strategically separating title and salary discussions. This ensures employees and managers appropriately assess the duties of the position. Introducing the assigned salary grades during the title discussion may result in duty inflation and an inaccurate assessment. The salary structure is not yet finalized and will be available in May 2020.

If an employee is mapped to a title that puts them in a new range and their base pay is at the maximum of the new range, how will they earn future salary increases if they cannot exceed the maximum in their range?

Compensation increases within the assigned salary grade can be obtained in numerous ways. Base and lump adjustments will still be granted for performance, retention and parity. Market movements and awards will continue to be reviewed. With the widening of the salary grade, these salary increases will be able to be implemented without exceeding the maximum in each grade.

Where does the money come from to address staff who are underpaid?

Our project sponsors (Chancellor, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration) are committed to the success of the TTC Project and are determined to address financial shortfalls that are identified through a long-term compensation strategy.
PROGRESSION/PROMOTION

How do I progress if I'm at the top of my salary grade? What are my options if the opportunities for promotion appear to be in a lower salary grade?

Progression is horizontal advancement within the same job and across its salary grade. A component of the TTC project is to widen each salary grade to account for employees who are at or near the top of their salary grade. These salary grades are Market influenced and advancement through the grade is performance driven.

Is promotion based on performance or would there have to be a position open to be promoted? Would you have to have an open recruitment and apply for a job for promotion?

Promotion is vertical advancement to a new job, with a different job title and work responsibilities. Some position vacancies will require a recruitment just as we do today.

BENEFITS

Will the proposed benefit enhancements mean the cost of benefits will increase?

Current benefits offerings will only be enhanced and will not be reduced. To attract and retain UW employees, the university is evaluating benefits enhancement options. The TTC Project surveyed staff through the Benefits Preferences Survey. Results from the Market Benefits Value Analysis (BVA) will be available and posted on the website in the beginning of 2020.

Benefits that are state mandated such as the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) and State Group Health Insurance are determined by the Wisconsin State Legislature. UW cannot make changes to these benefits as they are mandated by Wisconsin law.

APPEALS

What will the appeal process entail?

If an employee does not agree with their assigned job title they should talk with their manager and local HR. If the concern cannot be resolved, the employee can request a title review and begin the formal appeals process. This process will start in May 2020.

TIMELINE SHIFT

Why did the TTC Project shift the timeline? When will my new title go into effect?

The TTC Project is extending the project timeline to allow for a more in-depth quality assurance review. This extension ensures titles will be more consistent across UW–Madison’s schools, colleges and divisions. Managers and supervisors will also have more time to complete training and engage in conversations with employees.

On May 1, 2020 employees will receive a letter with their new title and salary range. The new titles and position descriptions will be effective on July 1, 2020. Employee conversations, some of which have already begun, will be extended through the spring.

During this timeframe, and once the expanded quality assurance review is complete, Human Resources at schools, colleges and divisions working with the TTC Project team will determine the exact timing for the
upcoming employee conversations. The TTC Project team will continue to work with Human Resources to communicate the next steps.

**QUESTIONS?**
Questions regarding the TTC Project can be submitted at employee engagement events, or by emailing the TTC Project (ttcstudy@ohr.wisc.edu). Visit go.wisc.edu/ttcproject.

* Please note that this is an internal document that is subject to change. It does not constitute a contractual commitment and may be unilaterally modified or rescinded at will by the Chancellor of UW-Madison.