



WRITING AN EFFECTIVE POSITION DESCRIPTION

This guide describes how to develop effective position descriptions. Position descriptions are often the first impression a student will have of your department unit, and help determine whether or not a student will apply or further research your organization. Follow this guide to learn how to develop inclusive, detailed position descriptions that appeal to UC Santa Cruz students.

Tip no. 1

CLEARLY IDENTIFY YOUR JOB TITLE

Include as much detail as possible when posting a job. Providing sufficient context in the job title better equips students when searching and applying for a job.

For example, students will have a better idea when applying to an “Experiential Learning Student Assistant” position rather than one titled “Student Assistant”.

If the working job title and description are vague or lack context, you may miss out on potential candidates and thus a larger applicant pool for selection. The more background information students are offered, the more prepared they will be when describing their relative experience, skills, and understanding the job expectations.

Tip no. 2

INTRODUCE THE ORGANIZATION BY HIGHLIGHTING GOALS AND STRENGTHS.

Use inclusive language to feature any elements of company culture to your audience. Consider highlighting attributes that may draw in a diverse and wider candidate pool. Your diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices demonstrates your value and commitment to an inclusive and fair work atmosphere. Advocating for DEI practices is highly sought after from students and new talent, so it is expected more qualified candidates will apply when this is demonstrated.

Students will begin to examine your company culture and inclusivity practices as soon as they read your job description, and especially once communication has been established. Please keep in mind that the job title, description, and company overview are highly impactful in the application process. Every interaction the hiring team and candidates have are essential to building foundational relationships and determining if the employment is mutually prosperous. Using inclusive language helps students see themselves in your workplace. Vocalizing your authentic strengths within the first interaction will attract a wider variety of candidates, and ultimately speak to the growth of your team. You may consider one person or a small group taking ownership of

your department or unit introduction. You will want to reuse the introduction on job postings and even featured in your Handshake employer account for consistency. The department messaging and language should be defined and unified throughout all postings and profiles.

Tip no. 3

SUMMARIZE PREFERRED AND REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Outlining job expectations and ideas of success gives applicants a preview into what the job entails and how your team operates. Reflect on what knowledge, skills, and abilities are absolutely required rather than highly preferred. When outlining your required skills, avoid creating criteria that are too strict and discourage applicants as a result. Reflect on your recruiting criteria and reconsider if some skills are highly preferred instead of mandatory. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to focus on transferable skills and aspects of experiential learning. Your preferred skills may include more specific skills that the job will require. Training offered to develop and refine these desirable skills facilitates career readiness. Do not rely on GPA, major, and other factors to define success in any given role.

EXAMPLE: "We are looking for a flexible candidate with strong problem-solving and leadership skills. The role will require working in a fast-paced and dynamic environment, so the candidate will also have strong communication skills and professionalism."

Tip no. 4

OUTLINE THE PERCENTAGES OF ANTICIPATED JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Highlight key job duties under respective categories. Each point should be robust and clearly defined so all applicants have a clear understanding of responsibilities. Job responsibilities must be outlined into percentages that total to 100%. For example, if the role is primarily administrative but requires occasion event coordination, assign each duty a weighted percentage of their anticipated tasks (i.e. 80% administrative and 20% event coordination).

Once you have established the weighted categorizations of the job position, outline specific duties under each category. Provide detailed yet brief descriptions to keep the recruiting message clear and concise. For example, if 80% of the position is administrative, outline specific administrative duties such as promptly responding to incoming email and phone calls, or attending a front desk area. Ensure each overarching category is supported and well-understood by the specified job duties

Tip no. 5

FEATURE THE PERKS AND BENEFITS YOUR DEPARTMENT OFFERS, AND YOUR SUPERVISION STRENGTHS

This is a chance to highlight transferable skills that students will take away from the position. It is helpful to note certain aspects of the position can be learned on-site and extensive training is provided to find a great fit. Willingness to train at any experience level will foster the professional development of all student employees. Another benefit may be having a flex schedule with a remote or hybrid model. Establishing the opportunities and knowledge your department can offer student employees may make the job description more appealing, thus leading to more applicants.

Tip no. 6

MAKE A NOTE OF ANY REQUIRED PROCESSES FOR ONBOARDING

This will include background checks, CANRA, and any other training or documentation required for employment. Students should be informed prior to applying if a background check will be required to finalize employment. Students should have an understanding of required documentation and processes prior to the application process. If you are unsure if a role will require any of the above requirements, please contact your Staff HR Timekeeper.

Tip no. 7

INCLUDE NACE CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES THAT WILL BE EMPHASIZED THROUGHOUT THE ROLE

NACE career readiness competencies are the top transferable skills that encourage professional development. Companies and organizations look for these skills while recruiting, so offering growth in these areas will directly help our student employees. The NACE career readiness competencies are: career & self development, communication, critical thinking, equity & inclusion, leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and technology.

These areas of skill and experience best equip new talent when entering the workforce, and ultimately to gain experience and opportunities. Outlined below are some sample behaviors per competency. More examples and information can be found on the NACE website [here](#).

NACE CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES

Career & Self-development

- Show an awareness of your own strengths and areas for development.
- Identify areas for continual growth while pursuing and applying feedback.
- Professionally advocate for oneself and others.
- Voluntarily participate in further education, training, or other events to support one's career.

Communication

- Understand the importance of and demonstrate verbal, written, and non-verbal/body language, and abilities.
- Employ active listening, persuasion, and influencing skills.
- Frame communication with respect to diversity of learning styles, varied individual communication abilities, and cultural differences.
- Promptly inform relevant others when needing guidance with assigned tasks.

Critical thinking:

- Make decisions and solve problems using sound, inclusive reasoning and judgment.
- Accurately summarize and interpret data with an awareness of personal biases that may impact outcomes.
- Effectively communicate actions and rationale, recognizing the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of stakeholders.
- Multi-task well in a fast-paced environment.

Equity & Inclusion:

- Solicit and use feedback from multiple cultural perspectives to make inclusive and equity-minded decisions.
- Actively contribute to inclusive and equitable practices that influence individual and systemic change.
- Identify resources and eliminate barriers resulting from individual and systemic racism, inequities, and biases.
- Address systems of privilege that limit opportunities for members of historically marginalized communities.

Leadership:

- Inspire, persuade, and motivate self and others under a shared vision.
- Seek out and leverage diverse resources and feedback from others to inform direction.
- Use innovative thinking to go beyond traditional methods.
- Motivate and inspire others by encouraging them and by building mutual trust.

Professionalism:

- Act equitably with integrity and accountability to self, others, and the organization.
- Prioritize and complete tasks to accomplish organizational goals.
- Consistently meet or exceed goals and expectations.
- Have an attention to detail, resulting in few if any errors in their work.

Teamwork:

- Listen carefully to others, taking time to understand and ask appropriate questions without interrupting.

- Effectively manage conflict, interact with and respect diverse personalities, and meet ambiguity with resilience.
- Exercise the ability to compromise and be agile.
- Build strong, positive working relationships with supervisor and team members/coworkers.

Technology

- Navigate change and be open to learning new technologies.
- Use technology to improve efficiency and productivity of their work.
- Manage technology to integrate information to support relevant, effective, and timely decision-making.
- Manipulate information, construct ideas, and use technology to achieve strategic goals.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Watch the informational video on how to create an effective position description [here](#)
- Make an appointment with [Dr. Veronica Heiskell](#), or [Taylor Harrison](#)
- Send us your questions via email to ucscel@ucsc.edu
- If you would like to schedule a department visit or training, please make your request with additional information to ucscel@ucsc.edu
- Additional training and informational videos will be available on Career Success's website [here](#)
- Please review the below examples for further reference

Example No. 1

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING STUDENT ASSISTANT

At UCSC Career Success we prepare students for what they want to do with their lives by helping them to develop relevant career skills. We offer an array of services from individual coaching, drop-in peer advising, professional skill building workshops, industry panels, and career fairs! We can assist you with discovering your interests and skills, in career exploration, job search strategies, and with your graduate school applications, and even more!

Experiential Learning Student Assistants support the experiential learning and student employment functions of Career Success. Experiential Learning Student Assistants collaborate with the Experiential Learning team to support the hiring and onboarding process for over 4,000 students on a yearly basis. This includes reviewing and curating on and off-campus experiential learning and full-time job opportunities on Handshake, onboarding new student employees, and assisting with Career Success' experiential learning programs.

Position duties:

- **80% Experiential Learning Team support**
 - Assist with managing the Handshake database, reviewing employers and position descriptions for approval.
 - Onboard new student employees, completing payroll packets and reviewing a variety of databases to support and complete the onboarding process.
 - Support Career Success experiential learning programs (GANAS, CUIP, PCPD, etc.) as needed.
 - Demonstrate how to use Handshake and other partner software systems to students.
 - Present and conduct outreach to students, campus organizations, and partners on experiential learning opportunities within Career Success, UC Santa Cruz, and with external partners.
 - Assist with workshops and events.

- **10% Front desk support**
 - Serve as the first contact in the Career Success office at the front desk, including assessing student needs upon their arrival, directing them to the appropriate resources, checking them in, and answering phone calls or other inquiries as necessary.
- **10% Other duties and special projects as assigned** by the Associate Director of Experiential Learning & Student Employment.

Preferred skills, knowledge, and abilities:

1. Web content management.
2. Willingness to learn new skills and navigate new spaces.
3. Great relationship building skills with the ability to provide presentations to students, staff, parents, and community groups.
4. Strong computers and spreadsheets skills including Google Drive. Experience with data entry.

Required skills, knowledge, and abilities:

1. Currently enrolled as a student at UC Santa Cruz.
2. Ability to assist students and other constituents of diverse backgrounds.
3. Team focused and collaborative attitude; ability to participate in a positive and supportive manner.
4. Great organizational skills and detail-oriented with the ability to prioritize assignments to meet deadlines.
5. Ability to maintain privacy and confidentiality.
6. Strong communication skills.

Example No. 2

UC SANTA CRUZ SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT CREATOR

We're looking for 2 creative and highly motivated students to help build, run, and grow our UC Santa Cruz TikTok and Instagram accounts. The right students will be familiar and active users of TikTok and Instagram, know how to make compelling Tik Tok and Reels, be familiar with UC Santa Cruz student life, be comfortable being on camera, and have tons of creative ideas for content creation for each platform! We're looking to hop on trends, highlight campus culture and student life, showcase our beautiful campus, highlight majors, and more on each platform. Students will report to a supervisor but must be motivated to plan, shoot, and create content independently.

Please submit your resume, cover letter, and link to examples of Instagram Reels or Tik Toks you have made.

Job Duties

- **55%** Ideate, shoot, and edit evergreen/always-on social media content depicting student life specifically for the campus TikTok and Reels (Instagram) accounts. Content would include: Highlighting campus culture and student life, student profiles, hopping on trends on each platform and utilizing them for the UC Santa Cruz brand, showcasing our beautiful campus, highlighting majors, and more. Compose, edit and proofread caption and any on-image copy.
- **20%** Develop and execute campaign-based content on Tiktok and Instagram as directed by the Senior Director of Digital Engagement. Collaborate to identify and create compelling stories. Create responsive content that speaks to current cultural moments from a student perspective.
- **15%** Monitor content performance and engagement.
- **10%** Research content trends, topics & hashtags.

Skills Knowledge and Abilities Required:

- Computer skills including Microsoft Office and/or Google Docs, major web browsers, social media, and email.
- Social content creation experience with TikTok, Instagram and Instagram Reels feature.
- Knowledge, or willingness to learn, the TikTok and Instagram content algorithms and how to spread content to as wide an audience as possible.

- A self-starter who is proactive and can work autonomously as needed.
- Highly organized with an innate ability to self-manage time and prioritize.
- Demonstrated experience creating photography, video and graphical imagery using a smartphone.
- Demonstrated experience creating content on TikTok and Instagram including tools
- for producing editing and surfacing content including filters, on-image copy and doodles, hashtags, GIFs, boomerangs, polls, questions, quizzes, memes, stickers, tags, locations, etc.
- Familiarity and compliance with content, posting and community guidelines set by Instagram and TikTok.
- Comfortable being on camera.
- Ability to capture content during high foot-traffic times on-campus, extra curricular events, student organization group meetings, campus events and activities.
- Actively engaged with current content trends including pop-culture references, hashtags, emojis, GIFs, etc.
- Attention to detail.
- Communication skills and ability to interact with Marketing and Communications staff.

Skills Knowledge and Abilities Preferred:

- Photoshop and Adobe Creative Suite experience.
- Insightful and highly creative with the ability to guide and create compelling content.
- Good writing and editorial skills.
- Familiarity with content being created by other universities and colleges.
- Proud banana slug and excited to create content showing what makes UC Santa Cruz great.
- Someone who works well under pressure and in a fast-paced environment.