



**Suggested Guidelines for Establishing
Differentiated Student Employee Wage Rates
within Ball State University Departments**

**Provided by the Career Center
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The Ball State University Student Wage Plan and Suggested Student Employee Wage Levels

On May 3, 2002, the university Board of Trustees approved a student wage plan that included variable pay rates recognizing the complexity of the work performed, current merit/market conditions, job experience, special skills, and other factors. In subsequent action, university officers authorized the creation of three student employee wage levels, with each vice president approving wages higher than the campus minimum wage within their units. In addition, departments may award longevity increases at the end of each semester to become effective with the next academic term.

This plan was revised by the Board of Trustees on September 5, 2008, raising the maximum student wage for the first time since 2002. The cap on hourly wages was increased from \$7.50 to \$8.50 an hour effective immediately. The cap will be adjusted to \$9 an hour effective July 24, 2009, when the federal minimum wage is raised again.

The student employee wage levels included in this document are provided as suggestions to assist departments in recognizing and appropriately compensating the differences in student positions within their vice-presidential areas. Differences in student wage rates should be based upon the complexity of the work activities and the skill level and experience required performing them.

Each vice president approves wage guidelines for departments in his or her unit. Questions about wage rates will be referred to the vice president, dean, or department chair, depending upon the one who assumed responsibility for establishing wage rates in a particular area. The Career Center does not have the authority to approve wage rates and longevity increases nor to determine market or equity issues.

Three factors may be used to evaluate student positions: 1) the level of skills and previous experience required, 2) the complexity of the essential functions of the position, and 3) the amount of supervision by a university supervisor that the position requires. For purposes of job review and determining wage level, these factors may be broken down into nine elements: 1) previous experience required, 2) previous training required, 3) licensing or certification required, 4) complexity of general duties, 5) decision making, 6) technical complexity, 7) supervision received, 8) supervision provided, and 9) job context.

There are three suggested student employee wage levels.

Student Wage Level I

Jobs at this level are typically entry-level or trainee jobs requiring basic skills that may be performed without previous training or work experience. Essential duties are routine tasks following prescribed procedures. The employee may follow standardized instructions, operate basic equipment, and perform repetitive duties. Some independent judgment or decision making is required. The student works under close supervision and may receive on-the-job training. The suggested wage range for Level I positions is a minimum of \$6.55 an hour to a maximum of \$7.20 an hour.

Student Wage Level II

Jobs at this level are typically intermediate positions requiring related experience or training. Essential duties vary from routine to semi-complex requiring independent judgment or decision making; previous knowledge of the work area may be required; duties are varied and may require specialized technical skills; the student may be eligible for certification opportunities. The student works under moderate supervision and may receive additional training or specialized instruction. The suggested wage range for Level II positions is a minimum of \$7.20 an hour to a maximum of \$7.85 an hour.

Student Wage Level III

Jobs at this level are typically advanced positions requiring special skills acquired through previous experience, specialized training, or related course work. Essential duties are complex and require independent decision making, problem solving skills, and individual initiative not covered by routine procedures; the student may be responsible for creating or developing processes, procedures, or materials; he or she may also research and analyze information, make recommendations, consult with others, and creatively apply related skills; the student may assign, review, or monitor the work of other student employees, may be required to have certifications, and may receive advanced training. The student works under indirect supervision. The suggested wage range for Level III positions is a minimum of \$7.85 an hour to a maximum of \$8.50 an hour.

Other employment categories include the following:

Undergraduate Internships

Internships are advanced positions requiring special skills and knowledge acquired through the student's academic program. Essential duties may be complex and require the student to use problem-solving and decision-making skills or to apply subject matter expertise related to the academic discipline; the student may also research and analyze information, make recommendations, consult with others, and creatively apply related skills and specialized experience. The student is usually responsible for the creation of a final project, process, report, or materials. The supervisor may be required to complete academic performance reviews and evaluations. The rate of pay for on-campus internships may not exceed the hourly equivalent for graduate assistants within the hiring department.

Graduate Students

Graduate students may be employed in advanced positions requiring a bachelor's degree and specialized knowledge acquired through academic preparation. Essential duties may be complex and require the student to use problem-solving and decision-making skills or to apply subject matter expertise; the student may also research and analyze information, make recommendations, consult with others, and creatively apply related skills and specialized experience; he or she may perform work

similar to that of a graduate assistant. The student may assign, review, or monitor the work of other student employees. The rate of pay for graduate student positions may not exceed the hourly equivalent for graduate assistants within the hiring department.

Commission Sales

A limited number of campus positions selling advertisements may be paid on a commission basis. These positions typically involve soliciting advertisers, monitoring contracts, and reviewing ad layouts and proofs. The rate of commission and the basis used to calculate the commission must be approved by the chairperson of the department hiring the student as well as the appropriate university officer. Federal Work-Study students are not eligible for these positions. Guidelines are available from the Career Center.

Longevity Increases

Supervisors may award longevity increases to students at the completion of an academic term provided the student has performed satisfactorily in his or her work assignment and is returning for the subsequent semester or term.

Requests for longevity increases must be submitted no later than the last working day of each semester, to become effective with the next full pay period of the following semester or term. Longevity increases may range from 5¢ an hour up to 25¢ an hour (or in increments of 5¢, 10¢, 15¢, etc.). [Reminder: total student employee compensation, including longevity, cannot exceed \$8.50 an hour.]

Supervisors will be responsible for submitting *Longevity Pay Increase* student employment authorization FormBlaster forms for each student eligible for a longevity increase. The department head must also approve the change in rate.

Longevity increases are not transferable to other departments if students choose to change jobs. Students changing jobs begin at the base wage rate established for the position for which they're applying.

Suggested Student Employee Job Review Process

- Step 1. Identify a key person in your unit to serve as a liaison with other supervisors in the department. This person will help provide consistency in the job review process in your area.
- Step 2. Collect information on your student jobs. You may want to gather information and insights from current student employees or rely on information from supervisors and current job descriptions.
- Step 3. Write the job description focusing on
 - A. Position function statement
 - B. Task statements
 - C. Required qualifications
 - D. Additional preferred qualifications
 - E. Job context
 - F. Supervision received
 - G. Supervision provided
- Step 4. Review the position using the following factors:
 - A. Previous experience required
 - B. Previous training required
 - C. Licensing or certification
 - D. Complexity of general duties
 - E. Decision making
 - F. Technical complexity
 - G. Supervision received
 - H. Supervision provided
 - I. Job context
- Step 5. Determine an appropriate wage level
 - A. Student Wage Level I
 - B. Student Wage Level II
 - C. Student Wage Level III
- Step 6. Submit your position descriptions and recommended wage levels to your department chair, director, or dean for review and approval.
- Step 7. Your chair, director, or dean will review department submissions and either approve or deny your recommendation, or return the job description to you for more information.
- Step 8. The vice president of your area must approve wage recommendations above the \$6.55 an hour minimum wage.
- Step 9. Notify the Career Center of any changes in job titles, job duties, qualifications, and rates of pay for posting on Cardinal ViewJobs.

Importance of the Job Description in Justifying Student Wage Levels

Having written job descriptions with clearly defined duties and work tasks is crucial to making wage-level decisions and differentiating among various student positions in your department. The information presented here may serve as a guide in identifying the components of a well-written job description.

Job descriptions form the basis for much of what happens (or should happen) in selecting and hiring students, managing work activities, identifying and measuring outcomes, and recognizing performance. To paraphrase an old cliché, “If you don’t have a job description, how will you know when the work has been accomplished?”

More specifically, job descriptions help you achieve five basic functions in your role as a supervisor. First, the well-written job description enables you to identify the important work activities the student will be performing and helps you define the role of the student’s position within your unit.

Secondly, the job description helps you identify the experience, skills, and abilities necessary for a student to be successful in the position. This is critical if your interviewing and selection activities are to identify the right student for the job. In addition, the job description can serve as a realistic “job preview” for students during the selection process—they need to decide if the job “fit” is for them, also.

Third, the job description serves as a training guide. Based upon your evaluation of the work activities to be performed, you can determine the best way to train or orient your newly hired students to the job. This may be as simple as orienting them to the department or training them in the use of specific equipment or procedures.

Fourth, the job description assists you in setting performance objectives with your student. Based upon the work activities to be carried out, you can set measurable objectives for your student to achieve and create a baseline for performance review discussions. It is extremely important for students to understand how their performance will be measured and what standards will be used.

Fifth, job descriptions create a baseline to use in planning within your department. Job descriptions are ever changing, just as goals and objectives change within your department. Changing priorities, increased use of technology, and the greater environment in which we operate all contribute to changing job duties and tasks. Documented job descriptions assist you in preparing for future demands.

Effective job descriptions are action oriented, brief and concise, specific to the work to be accomplished, and reflective of the job as it exists now. The job description should be factual, free of jargon, and non-sexist in terminology.

Writing the Job Description

Use this guide as you begin to identify each component of the job you're describing. Refer to the sample work sheet on page 10. See the sample position description labeled **Appendix 1, page 12**. This sample job description should be used only as a suggestion of what a finished, comprehensive student job description looks like. Its use here does not imply any particular wage level.

1. Position Statement

Begin by writing a position function statement about the position's role within your department. This statement typically describes the basic purpose of the position and general responsibilities. Include outcomes statements as appropriate.

Example: Assist employers with posting student jobs and keeping vacancy information in the Cardinal ViewJobs database up to date. Obtain hiring information from employers when BSU students are hired.

2. Task Statements

Next, make a list of task statements for the position. You can generate these by asking the question, What does the student do? These should be action oriented and use action words to describe the work activity. (See **Appendix 2, page 14**, for a sample list of "action verbs"). Task statements should be listed in order of importance. If possible, include the percentage of time conducting each task.

Examples:

Review information on computer system to verify that students are eligible to work on campus and have completed all necessary documents; check student documents for accuracy and examine the documents required to verify students' eligibility to work in the United States. (25%)

Using Excel software, enter hiring information for off-campus jobs into a database. (15%)

3. Minimum Qualifications

What are the minimum qualifications for the position? What skills and attributes must a student have to be successful in the position? These may include 1) general attributes (abilities, work habits, attitudes), 2) skills (technical proficiency, knowledge, motor skills, etc.), 3) physical demands (requirements related to physical movement or the student's interaction with the environment), and 4)

academic or licenses (most often related to a specific major or GPA requirement, or license or certification).

Examples:

Must have basic computer skills, effective oral and written communications skills, accurate filing ability, typing/data-entry skills, and the ability to work independently within a team concept.

Professional attitude; effective interpersonal communication skills; basic computer skills; attention to detail; dependability; initiative; ability to handle difficult situations.

4. Additional Preferred Qualifications

Additional preferred qualifications are those attributes that would be “nice to have” and that would enhance a student’s abilities to do the job, but they are not absolutely necessary.

Examples:

Experience in customer service; experience with network or mainframe computer applications; knowledge of Ball State University and its operations; experience with Microsoft Office products.

Experience using the Internet and CD-ROMs; demonstration of high commitment to excellent customer service; ability to work independently; demonstrated flexibility in a varying office environment; commitment to functioning as a team player.

5. Job Context

Job context refers to the working environment and the setting in which the student will perform the tasks. These are helpful in determining fit between a student’s abilities and temperament and the job. They also provide a realistic preview to students of the setting in which they’ll be asked to conduct their work activities.

Example: Position requires student to work in a multi-faceted customer reception area answering multiple-line telephone set and greeting visitors; student must be able to sit for long periods of time while using computer to enter customer contacts into a database and to forward phone messages.

6. Supervision Received

Students normally work under close supervision, moderate supervision, or indirect supervision.

Close supervision usually means there is continuous and close monitoring of student work, the supervisor checks the quality of work, and students typically complete tasks as assigned.

Moderate supervision occurs when the supervisor checks on work progress and assignments occasionally, but students are given more latitude to make decisions and monitor their own progress.

With indirect supervision, students are often working on their own, making decisions, and monitoring their own assignments. Contacts with the supervisor are less frequent.

7. Supervision Provided

Some students may provide supervision to other student employees. Use the descriptions in section 6 above to describe the level of supervision the student provides to others.

Ball State University
Suggested Format for Student Employee Job Descriptions

Department: _____

Account Code: _____

Position Title: _____

Job Number: _____

Supervisor: _____

Supervisor Title: _____

1. Position Function Statement

2. Position Tasks

3. Minimum Qualifications

4. Additional Preferred Qualifications

5. Job Context

6. Supervision Received

7. Supervision Provided

Importance of Performance Reviews in Longevity Decisions

In accordance with the Board of Trustees-approved student wage plan, supervisors may award wage increases to students based upon longevity. A longevity increase may be awarded each semester effective with the next academic term in amounts ranging from a minimum of 5¢ an hour to a maximum of 25¢ an hour (or in increments of 5¢, 10¢, 15¢, 20¢). Longevity raises are processed using the *Longevity Pay Increase* student employment authorization form in FormBlaster. The chairperson, director, or dean responsible for budgets in your unit or department must approve longevity raises.

While performance appraisals are not required for student employees, decisions to award longevity increases should take into account the student's performance and accomplishments during the semester or term. The information presented here may be helpful in providing performance reviews to student employees.

Effective performance feedback is a process of letting students know what is expected, how they're doing based upon expectations, when they're doing a good job, and how they can improve. Setting the stage for performance management starts with using the position's job description to communicate to students their job duties, desired outcomes, and what they'll be held accountable for. It also helps to share the performance appraisal form for the job (based upon the job description) with the student when hired. Be specific in describing the basic criteria you will use in evaluating the student's performance.

Ideally, you should conduct a preliminary performance review thirty days after hiring. This discussion should identify current strengths, identify areas for improvement, identify additional training that may be needed, show how their jobs can help prepare them for future careers, and answer their questions or clarify expectations.

A regular performance review should be conducted at the close of the semester; especially to support longevity increases. Your performance discussion should focus on work performance and behaviors. You should be specific, honest, and fair in describing work performance and outcomes.

To have a successful discussion with your student, be sure to introduce the goal or purpose of the meeting and explain how you define the evaluation criteria. Go through your written comments and ask the student for feedback or questions. Determine what training or coaching may be needed. Focus on future performance and agree on the action steps to be taken.

Remember to evaluate the student's performance over the course of the entire appraisal period and provide written comments. Maintain a copy of the student's written performance appraisal for your records. Additional information about conducting performance appraisals is available in the training module entitled "*Performance Appraisals Made Easy*" provided by the Office of Training and Development on the Ball State University Human Resources Web page.

Ball State University **Appendix 1**
Sample Student Employee Job Description

Department: Career Center	Account code: 1-21600
Position Title: Career and Experiential Learning Lab Career Assistant	Job Number: 796
Supervisor: Deb Dolak	Title: Coordinator of Career Resources

1. Position Function Statement

This position offers the opportunity to work with career information in print and electronic formats while assisting clients, as well as the opportunity to develop customer service skills in a professional office.

2. Position Tasks

- A. Assist clients in using the print and electronic resources in the Career and Experiential Learning Lab. (50%)
- B. Assist with locating and evaluating new Web sites to bookmark on workstations, and for the Career Center's Web pages; add/delete links from Career Center Web pages using Sitecore content management system; assist in maintaining integrity of bookmarks. (30%)
- C. Electronically check resources used by clients in and out; reshelve materials. (5%)
- D. Assist in marketing the Career and Experiential Learning Lab through bulletin boards and displays. (5%)
- E. Assist in maintaining lab files in Microsoft Excel and Word. (3%)
- F. Assist in keeping Career and Experiential Learning Lab statistics. (2%)
- G. Answer the phone, take messages, and transfer calls to appropriate parties. (1%)
- H. Restock free-materials stand as needed. (1%)
- I. Keep area tidy and clean. (1%)
- J. Assist in staffing Career Center special events as scheduling permits. (1%)
- K. Perform other duties as assigned. (1%)

3. Minimum Required Qualifications

Basic computer knowledge, Internet experience, and telephone and customer service experience; compliance with Career Center dress standards and expectations for career assistants; ability to lift a heavy book up to 15 lbs. for shelving on a 6 ft. high shelf; ability to answer the telephone and take messages; ability to operate a computer keyboard and mouse; ability to read print resources and print on computer monitors.

4. Additional Preferred Qualifications

Experience using CD-ROMs; demonstration of high commitment to excellent customer service; experience using Microsoft Office products; ability to work

independently; demonstrated flexibility in a varying office environment; commitment to functioning as a team player.

5. Job Context

Position requires student to work in a multi-faceted resource lab/library; student will be required to interact with clients by answering career-related questions using available resources; student will be required to be mobile while interacting with clients; student will also be required to sit at a desk to perform office-related activities on a computer; student will also be required to answer the phone and take messages.

6. Supervision Received

Student will work under varying degrees of supervision. Some activities will be closely supervised, while others will require indirect to moderate supervision.

7. Supervision Provided

Student may be required to supervise other student employees' work on monitoring the integrity of links on the Career Center's Web pages.

Action Verbs for Task Statements*Appendix 2*

accelerate	direct	inspire	purchase
accomplish	discover	install	recommend
achieve	distribute	integrate	reconcile
adapt	double	interpret	record
administer	draft	interview	recruit
advance	earn	invent	reduce
advertise	edit	investigate	reinforce
advise	educate	justify	relate
analyze	effect	keynote	reorganize
approve	eliminate	launch	report
arrange	engineer	lead	research
assemble	establish	license	review
assist	estimate	maintain	revise
build	evaluate	manage	schedule
calculate	examine	manipulate	serve
change	execute	market	simplify
clarify	expand	master	spark
collaborate	experience	mediate	sell
collect	expedite	modify	solve
communicate	explain	monitor	specify
compile	facilitate	motivate	stimulate
complete	finance	negotiate	strengthen
compose	form	obtain	structure
conceive	formulate	operate	succeed
conceptualize	find	order	supervise
conduct	generate	organize	survey
confer	govern	originate	synthesize
control	graduate	overcome	teach
convert	guide	participate	train
coordinate	halve	perform	transform
construct	head	persuade	transmit
consult	hire	pioneer	triple
correlate	identify	plan	unify
create	illustrate	prepare	use
define	implement	present	verify
delegate	improve	process	win
demonstrate	increase	program	write
detail	influence	promote	
design	inform	propose	
develop	initiate	provide	
devise	innovate	publicize	