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UA3/6/3 Position Classification & Compensation Program Memo

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MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. Harry Largen  
Vice President for Business Affairs

SUBJECT: Position Classification and Compensation Program

During the past year the Department of Personnel Services has been involved in a project of evaluation and classification of staff positions. I am pleased to report that the classification of over 700 University staff positions is now complete.

Position specifications such as the one at Tab A have been written for each of the classified positions. In addition, the rankings for each section, department, college, and Vice Presidential area were provided for review by the appropriate administrative officer. These rankings of positions were determined by using a factor-point rating system based upon the Position Questionnaire (example at Tab B) completed for each position by the incumbent and the supervisor. The appropriate officials in each department, college, and Vice Presidential area were given the opportunity to review the position specifications and rankings to determine:

1. Were the position titles accurate?
2. Were the descriptions of work accurate?
3. Were the examples of duties performed accurate?
4. Were the minimum qualifications suitable requirements for the positions?
5. Did the rankings of positions present an accurate determination of the levels of skills and responsibilities?

In each area of the University, we solicited the feedback of the administrators necessary to establish an accurate classification system. Some position specifications, titles, qualifications, and rankings were adjusted based upon these conversations and proper justification. At Tab C is a complete listing of the new classifications grouped by pay grade. (The uniformed positions within the Department of Public Safety have been excluded for further analysis and review.)

The listing of classifications at Tab C indicates that the classified positions have been assigned to thirteen grade levels. A great majority of the positions are confined to grades 1-5.

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In addition to the classification of positions, it is necessary to devise an appropriate method for matching pay grades to classifications and establishing pay ranges for the grades. Many classification programs have 10% differentials between pay grades. We took a look at our wage comparison with the Southern Kentucky area of the Associated Industries of Kentucky annual wage survey. At Tab D you will see the comparison of average wages for selected classified positions between Western and AIK. The first page shows the actual average wages for Western and the AIK based upon January, 1978 wage data. The following pages present the necessary information to develop salary trend lines for both Western and AIK. The salary trend lines show a line of "best fit" between the average wages for classifications at the same level or ranking. Approximately one-half of the rates will be above the salary trend line and one-half will be below the line. The charts and the trend lines clearly indicate that, on the whole, Western is below the average wages for the Southern Kentucky area of the Associated Industries of Kentucky. This is especially true of some of the skilled trades classifications. In our proposal we are recommending that the starting pay rates for grades 1-5 remain at basically their current levels. For grades 6-16, we are recommending starting rates of 8% differential above the next lower grade. This figure will allow for an acceptable monetary differential between grades (and levels of responsibilities and skills), but would not cause the financial burden to the University of a 10% differential. In addition, this wage scale would help us to improve our position in comparison to the Southern Kentucky area without trying for complete parity.

At Tab E is the complete listing, by department, of our classification proposal. Each page provides departmental information to include position incumbents, departmental position numbers, position titles, and the classification grades for the positions. The specifications, titles, and relative rankings within each area of the University have been reviewed and approved by each Vice President. The pay grades have been assigned by Personnel Services.

We believe the position classification plan as proposed is an important element of the personnel management of the University. It provides the following benefits:

(1) It will assist the Department of Personnel Services in the recruitment, testing, orientation, training, transfer, and promotion of employees.
(2) It is a basis for improved employee morale.
(3) It will assist in supervisory and departmental management.
(4) It provides for organizational and fiscal control.

We strongly believe that the classifications should be approved by the President and the Board of Regents as soon as possible and notification made to the University's classified employees. Each department head should also receive copies of the position specifications for his/her department as well as a copy of the appropriate departmental listing found at Tab E.
Memo to Mr. Largen (page 3)

We understand the present budgetary problems which would prevent the University from making salary adjustments, at the present time, to those whose positions have been reclassified or upgraded. It is our sincere opinion that adjustments based upon the classification program should be incorporated into the 1979-80 budget as a priority item, as our employees are the lifeblood of the University's day to day operation.

We would be glad to discuss any or all aspects of our proposal with you at your convenience.

Michael C. Dale, Staff Assistant

for James B. Tomes
Director

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Enclosure