

Lab Manager CoP – Overview of Lab Manager and Research Titles in the SJD Library  
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32 Attendees

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## Agenda

- Salary Structure
  - Historical context
  - Process for updates/maintenance
- Title and Standard Job Description (SJD) Library and Job Groups
  - Research subgroups
- HR Salary Administration Guidelines
  - Pay upon appointment
  - Promotion vs progression
  - Supervision
- Updates – grant funded positions
- Questions

### Salary Structure Process

- Started work in 2016
- Some considerations (working off a 40-year-old structure):
  - \$15/hr minimum
  - Leading market practices
  - Competitive
  - Consistency
  - Attracts, Rewards, Retains
  - 21 unique salary grades
- New structure better but not w/o challenges
- Use established salary surveys from similar businesses (size, etc.)
  - One private industry
  - One higher education
  - Unable to benchmark against a SPECIFIC institution due to antitrust laws
- Regular review (not having to work off a 40-year-old structure)

## Market Data

- Multiple titles may have different market averages but be placed in the same salary grade
- Determining when a position is out of scope for salary grade assignment
  - Title general to multiple disciplines
  - Market data shows pay differences
  - Typically found in academic instructional or research related titles

- Look at salary, then place it w/in the University's salary structure
- Annual survey at different times of the year (spring and fall)
- Review structure every 2 years
- Structure is shared within the entire UW System
  - Does Madison need something more specific?
  - Some titles/salaries are hidden
  - What is the market telling us? Are changes needed?

#### Higher Education Salary Survey

- College and University Professional Association-HR
  - Association of American Universities (AAU)
  - Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA)
  - Data Anonymity (anti-trust laws)
  - See appendix for complete list
- Private: Willis Towers Watson

## Willis Towers Watson

General Industry	Health Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 840 organizations</li> <li>• More than 2.8 million reported employees</li> <li>• Includes all industries except health care (e.g., HR, finance, IT,)</li> <li>• Public and private organizations</li> </ul> <p><b>Market surveys:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1-3 billion</li> <li>• \$3-6 billion revenue organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 279 organizations</li> <li>• More than 1.7 million reported employees</li> <li>• Public and private organizations</li> </ul> <p><b>Market surveys:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1.5-3 billion</li> <li>• \$3-5 billion revenue organizations</li> </ul>



#### Research Subgroups

- Based on titles/responsibilities – two created:
  - Client-Based Research Services
  - Research
- What is more important – similar duties or purpose of duties (i.e. for fee or for research)?
- OPTION: combine sub-job group
- IMPACT: no market impact, may require add'l review of Client-Based Researcher (I-III), Researcher (I-III) and Scientist (I-III)
- Do not plan to keep this static – plan is for regular reviews to titles (what does that process look like? Past year has been working on tweaks to current job descriptions, etc.). After a year plus, feeling that things have stabilized

## HR Salary Administration Guidelines

- Compensable Factors (factors that can influence employee's pay)
  - Not many guidelines in past
  - Consideration of compensable factors was not taken into account – but now there are guidelines to follow (performance, specialized skills, etc. relevant to the job)

## Compensable Factors

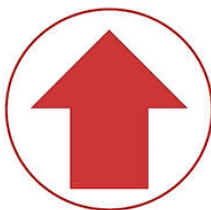
Factors that can influence employee's pay



## Promotion vs. Progression

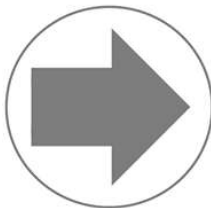
- Before TTC:
  - Found salaries that were not competitive with market (lots of people put into first quartile of old salary structure)
  - Did not see many people at top end of salary range

## Promotion vs. Progression



### Promotion

- **Vertical advancement to a new job**
- Duties based on work performed
- Market influenced
- Internal salary alignment (parity)
- Not based on time in seat or seniority



### Progression

- **Horizontal advancement within the same job**
- Performance driven within the same title
- Market influenced
- Internal salary alignment (parity)
- Not based on time in seat

- With TTC:
  - Expect to see more advancement w/in job title

#### Ways to promote:

- Recruitment – apply and take on a new job
- Change responsibilities with a title change (requested by a school/college/division)

#### Supervision

- Requires at least 2 full-time equivalents (FTE)
  - Working over 40 hours/week
  - Applies to employees only
  - Ex. 1 full-time and 2 half-time employees
  - Ex. 4 half-time employees
- Compensable factor

#### Updates

- Grant funded positions
  - Campus-wide issue
  - No good answer
- OHR collaborations/conversations in progress

#### Employee Concerns

- Contact your local HR Professional
  - For how you were assigned to your title
  - If title does not reflect current duties, but another title does not exist
- Local HR Professionals
  - Have the most information
  - Make decisions regarding pay (QUESTION ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION)
    - PI can say they make all the decisions, but what you do (skills, responsibilities, etc.) is a compensable factor – how can we as a lab manager get compensated for these factors?
      - TTC is showing a severe unpayment (i.e. research specialists working at lab managers)
      - HR being told to look at positions across campus to compare duties to titles (are they correct)
      - HR needs to ask why are we not seeing progression in a title?
    - OHR needs to do a review on campus (working on how to do this)
    - Market comparison needs to be done BEFORE recruitment is done, and HR needs to do more training/education

#### QUESTIONS:

Even relying on local HR professionals, there are gaps of knowledge.

- PVL: grant-funded vacancy – what are the actual needs, and what is the salary? Cannot put salary escalator into grant, but can put higher salary (though paying person less to start).
  - Research-related titles: OHR needs to gather more market data
  - i.e Research Specialist vs. Lab Manager; biological vs. physical sciences; etc.
  - Need to train HR community to better understand the research titles/market
  - Someone needs to talk to HR about WHAT IS NEEDED and what the title SHOULD BE
  - Working with School of Business to come out with better title guidelines (to find the best fit)

- PIs ask say “opening for a Lab Manager” then bring people in at the low end of the Research Specialist title.
- Business title cannot match a current Job Title (i.e. Lab Manager is an actual TTC title and Research Specialists or others cannot be called a “Lab Manager”)
  - Issue has been brought to HR managers (they are responsible) – but OHR needs to tackle this at some point (because it is prevalent)
  - PVLs have to be cleaned up prior to posting

What resources are available for employees in grant funded positions, where local HR has had high turnover and that position remains temporary/unfilled with minimal communication?

- Go to divisional HR if possible (or go up the ladder)

Career progression for Lab Managers?

- Proposal: Business title change linked to salary range
- Couple review by supervisor (who should be looking at complete person) – business title should be used to show where person is within their title
- Associate/No Prefix/Senior series – eliminated because they could not find those for the Lab Manager series in the market (scientist I and II were common, but some job titles just did not show levels within the market)
- Karen believes the Business title structure needs to be utilized to show career progression
  - In the past, salary structures were not updated
  - Salary ranges WILL be updated (i.e. if you are a lab manager and continue your career as a lab manager, you will never reach the salary range maximum)
- OHR will have two (2) career counselors to help
- **Requests from group:**
  - Clarity in descriptions (what does a lab manager do? what does a research specialist who does lab manager duties do?)
  - There is no clear path for career growth after the lab manager position.
  - Culture – faculty expect research specialists to perform bigger and bigger roles in supporting their labs.
  - Conversations about supervisory duties of undergraduates is very important; require a lot of hours of training (more so than other staff/grad students); may only work 10 hrs/week, but with multiple undergrads, this does constitute supervisory duties
  - PI vs. lab manager – who is the actual supervisor?
  - wide gap between the operational guidance of the research specialist and the 2.0FTE of the lab manger
  - On paper, people report to a single Faculty member – often times a faculty member identifies a senior member to serve as the labs’ Lab Manager (w/o the title)
    - Response: significant shift to campus culture and this will take time
    - PIs have to provide dept/division with their number of FTEs (so lab manager cannot be a supervisor, because it takes away from their FTEs)
  - Reporting structure: businesses see why they need lab manager, however, faculty look at financial implications to having an “official” lab manager (and the ability for that person to have career growth) [Budget Model]
  - Where or how can we find specific salary data for a Core/Shared service? (aka client based research)

- HR tries not to look at individual data, they want aggregate data to inform decisions
  - Concern is that the client based research titles are an aggregate, where some areas are specialized and may be more underpaid than other specialties.
    - Athletics is a special case; what about research? HR has a graduate student looking at market data, where it is coming from, are there other areas we should be looking/using?
- We sometimes have staff who have gradually shifted in their responsibilities, skills, and experience and this merits a title change. We do not want to lose these individuals who have extensive institutional knowledge. In the future, will we be allowed to give them a title change without having to advertise the position? We hate lying to applicants for the "new" position or causing anxiety for the current staff member.
  - When you say director, does that include a management track title like lab manager or research program manager?
    - It could; depends on situation
    - Conversation about the position, title, etc. to inform whether or not position title change is needed (case-by-case discussions)
    - Research Specialist (Individual Contributor) vs. Lab Manager (Manager Track) – still have issues in this area, don't want to disadvantage employees in current roles
- SO much information sent to staff about TTC and an obviously long roll out, suspect that the delays in increasing pay disproportionately affect people from marginalized groups, women, and early/mid career staff who may not have strong advocates within their business units.
  - Market data does not always report gender, but OHR is tasked with an equity study – need a statistically significant number within a title in order to do this type of study to determine if there is bias