

CITY OF MADISON  
**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL**  
CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: February 20, 2009

TO: Personnel Board

FROM: Gail Glasser, Human Resources

SUBJECT: Senior Center Program Assistant Position

Madison Senior Center has two budgeted Program Assistant 2 positions, one with duties specific to Senior Center work identified as a separate class (Senior Center Program Assistant) in 1985, and one with more general program responsibilities. The soon-to-be-vacant Senior Center Program Assistant is the subject of the current study.

In 1985 described duties focused on assisting the Senior Center Director in programs that were anticipated for the center. In 1992, 50% of the work was identified as "Develop, implement and coordinate Center programs that promote and maintain healthy aging" and 45% as "Maintain community information efforts and enhance the visibility of Center programs, services and activities." The remaining 5% of work was described as writing correspondence, preparing reports and "assist in computer support system."

The current class specification, revised in 1995 with no accompanying classification or pay change, reflects expanded duties in program development and more detail about program responsibilities, with increasing independence.

The position duties are now identified as 75% independently developing, implementing, maintaining and coordinating programs, services, and activities, requiring professional-level knowledge, understanding and expertise. Liaison and active collaboration with community resources (MATC, UW Extension, UW Center for the Humanities) and other agencies for development and implementation of wide-ranging Senior Center programs have become an important part of the work. Current Senior Center scheduling includes lectures, workshops, support group meetings, intergenerational programs, training sessions and programs ranging from connecting volunteers with mentorship and teaching opportunities to single-session and multi-session classes for crafts, health, fitness, philosophy, religion, art and music, and a wide range of technology topics. The responsibility for coordinating scheduling, publicity and promotion for programs continues to rest with the study position. The scope of work extends to providing direct services in referral to appropriate social service agencies for individuals as well as assisting such agencies with planning and providing for their outreach to older adults.

Above-cited duties involve significant financial responsibility: In addition to coordinating the Senior Scholarship Program, an employee in the class manages program budgets, negotiates fees with vendors and instructors (approximately 120 each year, part of a \$36,700 agency total for program and activity expense in 2008), sets up and approves approximately 100 Limited Purchase Orders each year, manages program budgets and maintains associated financial records.

Evaluating and meeting changing requirements for Madison Senior Center services fall primarily to the study position and to Senior Center Director Christine Beatty, who notes:

Senior center program design and development undergoes trends and changes as seniors age in and out of senior centers. It is not static, but very dynamic, requiring focus groups and interaction with the client base to determine needs and desires of the many population groups or cohorts (ie. 50-65, 65-75, 75-85, 85+). Each has their own expectations for programming at a senior center.

Senior adult programming is also designed to respond to different aspects of successful aging, like programs offered to enhance the emotional, intellectual, physical, spiritual, social, cultural and economic wellness of senior adults. These programming categories illustrate the knowledge base required by the position and the ability to call upon appropriate partners and resources in the community. And add to that mix, the variety of socio-economic and cultural differences amid a population described as OLD people (defined as 50+!!).

As programming has changed, the Director and the incumbent in the study position have provided leadership for similar programs elsewhere in the state and area, at meetings and conferences, and as a media presence (Senior Beat on City Channel and the Madison Senior Center web site).

We therefore recommend a change in specifications and placement for the class to reflect its level of responsibility and the knowledge, skills, abilities, training and experience required. The work has become professional in nature, and it's appropriate (and consistent with other comparable positions) to require an academic degree. Potential areas of academic training are identified in the revised class specification. Because of the professional nature of the position, we recommend that the position be moved from Compensation Group 20, made up of represented clerical and paraprofessional positions, into Compensation Group 18, which consists of Professional, Managerial, and Supervisory classifications. No classifications in Compensation Group 20 require a four-year degree, but this is quite common in Compensation Group 18. Several professional positions within Compensation Group 18 are identified as "Analyst" or "Coordinator" and we believe a suitable title would be Senior Center Program Coordinator. Comparable duties on a larger scale occur in the Overture Center Community Events Coordinator class, and the EOC Outreach Coordinator class in Compensation Group 18/04 has directly comparable responsibility for development, implementation and promotion of services and programs, including coordinating technical assistance programs. Because of the close comparison to the EOC Outreach Coordinator class, we recommend that this position be placed in CG 18, Range 04.

We have prepared the necessary Ordinance and Resolution to implement this recommendation.

cc: Christine Beatty, Senior Center Director  
Mike Deiters, Labor Relations Manager

Attachments

Compensation Group/Range	2009 Minimum Step 1	2009 Maximum Step 5	2009 Maximum Step 5 with Longevity
20/12	\$40,647	\$45,582	\$51,064
18/04	\$45,360	\$52,309	\$58,578