

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

DEFINITION

Under general direction of the Director of Research and Institutional Effectiveness, performs a variety of basic level research, collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of data and statistics to support institutional planning issues, decision-making, program planning, and other measures of institutional effectiveness; assists in analyzing practices and procedures and makes recommendations for operational, policy, and procedural improvements; assists in developing, summarizing, and maintaining reports, records, and files.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from the Director, Research and Institutional Effectiveness. Exercises no direct supervision of staff. May provide basic level technical and functional direction and training to part-time hourly staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is basic-journey level classification in the Research Analyst classification series responsible for providing support for complex research projects on a variety of institutional, operational, programmatic, and planning issues. Incumbents support the work of management staff by providing a beginning-level resource for institutional, educational, and operational analyses and studies. Responsibilities include performing diverse and specialized work involving beginning level accountability and decision-making responsibility. This class is distinguished from the Director, Research and Institutional Effectiveness and Educational Research Assessment Analyst in that the latter has overall responsibility for all research programs, projects, and activities used in institutional effectiveness assessment, strategic and institutional planning and decision-making, and evaluation of key performance indicators of District-wide quality improvement and for developing, implementing, and interpreting public policy.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

1. Assists in the planning, coordinating, and conducting of a variety of basic level research, collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of data and statistics to provide information and assistance for institutional planning issues, decision-making, and program planning.
2. Assists with responding to internal and external data requests.
3. Collects and configures relevant data to support all aspects of planning and decision-making processes using a variety of means, including conducting data-base queries, extracting data from central databases, and transferring data to other applications, such as Excel, for analysis.
4. Assists with designs and conducts basic level institutional research projects and activities to support external and internal accountability mandates in areas such as instructional and service performance, program review, enrollment management, matriculation, and outcome assessment.
5. Assists in the preparation of a variety of basic level narrative and statistical records, reports, and files related to institutional planning, research projects, data analysis, findings, conclusions, and decision-making; designs and produces related charts, tables, and graphs.
6. Provides basic level technical support, assistance, and training to staff, faculty, administrators, and others concerning institutional effectiveness and research projects and activities.
7. Manages the input and coding of a variety of data and information into an assigned computer system; creates basic level queries and reports, data extraction, and manipulation in tabular, spreadsheet, and graph formats; generates links to the data and produces a variety of computerized data, records, and reports for use in projects, studies, and analyses.

8. Assists in the investigation and diagnoses of evolving data issues and production of effective solutions and recommendations for improvement; uses validation protocols and applies strategies to ensure data integrity.
9. Develops, maintains, organizes, and utilizes a defined set of files and databases using various computer platforms and software.
10. Assists administrators in the coordination, preparation, distribution, collection, and scoring of State-mandated, organizational, and special tests.
11. Communicates with staff, faculty, administrators, and various outside agencies to exchange information and resolve issues or concerns.
12. Prepares and delivers presentations concerning research project data, findings, and related reports.
13. Assists in defining, analyzing, planning and implementing solutions to improve operational efficiencies related to research.
14. Works collaboratively with various campus units to stay abreast of reporting needs and complies with Federal and State reporting requirements.
15. Learns and applies emerging technologies and, as necessary, to perform duties in an efficient, organized, and timely manner.
16. Composes correspondence; generates reports and projects; maintains records; orders office supplies and records budget transactions.
17. Assists in making conference and travel arrangements; coordinates meetings; takes minutes of meetings as assigned.
18. Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

1. Basic level research, analysis, and reporting methods, techniques, and procedures.
2. Theories, principles, and methods of research project design, methodology, qualitative and quantitative analyses and longitudinal and program evaluation studies.
3. Basic level principles of database structures and management, computer programming, and systems development.
4. Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, codes, and guidelines related to the projects and programs to which assigned.
5. Basic level record management principles and procedures.
6. Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications, including word processing, database, and spreadsheet applications.
7. English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
8. Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, students, and District staff, including individuals of various ages, disabilities, various socio-economic and ethnic groups.

Skills and Abilities to:

1. Plan and conduct basic research studies applying appropriate and effective design, methodology, and data analysis techniques as assigned.
2. Perform basic level duties in support of institutional research programs, projects, and activities.
3. Apply a variety of basic level techniques of data extraction and modify techniques and procedures to ensure data integrity and relevance.
4. Analyze, interpret, summarize, and present administrative and technical information and data in an effective manner.

5. Identify, evaluate, and solve basic programming problems; perform diagnostic checks and take appropriate corrective action; apply basic programming language; and implement new or revised systems and procedures for the automation of information processing.
6. Provide solutions to improve operational efficiencies related to research.
7. Research, analyze, and evaluate new service delivery methods, procedures, and techniques.
8. Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
9. Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local policies, procedures, laws, and regulations.
10. Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record keeping, and tracking systems.
11. Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs.
12. Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
13. Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
14. Understand scope of authority in making independent decisions.
15. Review situations accurately and determine appropriate course of action using judgment according to established policies and procedures.
16. Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

Equivalent to graduation from a regionally accredited 2-year college and two (2) years of work experience involving basic statistical research and analysis preferably at an institution of higher learning. Bachelor's degree preferred.

A Master's degree in an ethnic studies discipline will qualify incumbents for an increased pay grade.

Licenses and Certifications:

The incumbent may periodically be required to travel to a variety of locations. If operating a vehicle, employees must have the ability to secure and maintain a valid California driver's license.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing in and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects weighing up to 20 pounds.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with upset staff, students, and/or the public in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.