

Functional or Working Title Guidelines/Protocols

It may at times prove useful for a variety of reasons to have a functional or working title for a position, in addition to its “pay” or system title. A good example would be for recruitment purposes, to assign a functional title to an otherwise generic title, such as using the functional title of “Electrician” for a Trades Specialist I, or a working title of “LAN Specialist” for a Prof Tech 2. The Classification and Compensation Unit of the Division of HR is responsible for creating/assigning working or functional titles as appropriate. Supervisors who wish for a given position to have a working/functional title should consult with the C&C unit for guidance before assigning one.

Following are some general guidelines we use when creating a functional or working title for a job class. Working titles are intended to more specifically and accurately reflect either the work or the mission of the unit to which the position is assigned. Working titles are assigned to particular POSITIONS, not to a general job title.

- 1) We do not give a working title if the “official” title is pretty self-explanatory: “President,” “Health Sciences Center Chancellor” or “Campus Police Officer” (other than perhaps listing the campus to which assigned for the latter).
- 2) We do not use as a working title any other “official” job or class title. For example, a Secretary should not functionally be titled a “Program Assistant,” which exists in the classified structure as an established and distinct pay title/job class.
- 3) We don’t “borrow” a title from another job type; an AP Program Coordinator should not be assigned a functional title of “Director” or “Assistant Director”, which are typically non-classified titles or titles assigned to jobs with distinct job responsibilities and oversight. There are FE/AP and classified director and assistant director titles, but there are protocols and parameters for naming any position a director, associate director or assistant director. Always consult with your C&C analyst before assigning a position a director, assistant director, manager, administrator or coordinator functional title.
- 4) A functional title can include not only an idea of the work to be performed but also the location: Trades Specialist I = Electrician, HSC Facilities, Evansdale Campus.
- 5) We do not approve titles that imply status or authority beyond that which the position has or is assigned, such as “Coordinator of Office Services” for an Administrative Associate.
- 6) To assist in recruitment , Employment Services lists any functional or working title first on the Jobs Bulletin, followed by the position’s pay title.

- 7) The “official” job or pay title is always the one keyed into our personnel system, MAP (Oracle). When employees receive employee status updates, benefits statements or other correspondence from HR or Finance that contain pay or title information, the MAP title information will be noted, not any working or functional titles the position or employee might use.
- 8) The C&C analysts will note any approved working titles on the coversheets of PIQs and job descriptions.

The ultimate question is, of course, why don't we just create a very specific and distinct title for each position at WVU? The answer is that we use as many general titles as possible so that we maintain internal pay equity and also (for market-based or market-driven positions) make sure that we align our salaries with external markets. If every position had a distinct title, it would be virtually impossible to ensure that we benchmarked and had current salary data for each one. As a result, employees who worked at the same level and performed the same basic duties, except under distinctly different titles, might not be paid equitably and comparably. “Benchmarking” refers to the compensation practice of matching our jobs to an external job that has similar job content. When benchmarking is done, it is always done on job content and not on job title—but having 10,000 separate titles would make it very difficult to ensure that similar work was being paid similarly and equitably.

Contact the HR Class and Comp team at classcomp-hr@mail.wvu.edu or at 304.293.5700, x. 6 if you have further questions.