

Classification and Qualification



STANDARDS

The California State University System

Media Production Specialist

Class Codes: 0810 - 0812

Date Established: 12/01/00

OVERVIEW:

The Media Production Specialist is a broad classification with three position skill levels. It is designed for positions responsible for the performance and/or leadership of technical production work of instructional and/or promotional communications using such media as film, television, radio, multimedia, and photography. Incumbents can also be responsible for the production of audio slide/tapes, sound presentations and distance learning programs. Individual positions may be specialized in one function related to the production cycle or may perform more generalist duties throughout the production cycle.

Position Skill Level I - Incumbents at this level typically perform assignments of limited scope and complexity. They primarily act as production assistants to more experienced staff by providing technical support for a variety of preproduction, production and postproduction activities, distance learning, or related multimedia projects. Assignments may include, but are not limited to: obtaining equipment; setting up and testing equipment; assisting in prop and set production and set up; photographing events or subjects; developing film and/or digital still photography and image processing; maintaining files on visual materials; performing basic shoots or assisting in more complex shoots; duplicating and editing audio and video tapes; assisting in video conferences; and providing technical support for distance learning.

Position Skill Level II - Incumbents at this level perform a broader range of assignments and are often assigned full responsibility for small to medium production projects in film, television, radio, video or other multimedia. They often serve as an associate producer and perform work such as writing, directing, shooting, staging, and editing productions. Assignments may also include technical support in such areas as photography, video conferencing, and distance learning. Typically incumbents at this level work fairly autonomously and are able to coordinate production activities, support staff and students.

Position Skill Level III - Incumbents at this level have a very broad range of responsibility including the accountability for all technical, aesthetic and programmatic components of productions. They often are responsible for the full operations of a production unit and manage the most complex projects and assignments, working with instructional designers to create a production that meets instructional objectives. They perform a variety of highly skilled technical assignments in the areas of media design, planning and production, producing and broadcasting live productions, and the supervision of technical work in connection with the production of instructional media.

CORE AREAS:

The work of the Media Production Specialist follows the production cycle: preproduction, production and postproduction. Assignments for a position within the classification may be focused in one or more of these production areas. The work examples cited here are not meant to be all-inclusive or indicate a specific level within the classification; rather, they illustrate the variety of assignments that may fall within each phase of the production cycle.

Preproduction - Work during the preproduction phase includes: clarifying the subject matter with the client or originator; researching the subject matter to generate ideas for presentation; defining the communication objectives; developing the production plan and budget; arranging for location, equipment and crews; developing production and shooting schedules; writing scripts and creating story boards; securing sets, props and casts; performing or overseeing staging and striking of sets; and rehearsing shoots.

Photography - Photography work may be involved in the preproduction or production phase of a communication or multimedia project and may be used in a variety of visual and multimedia products. Work includes: setting up and performing both still and motion picture photography; taking interior and exterior photographs using color or black and white film or digital still photography equipment; performing photographic processing, including the layout and manipulation of images; using computer systems or digital technology to produce final images; and maintaining photographic laboratory and equipment.

Videographic Design - Videographic design is a highly technical specialty encompassing the entire visual look of a production and its content. Work requires the use of design skills and learning theory to take instructional concepts and ideas and translate them into design features and structures that maximize the production's instructional impact.

Multimedia Production - Work during production may involve a variety of functions depending on the nature of the production. Examples include: performing or directing the photography, cinematography, videography; recording and taping productions; designing and/or programming materials for web sites; and/or authoring instructional CD-ROMs or web sites. Incumbents may serve in the role of producer and/or director and may be responsible for producing live productions.

Postproduction - Work during the postproduction phase includes: the editing of audio and visual programs and series; adding postproduction attributes such as digital animation, electronic graphics or other audio/visual special effects; and evaluating the final product.

Distance Learning - Work involves setting up, integrating and operating all the elements of an interactive distance learning classroom or web site. Work includes: operating multiple cameras; operating complex two-way audio systems; handling computer inputs in a synchronous or asynchronous environment; and coordinating with faculty and other content presenters and experts.

ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS:

Entry to the first level within this classification requires a basic knowledge of and skill in graphics, still or motion photography, or television production. This knowledge and skill normally is obtained through a bachelor's degree in a related field and at least six months of experience in still and motion picture photography, including a thorough knowledge of video production techniques.

POSITION SKILL LEVELS:

Three position skill levels are defined within this classification denoting a progression of responsibility, knowledge, and skill requirements. Progression from a lower to a higher skill level is referred to as an *in-classification progression*. The factors used to determine position skill level include: complexity, scope and impact of the work performed; level, type and scope of knowledge required; autonomy exercised and level of supervision received; position accountability for work results; judgment and discretion required by the position; problem solving and analytical skills required; level of creativity and ingenuity required by the work; and the level and diversity of contacts and interactive capabilities required by the position.

A position is placed at a skill level where the majority of and/or most critical position responsibilities and skill requirements fall in relation to the position skill levels defined below. Management assigns position responsibilities and their associated skill requirements. It is important to note that the position skill level definitions do not delineate entry requirements for each skill level, but are composites of the typical position at each level. Entry qualifications are defined for the first position skill level of the classification. Further, progression within the classification depends first, on the need for a position at a higher skill level, second, on the nature of the duties and requirements of the position, and third, on an employee's demonstrated and applied skills and abilities.

POSITION SKILL LEVEL I

Typical nature of work assignments:

Performance of moderately complex technical work to support and assist in the various phases of multimedia production and delivery. Support of multimedia functions may include distance learning, web course updates and transfers, video-conferences, and photography.

Assignments are typically limited in scope and have impact on a component of a project.

Day-to-day work is performed relatively independently under general supervision with guidance provided for priorities and new assignments.

Work involves limited judgment and discretion. Actions and problem solving are guided by standard practices.

Work involves establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with faculty, other staff members and students. Often provides support to students working on production projects.

Typical knowledge and skill requirements:

Working knowledge of techniques, materials and equipment used in the production of instructional media and related communication assignments.

Working knowledge of full range of production techniques including sound recording, graphics, television, photography, video taping, lighting, editing methods and equipment.

Ability to set up and operate a wide variety of production equipment, including set-up for multi-camera video productions and distance learning classrooms.

Ability to learn techniques in the development of television, film, radio or multimedia productions.

Basic computer skills to operate digital and analog production-related editing and duplication equipment.

Basic photography skills such as film speed, light, and color requirements. Ability to perform photographic processing including an understanding of photographic chemicals and working knowledge of darkroom and development practices.

Ability to use and maintain studio, camera and related equipment.

Working knowledge of safety requirements including how to handle hazardous chemicals and materials.

Solid writing and editing skills, including a strong foundation in English grammar.

Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to build and maintain working relationships with staff and students.

POSITION SKILL LEVEL II

Typical nature of work assignments:

Performance of the full range of technical and organizational work associated with small to medium sized productions. Projects include, but are not limited to: producing and directing distance learning productions; scheduling, producing and delivering programs for television instruction; researching subject matter, defining communication objectives and translating into an effective production; and writing, directing and editing instructional videos.

Technical work is performed with limited oversight. Assignments are performed under general supervision with results reviewed against goals. Often accountable for project results.

Work requires regularly exercising judgment and discretion to interpret needs and make production decisions.

Work involves considerable ingenuity to develop and execute multimedia productions.

Work and coordinate with individuals at all levels within the organization in the development and execution of productions. Advises faculty on achieving instructional objectives. Work with students as a technical trainer.

Lead work direction may also be provided to less senior staff and operators.

In addition to Position Skill Level I knowledge and skill requirements, work assignments typically require:

Thorough knowledge of production techniques and equipment. General knowledge of production principles and practices for instructional media.

Ability to develop, create, stage and/ or produce professional quality visuals and evaluate production effectiveness in meeting objectives.

Strong writing skills including the ability to learn narration and continuity script writing.

Working knowledge of tools for authoring interactive multimedia products delivered via a variety of synchronous and asynchronous techniques.

Strong research skills and broad knowledge of resources and techniques which communicate information through multimedia productions.

Ability to understand operating procedures and underlying technology in order to use and troubleshoot equipment and systems.

Strong organizational skills to independently manage and coordinate all facets of production, budgets and other projects.

Solid to advanced photographic capabilities, as well as photographic processing and manipulation skills.

Ability to provide lead work and project direction to other staff.

Ability to work with and train students involved in production projects.

POSITION SKILL LEVEL III

Typical nature of work:

Under general direction, responsible for all phases of multimedia productions including client consultation, media design, project planning, media production, postproduction activities, and production evaluation. Usually serves as the producer.

Normally responsible for entire production unit, including managing production budgets.

Leadership for overall technical, aesthetic and programmatic components of productions and related multimedia activities is often provided.

Work requires considerable judgment and discretion to develop production policies and practices.

Work involves appreciable creativity and ingenuity to conceive of and execute production ideas.

Work involves consultation with instructional designers and faculty to translate learning objectives into an effective production.

Work involves researching and developing proposals for new equipment, technology and/or new production initiatives.

Lead work direction is often provided as well as training of students.

In addition to Position Skill Level I and II knowledge and skill requirements, work assignments typically require:

Comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of production theory, principles and techniques as they apply to multimedia.

Foundation background in communication theory and instructional design and development.

Ability to quickly research and incorporate subject matter expertise to provide production direction and enhance the quality of productions.

Ability to produce and broadcast live productions.

Ability to critique and evaluate work in progress for instructional design and impact.

Ability to develop innovative solutions to complex communication problems.

Ability to evaluate the effectiveness of productions.

Strong skills in production, project and budget management.

Demonstrated consulting skills to work with faculty and staff to develop productions that meet stated objectives.

Demonstrated ability to effectively provide technical and aesthetic leadership and work direction to others.