

Laboratory Assistant

University of California, Los Angeles
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Class Specifications - I.20
Laboratory Assistant IV - 9601
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SERIES CONCEPT

Laboratory Assistants perform or supervise the performance of standardized and recurring technical procedures in the natural, physical or social sciences in a teaching and/or research laboratory; perform or supervise a variety of business operations related to management of a laboratory; and perform other related duties as required.

Incumbents in the series may work under the supervision of academic personnel, Staff Research Associates, or higher level Laboratory Assistants. Assignments may require specialized knowledge of a field or area of discipline, however, they do not require the thorough understanding of the scientific principles involved or knowledge of the discipline as required for incumbents in the Staff Research Associate series.

Incumbents typically perform duties ranging in level from unskilled to skilled in one more academic fields. The fields may include chemistry, biochemistry, physics, microbiology, botany, zoology, biology, bacteriology, geology, psychology, physiology, dentistry, and other related fields. Incumbents perform duties which include preparation of media for research activities; participation in the construction, assembly, testing and/or operation of laboratory equipment; preparation of tissues for microscopic examination; setting up research and teaching laboratories; ordering, receiving and distributing laboratory supplies to faculty, teaching assistants and students; cleaning and maintenance of equipment and supplies; and the maintenance of safety procedures in teaching and research laboratories. Incumbents may assist in laboratory facility planning and space utilization; and may assist faculty, teaching assistants and students in their use of laboratory equipment and supplies.

The examples cited subsequently in the class concepts are illustrative and do not preclude allocation to the series of positions requiring equivalent technical knowledge and skill.

CLASS CONCEPTS

Laboratory Assistant IV

Under direction incumbents perform business management and/or technical support duties in a laboratory operation typically involving supervision over a large group of Laboratory Assistants.

Incumbents prepare and assist in the justification of budget estimates; maintain expenditure control over approved budgets; direct the work of Laboratory Assistant and related clerical/administrative personnel; have responsibility for the purchasing, storing and issuing of equipment and supplies; advise students, teaching assistants and/or faculty members on laboratory rules and procedures; supervise the preparation of class demonstrations and teaching aids for lectures, laboratory classes and student field trips; and make cost estimates of laboratory expenses of courses in order to determine student laboratory fees. Incumbents may participate in laboratory facility planning and space utilization projects and may design and/or supervise the construction of complex and technical laboratory installations.

Assignments at this level are primarily managerial and supervisory and typically involve, full managerial responsibility for related laboratory support and/or teaching support activities. The scope of laboratory management duties usually precludes the performance of the majority of technical duties found at lower levels in the series.

Laboratory Assistant III

Under general supervision, incumbents perform technical and/or supervisory duties in a laboratory.

Incumbents typically supervise the purchasing, receiving, storing, distribution and maintenance of laboratory equipment used by students, teaching assistants, faculty and/or staff personnel; supervise lower level Laboratory Assistants and/or students in the laboratory; coordinate the physical preparation of laboratories and the scheduling of dates for experiments for a variety of teaching courses; and supervise the preparation and distribution of culture media, chemical solutions and other material for various class laboratories.

Technical assignments at this level typically require scientific knowledge and skills which might be expected from incumbents at the college "upper division" level or from incumbents who have acquired equivalent knowledge and skills through experience. The following examples are typical of technical assignments at this level: collection, classification and filing of scientific material; dissecting, assembling and mounting of skeletal and other body parts; preparation of charts, graphs and/or models involving experimental data; modification of media solutions; performance of microtechnique procedures including knowledge of staining, and the ability to distinguish between treated and untreated plant tissue; and performance of surgical procedures on animals without supervision.

Laboratory Assistant II

Under supervision incumbents perform one or more standard repetitive laboratory and/or field experimental procedures that require technical scientific knowledge and skills which might be expected from incumbents at the college "lower division" level or from incumbents who have acquired equivalent knowledge and skills through experience.

Technical assignments at this level typically include duties such as: preparing samples for radiochemical analyses, preparing complex reagents and media using basic ingredients, processing serum from whole blood, preparing components required for media making, preparing specimens for examination by professional and/or academic personnel, preparing concentration specimens, removing fluids and preservatives by pipetting and using solvents, preparing smear and imprint impressions, processing and sectioning tissues, preparing and staining slides, grinding tissues and placing in suspension for passage into host animals, and dissecting laboratory animals exposing tissues for examination.

Incumbents may, when in charge of laboratory equipment and supplies, keep records; maintain, order, store and dispense a limited variety of standard supplies for a complex of student laboratories; assure availability of materials used by students in laboratory classes such as chemical compounds, unknowns, microscopes, culture media and models; set up and maintain equipment such as fume hoods, fans, emergency lights, water drains and special fixtures; and assist in the assembly, testing and operation of complex laboratory equipment.

Laboratory Assistant I

Under supervision incumbents perform operational level work in a teaching or research laboratory requiring delicate manual or manipulative skills in a limited variety of tasks but not necessarily a thorough understanding of the principles involved.

Incumbents prepare standardized media, reagents and solutions from formulas for clinical, research or teaching use; set up simple apparatus for classroom demonstration or laboratory experiments; prepare bacterial and viral filters; make routine sugar analysis and prepare solutions; wash glassware using a mechanical dishwasher with the responsibility for determining the number and sequence of steps in the cleaning process; clean and decontaminate radioactive glassware and equipment; and may in addition keep laboratory facilities clean and sanitary.

Laboratory Helper

Under close supervision incumbents perform simple duties of a routine nature in a teaching or research laboratory.

Incumbents wash, wrap and sterilize glassware, equipment and/or instruments; fill, label and distribute media and reagent bottles; clean, check and replenish standard laboratory equipment and supplies and order new stocks of supplies as necessary; dust and wash shelves and counters; clean sinks; check and record temperatures of refrigerators and incubators; check and clean centrifuges; keep standard solution bottles filled; prepare labels; provide clean towels, test tubes, cover slips, filter and lens paper and keep records of supplies furnished.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Laboratory Assistant IV

Graduation from high school or a General Education Diploma and five years of laboratory experience or two years of college including courses in the natural, physical or social sciences and four years of laboratory experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience; and knowledges and abilities essential to successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.

Laboratory Assistant III

Graduation from high school or a General Education Diploma and three years of laboratory experience or two years of college including courses in the natural, physical or social sciences and two years of laboratory experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.

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Laboratory Assistant II

Graduation from high school or a General Education Diploma and two years of laboratory experience or two years of college including courses in the natural, physical or social sciences and one year of laboratory experience, or an equivalent combination of education and experience; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.

Laboratory Assistant I

Graduation from high school or a General Education Diploma and one year of laboratory experience or two years of college including courses in the natural, physical or social sciences; or an equivalent combination of education and experience; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.

Laboratory Helper

Ability to read, write, perform basic mathematical calculations, follow oral and written instructions; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.