INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT I/II - ASTRONOMY

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs a variety of standard to difficult instructional program support, tutoring and administrative activities in support of the Astronomy program; primary responsibility include assisting with instruction in observational astronomy and in astrophotography labs, including equipment set-up and use; performs related duties as required or assigned.

CLASSIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS

**Instructional Assistant I - Astronomy** is the entry level classification of this instructional support series. This position provides direct support to students. Initially under supervision, incumbents learn about the College Astronomy program and procedures. As experience is gained, there is greater independence of action within established guidelines. This classification is alternately staffed with Instructional Assistant II - Astronomy and incumbents may advance to the higher level after gaining experience and demonstrating proficiency which meet the qualifications of the higher level classification.

**Instructional Assistant II - Astronomy** is the experienced level classification of this series, competent to perform standard to difficult instructional support services. Incumbents in this classification may be assigned duties in support of students in a laboratory or tutoring capacity or in support of the overall Astronomy program. General work guidelines are normally established by an instructor or educational administrator; however, day-to-day activities require the use of initiative and judgment in specific situations.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (Illustrative Only)

- Prepares, compiles, collates, maintains, updates and disseminates instructional materials in accordance with instructors' directions (E)
- Develops and presents learning materials and instructional exercises to individuals and groups (E)
- Tutors students individually and/or in small groups to reinforce class material while keeping abreast of Astronomy program changes (E)
- Demonstrates to students how to locate specific galaxies and star clusters with telescopes, requiring extensive familiarity with the night sky (E)
- Coordinates materials, equipment, facilities and supplies for classes including driving to local suppliers to obtain necessary materials for various astronomy projects; may conduct workshops, orientations and meetings (E)
- Sets up, installs, maintains and services equipment, materials and supplies used in astronomy classes, workshops and supplemental tutoring sessions (E)
- Trains students and others in the safe use of specialized equipment, such as telescopes, digital cameras, mounts, computers, darkroom enlargers, and developing tanks; including computer hardware and software used to control telescopes and cameras during lab sessions (E)
- Administers and scores tests and examinations (E)
- Answers students’ questions regarding astronomy course assignments; assists students with class assignments in observational astronomy labs which may require algebraic and geometric math skills; could include astrophotography courses (E)
- Assists in completing and processing various forms, certificates and other documents (E)
- Maintains physical environment and condition of facility and its equipment (E)
- Schedules student appointments, tests, meetings and facilities (E)
EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (continued)

- Maintains student records; keeps other detailed records such as budget, financial and attendance records (E)
- Maintains an inventory of and requisitions supplies and equipment (E)
- Maintains the security of special, technical or hazardous supplies and equipment (E)
- Operates standard office equipment and instructional media (E)
- Prepares periodic and special reports (E)
- Attends to a variety of office administrative details such as arranging for the repair of equipment, transmitting information and keeping reference materials up to date (E)
- Assists in the recruitment and selection of student assistants and provides instruction in safe work procedures (E)
- Performs related duties as required or assigned

(E) = designates essential functions

QUALIFICATIONS

NOTE: The level and scope of the knowledge and skills listed below are related to job characteristics as defined under Classification Characteristics.

Knowledge of:

- Subject matter
- Effective instructional techniques
- Principles, theories, practices, methods and equipment used in astronomy, including telescope operations
- Health and safety practices related to the tools and equipment used in astronomy
- Algebra and geometry necessary to the study of observational astronomy
- Basic instructional methods and procedures above a high school level
- Detailed recordkeeping and budget tracking
- Standard office practices and procedures including filing and the operation of office equipment, including personal or online computers
- Correct English usage, including, spelling, grammar and punctuation

Skill in:

- Safely operating, maintaining and demonstrating the use of specialized equipment, supplies and materials
- Applying and explaining instructional methods and procedures
- Reading, understanding and presenting course materials to students
- Keeping abreast of Astronomy program changes
- Coordinating multiple projects and meeting deadlines
- Operating a personal computer to enter, edit and retrieve data and generate reports
- Maintaining accurate records, files and databases
- Effectively operating and maintaining an orderly instructional environment
- Preparing clear and concise reports, correspondence and similar written materials
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work including those from diverse backgrounds
- Understanding and following oral and written instructions
- Assisting students in quantitative labs involving algebraic and geometric math
QUALIFICATIONS (continued)

Other Minimum Requirements:

- Extensive familiarity with the night sky and telescope operations
- Training or experience in photography
- Must possess and maintain a valid California driver's license and safe driving record during course of employment
- Specified positions may require bilingual skills in Spanish/English or other languages
- Specified positions may require registration, licensure or certification related to the assigned instructional program area
- Must be willing and able to work at various campus sites

Education and Experience:

A typical way of gaining the knowledge and skills outlined above is:

**Instructional Assistant I - Astronomy**: Equivalent to completion of two years of college with college-level, lower division* coursework in astronomy (must have taken Astro 8A, observational astronomy or comparable course which involves observatory lab projects on stars, planets, moon, and galaxies) *(transfer-level, sophomore or above) which will provide the knowledge and skills necessary to support the Astronomy program and two years of experience in either educational support work which has included interaction with students in a classroom, laboratory or tutorial setting, or work in the program area to which assigned.

*Please note: additional experience that would provide the required subject matter expertise as outlined above may be substituted for the education on a year-for-year basis and/or additional education may be substituted for the experience on a year-for-year basis.

**Instructional Assistant II - Astronomy**: In addition to the above, one year of full time equivalent experience providing instructional assistance in a laboratory or tutorial setting at a level equivalent to the College's classification of Instructional Assistant I.