



Procedure 6.19: Staff Career Ladder Procedure  
Volume 6: Human Resources  
Managing Office: Office of Human Resources  
Effective Date: November 11, 2015

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Staff Career Ladder is a series of defined levels within a job family where the nature of work is similar and the levels represent requirements for increased skill, knowledge and responsibility as an employee moves through a career. Job families function to provide both a structure for departmental human resource decisions and a career ladder by which an employee may plan his/her professional growth and advancement. Because the employee and the manager work together to progressively advance to the higher level of responsibility, there is no need for a competitive posting process. The Staff Career Ladder is a department-driven process, with five (5) preconditions:

1. The target position classification must be available for Staff Career Ladders.
2. The employee must be both interested in the higher level work and able to demonstrate the potential to perform it successfully.
3. Duties and responsibilities may not be taken away from an existing employee to create a career ladder opportunity for another employee.
4. A career ladder may not be initiated for an employee within 12 months of a layoff from a position in the same job family within the immediate work unit.

## **II. CAREER LADDER BENEFITS**

### **Employees:**

1. An employee can develop new skills and competencies at his/her own pace and while in current job.
2. An employee can advance to a higher level of responsibility without competition and without moving to a different work unit.
3. An employee can demonstrate initiative and readiness to work to further department and University goals.

### **Supervisors:**

1. Retain valued employees who are motivated to advance in his/her careers.
2. Attract high quality employees with the opportunity to advance.
3. Develop well-trained employees who have high morale.

### III. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

An employee meets eligibility requirements for a Staff Career Ladder if s/he:

1. Is a regular full-time staff employee who has been employed with the university for at least one (1) year.  
  
**Note:** The year requirement maybe waived for the initial implementation of placing a specific position title on the career ladder when there is a change in the grade of a position title. Final approval is required by the President.
2. Is in a position that is classified at a level below that of true management.
3. Received all ratings of least a “meet expectations” or better on his/her most recent performance evaluation.
4. Is not currently under disciplinary action.

### IV. TYPES OF STAFF CAREER LADDERS AVAILABLE

There are two (2) different kinds of Staff Career Ladders available to eligible staff employees depending upon circumstance, budget, internal equity, and other internal operational constraints.

1. Pre-Defined Vertical Career Ladders are designed for staff employed within identified position classification series. Employees may advance along a classification hierarchy consisting of 2 or 3 levels, such as, say, “Recruiter” to “Senior Recruiter”. The pre-defined vertical career ladders are developed by the Office of Human Resources in collaboration with the department supervisor. Approval is required from the Senior Personnel Officers and the President.
2. Individualized Vertical Career Ladders are designed to allow a staff employee to bridge into a higher position in a different family of classifications or into a position in the same family but not within a pre-defined hierarchy. Individualized Career Ladders are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, in discussion with Senior Personnel Officers and department supervisor. Final approval is required by the President.

**Special Note:** Vertical Career Ladder program, either Pre-Defined or Individualized, are predicated on the identification of the “Distinguishing Characteristics” between the responsibilities of the position classification currently held by the employee and those of the higher level classification to which the employee aspires. Distinguishing characteristics are those key functional responsibilities of a position classification that make it significantly different from and greater than another classification at a lower pay grade.

## **V. INITIATING A CAREER LADDER**

**Step 1:** There are eligibility requirements for Staff Career Ladders, which must be met before the initiation of a program can be approved. These requirements are listed on **Section II** of the Career Ladder Request Form. Once the supervisor has verified eligibility and the employee and the supervisor have mutually agreed that a Staff Career Ladder plan is appropriate, they will work together to develop an action plan for attaining all education and experience requirements and acquiring the specific competencies that the employee will need to be successful at the higher responsibility level.

**Supporting documents needed to request a Staff Career Ladder are:**

- a) A completed Staff Career Ladder Request Form
- b) A department organizational chart

**Step 2:** Once step 1 is completed, the supervisor will enter an estimated date for completion of the Career Ladder onto the Staff Career Ladder Request Form. The supervisor may also include a proposed salary increase for the employee upon completion based on the Staff Salary Schedule. The signed Staff Career Ladder Request Form should be sent to the appropriate Dean (if applicable), Vice President, Vice President for Business and Finance and the President.

**Step 3:** Forward the approved Staff Career Ladder Request Form to the Office of Human Resources for review and final approval.

**Step 4:** Once the supervisor has been notified by the Office of Human Resources that the Career Ladder is approved, the employee can begin working on the development plan.

## **VI. DURATION AND COMPLETING THE CAREER LADDER**

**The minimum time period for a Staff Career Ladder Plan is six (6) months, from initiation to completion.**

However, Staff Career Ladders may last longer depending on:

1. The time it takes to attain the qualifications, knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the higher level of responsibilities.
2. The time it takes to complete all the elements of the action plan outlined on Section V of the Career Ladder Request Form
3. The time it takes to demonstrate a satisfactory degree of competence in the performance of the higher level responsibilities.

## **VII. COMPLETION OF CAREER LADDER FORM**

### **Step 1: Supervisor**

- Complete section I-IV of the Staff Career Ladder Request Form
- If any of the responses to Section II (Eligibility Checklist) are “no”, contact the Office of Human Resources for assistance in pursuing alternative options for the employee.

### **Step 2: Employee**

- Work with supervisor to develop the “Action Plan” in section V of the Staff Career Ladder Request Form. Sign the Staff Career Ladder Request Form.

### **Step 3: Supervisor**

- Obtain appropriate signatures to request a career ladder for the employee.
- Forward the form with any additional supporting documents, to the Office of Human Resources and retain a copy for your records which will be used at the time of completion.

### **Step 4: Human Resources**

- Review the request to verify compliance with all prerequisite criteria and documentation requirements.
- If the request does not comply with parameters for the Staff Career Ladder, the form is returned to the supervisor for review.
- If documentation complies with all requirements, the Office of Human Resources signs the form as approved, and notifies the department supervisor.

### **Step 5: Supervisor**

- If the Staff Career Ladder Request is not approved by the Office of Human Resources and there are actions that can be taken to bring the proposal into compliance with program parameters, either take these actions OR consider alternative career development programs.
- If HR has notified the department of approval, work with the employee to complete the action items outlined in the form.

### **Step 6: Employee**

Complete the action items outlined in section V of the Career Ladder Request form.

### **Step 7: Supervisor**

Upon the employee's successful completion of the action plan outlined in section V of the Staff Career Ladder Request Form, the supervisor completes Section VI of the form and forwards the form along with any supporting documentation to the Office of Human Resources. A copy of any certificates, licenses, transcripts, degree, etc. that were included in the Career Ladder action plan.

## **Step 8: Human Resources**

- Verify successful completion of the program. If the form does not comply with program requirements, return to the requesting department unapproved for review and revision.
- If the completion form is in order, notify the department supervisor of successful completion of the Staff Career Ladder and process accordingly. No further action is required of the department.

## **VIII. SALARY AND EFFECTIVE DATE**

- Upon completion of the Staff Career Ladder Plan, the employee will receive a promotional increment within the guidelines of the university and according to the University Staff Salary Schedule.
- Staff Career Ladder promotions will become effective the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month after the completion of all action plan items outlined on approved Staff Career Ladder Request Form.
- Depending upon budget, internal equity, or other internal operational constraints, including the proviso that the employee's base pay must not be less than the minimum of the pay range for the higher level classification.
- If an employee receives a Staff Career Ladder pay increase, the employee remains eligible for board approved pay increase.

## STAFF CAREER LADDER REQUEST FORM

## Section I. Type of action being requested

- ☐ Pre-defined Vertical Career Ladder Initiation  
☐ Individualized Vertical Career Ladder Initiation
- ☐ Completion – Complete **ONLY** section VI  
*(All other sections should have been completed at the time of initiation)*
- Complete **ALL** sections **EXCEPT VI**

## Section II. Eligibility Checklist

YES NO

- ☐ ☐ Has the employee been employed with the University for at least one (1) year?  
☐ ☐ Will the incumbent meet the minimum qualifications of the approved title at the time of completion?  
☐ ☐ Has the employee received all ratings of “Meets Expectations” or higher on the last performance evaluation?  
☐ ☐ Is the employee currently free from disciplinary action?  
☐ ☐ Has the department been free of layoffs in similar classifications for the past 12 months?  
☐ ☐ Is this either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> successive Career Ladder since the employee’s initial hire or last competitive position change?

If ALL answers to the above are “YES”, please continue completing the below paperwork.

If ANY answer to the above is “NO”, the employee is not career ladder eligible at this time.

## Section III. Background information regarding this request

Address the business need that prompted the request and provide any supporting information that will be useful in review of the request.

## Section IV. Position and Incumbent Details

## a) Incumbent Details

Employee Name		Banner ID No.	
Current Salary		Proposed Salary	

## b) Position Details:

Fund Code		Org Code		Account Code	
Department Name				Supv of Record	
Current Classification Details				Proposed Classification Details	
Position Title				Position Title	
Position Grade				Position Grade	

**Section V. Career Ladder Initiation**

Estimated completion date of the career ladder \_\_\_\_\_

*(Minimum duration of six months from the time HR approves the request. Duration must reflect time duties actually worked)***Action Plan - Duties and Responsibilities**

List the top five goals to be accomplished by the employee during the proposed timeframe. Indicate the approximate percentage of time spent on each.

	<b>Action Plan – List Top Five Goals &amp; Describe How Each Goal Will Be Accomplished</b>	<b>% OF TIME</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE</b>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

**Section VI. Career Ladder Completion**Did the employee complete all the items listed above in section IV in a timely and satisfactory manner? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please provide details on how the action plan in Section V was met.

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Supervisor verification of completion:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**Section VII. Required Signatures/Acknowledgement****Employee Acknowledgement**

I certify I am aware and agree to meet the objectives identified in the above action plan in order to complete the career ladder.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME AND TITLE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

**Leadership Support and Approval****a) Supervisor's Support**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME AND TITLE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

**b) Dean's approval (if applicable)**

☐ I support and approve this request

☐ I do not support this request

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME AND TITLE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

**c) Vice President's approval**

☐ I support and approve this request

☐ I do not support this request

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME AND TITLE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

**d) Vice President of Business and Finance's approval**

☐ I support and approve this request

☐ I do not support this request

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME AND TITLE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

**e) President's approval**

☐ I support and approve this request

☐ I do not support this request

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME AND TITLE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)



**STAFF CAREER LADDER  
REVIEW AND CERTIFICATION  
(For internal HR use only)**

*The outcome of the review may differ from the initial request depending on the analysis conducted. If the requested outcome differs, HR will communicate back to the department prior to sending out an official notification.*

- ☐ The targeted position is below management level
- ☐ The department been free of layoffs in similar classifications for the past 12 month
- ☐ The incumbent meets the minimum qualifications of the approved title
- ☐ The request is within Staff Salary Schedule
- ☐ Incumbent review:
- Number of eligible incumbents: ☐ Single incumbent position ☐ Multiple incumbent position \_\_\_\_\_ Incumbents
- If more than one eligible incumbent, how was the current incumbent selected for this opportunity?

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**HR Notes:**

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*Review conducted by:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME AND TITLE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)