

San Diego Community College District

CLASSIFICATION DESCRIPTION

Title: Instructional Lab Technician – Agriculture

Unit: Office Technical

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Job Code: J1906

Original Date: 04/2025

Last Revision: 04/2025

Staff Type: Classified

FLSA status: Non-Exempt

Salary Range: 23

DEFINITION:

Under the direction of an assigned supervisor, assist in the instructional program by organizing day-to-day operations and maintaining agricultural areas of the farm laboratory and performing complex technical work in an instructional laboratory environment in the subject of sustainable agriculture.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

The Instructional Lab Technician class is distinguished from the Instructional Aide or the Instructional Assistant class in that positions assigned to the class of Instructional Lab Technician oversee a complex instructional laboratory for Sustainable Agriculture and must possess extensive technical or academic training and experience in the field of Agriculture. Incumbents work independently and provide work direction and training to instructional assistants and/or student assistants.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

1. With supervision from faculty, oversee the operation and maintenance of the farm laboratory as well as the greenhouse and laboratory classrooms; perform daily maintenance of farm environment, maintain laboratory in a safe, clean and orderly condition.
2. In coordination with faculty, develop, maintain, update and follow a seasonal crop plan with appropriate crops, including considerations for instructional requirements.
3. Train and provide work direction to instructional assistants, student assistants, farm interns and volunteers (including those doing service learning hours).
4. Maintain regular communication with faculty; including weekly work schedule, report of leave and other program related items.
5. Prepare materials and equipment for instructional use and farm maintenance as required, according to approved procedures and faculty request.
6. Order, receive, inventory and store seeds, tools, irrigation, fertilizers, pesticides, instructional equipment and other farm supplies, ensuring adequate quantities are available for timely instructional use; mark tools and other equipment with appropriate identification and safety information.
7. Test, adjust, and maintain equipment and tools. Perform minor repair, adjustment, and upkeep of farm and lab equipment as necessary. Oversee appropriate handling, storage, and disposal of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
8. Assist instructors, staff, and students in the safe use of equipment (such as; microscopes, balances, and a variety of basic farm hand tools including shovels, digging forks, hoes, pruning shears, and loppers).
9. Prepare soil for planting and maintain soil quality. Care for a variety of crop and non-crop plants including annuals, perennial shrubs, and fruit trees. Conduct plant propagation including direct sowing and transplant maintenance. Monitor and maintain crop growth by implementing an irrigation, fertilization, weeding, and integrated pest management plan.

10. In coordination with faculty, manage the harvesting, post-harvest handling and sale of produce and follow appropriate food safety regulations.
11. Provide technical assistance in preparation of equipment and material purchases; recommend selection of equipment as requested; may interview vendors to assess new equipment and supplies as necessary.
12. Assist in preparation of the farm and laboratory budget, monitor budget expenditures.
13. Provide technical support for faculty developing new field and laboratory activities.
14. Prepare and maintain departmental documents, records, and files; maintain records of materials and equipment loaned to students.
15. Perform related duties as assigned.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge:

Appropriate workplace behavior and attire

Basic principles related to sustainable farming methods such as techniques for: amending soil, plant science and crop production, plant propagation, crop planning, harvest and post-harvest handling of crops, bed preparation, composting, integrated pest and weed management, pruning fruit trees, greenhouse operations, and irrigation installation and maintenance.

District organization, operation, policies, and objectives

General first aid

General farming, agricultural, and equipment safety.

Microsoft Office computer spreadsheets and document applications

Principles of handling and storage of pesticides and fertilizers

Principles of on-farm food safety

Principles and practices of work direction and training

Record-keeping techniques.

State and local regulations regarding organic fertilizer and pesticide application.

Verbal and written communications skills including English usage, grammar, spelling, and vocabulary

Skills and Abilities:

Assemble, maintain and repair irrigation equipment and farm tools.

Carry out and/or delegate all practical functions at the farm.

Communicate effectively both verbally and in writing.

Demonstrate competence in basic agricultural skills

Demonstrate competence in farm safety and pesticide and fertilizer management.

Develop written action plans for farm operation and implement them effectively.

Ensure the care and security of assigned equipment, materials, and supplies.

Establish and maintain effective working relationships with others.

Issue and receive equipment and supplies.

Learn and apply techniques of precise measurement and notation.

Lift, carry and move up to 50 lbs of weight.

Maintain records and prepare reports
Meet schedules and timelines.
Operate maintain and repair a variety of farm equipment such as string trimmer, mini-tiller, and hand tools.
Plan, prioritize and organize work
Train and furnish work direction to others.
Understand and follow verbal and written directions.
Work cooperatively with others.
Work for extended periods of time in awkward positions such as: kneeling, bending and digging.
Work independently with little direction.
Work outdoors in sun.
Work on uneven terrain.

License

Valid California Driver's License

Training and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience equivalent to: Satisfactory completion of 15 semester units of courses related to Sustainable Agriculture or sufficient specialized training to demonstrate the knowledge and abilities listed above including three years of experience in farming or a related agricultural field with a broad range of duties and responsibilities. Relevant experience in an instructional setting is preferred.

WORKING CONDITIONSPhysical Requirements:

Category II.

Environment:

Involves working in both an urban farm outdoor setting and instructional laboratory setting. Subject to noises from farming equipment, fumes and odors from a variety of chemicals such as organic pesticides and fertilizers and motor fumes. Frequently required to work on uneven terrain under inclement weather conditions.