



RECLASSIFICATION IN ACTION: JOB RESPONSIBILITIES EXAMPLE

POSITION TYPE: SENIOR-LEVEL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Reclassification in higher education involves evaluating and adjusting a staff role, responsibilities, title, and compensation to better align with institutional needs, job complexity, and evolving organizational structures. This process can support staff retention, professional development, and career mobility for financial aid offices while ensuring the position reflects current regulatory requirements and operational demands.

This example illustrates the “before” and “after” job responsibilities for **senior-level leadership positions** in a financial aid office. It is intended to provide a practical, anonymized reference for offices considering similar changes, highlighting how this position’s duties, scope, and responsibilities evolved through the reclassification process.¹

Learn more about the overall work on reclassification at nasfaa.org/reclassification.

Explore full job descriptions in NASFAA’s Community Resource Library at nasfaa.org/community_library and nasfaa.org/position_descriptions.

JOB TYPE: MANAGER OF FINANCIAL AID SYSTEMS AND APPLICATION PROCESSING TO DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL AID SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONS

Before: The Manager of Financial Aid Systems and Application Processing oversaw the financial aid systems and processing office. Core responsibilities included supervising a team of specialists, managing financial aid management system upgrades and financial aid packaging, coordinating verification services, and ensuring compliance with federal, state, and institutional regulations. The role also involved budget management, collaboration with other financial aid managers to standardize practices across the college, and customer service oversight. While technical system management and team supervision were central, the role was largely operational, focused on ensuring efficient processing and compliance at the unit level.

After: The reclassified Director of Financial Aid Systems and Operations reflects a broadened leadership and strategic scope. In addition to managing financial aid processing and technology systems, the position now directs compliance reviews, reporting, and default management. It oversees the satisfactory academic progress (SAP) process, financial literacy initiatives, and outreach strategies. The Director works closely with IT to optimize automation, serves as a resource for system updates, and produces data analytics to support institutional decision-making. Supervisory responsibilities expanded to include multiple coordinators and specialists, while the role now represents the college at state and national meetings. The position elevates from managing a processing office to shaping policy, compliance, and systems strategy at the institutional level.

KEY CHANGES

Before (Manager)	After (Director)
Managed financial aid systems and application processing, including financial aid management system upgrades and packaging.	Leads financial aid systems and operations at the director level, with expanded compliance, reporting, and outreach responsibilities.
Supervised specialists and a coordinator focused on application processing and verification.	Supervises coordinators, lead specialists, and software staff with broader operational oversight.
Focused on operational management and standardization of processes across the college.	Provides strategic direction, collaborates on automation and process improvement, and represents the college externally.
Responsible for budget and payroll for the processing office.	Manages budgets, reporting, SAP, financial literacy programs, and default management.
Primarily an operational/technical management role.	Elevated to strategic leadership with expanded compliance, analytics, and institutional decision-making authority.

¹ This summary was written with the assistance of generative AI, 2025.

JOB TYPE: GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL AID MANAGER TO DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE PROGRAM FINANCIAL AID

Before: The prior role managed financial aid services for graduate and professional students, but at a more limited managerial scope. Responsibilities focused on application processing, eligibility reviews, and assisting students with financial aid options and procedures. The position provided general oversight of aid delivery, compliance, and customer service but did not carry the broader institutional coordination or leadership responsibilities associated with higher-level director positions. Much of the work emphasized transactional processing and student support rather than strategic engagement with academic programs or advancement.

After: The reclassified Director of Graduate Program Financial Aid represents a significant expansion in scope and leadership. The position now oversees financial aid operations for all on-campus graduate programs, including need analysis, packaging, disbursement, and compliance monitoring. It serves as a liaison to graduate program administrators and faculty, ensuring financial aid policies align with academic program structures and calendars. The Director manages scholarships and assistantships, collaborates with Advancement on stewardship of endowed funds, and leads a team of advisors dedicated to graduate populations. The role requires stronger regulatory expertise, data-informed decision-making, and the ability to align financial aid operations with institutional goals for graduate and professional education.

KEY CHANGES

Before (Manager)	After (Director)
Focused on application processing, eligibility reviews, and transactional student support.	Oversees all aid processes for graduate programs, including packaging, disbursement, and compliance.
Provided general oversight of compliance and customer service.	Ensures compliance with federal, state, and institutional regulations; updates policies in response to changes.
Limited engagement with academic departments.	Serves as liaison to graduate program administrators/faculty; coordinates aid to align with academic calendars.
Did not manage institutional funding programs.	Manages scholarships, assistantships, and collaborates with Advancement on endowed funds.
Primarily a managerial, operational role.	Elevated to director-level leadership with strategic oversight and staff supervision.

