



HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR YOUR RECLASSIFICATION

Reclassification can help financial aid offices attract and retain skilled staff, improve efficiency, and ensure roles align with institutional needs. Read more about our overall work on reclassification at nasfaa.org/reclassification¹.

HOW THIS GUIDE WAS CREATED

This guide was developed based on insights gathered from financial aid professionals who have undergone the reclassification process at various institutions. Through interviews with financial aid directors and staff across different types of colleges and universities — including public, private, community colleges, graduate/professional schools, and proprietary institutions — we identified key strategies, challenges, and best practices for requesting a reclassification.

This guide compiles real-world experiences and institutional policies and provides employees with a clear and practical approach to advocating for job title, salary, or role adjustments. Whether you are seeking a salary increase, a title change, or a better alignment of your responsibilities with your classification, this resource will help you navigate the conversation with your supervisor confidently and professionally.

HOW TO APPROACH YOUR SUPERVISOR ABOUT RECLASSIFICATION

Reclassification can align your job title, responsibilities, and salary with the work you are actually performing. If you believe your role should be reclassified, here's how to approach your supervisor with a well-prepared and professional request.

Assess Your Current Role and Responsibilities

Before initiating a conversation with your supervisor, take time to evaluate how your current job duties compare to your official job description. Consider:

- Have your responsibilities expanded beyond your original job scope?
- Are you consistently performing higher-level tasks than those outlined in your job description?
- Have other employees in similar roles been reclassified recently?
- Are there discrepancies in pay or classification compared to similar roles at your institution or peer institutions?

Gather Supporting Documentation

A strong request is backed by data and comparisons. To strengthen your case:

- **Build a Job Description Comparison:** Obtain your official job description and highlight outdated sections or missing duties.
- **Conduct Peer Benchmarking:** Research how similar roles at your institution or other institutions are classified and compensated.
- **Quantify Your Contributions:** List any significant projects, leadership roles, or additional responsibilities you've taken on.
- **Gather Performance Evaluations:** If applicable, reference past performance reviews that highlight your increased duties and contributions.

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

Understand the Reclassification Process at Your Institution

Every institution has a different process for job reclassification. Check if your institution has:

- A formal job evaluation or reclassification process
- Required documentation or forms for submitting a request
- Specific timelines or budget cycles when reclassification decisions are made
- Union or HR policies that might impact the process

Speaking with HR or reviewing internal policies can help clarify these details before speaking with your supervisor.

Prepare for the Conversation

When you meet with your supervisor, frame your request professionally and be prepared to discuss why reclassification is appropriate. Here's how to structure the conversation:

- **Start With Appreciation:** Express appreciation for your role and growth within the organization.
- **Clearly State Your Request:** Be direct in stating that you would like to discuss the possibility of reclassification based on your expanded responsibilities.
- **Provide Evidence:** Present the documentation and comparisons you gathered.
- **Align With Department Goals:** Emphasize how your reclassification aligns with the office's needs and improves efficiency.
- **Be Open to Feedback:** Your supervisor may need time to review your request or may suggest alternative solutions.

Follow Up and Stay Engaged

If your supervisor is supportive, ask about the next steps and any required documentation. If they are hesitant, request feedback on what would strengthen your case. Keep the conversation open and professional, and be patient, as reclassification processes often take time.

CONCLUSION

Reclassification is a formal process that requires preparation and patience. Approaching your supervisor with a clear case backed by documentation and an understanding of institutional policies increases the likelihood of a productive discussion and a successful outcome.



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