

Classification and Qualification



STANDARDS

The California State University System

Performing Arts Technician

Class Codes: 0840 - 0842

Date Established: 12/01/00

OVERVIEW:

The Performing Arts Technician is a broad classification with three position skill levels. It is designed for positions with responsibility for a variety of technical specialties that provide production support in the departments of theatre arts, drama, cinema/film, music, and radio/television broadcasting. Typically, positions are focused in one technical production support specialty such as costume construction, stage and set construction, lighting configuration and operation, film/video set up and operation and/or audio/music production or recording.

Position Skill Level I - Incumbents at this level work independently on standard assignments in the applicable production support specialty and require limited technical direction. Typically, incumbents work from written instructions and are responsible for organizing their own projects, including managing budgets for materials and supplies.

Position Skill Level II - Incumbents at this level are more experienced in the most technical aspects of the applicable production support specialty. Incumbents work with minimal creative and technical direction on a wide range of projects including the more complex projects involving the more difficult designs and materials. Incumbents may also set up and conduct classroom demonstrations and may be involved in estimating costs and budget control for multiple projects.

Position Skill Level III - Incumbents at this level are highly skilled, with experience in multiple areas of production support. They coordinate the most complex projects and provide overall technical and operational leadership. Incumbents also may serve as the technical and/or operational production manager.

CORE AREAS:

The work of the Performing Arts Technician typically is focused in one of the following technical specialties. At the highest level, work may span more than one technical specialty. The position skill level determines the level of expertise and scope of knowledge required to perform the duties in these areas.

Costuming – Using ingenuity, technical abilities and knowledge of production goals and themes, creates and constructs costumes from design specifications. Work may include: preparing and/or drafting new patterns; selecting and preparing appropriate materials; selecting and reconstructing appropriate costumes from existing stock; creating new costumes from scratch; fabricating costume accessories and wigs; fitting costumes and making alterations; styling hair and applying make-up to complete the costume look; repairing and restoring costumes; ordering supplies and materials; and ensuring proper cleaning, maintenance and storage of costumes.

Scenery and Staging Operation – Using ingenuity, technical abilities and knowledge of production goals, themes and set designing, creates and constructs scenery properties from design specifications. Work may include: painting sets, scene décor, and murals; operating and maintaining stage equipment; inspecting, repairing and performing regular maintenance on riggings and equipment to ensure safety standards are maintained; working with students and faculty to understand production goals; and attending performances to assist students in technical aspects of production and backstage organization.

Lighting – Using ingenuity, technical abilities and knowledge of production goals and themes, creates and implements and/or fabricates lighting and special effects from design or director specifications. Work may include: operating lighting and special effects equipment; repairing, inspecting and maintaining equipment; and participating in performances to assist students in the more technical aspects of lighting production.

Music/Audio Production - Using ingenuity, technical abilities and knowledge of production goals and themes, produces sound/audio effects or music based on design and director specifications. Work may include: assembling and operating audio equipment requirements; inspecting, repairing and maintaining audio equipment to ensure quality production; participating in performance to assist students in the more technical aspects of audio and music production.

ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS:

Entry to the first level within this classification requires one to two years of experience working for a theater, repertory or stock company engaged in the applicable production specialty such as costume construction, stage and set construction, lighting production, and/or sound/audio production. This background normally would be achieved through professional training or applicable college coursework and practical experience.

POSITION SKILL LEVELS:

Three position skill levels are defined within this classification denoting a progression of responsibility, knowledge, and skill requirements. Progression from a lower to a higher skill level is referred to as an *in-classification progression*. The factors used to determine position skill level include: complexity, scope and impact of the work performed; level, type and scope of knowledge required; autonomy exercised and level of supervision received; position accountability for work results; judgment and discretion required by the position; problem solving and technical skills required; level of creativity and ingenuity required by the work; and the level and diversity of contacts and interactive capabilities required by the position.

A position is placed at a skill level where the majority of and/or most critical position responsibilities and skill requirements fall in relation to the position skill levels defined below. Management assigns work responsibilities and determines the skill requirements of the position. It is important to note that the position skill level definitions do not delineate entry requirements for each skill level, but are composites of the typical position at each level. Actual skill requirements will vary by position based on the technical production specialty performed.

Entry qualifications are defined for the first position skill level of the classification. Further progression within the classification depends first on the operational need for a position at a higher skill level, second, on the nature of the duties and requirements of the position, and third, on an employee's demonstrated and applied skills and abilities.

POSITION SKILL LEVEL I

Typical nature of work assignments:

- Independent performance of standard assignments related to the production support specialty, such as costuming, scenery construction, lighting and special effects, and music/audio production.
- Work is performed under general supervision, often from written specifications or instructions with limited technical direction, except for more complex aspects of work.
- Work requires a base level of creativity and ingenuity to create production materials and effects.
- Assignments require some judgment, but standard procedures and practices generally are followed.
- Focus is on own work assignments rather than providing lead work direction to others, but assignments may involve training less experienced staff and working directly with students participating in productions.

Typical knowledge and skill requirements:

- General knowledge of methods and problems related to applicable production specialty area.
- Working knowledge of design principles and the ability to translate design specifications, blueprints, or drawings into applicable costume, scenery, lighting and sound production.
- Ability to identify and appropriate materials and supplies needed for projects and manage materials budgets for production specialty and specific projects.
- A foundation knowledge of applicable software packages for applicable production specialty and ability to use standard features.
- General knowledge of historical periods as they relate to the production specialty.
- For costuming, working knowledge of and ability to use the patterns, methods, materials and equipment involved in construction and reconstruction of costumes and related accessories.
- For scenery construction, ability to read blueprints; working knowledge of carpentry and ability to apply knowledge to set and scenery construction; ability to mix and apply paint for sets and scenes; and ability to operate staging equipment.
- For lighting and sound production, general knowledge of basic electrical theory and working knowledge of lighting and/or sound effects.
- Working knowledge of safety requirements and standards related to stage and set construction, lighting, and stage operations.
- Ability to assist in the training and supervision of students involved in productions.

POSITION SKILL LEVEL II

Typical nature of work assignments:

- Independent performance of more complex projects in production specialty, including planning, organizing and construction/implementation for one or more productions. Work typically involves handling multiple priorities.
- Work is performed independently with limited creative or technical direction. Approaches to projects and priorities usually are determined independently.
- Work involves appreciable creativity in the execution of designs and production effects.
- Work involves considerable judgment and discretion in terms of the use of materials and meeting safety requirements.
- Lead work direction may be provided to other staff members.
- Ongoing coordination with faculty involved in the productions is central to work. Provides direct lab support to students involved in productions.

In addition to Position Skill Level I knowledge and skill requirements, work assignments typically require:

- Thorough and specialized knowledge and experience in applicable production specialty. More sophisticated knowledge of design theory and principles to be able to translate design specifications, blueprints or drawings into costume, scene, lighting or sound production and effects.
- Ability to independently manage production support projects and productions by breaking segments into working units that coincide with production needs.
- Ability to work on more complex projects/designs and to work with more difficult materials and equipment, including the ability to select and use the most appropriate materials to meet production needs.
- Ability to use more complex features of applicable software packages for production specialty.
- Ability to plan the layout and use of work areas.
- Thorough knowledge of safety requirements and standards related production support specialty and stage operations and ability to train others in safety measures and ensure compliance with codes and regulations.
- Comprehensive knowledge of historical periods for design and construction of materials and effects related to applicable production specialty.
- For costume construction, thorough and comprehensive knowledge of costume techniques, including specialized hand sewing and machine techniques, and ability to work with a wide range of costuming materials.
- For scenery construction and stage operation, thorough working knowledge of carpentry including ability to operate applicable hand, power and woodworking tools; ability to work with a wide range of set and scenery construction materials; ability to paint scenery from designer renderings, elevations, sketches or models; ability to create scale renderings or models; thorough knowledge of lighting, sound, counterweight and other stage systems and equipment; and ability to operate and troubleshoot computerized set and scenery systems.
- For lighting and sound production, thorough knowledge of basic electrical theory and usage related to audio and lighting effects and working knowledge of lighting, sound and stage effect techniques, including the ability to improvise lighting, sound, stage property, and other stage effects.

POSITION SKILL LEVEL III

Typical nature of work assignments:

- Performance of broader production functions, typically covering multiple production specialties, including participating in production planning meetings, designing components of stage productions; determining need for and coordinating the acquisition of stage supplies; and maintaining schedules for stage facilities. May serve as the production technical and operational director.
- Provides creative and technical consultation and leadership on a variety of production issues and often provides lead work direction.
- Work involves coordinating a wide variety of productions and projects including such functions as budget preparation, cost analyses and vendor management.
- Work is performed under general direction and is reviewed against goals and objectives.
- Appreciable ingenuity is required in almost all aspects of the work.
- Considerable judgment and discretion are exercised in carrying out projects.
- Work involves regular contact and coordination with faculty, staff and students. Consultation may be provided in the more technical aspects of specific productions.

In addition to Position Skill Level I and II knowledge and skill requirements, work assignments typically require:

- Ability to support classroom instruction by performing classroom demonstrations related to production specialty.
- Ability to work with faculty and provide training and supervision to students involved in productions.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the methods and problems in multiple production specialties. Comprehensive knowledge of design theory and principles and how they are executed in various production specialties.
- Working knowledge of directing and stage management, including the ability to manage staging needs for productions requiring numerous costume and set changes and the ability to manage and coordinate the use of multiple facilities.
- Thorough and in-depth knowledge of the technical aspects of construction, implementation, and operation of staging materials and effects in the various production specialties, including the ability to work with drawings and plots to assist in their execution.
- Comprehensive knowledge of safety measures and hazards related to theatre productions.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work with individuals at all levels within the organization.