

ACADEMIC SPECIALIST

Employment Guidelines

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Academic Specialists - Summary

Under supervision of a full-time professional employee, Academic Specialists provide part-time, temporary and professional services to the University. Such functions are performed on an intermittent basis or for fixed period of a short duration. Academic Specialist positions are project-oriented, and should not be utilized for temporary appointments for responsibilities that would normally be assigned to a full or part-time staff member.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

- Performs course instruction for non-credit courses (such as Continuing Ed courses)
- Prepares instructional materials
- Maintains student records
- Provides individualized instruction
- Provides administrative services
- Provides other academic services
- Provides student services

Academic Specialists may not serve on any faculty committees.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

An appointee must possess those qualifications deemed appropriate to the specific assignment. The level of work assigned to an Academic Specialist is professional in nature, and usually requires a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in a relevant discipline and some related experience.

In certain circumstances, a department may select an individual who has obtained an Associate's Degree and substitute experience on a year for year basis in lieu of a Bachelor's degree. This must be approved by both the department head, and the Office of Human Resources.

Work Hours and Break Times

An Academic Specialist are compensated on an hourly basis and may only work a maximum of 15 hours per week.

They are required to take breaks and must indicate them on their time sheets. Academic Specialists will not be compensated for more than seven (7) hours per day.

The work schedule should be based on the half (1/2) hour. More than four (4) hours of work requires a half (1/2) hour break; more than six (6) hours of work requires a one (1) hour break. Example: 6 hours and 30 minutes requires a 1 hour break; the employee will be compensated for 5 hours and 30 minutes. 4 hours and 30 minutes requires a ½ hour break; the employee will be compensated for 4 hours.

Electronic time sheets must be submitted through Kronos in a timely manner, or the employee will face a delay in payment.

Pay Rates

The Office of Human Resources has established three levels of compensation for Academic Specialists. The levels are based on skills, knowledge, problem solving ability, and the level of accountability assigned.

Level I – Bachelor’s Degree and a minimum of one year of experience in a related area. An Academic Specialist in Level I performs basic professional work under close supervision using established policies and procedures. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to participation in meetings, coordinating activities in close consultation with full time staff members of the University, providing limited supervision of the office and/or students for short period of time in the absence of a permanent employee. (\$11.00 – \$13.00).

Level II – Bachelor’s Degree and two years of experience in a related area. An Academic Specialist in Level II performs professional work of some difficulty semi-independently using established policies and procedures. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to the examples provided in Level I and serving as a co-leader regarding the organization and supervision of activities for program participants or departments; maintaining databases, records and files; reviewing and analyzing documents for the approval of the department head or designee; counseling and advising students under close supervision of a full time professional staff member; facilitating the activities of a student organization under the close supervision of a full time professional staff member; preparing correspondence for distribution under the general supervision of a full time professional staff member of the University. (\$13.50 - \$15.00).

Level III – Bachelor’s Degree and three years of experience in a related area. An Academic Specialist in Level III performs professional work of considerable difficulty independently using established policies and procedures. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to the examples described in Levels I and II and the person selected must be able to assist in providing specialized educational, vocational and personal counseling of students upon the approval of the Director of the department or program and under general supervision. Individuals may be responsible for drafting highly technical and specific documents for reports under general supervision; may provide assistance with developing websites and presentations to be utilized by professional staff in the delivery of services to students and the Kean University community. (\$15.50 – \$17.00).

Special approval from the Vice President for Administration and Finance must be obtained for Academic Specialists who are assigned salaries greater than \$17.00 per hour.

Academic Specialist Hiring Procedures

The following procedures have been established in order to ensure uniformity in the Academic Specialist hiring procedure:

- An Academic Specialist Authorization to Hire (ATH) Form must be completed and submitted, along with a job description to support the proposed hourly rate, to the appropriate parties for approval, as indicated on the form.
- The ATH Form must contain approval from the Budget Officer for fund availability prior to submission to the Office of Human Resources.
- Departments should recommend a salary on the ATH Form that they feel is comparable to the duties of the position.
- Please be advised that if a pay rate exceeding \$17.00 per hour is being requested, the ATH form will also be sent to the Vice President for Administration and Finance for approval.
- All final salary determinations will be communicated by the Office of Human Resources, to the employee and the hiring department/unit.

No prospective employee may be given permission to begin working until the department/program has received written authorization from the Office of Human Resources.

New Hire Onboarding

When the Office of Human Resources communicates a formal offer to the candidate, he/she will be instructed to present themselves to the Office of Human Resources for new hire onboarding, including the collection of additional documents, such as a Social Security Card.

Please note that if the Social Security card is not readily available or it is lost, the intake process will be halted until the card is available.

Prospective employees who do not complete the onboarding process in a timely manner will delay their ability to start working, and may jeopardize their offer of employment.

Prospective employees who have begun working before authorized to do so, in writing by the Office of Human Resources, will be subject to immediate rejection of the offer of employment and/or termination.

Prospective employees on an F1 Visa are required to establish both identity and employment authorization before being processed. Only documents designated on the current Form I-9 will be accepted. Prospective employees who are also taking classes at Kean University should also submit the I-20 form.

Dual Titles Prohibited

Kean University prohibits Academic Specialists from holding two positions/titles on campus simultaneously.

For example:

- Academic Specialists cannot work in two different departments at the same time.
- Academic Specialists cannot hold Adjunct positions.

Benefits

Workers' Compensation

Academic Specialists are employees of Kean University, and are covered under Workers' Compensation for on-the-job work related injury and accidents. For details, see our weblink:

<http://www.kean.edu/offices/human-resources/benefits/workers-compensation>

Sick Leave

Academic Specialists that are paid on an hourly basis accrue one hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked, up to a maximum of 40 hours per calendar year. For further details, you may refer to the [Sick Leave Guidelines for Hourly Student Employees and Academic Specialists](#) available on the website for the Office of Human Resources.

Retirement Plan

The Defined Contribution Retirement Program (DCRP) is a NJ State administered retirement plan. It is a tax-deferred, defined contribution retirement plan which includes benefits such as a 3% matching employer contribution, life insurance and long term disability insurance. All eligible Academic Specialists will be enrolled in the DCRP. Members of the DCRP will contribute 5.5% of wages to a tax-deferred investment account established with Prudential Financial, which jointly administers the DCRP investments with the NJ Division of Pensions and Benefits. Additionally, Kean University will provide a matching contribution of 3%.

Members of the DCRP also benefit from a non-contributory (employer paid) life insurance policy. The life insurance policy is equal to 1 ½ your annual wages (on which the DCRP contributions are based). Additionally, a member is eligible for (employer paid) long-term disability insurance coverage after one year of participation in the DCRP.

Eligibility for Health Benefits – DCRP Members

Part-time employees of Kean University who are enrolled in a state administered retirement plan, such as the DCRP, are eligible to enroll in the Part-Time State Health Benefits Program for medical and prescription drug coverage. For additional information, you may visit our website (<https://www.kean.edu/offices/human-resources>) and follow the links for Benefits/Health Coverage for Part-Time Employees.

Please note that Academic Specialists do not earn vacation benefits.

HR Contacts

For questions or concerns, you may contact the following members of the Office of Human Resources for assistance:

Makenzie Carty
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