Photographer

University of California, Los Angeles
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Class Specifications - D.15
Principal Photographer - 6221
Senior Photography - 6222
Photographer - 6223

SERIES CONCEPT

Photographers perform or supervise a variety of tasks involving the use of cameras, lighting equipment, darkroom equipment, photographic films and papers; understand and utilize the capabilities and limitations of available equipment to the subject being photographed and the film being developed; know and apply the processes, techniques and equipment used in developing negatives, making and enlarging prints; and perform other related duties as required.

The series consists of three levels: Under direction the Principal Photographer supervises and coordinates the work of photographers or technicians, and may perform the advanced and more complex photography tasks. At the Senior level incumbents work under general supervision doing photographic work on complex assignments which require general background knowledge of the nature of the material to be photographed. Incumbents at the Photographer or operational level work under supervision and make use of the full range of photographic skills and knowledge to perform a variety of duties.

CLASS CONCEPTS

Principal Photographer

Incumbents plan, direct, and coordinate the work of Photographers and Technicians in either a large or highly specialized photographic laboratory; develop and maintain quality control standards; may be assigned full responsibility for the supervision of a large or highly specialized photographic laboratory; maintain workflow; and determine the need for and recommend purchase of photographic supplies and equipment needed to carry out both standard and specialized photographic activity.

Incumbents not primarily engaged in supervision develop and operate highly specialized photographic processing equipment; modify and adapt equipment to fit new or unusual photographic situations; improvise and devise new methods and techniques for use of camera equipment; and have sufficient knowledge of the material being photographed (1) to know when to alter or improvise equipment, methods, or techniques, and (2) to know the limits beyond which the material cannot be altered.

The Principal level is distinguished from the Senior level by either the degree of supervision exercised over others or by the possession and use of a thorough comprehension of the use of special techniques and equipment, or both.
Examples of assignments allocated to this level of difficulty and responsibility are:

1. Directs a large photographic or highly specialized laboratory and is assigned administrative responsibilities for budget, production records and general operations.

2. Takes photographs of special underwater effects of tests for behavior studies of animals, or high-speed eye movements in simulated space conditions, requiring a knowledge of both underwater and space photography.

Senior Photographer

Incumbents take still or motion pictures in black and white or color of a wide variety of subjects presenting problems of unusual difficulty because of fragility, changeable nature, or time factors, requiring special techniques, exceptional care in handling, or unusual rapid and precise work; have and use knowledge of the special handling and lighting of the subject to be photographed; and determine the appropriate equipment to use, including cameras, lights, film and adapt the developing process to meet special requirements of each photograph.

Examples of assignments allocated to this level of difficulty and responsibility are:

1. Processes negatives, prints or film requiring knowledge in a special area of photography such as fine printing, and in-depth knowledge of spectrometry, sensitometry and densitometry.

2. Makes still and motion pictures in color or black and white of clinical situations, such as the interior of the eye, ear or throat, requiring special knowledge of anatomy or surgery.

3. Assists the Principal Photographer in a large unit in assigning work, devising procedures and laying out technical material.

4. Photographs three dimensional models, highly reflective art work, portraits, paintings, and architectural and publicity photographs which require special lighting and hyper-color correction and filtration to render the correct color balance and fine detail.

Photographer

Incumbents take still or motion pictures of subjects in black and white or color using standard photographic skills, with opportunity for repeated exposures or for retakes if the original exposure is unsatisfactory; operate a variety of photographic processing equipment; determine lens settings and filters, types of film, shutter speeds, camera angles, and exposure time; assist in photographing subjects presenting difficult problems of lighting, arrangement, or requiring special techniques; maintain, repair and make minor adjustments to photographic apparatus; and may perform the work of Photographic Technicians.

The Photographer level is distinguished from the Senior Photographer level by the time requirements for completion, the emphasis on standard rather than special techniques, and the subject matter being photographed.
Examples of assignments allocated to this level of difficulty and responsibility are:

1. Takes still photographs of research equipment and personnel for record, publication or identification purposes with appropriate camera format.

2. Operates a 35 mm camera especially equipped or set up for events uncomplicated by rapid movements or for the need to depict depth of field.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Principal Photographer

Two years of training at a professional school of photography; and four years of photographic experience, two years of which must include performance of a wide variety of standard photographic techniques involving complex scientific subjects; or an equivalent combination of education and experience; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.

Senior Photographer

Two years of training at a professional school of photography; or four years of professional experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.

Photographer

One year of training at a professional school of photography; or two years of professional experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.