

## Know Your Contract

# Column and Step for the Rank and File

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Are you correctly placed, both in step and column, on the appropriate salary schedule? If not, you may be needlessly losing thousands of dollars every year. After reading this article, if you have questions regarding salary placement, call Kit Perales at De Anza in Budget/Personnel (408.864.8260) or Nancy Cortes at Foothill in Personnel Services (650.949.7454). If you need additional assistance, call your FA conciliator.

### **Q: Who is responsible for correctly placing me on the salary schedule?**

**A:** Part of the responsibility belongs to the District, and part belongs to you. All new faculty, both part- and full-time, are placed on an appropriate schedule, *Appendix A, B, B.1, C, E or G*, based on both education, which determines the initial column, and past teaching, counseling or librarian experience, which determines the initial step. *You* are responsible for stating complete and accurate information on your employment paperwork to determine your initial placement, and *you* must provide official transcripts and letters of work experience as verification (the photocopies of transcripts and statements of work experience included in the District application for employment are not sufficient). The *District* is responsible for correctly placing you based on that documentation.

### **Q: How was my initial placement determined?**

**A:** Placement is based on two factors: level of education attained determines the appropriate COLUMN and years of past relevant work experience determine the appropriate STEP. Each salary schedule specifies both the educational experience necessary to be placed on Column I through V and the highest step on which new hires may be placed. When you were hired into the District, your job announcement clearly stated the required minimum qualifications as to education and work experience. Some faculty positions require a Master's degree, or equivalent, while some vocational faculty positions require an AA or Bachelor's degree. Any education used to meet the minimum qualifications cannot also be used for column advancement at a later date. Initial column and step placement are critical as any COLA or salary adjustments are added to this base. Also, if full-time, your step placement determines how quickly you reach the top of the salary schedule and become eligible for a Professional Achievement Award (PAA).

### **Q: Who is responsible for step movement after initial placement?**

**A:** Both faculty and the District. For full-time faculty, step advancement operates on a four-year cycle; after being hired, full-time faculty advance one step each of the next three years. At the end of the fourth year, you must have accumulated six semester or nine quarter units of professional growth activities and have received satisfactory evaluations; then the District automatically advances you one more step, and the four-year cycle begins again until you reach the top of your column. And there you stay, unless additional college units move you over to a new column. For part-time faculty, the District automatically advances you one step when you have completed the equivalent of a full-time annual load in the service of the District until you reach the top of the salary schedule.

### **Q: Who is responsible for column movement after initial placement?**

**A:** Basically, you are. A full-time faculty member must file both an intention to change column form (Kit Perales in Budget/Personnel at De Anza or Nancy Cortes in Personnel Services at Foothill) by June 30 of the previous year and turn in evidence of completion of work by September 15 of the same year to qualify for a column change. Remember that official transcripts and verification of professional growth activities must be provided. If you miss either deadline, you must wait until the following academic year for the change. If you never file, you never move. A part-time faculty member must file a Request for a Column Advancement form (Kit Perales at De Anza or Nancy Cortes at Foothill) at least one month before the beginning of an academic quarter. The documented completion of requirements for such a change can be filed any time before the beginning of the academic quarter. If you fail to meet the timelines, change of column cannot be made until the following quarter.

Remember, it is your responsibility to provide official transcripts showing professional course work.

**Q: If I have submitted enough professional growth units for step advancement or Professional Achievement Awards, won't the District automatically move me over to the next column?**

**A:** No. Requirements for column change units differ somewhat from professional growth units (see *Appendix A, B, B.1, C, E or G* for details). But more importantly, *you* must initiate every column change by filing both your intention and turning in official documentation of your professional growth activities.

**Q: How much is each column move worth?**

**A:** On the current full-time faculty salary schedule (*Appendix A*), each column move increases annual gross pay by about \$3,600. Each column move on the current part-time salary schedule (*Appendix C*) increases gross annual pay by about \$3,050 for a load factor of 1.000 (or about \$1,830 for a load factor of 0.6).

**Q: How many units are needed to move over one column?**

**A:** Twenty-four semester units. For full-time and part-time faculty, some of these units can be earned with conference attendance or professional activities approved by the Dean or appropriate administrator. See the appropriate *Appendix* in the *Agreement* for full details.