

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT, HORTICULTURE

DEFINITION

Monitors and maintains one or more instructional horticulture laboratories; operates and maintains a college nursery and arboretum; assists students and faculty with instructional activities related to the assigned program; maintains horticulture equipment; and orders, issues, receives, and stores classroom materials and supplies.

TYPICAL DUTIES

Plans, oversees, and participates in the following functions:

- Preparing and maintaining a stock of soil and compost for planting.
- Sterilizing pots, flats, cans, and soil.
- Preparing and maintaining seed beds and other plant plots.
- Propagating flowering plants, shrubs, vines, hedges, and trees.
- Planting, lifting, drying, and storing bulbs.
- Potting and preparing propagated plants for sale.
- Fertilizing, irrigating, cultivating, and transplanting plants.
- Controlling pests by using various pesticides.
- Planting, pruning, and trimming trees, shrubs, and hedges.
- Monitoring the proper irrigation of the nursery, arboretum, and plant plots.
- Selling plants to the public.

- Schedules and oversees the use of one or more instructional horticulture laboratories by students, faculty, and staff.
- Instructs students individually on the proper and safe use and operation of a variety of equipment and tools and orients students to established policies within the instructional laboratory.
- Oversees and participates in the planting, labeling, and maintaining of trees, shrubs, ground covers, and herbaceous plants in the arboretum and horticultural area.
- Oversees the receipt of plant materials, supplies, equipment, and other requisitioned items.
- Issues and receives supplies, materials, and equipment for student use in laboratory and classroom assignments, keeps records, and effects the return of supplies and equipment checked out to students.
- Assists instructional staff with demonstrations and maintenance of plant histories and materials.
- Maintains inventories of plants produced in the glass and lath houses and prepares periodic inventory reports.
- Contacts nurseries, selects stock, recommends the ordering of plant materials, and prepares requisitions as needed.
- Operates, adjusts, and performs minor maintenance and repairs on equipment used in cultivation, moving plants, soil mixing, and spraying.
- Maintains lath and glass houses, and cold frames.
- Maintains laboratory attendance and progress records.
- May provide training and work direction to student employees.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

An **Instructional Assistant, Horticulture**, applies knowledge of horticulture in assisting students and faculty with instructional activities related to a broad range of duties related to the day-to-day operations of a horticulture department which include: preparation of supplies, materials, and equipment; maintaining and operating a college nursery and arboretum; storekeeping functions; and proper and safe use of equipment and materials.

A **Gardener** performs general maintenance gardening of college grounds under immediate supervision.

SUPERVISION

General supervision is received from a Department Chair. Functional supervision is received from instructional staff. Work direction may be provided to student employees.

CLASS QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Characteristics and methods of propagation of nursery and arboretum plants, especially those common to California
- Proper and safe use of pesticides including insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides
- Soils and fertilizers used in Southern California
- Common horticultural pests
- Materials, equipment, and tools used in nursery, arboretum, and other horticultural operations
- Health and safety precautions, practices, and procedures related to horticultural equipment and hazardous materials
- Capabilities of computer systems, software, and hardware common to instructional laboratories
- Principles of recordkeeping

Skill in:

- Proper and safe use of power gardening equipment, hand tools, and other horticultural equipment

Ability to:

- Provide instructional assistance to students and instructional staff
- Propagate plants from seeds and cuttings and apply propagation methods
- Mix and apply pesticides according to written instructions
- Apply fertilizers and soil amendments in proper proportions and sequence
- Effectively and safely operate, adjust, and make minor repairs to equipment in a horticulture department
- Give clear and concise instructions
- Follow written and oral instructions
- Work effectively and cooperatively with District staff, students, and the public
- Keep detailed and accurate records
- Effectively utilize computer hardware and software
- Learn general and specialized software applications

ENTRANCE QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience:

An associate degree or its equivalent from a recognized college or university with a major in horticulture, nursery management, or a closely related field.

OR

Graduation from high school or its equivalent **AND** two years of full-time paid experience in nursery plant cultivation and care, including planting of seeds and cuttings, watering, fertilizing, transplanting, and pruning. College-level courses in botany, horticulture, floriculture, arboriculture, or a related field are desirable.

Special:

A valid Class "C" California driver's license.