

Position Classification Standard for Statistical Assistant Series, GS-1531

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SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes positions which require primarily the application of knowledge of statistical methods, procedures, and techniques, to the collection, processing, compilation, computation, analysis, editing, and presentation of statistical data. The work does not require the application of professional knowledge of statistics or other disciplines.

This standard supersedes the standard for the Statistical Clerical and Administrative series, GS-1531, published in March 1957.

SERIES COVERAGE

Positions in this series typically involve the application of statistical methods, procedures, and techniques in one or more of the following types of statistical assignments:

- ! Processing schedules, questionnaires, and similar reporting forms to obtain and compile data for specific studies and reports.
- ! Collecting, assembling, and compiling partially tabulated data into final tabulations, and preparing tables, charts, or graphs for presentation or publication.
- ! Making special studies requiring the search for, and selection, and evaluation of data from published and unpublished sources, and the preparation of such data for inclusion in reports and publications.
- ! Editing schedules, questionnaires, or similar reporting forms for completeness, internal consistency, relevance, and similar purposes.
- ! Performing scientific support work for statisticians and other professional personnel, e.g., making computations in the statistical testing of models and estimating sampling variance.
- ! Developing processing procedures based upon specific operational, program, or subject-matter requirements to ensure proper treatment and presentation of statistical data.
- ! Developing and designing schedules, reporting forms, and questionnaires.
- ! Developing plans, programs, methods, procedures, and techniques for collection, processing, compilation, and presentation of statistical data.
- ! Administering, coordinating, and supervising work of a statistical nature such as that described above.

STATISTICAL METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

A great deal of the statistical information collected by agencies in the Federal Government can be presented satisfactorily by elementary numerical treatment, such as by giving ratios, percentages, averages, etc. In many areas of Government operations, however, more intricate and refined methods must be used, e.g., measures of dispersion, frequency distribution, time series analyses, index numbers, correlations, sampling, etc. This is particularly true where it becomes necessary to compare significant differences among groups, establish the reliability of data obtained in a sample, or measure the validity of the relationships of data between and among the different groups being studied, surveyed, or analyzed.

Many of the methods, procedures, and techniques involved, being essentially basic forms of statistical analysis, require the application and use of various equations and formulas. These are developed by statisticians, who apply mathematical and statistical principles in deciding what equation or formula is appropriate.

The extent to which any method, procedure, or technique is used varies from one organization or agency and from one study or project to another. This depends to a large extent upon the impact and effect of several variables. These include the nature of the statistical functions involved, the purpose and use of the data, the degree of refinement and accuracy required in a specific study or operation, the anticipated impact of the results on subsequent studies, and the specific requirements set by the statisticians, program or subject-matter specialists, and other interested operating officials.

In much of the work, the statistical methods, procedures, and techniques can be and are reduced to relatively simple components. These, in turn, are translated into a series of sums, quotients, roots, etc., that are determined by addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, and by selection and comparison on that basis. Where this is done, the work resolves itself to a greater or lesser degree into computing procedures that combine these mathematical techniques in particular sequences. This, and the development of new equipment and methods designed to retrieve previously recorded data stored on tapes and in memory chambers, is the basis for automating many statistical operations. As a result, much of the statistical work, particularly in the larger operations where it can be standardized sufficiently, is performed by coding clerks, card punch operators, and computer specialists.

The standard for the [Statistician Series, GS-1530](#), contains a discussion of statistical methods and techniques which provides additional insights into the nature of the statistical assistant occupation.

EXCLUSIONS

The following types of positions are excluded from this series:

1. *Statistician.* -- Positions that require primarily the application of professional training in statistics or in mathematics and statistics are excluded from this series. Such positions should be classified in the [Statistician Series, GS-1530](#), or the [Mathematical Statistician Series, GS-1529](#), whichever is most appropriate.

Distinguishing Between Statistical Assistant and Statistician Positions

In general, the application of a broad and thorough knowledge of statistical theory in the evaluation and selection of statistical techniques of measurement distinguishes statistician positions from statistical assistant positions. Statistician positions require, as a primary condition of recruitment, the understanding and use of fundamental statistical theory and methods and a wide variety of statistical techniques.

Positions classified to the Statistical Assistant Series are concerned primarily with descriptive statistical methods used in the collection, compilation, and presentation of numerical data, or in any treatment of observed data which does not require inductive generalizations. Statistician positions are concerned primarily with analytical and inductive statistical theory and method used in design of surveys, experiments, or studies; establishing relationships among situations or results; comparing actual events with hypothetical events; drawing inferences or conclusions from observed data; and constructing forecasts, predictions, or estimates.

Statistical assistants (a) know the particular subject-matter field well enough to determine how best to obtain required data economically and how errors might arise in the reporting and gathering of data; (b) use their best practical judgment and accessory knowledge of the subject-matter field to determine whether bias exists, whether coverage appears to be adequate, what the trends appear to be, etc. The statistician, on the other hand, must also call upon his knowledge of sampling techniques, standard errors, statistical tests of significance, and other methods of measurement in determining coverage, bias, and significance. The statistician adjusts, verifies, and weighs data based upon his knowledge of what techniques to use, why they are used, the advantages and disadvantages of the techniques, and the limitations of the data.

Much of the detail work of some statistician positions appears to be similar to that of positions of statistical assistants, and the end products themselves may be similar. The statistician, however, makes judgments as to approaches, techniques, and results that the latter does not make. The statistician and the statistical assistant may both test the reliability of data, but by different methods.

While some statistical assistants are familiar with statistical techniques and methods, and know how to use formulas and substitution factors, the statistician knows when to use the formulas, methods, and techniques, and what the limitations on their uses are. The statistician evaluates a

wide variety of techniques in terms of their sampling stability, sensitivity to extremely small or extremely large items, and adaptability to further mathematical computations.

The statistician position, therefore, is distinguished from that of the statistical assistant by the requirement for knowledge and the use of recognized statistical theory and techniques of measurement. The statistical assistant relies upon practical judgment in gathering, checking, and analyzing data for the use of statisticians, subject-matter specialists, and others. His knowledge of the organization, programs, or subject-matter field enables him to grasp the particular assignments but is not sufficient to qualify him to make decisions which involve predictive processes or to initiate or carry out actions which require the drawing of inferences based on theoretical observations.

2. *Program specialists.* -- Positions that require primarily the application of a substantive knowledge of a specific subject-matter area or functional field of work are excluded from this series. The primary knowledge required is an understanding of a specialized field of work which serves as the basis for decisions in organizing, editing, and presenting data in report form. The line of promotion is to positions in the subject-matter or functional area of work, for which the incumbent is prepared by increasing knowledge of the work processes upon which data are generated. Such positions in which other than statistical knowledges are paramount and series-controlling are excluded from this series and classified to the series most appropriate to the knowledge requirements, e.g., the [Industrial Specialist Series, GS-1150](#).
3. *Mathematics technician.* -- Positions concerned primarily with the application of a technical, but not fully professional, knowledge of mathematics, involving the use of algebra, logarithms, trigonometric functions, and some higher mathematics are classified to the [Mathematics Technician Series, GS-1521](#).
4. *Economics assistant.* -- Positions concerned primarily with the application of a technical, but not fully professional, knowledge of economics, involving collecting, compiling, processing, verifying, analyzing, reporting, and interpreting economic data are classified to the [Economics Assistant Series, GS-0119](#).
5. *Statistical drafting.* -- Positions that involve primarily the application of skill in drafting and graphic presentation in the preparation and revision of charts, diagrams, and other illustrative material used for statistical purposes are classified to the [Office Drafting Series, GS-1021](#).
6. *Statistical interviewing.* -- Positions that involve primarily statistical interviewing or census enumerating are excluded from this series. Such work requires the ability to make personal contacts with the public in order to explain the purpose of the survey or census and involves the recording of data on prescribed forms. Such positions are classified to the [General Administration and Program Series, GS-0301](#).
7. *General clerical.* -- Positions the duties of which are to supervise or perform work involved in the collection, abstracting, posting, and computing of numerical data where the duties of such positions do not require to a significant degree specialized knowledges of statistical

methods, procedures, processes, operations, or programs are classified to the [Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-0303](#).

Most positions included in the Statistical Assistant Series are *typically*, although not necessarily always, located in statistical organizations or units where the essential function of the organization or unit is the output of statistics, rather than the carrying out of a *primary program*.

There are some types of positions that involve the assembly of information and the compilation of reports dealing with production figures, status of work projects, cost of operations, manpower utilization and similar information. The duties of these positions usually involve recording and reporting tasks, e.g., numbers of units of production or unit costs, man-hours expended, and direct and indirect labor charges. The incumbents post from various documents to a form or forms, they recognize radical changes in amounts and quantities from past reports, and they check such changes with individuals or organizations supplying the original information to verify the accuracy of the figures given. The work regularly involves computation through use of basic arithmetic principles, e.g., computing percentages, averages, and ratios.

Incumbents of these positions may be required to determine means, modes, medians, and weighted averages, but rarely, if ever, apply more complicated statistical measures. They may also be required to present some information in the form of simple bar charts or graphs, or to maintain charts developed by others. Any required elementary knowledge of statistical methods and techniques is of little or no significance to the career ladder or the classification of the position. Accordingly, the proper classification is to the General Clerical and Administrative Series, GS-0301, or, as appropriate, a subject-matter series.

On the other hand, in some large statistical organizations there may be positions in the Statistical Assistant Series where, because of the high degree of subdivision of the work, the knowledge of statistical methods and techniques does not appear to materially exceed that of the excluded positions. Such positions are classified to the Statistical Assistant Series when the work is one phase of broader statistical operations in the immediate organization and there is a direct line of promotion to statistical assistant positions which require substantial knowledge of statistical methods and techniques.

8. *Statistical coding*. -- Positions that involve primarily coding information in schedules, questionnaires, reports, documents, or other material for statistical purposes are classified to the [Coding Series, GS-0357](#).

9. *Machine operation.* -- Positions that are concerned primarily with computers or various mechanical or electronic devices, such as tabulating equipment, card punch machines, calculators, etc., are excluded from this series. Such positions are classifiable in other appropriate series, such as the Calculating Machine Operation Series, GS-0355; the [Data Transcriber Series, GS-0356](#); the [Computer Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-0335](#); etc.
10. *Positions at grade GS-2 and below.* -- The knowledge of statistical methods and techniques which characterizes positions in this series is such as to preclude classification of positions at grades GS-2 and below. Such positions should be classified to the [Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-0303](#).

CLASSIFICATION FACTORS

The factors of primary significance in determining grade levels of statistical assistant positions have been grouped under Nature of Assignment and Level of Responsibility. The qualifications required are not separately discussed but are implicit in the other two factors.

Nature of Assignment

Nature of assignment includes the following elements:

- (1) The *nature of assignments* consider whether they require knowledge and application of a limited body of instructions and procedures or of a variety of bodies of instructions and procedures; and whether they involve repetitive, routine operations or a variety of different operations.
- (2) The *nature and complexity of the subject-matter field involved* consider whether reporting areas require knowledge of related or unrelated subject-matter or program terminologies, classifications, nomenclatures, and definitions.
- (3) *Character and variety of source data and forms* consider whether they are of a limited variety, small in number, uniform as to purpose and data content, and fairly standardized in use over a long period of time; or whether they are varied in nature and form, lacking in uniformity of purpose and content, and subject to frequent change or modification.
- (4) *The nature and extent of searching required in primary and secondary sources* consider whether this is done with respect to data which are available in directly comparable and usable form, or whether it requires the extensive searching for and location and evaluation of data where comparability, usability, and data identification cannot easily be established without conversion and recasting.
- (5) *The degree to which compilations or tabulations are governed by standardized specifications or formats* considers whether predetermined patterns are followed in the performance of the work, or whether it is necessary to devise table patterns for individual assignments with very general guides or without standardized specifications or patterns.

(6) *The nature and complexity of statistical methods and computations used* consider the knowledge required in their use, the difficulty in proceeding from one step to another without additional guidance, the requirement for developing worksheets and forms, and the extent to which the statistical assistant participates in the complete application of the technique to various categories of data.

(7) *The kind of textual, narrative, or explanatory composition involved* considers whether it is restricted to the inclusion of brief footnotes or symbolic references having obvious connotations within the body of the table, or whether it requires the full and precise description of the sources, identification, and factual presentation of the data, and the consideration of data outside the range of the tables to show interrelationships or to point up significant trends or associations.

At the higher levels, this factor is measured by such elements as detailed planning and carrying out of projects and assignments; development of procedures and instructions; evaluation of source materials; and integration or consolidation of final reports.

The degree of difficulty associated with the use of any of these methods in assignments normally given to statistical assistants depends upon the circumstances of their use, e.g., applicability of guides and precedents, rather than upon the specific method involved.

Level of Responsibility

Supervision received ranges from (a) specific guidance and instructions, either through direct oral supervisory control or through the use of manuals and other specific guides in written form, to (b) an outline of project objectives without specific instructions as to form, content, or procedures to be followed. Review of completed assignments ranges from checking accuracy of mathematical calculations and individual item classification to general review for compliance with general instructions and procedures, reporting objectives, and appropriateness of form in presentation. At all levels, personal work relationships typically include contacts to obtain or verify information. At the higher levels personal work relationships may involve collaboration in developing plans and joint studies. Since personal work relationships are typically not grade controlling they are not discussed separately.

EVALUATION NOTES

1. Supervisory positions

Supervisory positions are included in the coverage of this series, but this standard does not provide criteria for classifying such positions. The grades of such positions are determined by reference to the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#).

2. *Grade-level coverage*

This standard includes criteria for use in classifying positions from GS-3 to GS-9. Those positions which exceed the GS-9 level as depicted in this standard may be classified by extrapolation of the criteria herein and the application of sound position-classification judgment. The standard does not include criteria for GS-8. Such positions are classifiable by interpolation of the criteria for GS-7 and GS-9. Nonsupervisory positions classifiable in grade GS-8 would typically involve either:

- (a) assignments which are intermediate in difficulty between those described at GS-7 and GS-9; or
- (b) assignments of the type described at GS-9 in combination with increased guidance and control by the supervisor.

3. *Use of statistician standard*

As a result of education and long experience in close association with professional statisticians, some statistical assistants acquire knowledge of statistical theory and method which approaches that of the professional statistician. In such cases the statistical assistant may receive assignments which are of the type normally given to professional statisticians. For such positions the grade-level criteria in the [statistician standard, GS-1530](#) for grades GS-11 and above may be helpful in extrapolating the criteria for Statistical Assistant GS-9.

A high degree of caution must be exercised when professional standards are used in classifying statistical assistant positions. Consideration must be given to any possible significant differences in the true scope and intensity of the theoretical and practical knowledge and insight required to accomplish the assignment. There are some situations where the qualifications required for the work of professionals are so different from the qualifications required for the work of an assistant that these distinctions have a marked impact on grade level. On the other hand, there are situations where these differences have no effect on grade level, and, in these cases, the appropriate professional classification standard may be used.

TITLES

This standard provides the following titles:

Statistical Clerk GS-3/4

Statistical Assistant GS-5/9

For supervisory positions, the prefix Supervisory should be used.

STATISTICAL CLERK, GS-1513-03

Nature of Assignment

Assignments are typically of a level of difficulty represented by the following:

- Assignments are of a recurrent nature, usually on a continuing workflow basis, and concerned with a small number of statistical items. There is little or no variation in the kinds and types of items or in the way they are reported on. The instructions and procedures used are limited and well standardized, as are the sequences of statistical operations.
- Basic reporting practices are well established with little or no variation from one reporting period to another. The classification and definitions of items reported on are well defined, are easily applied, and do not vary.
- Source data forms are few in number, are limited in variety and purpose, and are constant in format and content. The work requires only straight arithmetical cross-checking of parts to determine consistency of statistical data reported.
- Searching of primary and secondary sources requires the location and abstraction of data which are usually readily identifiable and directly comparable on the basis of subject, unit or item classification, time period, and coverage.
- Patterns for compilations or tabulations are standardized, well established, and relatively simple in format.
- Computations of statistical measures are characterized by the following:
 - (a) most measurements are derived from counseling position or location (e.g., range, median, mode, etc.) or require elementary arithmetic processes, e.g.1 involving addition or subtraction of any range of numbers;
 - (b) accuracy of computations can be verified internally at check points during the work; and
 - (c) each computation is performed in accordance with detailed worksheets and step-by-step breakdown of procedures.
- Textual material prepared at this level is limited to brief symbolic footnotes having obvious connotations or direct references, to sources, time periods, unreported data, or omitted items or classification.

Level of Responsibility

The supervisor gives specific detailed instructions as to desired form in which data are to be presented, sources and computations to be used, and procedures to be followed. The work is controlled primarily by the standardized, directly applicable procedures. Problems in their application are referred to the supervisor. The work is spot checked, and completed assignments are reviewed for accuracy and adherence to instructions.

STATISTICAL CLERK, GS-1531-04

Nature of Assignment

Assignments are typically of a level of difficulty represented by the following:

- Assignments normally are of sufficient variety over a period of time to require the cyclical or noncyclical application of one comprehensive body or several bodies of different, and somewhat related, instructions and procedures. The sequence of operations may vary from one assignment to another, or there may be variations in the way common items are reported or from one reporting period to another. Although the basic reporting forms and purpose remain the same, new items may be introduced with or without the deletion of some other items.
- Basic reporting practices vary somewhat from one period to another, or within one reporting period vary somewhat among offices of origin or respondents. Classifications and definitions are fairly level standardized but are subject to some change.
- Source data forms are not consistently uniform as to number, purpose, or data or item content. They may be revised to reflect new regulations, changes in the character of reporting sources, modifications in statistical procedures or operations, or related reasons. They require checking current figures with previous reports or with corollary data in current reports to adjust figures or to determine reasonableness of changes.
- Searching of primary and secondary sources requires the location and adjustment of data from readily available sources. The data may require some simple conversion, adjustment, and reworking involving identification of relationships between the items in the sources and recognition of what constitutes comparable items.
- Patterns for compilations or tabulations are governed by standardized specifications, but occasionally vary in particular aspects of format, content, detail, and purpose.
- Computations of statistical measures are characterized by prescribed instructions and procedures for the application of a limited set of statistical measures. These are not reduced to a worksheet format showing specific operations when the same type of calculation must be applied to different variables, numerous classes, or other frequency distributions.

- Textual material prepared includes explanatory notes accounting for coverage, time periods, unit and classification definitions, or other details of a similar nature and degree of complexity.

Level of Responsibility

The supervisor indicates desired form in which data are to be presented, sources and computations to be used, and procedures to be followed. The work is spot checked, and completed assignments are reviewed for adherence to instructions and policy. The Statistical Clerk GS-4 carries through a sequence of operations without continuous supervision. He recognizes and refers the more difficult problems to his supervisor for instructions, decisions, or action.

STATISTICAL ASSISTANT, GS-1531-05

Nature of Assignment

Assignments are characterized and differentiated from those performed at GS-4 by the following:

- Assignments involve application of standard general or specific instructions, but require the working out of:
 - (a) specific methods, procedures, steps and sequences of operations applicable to the assignments and to the individual nonrecurrent problems encountered as the work progresses, and
 - (b) conversions and transmutation from some types of units to other types of units.
- Assignments require that Statistical Assistants GS-5:
 - (a) recognize interchangeability and duplication of data in reporting forms and in tabulations, and
 - (b) examine apparent skewed results or deviations from accustomed patterns.
- Source data forms often vary in format, purpose, and content from one assignment to another depending upon desired statistical treatment of the data. They are revised frequently to reflect new regulations, changes in character of reporting services and sources, or modifications in statistical procedures. They frequently require detailed cross-checking of parts to determine interrelationships or consistency of reported data or final tabulations.
- Searching of primary and secondary source data usually requires the preliminary evaluation of the currency, pertinency, and usability of selected data. It occasionally requires location from readily available sources of data which in themselves are not directly comparable nor

completely identifiable in their original form and which require conversion, adjustment, and refinement. Searching frequently involves a number of intermediate work operations to secure detailed coverage and precise comparability.

- Patterns for compilation or tabulations must frequently be developed for individual assignments to accommodate the scope of coverage, detailed treatment required, and end use of the data.
- Computations of statistical measures are characterized by a minimum amount of instruction in the use of a limited variety of statistical processes. The Statistical Assistant GS-5 is expected to carry out a substantial part of the complete process involved, including the selection and application of appropriate formulas from a number of predetermined alternatives and, frequently, the layout of the necessary forms and worksheets.
- Textual material includes writing or changing standardized texts, writing tentative or preliminary drafts, preparing portions of texts, and writing textual descriptions of sources of data and methods used in compiling them. Explanatory footnotes and discussions of data presented are frequently composed without standard pattern guides and point out apparent tendencies and inconsistencies. These often involve the checking or annotation of data outside the range of the purpose and presentation of the tables, but which have a bearing upon the composition of the tables and their ultimate application.

Level of Responsibility

The supervisor makes initial assignments, gives general instructions about their purpose and use, form of presentation, and ultimate objectives of the assignment or project. He also provides guidance, as requested, on such points as interchange-ability of data, conversions, transmutations, etc. during the progress of the work.

The Statistical Assistant GS-5 works largely on his own initiative in applying the methods, procedures, and techniques used in his work. The work is reviewed for logic, adequacy of coverage, use of proper techniques, consistency, and conformity with procedures.

STATISTICAL ASSISTANT, GS-1531-06

Nature of Assignment

Assignments are characterized and are differentiated from those performed at GS-5 by the following functions performed by the Statistical Assistant GS-6:

- Develops a variety of tabulations requiring consideration of varied sources, limitations of the data, and degree of consolidation, refinement, and validation required.
- Compiles special reports which require clerical analysis to assure adequate coverage, continuity, and accuracy of the basis on which data were collected (either following the

course of certain items over a period of time or under special conditions), or which include items or conditions, where definitions and classifications are related to a complex or technical area of reporting.

- Studies and examines skewed results or deviations from accustomed patterns in the data and prepares explanations showing possible causes of such results or deviations. These may be based on observations of inconsistencies in primary and secondary sources of material used, discrepancies in the inclusion of certain data and the discarding of certain other data, or failure to treat properly other items outside the range of the data.
- Performs computations characterized by a minimum amount of instruction in the use of a comparatively wide variety of statistical processes, including the editing of the data, the selection and application of appropriate formulas from a variety of predetermined alternatives, and usually the layout of the necessary forms and work sheets.
- Prepares textual material to explain new items, new conditions, or new definitions and classifications, and highlights tendencies and trends on the basis of a comparison with previous reports and observation of past trends.
- Recommends changes in basic definitions, classifications, grouping of items, or reporting of items in the light of apparent misinterpretation or misapplication, changes in conditions, apparent duplication, or obvious changes in operations in the subject-matter field.
- Develops preliminary drafts of procedures, forms, and instructions for collecting, editing, and compiling data, when these are concerned primarily with less complex problems of internal processing methods.

Level of Responsibility

Supervisor makes initial assignments, indicating the purpose of the assignment and the use to which data or reports will be put. Guidance is provided on new developments in the subject-matter field, changes in programs, or deviations to observe, rather than on the statistical procedures to use or on changes in the character, or the conversion of units to other units.

Completed assignments are reviewed for logic and form of presentation. Supervisor reviews for logic and pertinence recommendations for changes in classifications, grouping of items, or textual material indicating tendencies or apparently new deviations from normal patterns.

STATISTICAL ASSISTANT, GS-1531-07

Nature of Assignment

Assignments are typically complete studies of limited scope which have specific objectives and involve recurrent and predictable factors. Typically, technical responsibilities include the development of the details of the study according to established objectives and specifications, recognition of unexpected problems or variations in results, and the preparation of preliminary interpretations or tentative recommendations.

Positions at GS-7 are characterized and differentiated from those at GS-6 by assignments such as the following:

- Develops details for operations and procedures for the collection, compilation, editing, and verification of statistical data for (a) limited types of surveys having few problems, or (b) portions of more comprehensive procedures required for larger and newer surveys, usually following established patterns. For example, initially develops the whole range of processing procedures for less complex or smaller surveys, or initially develops specific procedures for individual phases, such as editing, verifying, or preplanning mechanical tabulation specifications, for more complex surveys.) Assignments may relate to a variety of surveys having different schedules and code structures.
- Makes limited studies of classification systems, usually within a designated area. Compares systems of the agency with those of other public and private agencies to secure refinement, changes, or modifications in existing agency systems. Considers the quantitative results of various systems, the influence of characteristics of data being compared, the degree of flexibility in the systems, and the anticipated coding or processing problems which will be created or solved by revisions in the systems.
- Develops reports which require the same general types of computations and compilations occurring at lower levels, but which in addition require detailed scrutiny of the data, the methods used in collecting them, and the characteristics of the subject-matter area. Explains circumstances which are not evident in the data themselves, but which have caused disparities between comparable reporting intervals, or which have developed out of significant trends in data not related to that which is the subject of the report.
- Prepares recurring reports where several agencies, groups, or individuals participate in the initial collection and compilation of segments of the data. Is responsible for assuring consistency in approach, treatment, and presentation; for making necessary adjustments in data to secure consistency and uniformity; for evaluating the data in terms of currency, pertinency, and usability; and for making estimates where data are missing, based upon corollary information, previous reports, or consideration of factors which influence the subject-matter field.

- Prepares specifications for machining processed reports of a recurring or unique nature including the specification of techniques to be used. Evaluates the resultant products to insure their accuracy and the use of correct methods.

Tests validity of results and the size of error rates introduced by machine methods involved, e.g., errors introduced by the use of floating point coding.

Level of Responsibility

The supervisor determines such things as the objectives of the survey, selection of respondents, content of schedules, and general approach to the problems involved. In making assignments, he gives instructions and makes recommendations as to the sources of data and objectives to be attained.

Completed work is examined for reasonableness and consistency, but is not normally reviewed in detail. Statistical Assistants GS-7 are expected to seek such assistance as may be needed as their assignments progress.

STATISTICAL ASSISTANT, GS-1531-09

Nature of Assignment

Assignments are typically well-defined units or parts of large projects assigned to others. They typically involve numerous or unpredictable factors and require the setting up and carrying out of integrated procedures. The work includes the selection and application of standard statistical techniques and the adjustment and adaptation of established statistical methods to problems.

Assignments are characterized by a level of difficulty and complexity represented by the following:

- Develops procedures and writes accompanying instructions for surveys involving the conduct of a variety of studies. Establishes criteria for length of time required for various processes, recommends revisions in work methods which will improve production rates, develops detailed specifications for mechanical tabulation of data, reviews machine runs to test their accuracy, and develops standards which will be incorporated into the final procedures.
- Studies classification systems (usually of comparatively broad coverage, such as an entire occupation, industry, or commodity group, or within a segment of one of these areas which has unique characteristics or complexities). Develops coding structures based upon considerations of the purposes of the studies, the nature of the data, the form of presentation, elapsed time between collection and publication, and the complexities inherent in the occupations, commodities, or other classification groups.

- Plans and prepares reports, on a counting basis, where sources of data are widely varied in nature and characterized by diversity in classifications, time periods, degree of detail, or reliability. Resolves problems in securing appropriate coverage, in integration of component or subsidiary tabulations, in maintenance of continuity, in coordination with other reports dealing with related series, and in timing of publications.

Level of Responsibility

The supervisor indicates the scope and objectives of the assignments, advises on the move involved unique and critical technical implications, and reviews the work for feasibility and suitability. The Statistical Assistant GS-9 is expected to request assistance when necessary, and to be aware of policy implications that need to be cleared in advance.