

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

TITLE: Master Gardener

GRADE: M-4.5

FUNCTIONS:

This position provides technical labor required to plan, install, refurbish, and otherwise care for grounds, plantings, and small landscaping projects. The incumbent prepares and grades terrain; applies fertilizers/herbicides/pesticides; seeds and sods lawns; and transplants flowers, shrubs and plants. This position plans lawns, flower beds, and border landscaping; plants and cultivates new and repairs established lawns, trims shrubs, and cultivates flower beds and gardens. The incumbent installs major plantings and applies chemical herbicides/pesticides to designated areas to control weeds and infestations. This position sprays trees and shrubs; tests and evaluates soils; and applies supplemental liquid and dry nutrients to lawns, shrubs and other plantings. The incumbent assists in ordering plant and flower stock for planned landscapes and plantings. The incumbent assists grounds construction crews and special project crews in grading and otherwise preparing sites for and pouring concrete, erecting fences, removing and replacing damaged or deteriorated walkways and other features, erecting retaining walls and other structures, and construction functions and landscaping. The incumbent operates testing equipment such as pH meters, soil analysis devices, etc. This position may operate light equipment while preparing sites and fertilizing lawns.

This position provides manual labor required to maintain grounds, trees, shrubs, flower beds, other plantings, landscape forms and vehicle and pedestrian access ways throughout the University. The incumbent removes trash, rubbish and detritus from grounds, walkways, parking lots and structures, external receptacles and other surfaces and structures in assigned areas/regions. This position maintains shrub beds and tree wells, removing leaves and other debris, turning dirt and/or mulch, and trimming edges. The incumbent weeds and waters flower beds, lawns and other grassy areas, as well as areas of groundcovers and other plantings. The incumbent mows and trims lawns and other grassy areas, and prepares plant beds for planting/installation of trees and shrubbery. During winter months, the incumbent may be required to operate light equipment for removing snow from streets, parking lots, and walkways, porches, steps and other structures.

In addition to performing daily maintenance of campus grounds, greenery and landscaping, the incumbent sets up indoor and outdoor facilities for University events, including graduations and athletic contests, and assist landscape grounds tradespersons in installing, repairing, replacing, and maintaining fences, retaining walls, trash receptacles and landscape forms.

This position utilizes pointed and flat shovels, hoes, rakes and other small hand tools to prepare flower shrub beds for planting. The incumbent employs garden rakes, leaf rakes, brooms and other implements to remove debris from shrub beds, tree wells and lawn areas, and operates hand-held and lo-blow push blowers to remove leaves. This position operates push mowers, self-propelled walk-behind mowers weed whips and sidewalk edgers to mow and trim lawns

and edges of lawn areas. The incumbent also operates ride-on mowers and cultivators to mow and maintain large grassy areas, and uses lawn sweepers to remove rocks, stones, twigs and other debris from lawns prior to mowing. The incumbent operates power grounds equipment and tools including compressors, hand sprayers, jackhammers, post-hole augers, leaf vacuums and sandblasters. This position trains and provides oversight to Gardeners, and Groundskeepers, and students in the operation and maintenance of tools and equipment, pesticide application and daily landscape tasks. The incumbent operates skid steers and tractors with attachments to move materials and equipment. This position uses snow shovels and snow blowers to remove snow from walkways, parking ramps and road crossings and operates small and large trucks with plows as well as for the removal of snow from streets and parking lots and structures. In setting up and/or dismantling seating and other furnishings and fixtures for events, the incumbent may employ manual and hydraulic jacks, screwdrivers, wrenches and other implements/tools.

The incumbent operates a motor vehicle to transport trailered equipment from storage facilities to work sites in the field and to remove snow from streets and parking lots and structures and is responsible for ensuring that all hydraulic lines and couplings are properly checked and that trailered equipment is properly functioning before it is moved to field sites. The incumbent operates light equipment, including skid loaders, small dump trucks and tractors with implements, as required to transport plant stock, install and/or remove plantings, grade terrain, fertilize lawns, remove snow and/or other debris, and perform other grounds maintenance and landscaping functions. This position maintains the work area, all tools, all equipment, all supplies and any assigned vehicles in a neat, clean and orderly condition and performs all work in accordance with established safety rules. The incumbent performs appropriate operational checks of all power tools and equipment before, during and after each use. The incumbent checks fuel, oil, hydraulic, transmission, coolant and other fluid levels; adds any required fluids to maintain/restore appropriate levels; inspects tires and tire pressure; checks lights, strobes, electrical connections and safety switches for proper operation; inspects hoses and hose connections; cleans air filters; greases all fittings; and checks other components and systems/relays specific to each piece of equipment/tool. The incumbent must wear MIOSHA-approved safety shoes at all times and must wear a hard hat and safety glasses when operating power equipment as required by MIOSHA rules. Ear plugs are required when operating tools/equipment producing noise levels exceeding MIOSHA standards. The incumbent must wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when operating tools and equipment.

The incumbent must wear no loose-fitting clothing which might pose a hazard to incumbent's safety. This position performs additional duties as requested by supervisory personnel including, but not limited to, training and programs for staff and students.

QUALIFICATIONS:

The incumbent must be able to read and comprehend written instructions and safety regulations regarding the performance of job duties, and must be able to understand and comply with oral instructions, perform basic math, and be proficient in basic computer operation and use. Sufficient writing ability to prepare any necessary documents or forms is required. Ability to identify and knowledge of the growth habits of common plants found in southwest Lower Michigan are required. In depth knowledge of a variety of annuals, perennials and bulbs

common to the area is specifically required. Specific knowledge of small ornamental shrubs, trees and herbaceous plants is necessary, as is experience in the identification and propagation of flowers from annual, perennial and bulb stock. Considerable knowledge in landscape maintenance practices, principles, and techniques is required. This is typically obtained through formal education/training in landscape maintenance; some examples are (but are not limited to): B.S., Associate degree, or technical degree in horticulture, soil science, turf management, botany, forestry, or other agriscience. Or, the incumbent must possess four (4) years proven landscape maintenance experience; some examples are (but are not limited to): landscape crew leader, farm manager, greenhouse grower, turf manager or senior groundskeeper. The incumbent must be familiar with basic irrigation operation, maintenance and repair, and assist irrigation specialist as needed to run campus irrigation. A valid Michigan commercial pesticide applicator's license for applying pesticides in the right-of-way (category 6), turf (category 3a), ornamental (category 3b) is required within forty (40) days worked on the job. Knowledge of, and experience in soil and plant tissue analysis and treatment for modification is required. Possession of a valid Michigan driver's license or a commercial driver's license Class B (w/air brakes) or better is required.

In order to perform the essential functions of the job, the incumbent must be able to raise fifty (50) pounds dead weight to/from a height of thirty-six (36) inches to load/unload power tools, air compressor attachments and apply bags of ice melt. The incumbent must be able to move bags and buckets of trash weighing up to thirty (30) pounds each a distance up to three hundred (300) yards as often as fifty (50) times per day to remove trash and debris to dumpsters. The incumbent must be able to transport items of equipment weighing up to fifty (50) pounds each a distance up to one hundred and fifty (150) feet in order to load/unload equipment and move it to/from worksites in the field. The incumbent must be able to transport and operate hand-held power tools, including weed whips, hand blowers and sprayers, weighing from ten (10) pounds to twenty-five (25) pounds each for up to two (2) hours at a time for the entire length of the shift.

The incumbent must be able to transport and operate tools and equipment; manipulate tools, equipment, landscape materials, and plantings; and remove trash and debris from ground level up to waist height and above. The incumbent must be able to raise to waist height shovels loaded with dirt, mulch, other landscape materials and/or snow several hundred times per day, depending on seasonal work assignments. The incumbent must be able to descend to/rise from a kneeling position as often as one hundred and fifty (150) times per day or work at ground level for two hours at a time for entire length of shift. The incumbent must be able to pull-start walk-behind mowers, lo-blowers, push-mowers, and other equipment. The incumbent must be able to safely operate self-propelled walk-behind mowers weighing three hundred and fifty (350) pounds and operated with bi-lateral hand controls and to simultaneously steer and operate the blades of ride-on mowers. The incumbent must be able to attach trailered equipment to vehicles and to attach and properly secure hydraulic hoses and couplings. The incumbent must be able to operate ride-on mowers with manual clutches and foot-pedal controls.

In order to obtain a valid Michigan driver's license, the incumbent must possess 20/40 vision with or without corrective lenses. The incumbent must have sufficient visual acuity, with or without corrective lenses, to inspect equipment before operation and to identify trash, debris, and other foreign objects to be removed from flower and shrub beds, tree wells, walkways, and other paved areas. The incumbent must have sufficient auditory acuity, with or without audiological appliances, to hear warning sounds signaling that landscape and grounds equipment and vehicles are operating/moving in reverse.

The incumbent must be able to tolerate exposure to extreme temperatures ranging from -25°F to 120°F, depending on seasonal work assignments. The incumbent must be able to tolerate exposure to dirt, dust, pollen, grass clippings and other airborne debris, as well as weed killers, fertilizers and other lawn care chemicals. The incumbent must be able to tolerate prolonged exposure to sunlight.

A physical examination required by state and federal laws and administered by the employer's designated physician is required.