# Sample Position Description:

# The Role of the *Get Focused...Stay Focused!* ® Curriculum Specialist

To facilitate ongoing professional development and leadership of a school’s *Get Focused…Stay Focused!®* team, the *Get Focused…Stay Focused!®* Curriculum Specialist will function in a variety of different roles. For instance, when generating buy-in inside and outside a school, the curriculum specialist facilitates large meetings, for the department or whole school. When working with the instructional team, they perform ongoing troubleshooting and brainstorming, functioning in the role of coach. When introducing new strategies in capacity-building sessions, they function as trainer. And, when helping to organize and execute the school-wide implementation of the 10-year plan as advisory tool, the curriculum specialist helps with planning the school-wide meetings and training.

## *The Curriculum Specialist will:*

* Provide training, support, encouragement, and coaching for the instructors of the GFSF courses
* Teach and demonstrate various active learning techniques for use in GFSF courses
* Facilitate the customization process as the group develops their detailed lesson planning spreadsheets
* Demonstrate how to use the various online resources of the *Career Choices* series curriculum, My10yearPlan.com®, and GFSF modules
* Monitor use of the optional technology applications of the course
* Generate—and maintain—buy-in from course instructors and the school community
* Facilitate team building for course instructors and all school staff involved with the 10-year plan
* Chair periodic district-wide meetings of the course instructors
* Working with the community college leadership and Academic Innovations, determine how to evaluate the program and assess success
* Troubleshoot and problem solve, making recommendations to the administration regarding adjustments to future plans
* Encourage creative solutions while maintaining the focus required for success
* Develop plans to involve parents and the community
* Find resources to address the needs of special populations

## *Other Curriculum Specialist Factors*

A long-term commitment is desirable. To provide course continuity from year to year, a curriculum specialist should commit a minimum of four years to the project.

This is particularly important for the implementation of the School-wide Initiative and/or *Get Focused…Stay Focused!®* follow-up modules. Four years is the time needed for the first year freshman class to progress through high school. During the course of those four years, the Curriculum Specialist can bring each grade’s academic department on board to help with the upgrading of students’ 10-year plans and their utilization for advisory purposes.

A curriculum specialist will develop plans to train and support the course instructors through onsite visits and using the online professional development opportunities provided by Academic Innovations. They are the resource person to provide support for the School-wide Initiative and/ or *Get Focused…Stay Focused!®* program for updating and using the 10-year plan as a school- wide advisory tool.

This is not just an administrative position. It is important that the curriculum specialist also be able to teach the course. They’ll work to refine the classroom efforts of the team. They identify the “champions” at each school and provide training to those individuals so they can work closely with the school and district administration to make sure the course receives the resources and attention required.

Some schools will be fortunate enough to have a person who (usually because of special funding) can devote most, if not all, of their time to supporting a redesign effort such as a Freshman Transition program. The curriculum specialist will ensure that individual receives the Lead Teacher training from Academic Innovations.

## *Job Duties for the Curriculum Specialist*

### *Oversee classroom practices of the Career Choices and GFSF instructional team:*

* Provide leadership and support to the team of course instructors to assure the courses are presented with fidelity
* Make sure the standards are being met, whether they are the Course Standards for Freshman Transition Classes or state- or district-mandated standards
* Take advantage of all benefits and resources offered by the publisher
* Help the team finalize a comprehensive lesson plan for all sessions to assure fidelity and therefore results
* Conduct periodic lesson planning sessions with the team
* Share best practices among the team members
* Monitor classroom performance of team members and make constructive suggestions

### *Oversee the continued updating of the 10-year plan as part of the Get Focused…Stay Focused!® program:*

* Championing the *Get Focused…Stay Focused!®* program on each campus
* Work with department heads to develop plans for the yearly updating of students’ 10- year plans through the GFSF follow-up modules
* With the principal, monitoring the 10-year plan updating process and evaluating its effectiveness

### *Through district-wide workshops, develop onsite personnel at each school to:*

* Provide the support and professional development to help each teacher in the school learn how to use the 10-year plan to provide personalized instruction and mentoring
* Conduct periodic professional development during staff in-service days on how to use the 10-year plan in an advisory capacity
* Orient new hires on the *Get Focused…Stay Focused!®* program and its goals, systems, and operation

### *Working with each principal and the reporting functions of My10yearPlan.com® to monitor the 10-year plan updating process and evaluate its effectiveness:*

* Develop a plan to provide the support and professional development to help each teacher in the school to learn how to use the 10-year plan to provide personalized instruction and mentoring
* Develop a plan to build a team on campus to conduct periodic professional development during staff in-service days on how to use the 10-year plan in an advisory capacity
* Develop an ongoing plan to orient new hires on the *Get Focused…Stay Focused!®* program and its goals, systems, and operation

### *Professional development of the team (with each principal’s approval):*

* Develop individualized professional development plans for all freshman transition course instructors
* Recruit attendance at appropriate conferences and workshops to help build the capacity of instructors
* Develop and monitor individualized plans to train and mentor newly hired or newly assigned instructors in the specifics of the curriculum design.
* Provide implementation workshop(s) for the team, using the resources of the Teachers’ Lounge and the *Manual for Lead Teachers*
* Conduct periodic district-wide professional development sessions for the *Career Choices* series course instructors using the sessions outlined in the *Manual for Lead Teachers* and the webinar training resources of Academic Innovations
* Plan yearly professional development opportunities for the whole-school related to updating and using the 10-year plan for academic coaching and advisory efforts

### *Organizational duties:*

* Monitor the administration of the pre- and post-course surveys so detailed data can be collected on the success of the class
* Once a year, along with the community college leadership, review course data from pre- and post-course surveys and analyze the findings
* Maintain comprehensive records and develop systems so that, when you leave the position, the transition is efficient and seamless
* One year before the end of their tenure as Curriculum Specialist, recruit, train, and orient a replacement
* Report on the progress of the project and classes at community college leadership meetings and school board meetings

### *Profile of the ideal candidate for Career Choices/GFSF Curriculum Specialist:*

* They are passionate about the Freshman Transition course and embrace the goals of the GWU/GFSF Freshman Transition program.
* They are willing to commit to a minimum of four years in the position as long as funding is available.
* They have an affinity for working with high school students.
* They lead by example.
* They are an energetic and inspirational leader and a good mentor/teacher of adults.
* They are organized and have the ability to help others become more efficient and effective.
* They are tenacious, even in the face of difficult assignments or with challenging personalities.
* They have the people skills to neutralize dissension and conflict.
* They understand the importance of providing constructive criticism as well as recognition and praise.
* They are knowledgeable about the changing, global economy and the challenges that presents to our educational efforts.
* They are respected by all departments and grade levels and by the students.
* They can travel to attend capacity building workshops and assignments.

## *Curriculum Specialist Evaluation Criteria*

### *In periodic reviews, evaluate if the curriculum specialist has been able to:*

1. Encourage and support educators who want to pursue the adoption of the GFSFcurriculums with fidelity.
2. Encourage pilot projects to grow in scope to a complete grade cohort in the following year.
3. Build the capacity of the secondary schools in the district so they adopt with fidelity the program in the freshmen year for one complete grade level and implement the follow up modules with fidelity in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grade.
4. To facilitate the GFSF program from year to year with an eye to sustainability.
5. Support the professional development of GFSF instructors so that they use the curriculum to the fullest extent and with fidelity.
6. Help identify schools that are struggling with their GFSF effort and provide timely support for a turn-around of the program.
7. Help school deliver a program that will impact their completion rate both high school and college.