BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

JAMES ELNICKI, ROBERT LOSH, and KENNETH OWENS, Appellants, v. WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY, Respondent.	Case No. ALLO-00-0008 ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. This appeal came on for hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair; GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair; and LEANA D. LAMB, Member. The hearing was held on February 28, 2001, in the Compton Union Building on the campus of Washington State University in Pullman, Washington.

Appearances. Appellants James Elnicki, Robert Losh, and Kenneth Owens were present and were represented by Desiree Desselle, Area Representative, Washington Federation of State Employees. Respondent Washington State University (WSU) was represented by Karen Erp, Human Resource Representative.

Background. Appellants James Elnicki, Robert Losh, and Kenneth Owens requested a review of the allocation of their Trades Helper positions. By memorandum dated February 15, 1999, Respondent determined that Appellants' positions were properly allocated. On March 11, 1999, Appellants appealed that decision to the Director of the Department of Personnel. The Director's designee, Tammy Tee, conducted a review of Appellants' positions. By letter dated April 5, 2000, the Director determined that Appellants' positions should be reallocated to the Maintenance Custodian II classification. On April 28, 2000, Appellants filed exceptions to the Director's determination. In their exceptions, Appellants are

asking that their positions be reallocated to either the Maintenance Mechanic I or the Electrical Trades Trainee classification. Appellants' exceptions are the subject of these proceedings.

Appellants work for Facilities Operations as part of Respondent's light crew. Appellants replace light bulbs and perform alterations, maintenance and repair of a variety of lighting fixtures including installing wiring, switches, and repairing ballasts. In addition, Appellants do retrofitting for remodeling projects on campus. Appellants work independently and report to the Assistant Custodial Manager, however, they take technical direction from an Electrical Supervisor.

Summary of Appellants' Argument. Appellants argue that their responsibilities go beyond the routine changing of light bulbs and assert that they perform duties that are encompassed by a variety of trades positions. Appellants assert that they utilize specialized equipment to reach lighting fixtures, troubleshoot broken fixtures, repair fixtures or refer the repair to an electrician, replace light bulbs and ballasts, and complete a project as necessary such as painting or replacing ceiling tile. Appellants argue that they perform a variety of semi-skilled trades work, that they do not perform custodial work, and that their positions should be reallocated to a class that encompasses the breadth of work that they perform.

Summary of Respondent WSU's Argument. Respondent argues that Appellants perform their duties by utilizing written guidelines and procedures. Respondent asserts that Appellants' positions are limited in scope and that when they encounter a problem that is more than routine, they are to report the problem to their supervisor or to the appropriate trades person for resolution. Respondent argues that Appellants do not perform a variety of semi-skilled maintenance or work under a journey-worker as required for allocation to the Maintenance Mechanic I classification. Respondent argues that Appellants do not work under the guidance of an Electrician as required for allocation to the Electrical Trades Helper classification. Respondent asserts that the Maintenance Custodian II classification provides the best fit for Appellants' positions.

Primary Issue. Whether the Director's determination that Appellant's position should be allocated to the Maintenance Custodian II classification should be affirmed.

Relevant Classifications. Electrician Trade Trainee, class code 5338; Maintenance Custodian II, class code 5233; and Maintenance Mechanic I, class code 5242.

Decision of the Board. The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. Also, a position review is not a comparison of work performed by employees in similar positions. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class which best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

The Electrician Trade Trainee classification is intended for positions that are in-training and that are receiving on-the-job and academic training to achieve journey status. Appellants are not in-training and they are not working towards achieving journey status as electricians. The Electrician Trade Trainee classification does not encompass the intent or purpose of Appellants' positions.

The definition of the Maintenance Mechanic I classification states, "[a]ssist journeyworker and/or perform work of a semi-skilled nature in the maintenance, repair, remodeling and construction of buildings, grounds, facilities and equipment." Appellants do not directly assist journeyworkers but they do perform semi-skilled work in the repair of light fixtures. Their work requires limited knowledge of the trades of carpentry, electrical, and painting. However, while a portion of Appellants' responsibilities are encompassed by the Maintenance Mechanic I classification, their work is limited in scope to the area of lighting. The scope of their duties and the level of their responsibilities do not reach the scope and breadth of duties intended to be encompassed by the Maintenance Mechanic I classification.

Incumbents allocated to the Maintenance Custodian II classification work under general supervision, perform custodial duties and perform a variety of maintenance work on buildings, facilities and equipment. The typical work for this class includes performing minor repairs on electrical circuits and lights. Furthermore, changing light bulbs is a custodial duty. While Appellants do not perform the full scope custodial duties described in this class, they do perform limited custodial duties. The majority of Appellants' duties and the focus of their positions are the routine maintenance and repair of light fixtures, which, on occasion, requires them to perform routine carpentry or painting. These are duties found in the Maintenance Custodian II classification. Therefore, on a best fit basis, the majority of Appellants' duties and responsibilities fall within the Maintenance Custodian II classification and their positions are properly allocated.

Conclusion. Appellants' appeal on exceptions should be denied and the determination of the Director, dated April 5, 2000, should be affirmed and adopted.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Appellants is denied and the Director's determination dated April 5, 2000, is affirmed and adopted. A copy is attached.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2001.

WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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Walter T. Hubbard, Chair

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Gerald L. Morgen, Vice, Chair

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Leana D. Lamb, Member