BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

KENNETH GUIDRY, Appellant, v. EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, Respondent.	Case No. ALLO-02-0019 ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. This appeal came on for hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair, on Appellant's exceptions to the director's determination dated June 3, 2002. The hearing was held at the Office of the Attorney General in Spokane, Washington, on March 27, 2003. GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair, listened to the recorded proceedings, reviewed the file and exhibits, and participated in the decision in this matter.

Appearances. Appellant Kenneth Guidry was present and appeared *pro se*. Respondent Eastern Washington University was represented by Jolynn Rogers, Director of Human Resources, and Dave Nelson, Systems Librarian.

Background. The Washington State Department of Personnel adopted revisions to the Information Technology class specifications. Appellant submitted a position questionnaire dated October 6, 2001. Jolynn Rogers, Director of Human Resources, conducted a review of Appellant's

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position. By letter dated November 29, 2001, Ms. Rogers informed Appellant that his position was being reallocated from Computer Support Analyst 3 to Information Technology Systems Specialist 4 (ITSS4) effective January 1, 2002.

Appellant requested that Eastern Washington University re-evaluate the allocation decision. Appellant requested that his position be reallocated to the Information Technology Systems Specialist 5 (ITSS5) classification. By letter dated December 28, 2001, Ms. Rogers informed Appellant that his position was properly allocated as an ITSS4.

By letter dated January 18, 2002, Appellant filed a request for review to the Director of the Department of Personnel. The director's designee, Kris Brophy, conducted an allocation review of Appellant's position. By letter dated June 3, 2002, Mr. Brophy determined that Appellant's position was properly allocated to the ITSS4 classification.

On June 28, 2002, Appellant filed exceptions to the director's determination with the Personnel Appeals Board.

Appellant's position is located at the Eastern Washington University's JFK Library within the Information Resources Division. Appellant's primary responsibilities include installation, maintenance, troubleshooting, and repair of the JFK Library computing environment.

Summary of Appellant's Argument. Appellant disagrees with the determination that he does not work under administrative direction to evaluate and resolve large-scale, high-impact, and mission-critical computing systems and operational needs. Appellant argues that his supervisor concurs that he performs mission-critical high-impact work. Appellant asserts that his second-line supervisor affirmed that his focus is the library, which has been identified as a large-scale, high-impact, and

mission-critical environment. Appellant contends that the fundamental difference between the Information Technology Systems Specialist 4 and 5 classifications is based on the nature of the systems maintained rather than the work performed. Appellant argues that he supports the types of systems identified in the specifications. Appellant asserts that the director's designee created criteria that is not part of the specifications by stating that Appellant does not have "primary responsibility" for several components of the work performed. Appellant contends that the director's designee allowed individuals outside his chain of command to comment on his duties and such information should have no bearing on the allocation decision. Appellant argues that the director's designee improperly claimed that he does not provide the higher level responsibility for the library system upkeep because it is a shared system.

Summary of Respondent's Argument. Respondent asserts that Appellant's position is correctly allocated to the ITSS4 classification. Respondent acknowledges that Appellant works "under administrative direction," but argues that large-scale, high-impact computing systems are those that deal with operations such as registrations, admissions, financial aid, payroll, accounting, and personnel functions. Respondent acknowledges that Appellant has participated in some campus-wide efforts, however, Appellant's position is assigned to the Library Division and focuses on the library itself rather than campus-wide. Respondent contends that Appellant's position is responsible for the library computer stations and servers, in addition to the connection and interface to the library. Respondent argues that the library is a division in itself and certainly not university-wide. Further, Appellant works with a system that is specific to the library and not part of a centralized information technology unit. Respondent asserts that Appellant's participation in various projects and occasional work at the higher level is neither the primary purpose of his position nor a significant portion of his time. Respondent contends that Appellant's supervisor has the ultimate responsibility and authority in decision making. Respondent argues that Appellant's position, therefore, is correctly allocated to the ITSS4 class.

Primary Issue. Whether the director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated to the Information Technology Systems Specialist 4 classification should be affirmed.

Relevant Classifications. Information Technology Systems Specialist 4, Class Code 2408; Information Technology Systems Specialist 5, Class Code 2409.

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).

Because a current and accurate description of a position's duties and responsibilities is documented in an approved classification questionnaire, the classification questionnaire becomes the basis for allocation of a position. An allocation determination must be based on the overall duties and responsibilities as documented in the classification questionnaire. Lawrence v. Dept of Social and Health Services, PAB No. ALLO-99-0027 (2000).

During the review of Appellant's position, the director's designee requested a list of Y2K mission critical systems from outside Appellant's chain of command to assist him in his review. Appellant argues that information acquired outside his chain of command is inappropriate. Pursuant to WAC 356-10-060(4), the Department of Personnel or the director's designee may investigate and obtain

such information as may be deemed necessary. Therefore, we conclude that the director's designee acted within his discretion to request or consider the list of Y2K mission critical systems.

For a position to be allocated to the Information Technology Systems Specialist 5 class, incumbents are expected to have broad discretion and authority as expert-level specialists. According to the Distinguishing Characteristics, incumbents must spend a majority of time performing:

> Under administrative direction, evaluate and resolve large-scale, high-risk, high-impact or mission-critical computing system, application, telecommunication, project, or operational needs. As an expert-level specialist, perform highly-complex tasks such as designing large-scale or enterprise systems crossing multiple networks, platforms or telecommunication environments; developing project plans; directing large-scale, enterprise, or mission-critical projects which align with organizational policy; identifying and resolving operational problems for systems; conducting capacity planning to determine institution-wide needs and making recommendations; developing comprehensive instructional technology support strategies; and writing feasibility studies and decision packages for high visibility/impact initiatives.

The record supports the decision by the director's designee that the focus of Appellant's position is to provide expert technical consultation on the implementation of computer systems impacting EWU libraries and occasionally provide consultation to other campus departments, or campus-wide initiatives, particularly those which impact library computing functions. Appellant's position questionnaire and exhibits show that the director's designee properly concluded that:

- The majority of Appellant's work does not reach the level of highly-complex responsibility required by the basic function and distinguishing characteristics for the ITSS5 class.
- The university's library computing system is not among the mission-critical systems that are hosted on campus and serve centralized, campus-wide functions such as the financial records system.
- Appellant does not have primary responsibility for designing enterprise-level systems crossing divisional lines with multiple networks, platforms, or telecommunication environments.

- Appellant's level of responsibility for projects is limited to the library computing system.
- Appellant does not have primary responsibility for developing project plans and directing large-scale projects.
- Appellant does provide expert technical advice regarding integration of enterprise-level projects with library services, but does not retain authority for those projects at the level anticipated at the higher job class.
- Appellant has been asked to develop feasibility studies and make technical recommendations to administration on certain campus-wide initiatives, but is not responsible for capacity planning to determine institution-wide needs.
- Appellant's supervisor is responsible for ensuring that projects and functions align with organizational policies.

Appellant has not met his burden of proving that his position provides independent expert consultation with enterprise-wide impact or that the duties of his position are at the Information Technology Systems Specialist 5 level a majority of the time.

Therefore, we supports the decision by the director's designee that Appellant's position does not meet the definition or distinguishing characteristics required for the Information Technology Systems Specialist 5 job classification.

According to the Distinguishing Characteristics for the ITSS4 classification, incumbents:

> Under administrative direction, independently evaluate and resolve complex computing system, application, telecommunication, project, or operational needs in an assigned area of responsibility. As a senior-level specialist apply advanced technical knowledge to perform complex tasks such as serving as a team or project leader; planning and directing complex projects; supervising lower-level staff; conducting capacity planning and making recommendations; designing multiple-server systems; designing specialized interfaces; designing and providing instructional technology support; managing multi-server systems; developing and implementing quality assurance testing and performance monitoring; acting as a liaison on the development of client/server applications; representing institution-wide computing and/or telecommunication standards and philosophy at meetings; or developing security policies and standards. The majority of tasks performed have division-wide or

multiple-functional area impact, may integrate new technology, and/or change how the mission is accomplished.

After reviewing the duties and responsibilities described in Appellant's position questionnaire, we conclude that Appellant's position meets the definition and distinguishing characteristics of the Information Technology Systems Specialist 4 classification. Further, we agree with the director's designee that Appellant's position "is consistent with the Basic Function, Distinguishing Characteristics, and Typical Work statements for this class."

Conclusion. Appellant's position is best described by the Information Technology Systems Specialist 4 classification. Appellant's appeal on exceptions should be denied and the Director's determination dated June 3, 2002, should be affirmed.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal of Kenneth Guidry is denied and the Director's determination dated June 3, 2002, is affirmed. A copy is attached.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2003.

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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