BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

WILLIAM BARTON, Appellant, v. UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, Respondent.	Case No. ALLO-04-0003 ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. Pursuant to RCW 41.64.060 and WAC 358-01-040, this appeal came on for hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, BUSSE NUTLEY, Member, on Appellant's exceptions to the Director's determination dated February 9, 2004. The hearing was held telephonically on September 8, 2004. GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair, reviewed the record and participated in the decision in this matter.

Appearances. Appellant William Barton appeared *pro se*. Julie Newnam, Senior Compensation Consultant, represented Respondent University of Washington.

Background. On February 6, 2003, Appellant submitted a Position Questionnaire (PQ) requesting that his position as an Electrician be reallocated to the class of Engineering Technician III. By letter dated March 27, 2003, Linda Mathisen concluded that, on a best fit basis, Appellant's position was correctly allocated to the class of Electrician. Ms. Mathisen concluded that Appellant did not perform "complex engineering technician work designing, developing, manufacturing, assembling, installing, calibrating, and repairing instruments, apparatus and equipment within a scientific,

instructional or engineering application." Rather, Ms. Mathisen found that Appellant performed "journey-level electrical work throughout the hospital facility, installing, maintaining and repairing a wide variety of simple to complex electrical systems and components." Appellant received this decision via email from Linda Mathisen on May 28, 2003.

By letter dated June 24, 2003, Appellant appealed this determination to the director of the Department of Personnel (DOP). DOP conducted an allocation review and by letter dated February 9, 2004, informed Appellant that his position was properly allocated to the Electrician classification. The Director's determination indicated as follows:

> Mr. Barton performs work which is incorporated by several different classes. His position overlaps with electrical, engineering, and electronics work. This is further complicated by the fact that he does not perform electrical work over 50% of his time. However, comparing the amount of time he does electrical work to electronics and engineering related work, more of his time is spent on electrical. There is no single class which fully addresses the variety and scope of Mr. Barton's position. However, with the specific requirements and intent of the class series concepts for the classes reviewed, the class which best describes the overall purpose, duties and responsibilities of Mr. Barton's position is the Electrician class.

On February 26, 2004, Appellant filed exceptions with the Personnel Appeals Board.

Summary of Appellant's Argument. Appellant asserts he not only performs journey-level electrical work, but that he performs electronic and designing work as well. Appellant argues his job at the hospital requires an extensive electronic and engineering background and involves work of a technically complex nature. Appellant contends his duties meet the Engineering classification because he is required to "reverse engineer" older systems that require modification and for which repair manuals no longer exist.

Summary of Respondent's Argument. Respondent argues Appellant does not perform complex engineering technician work designing, developing, manufacturing, assembling, installing, calibrating and repairing instruments, apparatus and equipment within a scientific, instructional or engineering application. Respondent asserts Appellant's duties are more appropriately allocated to the Electrician classification because he performs journey-level electrical work throughout the hospital facility, installing, maintaining and repairing a wide variety of simple to complex electrical systems and components. Respondent recognizes that Appellant performs some duties that are not described in the Electrician classification, such as maintaining an inventory of parts, and making recommendations on purchases; however, Respondent asserts the duties are related to the primary function of performing journey-level electrical.

Primary Issue. Whether the Director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated to the Electrician classification should be affirmed.

Relevant Classifications. Electrician, class code 5340; Engineering Technician III, class code 4747.

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).

Position allocations are "based upon an investigation of duties and responsibilities assigned and/or performed and other information and recommendations." Because a current and accurate description of a position's duties and responsibilities is documented in an approved Position Questionnaire, the PQ becomes the basis for allocation of a position. Position allocations are made on a best-fit basis. An allocation determination must be based on the overall duties and responsibilities, as documented in the PQ. (emphasis added).

The PQ prepared by Appellant for review represents a current, complete and accurate description of his duties and responsibilities. Appellant's supervisor and the department head both concurred with the information in the PQ. Therefore, we are basing our review and decision on this approved PQ. Appellant works in the Operations and Maintenance Department at the University of Washington Medical Center. Appellant's position questionnaire describes the purpose of his position as follows: Perform journey-level electrical work throughout the hospital. The PQ describes Appellant's job duties as follows:

> In addition to the responsibilities listed for Electrician, class code 5340 ..., we are also expected to cover the additional workload listed below.
>
> Maintain, install, and repair:
> 2% Executone Futura I & II Care Comm
> 2% Elacom
> 10% Dukane
> 1% Chemetron Medical Gas System
> 4% Swiss Logic/TransLogic Pneumatic Tube System
> 1% Allied Security Point to Point
>
> 25% Troubleshoot, repair, and install parts that use logic, electronic and relay type controls. HVAC systems, Johnson Control (METASYS), and Variable Frequency speed controllers.
>
> 20% Keep inventory of parts, make recommendations on purchase of new equipment, work with outside vendors to purchase material, equipment, as-built and verify all new construction and remodel jobs, including contract and inside work, update and maintain electrical database including data entry.

Both parties agree that no one classification in the Higher Education classification plan specifically describes all the duties and responsibilities of Appellant's position. Therefore, the question here is which of the available classifications best describes the overall nature and scope of his position.

In Allegri v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. ALLO-96-0026 (1998), the Board addressed the concept of best fit. The Board noted that while the appellant's duties and responsibilities did not encompass the full breadth of the duties and responsibilities described by the classification to which his position was allocated, on a best fit basis, the classification best described the level, scope and diversity of the overall duties and responsibilities of his position.

In order to determine the best fit for Appellant's overall duties and responsibilities, we must first understand the intent of the Engineering Technician classification series. The Engineering Technician I classification provides clarification of the intent of the series and confirms that the incumbent must follow requirements and specifications from engineers or scientists, to perform engineering technician work designing, developing, fabricating, modifying, assembling and repairing various mechanical, electro-mechanical, agricultural, hydraulic, pneumatic, or electronic instruments, apparatus and equipment within an engineering, scientific, or instructional application.

In an allocation appeal, the Appellant has the burden of proof. In this case, Appellant has not established that his duties and responsibilities are consistent with those intended to be encompassed by this series. We agree with the DOP determination that Appellant does not work with engineers or scientists within an engineering, scientific or instructional application. Rather, the focus of Appellant's position, as supported by his PQ, is to perform journey-level electrical work. Furthermore, we are not convinced by Appellant's argument that "reverse engineering" also constitutes "designing" as required by the Engineering Technician series. Therefore, the scope and

level of responsibilities assigned to Appellant's position are best described by Electrician classification. Appellant has not sustained this burden.

The appeal on exceptions by Appellant should be denied and the Director's determination dated February 9, 2004, should be affirmed and adopted.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Appellant is denied and the Director's determination dated February 9, 2004, is affirmed and adopted.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2004.

WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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Gerald L. Morgen, Vice Chair

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Busse Nutley, Member