BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

MICHAEL KELLER, Appellant, v. WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY, Respondent.	Case No. ALLO-02-0035 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, and GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair, on Appellant's exceptions to the director's determination dated November 8, 2002. The hearing was held at the office of the Personnel Appeals Board in Olympia, Washington, on February 28, 2003.

Appearances. Appellant Michael Keller was present and appeared *pro se*. Respondent Washington State University was represented by Jeanne Greene, Human Resources Area Coordinator, and Lynn Valenter, Finance and Operations Director.

Background. Appellant requested a review of his Program Coordinator position and asked that it be reclassified to Maintenance and Construction Coordinator A. Jeanne Greene, Human Resources Area Coordinator, conducted a classification review. By memorandum dated August 21, 2002, Ms. Greene informed Appellant that his position was being reallocated to the Materials Resource Manager A classification effective June 1, 2002.

By letter dated August 30, 2002, Appellant filed a request for review to the Director of the Department of Personnel.

The Department of Personnel director's designee, Kris Brophy, conducted a verification interview with Appellant, Ms. Greene, and Appellant's supervisor, Bill Kelly, Facilities Operations Manager. By letter dated November 8, 2002, Teri Thompson, Classification and Compensation Program Director for the Department of Personnel, informed Appellant that Mr. Brophy had determined that his position should be reallocated to the Construction Assistant classification.

On December 4, 2002, Appellant filed exceptions with the Personnel Appeals Board to the determination of the Department of Personnel.

Appellant works in the Facilities Operations Department within the Division of Finance and Operations at the Washington State University - Vancouver campus. Appellant performs both technical and administrative work. Appellant's technical work involves assistance in facilities development, construction, maintenance, and planning. Appellant's administrative work involves materials resource management.

Summary of Appellant's Argument. Appellant argues that the Construction Assistant job class is not an accurate description of his job duties and that his position should be reclassified to Maintenance and Construction Coordinator A. Appellant disagrees with the determination that he does not perform his duties within the broad context of a large institution. Appellant asserts that the Washington State University - Vancouver campus is part of the larger institution of the Washington State University. Appellant further states that the specification definition does not say that work must be performed from a large main campus location. Appellant asserts that the University of Washington has several Maintenance and Construction Coordinator A positions and divides the

responsibilities of those positions into several small "zones." Appellant states that the scope of his responsibilities are comparable to the University of Washington counterparts within their "zones."

Summary of Respondent's Argument. Respondent asserts that the Washington State University - Vancouver campus is a separate branch campus from the main facility and is not a large institution. Respondent states that Appellant does not assist in the coordination and direction of total physical plant construction and maintenance activities. Respondent argues that Appellant's position does not involve close liaisons with various physical plant organizational divisions and departments. Respondent asserts that Appellant does not have budgetary responsibility, nor does he allocate workload or work assignments. Respondent states that Appellant's duties meet the requirements of the basic function and distinguishing characteristics of the Construction Assistant. Respondent asserts that although the Construction Assistant classification is not a perfect fit, Appellant's duties are more reflective of this job class than any other available class.

Primary Issue. Whether the director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated to the Construction Assistant classification should be affirmed.

Relevant Classifications. Construction Assistant, Class Code 4683; and Maintenance and Construction Coordinator A, Class Code 5211.

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).

Appellant asks the Board to compare his position to other Maintenance and Construction Coordinator A positions at the University of Washington. While a comparison of one position to another similar position may be useful in gaining a better understanding of the duties performed by and the level of responsibility assigned to an incumbent, allocation of a position must be based on the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to an individual position compared to the existing classifications. The allocation or misallocation of a similar position is not a determining factor in the appropriate allocation of a position. Flahaut v. Dept's of Personnel and Labor and Industries, PAB No. ALLO 96-0009 (1996).

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).

According to the Maintenance and Construction Coordinator A definition, Appellant must "assist in the coordination and direction of total physical plant construction and maintenance activities of a large institution." Appellant asserts that he meets this definition because the Washington State University – Vancouver campus is part of the larger institution, and the definition does not say that work must be performed from a large main campus location. The record shows that the Washington State University – Vancouver campus has approximately 8 buildings, 200 permanent employees, and approximately 1,800 students. The Board finds that the director's designee

properly concluded that the Washington State University - Vancouver campus is a separate branch campus from the main facility and does not qualify as a large institution.

The Maintenance and Construction Coordinator A distinguishing characteristics state that this class "coordinate[s] physical plant maintenance and construction activities and involves close liaison with various physical plant organizational divisions and university." The Washington State University – Vancouver campus has one Finance and Operations Division containing a single Facilities Operation department. Therefore, the record supports the decision by the director's designee that Appellant does not work with various divisions.

The Board concludes that Appellant's position does not meet the definition or distinguishing characteristics required for the Maintenance and Construction Coordinator A job classification.

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 Construction Assistant job class. The director's designee properly concluded that "although this class is not a perfect fit for Appellant's position, it is a better fit than the Materials Resource Manager A because it exemplifies the level of complexity and responsibility." Further, we agree with the director's designee that although Appellant's "duties do not encompass the full breadth of this classification, his duties are more reflective of a Construction Assistant than any other available class."

Conclusion. Appellant's position is best described by the Construction Assistant classification. Appellant's appeal on exceptions should be denied and the director's determination dated November 8, 2002, should be affirmed.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal of Michael Keller is denied and the director's determination dated November 8, 2002 is affirmed, and 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

Personnel Appeals Board
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Olympia, Washington 98504