BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, Appellant, v. JOYCE FORD, Respondent.	Case No. ALLO-02-0025 ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. This appeal came on for a telephonic 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 July 22, 2002. The hearing was held on November 21, 2002. RENÉ EWING, Member, did not participate in the hearing or in the decision in this matter.

Appearances. Karla Shugart, Assistant Director of Human Resources, represented Appellant Central Washington University. Respondent Joyce Ford represented herself *pro se*.

Background. Ms. Ford was a Secretary Lead. On October 31, 2001, she completed a Position Questionnaire and requested that her position be reallocated. Appellant conducted a review of Ms. Ford's position and by letter dated March 25, 2002, informed Ms. Ford that her position was properly allocated.

On April 8, 2002, Ms. Ford appealed to the Director of the Department of Personnel (DOP). Ms. Ford asked that her position be reallocated to the Administrative Assistant A classification.

The Director's designee, Tammy Tee, conducted an allocation review of Ms. Ford's position and forwarded the results of her review to Teri Thompson, Classification and Compensation Program Director. By letter dated July 22, 2002, Ms. Thompson notified Ms. Ford that her position should be reallocated to the Program Manager A classification. On August 20, 2002, Appellant Central Washington University (CWU) filed exceptions to the Director's determination with the Personnel Appeals Board. Appellant's exceptions are the subject of this proceeding.

Ms. Ford works in the Empowerment Center in the Student Affairs Department at CWU. She reports to the Director of the Center for Student Empowerment. The Empowerment Center is a specialized and technical program. Ms. Ford is responsible for ten student employees. Ms. Ford consults with her supervisor regarding student employment issues; however, she has supervisory authority, including signature authority, for hiring students, tracking and submitting payroll, time sheets and leave requests for the students. Ms. Ford is responsible for the daily operations of the center, she organizes and performs work related to the center's operations and she functions independently of the daily administrative office needs of her supervisor.

Summary of Appellant CWU's Argument. Appellant argues that Ms. Ford and her supervisor utilize a corroborative process for student employment and budget issues and that Ms. Ford has not been delegated signature authority for hiring or firing staff or for the budget. Appellant argues that Ms. Ford meets weekly with her supervisor to discuss issues related to student employees, project status and budget, and that their corroborative approach to these issues dilutes Ms. Ford's program responsibilities. Appellant asserts that Ms. Ford does not have total responsibility for supervising student employees, the program is not a division of a major administrative department or operating unit, and Ms. Ford does not plan, coordinate or implement all functions required by the program. Therefore, Appellant contends that Ms. Ford's position is best described by the Secretary Lead classification.

Summary of Ms. Ford's Argument. Ms. Ford argues that she is responsible for the direct supervision of ten students. Ms. Ford also argues that after consultation with her supervisor, she makes the final decision in regard to hiring, firing and disciplining students, including signing the Student Personnel Action Forms as the supervisor. Ms. Ford asserts that she oversees the daily program operations and budgets, determines how funds should be allocated to the various program offerings, exercises signature authority for budget expenditures, and ensures that the program offerings are consistent with the mission and strategic plan for the program. Ms. Ford contends that the Director's determination is correct and that her position is best described by the Program Manager A classification.

Primary Issue. Whether the Director's determination that Appellant's position should be reallocated to the Program Manager A classification should be affirmed.

Relevant Classifications. Secretary Lead, class code 2246; Program Manager A, class code 2015.

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 position questionnaire (PQ), the position 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 PQ. In this case, Ms. Ford's PQ was approved by both her first-line supervisor and by the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs. Ms. Ford's PQ describes duties that are beyond the scope of the Secretarial class series.

Positions allocated to the Secretary Lead classification have delegated authority to regularly assign, instruct and check the work of others. Ms. Ford's responsibilities for student employees exceed lead responsibilities and are best described as supervisory duties. In addition, the primary thrust of positions allocated to the Secretary Lead is the performance of secretarial duties. The focus of Ms. Ford's position is to oversee the daily program operations of the Empowerment Center thereby relieving her supervisor of the day-to-day operating and administrative details of the program. Ms. Ford's performance of secretarial duties is incidental to her program responsibilities. The focus of Ms. Ford's position is not secretarial in nature; therefore, allocation to a secretarial position is not appropriate.

Positions allocated to the Program Manager class series, "[s]upervise a division of a major administrative department, operating unit or program undertaking relieving the senior official of operating and administrative detail. Plan, coordinate and implement all functions required by the activity." Positions at the A level are typically first-line supervisors and have total responsibility for a program or management service to an administrative supervisor.

As stated above, Ms. Ford supervises a program undertaking relieving her supervisor of operating and administrative details. Ms. Ford plans, coordinates and implements the functions of the program, and ensures that program activities meet the mission and strategic plans for the program.

Furthermore, Appellant is a first-line supervisor for student employees, she has budgetary responsibilities, exercises independent judgment, and has delegated decision-making authority. Ms. Ford's position is consistent with the definition and distinguishing characteristics of the Program Manager A classification.

Conclusion. Appellant's appeal on exceptions should be denied and the Director's determination, dated July 22, 2002, should be affirmed and adopted.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal of Central Washington University is denied and the Director's determination dated July 22, 2002, is affirmed and adopted.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2002.

WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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Walter T. Hubbard, Chair

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Gerald L. Morgen, Vice, Chair