

Appellant is the sole person responsible for providing support to the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate is described as “an integral partner in the shared governance of the entire University.” Appellant reports to the Faculty Senate President, a position that rotates every year. This requires Appellant to advise, instruct, and assist the new senate president in accomplishing the goals of the Faculty Senate. Appellant also provides administrative support to the various Faculty Senate committees. Appellant’s duties and responsibilities include:

- performing a variety of tasks to coordinate, support, and document the meetings of the Faculty Senate and Senate committees, including providing assistance about past practices, protocols, and operational information;
- managing complex details;
- recording, transcribing, editing, and preparing minutes of various meetings for final approval;
- assuring that information is appropriately distributed or archived;
- overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Faculty Senate Office including the supervision of student staff;
- exercising independent judgment and maintaining confidentiality; and
- performing other administrative duties such as publishing activities, compiling information and preparing special reports as requested, making travel arrangements and completing travel reimbursements, assisting with recruitment efforts for committees, and overseeing the election process for the Faculty Senate and committees.

Summary of Appellant’s Arguments. Appellant argues that the director’s designee misunderstood the scope of her duties and the importance of Faculty Senate. Appellant asserts that the Faculty Senate has institution-wide responsibility that includes approving all curricular matters for the University. Appellant further asserts that as the sole support for the Faculty Senate and various Senate committees, she functions with great a level of autonomy and responsibility. She contends that she functions as the executive secretary to the Faculty Senate and as such is involved in the highest level of discussions and strategies with regard to the University’s budget, faculty allocations, and curriculum planning. She argues that she is responsible for arranging all meetings and recording and distributing minutes and other information while exercising discretion and sensitivity. Appellant asserts that she develops and implements administrative methods, procedures and processes for the Faculty Senate and committees that impact how other departments interact with

1 the Faculty Senate. Appellant contends that the Faculty Senate is a complex organization and that
2 the duties and responsibilities of her position exceed the level of work assigned to the AA3
3 classification.

4 **Summary of Respondent's Arguments.** Respondent recognizes that Appellant applies her expertise,
5 professionalism, initiative and proficient skills in performing her duties and managing the operations of
6 the Faculty Senate office. Respondent agrees that Appellant performs a variety of tasks for various
7 committees and that she manages the details necessary to oversee the day-to-day operations of the
8 Faculty Senate office including supervising student staff, exercising independent judgment and
9 maintaining confidentiality. Respondent argues that while Appellant provides administrative
10 support for the various activities of the Faculty Senate and committees, she is not a decision-
11 maker. Respondent further argues that the policies and procedures Appellant creates affect the
12 faculty only, not the University as a whole and that the decisions made by the Faculty Senate do
13 not change how other divisions or colleges perform their business. Respondent asserts that the
14 complexity of the Faculty Senate is limited due to its size, area of responsibility and scope of impact to
15 overall University operations. Respondent contends that while the Faculty Senate may have
16 influence and impact on academic affairs, they do not support operations at an institution-wide level
17 and do not have institution-wide impact or responsibility. Respondent recognizes that some of
18 Appellant's duties may cross over to the AA4 level, but contends that the scope and impact of her
19 work and the majority of her duties and responsibilities best fit the AA3 classification.
20

21 **Primary Issue.** Whether the director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated to
22 the Administrative Assistant 3 classification should be affirmed.

23
24 **Relevant Classifications.** Administrative Assistant 3, class code 105G; Administrative Assistant 4,
25 class code 105H.

26 **Decision of the Board.** The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best
27 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement
28 of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed.
29

1 A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the
2 available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best
3 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. See Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State
4 University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

5 Most positions within the civil service system occasionally perform duties that appear in more than
6 one classification. However, when determining the appropriate classification for a specific position,
7 the duties and responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and the position
8 must be allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the majority of the
9 position's duties and responsibilities. Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and Industries, PRB Case No. R-
10 ALLO-07-007 (2007).

11
12 Some of Appellant's duties appear to meet the level of work described in the typical work statements of
13 the AA4 classification. However, in accordance with the guidance provided in the Department of
14 Personnel Classification and Pay Administrative Guide, typical work statements are not allocating
15 criteria. The guidance provided in Classification and Pay Administrative Guide establishes that the
16 following standards are the hierarchy of primary considerations in allocating positions:

- 17 a) Category concept (if one exists).
- 18 b) Definition or basic function of the class.
- 19 c) Distinguishing characteristics of a class.
- 20 d) Class series concept, definition/basic function, and distinguishing characteristics of other classes
21 in the series in question.

22
23 The Administrative Assistant class series does not include a category concept. Therefore we must first
24 look at the definition for the classes. The definition for the AA4 classification provides:

25 Positions serve as the assistant on administrative matters to the head of a state
26 agency, the head of a major sub-division or major operating location of an agency,
27 or to the chief administrator or head of a major organizational unit such as a school,
28 college, or major academic/administrative department.

Appellant's position does not fit within the definition of the AA4 classification. She serves as the assistant on administrative matters for the president of the Faculty Senate. However, the Faculty Senate is not a major organization such as school, college or major academic or administrative department. Because Appellant's position does not meet the definition for the AA4 classification, the threshold for considering the distinguishing characteristics of the AA4 class has not been met.

The definition of the AA3 classification provides:

Positions perform varied administrative and secretarial support duties or positions are responsible for one or more major program activities under a second line supervisor.

The distinguishing characteristics of the AA3 classification state:

Positions are delegated higher-level administrative support duties or positions are delegated one or more major program activities that would be performed under a second-level professional supervisor, manager or administrator in WMS Band II or above or in exempt service, chief administrator, or head of a major organizational unit such as a school, college, or major academic or administrative department. Only one position will be allocated to an individual second-line supervisor for those positions performing one or more major program activities.

A major program activity is defined as a function that is a major element of the supervisor's job. The duty must stand alone and would create significant adverse consequences if poorly performed. However, full delegation can't occur if the supervisor's position requires specialized licensure such as attorneys, medical doctors, and engineers.

Higher-level administrative duties are duties of a substantive nature that are appropriate to be performed by the supervisor, manager, administrator, or professional level employee but have been delegated to the administrative assistant to perform. Areas may include but are not limited to, the following: budget development and/or management, expenditure control, office space management, equipment purchases, budget development and/or management, public relations, personnel administration, records management, and report preparation.

Incumbents in these positions represent the supervisor's and/or unit's goals and interests and provide interpretation or explanation of the supervisor's policies or viewpoints.

Appellant's position performs a variety of high-level administrative support functions, duties and responsibilities which include the oversight and supervision of the day-to-day operations of the Faculty Senate office. Her duties are of a substantive nature and include budget management, expenditure control, office space management, equipment purchases, budget development, public relations, management of the Faculty Senate website, and report preparation. When considered in its entirety, the scope of work and the breadth of the impact of Appellant's position are described by the AA3 level. Appellant's position best fits within the definition and distinguishing characteristics of the AA 3 classification.

In a hearing on exceptions, the Appellant has the burden of proof. WAC 357-52-110. Appellant has failed to meet her burden of proof. The Administrative Assistant 3 classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of Appellant's position.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Rose Marie Norton-Nader is denied and the director's determination dated August 15, 2008, is affirmed.

DATED this ____ day of _____, 2009.

WASHINGTON PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

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