

STATE OF WISCONSIN

PERSONNEL COMMISSION

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CATHERINE CLOVER, et al

 Complainant,

v.

Administrator, DIVISION OF
PERSONNEL,

 Respondent.

Case Nos. 79-PC-CS-165, 153,
235, 891, 940, 934, 16, 17,
18, and 19

* * * * *

DECISION
AND
ORDER

This case involves ten appeals from decisions of the Administrator, Division of Personnel, to reallocate appellants' positions from their previous classifications to that of Program Assistant 1.

After hearing, briefs, and review of the evidence presented, the following findings, conclusions and decisions are made.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. In 1979 the respondent, Administrator, Division of Personnel (DP) initiated a survey of all classified civil service clerical positions in the state. Based upon the information obtained from the survey, DP drafted position standards or Classification Specifications, defining the various classes of clerical positions in the state classified civil service. These classification specifications were approved by the authorizing State Personnel Board.

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2. Subsequently, reallocation of individual jobs to the newly created classes was begun in each state agency, including the University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX). As part of the UWEX survey, current position descriptions were reviewed, jobs were compared to one another, departmental organization examinations and comparisons were made, and each classified service clerical position in UWEX was allocated under the new classification system and submitted to the UW System personnel office and Division of Personnel for review and final approval.

3. Appellants are employed in the state classified civil service by UWEX and have permanent positions. As a result of the survey, their positions were reallocated, effective August 16, 1979, to the Program Assistant 1 (PA 1) classification. Timely appeals were filed with the Commission alleging the proper allocation for such positions to be Program Assistant 2 (PA 2) or Program Assistant 3 (PA 3).

4. UWEX is an institution in the University of Wisconsin System, which includes 13 campuses and 14 centers. As a part of the statewide clerical survey, the University System developed system-wide allocation patterns. Appellants' positions correspond closely with other PA 1 positions in the UW System.

5. The positions in controversy are similar to each other in that each involves providing clerical and administrative support for faculty member program leaders who plan, develop and administer educational outreach programs. This work includes typing, processing various documents, performing bookkeeping functions and maintaining schedules. These positions do not have lead work

responsibilities although in some instances appellants assign work to student hourly workers. Appellants are supervised directly by individual faculty members except for matters relating to personnel, payroll and general office procedures. For these matters, an intermediate supervisory structure exists between appellants and the faculty. Decisions are made along clerical or administrative lines, rather than in program areas.

6. Appellants' positions also compare closely with PA 1 positions in other state agencies. Positions at this level in the Department of Public Instruction, like appellants' jobs, have responsibility for coordinating educational programs and providing secretarial support including arranging conferences, developing mailing lists and preparing brochures and informational pamphlets for their supervisors.

7. Classification specifications are the primary tool used in classifying a particular job. Key factors to be considered in making classification decisions include class descriptions, work examples, comparable positions, allocation patterns, job inclusions and exclusions, reporting relationships and job duties.

8. The primary distinctions between the PA 1, 2, and 3 classifications is in the level of services provided and the decisions rendered. Program Assistant 1 positions encompass a variety of clerical and administrative activities which support a particular function. Generally, there is a supervisory structure between the position and the professional. Decisions made at the PA 1 classification level are of a clerical or administrative nature and are not substantive.

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9. Appellants' positions are distinguishable from higher level Program Assistant positions. This is exemplified by UW System positions allocated to PA 2 and 3 levels. Positions at the PA 2 level, in contrast to appellants' positions, generally assist more than one staff member and have greater scope and complexity. PA 3 positions are generally assigned to positions providing assistance to academic administrators, rather than individual faculty members as in appellants' case.

10. While the appellants may engage in some work activities found at the PA 2 and 3 levels, such activities do not constitute the majority of their work time.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Personnel Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to §230.44(1)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

2. The burden of proof is on each of the appellants to establish that their positions should have been classified at the Program Assistant 2 or 3 level.

3. Each of the appellants failed to sustain the burden of proving that the majority of her job duties and responsibilities were at the Program Assistant 2 or 3 level.

4. The respondent's decisions reallocating appellants' positions to the Program Assistant 1 level were correct.

OPINION

The evidence in this case is fairly conclusive and favors the respondent. It is clear from testimony concerning allocation patterns and position comparisons that appellants' positions are properly classified at the Program Assistant 1 level. In point of fact, the position of appellant Bonnie Alexander was designated a "bench mark" for the Program Assistant 1 classification. As such, Ms. Alexander's position was used as the standard to which other positions were compared for classification purposes.

Appellants argue that they perform the same duties and have the same responsibilities as Marilyn Kanne, a Program Assistant 2. UWEX Eau Claire, Wisconsin. While appellants may perform some tasks similar to Ms. Kanne, it is apparent from Kanne's position description that her job has greater variety and scope than the appellants' positions. Ms. Kanne assists two program coordinators and acts as office manager and department secretary for UWEX Department of Business and Management, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, coordinating the activities of that office.

For the reasons expressed and based upon the evidentiary record, the appellants have failed to sustain their burden of proof and the decisions of the administrator in this matter are affirmed.

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ORDER

The decisions of the respondent, Division of Personnel effective August 16, 1978, regarding the allocation of appellants' positions are upheld and appellants' appeals are dismissed.

Dated: Jan 27, 1982 STATE PERSONNEL COMMISSION


LAURIE R. McCALLUM
Commissioner


DONALD R. MURPHY, Chairperson

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