April 10, 2012

TO: Teresa Parsons, SPHR
            Director's Review Program Supervisor

FROM: Kris Brophy, SPHR
            Director's Review Program Investigator

SUBJECT: Jason Gerdes v. Central Washington University (CWU)
            Allocation Review Request ALLO-11-047

Director's Determination

This position review was based on the work performed for the six-month period prior to April 14, 2011, the date CWU Human Resources received Mr. Gerdes's request for a position review. As the Director's designee, I carefully considered all of the documentation in the file, the exhibits presented during the Director's review conference, and the verbal comments provided by both parties. Based on my review and analysis of his assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude his position should be reallocated to the Information Technology Specialist 4 (ITS 4) classification.

Background

On April 14, 2011, CWU HR received a Position Review Request (PRR) from Mr. Gerdes requesting that his position be reallocated to the ITS 4 class (Exhibit B-1).

On August 10, 2011 CWU issued its allocation decision, concluding Mr. Gerdes's position was properly allocated to the ITS 3 class (Exhibit A-2).

On September 7, 2011, the Department of Personnel received Mr. Gerdes's request for a Director's review of CWU's allocation determination (Exhibit A-1).

On February 16, 2012, I conducted a Director's telephone review conference with Mr. Gerdes and Mr. Stephen Sarchet, Human Resources Representative, CWU.

Rationale for Director's Determination

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. 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 that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

Duties and Responsibilities

Mr. Gerdes provides information technology support for the student housing residential network (i.e. "ResNet") on the CWU campus. The ResNet network supports approximately 3,500 total users across campus. Mr. Gerdes manages the day-to-day operations of the ResNet including conducting capacity planning for future growth of the network, serving as the systems administrator, managing network bandwidth, effectively recommending and purchasing new equipment, working with architects to design and place wireless service during new residence hall construction, and performing associated network software programming support as needed. This includes performing systems analysis, designing and programming ancillary applications, installing and upgrading hardware and software, and troubleshooting and resolving hardware failures for residential internet service provided to the on-campus student housing program.

In summary, Mr. Gerdes describes his assigned duties and responsibilities on the PRR (Exhibit B-1) as follows:

60%   Install and maintain networking devices including their hardware and software configurations. Develop and maintain database structures and procedures in support of collaborative application development projects. Develop written procedures and write programs to create interfaces which may be vendor provided or developed on-site. Manage application systems accounts and overall security for assigned systems.

Perform network management tasks including fault management, resource accounting, performance monitoring, security, troubleshooting. Design complex network systems for new residence halls and retrofitting existing residence halls, including implementation of wireless. Develop, code, and test complex applications for the management of network systems and servers.

Design, implement, and manage new premium bandwidth programs for housing. Implement and maintain systems which now include the wireless traffic of all students, not just students living in residence halls. Make decisions regarding hardware/software selection, write RFPs for new equipment. Write interfaces to vendor supplied APIs. Create and maintain test environments.

35%   Assist with incident response processes, such as developing standard procedures, the collection and analysis of information, coordination and response strategies. Perform after-hours maintenance and troubleshooting on both and on-call and scheduled basis. Act as a liaison between the department and system vendors, and students. Oversee the work of two student apprentices who staff the ResNet helpdesk. Develop training materials. Conduct traffic studies, capacity planning for future network needs. Analyze/audit billing for new premium bandwidth packages.

5%   Present at and/or attend regional and national conferences regarding P2P systems and general ResNet topics.

Mr. David Hart, Interim Director of Networks and Operations, completed the supervisor's section of the PRR (Exhibit B-2). Mr. Hart clarified the last sentence of the Position Purpose on the

PRR wherein Mr. Gerdes states his position, "…includes Networks support for the Conference programs, Connection Card Office, Dining Services, Housing Services, and the University Store." In his comments Mr. Hart states: (in *italics*)

> *Most of these areas are routinely supported by other employees in Networks and Operations, while Jason is occasionally asked to perform duties outside his normal ResNet responsibilities in exchange for these services….support would not necessarily come exclusively from [Mr. Gerdes].*

Mr. Hart provided the following additional comments regarding Mr. Gerdes's duties:

> *…he analyzes and tunes existing systems and implements new systems and hardware and software upgrades where needed. He designs and implements networks for new residence halls and completes all steps other than DIS and budget approval…*

> *…Jason is responsible for all aspects of running a network with nearly 90 switches, 40 wireless access points, a dozen servers, and over 3000 users…. Jason is able to keep it running smoothly with minimal assistance from his colleagues in Networks & Operations…*

> *…most residents utilize wireless as their primary means of connecting to the CWU network. Jason must utilize advanced troubleshooting techniques to support these connections. The Barto [hall] replacement will have full wireless coverage, and Jason has been instrumental in designing that network…*

> *…It has also been necessary for Jason to …interact with Purchasing and negotiate with vendors as he works through procurement of new hardware and software systems for ResNet. …Jason has been instrumental in producing the necessary documents, evaluating proposals and making the final award.*

> *…Jason has also begun participating in building projects related to ResNet, a role previously played by his more senior colleagues. As a member of project committees, he must contribute to the design of the network infrastructure and interact with architects, contractors and Facilities staff.*

<u>Summary of Mr. Gerdes's Perspective</u>

Mr. Gerdes asserts his position serves as a senior-level network specialist through his responsibility for maintaining the residential student housing network (ResNet) system which includes campus wide maintenance of the network and its associated applications and software. Mr. Gerdes asserts the network he maintains is mission-critical and has wide-area impact as required at the ITS 4 level.

Mr. Gerdes asserts his duties reach the ITS 4 class on the basis of the following:

- He designs complex network systems for new residence halls and retrofitts existing residence halls, including implementation of wireless.
- He develops, codes, and tests complex applications for the management of network systems and servers.

- He designs, implements, and manages new premium bandwidth programs for housing.

- He implements and maintains systems which include the wireless traffic of all students, not just students living in residence halls.

- He makes decisions regarding hardware/software selection, and writes RFPs for new network and other equipment.

- He writes interfaces to vendor supplied APIs and creates and maintains test environments.

Summary of CWU's Reasoning

CWU asserts the overall level and scope of duties and responsibilities assigned to Mr. Gerdes's position does not reach the ITS 4 level of responsibility. CWU asserts ResNet is an independent network which is separate and apart from the CWU administrative network, and therefore is not mission-critical to University operations. CWU asserts the level of his work does not integrate new technology, nor does it affect how the University's mission is accomplished. CWU asserts Mr. Gerdes performs his duties consistent with ITS 3 level of responsibility. For these reasons, CWU asserts his position is properly allocated to the ITS 3 class.

Class Specifications

When comparing the assignment of work and level of responsibility to the available class specifications, the Class Series Concept (if one exists) followed by the Definition and Distinguishing Characteristics are primary considerations. While examples of typical work identified in a class specification do not form the basis for an allocation, they lend support to the work envisioned within a classification.

The Class Series Concept for the Information Technology series states in relevant part:

> "Positions in this category perform professional information technology systems and/or applications support for client applications, databases, computer hardware and software products, network infrastructure equipment, or telecommunications software or hardware.

> This category broadly describes positions in one or more information technology disciplines such as: Application Development and Maintenance, Application Testing, Capacity Planning, Business Analysis and/or Process Re-Engineering…IT Project Management, Systems Software, Web Development, or Voice Communications."

As described by the class series concept, Mr. Gerdes performs information technology specialist work troubleshooting, testing, installing, maintaining, and supporting the student residential network hardware and associated applications software. He has primary responsibility for providing professional technical support to ResNet. His position is consistent with the class series concept and should therefore be allocated to a class within this series.

Comparison of Duties to Information Technology Specialist 3

The Definition for this class states:

> In support of information systems and users in an assigned area of responsibility, independently performs consulting, designing, programming, installation,

maintenance, quality assurance, troubleshooting and/or technical support for applications, hardware and software products, databases, database management systems, support products, network infrastructure equipment, or telecommunications infrastructure, software or hardware.

Uses established work procedures and innovative approaches to complete assignments and coordinate projects such as conducting needs assessments; leading projects; creating installation plans; analyzing and correcting network malfunctions; serving as system administrator; monitoring or enhancing operating environments; or supporting, maintaining and enhancing existing applications.

The majority of assignments and projects are moderate in size and impact an agency division or large workgroup or single business function; or internal or satellite operations, multiple users, or more than one group. Consults with higher-level technical staff to resolve complex problems.

ITS 3 level positions work independently and perform functions within an assigned area of responsibility. They identify and resolve problems within a scope of operation such as a division, or large workgroup or single business function, multiple users or more than one group. The work methods used and the level of independent decision making required often combines following pre-defined standards as well as developing innovative approaches to resolve problems or issues that arise. While fully capable of working independently, complex problems are resolved through consulting with higher-level technical staff.

Mr. Gerdes's position reaches beyond the overall size, scope, and level of responsibility of this class.   Mr. Gerdes's position independently provides sole technical IT network operations support to ResNet, a large and complex campus-wide student residential network consisting of a dozen servers, approximately 90 switches, and 40 wireless access points across the campus. This network is utilized by over 3500 residential students. This reaches beyond the scope of this class of providing support to an assigned area of responsibility wherein the majority of assignments and projects are moderate in size and impact a division or large workgroup or single business function.

Additionally, the overall complexity of work performed by Mr. Gerdes's position reaches beyond the requirements of this class.

Mr. Gerdes functions as the senior-level network operations specialist for the campus-wide ResNet system. Mr. Gerdes consults with architects during residential new building construction and remodel projects on campus. In his written comments, Mr. Hart stated that Mr. Gerdes, "*contributes to the design of the network infrastructure relative to ResNet.*" He stated Mr. Gerdes, "*…interacts with architects, contractors and facilities staff during building projects, which is a role previously performed by his more senior colleagues.*" Mr. Hart also states that Mr. Gerdes, "*designs and implements networks for new residence halls and completes all steps other than [working with] DIS and [obtaining] budget approval.*" Mr. Gerdes stated during the review telephone conference that he effectively recommends what is needed regarding the student residential network (ResNet) infrastructure requirements up through and including the design, development and implementation phases of the projects.

Further, he independently evaluates and completes complex tasks for the network such as developing and maintaining the network's complex multiple-server system; working with other CWU technical staff to establish and maintain the interface between the ResNet and the CWU administrative network; troubleshooting, installing and maintaining ResNet network hardware and associated applications and other software for the system; developing and implementing quality assurance testing and performance monitoring; and developing security policies and standards for the ResNet system.

Overall, the scope of Mr. Gerdes's position reaches beyond the requirements of this class and his position should not be allocated to the Information Technology Specialist 3 class.

Comparison of Duties to Information Technology Specialist 4.

The Definition for this class states:

> Performs analysis, system design, acquisition, installation, maintenance, programming, project management, quality assurance, troubleshooting, problem resolution, and/or consulting tasks for complex computing system, application, data access/retrieval, multi-functional databases or database management systems, telecommunication, project or operational problems.

> As a senior-level specialist in an assigned area of responsibility and/or as a team or project leader, applies advanced technical knowledge and considerable discretion to evaluate and resolve complex tasks such as planning and directing large-scale projects; conducting capacity planning; designing multiple-server systems; directing or facilitating the installation of complex systems, hardware, software, application interfaces, or applications; developing and implementing quality assurance testing and performance monitoring; planning, administering, and coordinating organization-wide information technology training; acting as a liaison on the development of applications; representing institution-wide computing and/or telecommunication standards and philosophy at meetings; or developing security policies and standards.

> Incumbents understand the customer's business from the perspective of a senior business person and are conversant in the customer's business language. Projects assigned to this level impact geographical groupings of offices/facilities, and/or regional, divisional or multiple business units with multiple functions. The majority of tasks performed have wide-area impact, integrate new technology, and/or affect how the mission is accomplished.

The primary thrust of Mr. Gerdes's position, and the majority of his duties as a whole, falls within the scope and level of responsibility stated by the Definition of this class.

Mr. Gerdes performs senior-level information technology network operations specialist work under the administrative direction of his supervisor. He is responsible for designing, installing, maintaining, troubleshooting, and resolving operational problems for the University's complex student residential network. His position requires him to independently resolve complex operational needs in his assigned area of responsibility which is campus-wide. The complexity and scope of this network has wide-area impact to the University, and the projects to which he is assigned impact individual and/or geographical groupings of student residential buildings and/or other buildings or facilities. While individual projects may impact a single residential

building, the majority of his tasks support the entire CWU residential internet service network as a whole.

Further, as a senior-level specialist, he applies advanced technical knowledge to perform complex tasks for the network. He is the only specialist working on the large and complex, multiple-server system. He resolves complex installation and maintenance problems, and uses his knowledge to assist architects and/or vendors in design considerations and capacity planning, wiring, and other technical considerations.

Although the Typical Work examples do not form the basis for an allocation, they lend support to the work envisioned within a classification. The following provides an example of the level of work assigned to the Information Technology Specialist 4 class, as stated on the class specification:

> Represents organization-wide computing standards and philosophy at meetings, and reports information back to unit administrators;
>
> Develops and implements quality assurance testing and performance monitoring, utilizing quality assurance techniques and practices;
>
> Conducts traffic studies, analyzes information and trends, makes recommendations and takes action to improve system performance and efficiency.

Mr. Gerdes's duties are consistent with these statements. His responsibility for managing daily network operations for ResNet includes performing system hardware and software upgrades as needed. Mr. Gerdes develops and implements quality assurance testing and performance monitoring, utilizing quality assurance techniques and practices. He conducts user traffic studies, analyzes information and trends, makes recommendations, and takes action to improve system performance and efficiency.

Mr. Gerdes is responsible for ensuring all aspects of the ResNet system runs appropriately, and he troubleshoots and resolves issues and coordinates with other CWU network resources and vendors as necessary to resolve issues. His position is responsible for conducting capacity planning regarding improvements to network system bandwidth and other issues.

The purpose of an allocation review is to determine the classification which best describes the overall duties and level of responsibility of a position. A position's allocation is based on the majority of work assigned to a position and how that work best aligns with the available job classifications. Based on the level, scope and diversity of the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to Mr. Gerdes's position, his position should be reallocated to the ITS 4 classification.

Appeal Rights

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:

> An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to . . . the Washington personnel resources board . . . . Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The mailing address for the Personnel Resources Board (PRB) is P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911.

You may file in person at 521 Capitol Way South, Olympia, Washington. Fax number (360) 586-4694. For questions, please call (360) 664-0388.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

c: Jason Gerdes
        Stephen Sarchet, CWU
        Lisa Skriletz, OSHRD

Enclosure: List of Exhibits

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List of Exhibits

A. Jason Gerdes Exhibits

1. Director's Review Form for Jason Gerdes appeal received by Department of Personnel September 7, 2011.
2. CWU allocation determination memo from Stephen Sarchet to Jason Gerdes dated August 10, 2011.
3. Unsigned copy of Jason Gerdes Position Review Request form.
4. Additional description of work from Jason Gerdes titled, "Duties and Responsibilities."
5. Additional submission from Mr. Gerdes outlining his argument for reallocation to ITS4.

B. CWU Exhibits

1. Position Review Request form for Jason Gerdes received by CWU Human Resource on April 14, 2011
2. Supervisor/Department Head Review section of PRR from David Hart, dated April 27, 2011
3. IT Organizational Chart dated January 25, 2011
4. Position Description Form for Jason Gerdes's position date stamped May 2, 2008
5. DOP Classification Specification for Information Technology Specialist 3, 479k
6. DOP Classification Specification for Information Technology Specialist 4, 479L