

COLLEGE OF THE SISKIYOU

Procedure Manual

Title: Faculty Service Areas, Minimum Qualifications, and Equivalencies

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Responsible Area: Human Resources

Responsible Office: Human Resources

Policy References: Education Code Sections 87001, 87003 and 87743.2; Title 5 Sections 53400 et seq.; ACCJC Accreditation Standard III.A.2-4

I. Equivalency

Determination of equivalency is a Faculty responsibility. Only Faculty in the discipline in question possesses the academic expertise needed to determine qualifications in that discipline. Minimum qualifications are determined for disciplines, not for courses or subject areas within disciplines. The role of Human Resources is limited to collecting, date-stamping, and forwarding applications and other pertinent information to the Equivalency Committee for their review and subsequent recommendation as to whether equivalency should be awarded or not.

Once equivalency has been awarded by the District to a member of the Faculty it cannot and will not be subject to revocation. Title 5 section 53403 allows persons who have been employed “to teach in a discipline” to continue teaching even if the minimum qualifications or disciplines list are amended after the Faculty member is initially hired. Equivalencies once granted by the District exist for life.

II. Faculty Service Areas

Faculty service areas shall be established after negotiation and consultation as required by law with the appropriate Faculty representatives. See the Faculty Service Areas and Competency Standards Article in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the District and the Faculty Association.

III. Minimum Qualifications

Faculty shall meet minimum qualifications established by the Board of Governors or shall possess qualifications that are at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications set out in the regulations of the Board of Governors. Equivalent minimum qualifications are determined through an equivalency process.

A. Equivalency Process

An Academic Senate Equivalency Committee shall be established to fulfill the requirement of Education Code Section 87359, which states that the equivalency process

"shall include reasonable procedures to ensure that the Governing Board relies primarily upon the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate to determine that each individual employed under the authority granted by the regulations possesses qualifications that are at least equivalent to the applicable minimum qualifications..." In order to ensure that the Governing Board relies primarily on the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate, the Academic Senate Equivalency Committee shall:

1. Be available to Human Resources as experts regarding all recommendations of equivalency to the District.
2. Review all equivalency requests submitted by Human Resources.
3. Recommend all equivalency determinations to the Board of Trustees.
4. Further clarify the criteria to be used for determining equivalency.
5. Ensure that the District policies and processes do not allow for single-course equivalencies.
6. Ensure that equivalency processes for Part-Time Faculty be no different from equivalency for Full-Time Faculty.
7. Periodically review this procedure and recommend necessary changes to the Academic Senate and Board of Trustees as per the administrative procedure review process (Administrative Procedure 2410).
8. In general, ensure that the equivalency process works well and meets the requirements of the law.

B. Academic Senate Equivalency Committee Membership

1. The Equivalency Committee shall consist of five Faculty members appointed by the Academic Senate. It is the goal to have at least two Faculty from the Career & Technical area, two from Liberal Arts and Sciences area and one from the Kinesiology area.
2. One (1) Administrator appointed by the College President.
3. Because this is a standing committee of the Academic Senate, the chair shall be elected by the Committee from among the five Faculty members serving.
4. Faculty Committee members will be appointed to three-year terms. Every effort will be made to stagger terms.
5. A member of the Human Resources Department will be appointed to serve on the Committee as the recording secretary, a non-voting/resource member.

C. Determination of Equivalencies

This procedure is to be used to determine when an applicant for a Faculty position, although lacking the exact degree or experience specified in the "Disciplines List of the Board of Governors" that establishes the minimum qualifications for hire, nonetheless does possess qualifications that are at least equivalent to those required by the Disciplines List. The procedure is intended to ensure a fair and objective process for determining when an applicant has the equivalent qualifications.

D. Equivalency Request for Faculty Job Applicants

1. All Faculty position announcements will state the required qualifications as specified in the most recent Disciplines List in the "Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges," including the possibility of meeting the equivalent of the required degree or experience.

2. District application forms for Faculty positions will ask applicants to state whether they meet the minimum qualifications of the Disciplines List or whether they believe they meet the equivalent. Those claiming equivalency will then be asked to state their reasons and to present evidence. It will be the responsibility of the applicant to supply all evidence and documentation for the claim of equivalency at the time of application.
3. Human Resources will screen the pool of applicants to determine if the applicant meets the minimum qualifications.
4. Equivalency decisions shall be based on direct evidence of claims (e.g., transcripts, publications and work products) and claims of equivalence must include how both general education and specialization are met. The applicant must provide evidence of attaining coursework or experience equal to the general education component of the required degree.

E. Equivalency for Disciplines Not Requiring a Master's Degree

The District may elect to award equivalency for Faculty teaching in disciplines that do not require the Master's Degree using the following criteria.

1. **Semester units/occupational experience:** 120 semester units AND two years of occupational experience in the discipline; or, 60 semester units AND six years of occupational experience in the discipline; or, 30 semester units or industrial certification AND eight years of occupational experience in the discipline. Note: all semester or equivalent units must be earned from a regionally accredited postsecondary educational institution.
2. **Related occupational experience:** May be substituted by teaching experience in the discipline or related discipline on a year-for-year basis.
3. **Recency:** An individual employed to teach a vocational discipline shall demonstrate a competency in the current technology of that discipline.
4. **Rare exceptions:** In the rare case that an individual does not specifically meet the equivalency provisions as stated in the above Sections (#1 - #3), and the full-time faculty in that discipline (if applicable), the vocational faculty coordinator (if applicable), supervising instructional Dean, and the Chief Instructional Officer mutually agree that the applicant is otherwise qualified to teach in that discipline, that individual's qualifications may be recommended to the Academic Senate equivalency committee chair for a follow-up review by the Equivalency Committee.

F. Equivalency Procedure

1. When a candidate applies for full-time employment and Human Resources (HR) deems that he or she meets minimum qualifications, the application will be forwarded to the Screening Committee. When a candidate applies for part-time employment and Human Resources (HR) deems that he or she meets minimum qualifications, the application will be forwarded to the appropriate hiring authority.
2. A candidate whose qualifications HR concludes do not meet minimum qualifications will submit an application that explains how his or her academic preparation and professional experience meets minimum qualifications.
3. HR will send the application to the Committee chair who, in turn, will forward it to the full-time faculty members in the discipline. These Faculty members will review the candidate's record and determine if his or her qualifications are equivalent to the

minimum qualifications required to teach in the discipline. The completed reviews will be returned to the Committee within ten calendar days.

4. In the event that no full-time Faculty teach in the discipline at College of the Siskiyous (COS), the Equivalency Committee Chair will either solicit reviews from other COS Full-Time Faculty who hold a degree in a related discipline or the Equivalency Committee will make a recommendation to Human Resources as to equivalency. Again, the completed reviews will be returned to the Committee within ten calendar days.
5. If any Faculty reviewer feels that he or she cannot make an informed decision about a candidate's eligibility for equivalency because of a lack of sufficient information in the original application then the recommendation will be that the applicant not be granted equivalency.
6. The Equivalency Committee will convene to consider the reviews within one week of when the last one is returned. If the reviewers are unanimous about a candidate's qualifications for equivalency, then the Committee will forward the reviewers' decision to HR. If there is a difference of opinion among the reviewers about a candidate's qualifications for equivalency the reviewers will be asked to meet with the Committee (in person or via phone) to explain their rationales. The Committee members will then vote on the candidate's eligibility for equivalency and the secretary will forward the Committee's decision to the Academic Senate President and HR.
7. In all cases, a majority vote will be required to grant equivalency. A tied vote will deny equivalency.
8. Human Resources will then forward the committee's decision to the Superintendent/President.
9. Occasionally, the District may need to hire Faculty during the summer when the Equivalency Committee does not meet to review applications. If one or more applicants who apply during the summer do not meet minimum qualifications the following steps will be followed in order to determine equivalency:
 - a. The Administrator who serves on the Equivalency Committee will meet with the Equivalency Chair, or Academic Senate President if the Chair is not available, to determine which full-time Faculty member or members are appropriate to serve as discipline reviewers.
 - b. HR will contact the designated Faculty member(s), explain the situation and forward the applicant's packet to them with a timeline of 48 hours for a review to be completed and a recommendation returned.
 - c. The Faculty reviewer(s) must unanimously recommend that equivalency be granted in order for the process to move forward.
 - d. The Equivalency Committee Chair, or Academic Senate President, and Administrator will then review the discipline Faculty recommendation(s) and forward them, along with their own recommendations, to HR. Human Resources will then forward the committee's decision to the Superintendent/President. The Equivalency Chair, or Academic Senate President, and Administrator must unanimously concur with the discipline Faculty's recommendation that equivalency be granted in order for the applicant to be forwarded to the screening committee.

- e. If the assigned discipline Faculty member(s) are unable to complete their review within 48 hours, the Equivalency Chair, or Academic Senate President, and the Administrator will each make a recommendation regarding equivalency based on a thorough review of the Chancellor's Office guidelines and then those recommendations will be forwarded to HR. Again, the Equivalency Chair, or Academic Senate President, and Administrator must unanimously recommend that equivalency be granted in order for the applicant to be forwarded to the screening committee.