



Proposal from Academic Senate

AP 7211

EQUIVALENCE TO MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR ACADEMIC PERSONNEL

I. Purpose

All academic personnel must meet minimum qualifications as set forth in the Board of Governor's (BOG) Disciplines list and in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. Districts are authorized to establish local policies and practices for determining equivalence to the minimum qualifications.

This policy establishes criteria and procedures for the application of equivalencies to the minimum qualifications established in Hartnell College Board Policy. The standards and practices set forth in this policy shall be applied to determine the qualification for hire of candidates, for credit or noncredit assignments, who state they possess education, training, and/or experience at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications established by Title 5.

II. Policy

It is the policy of Hartnell College that hiring procedures and guidelines be established to provide for college academic personnel who:

- are highly qualified,
- are expert in their subject and administrative areas,
- are skilled in teaching and serving the needs of a diverse student population,
- can foster overall college effectiveness, and
- are sensitive to the diversity of the adult population of the state of California.

The Board of Trustees, represented by the Administration, has the principal legal and public responsibility for ensuring an effective hiring process. The faculty, represented by the Academic Senate, has an inherent professional responsibility in the development and implementation of policies and procedures governing the hiring process, and to ensure the quality of its faculty peers. Essential to fulfill these responsibilities are the standards and practices to determine when an applicant for a faculty position, though lacking the exact degree or experience specified in the BOG Disciplines List and in Title 5 as minimum qualifications, nevertheless does possess qualifications that are at least equivalent. In such

cases, equivalency determination will allow consideration of the applicant as part of the applicant pool.

III. Equivalency Review Committee

An Equivalency Review Committee consisting of the following members shall conduct determination of Equivalency to Minimum Qualifications:

- Academic Senate President, or designee
- One faculty member from the discipline for which a candidate is applying for equivalence
- One additional faculty member appointed by the Academic Senate to serve for the year
- Chief Instructional Officer, or designee

IV. Standards

The granting of equivalency is on a case-by-case basis. Equivalency may be achieved by course work or work experience. Equivalency may never mean lesser qualifications than the published minimum qualifications.

A candidate who claims equivalent qualifications shall be responsible for providing conclusive evidence, as clear and reliable as the college transcripts being submitted by the other candidates, that s/he has qualifications at least equivalent to those required. The candidate shall also be available for interview or examination, if requested. All material provided shall remain in the applicant's file or personnel file.

Under no circumstances is the granting of equivalency to the minimum qualifications to be construed as a determination that a candidate shall or shall not be interviewed or hired. Once granted equivalency, the candidate shall be placed in a pool of qualified applicants, any number of whom may be considered for a given position. Adjunct faculty applicants granted equivalency prior to the implementation of this policy must be re-evaluated under the terms of this policy. Full-time faculty granted equivalency in the discipline for which they were hired will not require re-evaluation for that discipline.

Each district establishes its own equivalency process, and equivalency is not transferable from district to district. Therefore, when academic personnel apply for a position in another district, they may need to go through that district's equivalency processes. Applicants who have been granted equivalency in another district will be required to establish equivalency at Hartnell College based on this policy.

Minimum qualifications, and therefore equivalencies, are determined for disciplines, not for subject areas or courses within a discipline. An applicant is either qualified to teach a full range of courses in a discipline or not, regardless of whether applying for a full- or part-time

position.

V. Qualifications

Hartnell College expects that some candidates may meet the minimum qualifications through the equivalency process. Candidates who have completed all the appropriate coursework for a particular degree but do not possess the specific degree named on the BOG Disciplines List may possess equivalent qualification, which may be in the form of academic coursework and/or degrees, or work experience, or a combination thereof. An applicant making such a claim must provide conclusive evidence of meeting the requirements stated below.

Faculty hiring falls into three categories as identified by the BOG Disciplines List:

- *Disciplines Requiring a Master's Degree*
- *Disciplines in Which a Master's Degree is Not Generally Expected or Available but Which Require a Specific Bachelor's or Associate Degree*
 - These disciplines require specifically named bachelor's degree(s) and two years of experience or specifically named associate degree(s) and six years of experience.
- *Disciplines in Which a Master's Degree is Not Generally Available*
 - These disciplines require ANY bachelor's degree and two years of experience or ANY associate's degree and six years of experience.

A. Equivalence to Academic Degrees

To establish equivalence to the academic degree requirements for either category above, the candidate must possess at least the equivalent in level of achievement and in breadth, depth of understanding, and rigor for each of the following as separate and distinct criteria:

- A broad cultural education, usually met by the General Education requirement for any bachelor's or associate's degree.
- A detailed study of the discipline in breadth, depth, and rigor, usually met by course work required for the degree major.

A candidate must provide conclusive evidence of fulfilling both criteria above to be considered to possess the equivalent of the degree in question.

The following criteria shall be applied to determine equivalence:

1. Formal Education Equivalent to the Master's Degree (must meet one of the following):
 - a. A Master's degree in a related discipline as determined by the Equivalency Committee, including 15 semester units of graduate and upper division course work

within the discipline specified in the job announcement, at least 12 of which must be at the graduate level.

- b. A Master's degree in any discipline plus a bachelor's degree in the discipline specified in the job announcement, AND **additional** post baccalaureate coursework equivalent to a graduate major in the discipline specified in the job announcement (30 units of upper division and/or graduate units, of which at least 15 units must be graduate).
 - c. In rare cases, a Bachelor's degree in the discipline specified in the job announcement or a related discipline as identified in the BOG Discipline's List or determined by the Equivalency Committee, plus 30 **additional** semester units of graduate course work in the discipline specified in the job announcement. This must include coursework designed for master's level research.
2. Formal Education Equivalent to the Bachelor's Degree:
 - a. At least 120 semester units, including 45 semester units representing a diversity of courses generally accepted as general education and, for disciplines that require a specific Bachelor's degree, 30 units in the discipline specified by the job announcement, of which 24 are upper-division or graduate units.
 3. Formal Education Equivalent to the Associate's Degree (must meet one of the following):
 - a. At least 60 semester units, including 18 semester units representing a diversity of courses generally accepted as general education. Candidates who have greater than 45 semester units and fewer than 60 semester units may be granted a one semester equivalency during which they must make progress toward obtaining the 60 units.
 - b. A current, valid certificate to work or a license to practice in California in the discipline specified by the job announcement and at least 30 semester units, including 18 semester units representing a diversity of courses generally accepted as general education.

B. Equivalence to Work Experience

Disciplines for which a Master's degree is not expected require either a two-year minimum work experience with a bachelor's degree or a six-year minimum with an associate's degree. To establish equivalence to the experience required for disciplines in which a Master's degree is not generally expected or available, candidates must show possession of thorough and broad knowledge for each of the following as separate and distinct criteria:

- Mastery of the skills of the vocation thorough enough to teach the courses assigned to the discipline, and
- Extensive and diverse knowledge of the working environment of the vocation.

A candidate must present conclusive evidence of fulfilling both criteria above to be

considered to possess the equivalent of the experience in question.

VI. Evidence

It is the candidate's responsibility to request equivalency at the time s/he submits the application and to provide conclusive evidence that they possess qualifications at least equivalent to those required. The conclusive evidence must be as clear and reliable as college transcripts submitted by other candidates.

1. Evidence of Coursework:

Conclusive evidence for general education or major coursework shall be transcript(s) demonstrating that the applicant successfully completed appropriate courses at a regionally accredited college or equivalent foreign institution whose accredited status is recognized by the district. The applicant will indicate on the Equivalency Request Form which courses on the transcripts are the appropriate courses for demonstrating that equivalency criteria are met.

2. Evidence of Work Experience Equivalence

Conclusive evidence for equivalence to work experience shall be:

- a. Publications, skill demonstration, or other products demonstrating the applicant's command of the occupational skills and working environment in question.
- b. Verification from employers, clients, or other objective entities, of the applicant's employment history in a closely related occupational field.

VII. Process

Screening of applications shall occur in accordance with the district hiring policy mutually agreed upon by the Academic Senate and Board of Trustees. The Equivalency Review Committee shall screen all applications requesting qualification through equivalency.

The Equivalency Review Committee shall review applications requesting equivalency or referred to equivalency review in accordance with the standards and qualifications set forth in this policy. Applications that are determined to meet the standards for equivalence to minimum qualifications will be included in the applicant pool for full consideration by the appropriate hiring committee. Applications determined to not meet equivalence to minimum qualifications by the Equivalency Review Committee will not be included in the applicant pool.

VIII. Noncredit Applications

Applications requesting equivalency for non-credit applicants shall also be reviewed using this policy.

IX. Community College Teaching Credentials

Applicants holding a valid California Community College Teaching Credential appropriate to the discipline are viewed as meeting minimum qualifications. (Credentials were offered prior to 1990 and were grandfathered into the minimum qualifications definitions.) In such cases the equivalency process is not necessary.

IX. Emergencies

Hiring, and thus the need to determine equivalencies, may sometimes occur under very short timelines and during times when faculty are not working, i.e. during the days just before a semester begins. The Academic Senate President or designee and the annual faculty appointment to the Equivalency committee will make every effort to be available for such equivalency needs. In such rare instances as review by the full Equivalency Review Committee is not possible, the Chief Instructional Officer and the President of the Academic Senate or designee can mutually agree to review the applicant's file and grant equivalency for a period not exceeding one semester if applicant meets all criteria for equivalency. Equivalencies granted under this emergency clause must be re-reviewed through the regular equivalency process before applicant may be offered further assignments.

X. Faculty Seeking to Serve in an Additional Discipline

Faculty already employed under a contract may acquire new assignments only if they meet the requirements specified in the BOG Disciplines List, possess qualifications that are at least equivalent to those specified in the BOG Disciplines List, or possess an appropriate credential. Those who believe that, although they lack both the specified qualifications and an appropriate credential, they do possess the equivalent shall be subject to the process described above, except that the process shall begin when a faculty member submits a request together with the conclusive evidence required of candidates for hire as indicated above. The process delineated above shall be used to review the application to serve in an additional discipline and determine whether the applicant meets the equivalency requirements.

This process resolves only whether the applicant has the equivalent of the minimum qualifications, not whether s/he may be assigned to teach courses in a new discipline.

XI. Interpretation

This policy and its standards and procedures shall be interpreted to be consistent with applicable provisions of the Education Code and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

XII. Review and Revision

This policy and its standards and procedures are subject to review and revision at the request of the Academic Senate or the Board of Trustees. Changes to this policy, standards, or procedures shall be determined by mutual agreement of the Board of Trustees (or designee) and the Academic Senate, consistent with Hartnell College's shared governance policy and with California law pertaining to shared governance.

Academic Senate adopted 3-22-11

Board of Trustees approved 5-3-11