

Sierra College

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

AP 7211

Faculty Service Areas, Minimum Qualifications and Equivalency Process

Date Adopted: 6/1/1986

Date Revised: 3/8/2019

Date Reviewed: 3/8/2019

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

Faculty Service Areas:

Sierra College has established one (1) faculty service area. This area was established after negotiation and consultation with appropriate faculty representatives.

Minimum Qualifications:

Faculty shall meet minimum qualifications as established by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, or shall possess qualifications that are at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications as set forth in the Board of Governors' regulations.

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 Board of Trustees relies primarily on the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate, the Academic Senate shall appoint an Equivalency Committee to:

- Establish equivalency guidelines that reflect Academic Senate primacy for recommendations in this AP to include but not limited to full-time faculty hires, part-time faculty hires, administrative retreat to faculty where clear minimum qualification requirements are unclear, etc.
- Be available for screening and hiring selection committees to determine equivalencies for these committees in a time sensitive manner though requests for equivalencies that fall outside of instructional faculty days, as issues of compensation and working conditions, are subject to the terms and conditions of the SCFA/District contract.

- Communicate and explain, when requested, the decisions of the Academic Senate Equivalency Committee to the screening or hiring committee as described below.
- Recommend all equivalency determinations to the Board of Trustees.
- Further clarify the criteria to be used for determining equivalency.
- Ensure that careful records are kept of all equivalency determinations.
- Periodically review this procedure and recommend necessary changes to the Board of Trustees.
- In general, ensure that the equivalency process works well and meets the requirements of the law.

The following procedure is to be used to determine when an applicant for a faculty position, whether full or part time, although lacking the exact degree or experience specified in the Disciplines' List of the California Community Colleges 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. It is not intended to grant waivers for lack of the required qualifications.

Full-time Faculty Positions:

All faculty position announcements will state the required qualifications as specified by the Disciplines' List, including the possibility of meeting the equivalent of the required degree or experience.

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. 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 a regular associate or bachelor's degree.

As its first task, the faculty hiring/selection committee collectively or, at minimum, one discipline faculty serving on the hiring committee, and the Academic Senate Equivalency Chair or Senate approved designee(s) will examine the minimum qualifications stated by each candidate. All applicants noting that they qualify for the position based upon an equivalency and any applicants whose qualifications are uncertain shall be referred to the Academic Senate for an equivalency hearing. The human resources participant on the hiring committee shall be charged with contacting the relevant applicants should any further documentation for an equivalency be required. The Academic Senate Equivalency Committee shall examine each of the relevant applications and determine equivalency

prior to the examination of any applications by the hiring/selection committee for the purpose of selecting interviewees and notify the chair of the hiring committee of its decisions. Only applicants who are found to meet the test of equivalency shall be potentially selected for interview. No single subject equivalencies shall be approved by the Sierra College Community College District.

Part-time or Emergency Equivalency Procedures:

The Academic Senate Equivalency Committee shall employ the following procedures in emergencies or special circumstances:

- In case a candidate to be offered an adjunct or temporary position is also an equivalency claimant, the screening committee shall contact the Academic Senate so as to convene an Equivalency Committee immediately following the identification of a possible hiring and as early in the screening process as possible. The Academic Senate Equivalency Committee shall meet in as timely a manner as possible and communicate their decision regarding the status of the equivalency to the relevant Educational Administrator and/or screening committee chair.
- For the purposes of this procedure, an emergency or special circumstance is defined as a situation in which the full hiring process cannot be carried out in a timely manner. Such situations may include, but are not limited to the following:
 1. Vacancies that occur shortly before the beginning of a session in which there is not sufficient time for the full equivalency process to take place.
 2. Additional sections of a class added shortly before the beginning of a session or after the session begins.
 3. An unforeseen opportunity, occurring shortly before the beginning of a session, to staff sections in locations, venues, or subject matter specialties for courses which previously have been difficult to schedule (certain off-campus sites, contract education, short courses, etc.).

The District may elect to award equivalency, based upon the recommendation of an Academic Senate appointed Equivalency Committee, for faculty teaching in vocational disciplines that do not require a master's degree.

- 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 all be earned from a regionally accredited postsecondary educational institution.
- Claims of equivalence for teaching in CTE areas must also 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 a regular associate or bachelor's degree.

- Related occupational experience: May be substituted by teaching experience in the discipline or related discipline on a year-for-year basis.
- Recency: An individual employed to teach a vocational discipline shall demonstrate a competency in the current technology of that discipline.

The Academic Senate Equivalency Committee shall establish procedures in cases of emergencies or special circumstances.

Eminence: In rare cases, the district will consider equivalencies based upon eminence. Requests for equivalency based upon eminence must necessarily be considered on a case-by-case basis. The following criteria will be used by the Equivalency Committee to determine whether an equivalence to the minimum qualifications established by the Board of Governors has been met. The candidate for consideration is responsible for providing evidence to support the claim that each of the following criteria has been met.

1. There must be consensus in the discipline's full-time faculty with regards to the recommendation for this equivalency.
2. The candidate must be nationally recognized for their contribution to the subject matter of the discipline.
3. The candidate's contribution to the subject matter of the discipline must span a sufficient range of the diversity of topics within the discipline to constitute a full equivalence to the minimum qualifications for the discipline and not merely a constitutive portion of the subject matter covered by the discipline.
4. The candidate's application must also demonstrate a breadth of knowledge equivalent to the General Education requirements established by the requisite degrees required by the Minimum Qualifications set by the Board of Governors.

See Board Policy 7211.