

# Article 15: Faculty Service Areas & Competency Standards, and Reduction in Force of Faculty Positions

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"FACULTY SERVICE AREA (FSA)" means a service or instructional subject area or group of related services or instructional subject areas performed by faculty and established by a community college district. (See [Ed Code Section 87743.1.](#)) FSA's are the teaching or service areas that will be governed by the same competency standards for determining assignment to the FSA. The decisions about the boundaries of each FSA were made by the Sonoma County Junior College District faculty at the department level and approved by AFA and the Board of Trustees. Beginning July 1, 2009, the Sonoma County Junior College District will adopt as its FSA's the most current "[Disciplines List](#)" approved by the [statewide Academic Senate](#). FSA's established before this date will remain in force.

"COMPETENCY STANDARDS" means the Sonoma County Junior College District requirements, in addition to the minimum and local qualifications that must be met by any faculty member to be recognized as being competent to serve in a faculty service area (FSA). (See [Ed Code Section 87743.5.](#)) These standards were developed in consultation with the Academic Senate and approved by AFA and the Board of Trustees. (See also [District Policy 4.3.2b, Equivalency of Faculty Qualifications.](#))

"REDUCTION IN FORCE" means an official status instituted after due process that requires faculty members to be removed from current assignments and may involve the layoff of the tenured faculty members if no suitable assignments can be determined through evoking seniority rights. (See [Ed Code Sections 87743–87746](#) and [District Policy 4.3.2d, Reduction-in-Force of Faculty Positions.](#))

"SENIORITY RIGHTS" means the right of senior faculty members to retain employment in the District in those subjects that they are both qualified and competent to teach. Priority of assignment in a reduction-in-force situation is based on placement on the District-maintained seniority list. Seniority rights can be exercised by faculty members only in their assigned FSA's. Seniority means length of service of regular faculty member ranked by date of hire with drawing of lots determining placement of faculty hired on the same date. (Note: A copy of the *Seniority List* for the District is available in the Human Resources Department.)

**15.01 GENERAL PROVISIONS:** Invoking of seniority rights within faculty service areas (FSA's) only occurs during an official reduction-in-force situation (see [Ed Code Section 87743–87746](#)). (See also 15.04, 15.05 and 15.06.)

## 15.02 INITIAL ASSIGNMENT TO FACULTY SERVICE AREAS (FSA'S):

"Each faculty member shall qualify for one or more faculty service areas at the time of initial employment. A faculty member shall be eligible for qualification in any faculty service area in which the faculty member has met both minimum qualifications and district competency standards" ([Ed Code Section 87743.3](#)). Assignment to an FSA is official recognition that faculty members meet both the minimum qualifications (and local qualifications, if any) to teach a discipline within an FSA and the competency standards for that FSA. Each faculty member is assigned to one (1) or more FSA's at time of hire.

- A. **Disciplines List.** Beginning July 1, 2009, the Sonoma County Junior College District will adopt as its FSA's the most current [Disciplines List](#) approved by the [statewide Academic Senate](#). FSA's established before this date will remain in force.
- B. **Additional Local Qualifications.** Academic Senate guidelines provide that each District may establish additional qualifications more rigorous than those listed in the [Disciplines List](#). At a regularly scheduled department meeting, all contract faculty in a given discipline will decide by majority vote on adopting more rigorous local qualifications. The department chair is responsible for conveying the minimum qualifications recommendations to the Academic Senate President for signature and approval after which the appropriate vice president will sign for final approval. In order for departmentally-approved minimum qualifications to be listed in the annual jobs announcements, they must be received by Human Resources by September 1<sup>st</sup>; departments may approve changes at any time during the academic year, but they will not be implemented until the publication of the new job announcements.

## 15.03 ASSIGNMENT TO ADDITIONAL FSA'S

- A. **Application to Add FSA's:** After initial employment and assignment to FSA's, any faculty member may apply to the District to add FSA's for which the faculty member qualifies (meets both the discipline minimum qualification — including local qualifications if any — and competency standards). The faculty member will initiate the process and file the application with the Human Resources Department on or before February 15 of any year.
- B. **Publication of FSA's:** On an annual basis, FSA's for regular faculty will be noted on the faculty seniority list and published in the Board agenda. An email will be sent to all regular faculty members and academic administrators notifying them that seniority and the FSA list has been published.

## 15.04 ESTABLISHING SENIORITY LIST AND APPLICABLE FSA'S

- A. **Placement on Seniority List:** Acknowledgment of the possibility of a reduction-in-force is implicit in the original hiring of regular faculty. At the time of hiring the faculty member is placed on a seniority list according to date of hire in the District with the use of a lottery to determine ranking among those with the same date of hire. The District will publish the date-of-hire list annually for review by the faculty.
- B. **Assignment to Faculty Service Areas:** A new faculty member will be assigned to one (1) or more FSA's based on minimum qualifications and teaching assignment according to the provisions of this article.

## 15.05 EXERCISE OF SENIORITY RIGHTS

- A. **Implementation:** At the time of an official reduction-in-force of faculty, seniority rights may be exercised only in the FSA's that the faculty member has been assigned prior to the official notice of the reduction-in-force situation.
- B. **Tenured Faculty Rights:** “. . . However, the services of no tenured employee may be terminated under this section while any probationary employee, or any employee with less seniority, is retained to render a service in a faculty service area in which the records of the district maintained pursuant to Section 87743.4 reflect that the tenured employee possesses the minimum qualifications prescribed by the board of governors and is competent to serve under district competency criteria.” ([Ed Code Section 87743.](#))
- C. **Assignments:** The Board shall make assignments and reassignments in a manner that employees shall be retained to render any service which their seniority and qualifications entitle them to render.

**15.06 FACULTY HIRED PRIOR TO JULY 1, 1990:** Faculty hired prior to July 1, 1990 will be “grandparented” recognition as being qualified in all the disciplines covered by existing credentials and/or meeting new minimum qualification requirements as of July 1, 1990. These faculty members will be deemed competent (in the AB 1725 context) in those disciplines in all areas covered by their credential and qualifications and thus qualified for assignment to FSA's associated with those areas.

## 15.07 COMPETENCY STANDARDS

- A. **Establishing FSA Seniority Rights in Nonassigned FSA's:** The District has defined competency standards to be met by those who wish to exercise seniority rights in an FSA other than the one of their teaching assignment. In order to be recognized as being competent to teach or offer a service within an FSA, the following District-wide competency standards must be met.
- B. **Definition of Additional Competency Standards:**
  - 1. After the faculty member has met the minimum qualification requirements to teach the discipline within the FSA, he/she must meet one (1) of the following four (4) standards:
    - a. Post-minimum qualification teaching experience of six (6) units in the discipline/service in the Sonoma County Junior College District, or
    - b. Post-minimum qualification paid full-time professional experience of two (2) years, and licensure if applicable, in the discipline/service, or
    - c. Post-minimum qualification additional education or training of fifteen (15) units in the discipline/service, or
    - d. Evaluation of qualifications by a review panel to determine equivalence to specified competency. Review panel composition to include voting members: instructional dean, department chair in FSA, and faculty member in FSA, and nonvoting Human Resources Department representative. Approval of the recommendation of the review panel will be made by the Superintendent/ President, or designee, within ten (10) working days of the review panel decision.

- 15.07** B. 2. Furthermore, the faculty member must meet both of the following standards:
- a. Any local qualifications that are applied to the position and
  - b. Special competencies determined by legal requirements or due to special nature of subject matter included in the specific FSA.

**15.08 RECORD OF FSA'S:** According to [Ed Code Section 87743.4](#), each district shall maintain a permanent record for each faculty member employed by the district of each FSA for which the faculty member possesses the minimum qualifications for service and in which he or she has established competency pursuant to district competency standards. The record shall be contained in the faculty member's personnel file.