

4.3.2bP

EQUIVALENCY OF FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

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Purpose. The following Equivalency 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 state's 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.

- A. 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.
- B. 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 qualifications. 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.
- C. The Screening and Selection Committee will first screen all qualified applicants, assuming that those claiming equivalency are in fact equivalent. Once applicants have been selected for interview, those claiming equivalency will have their claims reviewed by the Screening Committee prior to being interviewed. Only claimants who are found to meet the test of equivalency shall be invited for interview.
- D. 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..." The President/Superintendent, as the Board of Trustees designee, shall rely primarily on the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate, and follow the procedures outlined in Section G.

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 Screening and Selection Committees as a resource regarding equivalency determinations.
- 2. Review the recommendations of the Screening Committees as described above.
- 3. Recommend all equivalency determinations to the President/Superintendent.
- 4. Further clarify the criteria to be used for determining equivalency.

5. Ensure that careful records are kept of all equivalency determinations.
 6. Periodically review this Equivalency Procedure and recommend necessary changes to the Academic Senate and Board of Trustees.
 7. In general, ensure that the equivalency process works well and meets the requirements of the law.
 - a. Composition of the Committee. The Academic Senate shall form an Equivalency Committee of five members in accordance with the following guidelines:
 1. Three members of the Committee will be members of the academic senate electorate.
 2. One member of the Committee will be an adjunct faculty member.
 3. One member of the Committee will be an educational administrator.
 4. A member of the Human Resources Department may serve on the Committee as a nonvoting resource person.
 5. The Academic Senate president or designee will chair the Committee.
 - b. Committee members will be appointed to a two-year term.
- E. The Faculty Chair of the Screening Committee shall send its recommendations concerning equivalency and non-equivalency to the Human Resources Department and to the Academic Senate Equivalency Committee before candidates are notified of interviews. The Equivalency Committee will review the recommendations of the Screening Committee, asking the following questions:
1. Was the decision made in accord with this procedure, as outlined in subsections A, B and C, of this document?
 2. Specifically, did the Screening Committee follow the criteria for evidence of equivalency stated in this procedure?
 3. Are the Committee's decisions consistent with similar decisions made by earlier committees in this discipline or similar disciplines?
- F. The Equivalency Committee will work cooperatively with the Screening Committee to resolve any disagreements about the equivalency of a claimant. If agreement cannot be reached, the decision of the Academic Senate Equivalency Committee shall prevail, in accordance with Education Code Section 87359. The Human Resources Department will be promptly notified of the Committee's decision.
- G. The President/Superintendent will be informed of the committee's decision and asked to review it on behalf of the Board of Trustees. Since equivalency is one of the areas that the Board has elected to rely primarily upon the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate, the President/Superintendent will accept the decision of the Equivalency Committee, except for exceptional and compelling reasons. If the recommendation is not accepted, the Board shall, upon request of the Academic Senate, promptly communicate their reasons in writing to the Academic Senate (Title 5, Section 53203, d, 1 and Education Code Section 87358).
- H. SRJC may elect to award equivalency for faculty teaching in vocational disciplines that do not require the Master's degree.
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 all 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. Exceptions: In the rare case that an individual does not specifically meet the equivalency provisions as stated in the above Sections (H.1-3 above), and the department chair, the full-time faculty in that discipline (if applicable), supervising administrator, and Vice President of Academic Affairs/Assistant Superintendent or President/Superintendent all agree that the person is otherwise qualified to teach in that discipline, that individual's qualifications may be recommended to the Equivalency Committee Chair as deemed "equivalent" for that discipline.

I. Emergency or Special Circumstance Procedure

In emergencies or special circumstances the Department/Hiring committees shall employ the following procedure:

1. Definition: 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:
 - a. 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.
 - b. Additional sections of a class added shortly before the beginning of a session or after the session begins.
 - c. An unforeseen opportunity, occurring shortly before the beginning of a session, to staff sections in locations, venues or subject matter specialties for courses that previously have been difficult to schedule (certain off-campus sites, contract education, short courses, etc.).
2. Procedure:
 - a. If a candidate is claiming equivalency and is being considered for an Emergency Hire assignment, the Department Chair and/or Area Administrator (in consultation with a faculty member from the discipline) shall make a recommendation regarding the equivalency status to the Academic Senate Equivalency Committee prior to requesting an emergency hire.
 - b. The Equivalency Committee will review the recommendation and either accept or reject it. If the recommendation takes place during the summer or other times when the committee is not available, the petition may be forwarded to the Chair of the Equivalency Committee for review and recommendation. The recommendation will be forwarded to the President/Superintendent who will follow the procedures outlined in Section G of this document. If the equivalency is denied, the Department Chair and/or Area Administrator may request a review by the full Equivalency Committee.-