

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS, EQUIVALENCIES, AND
FACULTY SERVICE AREAS**AP No.
7211

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I. Minimum Qualifications and Equivalencies

Faculty shall meet the 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.

According to Education Code § 87359 individuals who do not possess the minimum qualifications for service may be hired as faculty members, if they possess “qualifications that are at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications.”

Any process developed to determine equivalencies “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 faculty member employed under the authority granted by the regulations possesses qualifications that are at least equivalent to the applicable minimum qualifications specified in regulations adopted by the board of governors” (Education Code § 87359, Title 5 § 53430).

Minimum Qualifications

Minimum qualifications (MQs) are the criteria by which faculty (Title 5, § 53402) are able to be hired in order to teach in the state of California (Title 5, § 53405). The state sets the MQs via a process facilitated by the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges; the MQs for all disciplines are maintained by the state Disciplines List (Title 5, § 53407). Local districts may apply additional MQs as they deem necessary, but local MQs may not be lower than the state standard. All faculty who teach in any discipline, whether full-time or part-time, must meet the MQs for their discipline prior to teaching; if faculty do not meet MQs, the units for the course that is taught are not valid (Title 5, § 53406). Not-for-credit (corporate and/or community education) instruction does not require MQs for hiring.

Equivalency

The Equivalency process is not intended to raise or lower MQs and exists to recognize alternate methods to become qualified. Upon determining Equivalency, the individual is deemed qualified to teach in the discipline for which Equivalency was granted. A determination of equivalency does not guarantee an interview, employment, or reassignment. The determination of equivalency establishes that the individual meets the MQs for the position and does not bestow rights to any position or process. The granting of an equivalency is on a case-by-case basis and does not establish precedent for future applicants.

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II. An Academic Senate **Equivalency Oversight Committee** shall be established to

- Recommend all established equivalencies to the Board of Trustees,
- Clarify criteria to be used for determining equivalency,
- Work with disciplines to review all established equivalencies for currency and accuracy at least every four years, and
- Periodically review equivalency procedures and recommend necessary changes to the Academic Senate and Board of Trustees.

The committee shall consist of six members: the Academic Senate President, four faculty appointed by the Academic Senate President **and approved by the senate**, and one non-voting representative from Human Resources appointed by the Executive Director of Human Resources. This committee shall be convened by the Academic Senate President as needed to conduct a review of established equivalencies or when issues arise regarding the equivalency process.

III. Determination of Equivalencies for Applicants

The following 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 or an established equivalency, 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, and any established equivalencies.
- B. The District employment application for faculty positions will ask applicants to state how they meet the minimum qualifications of the Disciplines List. Those claiming equivalency will be asked to demonstrate how they meet the stated equivalency. It will be the responsibility of the applicant to supply all evidence and documentation for the claim of equivalency at the time of application.

IV. The Human Resources Department will first screen all applicants. Those claiming equivalency will have their claims examined and approved by the **Discipline Equivalency Committee**.

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- The Discipline Equivalency Committee may be convened by the Human Resources Department at the start of the hiring process as needed.
- This committee shall consist of at least two full-time faculty in the discipline area (or full-time faculty in a related discipline may serve if there are fewer than two full-time faculty in the discipline), and the Academic Senate President.
- Each of the discipline faculty will independently review the equivalency applications and make a determination. If the determinations made by the discipline faculty are consistent, the Academic Senate President will confirm the determinations made and the equivalencies granted or denied. In the event that the determinations are not consistent, the Equivalency Oversight Committee will be convened for the purpose of achieving a consensus.

Only applicants who are found to meet provisions of the equivalency shall be forwarded to the selection committee.

V. Faculty Service Area

A Faculty Service Area (FSA), as defined by California Education Code §87743.1, is “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,” per Board Policy 7211 Faculty Service Areas, for which an academic employee is qualified shall be registered with the Office of Human Resources upon hire or upon qualifying for it. After initial employment, a faculty member may apply to the district to add faculty service areas for which the faculty member qualifies. This should be done prior to January 15 of any academic year in order to be considered in any proceeding during the academic year in which the application is received. At least one month prior to December 15 of each academic year, the Human Resources Office will notify faculty of the opportunity to and process for applying for an additional FSA. If the FSA is denied, faculty may refer to the grievance process in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Reference: Title 5 Section 53400 et seq, Education Code Sections 87001, 87003, 87356, 87359