

BP 7211 Faculty Service Areas, Minimum Qualifications, and Equivalencies

Reference: Education Code Sections 87355-87359.5; 86360

Title 5 California Code of Regulations Sections 53410 – 53417

The San Bernardino Community College District shall establish procedures for determining faculty service areas that adhere to collective bargaining agreements.

In addition, the District will establish procedures to determine minimum qualifications and equivalencies for minimum qualifications for hiring faculty that are compliant with relevant sections of the Education Code and Title 5 regulations and 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” per Education Code Section 87359(b). These procedures will ensure the hiring of highly qualified faculty who are experts in their subject matter areas, who are skilled in teaching and serving the needs of a varied student population, who can foster overall college effectiveness, and who are sensitive to and themselves represent the racial and cultural diversity of the College District community.

AP 7211 Faculty Service Areas, Minimum Qualifications, and Equivalencies

Reference: Education Code Sections 87001, 87003, 87355-87359.5; 86360, 87743.2

Title 5 California Code of Regulations Sections 53406, 53410 – 53417

Faculty Service Areas

Faculty service areas shall be established after negotiation and consultation as required by law with the appropriate faculty representatives.

Minimum Qualifications

The goal of the San Bernardino Community College District is to provide a faculty of highly qualified professional educators who are experts in their fields, skilled in teaching, and serve the needs of a varied student population. The District also seeks those who can promote overall college effectiveness and who are sensitive to the diversity of the District community. The San Bernardino College District shall employ faculty who possess the minimum qualifications, as established by the California State Chancellor’s Office (see publication, “Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges”).

Faculty are responsible for including a minimum qualification on all new curriculum or as part of a curriculum review process. All curriculum should be placed within a discipline that is identified as having a minimum qualification. It is best practice to place curriculum in the discipline that best matches the course content and for which the minimum qualifications of faculty best match the course content.

For departments that include courses with dual designators, deans and chairs from all relevant programs will collaborate to ensure the most qualified faculty teach these courses and minimum qualifications are met.

The Role of Human Resources

The role of the Human Resources office is to collect, date-stamp, and forward applications and other pertinent information to the appropriate discipline selection committee (full-time) or department chair and dean (part-time).

In addition, Human Resources ensures that the established minimum qualifications for the position will be listed in the job description/announcement. The District criteria for equivalency will be available at the Human Resources Department. A statement will be included in the application materials requiring all

candidates who do not possess minimum qualifications to indicate in the application material how they meet the equivalent qualifications for the position and to provide supporting documentation. The burden of proof for minimum qualifications and equivalency is on the applicant.

Human Resources staff will verify that applicants have the appropriate credential, or that applicants claiming the required minimum qualifications show the appropriate degrees on their transcript. If there is an experience requirement, College District Human Resource staff will verify that the applicant has the required number years of experience, but will not judge if the experience is appropriate.

If the applicant claims to possess the minimum qualifications, but the degree titles are significantly different from those listed in the "Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges," that application shall be considered under the equivalency process even if the applicant did not claim equivalency. Human Resources will rely primarily on the Academic Senate, in consultation with administration, to determine equivalency of degree titles based on an examination of an applicant's transcripts.

Human Resources forwards all applications which satisfy the credentials requirement, satisfy the minimum qualifications requirement, or are deemed to be equivalent to the college selection committee (full-time) or to the dean and chair in that department (part-time).

Supplemental Equivalency Application

Human Resources is responsible for maintaining a "Supplemental Equivalency Application." If a potential employee applies for a position and wishes to complete a "Supplemental Equivalency Application for Academic Employment", the following information should be provided:

Degree for which the applicant claims equivalency.

The educational preparation on which the applicant bases this claim for the major of the minimum degree.

The educational preparation on which the applicant bases this claim for the general education requirement of the minimum degree.

The relevant courses the applicant has taken or other evidence that the applicant has the equivalent of the General Education portion of the minimum degree.

An official transcript and copies of the appropriate pages from the catalog of the institution that granted the degree upon which the applicant bases a claim of equivalency.

Publications or other work products that support a claim of equivalency.

A detailed description of work experience which the applicant believes establishes equivalency to the minimum qualifications. If the applicant is using work products or other items which cannot be submitted, provide detailed information from an objective source about the nature of this work product or experience.

Equivalency

All community college faculty should exemplify the qualities of a college educated person.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 87359, 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." Equivalency may be recognized in three major ways: course work, work experience, and eminence in the field or a combination of the three.

Joint Equivalency Committee

The Dual College Equivalency Committee is comprised of the Academic Senate Presidents from each college, four faculty members, two from CHC and two from SBVC as appointed by their respective

Academic Senate president's and two administrators' one from CHC and one from SBVC as designated by the respective college VPI who are advisory to the process.

Process for Determination of Equivalency

In order to determine when an applicant for a faculty position who lacks the specific degree or experience specified in the "Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges" Handbook possesses qualifications that are equivalent, the following process has been established:

1. When Human Resources stipulates that a determination of equivalency is needed, the Equivalency Committee will be called to meet as soon as possible. Human Resources will provide the Equivalency Committee with the necessary information to determine equivalency no less than three working days prior to the meeting.
2. The dean, discipline faculty, and applicant may address the committee and provide additional information prior to the committee making a decision.
3. Determination of equivalency to the minimum qualifications for hire shall be decided, by majority vote in the Equivalency Committee and is final. The Equivalency Committee will document their determination in writing and send it to Human Resources within 5 working days.
4. If new information becomes available, a new request for equivalency may be submitted.
5. Human Resources will forward the written rationale from the Equivalency Committee explaining the equivalency decision to the applicant and dean.
6. The results of the Equivalency Committee decision shall be documented by Human Resources and records kept of all decisions. Individual voting by Committee members will not be recorded.
7. Education Code §87359(a) requires that the governing board take action on the equivalency before hiring occurs. Equivalencies shall be forwarded to the Office of the Chancellor to be placed on a Governing Board agenda.

Standards and Criteria Applicable for Determining Equivalency

The following standards and criteria apply when determining equivalency:

1. Minimum qualifications in a discipline—and, by extension, equivalency—are the same whether the position is for a full-time or part-time faculty member.
2. Equivalency is determined for an entire discipline, not on a course-by-course basis, per legal opinion I 03-28. The granting of equivalency is on a case-by-case basis and does not set precedence for future hires.
3. Past equivalency decisions in the discipline will be made available as needed to the Equivalency Committee or to the dean and chair in that department to aid in their deliberations and can be considered when determining equivalency, though they do not establish precedence.
4. Should an equivalency be granted, that decision shall not give the applicant any more or any less consideration than other applicants. In addition, granting an equivalency neither guarantees an interview nor a job.
5. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide all documentation in support of equivalency and to be available for questions. Applicants wishing to establish equivalency through work experience should provide objective, detailed information about those work experiences. Any applicant who fails to provide evidence to support his/her claim of a credential, or of minimum qualifications, or of equivalency may be eliminated from the applicant pool.

6. Various occupational experiences may be combined to total the required number of years established by the minimum qualifications; all experience must have taken place within the ten years preceding the date of application with at least one year of qualified experience occurring within the three years immediately preceding the date of application.
7. No candidate for a full-time position shall be invited to interview without meeting the minimum qualifications or having been verified as meeting the equivalency.
8. No candidate for part-time employment shall be hired without either meeting the minimum qualifications or having been verified as meeting equivalency per these procedures.

Provisional Equivalency

The Equivalency Committee shall not grant “provisional” or “temporary” equivalency. All faculty hires must possess the minimum qualifications or be determined to possess equivalency to the minimum qualifications to be employed by the college district.

Additional Criteria for the Equivalency Committee

In all cases in which equivalency is granted or denied, an officially signed form shall be filed with the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Academic Affairs. This form shall include a complete description of the Equivalency Committee’s reasons for determining that a candidate does or does not have the equivalent of the minimum qualifications for the position. The Human Resources Office is responsible for creating and maintaining this documentation.

Minimum Standards for Consideration of Equivalency to Minimum

Qualifications in Disciplines Requiring a Master’s Degree

In order to be considered for equivalency, In the case of disciplines normally requiring a Master’s degree, the minimum standard shall be any one of the following:

1. A Master’s degree in a discipline which is not specifically named in “Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges” for the particular discipline in question, but which, when courses (and course descriptions) are carefully reviewed, clearly constitutes parallel and/or closely related coursework to the discipline which is specifically listed in “Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges”.
2. In specific disciplines as named by the “Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges”, a bachelor’s degree in the discipline, plus licensure by an appropriate state agency, plus at least two years of professional experience, verified in writing.

Minimum Standards for Consideration of Equivalency to Minimum

Qualifications in Disciplines That Do Not Require a Master’s Degree

In order to be considered for equivalency in the case of disciplines not normally requiring a Master’s degree, the minimum standards shall be one of the following:

1. An Associate degree plus six years of related experience
2. Bachelor’s degree plus two years of related experience,

3. Associate degree plus graduation from an institution specific to that field, plus two years of professional experience in the discipline, verified in writing, plus appropriate certification to practice or licensure, if applicable.
4. The MQs for Credit ESL, English, and Reading will be used when evaluating Equivalency for Noncredit ESL, Noncredit Basic Skills Writing and Noncredit Basic Skills Reading.
5. Pursuant to Title 5 § 53406, all degrees and coursework must be from colleges/universities accredited by one of the intersegmental accrediting agencies: Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, North Central Associations of Colleges and Schools, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

Qualifications Established by Degrees and Coursework from Educational Institutions Outside of the United States

Applicants wishing to be granted equivalency based on coursework completed at an educational institution outside of the United States must provide the following:

1. A transcript assessment by a third party degree assessment service.
2. Proof that the institution is accredited in its country of operation or in the United States.

Local Minimum Qualifications and Equivalencies

Disciplines wishing to add “local” qualifications for hiring to their discipline beyond the minimum qualifications established by the “Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges”) may do so with approval of the Academic Senate with a recommendation from the Equivalency Committee. Local requirements may not be added on a course-by-course basis. Equivalency for the local requirement will be determined through the equivalency process.

Eminence

Although no legal definition of eminence exists, eminence shall mean that qualifications which, as evidenced by prominence and celebrity, is established by the specific industry and/or community at large and may be deemed equivalent to minimum qualifications. This may include appropriate local, state, national and/or international associations, trade unions, guilds or communities comprised of experts, who are themselves renowned in the specific field, and who can attest, in writing, to the prominence and celebrity of the applicant.

Eminence alone is not sufficient to grant equivalency. An application of equivalency based on eminence must be accompanied by conclusive evidence that the applicant exemplifies qualities of a college educated person and brings to the college district the knowledge and ability to expected at the college level. The applicant must provide documentation supporting the status of eminence

Relevant Education Code References

1. Assembly Bill 1725, Section 4 (p) (1) “The laws, regulations, directives, or guidelines should help the community colleges ensure that the faculty and administrators they hire and retain are people who are sympathetic and sensitive to the racial and cultural diversity in the colleges, are themselves representative of that diversity, and are well prepared by training and temperament to respond effectively to the educational needs of all the special populations served by community colleges.”
2. Assembly Bill 1725, Section 4 (s) (2) “The governing board of a community college district derives its authority from statute and from its status as the entity holding the institution in trust for the benefit of the public. As a result, the governing board and the administrators it appoints have the principal legal and public responsibility for ensuring an effective hiring process.”
3. Education Code, Section 87359 “No one may be hired to serve as a community college faculty member, instructional administrator, or student services administrator under the authority granted by the regulations unless the governing board determines that he or she possesses qualifications that are at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications specified in regulations of the board adopted pursuant to Section 87356. The criteria used by the governing board in making the determination shall be reflected in the governing board’s actions employing the individual. The process, as well as criteria and standards by which the governing board reaches its determinations, shall be developed and agreed upon jointly by representatives of the governing board and the academic senate, and approved by the governing board. The agreed upon 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 qualification specified in regulations adopted by the board of governors. The process shall further require that the governing board provide the academic senate with an opportunity to present its views to the governing board before the board makes a determination; and that the written record of the decision, including the views of the academic senate, shall be available for review pursuant to Section 87358.”
4. Education Code, Section 87359(a) “No one may be hired to serve as a community college faculty member or educational administrator under the authority granted by the regulations unless the governing board determines that he or she possesses qualifications that are at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications specified in regulations of the board of governors adopted pursuant to Section 87356. The criteria used by the governing board in making the determination shall be reflected in the governing board’s action employing the individual.”
5. Assembly Bill 1725, Section 4 (s) (3) “Faculty members derive their authority from their expertise as teachers and subject matter specialists and from their status as professionals. As a result, the faculty has an inherent professional responsibility in the development and implementation of policies and procedures governing the hiring process.”
6. Assembly Bill 1725, Section 4 (t) “While the precise nature of the hiring process for faculty should be subject to local definition and control, each community college should in a way that is appropriate to its circumstances, establish a hiring process that ensures that (1) Emphasis is placed on the responsibility of the faculty to ensure the quality of their faculty peers.”