

# Cerritos College Hiring Standards Procedures

## Definitions:

- I. “Minimum Qualifications” are the education and experience requirements recommended by the State Academic Senate, approved by the Board of Governors, and published as the Minimum Qualifications Disciplines List for Faculty in California Community Colleges. These minimum qualifications are necessary to teach in a California community college and cannot be altered or waived by a local institution. Failure to meet these minimum qualifications may result in the loss of state apportionment funds for any classes taught by faculty who do not meet minimum qualifications.
- II. “Local Standards” are qualifications for hiring, which the Hiring Standards Committee in conjunction with the faculty of the department has recognized as being more rigorous than, or in addition to, the Minimum Qualifications. According to section 4 (s) (4) of AB 1725 “. . . [C]olleges may establish criteria for hiring which go well beyond the minimum qualifications set by regulation. The establishment of additional criteria of this sort should be expected and encouraged.”
- III. “Equivalent Qualifications” are educational qualifications that do not match those of the Disciplines List, but which the discipline experts among faculty and the division dean, in conjunction with the review by the Hiring Standards Committee, deem to be equivalent to the minimum qualifications. The Committee decisions are based on documented evidence included in an Equivalency Request Form and must show that the qualifications are equivalent to the minimum qualifications in [both] general education and specialized subject matter knowledge.
- IV. “Pre-established Equivalencies” are educational qualifications which the Hiring Standards Committee in conjunction with the faculty of the department has recognized as being equivalent to the minimum qualifications. These equivalencies may involve degrees or majors which carry different names at different institutions but which are essentially the same as those contained in the Chancellor’s Office most recent Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges.
- V. “Emergency Hires” refers to a process when a faculty member is selected to teach a class without going through the regular hiring process, due to extenuating circumstances. All emergency hires must meet minimum qualifications and/or local standards or apply for equivalency.

## Procedures:

### I. THE HIRING STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Hiring Standards Committee is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate with the following responsibilities and composition:

#### A. Hiring Standards Committee Responsibilities

- i. To ensure that local standards and equivalencies as submitted by the divisions and departments of the District are clearly worded and in compliance with state law, standards and practices established by the State Academic Senate and approved by the Community College Board of Governors.
- ii. To ensure that the institution at large is regularly notified of changes to the current standards and practices at the state and local level regarding minimum qualifications, equivalencies, pre-established equivalencies, and local standards.
- iii. To ensure that equivalency standards are consistent with the actual functions and duties of the position, and do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, religion, national origin, or other factors which are not related to job performance
- iv. Equivalency decisions establish a standard. Candidates with equivalent coursework should be judged equally, and the process for consideration should follow established precedents. The committee's purpose includes protecting against favoritism, ensuring fairness and ensuring equal opportunity hiring practices.
- v. The Committee will consider requests from candidates for faculty positions who claim equivalency to the minimum qualifications and local standards. Upon request of a faculty selection committee or department chairperson, the committee will also evaluate candidates who may need equivalency, but did not originally request it. The Committee will determine whether a claim of "equivalency" is equivalent to the required qualifications in both general education and specialized subject matter knowledge.

The Committee will then make a recommendation to the department or faculty selection committee to grant or deny the claimed or requested equivalency.

If, in recommending the employment of new faculty, a faculty selection committee chooses a candidate who has been approved by the Hiring Standards Committee on the basis of equivalency, the Board of Trustees must be informed. If the Board of Trustees determines that it will employ the individual in a faculty position, the Board must approve the equivalency with its employment action.

B. Committee Composition and Voting

- i. The Hiring Standards Committee membership shall be composed according to the structure identified in the College document: Shared Governance: Purpose, Structure, and Process.
- ii. The Committee Chairperson(s) shall be a faculty member(s) elected by the voting members for a two-year term. The term shall commence on July 1 and end on June 30.
- iii. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson(s) to prepare and distribute the agenda, conduct meetings, forward recommendations to the Faculty Senate and then to the College Coordinating Committee, for information only, then to the Board of Trustees or its designee, and maintain the Committee website.
- iv. The participation of 50 percent plus one (1) of the voting members constitutes a quorum for conducting Committee business. To pass, any motion must receive at least a simple majority of the quorum. The Chair may break a tie.

II. PRE-ESTABLISHED EQUIVALENCY

- A. The faculty in each discipline or area are encouraged to propose a pre-established equivalency when a particular degree title and particular granting institution constitutes equivalent standards to the minimum qualifications or local standards.
- B. The department and dean provides a rationale to the committee and may participate in a meeting or on-line discussion.
- C. The approval requires a majority of the committee's quorum.
- D. The decision shall be forwarded to the Faculty Senate and Human Resources.

III. POLICY STATEMENT ON LOCAL STANDARDS

- A. The faculty in each discipline or area are encouraged to review their hiring qualifications and curricular needs and establish or revise their own local standards and/or pre-established equivalencies.
  - i. [C]olleges may establish criteria for hiring that go well beyond the minimum qualifications set by regulation. The establishment of additional criteria of this sort should be expected and encouraged” (AB 1725 ([s] [4])).
  - ii. “Districts may establish local qualifications beyond the minimum standards defined in the Disciplines Lists . . . .” (2014 Discipline’s List, p. 14).
- B. However, local standards and pre-established equivalency must be more rigorous than minimum qualifications:
  - i. “Local Standards may be created for each position which may exceed, but not be less than, those specified on the State’s Disciplines List of Minimum Qualifications (Discretionary Title 5 Code Section 53430[a]).
  - ii. “Each district may establish additional qualifications which are more rigorous than those listed herein (2014 Discipline’s List, p. 52).
  - iii. The Faculty Senate or designee must attest that the local standards is more rigorous before Human Resources will forward the information to the Board of Trustees.
  - iv. The Hiring Standards Committee will be available for consultation.

#### IV. REQUEST FOR EQUIVALENCY TO MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The following procedure is used to determine minimum qualifications equivalency of applicants during the selection process.

- A. As part of the application process, an applicant for a faculty position who does not meet the minimum qualifications for that position may request consideration for equivalency to the minimum qualifications and/or local standards. The applicant must complete the appropriate request form included in the application package. It is the applicant’s responsibility to provide all documentation they wish to have considered.
- B. For full-time faculty positions, requests for equivalency shall be forwarded to Hiring Standards in a manner consistent with the published Selection Procedures document for full-time faculty positions.

- i. **“If an applicant submits [their] application with a request for equivalency consideration, Human Resources will forward that request to the Hiring Standards Committee.”** The department chair and hiring division or area manager should complete an **Equivalency Request Form** and provide a recommendation to approve or deny the applicant’s equivalency request. The department chair may, at their discretion, choose to delegate their recommendation to the Minimum Qualifications Screening Subcommittee (if one is formed). The completed Equivalency Request Form should be sent to Human Resources and forwarded to the Hiring Standards Committee along with the applicant’s materials.
  - ii. **“If the Minimum Qualifications Screening Subcommittee [if one is formed] determines that they would like to consider an application that the Subcommittee determines does not meet minimum educational qualifications, then the Subcommittee may request that Human Resources forward the application to the Hiring Standards Committee.”** The department chair and hiring division or area manager should complete an **Equivalency Request Form** and provide a recommendation to approve or deny equivalency. The department chair may, at their discretion, choose to delegate their recommendation to the Minimum Qualifications Screening Subcommittee (if one is formed). The completed Equivalency Request Form should be sent to Human Resources and forwarded to the Hiring Standards Committee along with the applicant’s materials.
  - iii. **“If all of the voting members of a selection committee determine that they would like to consider an application that the committee determines does not meet minimum educational qualifications, then the committee may request that Human Resources forward the application to the Hiring Standards Committee.”** The department chair and hiring division or area manager should complete an **Equivalency Request Form** and provide a recommendation to approve or deny equivalency. The department chair may, at their discretion, choose to delegate their recommendation to the Minimum Qualifications Screening Subcommittee (if one is formed). The Equivalency Request Form should be sent to Human Resources and forwarded to the Hiring Standards Committee along with the applicant’s materials.
- C. For part-time faculty positions, requests for equivalency shall be forwarded to Hiring Standards as follows:
- i. If an applicant for a part-time faculty position submits their application with a request for equivalency, Human Resources will forward that

request to the Hiring Standards Committee. The department chair and hiring division or area manager should complete an Equivalency Request Form and provide a recommendation to approve or deny the applicant's equivalency request. The chair and manager's recommendation should be forwarded to the Hiring Standards Committee along with the applicant's materials.

- ii. If the department chair and hiring division or area manager would like to consider an application that they determine does not meet minimum educational qualifications, they may request that Human Resources forward the application to the Hiring Standards Committee. The department chair and hiring division or area manager should complete an Equivalency Request Form with a recommendation supporting the proposed equivalency. The completed Equivalency Request Form should be sent to Human Resources and forwarded to the Hiring Standards Committee along with the applicant's materials.

- D. Foremost consideration will be given to the recommendation of the faculty in the discipline. "Determination of equivalency is a faculty responsibility. Only faculty in the discipline in question possess the academic expertise needed to determine qualifications in that discipline. Thus, while the governing board may, indeed, ultimately provide the legal approval authority for equivalencies, only faculty in a discipline have the expertise to determine whether an applicant possesses the equivalent of the published minimum qualifications" (Equivalence to the Minimum Qualifications, ASCCC, 2006, p. 12). Nevertheless, an equivalency will not be granted without final approval by the Hiring Standards Committee. The committee may reject a proposal when a candidate's coursework and qualifications are not at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications or local standards. On the other hand, the committee's approval of an equivalency depends upon the mutual consent of the department, discipline if necessary, and division dean.

If the applicant's equivalency request is approved, the applicant will be added to the pool of other applicants for consideration by the selection committee. An applicant is not required to request equivalency, nor does approval of an equivalency mean that the candidate will be selected for interview.

- E. No interviews of applicants shall be conducted until the decision(s) regarding the request(s) is made. However, every effort will be made to provide a determination in a timely manner, to avoid holding up the screening process. If a request for equivalency is not approved, the applicant shall not be considered any further in the selection process for that position.

- F. “The role of the human resources office shall be limited to collecting, date-stamping, and forwarding applications and other pertinent information to the appropriate discipline selection committee.” (Equivalence to the Minimum Qualifications, ASCCC, 2006, p. 12).
- G. If the instructional area has pre-established equivalencies that have been approved, and the candidate meets the requirements of these pre-established equivalencies, the selection committee may proceed to consider the applicant along with other candidates.
- H. The rules relating to the confidentiality of the selection process prohibit the dissemination of information relating to the identification or qualifications of any individual candidate. Sessions to determine equivalency are closed meetings and the members of the Hiring Standards Committee follow the same rules of confidentiality as the members of the selection committee.
- I. If an application for equivalency is denied by a department and division dean, that decision can be validated by the votes of two HSC members, the division representative and chair of the Hiring Standards Committee. If the recommendation is to grant the equivalency, however, a majority of a quorum on the Hiring Standards Committee must vote to approve. All members of the selection committee may participate and provide input to the Hiring Standards Committee during the determination meetings or online discussion.
- J. The Committee will determine whether a claim of “equivalency” is equivalent to the required qualifications in both general education and specialized subject matter knowledge. This means that the minimum qualifications have been met or exceeded.

#### V. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF EQUIVALENCY

- A. “Equivalence” is determined according to discipline, not by course. Candidates hired on the basis of equivalency are deemed eligible to teach any class within the discipline.
- B. Equivalent preparation must include the areas of general education and specialized subject matter.
- C. For disciplines requiring a master’s degree, under no circumstances shall an equivalency be granted to an individual who does not possess at least a master’s degree.

- D. It is the candidate's responsibility to provide adequate evidence that their qualifications are at least equivalent to the minimum required qualifications.
- E. Equivalencies granted at another institution, including another California community college, do not carry over to any other institution. Thus, a candidate deemed equivalent somewhere else may be denied equivalency at Cerritos College.
- F. Equivalencies granted at Cerritos College apply for life, even if the state minimum qualifications change.

#### VI. COMMITTEE COMMUNICATION

- A. In addition to committee meetings, communication may take place using available technology (e.g., website, email, discussion forums, etc.). Decisions made by the committee will comply with the voting procedures outlined in the Committee Composition and Voting section of this document.
- B. To ensure an expedited committee decision process, an online or mailed ballot vote of the committee may be conducted, as established by identified in the College document: Shared Governance: Purpose, Structure, and Process.
- C. The committee will receive copies of all documents submitted by the candidate along with a ballot. Committee members may reject the mailed ballot process and call for a full committee meeting if so desired. The Chairperson(s) of the committee will retain the ballots for one full year following the vote and make them available to any committee member on request.

#### VII. EMERGENCY HIRING:

- A. An emergency hiring procedure provides for hiring faculty when a class previously scheduled has no instructor. However, faculty hired on an emergency basis must meet the minimum qualifications, local standards, or the equivalent.
- B. All applications for emergency hire are to be signed off by a The Faculty Senate President or officer or the Chair of the Hiring Standards to confirm that the emergency hire has met Minimum Qualifications or Local Standards. Should an equivalency be required, the procedures will follow the steps outlined in Section III above.

- C. The emergency hiring procedure does not by-pass or eliminate the standard faculty screening committee procedure for the position.
- D. The maximum period for which an individual may be hired on an emergency basis without an evaluation is two consecutive semesters.

VIII. PART-TIME FACULTY:

- A. In accordance with Title 5, the Cerritos College policy is that minimum qualifications and local standards apply to both full-time and part-time faculty.

IX. DISPOSITION OF COMMITTEE DECISIONS:

- A. Decisions on requests for consideration of equivalencies will, if approved, be forwarded to the Faculty Senate, Office of Academic Affairs, and Human Resources Department. If rejected, they will be returned to the Division Dean and Department Chair of the affected discipline.
- B. Decisions on requests for consideration of equivalency for individual applicants will be returned to the selection committee considering the applicant.
- C. Decisions on matters of committee procedures will be forwarded to the Faculty Senate for approval.
- D. Equivalency hiring decisions may be scrutinized by state auditors who have the authority to deny funding or demand repayment for any course taught by an instructor who does not meet the minimum qualifications, local standards, or the equivalent. Failure to hire individuals who meet minimum qualifications may also negatively impact the college's accreditation.

X. APPEALS OF COMMITTEE DECISIONS:

- A. The Hiring Standards Committee is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate. Therefore, any decision of the Committee may be appealed to the Faculty Senate and then to the Vice-President of Academic Affairs.

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