

<b>EQUIVALENCY PROCESS</b>	<b>3013</b>
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The San Luis Obispo County Community College District shall establish faculty hiring procedures and guidelines to provide for highly qualified college faculty who are expert in their subject areas, skilled in teaching and in serving the needs of a varied student population, able to foster overall college effectiveness, and sensitive to and themselves representative of the racial and cultural diversity of the adult population of the State of California.

The Board of Trustees of the district, represented by the administration, has the principal legal and public responsibility for ensuring an effective hiring process. The faculty, represented by the Academic Senate, has an inherent professional responsibility to ensure the quality of its faculty peers in the development and implementation of policies and procedures.

The equivalency policy and its procedures are subject to review and revision at the request of either the Academic Senate or the Governing Board. Changes in this policy require the joint agreement of the Academic Senate and the Governing Board, and until there is joint agreement, this policy will remain in effect.

The equivalency process will be guided by the statewide Academic Senate's official Disciplines List (a list approved and published by the Chancellor's Office) and the Cuesta College Addenda to the Disciplines List. One part of the equivalency process needed to fulfill these responsibilities is a set of regulations for determining when an applicant for a faculty position, though lacking the exact degree or experience specified in the official Disciplines List, nonetheless does possess qualifications that are at least equivalent. These regulations follow:

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Certain candidates for faculty positions may meet minimum qualifications through an equivalency process, having all the appropriate courses for a particular degree even though they do not possess the specific degree named on the Disciplines Lists. Other candidates who are obviously highly qualified may be able to demonstrate through publications or similar achievements that they have qualifications equivalent to those specified in the Disciplines List. However, a candidate who claims equivalent qualifications by either method will have to provide conclusive evidence--evidence as clear and reliable as the college transcripts being submitted by the other candidates--that he or she has qualifications that are at least equivalent to what is required by the minimum qualifications.

A. Equivalency Criteria

1. Applications for positions requiring an M.A. degree (per the official Discipline List): The candidate making the claim must provide conclusive documentation and argument in regard to both of the following to be judged to possess equivalent qualifications:
  - a. The General Education required for that degree; and
  - b. The major required for that degree.

The candidate must establish that he/she possesses the knowledge/proficiency which is the equivalent of a required degree in level of achievement and breadth and depth of understanding for each of the above as separate and distinct criteria.

2. Applicants for positions not requiring an M.A. degree (per the official Disciplines List): If the candidate is applying for a position which does not require an M.A. degree, he/she must provide conclusive evidence of equivalency to the following qualifications:
  - a. An A.A. degree and six years full-time experience in the field or a B.A. degree and two years experience in the field of prospective instruction.
  - b. Mastery of the skills of the vocation thorough enough for the proposed specific assignment and broad enough to serve as a basis for teaching other courses in the discipline.
  - c. Extensive and diverse knowledge of the working environment of the vocation.

A statement presenting argumentation for equivalency is required; if this is not attached to the application, the Human Resources Office shall not forward the application to the Selection Committee.

B. Evidence of Equivalency

Conclusive evidence shall include:

1. A transcript showing that appropriate courses were successfully completed at an accredited college or appropriate foreign institution;
2. Publications that show a command of the major in question, the general education of the candidate, or his or her writing skill;
3. Other work products that show a command of the major or occupation in question.

C. The Equivalency Process

1. Applicants for faculty positions who do not possess the stated qualifications but believe they possess the equivalent of the qualifications will submit, as appended to the application, an argument for the granting of equivalency. See the application packet for advice on form and content.
2. The Human Resources Office will identify those applicants requesting equivalency and notify the appropriate Selection Committee.
3. The members of the Selection Committee must consider equivalency applications on the same footing as all other applications, making no judgments about the value of the argument made in the application for equivalency. They must assume that the applicants are fully qualified.

On this assumption, if the Selection Committee wishes to interview an applicant who is applying by equivalency, the Selection Committee must immediately notify the Equivalency Committee, asking for a judgment in the equivalency matter. Information, opinion, or argumentation from the Selection Committee or individual members of it would be welcome as an important part of the consideration by the Equivalency Committee.

The Equivalency Committee will make a judgement as expeditiously as possible. No candidate shall be interviewed prior to the granting of equivalency by the Equivalency Committee.

4. The equivalency process for hiring faculty for a temporary position shall be the same in

every respect as that for hiring faculty for a regular position, and the same standards for judgment shall be applied. Temporary faculty, however, may be granted "limited equivalencies" for specific courses.

D. The Equivalency Committee

1. The Equivalency Committee of the Academic Senate shall consist of five members of the faculty, including at least one faculty member from the vocational/occupational education area, if at all possible, appointed by the Academic Senate for two-year terms. The Academic Senate Council will seek to balance the committee to reflect the college's subject, gender and ethnic diversity. At least one member will have the approval of the college's Affirmative Action Officer as to his or her training or sensitivity to affirmative action issues.
2. With a full complement of five members, a minimum of four members of the Equivalency Committee must vote favorably for equivalency to be granted. This may be qualified by two unusual circumstances; viz:
  - a. If at any time the committee consists of only four members, three affirmative votes are necessary for the equivalency to be granted.
  - b. If the Equivalency Committee is unable to consider an equivalency application in a timely manner; e.g., when the college is not in academic session, an Equivalency Committee member, the Selection Committee, or Dean/Division Chair/Director may institute an emergency procedure. Approval of the candidate must be based on the belief that the candidate does qualify for equivalency by a review of the documentation. An emergency equivalency must be approved by: (1) the entire Selection Committee, (2) the Vice President/Assistant Superintendent, Instruction, (3) the Dean, Division Chair, or Director, and (4) a member of the Equivalency Committee. An emergency equivalency shall be allowed to stand for one semester only, during which the Equivalency Committee will reach an official equivalency decision.
3. The decision of the Equivalency Committee is final. The decision and a written summary of the reasons for it, addressing separately each of the criteria above, shall be made available to all appropriate parties for review. A resubmittal, with new documentation, will be accepted.

E. Regular Faculty Seeking to Serve in an Additional Discipline or to Qualify for Additional Faculty Service Areas

Faculty who are already employed under a contract may serve in new assignments or additional faculty service areas only if they meet the requirements specified in the Disciplines List or possess an appropriate credential. Those who believe that they do possess the equivalent, although they have neither the specified qualifications nor an appropriate credential, shall be subject to the process described above. The process shall begin when a faculty member submits to the Human Resources Office a request together with the information required of candidates for hire as indicated above. A committee of discipline faculty, established as provided for selection committees in the hiring policy agreed upon jointly between the Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees, shall review that material and make a recommendation to the Equivalency Committee as in the process outlined above.

(Approved: 9/19/90)

(Revised: 7/1/92, 6/2/99, 12/8/99)