

YOSEMITE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT EQUIVALENCY POLICY & PROCEDURES

POLICY

It is the policy of Yosemite Community College District that faculty hiring procedures and guidelines be established to provide for a college faculty of highly qualified people: (a) who are expert in their subject areas; (b) who are skilled in teaching and serving the needs of a varied student population; (c) who can foster overall college effectiveness; and (d) who are sensitive to the racial and cultural diversity of the adult population of the state of California.

The governing board, represented by the administration, has the principal legal and public responsibility for ensuring an effective hiring process, including action on the equivalency as part of its subsequent hiring action. The faculty, represented by the respective Academic Senate of Modesto Junior College and Columbia College, has an inherent professional responsibility in the development and implementation of policies and procedures governing the hiring process, which ensure the quality of faculty peers.

One part of the process needed to fulfill these responsibilities is a procedure for determining when an applicant for a faculty position, though lacking the exact degree or experience specified in the Disciplines List as minimum qualifications, nevertheless does possess qualifications that are at least equivalent.

The procedure will require that the decision to grant equivalency be the responsibility of discipline faculty working through an Equivalency Committee created by the Academic Senate. The Academic Senate and college administration will be responsible for establishing and monitoring the process to assure its fairness, efficiency, and consistent adherence to standards.

Qualifications

The equivalency process provides a specific and comprehensive way to determine if a candidate meets the requirements to be granted equivalency. Candidates who have completed all the appropriate course work for a particular degree but do not possess the specific degree named on the Disciplines List may possess equivalent qualification. In some instances, a candidate who is obviously well qualified will be able to demonstrate through publications or other substantial achievements that he or she has qualifications equivalent to those specified in the Disciplines List. An applicant who claims equivalent qualifications will have to provide conclusive 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. Specifically, an applicant making the claim must provide conclusive evidence in regard to the following:

For disciplines requiring a Master's Degree:

Possession of a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, or equivalent foreign degree, in a discipline reasonably related to the faculty member's assignment, AND

- I. For establishing the equivalent of a required *Master's* degree, possession of at least the equivalent in level of achievement and breadth, depth of understanding, and rigor for each of the following as separate and distinct criteria:
 - A. The General Education required for that degree; **AND**
 - B. Course work required for the degree major.

A candidate must provide conclusive evidence in regard to both A and B above to be considered to possess the equivalent of the degree in question.

OR

- II. For the equivalent of required experience, possession of thorough and broad knowledge for each of the following as separate and distinct criteria:
 - C. Mastery of the skills of the vocation thorough enough for the proposed specific assignment and broad enough to serve as a basis for teaching the other courses in the discipline; **AND**
 - D. Extensive and diverse knowledge of the working environment of the vocation.

A candidate must present conclusive evidence in regard to both C and D above to be considered to possess the equivalent of the experience in question.

Evidence

Conclusive evidence shall at least include one of the following:

1. A transcript showing that the applicant successfully completed appropriate courses at a regionally accredited college or equivalent foreign institution whose accredited status is recognized by the US Department of Education;
2. Publications that show the applicant's command of the major in question, his or her general education, or his or her writing skill;
3. Other work products that show the applicant's command of the major or occupation in question;
4. Work experience verification.

For disciplines in which the Master's Degree is not generally expected or available:

For faculty assigned to teach courses in disciplines where the master's degree is not generally expected or available, which are, generally, disciplines in specialized technical, trade, or industrial fields, either of the following:

- A Possession of a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, or equivalent foreign degree, in a discipline reasonably related to the faculty member's assignment, plus two years of professional experience, plus appropriate certification to practice or licensure or its equivalent, if available.
- B Possession of an associate degree from an accredited institution in a discipline reasonably related to the faculty member's assignment, plus six years of professional experience, plus appropriate certification to practice or licensure or its equivalent, if available.

Evidence

Conclusive evidence shall at least include one of the following:

1. A transcript showing that the applicant successfully completed appropriate courses at a regionally accredited college or equivalent foreign institution whose accredited status is recognized by the district;
2. Publications that show the applicant's command of the major in question, his or her general education, or his or her writing skill;
3. Other work products that show the applicant's command of the major or occupation in question;
4. Work experience verification.

Academic Senate Equivalency Committee Responsibility

The Academic Senate Equivalency Committee shall review the documentation of evidence and the signed *Determination of Faculty Equivalency* form. The equivalency committee's oversight of this information is to determine if the candidates seeking equivalency warrant an interview.

No candidate shall receive an interview unless the minimum qualifications or the equivalent of the minimum qualifications as specified in the current Chancellor's Office Minimum Qualifications are met. If any screening committee has chosen candidates for interview who do not meet these minimum qualifications and are requesting that equivalencies are granted, then the Academic Senate Equivalency Committee shall evaluate these applicants' claims of equivalency according to the procedures described below.

The application and supporting materials for any candidate who does not meet the minimum qualifications or equivalency shall be forwarded to the equivalency committee of the academic senate for review prior to any candidate receiving an interview.

PROCEDURES

Due to the significant difference in size and scale between Columbia College and Modesto Junior College, the procedures for completing the equivalency process vary. Modesto has chosen to have a discipline-based equivalency pre-screening committee which will send its recommendations on to a permanent Academic Senate Equivalency Committee. Columbia College has chosen to create discipline focused Equivalency Committees, chaired by the Academic Senate President, as needed when equivalency requests are made. Below are the detailed procedures for each college.

MODESTO JUNIOR COLLEGE

Discipline Prescreening Committee Procedures

At MJC, prescreening of applications shall be done in accordance with the district hiring policy as jointly developed and agreed upon by the academic senate and the governing board (See Education Code 87358). Prescreening minimum qualifications or pre-established equivalence will be done by the discipline prescreening committee; this committee shall consist of three full-time faculty members within the discipline where equivalency is being sought. If there are not at least three full-time members of the discipline in question, the Academic Senate President may call on part-time faculty or faculty members from a related discipline to help in this task. If the discipline prescreening committee agrees that a candidate should be considered for equivalency, they will forward the *Determination of Faculty Equivalency* form—with their signatures—and the accompanying documentation of evidence regarding the candidate's equivalency to the Academic Senate President who will meet with the Senate Equivalency Committee. The immediate administrator's signature is also required before this form can be forwarded to the Academic Senate President. The discipline prescreening committee shall also send to the equivalency committee a separate statement for each criterion of equivalency claimed by the applicant.

Academic Senate Equivalency Committee Procedures

The responsibility of the academic senate's equivalency committee is to ensure that selection committees all follow the same process for determining equivalency. The academic senate equivalency committee shall consist of three members appointed by the Academic Senate President with each member selected for a term of at least one year. The Academic Senate President will chair the equivalency committee. The committee shall meet within five working days of receiving materials from the discipline prescreening committee to review that work. It is recommended that one of the discipline prescreening members attends this meeting for informational—but non-voting—purposes.

The equivalency committee will: (a) review the signed *Determination of Faculty Equivalency* forms; (b) review all relevant evidence used to support granting equivalency as outlined in this document; (c) seek clarification with the discipline prescreening committee regarding the evidence provided and the process used in forwarding each equivalency applicant's request; and (d) either agree or disagree with the discipline prescreening committee's recommendations.

All requests for equivalency that have been approved will require additional signatures from the equivalency committee members and the Academic Senate President. The completed *Determination of Faculty Equivalency* form will then be sent to the YCCD Human Resources department for further processing. The Human Resources department will make sure that copies of all approved faculty equivalencies (i.e., containing ALL signatures) will be forward to: (a) the instructor's personnel file; (b) either student services OR the instruction office, as appropriate to the hire; (c) the immediate supervisor; and (d) the applicable Academic Senate office.

All requests for equivalency that have been denied will have the opportunity to re-apply provided that areas of concern have been addressed. It is expected that this *Equivalency Policy and Procedures* document will be updated and revised to reflect a clearer discussion of any appeals process. Regardless, any equivalency candidate who does not have a completed *Determination of Faculty Equivalency* form—with all of the required signatures—shall not be hired by the board to teach Yosemite Community College District.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE

The responsibility of the academic senate's equivalency committee is to ensure that selection committees all follow the same process for determining equivalency. The academic senate equivalency committee shall consist of three members including two members from the discipline where equivalency is being requested and the Academic Senate President, who will chair the committee. If there are not two available members from the discipline, the AS President will appoint a third person from an appropriate discipline. If the Academic Senate President is from the same discipline as that being requested in the equivalency, the third member of the committee will be appointed from a differing discipline. The committee shall meet within five working days of receiving materials from the administrative dean to review.

The equivalency committee will: (a) review all relevant evidence used to support granting equivalency; (b) seek clarification regarding the evidence provided and the process used in forwarding each equivalency applicant's request; and (c) either agree or disagree and sign the Final Determination of Equivalency Form.

The completed *Determination of Faculty Equivalency* form will then be sent to the YCCD Human Resources department for further processing. The Human Resources department will make sure copies of all approved faculty equivalencies (i.e., containing ALL signatures) will be forwarded to: (a) the instructor's personnel file; (b) Student Learning Offices; (c) the immediate supervisor; and (d) the Academic Senate office. Any denied equivalency applications will be filed in the Student Learning Offices and the Academic Senate office.

All requests for equivalency that have been denied will have the opportunity to re-apply provided that areas of concern have been addressed. It is expected that this *Equivalency Policy and Procedures* document will be updated and revised to reflect a clearer discussion of any appeals process. Regardless, any equivalency candidate who does not have a completed *Determination of Faculty Equivalency* form—with all of the required signatures—shall not be hired by the board to teach Yosemite Community College District.

FULL-TIME 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 acquire new assignments or additional faculty service areas only if they meet the requirements specified in the Disciplines Lists, possess qualifications that are at least equivalent to those specified in the Disciplines Lists, or possess an appropriate credential. Those who believe that, although they lack both the specified qualifications or credential, they do possess the equivalent shall be subject to the process

described above except that the process shall begin when a faculty member submits a request together with the information required of candidates for hire as indicated above. At MJC, a committee of discipline faculty, the same as that established for selection committees in the hiring policy, shall review that material and make a recommendation to the Academic Senate equivalency committee. At both MJC and CC, the Academic Senate Equivalency committee will make its recommendations to the governing board directly, since no interview or selection is involved.

REVIEW AND REVISION

This equivalency policy and its procedures are subject to review and revision at the request of either the academic senate of MJC or CC or the governing board. Changes in this policy require the joint agreement of the academic senate and the governing board. Until there is joint agreement, this policy will remain in effect.

It is recommended that the MJC and CC Academic Senate representatives continue to refine these policies in the areas noted below.

1. For the equivalent of a Master's degree, shall the General Education courses required for any bachelor's be regarded as sufficient (since there is no General Education requirement at the graduate level)?
2. For the equivalent of an Associate's degree, shall the six years work experience required by the minimum qualifications be accepted as the equivalent of the major? Thus, a candidate with six years of experience would need to show courses or other evidence only in order to establish the equivalent of the General Education for that degree.
3. For establishing the equivalent of any degree or requirement, is providing evidence that the courses taken would have met the requirement of at least one accredited college be sufficient or would these courses have to meet the requirement of the college at which they were taken or would they have to meet the requirement for the Associate's degree of the college for which the candidate seeks to work?
4. What happens when the equivalency committee disagrees with the recommendation of the prescreening committee? Is there an appeal process and how would it occur?