

CHAPTER 3: Certificated Personnel ADMINISTRATIVE Procedure NO. 3.05.1(AP 7211)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE
San Mateo County Community College District

Subject: 3.05.1 - Minimum Qualifications, Faculty Service Areas and Equivalency to
Minimum Qualifications

Revision Date: February 2020

References: Ed Code 87355, 87356, 87357, 87358, 87359(b), 87659, 87743.1 - 87743.5

Procedures for verifying faculty qualifications, equivalency process and process for being placed in additional faculty service areas (FSAs):

I. Faculty Minimum Qualifications:

All applicants for part-time and full-time faculty positions must meet the Minimum Qualifications for the discipline exactly as stated, or request equivalency. It is the applicant's responsibility to apply for equivalency as stated in Form 1, Part A of this procedure and also via the District application process.

II. Establishing additional FSAs:

1. Faculty wishing to establish an additional Faculty Service Area (FSA) must meet the Minimum Qualifications for the discipline exactly as stated in the statewide Minimum Qualifications List (Disciplines list), or request equivalency. The process is completed via the form in Form 2 of this procedure.
2. If the faculty member meets the Minimum Qualifications exactly as stated in the statewide Minimum Qualifications List (Disciplines list), application materials for an additional FSA may be submitted to the appropriate Vice President for consideration of assignment to an additional FSA.
3. If the faculty member does not meet the Minimum Qualifications exactly as stated in the statewide Minimum Qualifications list (Disciplines list), it is the faculty's responsibility to apply for equivalency as stated in Section III of this procedure.

III. Process for establishing equivalency:

1. The individual applying for equivalency must provide conclusive evidence to support their request (official transcripts, credentials, licenses, certificates, employer attestations, publications, etc.) for equivalency.
2. All equivalency requests are reviewed by the Faculty Equivalency Committee (FEC).
3. The FEC is convened by the local Academic Senate President from the hiring college, or designee, upon request by the screening committee chair.

4. The FEC shall consist of three faculty discipline experts representing the three colleges in the district and one non-discipline faculty member appointed from the District Academic Senate's Equivalency sub-committee. In addition, a Dean from the division in which the discipline is located, from a college other than the hiring college, will serve as co-chair of the FEC with the faculty member appointed by the District Academic Senate.
 - a) If there are no faculty currently in the discipline at the hiring college, the Academic Senate President shall either seek additional member(s) from one of the other colleges in the District, and/or invite discipline experts from another California Community College District.
5. The deliberation process of the five-member Faculty Equivalency Committee (FEC) shall be closed and confidential.
6. All communication of the FEC shall be a) in person, b) via conference call, or c) via District video conferencing platform. All communications regarding the equivalency should involve all committee members. Email should not be used to discuss the work of the equivalency committee.
7. The FEC evaluates the equivalency to Minimum Qualifications of individuals based on the Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges. This equivalency process is intended neither to raise nor to lower standards from the Minimum Qualifications established for a position, nor is it intended to grant waivers in lieu of required qualifications. Where San Mateo County Community College District standards are higher than the state Minimum Qualifications, the District qualifications shall prevail.
8. The three means of demonstrating equivalency are as follows:

- a) Degree Equivalence

The employee or applicant possesses a degree(s) with similar content to those listed for the relevant discipline. The name of the degree is close to that specified on the Disciplines List but the degree either has a different title or area of expertise or the coursework is slightly different. Equivalence is established through analysis of transcripts and coursework.

- b) Academic Background Equivalence

Related to disciplines in which a Master's degree is not generally expected or available. The employee or applicant must have completed at least 24 semester units (or equivalent) of coursework in the academic field being applied for, and must possess at least the equivalent level of achievement and the equivalent in breadth, depth of understanding, and rigor in each of the following:

- i. a broad cultural education usually met by the general education requirements for any Bachelor's or Associate's degree, and
- ii. a detailed study of the discipline in breadth, depth, and rigor, usually met by course work required for the degree major.

- c) Professional Achievement Equivalence

The employee or applicant must have completed the general education requirements for any Bachelor's or Associate's degree, and show evidence of outstanding professional achievement and/or substantial training in the requested field. The employee or applicant must submit substantial evidence, which demonstrates that their preparation, teaching experience, work experience, and ability are equivalent to those expected from a person who meets the minimum qualifications.

9. The equivalency process will be completed before interview of the candidate applying for equivalency. Human Resources (HR) will provide the FEC with the information provided by the candidate to determine equivalency no less than three (3) working days prior to the meeting of the FEC. The FEC will complete its work within ten (10) working days of the initial request.
10. Provisional equivalency is not allowed. The employee or applicant must be determined to meet the minimum qualifications prior to an interview being offered to the candidate applying for equivalency.
11. The equivalency process is intended to be anonymous, such that the identity of the candidate applying for equivalency is not known to the FEC. All information provided to the FEC will, to the greatest extent possible, have identifying information removed or redacted by HR.
12. If the FEC determines that it does not have enough information from the candidate to make a determination of equivalency, additional information may be requested from the candidate. Such requests for additional information shall be facilitated by the responsible administrator on the FEC, with the request being made to HR and communicated by HR to the candidate. All additional information should be submitted by the candidate, in writing, within three (3) days of the request. Additional information should be provided to HR before being provided to the FEC.
13. Apart from requests for more information, outside entities are not permitted to influence or in any way affect or interfere with the FEC deliberation process.
14. The FEC will document the recommendation of each member of the committee in writing. The signature page, once complete, must be presented to all voting members prior to being sent. Each member of the FEC will indicate whether or not they recommend equivalency for the candidate based on the evidence provided. The recommendation regarding equivalency will reflect the majority of the members of the FEC.
15. The written recommendation of the FEC, based on the recommendation of the majority of the five member FEC, will be forwarded by the responsible administrator (Dean) to the appropriate college Vice President who will, with the Academic Senate president, make a recommendation to the college president. Upon concurrence of the college president, the equivalence recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for consideration. A copy of the Board action will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
 - a) Education Code §87359(a) requires that the governing board take action on the equivalency before hiring occurs. Equivalencies shall be forwarded to HR to be placed on a Governing Board agenda.
16. If the President does not concur with the recommendation of the FEC and/or the college Vice President and Academic Senate President, the justification and reasoning will be

communicated, in writing, to the FEC the Academic Senate President, and the District Academic Senate, within ten (10) working days.

17. The final recommendation will be documented by HR and records kept of all decisions.

18. The procedure for reviewing equivalency requests for additional FSAs is as follows:

- a) The Faculty requesting equivalence for the purpose of an additional FSA will submit the application to the local Academic Senate President to be reviewed by the Faculty Equivalency Committee (FEC).
- b) The Academic Senate will convene a FEC annually, no later than November 15th of each year, to review equivalency requests from current faculty applying for additional FSAs.
- c) The written recommendation of the FEC will be forwarded by the responsible administrator (Dean) to the appropriate college Vice President and local Academic Senate president, who will each make a recommendation to the appropriate college president. The college president will make a final equivalence recommendation. If the college President recommends that equivalency be granted, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for consideration. A copy of the Board action will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- d) If the equivalency is granted, the appropriate Vice President will complete the process of assigning the additional FSA.