

***Revision to:***

**EQUIVALENCE TO MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR ACADEMIC PERSONNEL H4446**

I. Purpose

All academic personnel must meet minimum qualifications as set forth in the Board of Governor's (BOG) Disciplines List and in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. Districts are authorized to establish local policies and practices for determining equivalence to the minimum qualifications.

This policy establishes criteria and procedures for the application of equivalencies to the minimum qualifications established in Napa Valley College Board Policy H4445. The standards and practices set forth in this policy shall be applied to determine the qualification for hire of candidates for credit or noncredit assignments who state they possess education, training, and/or experience at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications established by Title 5.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Napa Valley Community College District that hiring procedures and guidelines be established to provide for college academic personnel who:

- Are highly qualified;
- Are expert in their subject and administrative areas;
- Are skilled in teaching and serving the needs of a diverse student population;
- Can foster overall college effectiveness;
- Are sensitive to the diversity of the adult population of the state of California.

The Board of Trustees, 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 in the development and implementation of policies and procedures governing the hiring process, which is to ensure the quality of its faculty peers. Essential to fulfill these responsibilities are the standards and practices to determine when an applicant for a faculty position, though lacking the exact degree or experience specified in the BOG Disciplines List and in Title 5 as minimum qualifications, nevertheless does possess qualifications that are at least equivalent, to allow consideration of the applicant as part of the applicant pool.

### III. Equivalency Review Team

An Equivalency Review Team (ERT) consisting of the following members shall conduct determination of Equivalency to Minimum Qualifications for Service:

- First Vice President of the Academic Senate or Chair of the Faculty Standards and Practices Committee
- Faculty Member from the discipline for which a candidate is applying for equivalence
- Division Chair or Dean of the related division
- One additional member of the Faculty Standards and Practices Committee

The ERT may consult with the Administrative Assistant to the Office of Instruction.

### IV. Standards

The granting of equivalency is on a case-by-case basis. Equivalency may be achieved by course work, work experience, or a combination thereof. Equivalency may never mean lesser qualifications than the published minimum qualifications.

A candidate who claims equivalent qualifications shall be responsible for providing conclusive evidence, as clear and reliable as the college transcripts being submitted by the other candidates, that s/he has qualifications at least equivalent to those required by the minimum qualifications. The candidate shall also be available for interview or examination, if requested. All material provided shall remain in the individual's applicant file or personnel file.

Under no circumstances is the granting of equivalency to the minimum qualifications to be construed as a determination that a candidate shall or shall not be interviewed or hired. Once granted equivalency, the candidate shall be placed in a pool of qualified applicants, any number of who may be considered for a given position. Applicants granted equivalency and subsequently hired, whether on a full- or part-time basis, maintain that status for their entire careers in the NVCC district.

Each district establishes its own equivalency process, and equivalency is not transferable from district to district. Therefore, when academic personnel apply for a position in another district, they may need to go through that district's equivalency processes.

Minimum qualifications and therefore equivalencies are determined for disciplines, not for subject areas or courses within a discipline. An applicant is either qualified to teach a full range of courses in a discipline or not, regardless of whether applying for a full- or part-time position.

## V. Qualifications

Napa Valley College expects that some candidates may meet the minimum qualifications through the equivalency process. Candidates who have completed all the appropriate coursework for a particular degree but do not possess the specific degree named on the BOG Disciplines List may possess equivalent qualification, which may be in the form of academic coursework and/or degrees, work experience, or a combination thereof. An applicant making such a claim must provide conclusive evidence of meeting the requirements stated below.

Faculty hiring falls into two categories as identified by the BOG Disciplines List:

- *Disciplines Requiring a Master's Degree*
- *Disciplines in Which a Master's Degree is Not Generally Expected or Available*, which require any bachelor's degree and two years of experience or any associate's degree and six years of experience

### A. Equivalence to Academic Degrees

To establish equivalence to the academic degree requirements for either category above, the candidate must possess at least the equivalent in level of achievement and in breadth, depth of understanding, and rigor for each of the following as separate and distinct criteria:

- A broad cultural education, usually met by the General Education requirement for any bachelor's or associate's degree.
- A detailed study of the discipline in breadth, depth, and rigor, usually met by course work required for the degree major.

A candidate must provide conclusive evidence of fulfilling both criteria above to be considered to possess the equivalent of the degree in question.

The following criteria shall be applied to determine equivalence:

1. Formal Education Equivalent to the Master's Degree:
  - a. Master's degree in a related discipline as identified in the BOG Disciplines List or approved by the Equivalency Review Team, including 15 semester units of graduate and upper division course work within the discipline specified in the job announcement, at least 12 of which must be at the graduate level.
  - b. Bachelor's degree in the discipline of hire or a related discipline as identified in the BOG Discipline's List or approved by the

Equivalency Review Team, plus 30 additional semester units of upper division or graduate course work in the discipline specified in the job announcement, 12 of which are at the graduate level and the remainder at the upper division level or higher.

2. Formal Education Equivalent to the Bachelor's Degree:

At least 120 semester units, including 18 semester units representing a diversity of courses generally accepted as general education and, for disciplines that require a master's degree, 30 units in the discipline specified by the job announcement, of which 24 are upper-division or graduate units.

3. Formal Education Equivalent to the Associate's Degree:

At least 60 semester units, including 18 semester units representing a diversity of courses generally accepted as general education.

B. Equivalence to Work Experience

To establish equivalence to the experience required for disciplines in which a Master's degree is not generally expected or available (either a two-year minimum with a bachelor's degree or a six-year minimum with an associate's degree), possession of thorough and broad knowledge for each of the following as separate and distinct criteria:

- Mastery of the skills of the vocation thorough enough to teach the courses assigned to the discipline,
- and
- Extensive and diverse knowledge of the working environment of the vocation.

A candidate must present conclusive evidence of fulfilling both criteria above to be considered to possess the equivalent of the experience in question.

VI. Evidence

It is the candidate's responsibility to request equivalency at the time s/he submits the application and to provide conclusive evidence that they possess qualifications at least equivalent to those required. The conclusive evidence must be as clear and reliable as college transcripts submitted by other candidates.

Conclusive evidence for general education, major, or experience requirements shall be one or more of the following:

- A. Transcript(s) demonstrating that the applicant successfully completed appropriate courses at a regionally accredited college or equivalent foreign institution whose accredited status is recognized by the district.
- B. Publications demonstrating the applicant's command of the major in question, his/her general education, or his/her writing skill.
- C. Other products that show the applicant's command of the major or occupation in question.
- D. Skills demonstration or verifiable evidence of the applicant's professional performance, professional and/or public recognition, professional presentations, computer software development or applications, or related training
- E. Verification of the applicant's employment history for professional or occupational work experience

#### VII. Process

Screening of applications shall occur in accordance with the district hiring policy mutually agreed upon by the Academic Senate and Board of Trustees. The Equivalency Review Team shall screen all applications requesting qualification through equivalency.

The Equivalency Review Team shall review applications requesting equivalency or referred to equivalency review in accordance with the standards and qualifications set forth in this policy. Applications that are determined to meet the standards for equivalence to minimum qualifications for full consideration by the appropriate hiring committee. Applications determined to not meet equivalence to minimum qualifications by the Equivalency Review Team will not be included in the applicant pool.

#### VIII. Noncredit Applications

Applications requesting equivalency for non-credit applicants shall be reviewed and approved by the Office of Instruction.

#### IX. Emergencies

The Napa Valley College hiring policies define hiring emergencies and establish standards and practices for emergency hiring. Emergency hires requesting or requiring equivalency review will adhere to the same process outlined in this document. If the nature of the emergency does not allow for the full equivalency review process, the VPI and the President of the Academic Senate or designee can mutually agree to review the applicant's file and grant equivalency for a period not exceeding one semester if applicant meets all criteria for equivalency. Equivalencies granted under this emergency clause must be re-reviewed through the regular equivalency process before applicant may be offered further assignments.

#### X. Faculty Seeking to Serve in an Additional Discipline

Faculty already employed under a contract may acquire new assignments only if they meet the requirements specified in the BOG Disciplines List, possess qualifications that are at least equivalent to those specified in the BOG Disciplines List, or possess an appropriate credential. Those who believe that, although they lack both the specified qualifications and an appropriate 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 conclusive evidence required of candidates for hire as indicated above. The process delineated above shall be used to review the application to serve in an additional discipline and determine whether the applicant meets the equivalency requirements.

This process resolves only whether the applicant has the equivalent of the minimum qualifications, not whether s/he may be assigned to a new discipline.

#### XI. Interpretation

This policy and its standards and procedures shall be interpreted to be consistent with applicable provisions of the Education Code and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

#### XII. Review and Revision

This policy and its standards and procedures are subject to review and revision at the request of the Academic Senate or the Board of Trustees. Changes to this policy, standards, or procedures shall be determined by mutual agreement of the Board of Trustees (or designee) and the Academic Senate, consistent with Napa Valley College's shared governance policy and with California law pertaining to shared governance.