

EQUIVALENCY PROCEDURE Antelope Valley College

Introduction

Education Code Section §87359 states that the equivalency process “shall include reasonable procedures to ensure that the governing board relies primarily upon the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate to determine that each individual employed under the authority granted by the regulations possess qualifications that are *at least equivalent* to the applicable minimum qualifications.” While neither the Education Code nor Title 5 regulations provide additional guidelines for what constitutes *at least equivalent*, each district, through its academic senate, must establish standards and criteria for equivalency, ensuring that they are not less than the minimum qualifications specified on the Disciplines List. Once the local equivalency process has reached a recommendation regarding an individual applicant, Education Code §87359(a) requires that the governing board include action on the equivalency as part of its subsequent hiring process.

District equivalency policies most often recognize three ways of demonstrating equivalency: 1) course work, 2) work experience, 3) eminence in the field (a sub-set of *experience*), or a combination thereof. But whatever the means used for determining equivalency, “*equivalency should never mean less than the qualifications specified on the Disciplines List,*” nor are districts free to ignore this provision within the law.

The State Academic Senate has consistently supported the following basic principals for granting equivalency:

- Equivalent to the minimum qualifications means *equal to* the minimum qualifications, not nearly equal.
- The applicant must provide evidence of attaining coursework or experience *equal to* the general education component of a regular associate or bachelor’s degree.
- The applicant must provide evidence of attaining the skills and knowledge provided by specialized course work required for a master’s degree (for disciplines on the Master’s List) or requisite experience or coursework (for disciplines on the Non-Master’s List).

Furthermore, *this evidence must be as clear and reliable as the college transcripts being submitted by the other candidates, proving that he/she has qualifications that are at least equivalent to what is required by the minimum qualifications.*

The approved discipline equivalency shall be reviewed and affirmed by AVC’s Academic Senate every three years. If not reviewed and affirmed, the equivalency is no longer valid; therefore, the established minimum qualifications must be used. In addition, every three years, the Equivalency Committee, a standing committee of the Academic Senate, will review the equivalency procedure and make recommendations to the Academic Senate and governing board regarding any necessary changes.

Equivalencies—just like, minimum qualifications—are in a discipline, and they are the same whether the position under consideration is full-time, part-time, or a full year or semester replacement.

Equivalency Committee:

- A Standing Committee of the Academic Senate whose purpose is to verify that there is documented, objective evidence to support the claim that the qualifications of a candidate are equivalent to the minimum qualifications required for a discipline. All decisions of the committee are made through consensus. Membership is as follows:
 - Vice President of Academic Affairs (or designee)
 - Three Faculty – *3 year terms (staggered)

Of the three faculty members serving, one will be selected to act as committee chair. When a committee faculty member is unable to attend a meeting to make a determination on an equivalency, the Academic Senate President will serve as proxy.

Equivalency Process:

1. The discipline faculty will review the official Course Outlines of Record for the discipline when writing the equivalency to minimum qualifications. (There is no single course equivalency.)
2. The discipline faculty will send the proposed equivalency to the Equivalency Committee for review. Once the Equivalency Committee and discipline faculty agree to the final proposed equivalency, it will be forwarded to the Academic Senate for approval.
3. Once approved, the equivalency is sent to Human Resources to be placed on job announcements. All records of equivalency determinations will be dated and kept in the Office of Human Resources and Employee Relations.
4. The evidence provided by a candidate claiming equivalency (whether full-time or part-time) is reviewed by the full-time, discipline faculty member(s) on the hiring committee, along with the immediate educational administrator of the division/area. If the faculty and administrator agree that a candidate's evidence meets the equivalency criteria, the candidate's application packet will be forwarded to the Equivalency Committee by the hiring committee chair. No candidate can be invited for an interview until the Equivalency Committee has reviewed the equivalency evidence provided by a candidate.
5. The discipline faculty who reviewed the evidence with the administrator will be present when the Equivalency Committee reviews the candidate's application and equivalency evidence. (When discipline faculty are unable to participate in the determination of a candidate's claim of meeting equivalency, a related discipline faculty member or a discipline faculty member from a neighboring college will be invited to review the application and evidence.)
6. The Equivalency Committee either concurs or does not concur with the discipline faculty. If the Equivalency Committee determines that the documented, objective evidence

supports the equivalency, then the hiring committee can review the application and consider inviting the candidate for an interview.

7. If the Equivalency Committee does not concur with the discipline faculty, the decision of the Equivalency Committee is final. The candidate's material will not be seen by the hiring committee.

Criteria for Determining Equivalency

The Equivalency Committee recommends the approval of employment based on equivalent qualifications as follows:

(where a master's degree is generally required)

In general, formal academic training equivalent to the training stipulated in the minimum qualifications will be considered acceptable.

- Minimum degree requirement with a different name from an accredited institution and supported by course work equivalent to the field required.
- Completion of course work and academic requirements required for the minimum degree from an accredited institution without the award of the degree (e.g., a doctoral student advanced to candidacy in a program that did not award a master's or a candidate who has completed degree requirements but has not received the degree due to the academic calendar).

(when minimum qualifications permit a bachelor's degree in the designated discipline plus a master's in a related discipline)

- A specific major on the transcript that is determined to be equivalent to the designated discipline (e.g. Speech and Drama for Theatre).
- Twenty-four semester units of credit (or equivalent quarter units) in the designated major field with 18 of those units at the upper division level. For disciplines in which equivalent courses are offered in different departments, they may be counted toward the 24 units.

(where the master's degree is not generally expected or available (as designated in the Disciplines List adopted by the Board of Governors)

- *The equivalent of an associate's degree* is the successful completion of two years of coursework at a two-or-four year institution (the equivalent of 60 semester units) including the completion of courses usual to a general education component.
- *Professional experience* must be the performance of duties typical of the specified professional service.
- Bachelor's degree in an appropriate major-discipline.
- Length, depth, and/or amount of professional experience.

Evidence of Equivalency

Evidence shall be:

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 (AVC accepts the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing which states that *individuals who have completed college or university course work at an institution in a country other than the United States must obtain a complete evaluation of foreign transcripts, degrees and other relevant documents prior to.....employment with an educational institution*). Foreign Transcripts Evaluations accepted by AVC and recommended by California Commission on Teacher Credentialing include agencies such as: Academic & Professional International Evaluations, Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute, and American Education Research Corporation.
2. Publications that show the applicant's command of the major/discipline in question, and his/her General Education background (i.e. course work for an associate degree required).
3. Other work products that show the applicant's command of the major/discipline or occupation in question, and
4. Work experience verification.

(See Candidates Supplemental Equivalency Request Form.)

Role of Human Resources and Employee Relations

The role of the Human Resources Office related to determining equivalencies will be to collect, date stamp, and forward applications and other pertinent information to the hiring committee. The Human Resources Office will assist the hiring committee chair in providing the Equivalency Committee with the application and evidence for candidates identified by discipline faculty and dean for meeting claims of equivalency.

Appeal Process

If a candidate's equivalency is denied either as a result of the discipline faculty and administrator's decision or the Equivalency Committee's evaluation, the candidate may request that a review be done by the Vice President of Human Resources and Employee Relations. This review will be done in consultation with the Equivalency Committee and the discipline faculty and administrator who originally reviewed the application and evidence. *Consensus from this review will be the final decision.*



ANTELOPE VALLEY COLLEGE
Office of Human Resources & Employee Relations

SUPPLEMENTAL EQUIVALENCY REQUEST

Applicant's Name (please print)

Division/Department

Please carefully review the approved equivalency for this discipline that is stated on the job announcement and provide documentation for those areas requiring verification.

1. Degree

Discipline for which you claim equivalency: _____

2. Educational Preparation

Indicate the educational preparation on which you base this claim for the discipline (major):

3. Relevant Courses*

Indicate the relevant courses you have taken or other objective evidence that verifies you have the equivalent of the General Education portion for a college degree: _____

4. Work Experience**

Describe in detail what you believe establishes equivalency to the minimum qualifications. If you are using work products or other objective items that cannot be submitted, provide *detailed* information from objective sources about the nature of this work product or experience. _____

* If you are using courses to establish equivalency, you must submit both an official transcript and copies of the appropriate pages from the college catalog.

** If you are using publications or other objective work products, you must submit documentation; if not possible, please explain.