



Standard Operating Procedure

Procedure Title: Faculty Qualifications Procedure

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Revision #: 003

Unit Responsible: Academic Affairs

Individual Responsible: Provost or Designee

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***Does this procedure support a Board Policy? Yes**

If yes, identify: [3.160 – Program Review](#)

Board policies can be found at: [LCC Board of Trustees Policy Page](#)

***Does this procedure support HLC criteria? Yes**

If yes, identify: [3C](#)

HLC Criteria can be found at: [HLC Accreditation Criteria](#)

***Does this procedure support a State or Federal Regulation? No**

If yes, identify: n/a

***Note:** Standard Operating Procedures should be in furtherance of some LCC policy and/or accreditation criteria, even if the relationship is not direct. Assistance in determining this information can be obtained from the Academic Procedure Advisory Committee (APAC) and/or the Accreditation Liaison Officer.



Faculty Qualifications Procedure, BP 3.160

1. Purpose

To ensure that all faculty teaching credit-bearing courses at Lansing Community College (LCC) are qualified in accordance with LCC requirements and Higher Learning Commission (HLC) guidelines.

2. Scope

Applies to all academic programs involved in establishing faculty qualifications for credit-bearing courses, and to Academic Affairs personnel involved in ensuring faculty meet those qualifications.

3. Prerequisites

Minimum Qualifications for a Faculty Member

Qualified faculty members are identified primarily by academic credentials from an accredited institution of higher education, but other factors, including but not limited to equivalent experience, may be considered in determining whether a faculty member is qualified.

A. For Teaching Faculty, including dual enrollment faculty who teach general education courses, minimum requirements are:

- i. Teaching Faculty should hold a master's degree in the discipline or in a specific sub-discipline in which they are teaching and/or for which they develop curricula.
- ii. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline or sub-discipline other than that in which they are teaching, the faculty member is expected to have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or sub-discipline in which they teach.
- iii. Equivalent experience may be used in lieu of the 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or sub-discipline in which they teach, provided the individual has both a bachelor's degree in the discipline or sub-discipline in which they are teaching and formal licensure/certification in the discipline or sub-discipline in which they are teaching.

B. For Teaching Faculty, including dual enrollment faculty who teach in career and technical education (CTE) courses, requirements are:

- i. Teaching Faculty in CTE college-level certificate and associate degree programs (primarily Associates of Applied Science) must:
 - a. Hold a bachelor's degree in the teaching discipline or field; OR

- b. Have a combination of education, training, tested experience, or alternative credentialing that equate to a bachelor's degree; OR
 - c. Use equivalent experience when an academic degree or credential does not exist.
 - ii. Developmental coursework is not eligible for transfer and falls under this category for determining minimum faculty qualifications.
- C. For Academic Professionals and Faculty who do not teach but are employed in service areas that support student learning, requirements are:**
- i. Academic Professional and Faculty should possess the appropriate academic credentials and experience necessary to satisfy the roles and responsibilities identified on the job description for the respective job.
 - ii. Non-instructional faculty who have regular or intermittent teaching responsibilities must meet the minimum faculty qualifications identified above for the specific coursework they deliver.

4. Responsibilities

Academic program faculty – Responsible for establishing the qualifications for instructors and for collaborating with Academic Affairs to ensure compliance with LCC requirements and HLC guidelines.

Academic Affairs Project Manager (AAPM) – As designee for the Provost, is responsible for overseeing this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) – Responsible for informing the AAPM of changes to HLC guidelines and for consultation as needed.

5. Procedure

1. The ALO will routinely monitor HLC communications regarding changes to the Assumed Practices that impact faculty qualifications guidelines, and inform the AAPM as necessary.
2. Academic programs will submit the Faculty Minimum Qualification Recommendation Form when proposing new courses.
3. Academic programs will propose any necessary changes to existing faculty qualifications when the content of courses and/or programs are revised, using the Faculty Minimum Qualification Recommendation Form.
4. The AAPM will review submitted Faculty Minimum Qualification Recommendation Forms for compliance with LCC requirements and HLC guidelines, and update the faculty qualifications spreadsheet as necessary.
5. When changes are made to the faculty qualifications spreadsheet, the AAPM will inform Human Resources (HR) so that HR is able to update their records and ensure all faculty in the program remain qualified.

6. During the process of hiring new faculty, prior to the scheduling of interviews, the AAPM will review the documentation submitted by applicants to ensure that only applicants meeting the minimum faculty qualifications are interviewed. Documentation may include transcripts, diploma, valid license or certification, etc.
7. Once a candidate has been selected, the AAPM will review the official documentation to confirm faculty qualifications before the final offer of employment is signed.
8. Under exceptional circumstances, the AAPM may accept unofficial documentation as evidence confirming faculty qualifications.

6. Reference

- [Higher Learning Commission Assumed Practices](#)
- [Faculty Minimum Qualification Recommendation Form and 5-Star Ticket](#)

Equivalent Experience

Evaluation of academic credentials is the primary method for determining faculty qualifications. However, other credentials may be considered for specific disciplines, particularly in career and technical education disciplines. The value of equivalent experience in determining faculty qualifications is dependent upon the relevance of the experience both to the certificate/degree level and to the specific content of the course(s). Equivalent experience implies that some objective measure ensures that the individual's knowledge and expertise are directly relevant to the course(s) being taught and are sufficient for determining students' achievement of learning outcomes.

Faculty members may have a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member teaches that clearly contribute to student learning and can be considered in lieu of formal academic preparation. In such cases, the faculty member may present objective documentation of those experiences relevant to the teaching assignment to be considered for determining if the faculty member is qualified under equivalent experience guidelines. Using equivalent experience as a method for qualifying teaching faculty should be used judiciously.

Following are applicable equivalent experiences that may be used to qualify a faculty member who holds a master's degree outside of the discipline and wishes to teach general education courses or in transfer programs:

- A. A minimum of two years of experience working in a field specifically related to the course(s) to be taught (as determined by the program leadership and approved by the divisional dean).
- B. Alternative credentials documentation that may be considered include:
 1. State and/or national board or licensure exams such as Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-Airframe and Powerplant License (A&P License), Michigan

- Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC), Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES)
2. Authoring peer-reviewed journal articles, textbook chapters, or textbooks
 3. Professional presentations at regional or national conference(s) in the desired discipline or sub-discipline
 4. Other discipline-related documentation that demonstrates third-party recognition of the applicant's expertise in the field
 5. Ongoing documented professional development in the discipline or sub-discipline
 6. National recognition rating of proficiency in a pertinent foreign language
 7. Passing a national post-baccalaureate exam

Following are applicable tested experiences that may be used to qualify a faculty member who holds an Associate's degree and wishes to teach in CTE programs:

- A. A minimum of four years of experience working in a field specifically related to the course(s) to be taught (as determined by the program leadership and approved by the divisional dean).
- B. Alternative credentials documentation that may be considered include:
 1. State and/or national board or licensure exams such as Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-Airframe and Powerplant License (A&P License), Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES)
 2. Industry certifications
 3. Industry training records
 4. Department of Labor recognized apprenticeships
 5. Professional presentations at regional or national conferences in the desired discipline or sub-discipline
 6. Other discipline-related documentation that demonstrates third-party recognition of the applicant's expertise in the field
 7. Ongoing documented professional development in the discipline or sub-discipline
 8. National recognition rating of proficiency in a pertinent foreign language
 9. Program accreditation requirement standards for faculty credentials established by state or national program accreditation bodies

Following are applicable tested experiences that may be used to qualify a faculty member who holds less than an Associate's degree and wishes to teach in CTE programs:

- A. A minimum of six years of experience working in a field specifically related to the course(s) to be taught (as determined by the program leadership and approved by the divisional dean).
- B. Alternative credentials documentation that may be considered include:
 1. State and/or national board or licensure exams such as Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-Airframe and Powerplant License (A&P License), Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES)
 2. Industry certifications

3. Industry training records
4. Department of Labor recognized apprenticeships
5. Professional presentations at regional or national conferences in the desired discipline or sub-discipline
6. Other discipline-related documentation that demonstrates third-party recognition of the applicant's expertise in the field
7. Ongoing documented professional development in the discipline or sub-discipline
8. National recognition rating of proficiency in a pertinent foreign language
9. Program accreditation requirement standards for faculty credentials established by state or national program accreditation bodies

7. Definitions

Equivalent Experience (per HLC) – Equivalent experience means experience that is commensurate with achievement of academic credentials such that it qualifies an instructor for the instruction. This could include through a minimum threshold of experience; research and/or scholarship; recognized achievement; and/or other activities and factors. Equivalent experience may differ by discipline or program. Previous years of classroom instruction does not alone constitute equivalent experience.