

Agenda Item 2.5 Dual Enrollment and Equivalency Process

Presenter: President Ayotte

Introduction

Before I begin I would like to say acknowledge Dr. Lauren Ford is in attendance today via zoom and extend a thank you for being here with us today as we embark on this important conversation. As we engage in this conversation, I would like to acknowledge the amazing work that she has done here during her time at Skyline College as the Interim Dean of Strategic Partnerships and Workforce Development, and all the work that she is doing with our dual enrollment program.

What are minimum qualifications?

According to [California Community Colleges website](#): “The Students depend on qualified faculty and staff. When Assembly Bill 1725 was signed into law, the issuance of credentials was discontinued in 1990, credentials were replaced by a set of ‘minimum qualifications’ that determine eligibility for academic and administrative positions in the California Community Colleges system.

For academic disciplines, the minimum qualifications are a masters’ degree in the discipline of the assignment, or a bachelor’s degree in the discipline of the assignment and a master’s degree in a reasonably related discipline. A statewide ‘disciplines list’ defines the degrees that are considered to be reasonably related.

Counselors and librarians are also expected to hold appropriate master’s degrees. There are special requirements for employees of Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) and Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS). For disciplines in which a master’s degree is not generally expected or available, the minimum qualifications are a bachelor’s degree (in any major) and two years of experience in the occupational area of the assignment.

Assignments that fall into this category are generally in technical, trade, or industrial fields. Nearly 150 such disciplines are covered in this area.

Examples include: Administration of Justice, Automotive, Cosmetology, Fire Technology, Real Estate...etc

All public California community college districts have hiring authority and must adhere to the minimum qualifications when establishing hiring criteria and/or determining hiring eligibility. The districts may include additional criteria over and above the minimums, but can never hire below the minimums.”

What is the equivalency process?

An article titled [“Equivalence to the minimum qualifications”](#) adopted in Spring 2016 published by The Academic Senate of California Community Colleges states, “In 1988 the Community College Reform Act (AB 1725) began to phase out credentials for faculty in favor of a process for establishing minimum qualifications to teach in a discipline. Part of that process included a way to determine equivalencies that are at least equal to the state-adopted minimum qualifications for a particular discipline. According to Education Code §§ 87359 and 87360, individuals who do not possess the minimum qualifications for service may be hired as faculty members if they possess “qualifications that are at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications.” The Disciplines List, a list of Board of Governors’ adopted minimum qualifications for hiring faculty, uses the term “equivalency” to describe processes to support this regulation.

Every district must have an equivalency process, and the determination of equivalency is the purview of the academic senate. Education Code §87359 (b) requires that “[t]he process, as well as criteria, and standards by which the governing board reaches its determination regarding faculty members shall be developed and agreed upon jointly by representatives of the governing board and the academic senate, and approved by the governing board.” While neither the Education Code nor Title 5 Regulations provide additional guidelines for what constitutes at least equivalent, each district’s governing board, acting on the advice of its academic senate, must establish its standard for equivalency, permitted the standard is not less than qualifications specified on the Disciplines List. Once equivalency regarding an individual applicant has been determined, Education Code §87359(a) requires that the governing board take action on the equivalency before hiring occurs. Because the equivalency process was

created by AB1725 and chaptered into the California Education Code, districts are not free to ignore provisions within the law.

San Mateo Community College District has a clear Administrative Policy that outlines our equivalency process: [3.05.1 - Minimum Qualifications, Faculty Service Areas and Equivalency to Minimum Qualifications](#)

Why am I bringing this forward today?

The reason why I have provided this brief background is because when we go against the process it can jeopardize a lot of things. When we do not follow the legal process it has the potential consequences for our institution but more importantly our students. As your Academic Senate President it is my job to preserve and uphold the 10+1.

As an institution we must always be thinking about accreditation and how we are meeting standards about teaching and learning. It was recently brought to light that a dual enrollment hire at College of San Mateo was teaching a dual enrollment class during the Fall 2023 semester without having gone through the equivalency process prior to being hired, thus prompting a retroactive equivalency request through CSM's academic senate (we were not aware at the time this was a retroactive equivalency request-this would become apparent later on). The first equivalency committee formed at CSM was disbanded due to not all 5 members being present at the initial meeting. The same applicant was also applying for equivalency at Skyline College which then prompted Skyline College to hold a second equivalency committee where all 5 members met. The equivalency committee determined that the applicant did not meet equivalency to teach within the discipline. This prompted a deeper look into past dual enrollment hiring processes. What we discovered was that a former Skyline College Administrator has bypassed academic senate purview when hiring adjunct dual enrollment and highschool dual enrollment instructors in years past by not following the equivalency process prior to hiring *[Addendum clarification added after the statement was read: Dr. Lauren Ford informed the senate for "Linguistic clarification - we don't "hire" the highschool teachers as they*

are never employed by our district but we do partner with them to approve their qualifications to teach in the discipline”]. As we began to look further it became apparent that four retroactive dual enrollment instructor equivalencies (that we know of) have also failed here at Skyline College.

College of San Mateo Academic Senate President, Todd Windisch and myself met with Interim Chancellor Dr. Moreno and Vice Chancellor Aaron McVean on Tuesday January 30, 2024. Todd and I shared what we had learned and our main concerns regarding dual enrollment hiring practices in addition to highlighting the faculty evaluation process. The next day, January 31, 2024, Dr. Moreno sent out an email to the College Presidents, and the three College academic senate presidents stating the following:

Dear Presidents:

It has been brought to my attention by our college and District Academic Senate leadership that adherence to district policies and procedures concerning dual enrollment has been inconsistent across three campuses, and in some instances with a blatant disregard of 10 +1 and faculty's role in academic and professional matters. Of particular concern are the hiring processes for adjunct faculty and high school partner teachers in dual enrollment, verification of minimum qualifications for some high school partner teachers, and the evaluation of high school partner teachers in dual enrollment. As such, I will be initiating an immediate audit of these practices to identify any gaps or issues that need to be addressed. In the meantime, I want to reinforce the following:

- 1. Prior to assignment to teach a dual enrollment course section, the college must verify through the established process that any high school partner teachers meet the minimum qualifications in the discipline of the course as verified by the discipline dean.*
 - 1. If minimum qualifications are not met, high school partnership teachers must have their equivalency to the minimum qualifications certified as outlined the*

equivalency process ([AP 3.05.1](#)), prior to the assignment to teach a dual enrollment course section.

- 2. All adjunct faculty and high school partners teaching in dual enrollment will follow the hiring procedures for adjunct faculty outlined in Appendix A of [AP 3.15.3](#).*
- 3. All dual enrollment adjuncts must be evaluated as an adjunct instructor in accordance with the process as outlined in the AFT Contract ([Appendix G](#)) and in accordance with our CCAP agreements ([Appendix B](#)) effective Spring 2024 semester.*

Please share this email with your VPI's and dual enrollment leadership. I ask that you hold them accountable for ensuring adherence to these required practices moving forward.

Sincerely, Melissa

Closing remarks

What we do know is that some past dual enrollment hiring practices did not follow the minimum qualifications or equivalency process. The main concern is about the potential precedent this sets for future hiring. The future will include dual enrollment. This is not an attempt to stop dual enrollment from growing but rather a call to figure out the best way to move forward with the utmost ethical foresight and integrity. The ask I have of the Academic Senate today is to discuss how we would like to proceed moving forward. I will now open the floor for discussion.