



Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) Educational Procedure

EP 215 – Faculty/Instructor Qualifications

Originated:

Unknown

Revised:

December 2024

April 2016

References:

[HLC Policies and Procedures for Faculty Qualifications](#): Guidelines for Institutions and peer reviewers

[Current Assumed Practices \(CRRT.C.10.010\) | The Higher Learning Commission](#)

[PPSC Faculty/Instructor Minimum Qualifications](#) - living document

[PPSC Form Justification Request for Qualifications Exception](#)

Approved By:

Jacquelyn Gaiters-Jordan

Vice President for Instructional Services, Pikes Peak State College



Jacquelyn Gaiters-Jordan (Feb 7, 2025 15:05 MST)

Signature

02/07/2025

Date

Joseph Miller

Faculty Senate President, Pikes Peak State College



Signature

02/10/2025

Date

Deidre Schoolcraft
EP Committee Co-Chair, Pikes Peak State College



Deidre Schoolcraft (Feb 10, 2025 06:32 MST)

Signature

02/10/2025

Date

I. Purpose:

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) states that “an institution is responsible for establishing and maintaining reasonable processes for determining that its instructors are qualified. An institution could deem instructors qualified based on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, academic credentials, progress toward academic credentials, equivalent experience, or some combination thereof”. This EP outlines the process through which Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) determines that faculty/instructors are qualified.

II. Scope:

This educational procedure details the policies and procedures for determining PPSC faculty/instructor qualifications.

III. Procedure:

QUALIFICATIONS:

Qualifications for faculty in the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) and at Pikes Peak Community State College (PSCC) are aligned with the principles of accreditation of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

HLC provides the following [Assumed Practice B. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support](#) regarding faculty/instructor qualifications:

The institution establishes and maintains reasonable policies and procedures to determine that faculty are qualified. The factors that an institution considers as part of these policies and procedures could include but are not limited to the achievement of academic credentials, progress toward academic credentials, equivalent experience, or some combination thereof. The institution’s obligations in this regard extend to all instructors and all other entities to which it assigns the responsibility of instruction. HLC will maintain “Institutional Policies and Procedures for Determining Faculty Qualifications Guidelines” to further explain requirements for reasonable policies and procedures in accordance with this Assumed Practice (B. 2. a).

HLC also provides the following guidelines that apply to all faculty/instructors whose primary responsibility is teaching. For comprehensive information please see [Guidelines for Institutions and Peer Reviewers](#) (also linked in references).

Reasonable policies and procedures to determine that faculty are qualified

Reasonable policies and procedures to determine that faculty are qualified means the policies and procedures to determine that instructors are qualified that are developed and implemented by the institution. These policies and procedures are aligned with the common understandings set forth in these Guidelines. These policies and procedures must be codified, transparent, consistently implemented, and regularly reviewed.

Achievement of academic credentials

Achievement of academic credentials means that an instructor possesses an academic degree relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees. In terminal degree programs, an instructor possesses the same level of degree.

In the context of general education courses, or other non-occupational courses, achievement of academic credentials typically means that an instructor holds a master's degree or higher. Generally, this degree is in the discipline or subfield in which the instructor is teaching. If an instructor holds a degree in a discipline or subfield other than that in which they are teaching, the individual has completed a reasonable amount of coursework in the discipline or subfield in which they teach, as defined by the institution.

Progress toward academic credentials

Progress toward academic credentials means demonstrable, current, and consistent progress toward the academic credential(s) deemed relevant by the institution for an instructor to be qualified. It is expected that an instructor who is qualified because of progress toward academic credentials will not permanently be qualified on that basis; rather, the instructor will eventually be qualified on another basis. An instructor who is qualified based on progress toward academic credentials has access to and engages with resources that the institution provides to support their teaching. This could include, for example, professional development opportunities or opportunities to collaborate with other qualified faculty members who are not qualified based solely on progress toward academic credentials.

Equivalent experience

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 do not alone constitute equivalent experience.

INSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES:

It is the practice of PPSC to hire faculty and instructors who meet the above guidelines. At the same time, the college recognizes that, especially in the case of instructors, there are instances where qualifications of faculty/instructors can be supported through documentation such as those noted in the above guidelines. When the degree(s) of the faculty member in and of itself demonstrates sufficient evidence of competence in accord with the above guidelines, no further justification is required other than the normal review and documentation completed by the

division and human resource services. However, a *Justification Request for Faculty/Instructor Qualifications Exception form* must be completed and approved when the demonstration of competence involves qualifications based on tested experience. The process for obtaining approval of exceptions is initiated by the program chair or appropriate divisional leadership. In some cases, faculty must meet accreditation requirements for their program's accrediting body.

PROCESS

- a. Request is made to hire a Faculty/Instructor to teach courses not in their field of study.
- b. Faculty/Instructor gathers documentation and presents it to chair or director.
- c. Rubric and supporting documents are used by chair/director to determine if Faculty/Instructor meets minimum credentialing.
- d. Chair/Director completes the *Justification Request for Faculty/Instructor Qualifications Exception form* and provides completed rubric and documentation to executive dean for final approval.

Justification Request for Faculty/Instructor Qualifications Exception

Appointing authority for requests is as follows: executive dean/associate dean for faculty and program chair for instructors

Requester Information:

Instructor/Faculty name: _____ Email: _____

(Please check one box) Instructor ☐ Faculty ☐

Degrees awarded:

As the Department Leadership/Program Chair, I verify they are qualified to teach the following subject area(s) or course(s): _____

As the Department Leadership/Program Chair, I verify that they have/have not obtained an educational degree in the subject area(s) they are qualified to teach.

(Please check one box) Have ☐ Have not ☐

- If the faculty/instructor **has** obtained an educational degree with at least 18 graduate credits in the subject area(s) qualified to teach: instructor will be required, at their expense, to request sealed, official transcripts for all degrees conferred and have them sent to Human Resource Services within 30 days of hire date. Electronic delivery (certified pdf from educational institution) of official transcript is acceptable, if sent directly to hrs@pikespeak.edu.
- If instructor **has not** obtained an educational degree in the subject area(s) qualified to teach verification of other- than-degree credentials are applied for them to teach (i.e., industry experience, industry certification, applicable coursework, etc.). **Please include all supporting documentation.**

The **attached resume, transcript(s)**, and/or copy of **vocational credential or copy of application for vocational credential** (when needed) are being submitted for review. I have reviewed the attached information and recommend they qualified as a faculty/instructor in the subject area(s) as indicated above.

Department Leadership/Program Chair Signature _____ Date: _____

Executive Dean's approval: I have reviewed the information provided and indicate my approval of the Department/Program Chair's recommendation by signing below.

Executive Dean Signature _____

Date:

Instructor/Faculty Signature _____

Date:

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2.7.2025

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