

CSU-Pueblo Provost's Office Instructor credential approval

All instructors must meet requirements as defined in HLC credential language included in this document, including courses through all modes of delivery (STS, online, independent study, face-to-face, etc.) This also applies to continuing full-time faculty when being considered to teach a course for which criterion 1 is not met.

The assessment of suitability to teach a particular course is to be made at the time of each request. Information is to be updated with each successive hiring approval to match current CV on file and recent professional development, as faculty credentials should be the main criteria by which instructors are approved. No assumption should be made that approval for any one course in any one semester or academic year suffices as approval for another course or any subsequent semester or academic year.

For any questions on completing this form, please contact the CSU-Pueblo Accreditation Liaison officer: Helen Caprioglio at helen.caprioglio@csupueblo.edu or 549-2207.

Instructors must meet one of the following three criteria:

1. Master's degree or higher in the course discipline, content area, or subfield.
Documentation should include the discipline of master's or higher degree:
2. Master's degree or higher in another discipline, content area, or subfield with a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours of content courses in the course discipline or subfield.
Documentation should include discipline of master's degree AND list graduate courses
3. Tested experience to include "a" or "b" below:
 - a. Professional experience in the discipline (employment, etc.) equivalent to 3-5 years depending on level of course. Tested experience which includes a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be teaching. (3 years for undergrad teaching, 5 years for graduate courses)

Experience should be indicated when using Tested Experience

- b. Two or more of the following:
 - i. A minimum of 9-15 graduate credits in the course discipline.
 - ii. Professional experience in the discipline (employment, etc) equivalent to less than 3-5 years, depending on level of course.
 - iii. Teaching experience at the college level in the discipline with documented continuing related professional development. (publications, presentations, direct mentorship, etc.)
 - iv. Discipline-specific certifications or credentials at post-secondary level. Specialized advanced experience relevant to course discipline. Evidence of specialized credentials can include significant invited performances (e.g. gallery shows; guest conductor or performer experiences.)

Documentation should include two of the prior statements along with evidence attached

Higher Learning Commission (HLC) official language (taken from www.hlcommission.org)

Determining Qualified Faculty Through HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices
Assumed Practice B. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support [Effective September 1, 2017]

B.2. Faculty Roles and Qualifications

- a. Qualified faculty members are identified primarily by credentials, but other factors, including but not limited to equivalent experience, may be considered by the institution in determining whether a faculty member is qualified. Instructors (excluding for this requirement teaching assistants enrolled in a graduate program and supervised by faculty) possess 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 or when equivalent experience is established. In terminal degree programs, faculty members possess the same level of degree. When faculty members are employed based on equivalent experience, the institution defines a minimum threshold of experience and an evaluation process that is used in the appointment process. Faculty teaching general education courses, or other non-occupational courses, hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.
- b. Instructors teaching in graduate programs should hold the terminal degree determined by the discipline and have a record of research, scholarship or achievement appropriate for the graduate program.

Quality Assurance Expectations in Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty

Accreditation agencies expect that accredited institutions will use credentials as the primary mechanism to ascertain minimal faculty qualifications. HLC recognizes that experience also may be considered in determining faculty qualifications. In some situations, a combination of these may be appropriate.

Using Credentials as a Basis for Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty

Faculty credentials refer to the degrees that faculty have earned that establish their credibility as content experts and thus their competence to teach that content in the classroom. Common expectations for faculty credentials in higher education include the following:

- Faculty teaching in higher education institutions should have completed a program of study in the discipline or subfield* (as applicable) in which they teach, and/or for which they develop curricula, with coursework at least one level above that of the courses being taught or developed. Completion of a degree in a specific field enhances an instructor's depth of subject matter knowledge and is easily identifiable.
- With the exception noted in the bullet immediately following, faculty teaching in undergraduate programs should hold a degree at least one level above that of the program in which they are teaching. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18

graduate credit hours in the discipline in which he or she is teaching. If an individual faculty member has not achieved 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline in which he or she teaches, the institution should be able to explain and justify its decision to assign the individual to the courses taught. These decisions should be supported by policy and procedure that are acceptable to the professional judgment of HLC peer reviewers.

- Faculty teaching in graduate programs should hold the terminal degree determined by the discipline and have a record of research, scholarship or achievement appropriate for the graduate program.
- Faculty guiding doctoral education should have a record of scholarship and preparation to teach at the doctoral level. Research and scholarship should be appropriate to the program and degree offered.

Using Tested Experience as a Basis for Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty

Tested experience may substitute for an earned credential or portions thereof. Assumed Practice B.2. allows an institution to determine that a faculty member is qualified based on experience that the institution determines is equivalent to the degree it would otherwise require for a faculty position. This experience should be tested experience in that it includes a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be teaching. (Note: Tested experience, as is explained in the following section on dual credit, is typically not based exclusively on years of teaching experience, although other experiential factors as noted below may be considered on a case-by-case basis.)

The value of using tested experience to determine minimal faculty qualifications depends upon the relevance of the individual faculty member's experience both to the degree level and to the specific content of the courses the faculty member is teaching. An institution that intends to use tested experience as a basis for hiring faculty must have well-defined policies, procedures and documentation that demonstrate when such experience is sufficient to determine that the faculty member has the expertise necessary to teach students in that discipline. In their policies on tested experience as a basis for hiring faculty members, institutions are encouraged to develop faculty hiring qualifications that outline a minimum threshold of experience and a system of evaluation. Tested experience qualifications should be established for specific disciplines and programs and could include skill sets, types of certifications or additional credentials, and experiences. Documented qualifications would ensure consistency and transparency in hiring and human resources policies. The faculty hiring qualifications related to tested experience should be reviewed and approved through the faculty governance process at the institution—a step that should be highlighted for peer review teams, as appropriate.

The faculty members teaching dual credit courses should hold the same minimal qualifications as required by the institution of its own faculty.

This requirement is not intended to discount or in any way diminish the experience that the high school teacher brings into a dual credit classroom. Such classroom experience alone, however lengthy or respected, is not a substitute for the content knowledge needed for college credit.

HLC recognizes that many high school teachers possess tested experience beyond their years in the classroom that may account for content knowledge for the dual credit courses they may teach. These teachers may have gained relevant experience while working in other sectors or through professional

development or other relevant experience that now informs their teaching. They may be active in professional organizations and learned societies through presentations and publications on topics relevant to the dual credit courses they may teach. In combination with other credentials and/or tested experience, they may be able to provide direct evidence of their students' achievement on college-level tests that reflects a level of teaching and learning akin to a college classroom. However, evidence of students' achievement, on its own, is not sufficient to demonstrate minimal qualifications.

HLC also recognizes that dual credit faculty members who have obtained a Master of Education degree but not a master's degree in a discipline such as English, Communications, History, Mathematics, etc., may have academic preparation to satisfy HLC's expectations. In this context, the curricula of graduate degrees in the field of Education, when inclusive of graduate-level content in the discipline and methods courses that are specifically for the teaching of that discipline, satisfy HLC's dual credit faculty expectations. In other words, the attainment of a Master of Education degree does not demonstrate a qualification to teach dual credit courses in a particular discipline **unless it is demonstrated that the content of that faculty member's Master of Education degree is sufficiently related to the discipline of the dual credit course.**