

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 and all campus sites (STS, dual credit*, online, independent study, face-to-face, mixed, 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 faculty 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 and currency 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.

Questions: contact HLC Accreditation Liaison officer: helen.caprioglio@csupueblo.edu or 549-2207.

Instructors must meet one of the following three minimum criteria:

1. Master's degree or higher in the course discipline, content area, or subfield.**
Documentation must 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 must include discipline of degree AND list of graduate courses completed
3. Tested experience to include "a" or "b" below:
Experience should be clearly indicated when using Tested Experience
 - a. Professional experience in the discipline (employment, etc.) equivalent to 3-5 years beyond bachelor's level 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 course teaching)
 - b. Two or more of the following:
Documentation must include two of the follow statements along with evidence attached
 - i. A minimum of 9-15 graduate credits completed in the course discipline.
 - ii. Professional relevant experience in the discipline (employment, etc.) equivalent to less than 3-5 years beyond the bachelors, 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 may include significant invited performances (e.g. gallery shows; guest conductor or performer experiences.)

***Faculty members teaching dual credit courses shall meet the same minimal qualifications as required by the institution of all faculty.**

**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.

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 November, 2023]

B.2. Faculty Roles and 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.

Pursuant to this Assumed Practice, faculty should participate substantially in the establishment of institutional policies and procedures for faculty qualifications.

In order to assist institutions and peer reviewers with understanding and complying with the requirements detailed in the Assumed Practices on this topic, HLC shares the following common understandings:

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.

As noted in the Assumed Practice, the reasonable policies and procedures that an institution establishes and maintains to determine that faculty are qualified may include the factors listed in the Assumed Practice 2 November 2023 | HLC Guidelines | Contact: The institution’s HLC staff liaison (achievement of academic credentials, progress towards credentials, equivalent experience) or other factors established by the institution. Additionally, the reasonable policies and procedures that an institution establishes and maintains to determine that faculty are qualified may consider those or other factors.

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 the 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 as a result 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 does not alone constitute equivalent experience.

Other Entities—Other entities means entities other than the institution to which the institution assigns the responsibility of instruction. This could include, for example, contractual partners, consortial partners, dual enrollment partners, or institutional subsidiaries and other related entities.