

606.1 – Faculty Qualifications

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to comply with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices.

Procedure:

In alignment with the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices, BSC will ensure that students have access to qualified faculty members who are experts in the subject matter they teach and who can communicate knowledge in that subject to their students.

BSC will establish and maintain a policy and policy procedure for faculty qualifications. In alignment with HLC recommendations, BSC identifies qualified faculty members primarily by credentials, but other factors, including but not limited to equivalent experience, may be considered by the institution in determining qualifications. Generally, faculty will possess an academic degree relevant to their coursework and at least one level above the level at which they teach. The appropriate degree, equivalent experience, or combination of education and experience for each discipline/program are defined within BSC's Faculty Qualifications Matrix. BSC will minimally qualify faculty to teach courses based on the following categories: achievement of academic credentials, progress toward academic credentials, and equivalent experience.

- a. **Qualified through 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 the context of general education courses or courses in a baccalaureate program, achievement of academic credentials typically means that an instructor holds a master's degree or higher. Faculty teaching in CTE courses for an associate degree should hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Faculty teaching CTE courses for a certificate should hold an associate degree or higher. Faculty teaching academic skills coursework should hold a bachelor's degree or higher.
- b. **Qualified through Progress toward Academic Credentials**
Progress toward Academic Credentials is meeting the needs through a documented educational plan meeting the requirements listed in section a above.
- c. **Qualified through Equivalent Experience.**
This could include through a minimum threshold of experience; research and/or scholarship; recognized achievement; and/or other activities and factors.

Equivalent Experience:



Experience that a faculty has outside of the classroom is significant and quantifiable. All tested experience requires approval by the respective Assistant Dean and Academic Dean. All tested experience is relevant to the field or discipline the faculty teaches in. Faculty must have a minimum of 15 points from the Tested Experience (TE) Guidelines in order to be considered qualified under equivalent experience. Tested Experience (TE) Guidelines 1-12 are listed below. Refer to Appendix 1 for more details regarding each TE area.

- EE 1: Professional Work and/or Collegiate Teaching Experience (0-15 points)
- EE 2: Training or Education (0-12 points)
- EE 3: Industry Certification (0-6 points)
- EE 4: Professional License (0-6 points)
- EE 5: Professional Publications (0-6 points)
- EE 6: Professional Presentations (0-6 points)
- EE 7: Awards of Relevance Professional Recognition (0-6 points)
- EE 8: Professional Memberships (0-2 point)
- EE 9: Relevant Professional Conference Attendance (0-1 point)
- EE 10: Documented Military Training or Experience (0-9 points)
- EE 11: Renowned in the Field (0-9 points)
- EE 12: Graduate Credits in the Discipline or Subfield

Procedure for Determining Qualified Faculty:

- The Assistant Dean and Academic Dean of the area will review qualifications and fill out the Faculty Qualification Analysis (FQA) form. Once the form is completed, it will go to the VPAA's office for approval. If the VPAA agrees with the FQA form, the VPAA will sign and send to HR for hiring approval.
- A current faculty member who does not meet the minimum requirements to be considered qualified may continue to teach as long as they have an approved Faculty Qualification Plan in place. An approved plan should include:
 - Qualified degree required or qualified classes that are required.
 - Institution(s) where the degree will be obtained, or classes completed.
 - The timeline for completion (maximum of 4 years to complete per discipline)
 - Identification of any tested experience relevant to the field they teach.
- The Faculty Qualification Plan must be submitted and approved prior to the faculty member's first semester of employment.
- Faculty who are placed on a qualifications plan must make satisfactory, annual progress on their plan.

Equivalent Experiences Guidelines:

Experience that a faculty has outside of the classroom is significant and quantifiable. All tested experience requires approval by the Assistant Dean and Academic Dean. All tested experience is relevant to the field or discipline the faculty teaches in and relates to the post-secondary teaching and professional development. Tested Experience (TE) Guidelines 1-12 are listed below.



EE 1: Professional Work and/or Teaching Experience

Provides the individual with knowledge that is equal to a formal course of study (0-15 points; evaluated by prior learning criteria or teaching evaluations)

- Professional Work Experience – 1-3 points per year of full-time work within a relevant field
- Teaching Experience – 2 point per academic year for full-time collegiate work, adjunct experience will be pro-rated accordingly

EE 2: Training or Education

Training or education (including webinars) that enhances faculty capabilities required to teach to the course objectives (0-12 points).

- Webinars – .25 points per 4 hours (maximum of 3 points)
- Trainings – .25 points per 4 hours (maximum of 3 points)
- Non-credit courses – 1 point per 12 course hours (TRANSFER ONLY)
- Certificate in related program – 3 points
- Associate degree in related program – 6 points
- Bachelor degree in related program – 12 points

EE 3: Industry Certification (0-6 points)

- Points determined by certification requirements

EE 4: Professional License (0-6 points)

- Points determined by licensure requirements (not K12 teaching license)

EE 5: Professional Publications (0-6 points)

- Professional publications include trade publications, professional magazines, or journals (1 point per publication)

EE 6: Professional Presentations (0-6 points)

- Invited talks, small group presentations (.25 points per presentation)
- State-wide presentations (.5 points per presentation)
- Regional or National presentations (1 point per presentation)

EE 7: Awards of Relevant Professional Recognition (0-6 points)

- Local/community/state recognition (.5 points per award)
- Regional/National recognition (1 point per award)

EE 8: Professional Memberships (0-2 point)

- Local/community/state organization (.5 points per organization)
- Regional/National organization (1 point per organization)

EE 9: Relevant Professional Conference Attendance (0-1 point)

- Half-day conference (.25 points)
- Full-day conference (.5 points)

EE 10: Documented Military Training or Experience (0-9 points)

- Points determined by Assistant Dean and Academic Dean

EE 11: Renowned in the Field

Includes artists, authors, performers, etc. that have developed skills and knowledge to teach in their discipline or field (0-9 points)

- Assistant Dean and Academic Dean will review submitted portfolio or exhibition record to award points

EE 12: Graduate Credits in the Discipline or Subfield (0-15 points)

- Points equal to credit hours earned
- If the prefix or course title is not in the same prefix in which the faculty teaches, then a detailed description of the graduate course needs to be submitted
- Assistant Dean and Academic Dean will denote on the plan form if a graduate course fulfills requirements of a related field or discipline

References:

[606.1 Faculty Qualifications Policy.pdf](#)

History of This Policy Procedure:

First policy drafted by Vice President for Academic Affairs and Deans, approved by the Faculty Senate on May 5, 2017, reviewed by Operations Council on July 26, 2017, and approved by the Executive Council on August 14, 2017; May 23, 2018.

Reviewed by Campus Council on August 20, 2025, Executive Council on September 5, 2025, and approved by the President on September 9, 2025.