

<b>Minimum Faculty Qualifications Procedure</b>	Procedure Number	2.7P
	Effective Date	May 22, 2012

**1.0 PURPOSE**

In accordance with Board Policy 2.7, Minimum Faculty Qualifications, the purpose of this procedure is to establish appropriate processes and protocols necessary for ensuring faculty possess the minimum faculty qualifications for compliance with the Higher Learning Commission’s (HLC) criteria for accreditation and assumed practices, and quality facilitation of learning at Laramie County Community College (LCCC). Accordingly, the expectations set forth in this procedure pertain to all of the College’s faculty, including those in concurrent enrollment, contractual, and consortia programs. This procedure also provides information and clarification regarding faculty qualifications for those individuals responsible for hiring and supervising faculty.

**2.0 REVISION HISTORY**

Adopted on: 5/22/12  
 Revised on: 5/13/16, 1/29/20

**3.0 PERSONS AFFECTED**

All faculty, administrators, students, and supervisors are affected by this policy.

**4.0 DEFINITIONS**

- A. *Academic Subfield* – Components of the discipline in which the instruction is delivered. For example, in business, subfields include management, marketing, accounting, and finance.
- B. *Alternative Credentials* – The sum of equivalent experience acquired by faculty that clearly contributes to subject matter expertise and student learning outcomes and can, under special circumstances, be considered in lieu of formal academic preparation.
- C. *Assigned Field* – A defined area of knowledge and skill that is specifically related to a program, service, or academic discipline and for which minimum qualifications exist.
- D. *Career Technical Education (CTE)* – A defined area of knowledge and skill that is specifically related to specialized trades, applied sciences, modern technologies, and career preparation. CTE offers both academic and career-oriented courses that are intended for job entry and not intended for transfer to a four-year institution.
- E. *Concurrent Enrollment Instructor* – Adjunct faculty who teach a college-level course offered at a high school.
- F. *Credential Evaluation Summary* – The form used by the faculty supervisor to document that faculty meet the credential requirements to teach in their assigned field.
- G. *Credential Field* – A defined area of knowledge and skill that is specifically related to a program, service, or academic discipline.

- H. *Credential Review Committee* – A committee comprised of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the school chair of the relevant discipline in question, and a faculty of the relevant Pathway in question to consider the appropriateness of alternative credentials.
- I. *Developmental Coursework* – The non-credit bearing courses that are numbered below 1000 and into which students may be placed depending on LCCC’s procedure for placement testing.
- J. *Education Plan* – A plan agreed to by the faculty and the supervisor within which the parameters of educational opportunities, professional development opportunities, and/or certifications that must be pursued by the faculty in order to comply with LCCC’s minimum faculty qualifications are defined.
- K. *Faculty* – Employees that have the primary responsibility of teaching assigned courses, holding regular office hours, being available for students, advising, and collaborating on departmental objectives.
- L. *Faculty Credentialing Manual* – The Faculty Credentialing Manual is developed and maintained by LCCC faculty for each course offered at LCCC. The Faculty Credentialing Manual articulates the faculty credential requirements to instruct any course. The Faculty Credentialing Manual guides the Credential Review Committee when determining the appropriateness of alternative credentials.
- M. *Higher Learning Commission* – One of six regional accrediting bodies within the United States. HLC is the accrediting agency for the State of Wyoming, and thus for LCCC.
- N. *Lower-Division Courses*—Courses generally taken by freshman and sophomore level students as designated by the college. Lower-Division courses are commonly designated with course numbers in the 1000s and 2000s.
- O. *Minimum Qualifications* – The credentials, tested experience, or alternative credentials, that LCCC requires faculty obtain and/or maintain to become subject matter experts in their respective discipline or field, in order to convey the subject matter to students to master at various course and program levels.
- P. *Non-Instructional Faculty* – Positions that have primary responsibilities that generally include direct instructional and/or programmatic support with limited instructional responsibilities. Non-instructional faculty include, but is not limited to, Librarians, and some Program Director and Coordinator positions.
- Q. *Tested Experience* – The breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty would be teaching.
- R. *Upper-Division Courses*—Courses generally taken by junior and senior level students as designated by the college. Upper -Division courses are commonly designated with course numbers in the 3000s and 4000s.

## 5.0 PROCEDURE

### A. Minimum Qualification Guidelines

Credentials (primarily degrees or certificates) from a regionally accredited institution of higher education, are the primary means by which LCCC ascertains faculty qualifications. The College verifies faculty qualifications through the evaluation of official transcripts.

1) Faculty Teaching in Transfer Coursework, Programs, and/or Disciplines

The minimum qualifications for faculty teaching general education or other coursework designed for transfers to a bachelor's degree program shall be a master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree in a closely related academic field or subfield with a minimum of 18 credit hours of graduate level coursework in the teaching discipline. For appropriate teaching discipline see Faculty Credentialing Manual.

In some instances, faculty without a master's degree or the required 18 graduate credit hours of graduate level coursework, may be deemed qualified by the expertise they have developed through other means. This may include a combination of equivalent tested experience, training, or alternative credentialing qualifications as explained in the Manual's alternative credential guidelines.

2) Faculty in CTE Coursework and Non-Transfer Programs

- a. Faculty teaching in CTE college-level certificate and associate's degree programs (primarily Associates of Applied Science) should hold a bachelor's degree in the teaching discipline or field and/or a combination of education, training, tested experience, and alternative credentialing. When an academic degree or credential does not exist, equivalent tested experience may be applied. For appropriate teaching discipline field or sub-field, refer to the Manual's alternative credential guidelines.
- b. Developmental coursework is not eligible for transfer and falls under this category for determining minimum faculty qualifications.

3) Faculty Teaching Upper-Division Courses

The minimum qualifications for faculty teaching upper-division coursework shall be a master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree in a closely related academic field or subfield with a minimum of 18 credit hours of graduate level coursework in the teaching discipline. For appropriate teaching discipline see Faculty Credentialing Manual.

Faculty teaching content specific courses should have content specific knowledge in addition to the minimum graduate coursework within the discipline. Content specific knowledge can be in the form of coursework and/or tested experience within the topic(s) they are teaching. For example faculty teaching an upper-division project management course would need to have taken graduate level coursework in project management or be a certified project manager. A faculty teaching a human resource management course would need to have taken graduate level coursework in human resource management or be SHRM certified. Content specific knowledge requirements would be listed within the faculty credentials manual for that course.

4) Non-Instructional Faculty

Non-instructional faculty should possess the appropriate academic credentials and experience necessary to satisfy the roles and responsibilities identified on the position description for the respective job. Non-instructional faculty who have regular or intermittent teaching responsibilities must meet the minimum faculty qualifications identified above for the specific coursework they deliver.

## B. Faculty Education Plans

In recognition of the need to adhere to the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC's) minimum faculty qualifications, faculty at LCCC who are transitioning to meet the minimal requirements will have an education plan developed in collaboration with their supervisor. Education plans will only be used in the event of curricular changes that require an update to faculty credentialing to meet an institutional need. Documentation of credentials cited to substantiate qualifications to teach in the field must be submitted with the justification provided on the Credential Evaluation Summary Form.

## C. Standards for Documentation

All documentation used to qualify faculty to teach in their respective areas of study will be maintained in the faculty's permanent personnel file located in the Human Resources office. The Credentials Evaluation Summary Form is used to provide documentation of the minimum faculty qualifications necessary for faculty employment at LCCC.

The following standards will be applied for documentation of faculty credentials.

- 1) The Faculty supervisor reviews all available documentation related to faculty qualifications, completes the Credential Evaluation Summary Form, and delivers it to Human Resources for placement in the employee's permanent personnel file.
- 2) All official transcripts must be originals received by the Human Resources Department at LCCC directly from the degree-awarding institution. LCCC will not accept, as an official original, transcripts marked *Issued to Student in a Sealed Envelope* or transcripts hand delivered by the faculty. Upon hire new faculty will be instructed to request the official transcripts from institutions they attended, or the national clearinghouse. The original transcripts must be provided directly to LCCC.
- 3) Alternative Credentials
  - a. Tested Experience – Tested experience will be verified by documentation demonstrating that the faculty has directly related non-teaching experience and/or substantial accomplishments in the teaching discipline.
  - b. Teaching Experience – Directly related teaching experience within the discipline may qualify for up to six of the 18 graduate credit requirements.
    - i. Faculty who have successfully taught full or part-time equivalence (as defined by the Federal Government) of discipline specific courses, will be awarded one graduate credit hours per academic year of experience.
  - c. Licensures or Certifications
    - i. If a professional licensure, certification, award or other demonstrated competencies and achievements are used to qualify faculty to teach in a related credentialed field, then copies of those documents must be included in the faculty's permanent file located in the Human Resource office and be included on the Credential Evaluation Summary Form.
    - ii. If licensures or certifications are used to qualify faculty and if those licensures or certifications have expiration dates, then a new copy of those documents must be forwarded to the Human Resources office, by the faculty supervisor, each time a renewal is received for inclusion in the faculty's permanent personnel file. Licensures or certifications used for this purpose must be current at all times.
  - d. Continuing Education Credits
    - i. Faculty may use up to six credit hours earned through Continuing Education Unit (CEU) credits to satisfy the requirement of 18 graduate credit hours in the appropriate academic discipline.

- ii. LCCC accepts the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) definition that one Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is equal to 10 contact course hours.
- iii. LCCC defines a credit hour as 15 contact hours (Administrative Procedure 2.18P). A typical three-credit course at LCCC has 45 contact hours per semester.
- iv. One CEU is equal to 2/3 of a credit hour.
- e. Qualified Graduate Credit
  - i. Qualified graduate credit consists of masters level or higher courses which receive a letter grade. If a regionally accredited awarding institution clearly states in their transcript a passing or satisfactory grade corresponds to a letter grade of B or higher it meets this qualification.
  - ii. Any one credit hour masters level course must have a letter grade to be considered as a qualified graduate credit.

D. Credential Review Committee

- 1) When a hiring supervisor recommends an applicant be hired as faculty based on alternative credentials, the Credential Review Committee (CRC) will evaluate the applicant's alternative credentials in relation to the Faculty Credentialing Manual for discipline specific relevancy. The CRC will make a final decision to the hiring supervisor based on the Faculty Credentialing Manual.
- 2) Current faculty, who desire to use alternative credentials to meet the minimum faculty qualifications, will have their credential evaluated by the CRC and verified by the Faculty Credentialing Manual.

E. Concurrent Enrollment instructors must meet minimum faculty qualifications as established with this procedure and following HLC Guidelines.

REQUIRED APPROVALS	NAME/SIGNATURE	DATE
Originator(s) Name(s)	Joe Schaffer, President	5/8/12
Approval by President's Cabinet		5/22/12
Ratified by College Council	Chair Chad Marley, College Council Co-Chair	5/13/16*
Approval by President (Signature)		5/22/12

\*College Council was not organized at the time this procedure was approved on 5/22/12. The ratification date shown is associated with the procedure's revision date of 5/13/16.