The Process for All Equivalency Petitions

1. Each member of the Equivalency Committee will be provided with the current copy of *Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges*, which outlines the basic standards for certificated employment at a California community college. If possible, a current electronic file of the *Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges* will be maintained on the RC Senate Website. If this is possible, each Equivalency Committee Member would have ready access as necessary.
2. The petitioner is responsible for ensuring that the petition is complete. It is probable that petitioners will not be cognizant of equivalency or the equivalency procedure. Therefore it is imperative that screening committee members, discipline experts/representatives, Department Chairs, , or Deans of Instruction/Student Services who are interviewing and/or screening potential full-time or part-time candidates ensure that the candidates are aware of equivalency requirements and procedures and should also assist the petitioner to ensure complete equivalency petitions are prepared for submission.
   1. To expedite the consideration of the petition, it is recommended that all forms and documents be submitted in an electronic file format to be made available to all Equivalency Committee members through a secure process. If all documentation is provided via an electronic file format, a hard copy will be produced and included in the personnel file until the time the personnel file has been appropriately destroyed.
   2. Clear copies of unofficial transcripts and/or certificates may be submitted for initial consideration of the petition; however, the committee will not render a final determination until official transcripts and/or certificates are received. All applicants must have official transcripts and/or certificates on file with the Human Resources Department (HR) at the District Office. The committee may request verification from HR; however, this may/will delay final approval of an equivalency petition. Therefore, it is recommended that official transcripts and/or certificates be provided to the committee, preferably with the original submission of the equivalency petition for review.
   3. Complete petitions will include a full and detailed description articulating those exact courses/experiences which the petitioner is asserting make him/her equal to a candidate who meets the currently established minimum qualifications. If the petitioner has qualifications that fall under the department’s Equivalency policy that has been established by the department and approved by the Equivalency Committee, this matrix of comparable coursework does not need to be completed.
3. If the petitioner is lacking the appropriate degree(s) in ***“disciplines where a master’s degree is required,”*** and does not meet the current departmental policy, at a minimum, he/she must include:
   1. A list of the requirements for earning the degree in question from an accredited institution in the United States (appropriate pages from the institution’s catalog will suffice), and
   2. a matrix illustrating how his/her various academic and professional experiences satisfy the requirements of the degree that he/she lacks.
4. If the petitioner is lacking the requirements to teach in ***“disciplines in which a master’s degree is not generally expected or available,”***
   1. and the petitioner is ***lacking the specified bachelor’s or associate’s degree*** and does not meet the current departmental policy, at a minimum, he/she must include:
      1. A list of the requirements for earning the degree in question from an accredited institution in the United States (appropriate pages from the institution’s catalog will suffice), and
      2. A matrix illustrating how his/her various academic and professional experiences satisfy the requirements of the degree that he/she lacks.
   2. and the petitioner is ***lacking the specified years of experience***, and does not meet the current departmental policy, at a minimum, he/she must include:
      1. A matrix illustrating how his/her various academic and professional experiences satisfy the years of experience that he/she lacks.
5. Petitioners should pay special attention to detail in establishing his/her comparative academic and professional experiences and submitting supporting materials to avoid unnecessary delays caused by the need to request additional information or support.
   1. Upon submission, all petitions must be signed by at least one ***tenured*** faculty member from the discipline recommending the petitioner for equivalency. Signature by several of the tenured or non-tenured faculty within the discipline is recommended. Approval by the discipline specific faculty member(s) deems that the qualifications of the petition satisfy the equivalency requirements of the discipline.
6. If there are no tenured faculty members within the discipline, a faculty member from ***a related discipline*** (as defined in the current *Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges* handbook) may sign the petition. For disciplines with only non-tenured faculty members, the signing tenured faculty member must consult with the non-tenured faculty prior to signing. In such an event, it is suggested that tenured discipline experts from another college within the district be consulted.
7. It is imperative that the signing tenured faculty member consult with other faculty members within the discipline prior to signing the petition. The signature of this tenured Reedley College faculty member is the determination that the petitioner satisfies the equivalency requirements for the petition. Other faculty members may sign the petition in support of or in opposition to the petition.
   1. Petitions must be signed by either the Department Chair, depending on the origin of the petition. The signature of the Department Chair constitutes acknowledgement of the petition being submitted by the discipline experts and that the discipline experts deem the petitioner to meet the equivalency requirements. The Department Chair may not deny a petition or prevent a petition from being forwarded to the Equivalency Committee once the discipline experts have deemed the petitioner’s qualifications to be equivalent. The Department Chair is encouraged to include a statement of support or opposition.
   2. After the petition has received all appropriate signatures, it must be signed by the Dean of Instruction/Student Services. The Dean of Instruction/Student Services is encouraged to include a statement of support or opposition. The completed petition is then submitted directly to the Chair of the Equivalency Committee. If the petition is technically correct, it will go before the Equivalency Committee for consideration. If it is **not** technically correct, it will be sent back to the petitioner for changes.
   3. At the discretion of the Equivalency Committee, additional information, supporting materials, or additional justification or support from faculty within the discipline may be requested during the review period.
   4. All petitions must be submitted electronically to the chair no later than five business days prior to the monthly scheduled Equivalency Committee meetings for review. Should the petitions be submitted fewer than five business days prior to the monthly scheduled meetings, the petitions will be considered at the following month’s scheduled meeting.
8. If a petition has been denied, the Equivalency Committee has 3 working days from the day the decision was made to provide the Dean of Instruction/Student Services with formal notification (suitable for inclusion in the personnel file). The Chairperson of the Equivalency Committee will either prepare the formal notification or delegate the responsibility to a committee member. The formal notification should include the reasons why the petition was denied. Petitioners who have been denied equivalency may appeal the decision by submitting the completed appeal form and supporting materials to the Academic Senate Executive Committee within 5 working days of being informed of the decision by the Dean of Instruction/Student Services. If the petitioner is unable to adequately respond within this period, he/she may request additional time from the Chair of the Equivalency Committee. The duration of the negotiated extension will be included in the petition documentation. *To expedite the appeal process, the appeal should contain substantially more information or support than was provided to the Equivalency Committee.* The appeal will be considered by the Academic Senate Executive Committee at their next scheduled meeting. At the discretion of the Senate President, the appeal may be considered by the Executive Committee prior to their next scheduled meeting by other means (for example, electronic vote). The decision of the Academic Senate Executive Committee will be final. Hard copies of all forms and documents for equivalency must be maintained in the appropriate personnel file for future reference as needed.
9. The Equivalency Committee shall have sole responsibility to recommend forms to the Academic Senate for petitioning for equivalency and forms for appealing a denied petition. These forms shall be published and made readily available. The Academic Senate shall modify these forms as deemed necessary, and may request suggestions or recommendations for such modification from the Equivalency Committee.
10. Any person represented by the Academic Senate (hereafter referred to as “faculty member” or “faculty”) may propose amendments to the Equivalency Committee Operating Procedure. The proposed amendments shall be reviewed by the Equivalency Committee and the Senate. Upon the approval of a simple majority of the Senate, amendments will be immediately implemented by the Equivalency Committee unless otherwise specified in the approved amendment.

The Process for Establishing Department Policies

1. The Equivalency Committee governed by this agreement shall be responsible for overseeing the equivalency actions taken by the various Departments.
2. The Committee shall establish appropriate forms for the above purpose.
3. When a Department proposes a Departmental Equivalency Policy, an application of acceptance shall be forwarded to the Committee for review. If the Committee does not accept any policy, then the application shall be returned to the Department with the reason(s) for non-acceptance. The Department may attempt to make changes and will then forward the application to the Committee for further review. The Committee may accept it or return it again for further changes.
4. A Department may propose changes to its Departmental Equivalency Policy at any time. An application of acceptance shall be forwarded to the Committee for review. If the Committee does not accept the changes to the policy, then the application shall be returned to the Department with the reason(s) for non-acceptance. The Department may attempt to make changes and will then forward the application to the Committee for further review. The Committee may accept it or return it again for further changes.
5. Should a Department not wish to establish a policy, or should the Department want to forward a candidate who does not fit under their current approved policy, then the Department may forward a candidate they support using the petition and filling out the matrix of comparable coursework/work experience.