

Title: Faculty Credential Levels and Minimum Qualifications	
Originated by: Vice President of Instructional Services	
Originated Approver: President/BOD	Originated Date: 8/31/2011
Revised by: Vice President Student Success/CAO/CSSO	Revised Date: 10/27/2020
Reviewed on: 10/2020	

Policy Statement: According to the Guidelines of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) qualified faculty members are identified primarily by credentials, but other factors, including but not limited to equivalent experience and credentialing, may be considered. Instructors must possess an academic degree relevant to what they are teaching, and at least one level above the level at which they teach, or when equivalent tested experience is established. All persons considered for employment by the college as faculty are expected to show concern for the quality and totality of the educational experience and demonstrate evidence of, or potential for, effective teaching.

Rational: Institutions must ensure that faculty members who deliver college content are appropriately qualified to do so, following the guidelines established by the HLC published September 2020. The guidelines apply to full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and instructors of dual credit/concurrent credit courses.

Per HLC, college credit by means of dual credit arrangements must ensure the quality and integrity of such offerings and their comparability to the same college credit offered on the institution's main campus and/or other locations. As such, the faculty members teaching dual credit courses should hold the same minimal qualifications as required by the institution of its own faculty. These expectations extend to all concurrent/dual credit faculty.

Procedure:

- A. Using *Credentials* as a Basis for Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty
 - 1. First Level Approval
 - i. Faculty teaching general education courses, or other non-occupational courses, should hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield in which he/she is teaching.
 - 2. Second Level Approval
 - i. 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

**Manhattan Area Technical College
Institutional Policy and Procedure Manual**

Policy No. 7.3.3

should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.

- ii. In situations where no other appropriate qualified instructor can be identified and on a limited basis, an individual faculty member who has not achieved 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline in which he or she teaches can be utilized on a per semester basis. The institution should be able to explain and justify its decision to assign the individual to the courses taught.

B. Using *Tested Experience* as a Basis for Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty

3. Third Level Approval

- i. Faculty teaching in career and technical education college-level certificate and occupational associate's degree programs should hold a bachelor's degree in the field and/or a combination of education, credentials, training, and tested experience.
 - a. Faculty are qualified based on tested experience that the institution determines is equivalent to the degree it would otherwise require. It includes experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be teaching.
 - b. Valid/current industry-recognized credential for career technical field in which the instructor is teaching.
 - c. Tested industry experience with a minimum of 4000 hours (two years) in the career technical field.