

Faculty Policy: Faculty Qualifications

Policy:

Bismarck State College, as a community college serving both on-campus and online students, shall employ qualified faculty to develop and deliver its various curricula. BSC will develop and employ a system for evaluating faculty qualifications as part of the hiring process and will seek to hire the best qualified applicants. Current and newly hired faculty who have not met minimal qualifications as outlined below will be assisted in developing a plan of study to bring them into compliance within a reasonable amount of time.

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.

Definitions:

- **Faculty:** For the purposes of this policy "faculty" refers to all employees of the college for whom teaching is a significant portion of their responsibilities. This includes, but is not be limited to, the following categories: tenured, tenure track, non-tenure track, full-time benefitted, part-time benefitted, part-time non-benefitted, adjunct, dual-credit, and temporary. Guest lecturers, visiting authors, artists, political and business leaders, and others who upon occasion visit classrooms, deliver lectures, or demonstrate specialized skills, but are not hired by the college for that purpose or otherwise used by the college to develop and deliver curriculum, are exempt.
- **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Faculty:** Those whose teaching assignments are in curricula that are designed to prepare students for entry into the workforce upon degree completion.
- **Liberal Arts and Sciences/Transfer Faculty:** Those whose teaching assignments are in disciplines that are expected to prepare students to transfer to baccalaureate degree granting institutions. Their teaching assignments may include general education courses and other lower division (i.e., freshman and sophomore level) classes.
- **Academic Skills Courses (ASC) Faculty:** Those whose teaching assignments are in pre-college/developmental courses that are college preparatory in nature and, therefore,

are not college-level and do not count towards graduation. English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) instructors are included in this category.

- **Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) Faculty:** Those whose teaching assignments include upper division courses required for BSC's Bachelor of Applied Science degrees.

Minimum Qualification Guidelines:

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 will be defined within [BSC's Faculty Qualifications Matrix](#).

Faculty Teaching in CTE Coursework:

The minimum qualifications for faculty teaching CTE coursework shall be a bachelor's degree in the program and/or a combination of academic credentials, education, training, and tested experience. Refer to the [BSC Faculty Qualifications Matrix](#) for course specific information related to the appropriate program or equivalent experiences.

Faculty Teaching in Liberal Arts and Sciences/Transfer Coursework:

The minimum qualifications for faculty teaching coursework classified as general education or designed to transfer into a bachelor's degree at a four-year institution shall be a master's degree in the discipline or subfield. If the faculty member holds a master's degree in a discipline or subfield other than that in which they teach, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach. Refer to the [BSC Faculty Qualifications Matrix](#) for course specific information related to the appropriate discipline.

In some instances, a faculty member not meeting these requirements may be deemed qualified by the expertise they have developed through a combination of academic credentials, education, training, and tested experience. Refer to the [BSC Faculty Qualifications Matrix](#) for course specific information related to the appropriate alternative credentials.

Faculty Teaching in ASC Coursework:

The minimum qualifications for faculty teaching ASC coursework shall be a bachelor's degree in the discipline or subfield.

In some instances, a faculty member not meeting these requirements may be deemed qualified by the expertise they have developed through a combination of academic credentials, education, training, and tested experience. Refer to the [BSC Faculty Qualifications Matrix](#) for course specific information related to the appropriate alternative credentials.

Faculty Teaching in BAS Coursework:

The minimum qualifications for faculty teaching BAS coursework shall be a master's degree in the discipline or subfield. If the faculty member holds a master's degree in a discipline or subfield other than that in which they teach, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.

In some instances, a faculty member not meeting these requirements may be deemed qualified by the expertise they have developed through a combination of academic credentials, education, training, and tested experience. Refer to the [BSC Faculty Qualifications Matrix](#) for course specific information related to the appropriate alternative credentials.

History of This Policy:

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.