



WNCC Administrative Procedure

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| Title: | Faculty Qualifications |
| Division: | Academic Affairs |
| Category: | Faculty |
| Reference: | Nebraska Revised Statute §85-1511 <i>Nebraska Community and Tribal Colleges Statement of Principles and Standards for Dual/Concurrent Enrollment Credit</i> , January 25, 2019 <i>Institutional Policies and Procedures for Determining Faculty Qualifications: HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices</i> , Higher Learning Commission, November 2023 Board Policy 415 (Employee Group Classification) Board Policy 416 (Recruitment and Selection of Employees) <i>Current Nebraska Western College Education Association and Western Community College Area Board of Governors Negotiated Agreement</i> |
| Number: | AP-416.02 |
| Date of Approval: | August 18, 2025 |
| Approval: | Greg Dart, President |

Purpose

This procedure establishes and describes the minimum qualifications required for faculty members teaching at and for Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC).

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals hired to teach college-level, credit-bearing courses in a full-time, temporary, and adjunct capacity. Volunteers and contractors (e.g., high school dual credit instructors) who have been identified to perform functions similar to those of employees occupying faculty positions are subject to the same provisions of this policy. Other employees

who perform instructional duties, such as non-credit trainers and others, are subject to the provisions of Board Policy 414, Board Policy 416, and President's Procedure 416.01.

Definitions

CAO – Chief Academic Officer

Dual-Credit Instructor – An individual who regularly teaches at the high school-level but, with appropriate credentials as identified by WNCC, teaches a college-level, credit-bearing course at the high school.

Faculty – Any individual hired to teach college-level, credit-bearing courses in a full-time, temporary, or adjunct capacity.

Industry Certification – A voluntary process through which individuals are assessed by an independent, third-party certifying entity using predetermined standards for knowledge, skills, and competencies, resulting in the award of a credential that is nationally recognized, and must be at least one of the following: within an industry that addresses a critical local or statewide economic need; linked to an occupation that is included in the workforce system's targeted occupation list; or linked to an occupation that is identified as emerging.

Subfield – A subdivision of a field of study within an academic discipline.

Tested Experience – Tested experience demonstrates a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member may teach. Tested experience is established through evaluation of a minimum threshold of professional experience; consideration of demonstrated skill sets, portfolios, professional, industry, and subject matter certifications and experience; and additional credentials, publications, and experiences that establish expertise in the specific discipline or program area in which they will be teaching as well as demonstrated skill sets derived from work experience, combined with training, that contributes to knowledge and expertise in a given subject area, of no less than two years or as determined by the CAO in consultation with the appropriate dean of instruction.

Procedure

Western Nebraska Community College is committed to an effective teaching and learning environment for students and will ensure that faculty members whose responsibility is teaching college-level, credit bearing courses are qualified in accordance with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) guidelines. WNCC and the HLC are committed to ensuring that students have access to faculty members who are experts in the subject matter that they teach and prepared to communicate knowledge in that subject to their students

I. Academic Credentials

WNCC adheres to the following academic credential requirements for all members of the faculty (see Appendix 416.02A).

A. Faculty teaching general education or transfer courses must:

1. hold and be able to document receipt of a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield in which they teach, or
2. hold a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which they teach with a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.

B. Faculty positions in developmental studies (reading, writing, and math), English as a second language, and music and physical education activity courses require documentation of at least a bachelor's degree in the discipline area or a combination of education, training, and tested experience.

C. Faculty teaching career and technical education college-level certificate and applied associate degree programs courses require relevant industry credentials and one of the following:

1. Ten (10) years of industry experience in the absence of a degree,
2. an associate degree and five (5) years of industry experience, or
3. a bachelor's degree and two (2) years of industry experience.

Such qualifications are allowable even in instances where technical/occupational courses transfer.

D. Faculty members currently employed in an academic discipline or professional field who desire to teach in another discipline or field must have the same minimum qualifications required of the subject(s) to be taught as determined by the division chair and dean.

E. Dual-Credit Instructors

The qualifications for dual-credit instructors shall be evaluated by WNCC. These instructors must meet the same academic credential requirements as full-time, temporary, or adjunct faculty. The decision to utilize a dual-credit instructor rests solely with the College.

Those teaching dual credit must meet additional qualifications as outlined by the Nebraska Department of Education, such as an appropriate PK-12 teaching certificate or permit, or by completing the coursework to certify as a dual-credit instructor.

- F. In some cases, WNCC's standards for faculty qualifications exceed those required by HLC. The CAO may approve a faculty member meeting the HLC qualification standard of "making significant progress" towards the master's degree in consultation with the appropriate dean of instruction and division chair. HLC defines significant progress as demonstrable, current, and consistent progress toward the academic credential(s) deemed relevant by the institution. This decision may be made when no fully qualified candidate has been identified or the full-time faculty members are at maximum capacity.

II. Process

- A. Faculty are required to document work experience with an updated resume or curriculum vita. The evaluation of documentation will be conducted by deans, division chairs, and program directors, all who are required to verify relevant experience prior to the hire of any full-time, temporary, adjunct, or dual-credit instructor.
- Hiring recommendations can be based upon immediate receipt/review of unofficial transcripts.
 - Newly hired employees are required to provide official transcripts. Official transcripts should be sent directly from the institution(s) to WNCC's Human Resources office. Transcripts must be received within thirty (30) days of the start date.
- B. Documentation of the qualifications will be retained in the employee's permanent personnel file. Faculty members are responsible for keeping their documentation of qualifications up to date as additional coursework, degrees, certifications, or tested experience warrants.
- C. Salary schedule placement and salary schedule movement for all full-time faculty are defined in the Negotiated Agreement and will be administered by Human Resources pursuant to the evaluation of qualifications presented, including situations where placement of a new hire cannot follow the guidelines in the Negotiated Agreement.

Attachment: Appendix 416.02A – Faculty Qualifications (updated Fall 2025)

Revising this Procedure

This Administrative Procedure supersedes any prior WNCC procedure, guideline, or handbook on this subject matter.

WNCC reserves the right to revise this procedure, as necessary, and for the changes to become effective immediately.

Original Adoption Date: April 2020
Revision Date: August 18, 2025
Sponsoring Division: Academic Affairs

ATTACHMENT 416.02A

FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

DEFINITIONS

- **CAO** – Chief Academic Officer
- **Faculty Member** – An individual hired to teach college-level, credit-bearing courses in a full-time, temporary, or adjunct capacity. Unless noted, this procedure for Faculty Qualifications applies only to this group.
- **Trainer** – An employee providing training or instruction in the non-credit class setting (community education, business and industry, etc.), whose duties and responsibilities are part-time, as needed or temporary in nature. The length of assignment for individual trainers may vary based upon enrollment and institutional need. Actual activity assignments may vary, contingent on needs of the institution, or discipline function in the overall curricular offering. Trainer qualifications are often determined by, or influenced by, industry standards.
- **Lab Assistant** – An individual who is hired assigned instructional functions but is not the “instructor of record” for a given class. (For example, someone who helps address faculty-to-student ratios for safety, or someone who assists students with lab experiments and skill development but is not responsible for designing the curriculum or lesson planning.) Qualifications are determined by reviewing industry/field experience along with academic qualifications.

Category 1 – General Academic/Transfer to Baccalaureate Degree Courses & Programs

A. This category includes courses with the following prefixes:

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|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| ACCT | CHEM | ENGL | HUMS | MRKT | PHYS | SPAN |
| ANTH | CRIM | ENGR | HUSR | MUSC | POLS | SPCH |
| ARTS | ECED | FREN | INFO | PHED | PRDV | THEA |
| BIOS | ECON | GBST | MATH | PHIL | PSYC | |
| BSAD | EDUC | HIST | MNGT | PHOT | SOCI | |

B. **Faculty Qualifications for Category 1** – Master’s degree in the discipline, or any master’s degree and 18 graduate credits in the discipline.¹

¹The CAO may approve a faculty member meeting the HLC qualification standard of “making significant progress” towards the master’s degree in consultation with the appropriate dean of instruction and division chair.

C. **Exceptions or Additional Qualifications by Course Prefix or Individual Course(s)**

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| ANTH 2130 | Master’s degree with courses related to cultures, equity and diversity, and social science methodology. |
| BSAD 1150 and BSAD 2150 | Any master’s degree with 18 graduate hours in Business Office/Business Office Technology, Instructional Technology, Computer Technology, or Hospitality |
| CRIM | Master’s degree in Criminal Justice or master’s degree with 18 graduate hours in the discipline or subfield |
| ENGL 0050, 0065, 1000 | Bachelor’s degree in English, English Education, ELL, or Language Studies |
| HUMS | Master’s degree in any of the humanities (Art, Communication, English, History, Languages, Literature, Music, Philosophy or Theater) or any master’s degree and 18 graduate hours in the humanities. |
| HUSR | Master’s degree in Human Services or master’s degree with 18 graduate hours in the discipline or subfield |
| INFO 1030, 1040, 1100 | Any master’s degree and successful completion of the MOS Certifications |
| MATH 0070, M0070, 0160, M0160, 1010, M1010, 1020 | Bachelor’s degree in math |
| MUSC | Activities courses (e.g., “Applied Music” courses) require bachelor’s degree or relevant experience |
| PHED | Activities courses may be taught by faculty with industry credential/certification in the activity |
| PRDV 1010 | Any master’s degree plus additional WNCC training in teaching the course |

Category 2 – Occupational/Career Preparation associated with Professional Skill Awards (PSA), Diploma, Certificate, or Associate of Applied Science Credentials

A. This category includes courses with the following prefixes:

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| AMDT | AVIA | CNST | DSLTL | UTIL |
| AUTO | BSTC | DRAF | TRAN | WELD |

B. Faculty Qualifications for Category 2 ¹

- Ten (10) years of experience with no degree
- Five (5) years of experience and an associate degree
- Two (2) years of experience and a bachelor’s degree

¹The CAO may approve a faculty member based on tested experience in consultation with the Dean of Instruction for Business, Applied Technology, and Workforce Development and the division chair.

C. Additional Qualifications by Course Prefix

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| AUTO | Industry credential, if applicable |
| AVIA | Industry credential required |
| TRAN | Industry credential, if applicable |
| UTIL | Industry credential, if applicable |
| WELD | Industry credential required |

Category 3 – Health Sciences Occupational/Career Preparation and Academic Programs

A. This category includes courses with the following prefixes:

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| ADNR | HIMS | LPNR | SURT |
| EMSP | HLTH | MEDT | |

B. **Faculty Qualifications for Category 3** – Varies by area ¹

¹ The CAO may approve a faculty member who meets the standards outlined by the unique accrediting body with documented evidence of a plan in place for that instructor to achieve the required WNCC credentials in consultation with the Dean of Instruction for Health Sciences and the appropriate program director.

C. **Qualifications by Course Prefix or Individual Course(s)**

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| ADNR | Master’s degree in Nursing (MSN) and one (1) year of relevant experience, or bachelor’s degree in nursing (BSN) and five (5)+ years of relevant experience with progress towards an MSN. Licensed RN in Nebraska. |
| EMSP | Associate degree and five (5) years industry experience or no degree and ten (10) years relevant experience. Industry credential required. |
| HIMS | Bachelor’s degree in the field. Relevant industry credential. |
| HLTH 1060, 2500 | BSN or associate degree or diploma in Nursing or related field. |
| HLTH 1195 | Active licensed practical nurse (LPN) in Nebraska and one (1) year experience in long-term care. |
| HLTH 2190 | Active licensed practical nurse (LPN) in Nebraska. |
| LPNR | MSN and one (1) or more years relevant experience or BSN and five (5)+ years of relevant experience with progress towards an MSN. Licensed RN in Nebraska. |
| MEDT | Bachelor’s degree in related field and one (1) year relevant experience or associate degree and five (5) years relevant experience. |
| SURT | Associate degree in a related field from an accredited program and two (2) years of industry/teaching experience within the last five (5) years. Meets ARC/STSA standards. Industry credential required. |