BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

SERIES: 1  Faculty Development
NUMBER: AP3402  Determining Qualified Faculty

Scope: Provide guidance in evaluating and determining faculty qualifications consistent with accreditation criteria.

Approval Date: 6/26/14
Effective Date: 7/1/14

SECTION 1. Purpose

1.1 The primary purpose of the Administrative Procedure is to speak to the importance of Blue Ridge CTC (“College” hereafter) employing qualified faculty for the varied and essential roles performed. The College must be able to demonstrate consistent procedures and careful consideration of qualifications at multiple points for all faculty to show a commitment to effective teaching and learning. The College’s procedure outlines and emphasizes the importance of employing qualified faculty in alignment with the accrediting body’s Criteria & Core Components, Assumed Practices and quality assurance expectations. The guidelines are not new, rather they serve to amplify and clarify the critical importance of employing qualified faculty.

SECTION 2. Definitions


2.2 Assumed Practices within the Criteria for Accreditation. A set of practices shared by institutions of higher education in the United States. These are generally matters to be determined as facts, rather than matters requiring professional judgment. Assumed Practice B. Teaching and Learning, Quality, Resources and Support is one of the four areas organized within the Assumed Practices. Faculty Roles and Qualifications is subsection 2. of the Teaching and Learning, Quality, Resources and Support area.

2.3 Criteria for Accreditation. The standards of quality by which the HLC determines whether a College merits accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation. There are five (5) Criteria with each containing Core Components. The College meets the Criterion only if all Core Components are met. The College is judged to meet all five Criteria for Accreditation to merit accreditation. Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support, Core Component 3.C. ensures the College has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services. Part 2 requires that all instructors are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs. Part 4 requires that the College has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; the College supports professional development.

2.4 Determination by Credentials. The primary mechanism used by the College to ascertain faculty qualifications.

2.5 Faculty Members. Those whose primary responsibility is teaching, including part-time, adjunct and all full-time faculty whose appointments are 9-month or greater.

2.6 Online Coursework. Courses in which all or the vast majority (typically 75 percent or more) of the instruction and interaction occurs via the internet.
SECTION 3. Administrative Procedure

3.1 Determination by Credentials.

3.1.1 Faculty credentials generally refer to the degrees faculty have earned from a regionally-accredited institution that provide a foundation for knowing what students should learn in a specific discipline or field. Blue Ridge recognizes the following hallmarks and common expectations for faculty credentials:

3.1.1.1 A faculty member should have completed a program of study in the discipline or subfield from a regionally-accredited institution in which they teach or will teach, and/or for which they will develop curricula, with coursework at least one level above that of the courses being taught or developed. Successful completion of a coherent degree better prepares a faculty member than an unstructured collection of credit courses.

3.1.1.2 A faculty member should hold a degree at least one level above that of the program in which they are teaching from a regionally-accredited institution. Those teaching general education courses, or other courses that transfer per the state’s articulation agreement, shall have the following:

3.1.1.2.1 A master’s degree or higher in the discipline or subfield from a regionally-accredited institution.

3.1.1.2.2 If a faculty member holds a master’s degree or higher in a discipline or subfield from a regionally-accredited institution other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.

3.2 Determination by Factors other than Credentials

3.2.1 Qualified faculty members are identified primarily by credentials, but other factors are considered in addition to the degrees earned. Attributes outlined in Sections 3.2.1.1 through 3.2.1.4 enhance faculty credentials but do not supplant the required determination by credentials:

3.2.1.1 Additional attributes may be necessary to qualify someone to teach, such as the ability to design curricula, develop and implement effective pedagogy, and appreciate the breadth of knowledge in quality associate’s degree education.

3.2.1.2 Knowledge of a specific discipline as indicated by the credential is not all that is required since faculty carry other responsibilities, such as conducting research, advising students, participating in co-curricular activities, and contributing to the overall Vision of the College in alignment with its Mission and Core Values.

3.2.1.3 An earned degree does not necessarily attest to a faculty member’s ongoing professional development in the field. Knowing what students should know is dependent upon the discovery of new knowledge and currency in the field. While a credential minimally qualifies a faculty member to teach, the advancement of knowledge is critical to relevancy and delivering a quality education.

3.2.1.4 Because of changing academic, societal, and local/regional workforce needs, the College is and will develop interdisciplinary and non-traditional programs that require faculty members to think beyond their own disciplines and traditional academic programs to determine what students should know and to design curricula accordingly.

3.2.1.5 In (practice-oriented) occupational disciplines or programs, tested experience in the field may be needed as much as the formal educational preparation at the
prescribed level determining what students should know to practice. (See Section 3.3)

3.3 Determination for Faculty Teaching Occupational Coursework

3.3.1 The faculty member teaching occupational coursework shall have at least one of the following:

3.3.1.1 A degree at least one level higher than the program in which they are teaching.

3.3.1.2 A nationally recognized certification relevant to the program they are teaching. For example, a faculty employee for the EDET program is required to have a commercial driver’s license. A faculty employee for the IT program teaching Cisco courses is required to have a current Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) certification.

3.3.1.3 A certification required by an accrediting body specific to the program they are teaching. For example, the Physical Therapy Assistant accrediting body requires the program coordinator to be a licensed Physical Therapist with a master’s or doctorate degree and at least 5 years of clinical experience.

3.3.1.4 Years of experience that can only be acquired through the unique knowledge, skills and abilities obtained through an occupational career for the program they are teaching.

3.4 Using “Tested Experience” as a Basis for Determining Qualified Faculty

3.4.1 The value of tested experience to determine faculty qualifications depends upon the relevance of the experience both to the associate’s degree level or bachelor’s degree for transfer coursework and to the specific content of the course(s) for which the faculty member is responsible.

3.4.2 Tested experience implies that some objective measures ensures that the individual’s knowledge and expertise are sufficient for determining what students should learn and have learned. (Assumed Practice B.2.)

3.4.2.1 A faculty member teaching a transfer-eligible course in human resources or business ethics may not have a degree at the appropriate level but can provide evidence of effective work as a practicing labor relations attorney.

3.4.2.2 A faculty member who teaches courses in a pre-associate technology program may not possess a graduate degree but might have the industry certification and years of experience working in that field.

3.4.2.3 A faculty member who teaches a transfer-eligible course in political science may not have a master’s degree in Political Science but may have a Master’s degree in another discipline or subfield and significant years of experience serving as an elected official at the state or national level.

3.4.2.4 A faculty member teaching creative writing, painting, or music may have had his or her expertise ability, and talent validated through publications or through wide critical and public acclaim.

3.4.2.5 A faculty member teaching a foreign language may demonstrate his or her qualification through a nationally recognized rating of proficiency in foreign language.

3.4.2.6 Teaching experience does not equate to tested experience.

3.5 Determination for Teaching Online
3.5.1 The faculty member teaching online coursework shall have at least two of the following:

3.5.1.1 An official certification issued by the LMS developer

3.5.1.2 The Quality Matters' Applying the Quality Matters Rubric certification

3.5.1.3 The Sloan-C Online Teaching Certification, LERN Certified Online Instructor, @ONE Online Teaching Certification, or equivalent, recognized certification, or equivalent graduate level coursework

3.5.1.4 Completion of at least two BRCTC e-learning training courses

3.5.1.5 At least three (3) years of experience teaching a fully online course at BRCTC or another accredited institution

3.5.2 The faculty member teaching online coursework shall obtain the BRCTC Online Instructor Certification within at least one year of the date of course assignment.

3.6 Process for Determining and Assuring Qualified Faculty

3.6.1 Applicants, Candidates & New Hires

3.6.1.1 Full-time

3.6.1.1.1 Applicants must submit unofficial transcripts as part of the application packet to the applicant tracking portal. An official copy of the transcript evaluation from a foreign credential evaluation agency shall be submitted for foreign graduates. In addition, a resumé/vita with cover letter detailing how the applicant’s education, training, and experience directly relate to the listed minimum/desired qualifications and job description should be included. Proof of certificates and licenses as they apply to the job should also be submitted.

3.6.1.1.2 The interview committee and the hiring supervisor shall complete the Qualified Faculty Determination Standard Form for the teaching discipline. If the candidate will be eligible to teach in multiple disciplines, a form for each discipline shall be completed.

3.6.1.1.3 The form shall be approved by the hiring supervisor and vice president for the discipline area and provided to the Office of Human Resources prior to the extension of a contingent offer.

3.6.1.1.4 Upon acceptance of a contingent offer, the candidate shall request official transcripts for all applicable credentials from their respective institutions. Official transcripts must be received by the Office of Human Resources within 30 days of hire date.

3.6.1.1.5 The Office of Human Resources, as the College’s record keeper for personnel information, will maintain the official transcripts and the completed Qualified Faculty Determination Standard Form.

3.6.1.2 Adjunct

3.6.1.2.1 Adjuncts considered for temporary, part-time appointment must submit unofficial transcripts as part of their application packet to the applicant tracking portal for posted positions or to the hiring supervisor/program coordinator. An official copy of the transcript evaluation from a foreign credential evaluation agency shall be submitted for foreign graduates. In addition, a resumé/vita with cover letter detailing how the applicant’s education, training, and
experience directly relate to the listed minimum/desired qualifications and job description should be included. Proof of certificates and licenses as they apply to the job should also be submitted.

3.6.1.2.2 The hiring supervisor/program coordinator shall complete the Qualified Faculty Determination Standard Form for the course(s) that will be taught. If the candidate will be eligible to teach in multiple disciplines, a form for each discipline shall be completed.

3.6.1.2.3 The form shall be approved by the hiring supervisor and vice president for the discipline area and provided to the Office of Human Resources prior to completion of new hire paperwork. The Office of Human Resources will not proceed with new hire paperwork or the orientation and onboarding process until the form is received.

3.6.1.2.4 Upon acceptance of a contingent offer, the candidate shall request official transcripts for all applicable credentials from their respective institutions. Official transcripts must be received by the Office of Human Resources within 30 days of hire date.

3.6.1.2.5 The Office of Human Resources, as the College’s record keeper for personnel information, will maintain the official transcripts and the completed Qualified Faculty Determination Standard Form.

3.6.2 Faculty Members

3.6.2.1 Full-time

3.6.2.1.1 Full-time faculty members’ qualifications shall be reviewed on an annual basis concurrent with performance appraisals (due June 15th). A completed Qualified Faculty Determination Standard Form shall be provided to the Office of Human Resources to accompany the completed performance appraisal form if a faculty member’s qualifications have changed within the year. New credentials or other qualifying factors shall be supported by official documentation such as official transcripts, proof of certification, proof of licensure, updated resume, etc.

3.6.2.2 Adjunct

3.6.2.2.1 Adjunct faculty qualifications shall be reviewed on annual basis concurrent with the completion of class observations. A completed Qualified Faculty Determination Standard Form shall be provided to the Office of Human Resources to accompany the completed class observation form if a faculty member’s qualifications have changed within the year. New credentials or other qualifying factors shall be supported by official documentation such as official transcripts, proof of certification, proof of licensure, updated resume, etc.

3.7 Deficient Qualifications

3.7.1 Applicants, Candidates & Contingent Offers

3.7.1.1 Applicants whose qualifications fall below the stated minimum qualifications will be disqualified from consideration.

3.7.1.2 Candidates and those with a contingent offer whose credentials or other
qualifying factors change during the interview or hiring process are subject to a withdrawal of offer.

3.7.1.3 All faculty employment is contingent upon successful completion of a background check as permitted by the Federal Trade Commission's Fair Credit Reporting Act. Candidates with a contingent offer are provided with the College's background check administrative procedure (AP4102), disclosure and authorization form. Should results reveal discrepancies within employment history, educational, or certification and licensure qualifications, a contingent offer may be withdrawn. The individual will be provided with a Summary of Rights Under the Fair Credit Report Act which advises of the right to obtain the information being considered and how to report a dispute for incomplete or inaccurate information to the consumer reporting agency.

3.7.2 Faculty Members

3.7.2.1 Faculty members who do not provide official transcripts and other qualifying factor documentation (proof of certification, proof of licensures, etc.) within 30 days of hire date will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

3.7.2.2 Faculty members whose qualifications are deemed deficient in the discipline they teach will be provided notification to include:

3.7.2.2.1 The nature and discipline of the deficient qualification.

3.7.2.2.2 Timeline permitted to acquire the qualifications. The timeline will be consistent with the length of the faculty member’s appointment. For example, if a faculty member with a three (3) year term appointment has deficient qualifications, the individual will be placed on the second year of the three year term and therefore provided two years to meet qualification expectations. For a faculty member with a temporary appointment or one (1) year term, the individual will be provided one year to meet qualification expectations. For an adjunct faculty member with a part-time, temporary appointment on a semester basis, one semester will be provided to meet qualification expectations.

3.7.2.2.3 Opportunity to apply for faculty development consistent with the Faculty and Non-Classified Tuition Reimbursement (AP3401) and/or Faculty and Non-Classified Professional Development administrative procedures.

3.7.2.2.4 Personnel action if qualifications are not met within timeline provided. Employment action may include: non-renewal of appointment; course load reassignment within department or area dependent upon the needs of the College at that time to include but not exclusive to student demand, other faculty members and their respective loads, and funding availability; demotion; status change; or termination of employment.

SECTION 4. Exceptions

4.1 The President of the College, or his/her designee, may make exceptions to this policy for academic and other reasons as may be deemed appropriate.

ATTACHMENTS:
A: 3402A Qualified Faculty Determination Standard Form
DISTRIBUTION LIST:
President
Executive Assistant to the President
Vice President of Workforce & Engineering Technologies
Vice President of Instruction
Vice President of Business and Technology
Vice President of Enrollment Management
VP of Human Resources
Chief Financial Officer
VP of IT
Faculty Council Chair
Classified Staff Council Chair
Student Board Representative

_________________________  _________________________
President  Date