ACCREDITING BUREAU OF HEALTH EDUCATION SCHOOLS
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ABHES BULLETIN

To: ABHES-Accredited Institutions and Programs
Interested Parties

From: Florence Tate, Executive Director

Date: October 26, 2016

Subject: Academic Associate Degree Faculty Standards (VI.B.2.) -- Amendment

At its July 2016 meeting, the Commission of the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES or the Commission) approved the following revision to the academic associate degree standards, effective January 1, 2017.

VI.B.2. Faculty consists of qualified individuals.

~~All i~~Instructors hold, at a minimum, a baccalaureate degree ~~with~~ and academic preparation in the specific courses being taught. Instructors ~~of general education~~ must have at least 15 semester credit hours or equivalent in the subject area ~~or demonstrates equivalent, relevant training or experience in the subject matter (applicable to new faculty hires or instructors teaching new general education subjects after January 1, 2012)~~.

Additionally, instructors of occupational courses possess the following:

a. graduation from a program in the field in which they teach accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation; and

b. a minimum of three years of occupational experience in the subject field or in a closely related field.

At least 50 percent of general education courses must be taught by faculty possessing a master's degree or higher. In all cases, the degree must be from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

~~Exceptions to the baccalaureate degree requirement may be justified for instructors teaching in technical or vocational subjects in fields in which baccalaureate degrees are not generally available. An institution must be able to justify the assignment of any instructor who does not hold a baccalaureate degree in the assigned teaching field.~~

~~At least 50 percent of courses offered in the degree program must be taught by faculty possessing a baccalaureate degree or higher. Further, at least 50 percent of general education courses must be taught by faculty possessing a master's degree or higher. In all cases, the degree must be from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.~~

Please be advised that in order to provide institutions and programs an opportunity to come into compliance with the bachelor's degree requirement for faculty instructing in an academic associate degree program, ABHES will permit an extension of three (3) years in which to come into compliance. This will allow faculty hired prior to January 1, 2017, who do not currently hold the requisite degree, to earn the bachelor's degree not later than January 1, 2020. The extension will also provide institutions and programs time to submit a program modification and receive an approval to lower the academic associate degree program to an occupational or applied associate degree or a diploma/certificate, if they so choose. Please understand that the standard requires faculty hired on or after January1, 2017, to hold a bachelor's degree. The final standard language will read:

VI.B.2. Faculty consists of qualified individuals.

Instructors hold, at a minimum, a baccalaureate degree (applicable to instructors hired on or after January 1, 2017; whereas instructors hired prior to January 1, 2017, have until January 1, 2020, to evidence compliance with the baccalaureate degree requirement), and academic preparation in the specific courses being taught. Instructors must have at least 15 semester credit hours or equivalent in the subject area.

Additionally, instructors of occupational courses possess the following:

a. graduation from a program in the field in which they teach accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation; and

b. a minimum of three years of occupational experience in the subject field or in a closely related field.

At least 50 percent of general education courses must be taught by faculty possessing a master's degree or higher. In all cases, the degree must be from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

Please contact me at ftate@abhes.org with any questions.