

281—21.62(260C) Accreditation components and criteria—additional state standards. To be granted accreditation by the state board of education, an Iowa community college will also meet additional standards pertaining to minimum or quality assurance standards for faculty (Iowa Code section 260C.48(1)); faculty load (Iowa Code section 260C.48(2)); special needs and protected classes (Iowa Code section 260C.48(3)); career and technical education program evaluation (Iowa Code section 256.130(7)); facilities, parking lots and roads; institutional effectiveness and outcomes-based planning; quality faculty plan (Iowa Code section 260C.36); senior year plus programs (Iowa Code chapter 261E); and student services; as well as any other items referenced in this chapter.

21.62(1) Faculty.

a. Community college-employed instructors who teach college credit courses shall meet minimum standards and institutional quality faculty plan requirements. Standards will at a minimum require that all community college instructors meet the following requirements:

(1) Instructors teaching courses in the area of career and technical education will be registered, certified, or licensed in the occupational area in which the state requires registration, certification, or licensure and shall meet at least one of the following qualifications:

1. Possess a baccalaureate degree or higher in the field of instruction in which the instructor teaches classes, or possess a baccalaureate degree in any area of study if at least 18 of the credit hours completed were in the career and technical field of instruction in which the instructor teaches classes.

2. Possess an associate degree in the career and technical education field of instruction in which the instructor is teaching, if such degree is considered terminal for that field of instruction, and have at least 3,000 hours of recent and relevant work experience in the occupational area or related occupational area in which the instructor teaches classes.

3. Have special training and at least 6,000 hours of relevant tested experience in the occupational area or related occupational area in which the instructor teaches classes if the instructor possesses less than a baccalaureate degree in the area or related area of study or occupational area in which the instructor is teaching classes and the instructor does not meet the requirements of subparagraph 21.62(1)“a”(2).

(2) For purposes of numbered paragraphs 21.62(1)“a”(1)“2” and “3,” if the instructor is a licensed practitioner who holds a career and technical endorsement under Iowa Code chapter 256, subchapter VII, part 3, relevant work experience in the occupational area includes, but is not limited to, classroom instruction in a career and technical education subject area offered by a school district or accredited nonpublic school.

(3) Instructors in the area of arts and sciences shall meet the following qualifications set forth in Iowa Code section 260C.48.

b. For courses identified as applied liberal arts and sciences, possess at least a bachelor’s degree and a combination of formal training and professional tested experience equivalent to 6,000 hours. The instructor shall hold the appropriate registration, certification, or licensure in occupational areas in which such credential is necessary for practice.

c. Developmental education instructors will possess a minimum of a bachelor’s degree. Noncredit instructors are not subject to the standards in this subrule.

d. Adult education instructors will meet the minimum standards set forth in 877—Chapter 32. Instructional staff providing instruction in an adult education and literacy program to students must possess at minimum a bachelor’s degree.

e. A faculty standards council will be convened by the department to review procedures for establishing and reviewing minimum instructor qualifications and definitions for “field of instruction,” “applied liberal arts and sciences courses,” “qualifying graduate field or major,” and “relevant tested experience.” Definitions will be based on accepted practices of regionally accredited two- and four-year institutions of higher education.

(1) The council will include faculty and academic administrators and meet at least annually. The council will make recommendations to a committee consisting of the chief academic officers of Iowa’s 15 community colleges. The committee will adopt definitions and minimum faculty qualification standards to be utilized for the state accreditation process. Each community college will adhere to the adopted definitions and minimum faculty qualification standards.

(2) When utilizing relevant tested experience to qualify an instructor to teach classes within a specific field of instruction, each community college will maintain well-defined policies, procedures, and documentation in alignment with the adopted definitions and minimum faculty qualification standards. This documentation will demonstrate that the instructor possesses the experience and expertise necessary to teach in the specified field of instruction and is current in the instructor's discipline. When tested experience is assessed, an hour of relevant work is equal to 60 minutes and one full-time year of relevant work is equal to 2,000 hours.

21.62(2) Faculty load.

a. Arts and sciences. The full-time teaching load of an instructor in arts and sciences courses will be 15 credit hours within a traditional semester or the equivalent and will not exceed a maximum of 16 credit hours within a traditional semester or the equivalent. An instructor may also have an additional teaching assignment beyond the maximum academic workload, provided the instructor and the community college administration mutually consent to this additional assignment and the total workload does not exceed the equivalent of 22 credit hours within a traditional semester or the equivalent.

b. Career and technical education. The full-time teaching load of an instructor in career and technical education programs will not exceed an aggregate of 30 hours per week or the equivalent. An instructor may also teach the equivalent of an additional three credit hours, provided the instructor consents to this additional assignment. When the teaching assignment includes classroom subjects (nonlaboratory), consideration will be given to establishing the teaching load more in conformity with that of paragraph 21.62(2) "a."

21.62(3) Special needs and protected classes. Community colleges shall provide equal access to the full range of program offerings and services including recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities for students with special education needs or protected by state or federal civil rights regulations. Students with disabilities shall be given access to the full range of program offerings at a college through reasonable accommodations.

21.62(4) Career and technical education evaluation. The community college career and technical program review and evaluation system must ensure that the programs meet requirements as specified in 281—Chapter 46.

21.62(5) Facilities, parking lots and roads.

a. Infrastructure and facilities master planning. Each community college shall present evidence of adequate planning, including a board-approved plan that includes facilities, technology, and campus safety. At a minimum, the plan will include scheduling periodic maintenance, planning for facilities and infrastructure expansions and renovations, major equipment upgrades, and processes for continuity of service and instruction.

b. Adequate facilities. The site, buildings and equipment of the community college will be well maintained and in good condition. The physical plant and technological infrastructure will be adequate in size and properly equipped for the program offered. All remodeling of existing facilities will comply with Iowa Code chapter 104A and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.

c. Accessibility and safety. All new or remodeled facilities (buildings and programs offered in such facilities) and services in such facilities shall be made functional and usable for persons with special needs, comply with Iowa Code chapter 104A and the Americans With Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101, and address issues of campus safety and security as required by Iowa Code chapter 260C and by the federal Clery Act, 20 U.S.C. §1092(f). All parking areas and roads will comply with all state and federal rules and regulations dealing with roads, parking ramps, and accessibility requirements.

d. Library or learning resource center. A library or learning resource center will be planned as part of the master campus plan and space made for library or learning resource center services within the initial construction.

(1) **Facilities.** Community college libraries or learning resource centers shall provide the facilities and resources needed to support the total educational program of the institution and shall show evidence that the facilities and the resources are being used effectively and efficiently. Adequate consideration shall be given to the seating, comfort, setting, and technology of the facility used to house the collection and learning resources.

(2) Staffing. The library or learning resource center will be adequately staffed with qualified professionals and skilled nonprofessional personnel.

(3) Collection. The library and learning resource center materials collection of a community college shall be accessible and adequate in size and scope to serve effectively the number and variety of programs offered and the number of students enrolled, including distance and satellite sites. The library and learning resource center materials collection will show evidence of having been selected by faculty as well as professional library or learning resource staff and shall be kept up to date through a planned program of acquisition and deletion.

(4) Expenditures. The budget of the library or learning resource center will be appropriate for the programs and services offered by the institution. New programs and new curricula will be reflected in library or learning resource center expenditures.

e. Student center. An area of the college will be provided where students may gather informally and where food is available.

f. Laboratories, equipment and supplies. Laboratories, equipment and supplies will be comparable with those used in the occupations for which instruction is offered. Similarly, college parallel or transfer courses will be supported in a manner comparable to those conditions that prevail in standard, regionally accredited colleges and universities to which students may wish to transfer college credits.

21.62(6) *Institutional effectiveness and outcomes-based planning.*

a. Institutional effectiveness. The community college will prepare a high-quality, board-approved strategic plan that is regularly reviewed and revised, at least once every five years. The plan will guide the college and its decision-making. It will contain a list of goals, objectives and metrics and will be developed with input from internal and external stakeholders. The college should regularly track and communicate progress towards meeting plan goals.

b. Outcomes-based planning. The community college will review outcomes data regularly provided by the department and illustrate how the data informs institutional decision making in order to meet the plan goals identified in paragraph 21.62(6) "a."

21.62(7) *Quality faculty plan.* The community college will establish a quality faculty committee consisting of instructors and administrators to develop and maintain a plan for hiring and developing quality faculty. Each college will comply with the appropriate standards defined in Iowa Code section 260C.36.

21.62(8) *Senior year plus.* The community college shall provide access to joint enrollment opportunities for high school age students. Each college will comply with the appropriate standards defined in Iowa Code chapter 261E.

21.62(9) *Student services.* A program of student services will be provided to meet the needs of students in the community college. Services will be reviewed periodically and incorporated into the college's planning for effectiveness. The program of student services, at a minimum, will include the following functional areas:

a. A systematic onboarding process that includes recruitment, evaluation and support of college readiness, orientation to college processes and policies, and initial program and course selection.

b. Programs and resources to help students understand how to finance college, including access to federal, state and local financial aid to facilitate community college enrollment and completion.

c. A student-centered advising program related to career and academic goals focused on persistence, retention, completion, and transition to further education or employment.

d. Campus safety and security as required by Iowa Code chapter 260C; the federal Clery Act, 20 U.S.C. §1092(f); and 34 CFR Section 668.46.

e. Opportunities for students to participate in experiences and programs that supplement classroom learning experiences and provide an optimal climate for social and academic development.

f. A policy in compliance with Iowa Code section 260C.14(26) as enacted by 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 299, regarding any communication to students relating to immunization requirements.

21.62(10) *Effective dates of federal law.* All references to federal law in this rule are to those versions in effect on February 7, 2024.

[ARC 7790C, IAB 4/17/24, effective 5/22/24; ARC 8240C, IAB 10/2/24, effective 11/6/24; ARC 9102C, IAB 4/16/25, effective 5/21/25; ARC 9809C, IAB 12/10/25, effective 1/14/26]