

Guidelines for Evaluating Deficiencies in General Education, (Humanities/Social Studies) for applicants with baccalaureate degrees from foreign universities.

Background: For many years there has been an increased number of applicants, both in state and out of state and both initial application and application by comity from people who obtained their baccalaureate degree from foreign universities. Many foreign university transcripts indicate an insufficient number of General Education hours. This is typical of programs that focus on turning out technically competent graduates at minimum cost and time investment and is generally reflective of the economic constraints under which their economies are operating. The other point to keep in mind is that the educational systems where this arises generally expect more of their students at what we would consider the secondary education level than we do here in the United States. These people are often from countries experiencing internal and external conflict and many are reluctant immigrants who have had to relocate due to political or ethnic circumstances that have put them in fear for their lives. It seems that there should be some reasonable accommodation that can be made for these particular circumstances that has a grounding in reality and that can be applied in an even handed and predictable way so that people are not denied acceptance of their application unnecessarily. We need to keep in mind that the Health, Safety and Welfare of the public are our primary concerns.

A Way Forward: There are 16 hours of General Education coursework required by NCEES standards. The following equivalencies can be used as suggested substitutes for those hours:

Master's Degree in their field in an ABET accredited program - 8 hrs

PhD in their field - 12 hrs

Naturalized US Citizenship - 8 hrs (Due to history and citizenship education requirements)

Current License in field applied for from another State - 8 hrs

One year of employment in field applied for in the US - 2 hrs (maximum of 8 total hrs)

Rationale: A master's degree from in an ABET accredited program demonstrates a certain level of competence in communication and social function. A PhD demonstrates the same thing but on a more advanced level. The naturalized citizen has had to study US history, citizenship and prove facility in the English language. A current license from another State should be given some weight but not carry the whole load and should be viewed with an eye towards that States own requirements. Some States do not require any makeup of General Education hours and so should probably be discounted by some amount. A year of employment in their field in the US would demonstrate an ability to function and can be useful in providing its own form of general education.

How to Apply the Guidelines: Each application is unique. Every applicant has his or her own story. It is our job to evaluate those applications on their own particular merits. The people who come to our shores from other countries have not had the opportunity to attend institutions that are programmed to fulfill the NCEES standards and we should make reasonable accommodation for their difficulties. The above equivalencies are suggestive and not determinative. Some could be discounted under some circumstances and counted for more under others. Advanced degrees in non- ABET accredited programs will need to be evaluated separately. Our task is to use our judgment in fulfilling the duties assigned to us by the State of Kansas.