

## Coursework – Keep This in Mind

Typically...

- ❖ Schools require completion of a minimum of 60 semester credits in order to obtain an associate's degree. 12 of these credits will be in the student's selected major.
- ❖ Schools require completion of a minimum of 120 semester credits in order to obtain a bachelor's degree. 24 of these credits will be in the student's selected major.

*Note, semester credits and quarter hour credits are not equal. One quarter hour credit is equal to 0.67 semester credit. For our purposes, we're going to be referencing semester credits.*

## Levels of Experience – Keep This in Mind

Professional

- ❖ Work is predominantly intellectual and varied in character; requires consistent exercise of discretion and judgment; requires knowledge of an advanced nature in the field of science or learning customarily acquired by specialized study in an institution of higher learning or its equivalent; and is of such character that the output or result accomplished cannot be standardized in relation to a given period of time. (Source: Act 195)
- ❖ Requires knowledge in a field of science or learning characteristically acquired through education or training equivalent to a bachelor's or higher degree with major study in or pertinent to the specialized field, as distinguished from general education. Work is professional when it requires the exercise of discretion, judgment, and personal responsibility for the application of an organized body of knowledge that is constantly studied to make new discoveries and interpretations, and to improve data, materials, and methods, e.g., mathematics or engineering. (Source: U.S. Office of Personnel Management)
- ❖ Requires specialized and theoretical knowledge which is usually acquired through college training or through work experience and other training which provides comparable knowledge. (Source: Description of EEO Categories)

Paraprofessional

- ❖ Paraprofessionals perform some of the duties of a professional but in a supportive role. Paraprofessional work usually requires less formal training or experience than is normally required for professional status. Paraprofessional workers usually carry out many of the things that professionals want done. (Source: State of Illinois)

## Technical

- ❖ Technical work is typically associated with and supportive of a professional or administrative field. It involves extensive practical knowledge, gained through experience and/or specific training less than that represented by college graduation. Work may involve substantial elements of the work of the professional or administrative field, but requires less than full knowledge of the field involved. Employees carry out tasks, methods, procedures, and/or computations that are laid out either in published or oral instructions and covered by established precedents or guidelines. (Source: U.S. Office of Personnel Management)
- ❖ Requires a combination of basic scientific or technical knowledge and manual skill which can be obtained through specialized post-secondary school education or through equivalent on-the-job training. (Source: Description of EEO Categories)

## Coursework = Experience

- ❖ Paraprofessional/technical work experience and undergraduate coursework can be substituted for each other.
  - One month of paraprofessional/technical experience = 2.5 undergraduate credits
  - One year of paraprofessional/technical experience = 30 undergraduate credits
  - Four years of experience = 120 undergraduate credits
- ❖ Professional experience and graduate coursework can be substituted for each other.
  - One year of professional experience = 30 graduate credits
- ❖ Any amount (even just one day) of professional experience can be used in lieu of a required bachelor's degree. *The logic behind this: Given that professional experience and graduate coursework are equivalent, and graduate coursework trumps undergraduate coursework, professional experience should trump undergraduate coursework*

## Types of Equivalency Options

- ❖ Open Equivalency – Any combination of experience and training that can be considered equivalent to an option of the METs.

*Example: A bachelor's degree; or any equivalent combination of experience and training.*
- ❖ Limited Equivalency – Any combination of experience and training that can be considered equivalent to an option of the METs, **and** includes specific experience and/or training.

*Example: A bachelor's degree that includes 12 credits in accounting; or an equivalent combination of experience and training that includes 12 credits in accounting.*

## More About Interpreting Equivalency Options

Generic coursework and generic experience can be substituted for each other. Consider the following requirements:

*A bachelor's degree; or any equivalent combination of experience and training.*

No major is listed in the first option, so equivalent experience would not have to be in any particular field. Now, consider the following:

*Two years of paraprofessional experience; or any equivalent combination of experience and training.*

Because these requirements don't call for experience in a particular field, equivalent coursework can be in any subject.

### On the other hand...

Consider the following requirements:

*A bachelor's degree in accounting; or any equivalent combination of experience and training.*

Because the first option of the requirements calls for a specific major, equivalent experience/training would need to be in that field in order to be qualifying. There are many ways to qualify under the equivalency option. Based on what we've already learned, examples include, but are not limited to:

- Any amount of professional accounting experience
- A bachelor's degree in any major, including or supplemented by 24 accounting credits
- A master's degree in accounting
- Four years of paraprofessional experience, including 10 months in the field of accounting (10 months is equivalent to the 24 credits needed for a major)