

**TITLE 133
PROCEDURAL RULE
WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION
SERIES 46**

**TITLE: STANDARDS FOR SUBJECT- AREA CONTENT IN SECONDARY-
LEVEL TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

SECTION 1. GENERAL

- 1.1 Scope: This rule establishes minimum standards for subject-area content in secondary-level teacher preparation programs.
- 1.2 Authority - W. Va. Code §18B-1B-4
- 1.3 Filing Date - November 23, 2004
- 1.4 Effective Date - December 23, 2004

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission is committed to doing its part in improving the quality of education in the schools. It shares the conclusion of the Teaching Commission report, *Teaching at Risk*, one of many recent reports on the importance of teacher quality, "All good schools have one thing in common: good teachers. Top quality teaching fosters high achievement — and high achievers can harness their talents and energies to become successful contributing citizens." Clearly, good teachers who have a solid grasp of the subjects they teach are essential in the educational process to the attainment of a well-educated, highly skilled citizenry.

The Commission concurs with the conclusion of the National Council on Teacher Quality that an alarming number of teachers are insufficiently grounded in the subjects they teach. This rule is designed to help address the issue of adequate preparation in content fields.

- 2.2 The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission established a Task Force on Content Majors in Teacher Preparation to recommend ways to improve the quality of teacher preparation in secondary-level subject-content areas. The provisions of this rule are an outgrowth of the recommendations of the Task Force. The rationale of the Task Force in shaping its report was:
 - 1. Teacher quality is the major single determinant in improving student learning,

2. All teacher preparation programs must be academically rigorous, and
 3. Extensive content preparation for prospective teachers is a key factor in improving quality.
- 2.3 The standards which follow are designed to assure minimum levels of subject-area preparation in secondary-level teacher preparation programs. A higher education institution under the jurisdiction of the HEPC may implement more extensive and rigorous programs for preparation of secondary-level teachers, including requirements for a baccalaureate degree in the content field, dual baccalaureate degrees in education and in the content area, and baccalaureate degree in-field and a master's degree in education.

SECTION 3. STANDARDS FOR SUBJECT-AREA CONTENT PREPARATION

- 3.1 Each college or university with secondary-level teacher preparation programs shall provide that its secondary-level programs (those programs emphasizing the secondary-level grades and including licensure to teach grades 10-12) in core academic areas require at least the equivalency of corresponding content majors in terms of academic rigor and credit hours completed in content areas.
- 3.2 Secondary-level education certification areas for which equivalency in content majors would be required are: biology, business education, chemistry, English, general science, mathematics, modern foreign languages, physics, and social studies.
- 3.3 Each secondary-level certification area referenced in Section 3.2 must include an equivalent number of credit hours of subject area content coursework to the institution's baccalaureate major in the corresponding content field, with the following exceptions:
 - 3.3.1 For a baccalaureate major in a content field in which the credit hours for content coursework exceed 48 credit hours, the number of content credit hours in the corresponding secondary-level teacher preparation program shall not be less than 48 credit hours.
 - 3.3.2 For secondary-level teacher preparation programs in social studies and general science, areas in which there is typically no corresponding baccalaureate degree, the minimum number of required credit hours in the content area shall not be less than 48. While the number of content hours in other secondary-level teacher preparation programs for certification areas listed in section 3.2 is

to be at least the equivalent of corresponding baccalaureate degrees, in no instance shall the number of credit hours in the content area of a secondary-level teacher preparation program be less than 36.

- 3.4 Each secondary-level certification area referenced in Section 3.2 must meet expectations of academic rigor similar to that of the corresponding baccalaureate degree programs. While the subject-area curriculum of the teacher preparation program may vary somewhat from the subject-area curriculum of the baccalaureate degree program, it must include some form of culminating educational experience in the content area, such as a capstone course. At the discretion of the institution, the curriculum may include applied courses in the content areas as deemed appropriate.
- 3.5 All content coursework in a secondary-level teacher preparation program must be taught by faculty with appropriate in-field academic credentials. Typically, the faculty would serve in the academic department.
- 3.6 At the discretion of the institution, the secondary-level teacher preparation program could be administered in the appropriate academic department or the school/college of education.
- 3.7 At the discretion of the institution, the degrees awarded for successful completion of the secondary-level teacher preparation program could be in the appropriate academic field or in education.
- 3.8 Each institution will file a copy of revised secondary-level teacher preparation curricula with the Higher Education Policy Commission office.