

Guidelines for Catholic High School Religion Teacher Certification Professional Qualifications

Religion teachers shall be professionally prepared. The selection of teachers requires that all applicants be personally interviewed by the principal and the department chairperson and that a systematic effort be made to evaluate their educational credentials and relevant experience. Prime consideration should be given to those candidates who fulfill archdiocesan certification requirements.

Obtaining Certification

To be certified by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, a high school religion teacher must meet the following requirements:

- a) A bachelor's degree with a major⁴ in Catholic theology, religious education, or religious studies. This degree must include a minimum of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours of course work in theology, religious education, or religious studies. A well-balanced program of study must include courses in scripture, doctrine, Church history, moral theology⁵, and liturgical/sacramental theology. Courses in pastoral ministry, prayer, and spirituality will be recognized. However, these courses cannot constitute the majority of credits.
- b) An accredited college course in adolescent/developmental psychology, AND at least one accredited course in secondary teaching methods.
- c) Successful completion of a minimum of one quarter of student teaching or an equivalent practicum in teaching. This practicum must include observation of classes, lesson planning, and supervised teaching.⁶
- d) Review of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati policies regarding religious education, including legal and liability issues, and the *Archdiocese of Cincinnati High School Religion Graded Course of Study*.
- e) Read the most-recent *Decree on Child Protection* and remain in compliance with the SafeParish™ training program, which educates adults who work with

or around children on the vigilance and steps necessary to protect children from child sexual abuse.

- f) Maintain engagement in the Vocare Certification Program of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, including ten hours of ongoing faith formation annually (July 1 – June 30).
- g) Attend at least one religious in-service program per year and complete an *Event Submission* form in Vocare for the hours.⁷

Part-time⁸ high school religion teachers must meet these same requirements.

Principals are strongly encouraged to make compliance to these standards a factor in determining the selection of teachers.

Endnotes.

⁴ A bachelor's degree with a major other than the three here specified is acceptable. But to be certified by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, a high school religion teacher must have a minimum of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours of college-level course work in Catholic theology, religious education, or religious studies from an accredited Catholic college or university. These hours may be undergraduate or graduate, **and** some of them **must** be in scripture, doctrine, Church history, moral theology, and liturgical/sacramental theology.

⁵ "Moral" here would include studies in Catholic social teaching and in education for justice and peace, as well as Catholic sexual morality.

⁶ For the purpose of archdiocesan certification, if a high school religion teacher already in service has not completed student teaching, she/he may consider her/his first semester of teaching in fulfillment of this requirement provided that the religion department chairperson or another qualified person supervises and mentors the new teacher. A letter must be sent by the religion department chairperson to the Office for Evangelization and Discipleship asking that this supervised teaching fulfill the requirement. This student teaching requirement may be waived for veteran teachers who have demonstrated satisfactory teaching ability at the high school level during a five-year period immediately preceding the date of their application for certification.

⁷ This requirement may be fulfilled by participation in workshops, institutes, conventions, lectures, lecture series, and school-sponsored spiritual enrichment and in-service programs.

⁸ A part-time religion teacher is one who: a) teaches in one or more departments or who serves as counselor, campus minister or administrator, and b) whose religion classes are less than one-half the normal full teaching load. Religion department chairpersons who carry reduced teaching loads, because of their added responsibilities as chairpersons, are considered full-time religion teachers.