Faculty Appointments, Qualifications for

Policy: Board of Regents Policy Manual, Section 8.3.1.2,

<http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/>

In accordance with Board of Regents' policy and SACSCOC requirements (<https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/07/faculty-credentials.pdf>), all persons recommended for teaching appointments (both full- time and part-time) must hold at least a Master's degree. The only exception to this requirement is that on rare occasions, the case for alternative faculty credentials may be presented if an overwhelming case can be made for the exception. On the occasion that a candidate for a position has outstanding qualifications in a discipline that were achieved outside of traditional academic preparation, the case for *alternative qualification* may be considered. In these rare exceptions, the requirement is that the person have, at a minimum, a Bachelor’s degree, plus a strong record of experiences that would demonstrate their outstanding ability to teach outside of the discipline, or above their academic preparation. The experiences considered for alternative credentialing include but are not limited to:

* Extensive and appropriately related work experience in the field
* Professional licensure related to teaching assignments
* Professional certifications related to teaching assignments
* Related honors and awards
* Current and continuing professional development
* Relevant peer-reviewed publications and research
* Continuous documented excellence in teaching

These special cases must be supported with documentation upon request for the appointment and must be approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost of the University.

Additionally, all degrees held by persons recommended for teaching appointments must be from regionally accredited universities or the equivalent from international universities or institutions. The Office of the Provost will make the determination of equivalency of credentials for candidates who hold degrees from international universities or institutions.

The University President shall be responsible for the initial appointment of faculty members and administrative employees of each institution, the salary of each, and all promotions and be authorized to make all reappointments of faculty members and administrative employees, except as otherwise specified by the Board of Regents.

**Comprehensive Standard 6.2.a, *Faculty Qualifications,* of the SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation reads as follows:**

Qualified, effective faculty members are essential to carry out the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs. The emphasis is on overall qualifications of a faculty member, rather than simply academic credentials. While academic credentials in most cases may well be the standard qualification for faculty members, other types of qualifications may prove to be appropriate. Examples could include appropriately related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications related to the teaching assignment, honors and awards, continuing professional development, relevant peer-reviewed publications, and/or continuous documented excellence in teaching. These types of qualifications are especially important in professional, technical, and technology-dependent fields.

It is the institution’s obligation to justify and document the qualifications of its faculty. Determining the acceptability of faculty qualifications requires judicious use of professional judgment, especially when persons do not hold degrees in the teaching discipline or are qualified based on criteria other than their academic credentials. Similarly, persons holding a degree at the same or lower level than the level at which the course is taught require additional qualifications and the application of professional judgment. Additional justification is needed for these cases as compared to cases where the academic credentials are a “perfect match” for the teaching assignments. Appropriate qualifications may also differ depending on whether a course is generally transferable to other institutions; qualifications for teaching nontransferable technical courses depend heavily on professional experience and appropriate certifications or work experience.

Judicious use of professional judgment should also be exercised by those asked to serve as external reviewers of faculty qualifications.

**SACSCOC Guidelines for Faculty Qualifications:**

Standard 6.2.a (*Faculty qualifications*) of the *Principles of Accreditation* reads as follows:  
For each of its educational programs, the institution justifies and documents the qualifications of its faculty members.

When an institution defines faculty qualifications using faculty credentials, institutions should use the following as credential guidelines:

1. Faculty teaching general education courses at the undergraduate level: doctorate or master’s degree in the teaching discipline or master’s degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
2. Faculty teaching associate degree courses designed for transfer to a baccalaureate degree: doctorate or master’s degree in the teaching discipline or master’s degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
3. Faculty teaching associate degree courses not designed for transfer to the baccalaureate degree: bachelor’s degree in the teaching discipline, or associate’s degree and demonstrated competencies in the teaching discipline.
4. Faculty teaching baccalaureate courses: doctorate or master’s degree in the teaching discipline or master’s degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
5. Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work: earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline.
6. Graduate teaching assistants: master’s in the teaching discipline or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, direct supervision by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, regular in-service training, and planned and periodic evaluations.

*Approved: College Delegate Assembly, December 2006*

*Updated for Revised Principles: April 2018*