

Verification of Faculty Credentials at Georgia State University – Effective July 1, 2016

Policy

In accordance with Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 of the Principles of Accreditation as administered by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and the University System of Georgia Board of Regent's Policy 8.3.11 (faculty contracts and credentials), it is the policy of Georgia State University that all of its academic faculty will be required to verify their academic credentials with the Provost's Office prior to their employment in a teaching appointment.

The GSU standard minimum qualifications for faculty credentials is as follows:

- Perimeter campus faculty assigned to teach at the associate level will hold a doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or a master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum eighteen graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
- Atlanta campus faculty assigned to teach at the undergraduate level will hold at least a master's degree in the teaching discipline.
- Atlanta campus faculty assigned to teach at the graduate level will hold a terminal degree in the teaching discipline.
- Atlanta campus faculty at the rank of Assistant, Associate, or Full professor will hold a terminal degree in the teaching discipline.
- Graduate Teaching Assistants will have a master's degree in the teaching discipline or at least 18 completed graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, direct supervision by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, regular in-service training, and planned periodic evaluations.

Scope

This policy applies to all potential and active instructors of record and to all those that hold academic rank at Georgia State. Thus, it applies to full-time and part-time faculty, academic professionals, adjunct faculty, limited term faculty, academic department chairs/directors, deans/associate deans, the Provost and all vice/associate/assistant-Provosts. It also applies to university staff if assigned as an instructor of record as part of their staff appointment (adjunct). Emeriti faculty are not required to comply unless assigned as an instructor of record and the original credentials are no longer on file.

All degrees earned in the U.S. will have been awarded by regionally accredited institutions, and faculty will provide official transcripts as proof of award. For faculty whose degrees are earned abroad, official transcripts may be submitted to the academic department and evaluated by a nationally-certified evaluation service to verify the authenticity of the academic documents and demonstrate their comparability with U.S. credentials. This foreign credential evaluation must be sent to the Office of Faculty Affairs.

A document is considered authentic when it is issued by an academic institution, by an examination board, or by a legal entity authorized to issue academic documents. Transcripts must be received by the academic unit directly from the academic institution that issued them and cannot be issued to the degree-holder.

In all cases, primary consideration will be given to the candidate's highest earned degree in the discipline. If a candidate's teaching qualifications are not based on the traditional academic credential (i.e. earned degree), a justification of those credentials must be assembled, signed by the hiring unit, and forwarded as part of the original hiring packet for processing. The written justification should use a portfolio approach to make its case to the Provost. This approach normally requires a careful and thorough justification that demonstrates a linkage between the various components of the portfolio of qualifications to the course(s) being taught. For more information on justifications, please refer to the faculty credential guidelines document of the SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1, attached below.

Accountability

Candidates for faculty positions are responsible for ensuring that the official transcripts are submitted to the academic home department upon request and by the due date. This documentation should be received no later than three business days after their hire date, unless otherwise stated in an approval from the Provost. A candidate's failure to provide such documentation in a timely manner or falsification or misrepresentation of credentials will subject the appointment to discipline up to and including termination, per BOR Policy 8.3.11.

Academic units are responsible for extending Provost-approved offers of employment contingent upon receipt of the final official transcript and/or documentation of professional experience and additional licensure and/or certification. The academic unit is responsible for forwarding the official transcripts of degrees awarded abroad for third-party evaluation and following up on any concerns before forwarding the verification documents to the Dean. Academic units will verify all faculty credentials with their respective dean's office prior to the employee's hire date.

The Dean or Dean's designee is responsible for the verification and validation of all faculty credential requirements to be forwarded to the Office of Faculty Affairs. The dean's office will be responsible for forwarding the faculty credentials to the Office of Faculty Affairs no later than three business days after the employee's effective date of employment.

All official transcripts are to be kept on file in the Office of Faculty Affairs with the employee's faculty record. The Office of Faculty Affairs is also responsible for maintaining a database of faculty credentials and auditing the records on an annual basis.



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FACULTY CREDENTIALS

- Guidelines -

Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 of the *Principles of Accreditation* reads as follows:

The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty.

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

- a. 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).
- b. 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).
- c. 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.
- d. 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).
- e. Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work: earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline.
- f. 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