

	Florida Gulf Coast University Policy Manual	Policy: TBD
	Administration of Faculty Credentials	Responsible Office: Office of the Provost

A. POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy ensures that all teaching faculty (instructors of record) possess the academic preparation, training, and experience (which meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of accrediting bodies and state requirements) to teach in an academic setting. This Policy applies to all full-time and part-time faculty, including instructional teaching assistants, who are responsible for assigning grades for credit bearing courses whether those courses are taught face-to-face, online, or off campus.

B. REASON FOR POLICY

This Policy is necessary to establish an orderly and consistent process that maintains criteria for the appointment and assignment of teaching faculty and ensures that all individuals assigned to teach meet or exceed the minimum qualifications. Such qualifications are required of instructional faculty as described within the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) guidelines to maintain compliance with SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation Section 6.2.a (Faculty).

C. APPLICABILITY AND/OR ACCOUNTABILITY

The procedures in this Policy are applicable to all academic administrators assigning course faculty of record. Academic Affairs maintains a faculty credentials database that holds the documented qualifications of each faculty of record for all credit-bearing courses offered each academic term. This database is intended to provide documentation required by SACSCOC to demonstrate compliance with Section 6.2.a of its Principles of Accreditation.

D. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. *Faculty of Record*: The person qualified to teach the course and who has overall responsibility for the development and/or implementation of the syllabus, the achievement of student learning outcomes included as part of the syllabus, and assigning of grades.
2. *Full-Time Faculty*: A full-time Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) employee whose primary responsibility is teaching.

3. *Part-Time Faculty:*
 - a) *Adjunct:* A person hired to teach on a contractual basis per course, per academic term.
 - b) *Graduate Teaching Assistant:* A graduate student hired to teach a course.
4. *Staff or Faculty Instructional Overload:* A full-time FGCU employee hired to teach a course in addition to fulfilling their regular job assignment.
5. *Letter of Justification (LOJ):* Completed LOJ template that documents the objectives for the course and details how the specific graduate credits earned by the Faculty of Record and or other credential(s) and professional experience qualify the individual to teach the specific course(s) in question.
6. *CIP Code:* Classification of Instructional Programs is a taxonomic scheme developed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).
7. *SCNS Prefix and Number:* Statewide Course Numbering System course number prefix from Florida Department of Education. The prefix designates a particular area or part of a discipline.
8. *Faculty Credentials Manual:* A manual that documents what qualifications a faculty member should possess to teach courses specific to each academic program without requiring an LOJ.

E. PROCEDURES

1. Certification of teaching credentials is done at the course-level. Each course is assigned a course number consistent with the SCNS taxonomy. Each Program and course is assigned a CIP Code.
2. The department chair or program leader reviews qualifications of faculty prior to assigning a course. The department chair or program leader responsible for assigning faculty to a course ensures the prospective faculty's qualifications match identified requirements listed within the Faculty Credentials Manual.
 - a) If the highest degree earned is a terminal degree listed for the program within the Faculty Credentials Manual, the supporting documentation required is an official transcript and a current curriculum vitae (CV).
 - b) If the highest degree earned is not a terminal degree listed for the program, the department chair must submit an LOJ to the Office of Planning & Institutional Performance.
 - 1) The chair must make a clear and compelling case to sufficiently support each faculty hire and teaching assignment using the LOJ template.

- 2) Appropriate supporting documentation must be provided as evidence of the faculty member's qualifications (e.g. copies of relevant certifications, licenses, etc.).
 - c) If the transcript was issued by an institution located outside the United States, an international transcript review and evaluation establishing equivalence to a comparable degree issued by a regionally accredited U.A. institution is required.
3. The college dean reviews qualifications and provides approval, acknowledging the qualification for course assignment. Official transcripts, vitae, and LOJs, as necessary, are sent to the Office of Planning & Institutional Performance for inclusion in the faculty credentials database.
4. Academic Affairs reviews the documentation. This review serves as a quality assurance audit and risk assessment regarding sufficiency of justification and documentation provided. The Office of Planning & Institutional Performance will request the originating department provide additional information, as necessary, to adequately document faculty qualifications. Academic Affairs maintains a faculty credentials database with all Faculty of Record documentation.
 - a) The faculty credentials database contains a record of each faculty member, the courses taught, a scanned original transcript, and all LOJs for courses taught.
 - b) Academic Affairs' Office of Planning & Institutional Performance may request the department provide an LOJ if:
 - 1) The terminal degree is not one listed in the Faculty Credentials Manual; and
 - 2) The SCNS prefix (3 letter course prefix) does not match the highest degree earned; or
 - 3) The CIP Code for the course does not match the CIP Code for the highest degree earned.

F. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

1. FGCU adheres to the guidelines established by its regional accrediting body, the SACSCOC. These guidelines provide that primary consideration be given to the highest degree earned in the discipline:
 - 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 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);
- c) Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work: earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline; or
- d) 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.

Related Information

SACSCOC Guidelines
[FGCU](#) Faculty Credentials Manual

Specific Authority

Section 1007.24(7), Fla. Stat.
SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation Section 6: Faculty (6.2.a)

History of Policy

New _____

APPROVED

Michael V. Martin, President

Date