



# **Faculty Credentialing Policy and Guidelines**

## **I. Introduction**

In the event that any information contained within this policy conflicts with any Board of Regents (BOR) policy, the BOR policy controls.

## **II. Purpose**

Qualified, effective instructors are essential to carry out the institution's mission and ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs. The purpose of this policy is to define credentialing standards and other requirements for all ASU faculty, graduate assistants, and teaching associates assigned as instructors of record.

## **III. Policy**

Each academic unit at Albany State University has the responsibility to ensure and document that the instructor of record assigned to each course offered by the unit has appropriate credentials, overall qualifications, and required approvals to teach the specific content of the course assigned.

### **1) ASU Standard Criteria for Faculty Credentialing**

- a. Faculty credentialing standards apply to all faculty members and graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) who teach 10% or more of a course's academic content.

#### *Undergraduate Courses (Associate Degree Courses 1000-2000)*

Faculty teaching associate degree courses not designed for transfer to the baccalaureate degree:

- 1) Bachelor's degree in the teaching discipline, or
- 2) Associate's degree and demonstrated competencies in the teaching discipline.

#### *Undergraduate Courses (Course Numbers 1000-4000)*

Faculty members teaching undergraduate courses should possess:

- 1) A terminal degree or master's degree in the teaching discipline, or
- 2) A master's degree in any field with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline. (use Appendix C)

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) should:

- 1) Possess a master's in the teaching discipline, or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, (use Appendix C)
- 2) Be directly supervised by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline,
- 3) Engage in regular in-service training, and
- 4) Receive planned and periodic evaluations of their teaching performance.

*Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Courses (Course Numbers >=5000)*

Faculty teaching graduate and post-graduate courses should possess:

- 1) An earned doctorate or terminal degree in the teaching discipline or in a closely related discipline.

*Wellness Activity Courses (WELL1xxx level courses)*

Faculty teaching Wellness Activity courses should possess:

- 1) A bachelor's degree and substantial qualifications in the area of instruction (i.e., Dance, Golf, Sports and Games)

*Albany State University (ASU) General Courses (ASU1xxx level courses)*

Faculty teaching ASU General courses should possess:

- 1) A master's degree
- 2) Completion of ASU training course

If a faculty member does not meet the above credentialing requirements, an alternative justification is required (See Section 2: Documenting Alternative Justifications). In cases not explained in Section 1, the SACSCOC Standard 6.2a are adopted (use Appendix B).

**2) Documenting Alternative Justifications for Faculty Credentials**

- a. When an Alternative Justification is required, acceptable evidence of appropriate alternative credentials must be provided. One or more of the following is required depending upon the level of the course. The four types of alternative justifications described below are listed in the preferred order to make the strongest case possible. **All justifications must be emailed to the Office of the Provost at academicaffairs@asurams.edu and receive written approval before hiring of the faculty.**
  - i. Closely related degrees
    1. In cases where the faculty member does not hold a degree in the teaching discipline, but holds a degree that is consider a closely related degree, the personalized Alternative Justification below should be included:
    2. The <Department Name> at Albany State University has developed a list of Universally Acceptable Alternative degrees to credential faculty to teach within our various academic programs. <Faculty Name> holds a <degree name> degree from <institution name> which has been evaluated as an acceptable alternative by the <DEFINING AUTHORITY OR ACCREDITING BODY>.
  - ii. Advance coursework
    1. Documentation that the faculty member holds a Master's degree in any field and has completed 18 semester credits of graduate level coursework in the teaching field can serve as the basis for the instructional assignment at the undergraduate course level.
    2. If used for graduate course credentialing, this must be combined with other documentation described in subsequent sections below. Document should include:

- a. The list of Courses including institution name, prefix/number, course name, and term/year in which the credits were earned (use Appendix C).
  - b. A short narrative explanation of how this academic preparation has prepared the faculty member to teach the course's student learning outcomes. Note: These graduate semester credit hours must be consist of formal coursework. Normally, thesis, dissertation, internship, and similar credits do not count towards the documentation of 18 hours of graduate credit unless accompanied by an explanation of the relevance (or learning outcomes if available) for each course.
- iii. Substantial Accomplishments in the Field
  - 1. Documentation that the faculty member has a record of substantial and current accomplishments in the field of the teaching assignment. Documentation could include items such as:
    - a. Abstracts of published work, taken directly from the journals or proceedings
    - b. Evidence of book publication, including the rigor of the reviewing process and press
    - c. Copies of published reviews of an exhibition or performance
    - d. Copies of book reviews published in scholarly journals or similarly significant venues
    - e. Other noteworthy activities
    - f. Significant professional experience
  - 2. Documentation that the faculty member has significant professional experience in an area that would provide the qualifications needed to teach the learning outcomes associated with a given course. Documentation could include items such as:
    - a. The Curriculum Vita with relevant portions detailing the professional experiences highlighted or other documents that verify relevant positions held
    - b. An explanation of how the professional experience relates to course-level student learning outcomes,
    - c. Letters of support from an employer or co-worker

In all cases, the accomplishments must be independently verified, and the Office of the Provost should ensure the documents are placed in the faculty member's permanent employment record.

#### **IV. Exceptions**

None unless otherwise officially directed.

#### **V. Applicability**

ASU Faculty

#### **VI. Accountability**

Albany State University Office of Academic Affairs

#### **VII. Contacts**

Albany State University Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

## **Last Update**

Apr 2021

## **Appendix A – Aligned University System of Georgia Board of Regents Policies**

### **8.3.1 Faculty Employment**

#### **8.3.1.1 Recruitment and Appointment**

Each University System of Georgia (USG) institution shall publish comprehensive, clearly stated, written policies and procedures for the recruitment and appointment of faculty members. These policies and procedures shall conform to guidelines promulgated by the USG Chief Academic Officer and the USG Human Resources Administrative Practices Manual (HRAP).

#### **8.3.1.2 Minimum Qualifications for Employment**

Minimum faculty employment qualifications for all USG institutions and all academic ranks within these institutions shall be:

- 1. *Consistent with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) 's requirements for institutional accreditation;***
2. Evidence of ability as a teacher;
3. Evidence of activity as a scholar and ability in all other duties assigned;
4. Successful experience (which will necessarily be waived for those just entering the academic profession who meet all other requirements); and,
5. Desirable personal qualities judged on the basis of personal interview, complete biographical data, and recommendations.

#### **8.3.1.4 State Universities**

In addition to the minimum qualifications above, initial appointees to the full professorial rank should have a terminal degree in the appropriate discipline or the equivalent in training, ability or experience.

## **Appendix B – SACSCOC Standard 6.2a**

### **FACULTY CREDENTIALS - Guidelines -**

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.

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*

**Appendix C – Verification of Transcripts Form**

*Albany State University*  
*Academic Affairs*  
**VERIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPTS**  
**18 HOURS IN AREA OF INSTRUCTION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Qualified to teach in the \_\_\_\_\_ academic discipline.

but also qualified to teach in the \_\_\_\_\_ academic discipline.

\_\_\_\_\_ Not qualified to teach at the University level.

Course Number	Credit Hour	Course Title	Institution	Semester Completed

***TOTAL HOURS*** \_\_\_\_\_

List courses to be taught by the faculty in the department: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Verified By and Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Department Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Dean**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Provost/VPAA**

**8-7-19-awf**