

1 **Florida State University Policy 9-2**

2 Title of Policy: Policy for Credentialing Faculty Members
3 Responsible Executive: Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement
4 Approving Official: Provost
5 Effective Date: April 30, 2013
6 Revision History: New April 30, 2013

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8 **I. INTRODUCTION**

9 Florida State University ensures that all instructors of record possess the academic
10 preparation, training, and experience to teach in an academic setting, meet or exceed the
11 minimum requirements of accrediting bodies and accomplish the mission of the institution.
12 This applies to all instructors of record, including but not limited to, full and part-time
13 faculty, tenured, tenure-track, clinical, visiting instructors, instructors teaching with courtesy
14 appointments and adjunct positions as well as graduate teaching assistants.

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16 When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, Florida State University gives
17 primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution also
18 considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate
19 and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and
20 certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other
21 demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and
22 student learning outcomes.

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24 For all cases, the institution is responsible for documenting and justifying the qualifications
25 of its faculty prior to appointment.

26

27 **II. POLICY**

28 **A. Qualification Guidelines:**

29 **The university applies the following guidelines in establishing faculty**
30 **credentials:**

- 31 1. Faculty teaching general education courses at the undergraduate level: doctorate
32 or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a
33 concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester
34 hours in the teaching discipline).
- 35
- 36 2. Faculty teaching associate degree courses designed for transfer to a baccalaureate
37 degree: doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree
38 with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate
39 semester hours in the teaching discipline).
- 40
- 41 3. Faculty teaching baccalaureate courses: doctorate or master's degree in the
42 teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching
43 discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
- 44
- 45 4. Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work: earned
46 doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline.
- 47
- 48 5. Graduate teaching assistants: To meet SACS guidelines regarding graduate
49 teaching assistants, all graduate students assigned as instructors of record should
50 have either a master's in the same discipline or have satisfactorily completed at
51 least 18 semester-based graduate credit hours in the same discipline to that of
52 instruction. Credits for which an "incomplete" has been assigned, such as research
53 hours, should not be included in determining the number of graduate hours
54 completed. Graduate student instructors of record must receive appropriate
55 training prior to instruction and regular in-service training.

56
57 Training may include completion of the teaching assistant training provided by
58 Program for Instructional Excellence (PIE) and/or in-unit training. All graduate
59 student instructors of record must be supervised by a faculty member holding
60 teaching credentials appropriate to the course and should be regularly evaluated
61 on their teaching performance.

62 Departments wishing to appoint graduate students with fewer than 18 completed
63 graduate credit hours as instructors of record should maintain documentation
64 demonstrating additional credentials that qualify the individual for instruction.
65

66 6. Exceptions: In the event an instructor has not completed eighteen (18) hours of
67 graduate course work in the discipline in which he or she will teach, exceptional
68 alternative qualifications will need to be documented to justify the appointment of
69 the instructor. Alternative qualifications may include professional licensure and
70 certifications, diplomas or certificates earned, publications and presentations in
71 the field, honors and awards, and other demonstrated competencies and
72 achievements. Documentation that is relevant beyond the curriculum vitae will
73 require the verification and signature of the college Dean before appointment.
74

75 7. In order to ensure that all instructors of record possess the academic preparation,
76 training, and experience to teach in an academic setting, instructors of record must
77 present credentials that comply with the requirements of applicable accrediting
78 agencies and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on
79 Colleges (SACSCOC). The highest degree earned is the usual credential and a
80 transcript is the typical evidence for that degree. More generally, according to
81 section 4 of the FSU Faculty Handbook, these credentials include current
82 curriculum vitae, official transcripts, letters of recommendations and other
83 documents as appropriate, such as certain licenses, certifications, or work
84 experience, if needed as alternatives to establish faculty qualifications.
85

86 8. For purposes of this policy, an official transcript is defined as a transcript or other
87 academic record that includes the appropriate notation that it is an official
88 document of record for that institution. Each individual transcript must meet the
89 authentication criteria based on that institution's standard. The transcript must
90 contain all of the following:
91

92 a. An official seal if used by the issuing institution;

- b. Signature of the appropriate authorizing agent;
- c. The institution's official letterhead or stationary;
- d. The institution's watermark or other identifier, and
- e. The date of issue.

Official transcripts are required to be sent to the instructor's department chair (or Dean in the case of non-departmentalized colleges). The Dean of the relevant college is responsible for ensuring the authenticity of the transcript. Once authenticity of the transcript and at least 18 graduate semester hours in the field are ensured by the Dean, the official transcript should be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources for addition to the personnel file for the faculty member. The Office of Human Resources will then forward the original hard copies of the transcript and the curriculum vitae to the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement, as well as a scanned copy of the appointment page, letter of offer, and transcript for the OMNI tenure calculation records, as appropriate.

SACSCOC establishes the qualifications applicable to all faculty members, as described in section 4 of the FSU Faculty Handbook. This standard also applies to foreign educated faculty. For foreign educated faculty, if a transcript is available for a degree from a foreign institution, the transcript must be evaluated to show equivalency to a U.S. degree. A detailed, course-by-course foreign transcript evaluation is required to meet any credential requirement, even if a U.S. college or university has accepted the foreign coursework. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to bear the costs to obtain official transcripts and copies of licenses and certifications.

B. Foreign Transcripts and Office Campus Sites

1. Evaluation of foreign transcripts must be done through a certified external agency that provides credential evaluations. The transcript and other applicable academic records should be accompanied by a notarized translation if it is not in English. If

123 a transcript is not available, an approved external evaluation agency may be used
124 to evaluate foreign credentials for equivalence to a U.S. degree.

125
126 2. Foreign Faculty Teaching Abroad: Florida State University requires that all
127 foreign faculty teaching in University study abroad programs provide official
128 credentials that meet both University and SACS standards for instructors of
129 record and which are evaluated as needed by a certified external agency that
130 provides credential evaluation. All foreign faculty teaching in University study
131 abroad programs also must respect the procedures and policies of higher
132 education in the host country.

133
134 3. Faculty Teaching in Degree Programs on Branch Campuses: Policies, procedures,
135 and standards concerning the appointment and evaluation of faculty at branch
136 campuses are the same as those for the Tallahassee campus. Following
137 completion of the search process by the academic unit, all faculty appointment
138 documents are processed through the Office of Human Resources for every
139 person appointed to teach at a branch campus.

140 Each academic department maintains oversight over all faculty, full-time and
141 part-time, who teach in the programs of that department. Many of the units have
142 academic program coordinators located permanently at the branch campuses. In
143 addition to the full-time faculty who teach courses, some branch campuses have
144 one or more full-time faculty-ranked administrators on-site providing additional
145 coordination and planning concerning academic programs at that campus. As a
146 result of these standards, the number and quality of full-time faculty on each
147 extended campus is adequate to assure the quality and integrity of the academic
148 programs offered on those campuses.

149
150 4. Approval of Faculty Teaching in Study Abroad Programs: Some study abroad
151 programs operate with only regular University faculty providing the instruction.
152 These programs are typically smaller, more concentrated programs.

153 Other programs, such as those at the Republic of Panama campus, rely partially

154 on hiring faculty abroad for instruction. In such scenarios, faculty abroad meet all
155 standards applicable to faculty appointment and are appointed to teach University
156 courses using the following credential assessment mechanisms, which have been
157 approved by the University administration. Non-University faculty teaching study
158 abroad programs undergo credential review prior to teaching courses abroad.
159 Non-University teaching faculty must hold academic credentials that meet the
160 University's Instructor of Record Policy. One of the following methods must be
161 used for faculty credentials:

- 162
- 163 • Official transcript of highest foreign degree earned and U.S. equivalency
164 certification; OR official transcript of highest U.S. degree earned.
- 165 • Curriculum vitae.
- 166

167 **C. Accountability / Responsibilities:**

168

169 The basic responsibility for the verification and validation of all faculty credential
170 requirements is the responsibility of the academic instructional units offering the
171 courses in which the faculty member will teach. Verification and validations must be
172 completed prior to the faculty member beginning instruction in the course and must
173 be conducted for each separate course taught. Allowable extensions to this policy are
174 found below in the Implementation section.

175

176 It is the responsibility of all instructors of record to provide the university with the
177 documentation needed to verify their credentials. It is the responsibility of the faculty
178 member to bear the costs to obtain official transcripts and copies of licenses and
179 certifications. Graduate teaching assistants may use FSU internal transcripts to verify
180 that they have successfully completed eighteen hours of graduate course work in the
181 appropriate discipline.

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183 The academic instructional units are responsible for gathering, reviewing and
184 verifying the teaching qualifications for instructors of record, including graduate

185 assistants who serve as instructors of records, and adjuncts, at the time of hire. This
186 process will occur prior to any instructor's appointment with the University,
187 regardless of the mode of delivery or course location. The department chair will
188 assist the Dean in the acquisition of the documents required for the credentialing
189 process.

190
191 The determination of adequacy of credentials is the responsibility of the college Dean
192 or, if appropriate, program director. In the event that the Dean or director cannot
193 render a determination, it is the responsibility of the Vice President for Faculty
194 Development and Advancement.

195
196 For the purposes of this policy, the university accepts the common collegiate practice
197 in recognizing an academic discipline, concentration or field of study. The university
198 uses four-digit Classification of Instructional Program (CIP codes) to determine
199 whether or not an instructor's educational background is in the same discipline as the
200 courses being taught. The appropriate graduate faculty status (see Appendix A:
201 Graduate Faculty Status) is required for faculty teaching graduate courses or serving
202 on graduate committees. For faculty teaching interdisciplinary courses,
203 documentation must be provided that the faculty member's qualifications are relevant
204 to the disciplines that are components of the course. The Vice President for Faculty
205 Development and Advancement must approve exceptions.

206
207 The university offers undergraduate Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)
208 programs for both the Air Force and Army. Most instructors for undergraduate
209 ROTC courses are provided to the university through the military. The university
210 provides them with courtesy appointments and credentials their instruction provided
211 they have a master's degree or higher, have completed appropriate military training
212 programs, or have accumulated substantial and relevant experience.

213 After approval by the academic Dean, the Office of Human Resources shall maintain
214 relevant documentation including curriculum vitae, official transcripts, and letters of
215 recommendation for faculty covered by the bargaining agreement and instructors of

216 record. Graduate students assigned as instructors of record are not required to have
217 curriculum vitae in the system, but must have official proof of completion of at least
218 18 semester-based graduate credit hours in the same discipline to that of instruction.
219 (See II.E. above.)
220

221 **D. Implementation**

222 A complete credentialing file including any additional qualifications for all faculty
223 members, including instructors with courtesy, clinical, visiting, and adjunct
224 appointments, is due at the Office of Human Resources before any such instructor
225 will be appointed (see Appendix B: Faculty Credentialing Checklist).
226

227 It may be necessary in some instances to have a faculty member begin teaching prior
228 to receipt of an official transcript. In such situations, the appropriate college Dean
229 must compile all the relevant information regarding the qualifications of the
230 prospective faculty member, including current curriculum vitae, letters of
231 recommendation, and alternative or additional qualification documentation along with
232 an unofficial transcript and a copy of the request for an official transcript. The Dean
233 shall notify in writing the Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement
234 immediately about any temporarily “incomplete” credentialing files. The Vice
235 President will notify Human Resources about the acceptability of the qualifications of
236 the prospective faculty member. If the Vice President approves the appointment based
237 on the information provided by the Dean, the file will be sent to Human Resources,
238 which will complete the appointment. Once the official transcript has been received,
239 it must be sent by the Dean to the Office of Human Resources, and it will be placed in
240 the credentialing file.
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242 **E. Schedule for Implementation:**

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244 Implementation is an ongoing process in keeping with the academic year calendar.
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247 **III. LEGAL SUPPORT, JUSTIFICATION, AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY**

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249 The Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement has exclusive authority, as
250 delegated by the Provost and President, to establish all policy regarding faculty employment
251 issues.

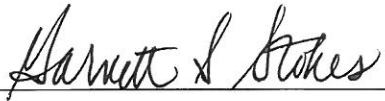
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253 The Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement shall be responsible for periodic
254 review and of this policy and for suggesting any necessary revisions to the Provost and President
255 for their approval.

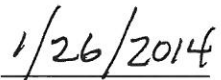
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259 Garnett S. Stokes, Provost



Date

260 **Appendix A**

261 **Graduate Faculty Status**

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263 **Graduate Faculty Status.** Eligible to serve on any graduate committee. (Chairing or serving on
264 doctoral or master's committee is subject to the approval of the student's department chair and
265 should be in accordance with established and approved guidelines.) Eligible to teach graduate
266 courses. This is the only status that may be awarded to tenure track faculty. Can be awarded to
267 active non-tenure track faculty under special circumstances.

268

269 **Retired Graduate Faculty Status.** Retiring faculty with GFS may be granted this status. Must
270 have a letter from the chair of the department in which the faculty has status with specific
271 approval for this status. May continue the committee roles in which they served at the time of
272 retirement. Eligible to serve as an extra member on a graduate committee. Eligible to teach
273 graduate courses.

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275 **Co-Doctoral Directive Status.** Only awarded to non-tenure track faculty or courtesy
276 appointments. Eligible to co-direct and/or serve as an extra member of a doctoral or master's
277 committee. Eligible to teach graduate courses with permanent CDDS.

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279 **Co-Masters Directive Status.** Only awarded to non-tenure track faculty or courtesy
280 appointments. Eligible to co-direct or serve as an extra member of a master's committee. May
281 serve as an extra member of a doctorate committee. Eligible to teach graduate courses with
282 permanent CMDS.

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284 **Graduate Teaching Status.** Only awarded to non-tenure track faculty or qualified visiting
285 faculty appointments. Eligible to teach graduate courses.

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Appendix B
Faculty Credentialing Checklist

Florida State University - Faculty Credentialing Checklist

A complete credentialing file including any additional qualifications for all faculty members, including instructors with courtesy, clinical, visiting, and adjunct appointments, is due at the Office of Human Resources before any such instructor will be appointed.

FACULTY INFORMATION

Name _____
Contact information _____
Academic Unit (Dept/College) _____
Date credentialing completed _____
Other _____

CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Official Transcript | From College to HR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum Vitae | From College to HR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer Letter | From College to HR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letters of Recommendation (as needed) | From College to HR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Justification for appointment approval | From Dean to FDA to HR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Justification for temporary appointment approval, as needed | From Dean to FDA to HR |