



*Commission on Colleges  
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
1866 Southern Lane  
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097*

## **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*

## From SACS Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation

Commonly accepted practices for the requirements of a graduate program address an appropriate number of semester hours, or its equivalent, and a coherent course of study appropriate to higher education.

### Relevant Questions for Consideration

- What evidence exists that the institution defines and publishes requirements for each graduate and post-baccalaureate professional program of study?
- What is the process for determining what coursework is included and for establishing how coursework conforms to commonly accepted standards and practices in the program requirements?
- What is the process for determining what coursework is included in the major program requirements?
- How does the institution demonstrate that all appropriate publications provide clear, complete, and consistent information about each program?

### Documentation

#### Required Documentation, if applicable

For all educational programs, evidence that the institution has published documents that describe program completion requirements

#### Examples of Other Types of Documentation

For program requirements: (1) comparative data for programs with peer institutions, (2) programmatic/specialized accreditation, and (3) external program reviews

### Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

“Distance and Correspondence Education”

### Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Federal Requirement 4.2

Federal Requirement 4.4

<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/Resource%20Manual.pdf>

**3.7.1. 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. (See Commission guidelines “Faculty Credentials.”) (Faculty competence)**

## **Rationale and Notes**

This standard asserts the fundamental principle that qualified, effective faculty members are essential to carrying out the goals of the mission of the institution and ensuring the quality and integrity of the academic programs of the institution. The emphasis is on overall qualifications rather than simply academic credentials and, that while academic credentials are primary and in most cases will be the standard qualification for faculty members, other types of qualifications may prove to be appropriate. It is also important to note that the documentation and justification of qualifications for each member of the faculty are the responsibility of the institution. This includes faculty teaching outside their discipline.

*Notes:* Institutions should use the Commission’s “Faculty Roster Form for Full-time and Part-Time Faculty” to report the qualifications of all faculty. Information requested on the form should be provided for all full-time and part-time faculty teaching credit courses that can be part of a degree, certificate, diploma, or other credential. Faculty teaching developmental/remedial courses should also be included. Teaching assistants should be included only if they are the instructor of record.

An institution is responsible for identifying the instructor of record; that is, the person qualified to teach the course and who has overall responsibility for the development/implementation of the syllabus, the achievement of student learning outcomes included as part of the syllabus, and for issuing grades.

For the submission of the Compliance Certification, a Track A institution (offering only undergraduate degrees) should submit rosters for fall term of the current academic year and spring term of the previous academic year. A Track B institution (offering graduate degrees) should submit rosters for fall and spring term of the previous academic year.

Transcripts for faculty should be available during on-site reviews but are not required to be part of the documentation provided as part of the Compliance Certification or a substantive change application/prospectus.

## **Relevant Questions for Consideration**

- How does the mission of the institution influence the selection and qualifications of faculty?
- How does the institution determine the competencies of members of the faculty and justify that the qualifications of the members of the faculty meet these competencies?
- How does the institution document and justify the qualifications for each member of the faculty?

## **Documentation**

### Required Documentation, if appropriate

A complete roster of faculty, qualifications, and teaching assignments (See Commission “Faculty Roster Form for Full-time and Part-Time Faculty” and directions for completing the form.)

### Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Guidelines governing the qualifications of faculty members necessary to carry out the mission of the institution and the process for their selection that ensures these qualifications

- A file or portfolio on each faculty member which includes pertinent up-to-date information describing the qualifications of the faculty member such as transcripts, curriculum vitae, teaching evaluations, and institutional qualification justifications in nonstandard situations
- Guidelines for identifying the instructor of record

**Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable**  
 “Faculty Credential Guidelines”

**Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable**  
 Core Requirement 2.8  
 Comprehensive Standard 3.5.4

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**3.7.2. The institution regularly evaluates the effectiveness of each faculty member in accord with published criteria, regardless of contractual or tenured status. (Faculty evaluation)**

**Rationale and Notes**

Since the members of the faculty direct the learning enterprise of an academic institution and are responsible for assuring the quality of the academic program, it is imperative that an effective system of faculty evaluation be in place. The concept of faculty evaluation encompasses a range of processes designed to assess the quality and effectiveness of the performance of each member of the faculty, including tenured, contractual, and adjunct/part-time faculty. The overall evaluation system may include a variety of components, but regardless of the evaluation types used, it is critical that the faculty evaluation system be consistent with the mission of the institution.

**Relevant Questions for Consideration**

- What are the policies, procedures, and criteria that govern faculty evaluation and how are these publicized among the faculty and others?
- What evidence exists that shows that evaluation is administered on a regular and timely basis, at least every three years?
- How does the institution ensure that faculty evaluation policies are sufficiently broad for all faculty, regardless of status?
- How are faculty evaluations administered and used in ensuring the effectiveness of all faculty, especially in terms of student learning?
- If evaluation procedures are different for full-time and part-time faculty, what are the distinctions?

**Documentation**

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Documents and publications that include the process and criteria used for faculty evaluation
- Evidence that shows that evaluations are taking place regularly and being used to measure performance effectiveness

Examples of other Types of Documentation

Sample of completed evaluation forms and procedures (names and sensitive details may be redacted)

**FACULTY ROSTER**  
**Instructions for Reporting the Qualifications of**  
**Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty**

**General Instructions for Completing the Faculty Roster Form**

1. These instructions apply to the use of the Faculty Roster Form\* for all institutions responding to Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 (Faculty Competence) or as requested in relation to substantive change.

2. Information requested on the form should be provided for all full-time and part-time faculty teaching credit or developmental/remedial courses. Teaching assistants should be included only if they are the instructor of record.

3. Faculty should be grouped by department, academic program, or discipline (do not group by broad areas such as social sciences or humanities, or by broad degree categories like Associate in Arts or Bachelor of Science). Faculty with teaching assignments in more than one academic area should be listed in the primary department, academic program, or discipline in which they teach, along with all of the courses taught, to avoid repeated entries for the same person.

4. For the submission of the Compliance Certification, a Track A institution (offering only undergraduate degrees) should submit rosters for fall term of the current academic year and spring term of the previous academic year. A Track B institution (offering graduate degrees) should submit rosters for fall and spring term of the previous academic year.

**Providing Information That Establishes Qualifications**

1. Institutions completing the Faculty Roster Form should review Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 and the Commission guidelines on "Faculty Credentials," which can be found on the Commission website under the Policies and Publications link. The guidelines represent commonly-accepted

good practice for the academic qualifications of faculty; however, the Commission recognizes that qualifications other than academic credentials (or combined with credentials) may be appropriate for teaching particular courses.

2. The Commission usually accepts common collegiate practice in recognizing an academic discipline, concentration, and/or field of study. Examples include history, mathematics, chemistry, English, sociology, finance, accounting, marketing, and management. For faculty teaching in these areas, it is expected that the institution will provide information that justifies and documents each faculty member's qualifications relevant to the specific courses they are assigned to teach. For faculty teaching interdisciplinary courses, it is expected that the institution will provide information that justifies and documents the faculty member's qualifications relevant to the disciplines that are components of the course.

3. When completing the Faculty Roster Form, it may become obvious that only one of the faculty member's degrees need be cited in order to justify his/her qualifications to teach a specific course. In that case, cite only that one degree. In other cases, it will be necessary to list two or more degrees and to list the specific course titles and number of semester hours in those degrees relevant to the courses assigned. It may also be necessary to indicate additional qualifications such as diplomas or certificates earned (with discipline indicated); related work or professional experience; licensure and certifications; continuous documented excellence in teaching; honors and awards; scholarly publications and presented papers; and other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. Indicate the dates for these additional qualifications and *clearly describe the relationship between these qualifications*

**FACULTY ROSTER**  
**Instructions for Reporting the Qualifications of**  
**Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty**

*and the course content and/or expected outcomes of the courses assigned to the faculty member.*

4. Institutions are expected to maintain appropriate justification and documentation in the files of all faculty that establish qualifications, including those listed in columns three and four of the Faculty Roster Form. These should be readily available for the consideration of On-Site Evaluators.

**Instructions for the Columns  
Of the Faculty Roster Form**

**Column One.** Provide the name of the instructor and indicate full or part-time status: (F) or (P). A full-time faculty member is usually defined as one whose major employment is with the institution, whose primary assignment is in teaching or research, and whose employment is based upon a contract for full-time employees. If a significantly different definition is used for full-time faculty, please provide that definition.

**Column Two.** List from the catalog the course prefix, course number, and course title of all credit courses taught by term during the requested time period. For each course indicate whether it is developmental (D), undergraduate transferable (UT) undergraduate non-transferable (UN) or graduate (G). Information should be provided—separate from the roster—summarizing the content of the courses listed on the roster. Appropriate information might be provided through a catalog or other description of the content of these courses.

**Column Three.** List the earned academic degrees, diplomas, and certificates that help qualify the instructor to teach the listed courses. Indicate the discipline (concentration or major) of each degree, the institution that awarded the degree. Listing

additional qualifications such as other specific course titles and number of semester hours awarded at the undergraduate or graduate level relevant to the courses assigned could also be helpful in building a case for qualified faculty.

**Column Four.** If necessary to establish adequate qualifications of faculty for courses assigned, list additional qualifications such as related work or professional experience, licensure and certifications; continuous documented excellence in teaching; honors and awards; scholarly publications and presented papers; and other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. Indicate the dates for these additional qualifications and *clearly describe the relationship between these qualifications and the course content and/or expected outcomes of the courses assigned to the faculty member.* As necessary, provide this information on additional pages.

January 2007  
Updated : January 2011

\* The Faculty Roster form can be found at [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org) under Institutional Resources.

## Faculty Roster Form Qualifications of Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty

Name of Institution: *ABC College*

Name of Primary Department, Academic Program, or Discipline: *XXXX*

Academic Term(s) Included: *Fall 20XX, Spring 20XX*

Date Form Completed: *mm/dd/yyyy*

1 NAME (F, P)	2 COURSES TAUGHT Including Term, Course Number & Title, Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G)	3 ACADEMIC DEGREES & COURSEWORK Relevant to Courses Taught, Including Institution & Major List specific graduate coursework, if needed	4 OTHER QUALIFICATIONS & COMMENTS Related to Courses Taught,
Joe Alvarez (F)	<p><b>Fall 2009</b> BUS 1001 Fundamentals of Accounting, 3 (UN) BUS 2001 Principles of Accounting I, 3 (UT)</p> <p><b>Spring 2010</b> BUS 1001 Fundamentals of Accounting, 3 (UN) BUS 2002 Principles of Accounting II, 3 (UT)</p>	<p>MBA (General), Good University included the following coursework: BUS 516 Cost Accounting (3) BUS 572 Federal Income Tax (3) BUS 573 Accounting Information Systems (3) Total: 9 Graduate Semester Hrs</p> <p>BBA (Accounting), Greenhill University</p>	<p>Current CPA license, NC</p> <p>1999-2009 Accountant, Big Four Accounting Inc., Durham, NC 3 years Auditing experience 7 years Income Tax experience</p>
Yolanda Bing (F)	<p><b>Fall 2009</b> HIS 101, Western Civilization I, 3 (UT) HIS 110, American Society and Culture, 3 (UT) GEO 222, Latin America, 3 (UT)</p> <p><b>Spring 2010</b> HIS 102, Western Civilization II, 3 (UT) KIN 103, Karate, 1 (UT)</p>	<p>MA (History), Good University Included the following coursework: GEO 512, Hist of Cartography GEO 516, Latin American Geography GEO 640, Geo Info Sys GEO 651, Migration GEO 670, Europe GEO 680, 20th Century US Total: 18 Graduate Semester Hrs</p>	<p>Holds black belt and was first alternate to US Olympic team in Karate</p>
Steig Cederholm (P)	<p><b>Spring 2010</b> Music Composition (UT)</p>	<p>BM (Music Composition), University of Louisville</p>	<p>Published composer, including four produced symphonies and one opera, which debuted last winter at the Houston Metropolitan Opera</p> <p>Formerly the composer in residence for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra</p>

**F, P: Full-time or Part-time; D, UN, UT, G: Developmental, Undergraduate Nontransferable, Undergraduate Transferable, Graduate**

Please use current MSWord version to complete and submit.

Available at <http://www.usm.edu/provost/faculty-search-and-hiring-process-0>

### USM Faculty Qualifications Form

#### for Full-Time and Part-Time Instructors of Record

Download Guidelines at <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/faculty%20credentials.pdf>

Name of Primary Department or School:

College:

Beginning Academic Term:

Date Form Completed:

This form is to be completed by the head of a department/school.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair/Director signature \_\_\_\_\_ For the Office of the Dean: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a signed copy of this form and supporting documentation to the Office of the Provost (Box 5026) and send the form electronically to [William.Powell@usm.edu](mailto:William.Powell@usm.edu) ). The form and other documentation must be in the appropriate university personnel or student employment folder, with signature from the Office of the Provost

Office of the Provost: Reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1 INSTRUCTOR NAME (F, P, TA)	2 COURSES Current/Anticipated Including Term, Course Number & Title, Credit Hours (D, UT, G)	3 ACADEMIC DEGREES & COURSEWORK Including Institution & major. Provide a total number of graduate hours by institution relevant to courses assigned List specific <u>graduate</u> coursework, if needed.	4 OTHER QUALIFICATIONS (documented) & COMMENTS, if needed Relevant to Courses Taught
<p>Please use current MSWord version to complete and submit. Available at <a href="http://www.usm.edu/provost/faculty-search-and-hiring-process-0">http://www.usm.edu/provost/faculty-search-and-hiring-process-0</a></p>			

Col. 1 - F, P, TA: Full-time or Part-time or Teaching Assistant serving as instructor of record Column 2 - D, UT, G: Developmental, Undergraduate Transferable, Graduate

#### The information below the line should be deleted before submission for signatures

Instructions (see also <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/FACULTY%20ROSTER%20INSTRUCTIONS.pdf> for examples). Please enter information onto form. Handwritten forms will not be accepted.

- Column 2 List all courses that an individual is currently scheduled to teach and that it is anticipated the individual might teach in the future. Additional teaching assignments will require an updated form and may require additional justification.
- Column 3 List all earned academic degrees, diplomas, and certificates, with the most relevant that help qualify the instructor to teach the listed courses listed first. Indicate the discipline (concentration or major) of each degree, the institution that awarded the degree, and the total number of graduate hours relevant to courses assigned (not counting dissertation/thesis hours). List specific coursework completed by institution if a direct relevance of a degree to course(s) taught is not evident (e.g., a PhD in History for HIS-prefixed lower division courses), with specific graduate course titles and credit hours awarded relevant to the courses assigned. For teaching assistants serving as instructor of record, annotate degree as *in progress* as appropriate and list relevant completed courses. In some instances, information on undergraduate coursework may contribute to the justification of an instructor's qualifications.
- Column 4 Fill in this column to establish adequate qualifications for instructors that are not evident in the degrees and coursework column. Include here any certifications, licenses, professional experience(s) related to the courses taught. If any information is entered in this column, provide hardcopy documentation to substantiate, such as the following: copies of licenses and certificates; evidence of professional experience beyond entry on curriculum vita (such as letters from former employers attesting to expertise related to courses taught); documented citations of published scholarly, creative work or performances; documented evidence of substantive or funded research in field pertinent to courses taught; continuous documented excellence in teaching; honors and awards; and other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. Indicate the dates for these additional qualifications and clearly describe the relationship between these qualifications and the course(s) taught. Caution: The need for someone to teach a course is **not** a valid justification.