

## Policy on Faculty Credentials

The University of Tampa is committed to delivering challenging and high quality educational experiences to a diverse group of learners in both undergraduate and graduate programs. One key part of achieving this goal is to ensure that we have a well-qualified faculty. The purpose of the present policy is to define the guidelines used by all departments to determine that faculty credentials meet the appropriate standards.

In making faculty appointments, a baseline requirement is adherence to the SACS Comprehensive Standard 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 in accordance with the guidelines listed below. 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.<sup>1</sup>

The University of Tampa further adheres to the following guidelines provided by SACS.<sup>2</sup> The guidelines apply to all faculty appointments, including full-time (tenure-track and term) and part-time or adjunct appointments:

1. Faculty teaching general education courses at the undergraduate level: doctoral 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 baccalaureate courses: doctoral 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). A least 25 percent of the discipline course hours in each undergraduate major are taught by faculty members holding the terminal degree—usually the earned doctorate—in the discipline.
3. Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work: earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline.

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<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Accreditation*, Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1

<sup>2</sup> "Faculty Credentials—Guidelines," approved by the SACS College Delegate Assembly, December 2006. Items 1-3 come directly from this SACS document. Items 4 ff. are specific to the University of Tampa.

The University of Tampa has established the following additional guidelines for determining the appropriateness of faculty credentials:

4. Individuals whose recent sustained artistic or creative accomplishments directly relates to their instruction of a specific course or set of courses. Because of their successful artistic and creative accomplishments (as attested to by their recognition through national honors, juried shows, grants, performance, or professional renown) these faculty members unquestionably demonstrate a level of accomplishment or understanding which enables them to teach the specific courses.

Individuals teaching in the arts disciplines must:

- Hold a Master's or Doctoral degree from an accredited Institution;
- Demonstrate a current and ongoing record of professional achievement equivalent to or surpassing that of a PhD, MFA or applied degree within field/subject they teach;
- Have been distinguished within their field through ongoing acceptance into juried regional, national or internationally recognized concerts, performances, recitals, reading, screenings, or museum exhibitions;
- Have an ongoing record of publishing and recognition in juried publications that rival the experience of a PhD, MFA or applied degree.

5. Individuals whose sustained record of research accomplishments directly relates to their instruction of a specific course or set of courses. Because of their successful research (as attested to by their publications, grants, and/or patents) these faculty members unquestionably demonstrate a level of advanced accomplishment or understanding which enables them to teach the specific courses.

6. Individuals teaching Scuba Diving must meet the following criteria:

- Be a Professional Association of Diving Instructor (PADI) or an Instructor with a nationally recognized agency subject to approval of the Academic Dive Program Manager;
- Be in good standing with that instructional association;
- Instructional membership must be current and active within the academic year and must carry liability insurance;
- Be current in CPR, First Aid, Oxygen Administration and Emergency Procedures.

7. The University of Tampa has an on-campus undergraduate Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program for the United States Army. This program has the specific goal of providing instruction in both military education and leadership to ensure students are prepared to enter into the United States Army as Commissioned Officers. All professors teaching in the Army ROTC program are employees of the United States Army; the university provides them with courtesy faculty appointments and credentials them to teach provided they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Have Masters' degrees from an accredited Institution;

- b. Be Commissioned and Non-Commissioned Officers, have five or more years of service, have completed the ROTC mandated teaching certification course. A combination of their educational and military training combined with their service experience qualifies their instruction of all undergraduate MSL courses;
- c. Be Commissioned and Non-Commissioned Officers who have twenty or more years of service, have completed the ROTC mandated teaching certification course and have deployed for a combined total of three or more years. Their military training combined with their extensive service experience qualifies their instruction of all undergraduate MSL courses;
- d. Other instructors may be credentialed via narrative justification and course objective matrix with the approval of the Provost's Office where their experience warrants assignment as the instructor of record.

8. The University of Tampa recognizes that the best interests of the students may, at times, be served by instruction delivered by someone who has not taken the typical academic route to developing her or his ability to effectively teach a particular subject. A request for an exception to the University's standards for teaching at the graduate or undergraduate level requires a clear demonstration of the qualifications of the prospective faculty member to effectively deliver the instructional assignment.

A request for exception is made for the particular course or courses an instructor will be asked to teach. For each course, the written request must document how the prospective faculty member's experience and accomplishments have prepared him or her to effectively deliver the instructional assignment.

The Dean of the College offering the course shall be responsible for the final decision whether to make the appointment.

The Dean's office shall maintain a copy of the documentation that justifies the exception.