

## **University Guidelines and Expectations for Faculty Credentialing**

In compliance with SACSCOC standards, Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) documents the qualifications for faculty (i.e. instructors of record) on an ongoing basis. At TAMIU, an instructor of record is tasked with the overarching responsibility for developing and implementing syllabi, achieving student learning outcomes, and for issuing grades. TAMIU ensures that faculty have academic preparation, training, and/or experience to teach at the university level. This process is in place for full- and part-time faculty, including tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure-track (fixed-term), adjunct instructors, and graduate teaching assistants assigned as instructor of record regardless of location and/or mode of delivery.

SACSCOC offers guidelines for faculty credentialing that read:

“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.
6. 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.”

SACSCOC standards on faculty qualifications also state:

“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.”

At TAMIU, the primary guide in determining an instructor of record’s qualifications is a terminal degree in the discipline of instruction. However, faculty members are considered qualified for instruction based on other criteria than a terminal degree in the discipline such as:

- Terminal degree in a closely related field
- A master's degree or at least 18 SCH of graduate-level coursework (of the Master's degree) in the same or a closely related field
- Significant and/or extensive research and/or teaching experience in the same or a closely related field (e.g. publications, teaching awards from professional associations, authored textbooks and/or manuals)
- Professional training, licensures, or certification in a related field or profession
- Significant and/or extensive professional experience in the same or a closely related field
- Honors and awards in teaching discipline or closely related field

For faculty teaching developmental education courses, the additional credentials are listed below if a faculty member does not hold a master's degree:

- A bachelor's degree
- Teaching experience (higher education and/or secondary) and/or
- Significant and/or extensive professional experience in the same or closely related field and/or
- Professional training, licensures, certifications in related field or profession

While TAMU follows the SACSCOC guidelines as closely as possible, the criteria above are also used to evaluate faculty qualifications when a faculty member does not hold a terminal degree in the teaching discipline.

#### *Graduate Assistants in Teaching*

On occasion, qualified graduate assistants are employed by the University. The following are the requirements for credentialing graduate teaching assistants.

Graduate Students (Teaching Assistants): To be considered for appointment as an instructor of record for a lower division course or laboratory, a graduate student who has not received his/her Master's degree:

1. Must have 18 verifiable hours of graduate work in the discipline.
2. Must be supervised by a full-time faculty member.
3. May not teach upper division undergraduate courses or graduate courses.
4. Must have an approved credentialing form on file in the Provost's office for each course taught.

Doctoral Students (Teaching Assistants): To be considered for appointment as an instructor of record for a course or laboratory, a doctoral student:

1. Must have a Master's degree in the field or have Master's degree in a related field and 18 graduate hours in the field or have completed all didactic work for the doctoral degree and 18 verifiable hours of graduate work in the discipline being taught.
2. May not teach graduate or doctoral courses.
3. Must have an approved credentialing form on file in the Provost's office for each course taught.

Undergraduate Students (Assistants): Junior and Senior undergraduate students may be employed as undergraduate assistants in the classroom or in discussion/recitation sections as long as they are supervised by a full-time faculty member. They may not be designated as instructor of record nor may they be the sole instructor in the section.

For any of the items listed above, the department chair is responsible for verifying and justifying such qualifications for each instructor of record in the Faculty Course Credentialing Form found in the Office of the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) website. A detailed description of qualifications must be given in the “Substantiating Documentation” section of the form.

### **New Faculty Credentialing and Verification Process**

1. Once a new faculty member accepts their formal offer, they are asked to submit official transcripts and an updated curriculum vitae (CV) by personnel of the Office of the Provost and VPAA.
2. New faculty member (regardless of rank and title) must provide the Office of the Provost and VPAA the necessary documentation to verify academic credentials including:
  - a. Updated long CV
  - b. Official transcripts sent directly from institutions where degrees were conferred, either electronically or via email to [provost@tamiu.edu](mailto:provost@tamiu.edu)
    - i. For purposes of these guidelines, an official transcript includes the following authentication criteria:
      1. the issuing institution’s official seal;
      2. signature of the appropriate authorizing agent, preferable the institution’s Registrar’
      3. the institution’s official letterhead or stationary;
      4. date of issue.
    - ii. In regards to credentialing foreign faculty, TAMIU verifies the academic credentials of faculty who have a terminal degree from a university located outside the United States. These verifications are included with the individual faculty credentialing information and supporting documents and reside in the faculty members’ permanent files retained in the Office of the Provost and VPAA. For faculty with foreign degrees, credentials must be evaluated and verified by a professional agency that is a current member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) or the Association of International Credential Evaluators (AICE) approved by TAMIU. Select one of the university-approved agencies listed below and visit their website and follow the process to request the required report type listed for that agency.
    - iii. Documents required may vary by agency and country. Faculty must contact the agency each has selected from the list below and verify required documents.

- iv. Request a copy of the "Evaluation Report" to be directly sent by the agency chosen to Texas A&M International University to the following email address: provost@tamiu.edu

All full-time (tenure-track, tenured, fixed-term) credentials must be submitted to:

Marta Esparza  
Executive Assistant  
mesparza@tamiu.edu  
956.326.2242

All part-time credentials must be submitted to:

Erika Medrano  
Senior Administrative Associate  
emedrano@tamiu.edu  
956.326.2240

3. The new faculty member submits the Banner New Faculty Information form to the Office of the Provost and VPAA.
4. Authorized personnel from the Office of the Provost and VPAA submit a request to the Registrar's Office so that the faculty member is added to the Banner system and is given a Banner identification number.
5. Once a faculty member is added to Banner system, personnel from the Office of the Provost and VPAA enter all relevant information including department, title, rank, degrees conferred, including CIP codes corresponding to their majors (of degrees conferred). The Banner system is connected to the course schedule (and faculty member's name will appear as instructor of record once the department chair verifies and assigns courses).
6. Once documents are submitted and verified, they are kept as in the official faculty file at the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
7. Once faculty members are given their course schedule, the department chair is responsible for submitting a Faculty Course Credentialing Form for each new course taught.
  - a. One important consideration: Once a faculty member is authorized based on their credentials to teach a particular course, they are considered authorized in subsequent semesters for that course. A credentialing form is thus necessary only when a faculty member is teaching a course for the first time.
8. Once the Faculty Course Credentialing Form is completed and signed by the department chair, it is sent to the corresponding Dean who reviews and signs form.
9. Once the Faculty Course Credentialing Form is verified and signed by the corresponding Dean, it is sent to the Provost for final review and approval.
10. Once the Provost approves the Faculty Course Credentialing Form, it is stored in the official faculty file at the Office of the Provost and VPAA.
  - a. If at any time in the workflow process a Faculty Course Credentialing Form is returned to the department chair for additional justification/verification, it is sent back to the corresponding administrator (e.g. dean, Provost) for approval.
  - b. If a dean and/or Provost rejects a Faculty Course Credentialing Form, the faculty will not be allowed to teach the course.

- c. Credentialing forms are due in the Office of the Provost at least two-weeks prior to the beginning of a semester so that they can be reviewed and approved before classes begin, the only exception being late hires and late course reassignments.

### **Ongoing Credentialing Process**

1. For each instructor of record (regardless of status and rank) teaching a different course in any given semester, a Faculty Course Credentialing Form is completed by the department chair and sent through the workflow listed above. As previously mentioned, once a faculty member is authorized based on their credentials to teach a particular course, they are considered authorized in subsequent semesters for that course. A credentialing form is thus necessary only when a faculty member is teaching a course for the first time. Department chairs are responsible for making all necessary changes and updates regarding course credentialing (e.g. ensuring credentialing forms are submitted when a faculty member teaches a new course)
2. During the annual evaluation process that takes place in February, all full-time faculty submit an updated CV along with their annual Professional Portfolio Evaluation (PPE). The CV is reviewed by the department chair, Dean, and Provost as it moves through the workflow process in *HelioCampus*.
3. Each academic year, all faculty members must submit a long CV to their respective administrative associate.
4. Similarly, each academic year, all faculty members must also submit a HB2504 CV (i.e. a short CV to comply with Texas law) to their respective administrative associate and each is uploaded to the TAMU website before the first day of classes to comply with Texas House Bill 2504.
5. Each of these documents is reviewed by the department chairs.