

**Virginia State University  
Academic Policy**

**Date of Adoption:** April 2017  
**Date of Revision:**

**POLICY NO. 2301**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Faculty Credentialing Policy</b>
<b>Authority</b>	
<b>Applicability</b>	This policy applies to faculty at Virginia State University

**I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to codify the credentials requirements that are utilized by Virginia State University (VSU).

The credentials requirements ensure that the University employs competent faculty members who are qualified to carry out the goals and mission of the University in teaching, research and service. The University must document the qualifications for all full-time and part-time faculty teaching any credit courses that can be part of a degree, certificate, or other credential.

**II. Policy**

VSU requires that faculty be appropriately credentialed to teach assigned courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and perform other assigned responsibilities including research, service, and student advisement.

**A. Primary Credentials:**

The VSU Faculty Handbook and Academic Procedures Manual requires that faculty members have appropriate higher education credentials. The primary credentials considered are those identified by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools -Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC) in *The Commission Guidelines: Faculty Credentials* as follows:

1. Faculty teaching general education courses at the undergraduate level: doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or doctorate or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
2. Faculty teaching baccalaureate courses: doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or doctorate or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).

3. Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course discipline or a related discipline, a doctorate with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
4. 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.

**B. Other Criteria:**

The University may also consider other criteria, factors, items, benchmarks, and achievements in the teaching discipline to substantiate the competence of faculty, such as:

1. A record of research activity related to the teaching discipline;
2. Service related to the teaching discipline;
3. Presentations related to the teaching discipline;
4. Professional Licensure related to the teaching discipline;
5. Certifications related to the teaching discipline;
6. Significant professional experiences related to the teaching discipline;
7. Honors and awards related to the teaching discipline;
8. Continuous documented excellence in teaching related to the teaching discipline;
9. Achievements that contribute to effective teaching; student learning outcomes related to the teaching discipline; and
10. Publications in the faculty member's area of specialization related to the teaching discipline.

**C. Foreign Transcripts and Academic Credentials**

Evaluation of foreign transcripts and diplomas 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. Embassies and foreign language faculty (unless certified independently) are not considered certified translators. If a transcript is not available, an approved external evaluation agency may be used to evaluate foreign credentials for equivalence to a U.S. degree. Acceptable agencies include, but not limited to, the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES), the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), the World Educational Services, and other agencies that are determined to be appropriate to provide credential evaluations.

**D. Exceptional Cases:**

An individual may be considered for instructional or other assignments normally requiring the higher academic credentials, where it can be clearly demonstrated by virtue of accomplishments and professional experiences that the individual lacking a doctorate or master's degree has the knowledge and skills normally associated with a person who is fully

qualified on the basis of academic credentials. In such cases, the hiring official and the person making the assignment must provide a written rationale and maintain full documentation of the individual's accomplishments and professional experiences to justify the hiring decision and assignment.

**III. Other Requirements**

- A. Tenured, tenure track, term and adjunct faculty must meet the guidelines stated above.
- B. Tenured and tenure track faculty should have the terminal degree in the teaching discipline or other credentials considered appropriate by the specialized accrediting body for the program.
- C. Teaching assistants must meet the guidelines stated above, specific to graduate teaching assistants.

**IV. Accountability/Responsibilities:**

The basic responsibility for the verification and validation of all faculty credential requirements is the responsibility of the academic instructional units offering courses in which the faculty member will teach. Verification and validations must be completed prior to the faculty member beginning instruction in the course and must be conducted for each separate course.

It is the responsibility of all instructors to provide the University with the documentation needed to verify their credentials. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to bear the cost to obtain official transcripts and copies of licensees of certifications.

The academic instructional units are responsible for gathering, reviewing and verifying the teaching qualifications for instructors of record, including graduate teaching assistants who serve as instructors of records, and adjuncts at the time of hire. This process will occur prior to any instructor's appointment with the University, regardless of the mode of delivery or course location.

The determination of adequacy of credentials is the responsibility of the college Dean, or the appropriate program director.

After approval by academic Dean, the Office of Human Resources shall maintain relevant documentation including vitae, official transcripts, and letters of recommendation for faculty and instructors of record. Graduate students assigned as instructors of record are not required to have curriculum vitae in the system, but must have official proof of at least 18 semester-based graduate credit hours in the same discipline to that of instruction.

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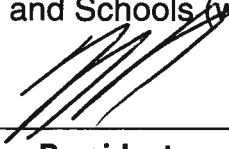
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**Attachment(s)** n/a

**References:**

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools ([www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org))

**Approved By:** \_\_\_\_\_



**President**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

4/4/17