Terminal Degrees

**Original Implementation:** July 21, 2009
**Last Revision:** April 17, 2012

Stephen F. Austin State University is committed to maintaining a high quality faculty. Toward that end, the university aspires to recruit and retain faculty members with terminal degrees in their disciplines. A terminal degree is defined as the generally accepted highest degree in a field of study.

As a general rule, possession of an earned doctorate or other recognized terminal degree from an accredited institution in an area appropriate to the individual’s discipline shall be required for appointment to a tenure-track or tenured faculty position. Exceptions to the requirement of a terminal degree may be made by the provost and vice president for academic affairs, but only upon recommendation by the academic unit chair/director/head and dean of the college. The following circumstances may justify approval of an exception to the requirement of an earned doctorate or other recognized terminal degree in a discipline-related field: (a) well-documented preparation and experience appropriate to the discipline that meets accreditation standards; or (b) exceptional preparation and experience for instruction in a discipline when the faculty member has a doctorate or other recognized terminal degree in another area.

Terminal degree requirements for appointment to a tenure-track position shall be clearly stated in position announcements.

Where appropriate, an offer of employment shall provide the time period in which the terminal degree must be completed.

Verification of a completed terminal degree shall require an official transcript sent directly to the Office of Academic Affairs by the degree-granting institution.

**Cross Reference:** Academic and Professional Qualifications (7.1); Academic Appointments and Titles (7.2); File Maintenance for Faculty Personnel Files (4.6)

**Responsible for Implementation:** Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Contact for Revision:** Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Forms: Faculty Certification of Credentials; Recommendation for Appointment

Board Committee Assignment: Academic and Student Affairs