



Academic and Professional Qualifications/Terminal Degrees

Purpose

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) 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.

The selection, development, and retention of competent faculty are essential to providing students with a high-quality education. Stephen F. Austin State University will follow requirements established by accrediting bodies and state agencies.

Persons Affected

This policy applies to all SFASU faculty.

Definitions

Terminal degree: the generally accepted highest degree in a field of study.

Policy

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 is required for appointment to a tenure-track or tenured faculty position.

Exceptions to the general rule of a terminal degree may be allowed. Upon recommendation of the academic unit head and the dean of the college, the provost and executive vice president for academic affairs may approve the following circumstances in lieu of the 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 recognized terminal degree in another area.

Terminal degree requirements for appointment to a tenure-track position will be clearly stated in position announcements. When appropriate, an offer of employment will provide the time period in which the terminal degree must be completed. Verification of a completed terminal degree will require an official transcript sent directly to the Office of Academic Affairs by the degree-granting institution.

Full-time and part-time faculty members teaching credit-earning courses leading toward the baccalaureate degree, other than activity courses, normally must have completed at least 18 graduate semester hours in the content discipline and, at a minimum, hold a master's degree from



an accredited institution.

Qualifications for Clinical Teaching Field Supervisors must meet the standards outlined in Texas Administrative Code Chapter 228, Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs.

Each faculty member teaching courses at the master's degree level normally must hold a terminal degree from an accredited institution, usually the earned doctorate, in the content or related discipline. A master's degree in the content discipline coupled with a doctoral degree in a related discipline may be appropriate. It is the responsibility of the academic unit head to justify the master's degree, or master's degree in the content discipline coupled with a related doctorate, as the terminal degree for faculty members teaching in those disciplines. All faculty members teaching courses at the doctoral degree level normally must hold a terminal degree from an accredited institution in the content or related discipline. Outstanding professional experience and demonstrated contributions to the content discipline may be presented in lieu of formal academic qualifications. In rare cases, graduate faculty who have demonstrated exceptional scholarly or creative activity, or professional experience, but who may not possess the required academic credentials may be considered.

Graduate teaching assistants who have primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit and for assigning final grades must have earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in the content discipline, be under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the content discipline and be evaluated periodically within the academic unit.

Appropriate documentation and justifications must be provided by the academic unit head. Appropriate documentation includes official transcripts and, if applicable for demonstrating competence, official documentation of professional and work experience, technical and performance competency, records of publications, certifications, and other qualifications. Appropriate documentation must be kept current and on file in the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Related Statutes or Regulations, Rules, Policies, or Standards

19 Tex. Admin. Code Ch. 228

SFA HOP 02-302 Academic Appointments and Titles
SFA HOP 02-107 File Maintenance for Faculty Personnel Files
SFA HOP 04-204 Graduate Admission and Assistantships

Responsible Executive

Executive Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Forms



**STEPHEN F. AUSTIN
STATE UNIVERSITY**

Handbook of
Operating Procedures

Policy Number: 02-301
Last Revised: N/A

Faculty Credential Certification
Faculty Certification of Credentials
Recommendation for Appointment

Revision History

September 1, 2023 (original)