



# POLICIES *and* PROCEDURES

Board of Trustees Policy Number:  
ACAF 3.01

Date of Adoption/Revision:  
1/24/2014

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>INSTITUTIONAL FACULTY CREDENTIALING AND VERIFICATION POLICY</b>
<b>AUTHORITY</b>	The president shall develop and implement procedures to credential college faculty and to assure compliance with this policy.
<b>APPLICABILITY</b>	This policy applies to all Bennett College faculty with full-time, adjunct, or visiting status. An individual offered employment as college faculty with full-time, adjunct, or visiting status shall meet the established faculty minimum qualifications for the appropriate field.
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<p>The purpose of this policy is to codify the credentials requirements that are used by Bennett College. The credentials requirements stated in the policy ensure that the College employs competent faculty members who are qualified to carry out the goals and mission of the College in teaching, research, and service. The policy also follows the SACSCOC guidelines for faculty credentialing and is aligned with best practices in higher education</p> <p><b>Accreditation Criteria Requirements:</b>          The policy satisfies SACSCOC Core Requirement 2.8  <i>The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of each of its academic programs. Upon application for candidacy, an applicant institution demonstrates that it meets the comprehensive standard for faculty qualifications;</i></p> <p>Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1  <i>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. 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;</i></p> <p>and SACSCOC criteria that specify when determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline in accordance with the “Primary Credentials” guidelines (<i>listed below</i>); and consider faculty competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work</p>

	<p>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. The college is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of faculty.</p>
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<p><b>POLICY</b></p>	<p>Bennett College requires that faculty be appropriately credentialed to teach assigned courses on the undergraduate level, and perform other assigned responsibilities including service, research, and student advisement. Further, at least 25 percent of the discipline course hours in each major shall be taught by faculty members holding the terminal degree—usually the earned doctorate in the discipline.</p> <p>1. Primary Credentials</p> <p>The primary credentials considered are those identified by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in <i>The Commission Guidelines: Faculty Credentials</i> as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 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).</li> <li>b. 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).</li> <li>c. Teaching discipline means the major in which one earned an academic degree.</li> </ol> <p>2. Other Credentials</p> <p>In addition to the degrees listed above, the College may also consider other credentials to substantiate the competence of faculty, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Record of Research Activity</li> <li>• Significant Professional Experiences</li> <li>• Professional Licensure</li> <li>• Honors and Awards</li> <li>• Continuous Documented Evidence in Teaching</li> <li>• Publications in the Faculty Member’s Area of Specialization</li> </ul> <p>3. Exceptional Cases</p> <p>Where it can be clearly demonstrated that by virtue of accomplishments and</p>
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	<p>experience, an individual lacking the 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, the individual may be considered for instructional or other assignments normally requiring the higher academic standards. In that case, the Provost must provide a written, compelling justification and maintain full documentation of the individual’s accomplishments and professional experiences to justify the hiring decision and assignment.</p> <p>Individuals who fall into this category must be recognized nationally for accomplishments and expertise in a particular area, possess knowledge and experience in a discipline in which it is difficult for the College to find an appropriately credentialed person, and have published in the discipline. The College will hire faculty in this category only in extremely rare cases.</p>
<p><b>PROCEDURES</b></p>	<p>Bennett College’s Office of the Provost will implement the faculty credentialing criterion by acquiring documentation for all professional faculty and then showing that they are qualified to teach the courses they are assigned to teach.</p> <p>Effective with the 2014-2015 academic year, the Provost’s Office must have in its faculty files official documentation showing completion of the doctoral degree (or the terminal degree for the field as appropriate for the discipline).</p> <p><b>Acquiring Credentials</b>  The first step will be to acquire basic documentation (official degree certifications, official transcripts, and other documentation as needed) to verify degrees obtained, specifically the highest degrees obtained.</p> <p>For faculty with only a master’s degree in disciplines for which the doctoral degree is the terminal degree, an original transcript(s) showing completion of the master’s degree and the necessary graduate coursework in the teaching discipline (in accordance with SACSCOC guidance) is required.</p> <p>Faculty without degrees in their teaching discipline as specified by SACSCOC criteria will be credentialed on a case-by-case basis, and additional information may be needed and may have to be gathered by the faculty member.</p> <p><b>Matching Credentials to Courses Taught</b>  The second step is to determine for each faculty member if the field of study of the highest degree matches the field(s) of the courses each faculty member is teaching during the academic year. For each faculty member, a CIP code will be assigned based on the highest degree and field of study. Courses offered at Bennett College likewise have a CIP code assigned to them. Faculty and course CIP codes will be compared. If there is a match, no further documentation is needed.</p>

	<p>If there is not a match, then at a minimum a justification for a faculty member teaching a course outside their highest degree field of study needs to be provided or additional documentation must be obtained that will show that the faculty member is qualified to teach each learning objective of the course(s) they are teaching. This will mean that learning objectives will need to be developed, if not already done, for courses involved in this credentialing and preferably all courses.</p> <p>This initial matching of faculty CIP codes to course CIP codes will be done in the Provost's Office. Where it is clear that additional credentialing is needed, the departments and divisions will work with their faculty to provide the information needed. All of the documentation being obtained will become part of the official faculty files in the Provost's Office.</p> <p><b>Future Faculty Credentialing</b> All faculty hired after AY 2013-2014 will be required to send to the Office of the Provost official transcripts from the institution where the terminal degree was received. The Office of the Provost must receive the official transcript before the faculty member can begin their employment with the College. Other information needed will be provided by the faculty member.</p>
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<p>Replaces policy:</p> <p><i>Date</i></p>
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