Office/Contact: Office of Academic Affairs
Source: SDBOR Policy 4.4.6; SDBOR – Approved Terminal Degrees
Link: https://public.powerdms.com/SDRegents/documents/1726900;
https://sdbor.edu/departments/academics-student-affairs/
Associated Forms: Determining Qualified Faculty: Tested Experience Form

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
Policy and Procedure Manual

SUBJECT: Determining Minimal Faculty Qualifications
NUMBER: 2:25

1. Purpose

   This policy and its procedures facilitate University use of instructional faculty who are academically prepared to teach and advise at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The University places primary importance on academic credentials. When other evidence, such as tested experience, is used in lieu of certain advanced degrees, this policy ensures that such experiences include the breadth and depth of experience outside the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be providing instruction.

2. Definitions

   a. General Education Courses: those courses which have been approved by the SDBOR to meet one or more of the system general education and/or institutional graduation requirements.

   b. Terminal Degree: an advanced degree which is considered to be at the highest level recognized by a discipline. The SDBOR provides a table of approved terminal degrees by program.

3. Policy

   a. The University will employ only qualified faculty and shall follow the guidelines set forth in SDBOR Policy 4.4.6 and this policy for determining whether the individual is qualified. This Policy does not convey rank and is usually applied to temporary or instructor level individuals.

   b. The University places primary importance on academic credentials which must be awarded from accredited institutions. When using credentials as a basis for determining minimally qualified faculty, the following levels of preparation apply:

      i. Instructional faculty at the University must have completed a program of study in the discipline or subfield in which they teach, and/or for which they develop curricula.

      ii. Faculty members teaching general education courses, or other non-occupational courses, must hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If

faculty members hold a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which they are teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield for which they teach.

iii. Faculty members teaching in undergraduate programs must hold a master's degree in the program in which they are teaching.

iv. Faculty members teaching in graduate programs must hold the terminal degree determined by the discipline and have a record of research, scholarship or achievement appropriate for the graduate program.

v. Faculty members guiding doctoral education must have preparation to teach at the doctoral level and a record of scholarship. Research and scholarship should be appropriate to the program and degree offered.

c. If instructors do not hold the appropriate level of degree for the program and course, they may establish eligibility using other credentials and professional experience. When using tested experience as a basis for determining minimally qualified faculty, the following applicable criteria must be outlined by the hiring department:

i. Highest earned degree appropriate to assigned program and content of course(s) and in no instance shall this be less than a master's degree;

ii. Professional experience in or closely aligned to program and content of course(s);

iii. Minimum threshold of experience (i.e. minimum number of years of experience);

iv. Knowledge base and skills;

v. Types of certification, licensure or other credentials required or preferred (if available for the discipline);

vi. Additional experience (if available for the discipline); and

vii. For doctoral level graduate courses only, a record of research, scholarship or achievement appropriate for the discipline.

4. Procedures

a. When using credentials to determine faculty qualifications, the hiring authority must follow the established SDBOR recruitment method and process.

b. When using tested experience to determine faculty qualifications:

i. The hiring department completes the *Determining Qualified Faculty: Tested Experience Form* and submits it to the Dean of the College for review.

ii. If for an undergraduate program or course, upon the Dean of the College's approval, the form is submitted to the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, or successor, for review.

iii. If for a graduate program or course, upon the Dean of the College's approval, the form is then submitted to the Graduate Dean for review. Upon Graduate Dean approval, the form is submitted to the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, or successor, for review.

iv. Upon approval by the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, or successor, the hiring department and appropriate Dean's office will be sent a copy of the approved form.

v. Approvals are awarded on a per course basis. If subsequently the applicant is to teach additional courses, the form must be re-submitted following the same process as outlined above.

vi. Unless underlying credentials change or the requirements for the program or course change, applicants only need to be approved once.

vii. The completed form should be submitted for review and approval prior to hiring.

viii. For temporary hires, the approved form and associated documents must be attached to the PAR and placed in the personnel file.

ix. For permanent instructor hires, the approved form must be placed in the personnel file with the hiring materials.

5. Responsible Administrator

   The Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, successor, or designee, is responsible for annual and ad hoc review of this policy and its procedures. The University President is responsible for approval of this policy.

SOURCE: Approved by President on 09/14/2016. Revised 01/26/2024 (clerical).