

SECTION: Personnel Policies and Procedures
SUBJECT: Faculty Credentials and Professional Growth Plan
SOURCE REFERENCE: Board of Trustees Policy 605.02

NUMBER: F/5.1

Faculty Credentials and Professional Growth Plan

To advance in rank, all faculty members, in consultation with the respective Dean, are required to develop professional growth plans. The President must approve the plan based on the recommendation of the Dean. **(See Form F/5.1-A- Professional Growth Plan)**

A Professional Growth Plan must be approved by the President prior to advancement in rank. The Dean of the employee's area is responsible for assisting in the development of the Professional Growth Plan.

An instructor who seeks to advance by completing a College degree or additional graduate courses must provide the President with a course of study. A course of study is defined as a complete list of all courses required by the College/University granting the degree or providing the additional graduate courses.

Instructor rank may change only at the beginning of the academic year, September 1. All activities must be completed and the instructor must provide documentation to the President no later than September 1. An approved Professional Growth Plan will be the only means by which an instructor can advance in rank.

1. The credentials are organized according to teaching areas. The following groups are presented:
 - 1.1. Group A. This group of requirements shall be used for instructors teaching credit courses in the following areas: humanities/fine arts; social/behavioral sciences; natural sciences/mathematics; and in professional and career technical areas that are components of associate degree programs designed for or usually resulting in college transfer to baccalaureate degree programs. This group is also used for instructors teaching credit courses that are not designed for or do not usually result in college transfer in cases where articulation agreements exist that require instructors to maintain Group A credentials for transfer.
 - 1.2. Group B. This group of requirements shall be used generally for instructors teaching credit courses in professional and career technical areas that are components of associate degree programs not usually resulting in college transfer to baccalaureate degree programs. There are courses that do not usually result in college transfer but that transfer under articulation agreements where instructors teaching those courses must be credentialed under Group A rather than Group B.
 - 1.3. Group C. This group of requirements shall be used for instructors teaching credit courses in certificate programs.

*(Teaching Discipline Group Assignments are presented in **F/5.1-B.**)*

2. All instructors will be "grandfathered" in their current rank and group placements.

- 2.1. Rank IV-Group A

- 2.1.1. Degree Requirement: Earned Doctorate

- 2.1.2. In-field Requirement:

Option (a) Earned doctorate in-field.

Option (b) Fifty-four (54) graduate semester hours of coursework in the teaching field.

Option (c) (Accepted only when fifty-four (54) graduate semester hours of coursework in the teaching field is unavailable at any accredited institution of higher education.) Fifty-four (54) graduate semester hours of course-work in a combination of teaching field, related field, and/or education.

Option (d) (Acceptable only when an instructor has two teaching assignments. Thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in a major teaching field with eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a second teaching area.

2.2. Rank IV-Group B

2.2.1. Degree Requirement:

Option (a) Specialist degree (minimum thirty (30) graduate semester hours beyond the master's degree in a planned program) plus thirty (30) additional graduate semester hours.

Option (b) Specialist degree (minimum of thirty (30) graduate semester hours beyond the master's degree in a planned program) plus the equivalent of thirty (30) additional graduate semester hours as stipulated in 2.2.2.(c) below.

2.2.2. In-field Requirement:

Option (a) Thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in teaching field.

Option (b) (Acceptable only when thirty- six (36) graduate semester hours in the teaching field in unavailable at an accredited institution of higher education.) Thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours is a combination of the teaching field and/or related field; or, if unavailable, thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field, related field, or education.

Option (c) Twenty- four (24) graduate semester hours in accordance with Option (a) or (b) above plus the equivalent of thirty (30) graduate semester hours of corporate or other external formal training as determined below:

The (30) graduate semester hours equivalent will be determined for each program area by the College.

2.2.3. Work Requirement:

Three years of successful full-time experience as a practitioner in the vocational field and successful completion of an approved occupational examination (e.g., NOCTI) or approved certification within the first year of employment.

2.3. Rank IV-Group C

2.3.1. Degree Requirement:

Specialist degree (minimum of thirty (30) graduate semester hours beyond the master's degree in a planned program.)

2.3.2. In-field Requirement:

Option (a) Thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in teaching field.

Option (b) (Acceptable only when thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in the teaching field are unavailable at any accredited institution of higher education.) Thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field and/or related field; or, if unavailable, thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field, related field, and/or education.

Option (c) Six (6) graduate semester hours in accordance with Options (a) or (b) above plus the equivalent of thirty (30) graduate semester hours of corporate or other external formal training as determined below:

The thirty (30) graduate semester hours equivalent will be determined for each program area by the College.

2.3.3. Work Requirement:

Six (6) years of successful full-time experience as a master craftsman/ journeyman in the vocational field with competency demonstrated through successful completion of an approved occupational examination (e.g., NOCTI) or approved certification within the first year of employment.

2.4 Rank III-Group A

2.4.1. Degree Requirement:

Specialist degree (minimum of thirty (30) graduate semester hours beyond the master's degree in a planned program) plus thirty (30) additional graduate semester hours.

2.4.2. In-field Requirement:

Option (a) Fifty-four (54) graduate semester hours in the teaching field.

Option (b) (Acceptable only when fifty-four (54) graduate semester hours in the teaching field is unavailable at any accredited institution of higher education.) Fifty-four (54) graduate semester hours in a combination of the teaching field and/or related field; or, if unavailable, thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field, related field, and/or education.

Option (c) (Acceptable only when an instructor has two teaching assignments.) Thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in a major teaching field with eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a second teaching area.

2.5. Rank III -Group B

2.5.1 Degree Requirement:

Option (a) Specialist degree (minimum of thirty (30) graduate semester hours beyond the master's degree in a planned program).

Option (b) Master's degree plus the equivalent of thirty (30) graduate semester hours equivalent as stipulated in 2.5.2.(c) below.

2.5.2. In-field Requirements:

Option (a) Thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in teaching field.

Option (b) (Acceptable only when thirty- six (36) graduate semester hours in the teaching field is unavailable at an accredited institution of higher education.) Thirty- six (36) graduate semester hours in a combination of the teaching field and/or related field; or, if unavailable, thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field, related field, or education.

Option (c) Fifteen (15) graduate semester hours in accordance with Options (a) or (b) above plus the equivalent of fifteen (15) graduate hours of corporate or other external formal training as determined below:

The fifteen (15) graduate semester hours equivalent will be determined for each program area by the College.

2.5.3. Work Requirement:

Three years of successful full-time experience as a practitioner in the vocational field and successful completion of an approved occupational examination (e.g., NOCTI) or approved certification within the first year of employment.

2.6. Rank III-Group C

2.6.1. Degree Requirement:

Option (a) Master's Degree

Option (b) Baccalaureate degree plus the equivalent of thirty (30) additional graduate semester hours as stipulated in 2.6.2.(c) below.

2.6.2. In-field Requirement:

Option (a) Eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in teaching field.

Option (b) (Acceptable only when eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in the teaching field are unavailable at an accredited institution of higher education.) Eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field and/or related field; or, if unavailable, eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field, related field, and/or education.

Option (c) The equivalent of thirty (30) graduate semester hours of corporate or other external formal training will be determined for each program area by the College.

2.6.3. Work Requirement:

Six (6) years of successful full-time experience as a practitioner in the vocational field and successful completion of an approved occupational examination (e.g., NOCTI) or approved certification within the first year of employment.

2.7. Rank II-Group A

2.7.1. Degree Requirement:

Specialist degree (minimum of a master's degree plus thirty (30) additional graduate semester hours in a planned program.

2.7.2. In-field Requirement:

Option (a) Thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in the teaching field.

Option (b) (Acceptable only when thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in the teaching field is unavailable at any accredited institution of higher education.) Thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field and/or related field; or, if unavailable, thirty-six (36) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field, related field, or education.

Option (c) (Acceptable only when an instructor has two teaching assignments.) Eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a major teaching field with eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a second teaching area.

2.8. Rank II-Group B

2.8.1. Degree Requirement:

Option (a) Master's Degree

Option (b) Baccalaureate degree plus the equivalent of thirty (30) graduate semester hours as stipulated in 2.8.2.(c) below.

2.8.2. In- field Requirement:

Option (a) Eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in the teaching field.

Option (b) (Acceptable only when eighteen (18) semester hours in the teaching field is unavailable at an accredited institution of higher education.) Eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field and/or related field; or, if unavailable, eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field, related field, or education.

Option (c) The equivalent of thirty (30) graduate semester hours of corporate or other external formal training will be determined for each program area by the College.

2.8.3. Work Requirement:

Three (3) years of successful full-time experience as a practitioner in the vocational field with competency demonstrated through successful completion of an approved occupational examination (e.g., NOCTI) or approved certification within the first year of employment.

2.9. Rank II-Group C

2.9.1. Degree Requirement:

Baccalaureate Degree

2.9.2. In-field Requirement:

Twenty-seven (27) semester hours in the teaching field or related field.

2.9.3. Work Requirement:

Six (6) years of successful full-time experience as a practitioner in the vocational field with competency demonstrated through successful completion of an approved occupational examination (e.g., NOCTI) or approved certification within the first year of employment.

2.10. Rank I-Group A

2.10.1. Degree Requirement:

Option (a) Master's Degree

Option (b) (Acceptable only for creative and applied arts and occupational programs.) Baccalaureate degree plus in-field requirements in 2.10.2.(c) below.

2.10.2. In-field Requirement:

Option (a) Eighteen graduate semester hours in the teaching field.

Option (b) (Acceptable only when eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in the teaching field is unavailable at any accredited institution of higher education.) Eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field and/or related field; or, if unavailable, eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in a combination of teaching field, related field, or education.

Option (c) (Acceptable only for 1(b) above.) Bachelor's degree with twenty- seven (27) semester hours in the teaching field, documented professional competency, and three (3) years full-time experience in the occupational area.

2.11. Rank I-Group B

2.11.1. Degree Requirement:

Bachelor's Degree

2.11.2. In-field Requirement:

Option (a) Twenty-seven (27) semester hours in the teaching field.

Option (b) Specialized coursework equivalent to the community or technical college program.

2.11.3. Work Requirement:

Three years of successful full-time experience as a practitioner in the occupational, technical, or vocational field.

2.12. Rank I-Group C

2.12.1. Degree Requirement:

Associate degree or equivalent (at least sixty (60) semester hours in a

planned program including associate degree core).

2.12.2. In-field Requirement:

Specialized coursework equivalent to the community or technical college program.

2.12.3. Work Requirement:

Six (6) years of successful full-time experience as a practitioner in the vocational field with competency demonstrated through successful completion of an approved occupational examination (e.g., NOCTI) or approved certification within the first two years of employment.

2.13. Level 0-Group A: Level 0 is paid at Rank IB on the Salary Schedule.

(Instructors using these minimum requirements may only teach basic computation and communication skills in certificate programs or remedial courses.)

2.13.1. Degree

Requirement:

Bachelor's Degree

2.13.2. In-field Requirement:

Twenty-seven (27) semester hours in the teaching field.

2.14. Level 0-Group B: Level 0 is paid at Rank IB on the Salary Schedule.

2.14.1. Degree Requirement:

Associate Degree or equivalent, combined with at least three (3) years' experience as a practitioner in the field of instruction. "Equivalent" can be academic or non-academic but must be documented by the college and approved by the President.

2.14.2. In-field Requirement:

Major in assigned teaching area.

2.14.3 Work Requirement:

Three (3) years successful full-time experience as a practitioner in the occupational or technical field.

2.15. Level 0-Group C: Level 0 is paid at Rank IB on the Salary Schedule

2.15.1. Degree Requirement:

Associate degree or equivalent, combined with at least three (3) years' experience as a practitioner in the field of instruction. "Equivalent" can be academic or non-academic but must be documented by the college and approved by the President.

The Chancellor may waive the minimum qualifications or credentials set forth in this policy upon receipt of a reasonably documented summary of qualifications and written explanation that justifies the instructor's overall qualifications, which should ensure the quality and integrity of the college's educational program

2.15.2. In-field Requirement:

Specialized coursework equivalent to the community or technical college program.

2.15.3. Work Requirement:

Three (3) years successful full-time experience as a practitioner in the occupational or technical field.

**CHANCELLOR'S PROCEDURE FOR POLICY
605.02: FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS**

- I. Advancement in Rank Through the Professional Growth Plan (only applicable for plans approved by August 31, 2022)
 - A. The college's official professional growth plan ("plan") will be used by the instructor to notify the college of a desire to pursue additional credentials for advancement in faculty rank. A new plan must be submitted when an instructor desires to advance to any rank not covered by a previously approved plan. If an instructor's plan is for the purpose of rank advancement, the plan must be approved by the President in advance of the instructor commencing the course of study included in the plan.
 - B. The instructional dean (academic or technical) of the institution is the administrator responsible for establishing the instructor's initial rank (with the president's approval) which determines appropriate starting salary, assisting the instructor in developing his/her professional growth plan, and assisting the instructor in advancing in rank by approving the appropriate plan. Each time the president is referred to later in these guidelines it is understood that the instructional dean (academic or technical) has been involved at the appropriate level.
 - C. The instructors' professional growth plans ("plans") shall be maintained in their respective personnel files in the institution's Human Resources office. Plans will be utilized to verify instructor changes in rank. A professional growth plan approved by the institution will be the only means by which an instructor can advance in rank at that institution. System institutions will be subject to audits of their faculty files.
 - D. Instructor rank may change only once per year. The instructor must provide documentation to verify accomplishment of planned activities to qualify for advancement in rank prior to September 1 each year. The president may establish a date prior to September 1 to provide time for evaluating documents needed to support the instructor's request for advancement in rank.
 - E. An instructor who has been "grandfathered" into a rank or level placement is not required to meet the credentialing standards under this policy, so long as the instructor remains employed at the institution where he/she was "grandfathered" and remains in the same teaching field at that institution. An instructor who changes institutions or who changes teaching fields is not covered by the "grandfathering" provision of this policy and will be required to meet credentialing standards in effect at the time of employment at the new institution

or at the time of the change in teaching fields.

II. Advancement in Rank by Means of Additional College/University Education

- A. The professional growth plan for an instructor who seeks to advance in rank by means of additional college/university coursework must include an approved course of study with appropriate college/university advisor signature(s). This course of study must lead to the appropriate standard required to advance to the intended rank. A college/university advisor, with the student's permission, may change the course of study, but the changes must lead to the same standard with the same major to allow the instructor to advance to the appropriate higher rank. A course of study is defined as a complete list of all courses and other work (such as research, thesis, examinations, or dissertation) required by the college/university granting the degree. All changes to the course of study must be submitted to the instructor's president. Official transcripts verifying the completion of the course of study and the awarding of any required degree as outlined in the plan must be submitted to the president before the rank increase is approved.
- B. An instructor who changes instructional programs prior to achieving the higher rank may change majors included in the professional growth plan with approval of the President. The revised plan will include the new course of study signed by the college/university advisor.

III. Fulfilling the In-Field Requirement for Advancement in Rank for Group B and Group C Instructors

- A. The information in this section is only applicable to instructors in Group B and Group C.
- B. Instructors who wish to use corporate or other external training as a graduate semester hour equivalency to meet the in-field requirement must include the plan for obtaining the corporate and/or external training in the professional growth plan that is approved by the President.
- C. Each college should develop and adopt a local policy for determining the graduate semester hour equivalency of corporate or other external formal training.

Colleges shall consider the following when developing a local policy:

- The federal definition of a credit hour as given in 34 CFR 600.2 and affirmed in the SACSCOC Credit Hours Policy Statement is the amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes that reasonably approximates at least one hour of direct instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work each week for fifteen weeks for one semester. Based on this federal definition, 30 semester credit hours includes at least 450 hours of direct instruction.

- Examples of corporate or other external training include but are not limited to Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) courses, NAM's Manufacturing Institute courses, International Code Council Learning Center courses, American Culinary Federation training, Association for Advancing Automation (A3) training, etc.
- The corporate and external formal training needs to be completed outside of the scope of the instructor's normal workday and work responsibilities.

IV. General Considerations for Rank Placement and Increase

- A. For initial assignment or advancement to a given rank, a Group A instructor must meet both the degree requirement and the in-field requirement of that rank; Group B and Group C instructors must meet the degree requirement, the in-field requirement, and the work requirement.
- B. The college should develop and adopt a policy which details the types of occupational examinations and certifications that are acceptable for meeting the examination/certification portion of the work requirement for Group B and Group C instructors. Examples include, but are not limited to, NOCTI, AWS, NIMS, etc.
- C. Instructors in Group C (i.e., those who teach in programs in which the highest award is a short-term certificate or certificate) may be considered "grandfathered" in that credential group and in their current rank if the college makes the decision to change the program to one in which the associate degree is offered. An instructor so grandfathered will follow the policy and procedures for increasing rank in Group C. Decisions of this nature shall be applied consistently.
- D. Advancement in rank for instructors who were hired prior to December 14, 1989, **and** who elected to use the 1977-1978 Credential Standards will be governed by the "Certification Guidelines for 'Grandfathered' Faculty Members" adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education on December 14, 1989.

V. Conversion of Quarter Hours to Semester Hours

- A. To convert quarter hours of college credit to semester hours, multiply the number of quarter hours by 0.67.
- B. Portions of a semester hour are not equivalent to a whole semester hour; rounding must go down. For example, 25 quarter hours = $25 \times 0.67 = 16.75 = 16$ semester hours.