| Procedure Number: | AS 005 |
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| Procedure Title: | Faculty Credentialing |

## 1. COMMITMENT AND PURPOSE

1.1 Northwest Vista College (NVC) recognizes and values the central role faculty play in student learning. Academic success hinges on quality teaching, and the college is committed to offering the highest quality of instruction by hiring faculty who have demonstrated mastery in the field as evidenced by credentials and qualifications, as well as ongoing professional development.

1.2 The purpose of this procedure is to provide:

Section 2: definition of terms.

Section 3: credential and qualification requirements for faculty across the college according to discipline and transferability of courses.

Section 4: the procedure for receiving and reviewing documents pertaining to faculty credentials and qualifications.

Section 5: a process for exceptions to credential requirements.

Section 6: a procedure for internal appeal.

Section 7: a process and timeline for review of credentialing requirements.

Appendix: the most recent version of the NVC Faculty Credentials Table. All updates to the Faculty Credentials Table should be reflected in this Appendix. The office of the Vice President for Academic Success is responsible for updating the Faculty Credentials Table.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 *Credentials*: Degrees, certifications, and credit hours conferred by or earned at accredited institutions of higher education

2.2 *Qualifications*: Credentials may constitute qualifications, but qualifications may include "…work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications related to the teaching assignment, honors and awards, continuing professional development, relevant peer-

reviewed publications, and/or continuous documented excellence in teaching." (SACSCOC Standard 6.2.a - Resource Manual, 2018)

2.3 *Faculty:* "…all full-time and part-time faculty teaching credit courses that can be part of a degree, certificate, diploma, or other credential. Faculty teaching developmental/remedial courses should also be included. In some cases, instructors should be included even if they are not employees of the institution … "(6.1 – "Full-time Faculty", 2018)

2.4 *Day* For the purposes of this procedure, a "day" will mean 1 business day, excluding holidays or breaks.

## 3. CREDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR FACULTY

3.1 NVC gives primary consideration to the highest credential earned in a discipline. Degrees specific to each discipline that constitute the credentials listed below are outlined in the Faculty Credentials Table.

**Required Faculty Credentials:**

3.2 For Associate Degree courses designed for transfer for a Baccalaureate Degree:

1) Minimum of Master's Degree in the teaching discipline (or closely related field) or

2) Master's Degree with 18 graduate semester hours in teaching discipline (or closely related field).

3.3 Faculty teaching courses not designed for transfer to a Baccalaureate Degree or Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Degree and/or certificate courses not designed for transfer to a Baccalaureate Degree but which may transfer to a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) Degree:

1) Bachelor Degree in teaching discipline (or closely related field) or

2) Associate's Degree in the teaching discipline (or closely related field) and at least 3 years of demonstrated qualifications in the teaching discipline (or closely related field). Additional program specific requirements can be found on the Faculty credentialing rubric.

3.4 Faculty Teaching in baccalaureate degree courses must have a minimum of a master's degree in teaching discipline or closely related field or a master's degree with 18 graduate credit hours in the teaching discipline or closely related field.

## 4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

4.1 During the hiring process, or during any internal credential auditing process, faculty must submit, as evidence of credentials, official transcripts from each institution attended to the Human Resources department.

      4.1.1   Faculty with advanced degrees from foreign, non-US institutions must submit an evaluation and translation from a National Association of Credential Evaluation accredited member.

## CREDENTIALS / QUALIFICATION APPROVAL PROCESS

4.2      STEP 1: Evidence of credentials/qualifications as referenced in Section 3 will be reviewed and submitted for approval routing by discipline coordinators.

4.3      STEP 2: An Academic Support Specialist will then check the credentials/qualifications submissionfor completeness and prepare an appropriate credentialing form.

      4.3.1   A credentialing form will include the following information:

- Candidate name and status (full time or adjunct)
- Department Chair
- Teaching Discipline
- Position/Requisition #
- Qualifying Degree and date awarded
- Qualifying Degree in Discipline – yes or no
- Qualifying Degree Institution

      4.3.2   The Academic Support Specialist will facilitate the approval process as documented by signatures on a credentialing form.

4.4      STEP 3: Credentials/Qualifications will be reviewed for approval by the Department Chair.

4.5      STEP 4: Credentials/Qualifications will be reviewed for approval by the appropriate Dean for Academic Success.

4.6      STEP 5: Credentials/Qualifications will be reviewed for approval by the Vice President for Academic Success (VPAS).

4.7      If credentials/qualifications are not approved in STEP 3, 4, 5, or 6, the Academic Support Specialist will notify the Discipline/Program Coordinator in writing within 2 days that the credentials/qualifications have not been approved.

4.8      If a candidate's credentials or qualifications are deemed unacceptable in the process described in either Section 4 or Section 5, The Discipline/Program Coordinator, Department Chair, or Academic Dean may appeal a subsequent disapproval of credentials/qualifications (for example, if the VPAS disapproves credentials/qualifications, the Department Chair or Discipline Coordinator may appeal the VPAS decision). The appeal process is detailed in Section 6.

## 5. EXCEPTIONS AND JUSTIFICATION

5.1    NVC recognizes there are rare cases in which outstanding faculty qualifications, including experience in the field and expertise may differ from traditional credentialing requirements, and this is especially true for workforce and technical fields. For this reason, and in compliance with SACSCOC standard 6.2.a, sometimes the crux of hiring decisions is the overall picture of ability, qualifications, and experience, rather than solely the possession of academic credentials. In the rare event of an exception to faculty credential requirements, the following process  will be used to determine whether qualifications are acceptable and the exception justified.

5.2    A Statement of Exception and Statement of Qualification are used for faculty who have qualifications other than those listed in the Faculty Credentials Table and Section 3 above. The Discipline / Program Coordinator should advise candidates of the need for these statements during the hiring process, and these statements should be submitted to the Human Resources department upon recommendation for hire.

        5.2.1    A Statement of Exception is used when a faculty member's credentials differ from the traditional credentialing criteria as found in the Faculty Credentialing Table, but the faculty member possesses relevant credentialing and qualifications.

        5.2.2    A Statement of Qualification is used when a faculty member demonstrates qualifications and experience in the teaching discipline (or closely related field) but does not meet the traditional credentialing criteria required for a specific teaching discipline.

5.3    In cases where Statements of Exception and Qualification are submitted, the process detailed in Section 4 will proceed beginning with 4.3. Statements of Exception and Qualification should be attached to the credentialing form, along with supportive evidence of qualifications. At any point in the review process, reviewers may request more or different evidence of qualifications in order to justify the exception.

## 6. APPEAL PROCESS

6.1    If a candidate's credentials or qualifications are deemed unacceptable in the process described in either Section 4 or Section 5, The Discipline/Program Coordinator, Department Chair, or Academic Dean may appeal a subsequent disapproval of credentials/qualifications (for example, if the VPAS disapproves credentials/qualifications, the Department Chair or Discipline Coordinator may appeal the VPAS decision).

6.1.1 The candidate may not initiate an appeal.

6.2 STEP 1: A brief memo regarding the appeal must be submitted to the VPAS within 3 days of notification of disapproval (see 4.6). If the VPAS is filing the appeal, then the VPAS should document the initiation of the appeal process by writing a memo regarding the nature of appeal.

6.3 STEP 2: The VPAS will assemble an *Ad Hoc* Credentials Appeals Committee.

6.3.1 The Credentials Appeals Committee will consist of: 1 Full-Time Faculty member from the discipline
1 Discipline/Program Coordinator

1 Department Chair

1 Member of the Faculty Senate other than the Faculty Senate President
1 Dean for Academic Success

6.4 STEP 3: Within 5 days of the appeal, the Credential Appeals Committee will review the evidence of credentials and qualifications. The committee will decide, by simple majority, whether to accept the credentials and qualifications or uphold the disapproval. If the result of an appeal overturns the disapproval, the hiring process will proceed. The Committee will provide a report to the VPAS that includes the evidence reviewed and the outcome of the appeal.

6.4 The President of Northwest Vista College is the final authority for hiring decisions.

## 7. CREDENTIALING TABLE REVIEW AND UPDATING PROCESS

7.1 The Academic Success Leadership Team (VPAS, Deans for Academic Success, and Department Chairs) will review the Faculty Credentials Table every 2 years or more frequently as needed. The office of the VPAS is responsible for updating the Faculty Credentials Table.

7.2 Revisions may be proposed by members of the Academic Success Leadership Team, Discipline/Program Coordinators, and faculty.

7.3 Advisory committees for each workforce program may provide input regarding the credentialing and/or qualifications of faculty members that teach in each respective program.

7.4 Changes will be documented by the office of the VPAS.

Contact for Interpretation:          Vice President of Academic Success

| **Relevant Board Policy:** | D.2.7 – Employee Licensure, Registration and Certification Requirements (Policy)<br> D.2.7.1 – Employee Licensure, Registration and Certification Requirements (Procedure)<br>D.1.1 – Compliance with Policies and Procedures (Policy)<br>D.2.3 – Qualifications for Hire (Policy) |
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| **Relevant SACSCOC Documents:** | 6.2a - Faculty Qualifications<br>SACSCOC Faculty Credentials Guidelines |
| **Originating Unit:** | Academic Success |
| **Maintenance Unit:** | Academic Success |
| **Implementation Date:** | Fall 2020 |
| **Revision Date:** | Spring 2023 |