May 27, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council of Deans and Regional Campus CEOs

FROM: S. David Stamps,
    Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Faculty Qualifications and Credentials

The purpose of this memorandum is to define minimum qualifications for all persons who teach undergraduate and graduate courses at the University and the credentials that are maintained documenting their qualifications.

Faculty (including adjuncts)

1. Instructional personnel teaching undergraduate courses should hold an earned doctorate or master’s degree with a major in the discipline taught; or hold at least a master’s degree and have completed at least 18 graduate semester hours in the discipline taught.

2. Instructional personnel teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate courses should hold an earned doctorate in the discipline taught or related discipline; or hold the terminal degree for the discipline.

3. Exceptions may be made for individuals who do not meet the minimum qualifications but who are considered by the department to possess other demonstrated competencies and achievements that will contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. All such exceptions must be approved in writing by the department chair and dean, and documentation of the competencies and achievements that justify the exception must be on file.
Graduate students

1. Graduate students teaching or assisting in courses should be supervised by at least one faculty member experienced in the discipline, perform teaching activities in the discipline of the student’s major, achieve a score of at least 50 on the Test of Spoken English (TSE) or SPEAK test if their native language is not English, receive regular in-service training, and receive planned and periodic written evaluations.

2. Graduate students who have completed at least 18 graduate semester hours in the discipline taught may be assigned to teach undergraduate courses and are appointed as Graduate Teaching Assistants, Class Code 9184.

3. Graduate students who have completed at least 30 graduate semester hours in the discipline taught may be assigned to teach undergraduate courses and are appointed as Graduate Teaching Associates, Class Code 9183.

4. Graduate students who have completed less than 18 hours in the discipline may not be assigned to teach an undergraduate course and therefore may not be designated as a "primary instructor." Such students, if their major is in the teaching discipline, may provide support to a qualified instructor and are appointed as Graduate Assistants, Class Code 9185.

5. Graduate students may not be assigned to teach a graduate course and therefore may not be designated as a "primary instructor." Such students, if their major is in the teaching discipline, may provide support to a qualified instructor and are appointed as Graduate Assistants, Class Code 9185.

Faculty Credentials

1. Each faculty member assigned to teach an undergraduate and/or graduate course must provide documents necessary to confirm his or her qualifications to teach. Required documents include a current vitae and official documentation of the highest degree held by the faculty member. Documentation of the highest degree held would normally be an official transcript from the institution that awarded the degree or the agency that is the custodian of records. In lieu of an official transcript, original correspondence verifying the degree awarded may be accepted from the institution that awarded the degree or custodian of records provided that such correspondence includes sufficient detail to discern the degree level and discipline. Typically these documents are provided at the time the faculty member is initially hired; however, if the faculty member is assigned to teach in a different discipline, additional documentation may be required. Further, if it is determined that official files do not contain documents needed to confirm a faculty member’s qualifications, then the faculty member must provide such documents upon request of the college dean.
2. In those instances where an individual does not hold a degree in the discipline taught and confirmation of qualifications is therefore based on an examination of the number of graduate hours completed, the individual must provide an official transcript from each institution that awarded graduate credit in the discipline for which confirmation is required.

3. In those instances where a faculty member holds a degree and/or graduate credit hours from an institution in another country, it may be necessary for him or her to obtain an evaluation of his or her credentials. The evaluation must be completed by an independent evaluation service acceptable to the University. Costs associated with such service will be the responsibility of the faculty member. Information about recommended and approved independent evaluators may be obtained from the Office of International Admissions.

4. Exceptions related to credentials may be made in individual cases where justified by unusual circumstances. All exceptions require written approval by the Provost in consultation with the Dean.

Questions related to minimum qualifications for faculty members should be directed to Dr. Tennyson Wright, Vice Provost. Questions related to documentation of credentials should be directed to Dr. Dan Gardner, Director of Institutional Effectiveness.

Thank you.