

February 16, 2001

MEMORANDUM:

TO: Academic Deans

FROM: John J. Piecoro, Jr.
Director, University Self-Study

SUBJECT: Faculty Credentials – SACS Requirements for Files

In December, I attended the annual meeting of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Commission on Colleges. There was a wealth of information presented at the meeting, much of which will be useful to the University as we continue our self-study process for reaffirmation of accreditation in April 2002.

One presentation that I attended dealt with those items in the SACS Criteria most often cited by visiting committees in their recommendations. Documenting faculty credentials is a problem for many institutions. The SACS Criteria states:

"It is the responsibility of the institution to keep on file for **all full-time and part-time faculty members** documentation of academic preparation, such as **official transcripts** and, if appropriate for demonstrating competence, official documentation of professional and work experience, technical and performance competency, records of publications, certifications, and other qualifications." In addition, "**each full-time and part-time faculty member** teaching credit courses ... **must have completed at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline and hold at least a master's degree** with a major in the teaching discipline" (the 18 semester hours can be part of the master's degree).

Further for graduate programs, "Institutions offering either master's or specialist degrees **must** demonstrate a high level of faculty competence in teaching and scholarship. Institutions offering doctoral degrees **must** demonstrate the research capability of faculty members teaching in these programs.... It is the responsibility of the institution to keep on file, for **all full-time and part-time faculty members teaching graduate courses**, documentation of academic preparation, such as **official transcripts** and, if appropriate for demonstrating competence, official documentation of professional and work experience, technical and performance competency, records of publications, and certifications and other qualifications."

When the visiting team arrives in April 2002, they will ask to see faculty files chosen at random. Members of the team will likely select several Colleges and ask to visit the offices where faculty records are housed. Because of this, we ask that you begin a check of your faculty records to bring them up-to-date and ensure that they comply with the SACS requirements. As part of our responsibility on the Self-Study Committee, I and other committee members will begin conducting random checks in March. By doing this, we hope that any existing problems can be corrected prior to the SACS site visit. See AR II-1.0-1, 7/27/00, Page 11-5, section G, Standard Personnel File for additional University requirements of the faculty personnel file. **PLEASE NOTE: Even though AR II-1.0.1, 7/27/00 states that official transcripts are required for only those faculty appointed after July 1, 1992, SACS requires that all full and part-time faculty employed at the University have official transcripts on file.**

If you have questions or need additional information, please call our office at 257-7915. Thank you for all your efforts and continued cooperation during this process.

cc: Charles T. Wethington, Jr., President
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