Southeastern Oklahoma State University
John Massey School of Business

Operational Definitions
of
Academically Qualified and Professionally Qualified Faculty

I. Rationale

AACSB accreditation standards clearly articulate the need for schools to demonstrate that faculty is current in their field of teaching. In Standard #10, which addresses faculty qualifications, we read the following:

“The faculty of the school has, and maintains expertise to accomplish the mission and to ensure this occurs, the school has clearly defined processes to evaluate individual faculty member’s contributions to the school’s mission.”

Further,

“The school specifies for both academically qualified and professionally qualified faculty, the required initial qualifications of faculty (original academic preparation and/or professional experience) as well as requirements for maintaining faculty competence (intellectual contributions, professional development, or practice).”

The standard goes on to discuss the school’s “portfolio of intellectual contributions,” which can provide evidence of faculty currency in their field. Our portfolio must include contributions to learning and pedagogical research, contributions to practice, and disciplined-based scholarship.

The language is also quite clear in differentiating professional development activities from activities that demonstrate currency and relevancy. The critical factor in determining whether faculty members bring current and relevant information is the impact (emphasis added) of faculty member’s development activities on the mission of the school.

The standards are specific in that business schools are expected to recruit and maintain a roster of qualified teaching faculty. The AACSB generally defines “qualified” as a combination of appropriate academic credentials plus evidence of currency in the teaching field. The standards are also rather vague in that business schools are expected to develop operational definitions of “qualified” that appear congruent to the specific mission of the business school.
II. Guiding Principles

As scholars, faculty members produce intellectual contributions, which are a function of three main activities: thinking, writing, and speaking. Measuring the impact of these activities is certainly inexact, but required nonetheless.

One principle that could be applied to intellectual contributions is the perceived quality of the faculty member’s activity or accomplishment. In the case of writing, the quality of the manuscript could be assessed by the rigor and structure of the review process that leads to publication.

Measuring the impact of thinking and speaking is more difficult. One way to look at this would be to use a “market-based” approach: Who values what the faculty member thinks or says? From this perspective, we can introduce the notion of third party validation as a means of assessing the current knowledge, skills, and/or abilities of a faculty member.

The extent to which the business community or others in the academy seek the faculty member’s expertise is a reasonable surrogate for evidence of the faculty member’s currency. Thus, a guiding principle should be the value – both intrinsic and extrinsic – that external stakeholders place on a faculty member’s talent.

Providing evidence of the impact of intellectual contributions then becomes a function of the quality of the contribution and/or third party validation. These two guiding principles lead to the following definitions of activities that faculty should pursue to remain qualified.

III. Definition of Academically Qualified

A faculty member, defined as one who is assigned to teach a JMSB class, regardless of contract status (tenured, tenure track, temporary instructor, part-time instructor, non-tenure track, etc.) must possess certain qualifications. For the John Massey School of Business a faculty member will be considered academically qualified (AQ) provided s/he meets the following conditions:

1. Possesses a doctoral degree in (or related to) the field in which s/he is teaching and:
   a. Completes at least 3 (three) quality publications over a rolling 5 (five) year period, or
   b. Completes 2 (two) quality publications and at least 1 (one) validating academic experience over a rolling 5 year period.

Exceptions:
   i. During the first five years after earning a doctoral degree in (or related to) the field in which s/he teaches, the doctoral degree alone will be sufficient in meeting intellectual currency. After five years, in order for the faculty member to maintain AQ status, a faculty member must meet the intellectual contribution qualifications list above.
   ii. Faculty members who are ABD (All But Dissertation) will be considered AQ for a total of three years including any employment with the JMSB.
iii. Faculty members who do not possess a doctoral degree but who possess a specialized master’s degree and significant publication record will be considered AQ in exceptional circumstances, but this classification will be limited to no more than 10 percent of JMSB faculty.

IV. Definition of Professionally Qualified

A faculty member\(^1\) in the John Massey School of Business will be considered professionally qualified (PQ) provided s/he possesses at least a master’s degree in business (or a specialized master’s degree in business) and meets two of the following conditions:

1. Is currently working full-time (or almost full-time) in business with job responsibilities related to the field in which s/he is teaching, or
2. Has completed 1 (one) quality publication over the past 5 (five) years, or
3. Has completed 2 (two) validating professional experiences over the past 5 (five) years.

Exceptions:

i. Faculty members who are not currently working in business, but retired from a full-time position in business within the last 5 (five) years will be considered PQ and may continue to pursue PQ status after the 5-year window.

ii. Businesspeople with doctoral degrees that transition from careers in industry to teaching positions in the JMSB will be considered PQ and may continue to pursue PQ status after the 5-year window.

iii. Businesspeople with a bachelor’s degree and professional certification along with significant professional experience matched to the area of teaching.

V. Quality Publications and Validating Experiences

A quality publication is a journal article that:

1. Was subjected to a documented formal review process;
2. Included a peer or editorial review; and
3. Is readily available for public scrutiny in a library or through an on-line retrieval service.

Considerations:

i. The publication outlet must be one that is traditionally subscribed to by a college library or one that is available on-line. A “working paper series” published by a department, for example, is not an acceptable outlet by definition.

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\(^{1}\)“Faculty member” means anyone who is assigned to teach a JMSB class, regardless of contract status (tenured, tenure track, temporary instructor, part-time instructor, non-tenure track, etc.).
ii. It is assumed that articles appearing in journals listed in Cabell’s *Directory of Publishing Opportunities* have been subjected to a documented formal review process. If the publication outlet is not listed in Cabell’s, it is the author’s responsibility to document the outlet’s manuscript review process.

iii. Co-authorship of articles is not being addressed at this time. If your name is on an article, it is assumed you made a significant contribution. Adding authors who made little or no contribution to the article is a breach of academic integrity.

A **validating experience** is an activity or accomplishment that is considered to add value to an independent third-party. Typically, the third-party has “purchased” the talent or expertise of a faculty member, either literally or by selecting the faculty member to perform a highly valued function.

The rationale for a validating experience is that a faculty member possesses a certain degree of current knowledge, skill, or ability that is sought after by the business community or by others in academe.

Examples of **validating experiences** for academic qualification (AQ) include, but are not limited to the following:

1. A faculty internship where a faculty member works full-time for a company for a minimum period of time (say, at least 5 weeks) and is given a project to complete or set of responsibilities to execute.
2. Major editorial responsibilities such as editor-in-chief or executive director of a journal or practitioner periodical.
3. A funded grant proposal from a major funding agency.
4. Publishing widely adopted edition of a textbook
5. Writing an invited article for an academic journal or a nationally-known practitioner periodical.
6. Obtaining new (and appropriate) professional certification.
7. Authoring a significant part of a major public policy analysis for the University, School, or other University entity.
8. Conducting a significant part of a funded research project including major contribution to a final written report or product.
9. Peer-reviewed proceedings (full paper) from scholarly meetings.

Considerations:

i. A key litmus test is the duration of time that the activity takes. A faculty internship should involve continuous work in the company, not a once-a-week meeting with middle managers, for example.

ii. Maintaining professional certifications by accumulating the requisite number of continuing education units does not qualify as a validating experience. It does not pass the test of an independent third-party “purchasing” the talent or expertise of the faculty member. If, by accumulating CEUs (and maintaining certification), the
faculty member subsequently engages in an activity sought by a third party, then it is that subsequent activity that may qualify as a validating experience.

iii. Editing the *Proceedings* for a meeting is not considered a major editorial responsibility, even if the faculty member is invited to do so.

iv. Serving as one of (perhaps) several editors on an editorial review board or serving as a referee for a journal is also not considered a major editorial responsibility.

v. Writing a book chapter may (or may not) qualify as a validating experience, depending on the stature of the book publisher and/or the impact of the book.

Examples of validating experiences for professional qualification (PQ) include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Creating and/or delivering executive education seminars that are fully subscribed.
2. Maintaining an active consulting practice with evidence of multiple major clients.
3. Serving as a member of a board of directors for a for-profit business.
4. Writing an invited article for a nationally-known practitioner periodical.
5. Writing a popular press book (such as *Good to Great*) that achieves national (or international) distribution.
6. Delivering speeches around the country to businesspeople through a contractual arrangement with a speaker’s bureau.
7. Authoring reports (from sponsored research) that are widely disseminated.
8. Publishing (and sustaining the publication of) a newsletter or sequence of reports that attracts a robust subscription base.
9. Operating or owning a profitable business with substantial annual revenues.
10. Obtaining new (and appropriate) professional certification or licensure.
11. Delivering a continuing education seminar or certificate program for an industry or trade group.
12. Delivering an invited presentation or training session on a topic relevant to the faculty member’s discipline, to business, trade groups, government or non-profit groups.

Considerations:

i. A key litmus test is the sustainability of the activity. Being invited to give a keynote address at a convention is admirable, but one such speech may not be sufficient as a validating experience.

ii. A consulting practice needs to be a regular, ongoing activity that involves many clients and, hopefully, many repeat clients. Doing consulting on an ad hoc basis is not sufficient to qualify for a validating experience.

iii. Operating a business does not mean operating a picture framing business out of one’s garage, for example. The business should be a major contributor to one’s annual income, not a hobby.

iv. Examples #7 and #8 might result from working with one of the Centers in the JMSB.
VI. Maintenance of Academic Qualifications for Administrators

To maintain AQ status, the Dean must have at least 2 (two) validating experiences over a rolling 5 (five) year period. Deans who do little to no teaching will be exempt from the peer reviewed journal article or scholarly publication(s) requirement.

Because the University does not allow for Associate Deans in academic departments, the Department Chairs perform administrative duties above and beyond those of typical academic Department Chairs in universities with Associate Deans. Department Chairs must have at least 1 (one) peer reviewed journal article or scholarly publication over a rolling 5 (five) year period and must have at least 2 (two) validating experiences during the same time frame. Department Chair Administrators who are academically qualified under this paragraph and who return to faculty status will continue to be considered academically qualified for a transition period of three years after leaving the administrative position.