Miami Dade College – Office of Faculty Initiatives

Faculty Credential Verification and Transcript Review Guidelines

- **Review the Faculty Credential Statement** (FCS) carefully to make sure that you understand the requirements as they are listed in the statement. If not, seek clarification from the lead Discipline Chair/Dean.
- Verify the accuracy of degree/course information by using only **official documents and primary sources (IHE web sites)**. Do not use unofficial transcripts, copies of transcripts provided by others (including the applicant) in your evaluation of faculty credentials.   Foreign-earned degrees must be validated/translated by a NACES member agency.
- Check the official transcript **degree** and **course prefixes** (Refer to MDC course taxonomy (https://wape.mdc.edu/FacultyCredentials/Taxonomy.htm located at top of the Faculty Credential Form) to make sure that they correspond to the ones in the discipline/areas required in the FCStatement and that they have the prefix that corresponds to the discipline for which the instructor is being hired to teach. Please be aware that the **MDC taxonomy chart** may be different from the **Florida Department of Education State Course Numbering System (SCNS) taxonomy** http://scns.fldoe.org/scns/public/pb_state_course_srch_lst.jsp.
  (For example, the MDC-FCSChart included Digital Media courses under School of Entertainment and Design (SEDT) although they are defined as Technology courses in SCNS. Currently, they are listed under "Digital Media" in the College's FCSChart).
- The course prefix is extremely important because it ties or maps the faculty member's qualifications to the teaching discipline requirements in the FCS and the MDC outcomes for courses in the teaching discipline.
- Pay close attention to evaluations of master's and doctoral degrees as well as individual courses whose titles sound as if they are related or similar to the teaching discipline as specified in the Faculty Credential Statement, but are obtained in an area of expertise or discipline not specified in the Faculty Credential Statement. (e.g., a graduate degree in Mathematics Education v. Mathematics to meet the FCS requirements for teaching Mathematics courses; Or a graduate degree in education to meet the FCS requirements for teaching non-Education courses; Or Multidisciplinary/Interdisciplinary degrees (e.g., Master of Liberal Studies, Master of Interdisciplinary Studies).
- If the match between the degree/courses under consideration and the FCS requirements in the teaching discipline is still unclear, refer to the **graduate catalog or bulletin** of the Institution of Higher Education (IHE) that awarded the degree to see if the degree/program description and the individual course descriptions of each course being considered are the same as those of the MDC-FCS requirements;
- If the "match" is still unclear, ask the applicant to provide **syllabi** for the course(s) being reviewed.
  Compare the content/competencies/LOs for MDC courses and FC Statements to establish whether the graduate courses you are reviewing meet the FCS requirements and the discipline teaching requirements for the MDC course (*MDC Course Competencies* http://www.mdc.edu/asa/course_competencies.asp
- Contact **Associate Dean** or **Associate Provost** for **Faculty Initiatives** for assistance with faculty credentialing questions.
- **Notify and Consult the Faculty Dean** if there are any doubts or concerns about an instructor's qualifications to teach course(s).

- Prior to requesting a salary quote from Human Resources, Chairpersons must be certain that the applicant meets **all** requirements to teach the courses they are being hired to teach.
- When considering existing MDC adjunct faculty to teach at your Campus for the first time, treat as a new hire and verify (review transcripts) that she/he meets the FCS criteria for teaching the courses you would like to assign to them—even if they have been previously approved to teach and have been teaching these courses at another MDC location.
- When repeated attempts through the College's hiring process do not draw qualified candidates who meet faculty position requirements, then this may signal to the School or Discipline that it is time to review or change the Faculty Credential Statement requirements.

Transcript Review Guidelines

U.S. Institutions
- **Hard-copy** transcripts must be received in a **sealed** (unopened) envelope from the issuing institution in order to be considered **official**. After opening and reviewing official transcripts, the MDC administrator must make a notation on the envelope in which the transcripts arrived (*Opened and reviewed by: Name, Signature, Date*); underline initial and date each page of the transcript and send to Human Resources for posting in Perceptive Content 7.
- **Electronic** transcripts: Print the electronic message, transcript cover page and the transcript(s) sent by the institution. Initial and date each page of the transcript, including the cover page, and send to Human Resources for posting in Perceptive Content 7.
- Make copies of transcripts (provided by a NACES member agency) and have them notarized before returning the originals to the applicant.
- Review both front and back of all **official** transcripts.
- Check and confirm the **date of award and the degree/program title** are on the transcript to assure that the applicant successfully *completed* the graduation requirements of the degree/program.
- Check the **credit type** for each course to make sure that the course is at the graduate-level (some IHEs offer graduate courses at the 3000/4000 level).
- "Audited" courses cannot be used to meet the FCS criteria.
- Check the **number of credits awarded to each course** to ensure that required number of graduate credit hours has been completed to meet the FCS requirements;
- Check to see whether courses are offered in **"quarter credit hours"** or "**semester credit hours."** Quarter hours are used by some IHEs with a quartered calendar (4 equally divided terms per academic year). A quarter hour/credit is the equivalent of approximately 2/3 of a semester hour/credit. (Please refer to the attached conversion table)
- **"Special Topics"** and **"Independent Study"** courses can be taken more than once and counted toward meeting the 18 graduate semester hour total as long as they have different titles. (Check the course syllabi and the date completed to match the dates/titles on the official transcript).
- It is College practice to consider only courses completed with a "C" grade or higher.
- **Dissertation, Practicum or Thesis credits** do not count toward meeting the 18 graduate semester hours.
- Check the **final grade** assigned to each course to make sure that each course was successfully completed with a passing grade;
- Ensure that all **official transcripts are on file** in Human Resources and uploaded in Perceptive Content 7 (Contact Ms. Letitia Rackley to obtain Perceptive Content 7 access or information regarding transcripts/documents).

- Verify through Human Resources that the degree(s)/graduate credit(s) was/were awarded by a **regionally accredited institution** of higher education (IHE) accepted by Miami Dade College and that foreign-earned credentials were evaluated (including translation of individual courses) by an approved NACES agency.
- Note: Law Degrees must be accredited by both the American Bar Association (ABA) and also the regional accreditation agency (accepted by MDC) for the University where the law school is housed.
- Institutions issuing faith-related degrees must be accredited by national faith-related accrediting organizations recognized by CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation) in addition to having regional accreditation accepted by MDC.

Foreign-Earned Degrees/Transcripts (Important: Allow sufficient time for foreign transcript *receipt and evaluation* in the hiring process)
- Foreign-earned degrees must be validated by a NACES member agency. Please visit http://www.naces.org/ for more information and a list of member agencies.
- Chairs/Faculty Credential Form Originators must review the foreign transcript evaluation prior to completing the Faculty Credential Form.
- Make copies of transcripts (provided by a NACES member agency) and have them notarized before returning the originals to the applicant. Include the notarized transcript copy in the hiring packet sent to Human Resources.
- Candidates with foreign-earned degrees are credentialed to teach only those courses for which they have the specified graduate degree. If an evaluation does not include a course-by-course breakdown of the courses completed for the degree (including translation of course descriptions), then it will not be possible to approve teaching assignments based on the 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline.
- In some cases, foreign earned degrees/programs consist of a continuous curriculum (from post-secondary/undergraduate to graduate level courses) incorporating undergraduate as well as graduate study. As a result, graduate-level courses may not be identified as such in the transcript/evaluation. The ability to distinguish between undergraduate and graduate level courses is extremely important when evaluating teaching credentials for the teaching discipline. For example, many universities have mathematical analysis, linear algebra, complex variables and other mathematics course titles at both levels, undergraduate and graduate. Courses need to be clearly identified as graduate level on transcripts from foreign institutions in order for the College to accept and count them towards meeting the specialization requirement (18 Graduate Semester Hours) in the teaching discipline.

Review and Documentation of Certificates and Licensures (required by Faculty Credential Statements or Job Position Minimum Requirements)

For all new and existing faculty, it is requested that Chairs/Program Directors:
1. Check original or certified copies of all FCS-required certificates/licensures in the Faculty Credential Statement;
2. Verify that they have seen the original/certified copy of these documents by placing initials and date on a copy of the original/certified copy of the certificate/licensure;
3. Ensure that all faculty have the FCS-required certificates/licensures entered in the Faculty Credential Form;
4. Include a copy of the verified document (with initials and date) in the RPA packet sent to Human Resources;
5. Check that all FCS-required licensures and certificates are posted in Perceptive Content 7;
6. Follow up with faculty to obtain any missing certification/licensure documents; and
7. Check with Human Resources to ensure that they have received the certificate/licensure documents and that they are posted in Perceptive Content 7.