

TO: Deans and Academic Deans

FROM: Cheryl Scheid 
Vice Chancellor of Academic, Faculty & Student Affairs

DATE: June 19, 2012

RE: Faculty Credentialing for SACS

As you are aware, UTHSC must obtain independent accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC). For our application for candidacy, UTHSC must meet several Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards, and Federal Requirements. In an attached document (see *SACS Faculty Credentialing Requirements*), I have listed the items that are most relevant to our faculty.

Essentially, UTHSC must document that our faculty are qualified to teach the subjects they are assigned to teach. Although I have every confidence that this is the case, SACS requires us to justify and document our faculty's qualifications.

Our application for candidacy covers Academic Year 2011-2012, therefore we must justify and document faculty qualifications for our recently-completed academic year. Our central faculty files must show documentation of the doctoral degree, or terminal degree if appropriate for one's field. Additionally, since some qualifications may be derived from coursework taken from an institution from which a faculty member did not graduate or from a degree program that was completed prior to receipt of the terminal degree, transcripts from those institutions must also be in our faculty files.

As noted in the UTHSC Faculty Handbook, Section 4.7.2, *Execution of a faculty appointment agreement requires documentation of the candidate's credentials (including a copy of his/her diploma and transcripts) and evidence of licensure where appropriate*. Given that our colleges have not systematically followed this requirement, my office is taking on the task of getting our current faculty files up to date with transcripts. **However, we expect the colleges to obtain the required documentation for all faculty appointed after July 1, 2012.** Please advise all of your department chairs of this requirement.

In order to obtain transcripts for current faculty, we are implementing the following procedure:

1. Beginning Tuesday, June 19, faculty will log onto the SACS Faculty Credentials website to provide information on institutions attended and semesters taught by college. Faculty will also upload their current CV (see the attached *Accessing and Using the SACS Faculty Credentials Website*).
2. Faculty will then sign a request form for each institution they've listed that authorizes my office to request their transcripts (see the attached *Official Transcript*

Authorization Request). These request forms will be distributed centrally from the departments.

Given the urgency of this process, I ask that you send this memorandum with its attachments to your department chairs and division directors as soon as possible and ask them to distribute the material to their faculty members.

We created a website at https://academic.uthsc.edu/faculty/sacs_faculty.php to facilitate communication about this process. We will be publicizing this website and encourage you to refer administrators and faculty to this website as a central point of information.

We also created an email address of accreditation@uthsc.edu as a venue for receiving and responding to questions about the accreditation process. Several people monitor the email that is addressed to this account. We ask that you and others in your college use this email address if you have questions about the SACS accreditation process.

If you have questions about this process, please contact Cindy Russell at 901-448-6158 or at crussell@uthsc.edu. She will be coordinating this process for my office.

Attachments: SACS Faculty Credentialing Requirements
Accessing and Using the SACS Faculty Credentials Website
Official Transcript Authorization Request

cc: Steve Schwab, Chancellor
Alicia Dorsey, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Cindy Russell, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Faculty Administration & Educational Technology