

Title: Program Faculty Sufficiency

Category: Academic Affairs

Responsible Cabinet Member: Provost

Purpose

To ensure that each academic program maintains a sufficient number of qualified full-time faculty and clearly designated program coordinators to support curriculum quality, program integrity, student success and continuous review, in alignment with the mission of the institution and accreditation standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

Scope

This policy applies to all educational units of the University.

Definitions:

- The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC): SACSCOC is an institutional accreditor responsible for quality assurance in higher education. It accredits institutions that award associate, baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees, including those offered through distance education, correspondence education and direct assessment.
- Program: As defined by SACSCOC, a for-credit credential for which an institution awards a degree, diploma, certificate or other credential at any level of instruction.
- Faculty Sufficiency: The presence of an adequate number of full-time faculty to ensure:
 - Curriculum oversight and delivery aligned with program goals.
 - Program-specific student guidance, mentoring and professional development (in coordination with the Office for Student Success).
 - Program assessment and continuous improvement.
 - Participation in shared governance.
 - Deliver across all modalities and locations.
 - Fulfillment of program's mission, including specialized roles (e.g., clinical faculty, extension, faculty, regular faculty).

Please note, part-time faculty and instructional support may supplement instructional delivery and provide specialized expertise but do not replace the primary responsibilities of full-time faculty.

Responsibilities

- Deans: Responsible for ensuring that the composition of full-time faculty within each academic program is adequate to serve the mission of the program, in both size and qualification, across all instructional sites and delivery modalities.
 - Deans must:
 - Monitor the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty teaching in each program.
 - Ensure faculty composition is consistent with program size, complexity, level and disciplinary expectations.
 - Evaluate ratios across all modalities (face-to-face, online) and locations to ensure comparability.
 - Take corrective action when thresholds are exceeded, including developing plans for rebalancing faculty loads, requesting exceptions or initiating hiring requests for additional full-time faculty.

- Ensure each program has a qualified program coordinator who meets institutional and discipline standards.
- The Provost has ultimate oversight for this policy and will:
 - Review annual faculty ratio reports from all colleges.
 - Use faculty composition data to inform institutional hiring priorities.
 - Ensure compliance with accreditation standards regarding full-time faculty sufficiency and program coordination.

Annual Review

- Data Collection: Institutional Research, Analytics and Decision Support (IRADS) will generate an annual faculty assignment report, disaggregated by:
 - Full-time vs part-time status by college and department.
 - Student Credit Hour (SCH) delivered.
 - Credential Level (undergraduate and graduate).
 - Instructional modality.
 - Location (e.g., main campus, off-campus sites)
- Dean's review
 - Review full-time/part-time faculty ratios.
 - Assess whether faculty sufficiency supports program quality, integrity and review across all modalities and locations.
 - Document trends, challenges and planned actions.
 - Confirm the designated program coordinator and verify qualifications.
- Threshold for Action:

While sufficiency will be evaluated holistically, sustained imbalance in faculty deployment may trigger a review.

Action may be required when one or more of the following conditions are observed:

- The proportion of SCH delivered by full-time faculty falls below a level reasonably expected for program sustainability.
- Reliance on part-time instruction becomes structurally necessary rather than strategic.
- Faculty resources are insufficient to support program oversight, student supervision, assessment responsibilities or curriculum integrity.
- Multi-year downward trends indicate erosion of full-time instructional capacity or leadership within the program.

When established indicators suggest that faculty sufficiency may be at risk, the dean shall conduct a review and, if warranted, submit a Faculty Sufficiency Action Plan outlining:

- Contributing factors.
- Risk assessment to program quality.
- A corrective or stabilization plan, which may include hiring, workload adjustments, program restructuring or other strategic actions.
- Exception requests that may be submitted when justified by mission alignment, specialized expertise needs, enrollment variability or other documented circumstances.

Program Coordination: For each academic program, the dean must formally designate a qualified faculty member to serve as a program coordinator who:

- Is academically qualified in a discipline appropriate to the curricular content and degree level of the program.
- Oversees curriculum development, review and revision.
- Ensures currency with disciplinary and profession standards.
- Facilitates program assessment and continuous improvement.

When the designated coordinator is not academically qualified in the primary disciplinary field of the program, or the program is interdisciplinary, the dean must ensure the curriculum development and review are conducted in collaboration with faculty who possess appropriate disciplinary expertise and degree-level qualifications.