



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Office of Planning & Assessment™

## **Justification Statements Guide**

### **Why are justification statements necessary?**

#### **SACSCOC**

Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 states, “The institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty.”

- General guidelines:
  - For undergraduate general education courses and baccalaureate courses, a doctorate or master’s degree in the teaching discipline – or- a master’s degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline)
  - For graduate and post-baccalaureate course work, a doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline
  - Graduate teaching assistants must have a master’s or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline – and have – 1) direct supervision by an experienced faculty member, 2) regular in-service training, and 3) planned and periodic evaluations
- In essence, the institution is called upon to “make its case” for why the faculty member is qualified to teach courses assigned.
  - When the qualifying credential aligns with the courses being taught, the credential speaks for itself.
  - However, written justification is normally necessary when a combination of traditional credentials and “other” credentials are used. This justification can include pertinent up-to-date information describing the qualifications of the faculty member such as: 1) transcripts, 2) curriculum vitae, 3) teaching evaluations, and 4) institutional qualification justifications.
  - <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/faculty%20credentials.pdf>,  
<http://www.sacscoc.org/FAQsanswers.asp>,  
<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2018PrinciplesOfAcrcditation.pdf>



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### **TTU's OP 32.36: Certification of Faculty Qualifications**

- For baccalaureate courses, all instructors of record, both full- and part-time (other than physical education activity courses), must have completed at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline or hold at least a master's degree or equivalent credential. Outstanding professional experience and demonstrated contributions to the teaching discipline may be presented on an exceptional basis in lieu of formal academic preparation. Such individual cases must be justified.
- Credentials for teaching interdisciplinary courses may vary and must be justified on a case-by-case basis.
- For master's and specialist degree level, faculty members are expected to hold the terminal degree, usually the earned doctorate in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. In some instances, the master's degree in the discipline may be considered the terminal degree. In other cases, a master's degree in the discipline coupled with a doctorate in a related discipline may be appropriate. Each of these two cases must be justified.
- In unusual cases, individuals who hold a master's degree and who have demonstrated exceptional scholarly or creative activity or substantial professional experience in the area of their proposed teaching assignment may be approved to teach doctoral courses. These cases must be justified.
- Graduate teaching assistants who have primary responsibility for teaching a baccalaureate-level course must have earned at least 18 graduate hours in the teaching discipline – and – 1) have direct supervision by an experienced faculty member, 2) receive regular in-service training, and 3) be evaluated regularly.
- It is the responsibility of the department chair or area coordinator of the department/area to which the faculty member is appointed to submit official transcripts and letters attesting to qualifications or achievement.
- <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP32.36.php>