POLICY
The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) requires documentation of highest earned degree(s) and postgraduate training at the time of initial faculty appointment. Through the review of the documentation, UTHSC verifies the credentials of its faculty and determines whether these individuals have appropriate degrees, licensure/certifications, and/or other work experiences that qualify them for their assigned teaching roles, where appropriate.

PROCEDURE

Documentation of Highest Earned Degree/Postgraduate Training

In assessing the qualifications of its faculty, UTHSC gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, publications in the relevant field, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes.

The documentation and verification of highest earned and relevant degree(s) through original transcripts and postgraduate training is the responsibility of the hiring department/unit and should accompany the initial faculty appointment materials routed to the Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs (VCAFSA). The VCAFSA assumes responsibility for retaining faculty files related to faculty qualifications and for insuring ongoing compliance with relevant accreditation standards.
Evaluation of Degrees from Foreign Institutions

For faculty who were granted degrees from foreign (non-U.S.) institutions, transcripts are verified and reviewed by one of several approved agencies (Educational Credit Evaluators, World Education Services or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services). Where necessary, e.g. for providing oversight/training in clinical settings, such faculty must also have obtained appropriate practice licenses from regional, state or federal agencies.

Evaluation of Credentials for Volunteer Faculty

Credential assessment for clinical volunteer faculty who provide clinical/professional experiences for students includes verification of an active professional license; receipt of an official transcript documenting the highest earned and/or most relevant degree obtained may also be required. If relevant verification of specialty certification(s) may also be required for credentialing. For adjunct volunteer faculty who provide research and other related experiences for students, degree verification requires official transcripts of the highest earned and/or most relevant degree or, in the case of faculty who were granted degrees from foreign (non-US) institutions, credential evaluations as described above.

In the event that clinical volunteer faculty provide non-clinical (i.e., research and/or administrative) experiences that are not covered by professional licensure, an official transcript for the highest earned and/or most relevant degree (or credential evaluation, if a non-US institution) must be obtained.

APPROVAL HISTORY
Effective: July 1, 1991
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Reviewed: October 3, 2013, Faculty Affairs Work Group (FAWG)