SECTION 6: Faculty

6.1   **The institution employs an adequate number of full-time faculty members to support the mission and goals of the institution.** *(Full-time faculty)* **[CR]**

Rationale and Notes

Achievement of the institution's mission with respect to teaching, research, and service requires a critical mass of full-time qualified faculty to provide direction and oversight of the academic programs. Due to this significant role, it is imperative that an effective system of evaluation be in place for all faculty members that addresses the institution's obligation to foster intellectual freedom of faculty to teach, serve, research, and publish.

The number of such faculty will need to be sufficient to fulfill basic functions of curriculum design, development, and evaluation; teaching; identification and assessment of appropriate student learning outcomes; student advising; research and creative activity; and institutional, community, and professional service. Consequently, an institution relies on full-time faculty engagement in all aspects of the academic program; its quality and integrity are not driven solely by the number of hours that full-time faculty are teaching. The work of the core faculty may be supplemented and enhanced by judicious assignment of professional staff, part-time faculty, and graduate teaching assistants whose qualifications broaden and enrich the curriculum, increase learning opportunities for students, and enhance the mission of the institution.

> *NOTE*
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> *This requirement addresses the more "macro" critical mass issue of the adequacy of the number of full-time faculty. The qualifications of faculty are addressed in Standard 6.2.a* (Faculty qualifications) *and the more "micro" issue of the sufficiency of the number of full-time faculty for each program is addressed in Standard 6.2.b* (Program faculty).

Questions to Consider

- What are the institution's definitions of terms such as full-time faculty, regular/permanent faculty, part-time faculty, student-faculty ratio?

- How does the mission of the institution affect the number and type of faculty employed?

- What is the organizational structure of the academic functions of the institution? How does this structure affect the critical mass of faculty needed?

- What process does the institution use to determine the number of full-time faculty needed to achieve its mission?

- What are the responsibilities of full-time faculty members, and do the number of faculty constitute a sufficient resource for carrying out basic faculty functions?

- How are traditional faculty functions being carried out in nontraditional ways?

- What are the institution's policies on employment of part-time or adjunct faculty?

Sample Documentation

- Definition of full-time and part-time faculty.

- References to faculty handbooks or other official publications that define terms (e.g., full-time faculty) and give insight into the expectations of the institution in terms of the role of the faculty.

- A narrative describing the role of full-time faculty supporting the adequacy of the mission of the institution, including research and service.

- Policies describing the role of full-time faculty (and others) in carrying out the basic functions of the faculty as described in the rationale and notes.

- Data such as number of faculty; number of students; faculty workloads (contractual and actual); proportion of courses taught by full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants; comparisons of peer institutions; student credit hours generated by full-time and part-time faculty.

- Policies governing the employment of part-time faculty and graduate assistants.

Reference to SACSCOC Documents, If Applicable

None noted.

Cross-References to Other Related Standards/Requirements, If Applicable

Standard 6.2.a   *(Faculty qualifications)*
Standard 6.2.b   *(Program faculty)*
Standard 6.2.c   *(Program coordination)*

6.2.a **For each of its educational programs, the institution justifies and documents the qualifications of its faculty members.** *(Faculty qualifications)*

Rationale and Notes

Qualified, effective faculty members are essential to carry out the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs. The emphasis is on overall qualifications of a faculty member, rather than simply academic credentials. While academic credentials in most cases may well be the standard qualification for faculty members, other types of qualifications may prove to be appropriate. Examples could include appropriately related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications related to the teaching assignment, honors and awards, continuing professional development, relevant peer-reviewed publications, and/or continuous documented excellence in teaching. These types of qualifications are especially important in professional, technical, and technology-dependent fields.