The New Faculty Qualification Criteria: The Impact on a Teaching Focused Public and Private School of Business

Jocelyn D. Evans
College of Charleston

Timothy A. Jones
Xavier University

James Malm
College of Charleston

This article discusses the 2013 change in AACSB faculty qualification classifications that will be required for accreditation by every school of business in 2017. The new requirement is contrasted with the former 2003 rule and an example of how the change can be implemented for a midsize public and private university that have missions emphasizing quality teaching, research, service and community involvement is provided.

INTRODUCTION

Walt MacDonald, President and CEO of Educational Testing Service, wrote an interesting 2014 article on the need for Schools of Business to transform public and private higher education through student learning outcomes. He comments that higher education is under tremendous pressure to provide evidence of a sufficient student return on investment, particularly since tuition costs are escalating. Documenting how the recruitment process is consistent with the above goal is consistent with the AACSB Accreditation's 'portfolio' approach to assessing faculty qualifications.

This paper presents an example of how a public or private university's School of Business student learning goals can be tied to instructors' skill sets and the school's specific mission. The correct deployment of faculty is viewed as an important strategy: all faculty members, regardless of classification, must be current in their teaching area of expertise as evidenced by instructional practices, research, professional experience, and professional development activities. To date, however, many School of Business administration have not yet established detailed faculty qualifications for each hire classification, which should enable both employers and students to clearly understand the institution's standards and how it is different from other accredited universities.

HISTORICAL DISCUSSION OF THE 2003 FACULTY QUALIFICATION MATRIX

Francisco, Noland and Sinclair (2008) ask whether AACSB Accreditation is a symbol of excellence or a march toward mediocrity. The authors' question whether AACSB actually promotes quality or is simply a marketing tool with loosely quantifiable standards. From a faculty qualification perspective, typical quantifiable measures include the number of terminally-qualified faculty, the percentage of student credit hours taught by full-time faculty, and the percentage of student credit hours taught by those with doctoral degrees in addition to the number and impact of publications.

Assessments measures regarding faculty qualification causes discussion among academics in business schools (Yunker, 2000). Many individuals and AACSB consider a one size fits all approach to be overly-stringent because a uniform standard is unfair to smaller universities that often place greater emphasis on student engagement/development and community involvement. Universities with a teaching emphasis place importance on instructional quality and student learning. As a result, in 1991, AACSB revised most of its standards to focus on the mission of the School of Business, which allows each university to set its own standards for success. The guidance for faculty qualification sufficiency, however, was vague.

Prior to the 2003 revision, the only definition for qualification was academic qualification (AQ) primarily based on publications/doctoral degree or not qualified. Afterward, faculty was categorized as Academically Qualified (AQ), Professionally Qualified (PQ), or other. The AQ status was primarily based upon research sufficiency, whereas the PQ status was tied to professional responsibilities/experience and a minimum of a master's degree in the area of expertise. Only faculty that held doctorate degrees in the field they taught in addition to evidence of consistent production of high quality research could be considered AQ. In contrast, a PQ faculty member only has to have 18 graduate credit hours in their area of expertise and significant professional experience.

A concern is that this general definition for faculty qualifications does not sufficiently differentiate universities from each other with respect to quality according to some scholars (Francisco, Noland and Sinclair, 2008). For instance, Standard 10 dictates a university has to have only a 50% minimum floor for AQ faculty and no more than 10% maximum for others who could not qualify for either category. Theoretically, these expectations are supposed to have increased for graduate programs relative to undergraduate-only institutions, but many non-research schools use PQ faculty for both undergraduate and graduate programs. What is an appropriate professional history for a PQ faculty member? Some schools have former partners of public accounting firms while others have former masters of accounting students with minimal actual work experience. Moreover, research standards attempting to differentiate quality business schools from weaker ones based primarily upon legitimate and respected academic research production are seen as flawed because each university is able to define its own definition of academic excellence with respect to journals and books.

Consequently, in 2013, AACSB expanded its categories of qualified faculty to emphasize mission driven classification definitions. Many regional public and private schools argue that doctoral-trained instructors are not always the most essential element in assuring a rigorous business education, student career development, ethical awareness, or the ability to understand diversity within a global economic environment. Yet, examples of ways to define faculty qualifications based on a business school's mission are not publicly available because the trial period for implementing these new standards (Business Standard 15) is from 2013 to 2016.

THE NEW 2013 FACULTY QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

After 2016, every accredited school of business must develop new criteria consistent with its mission for the classification of faculty based on initial academic preparation, professional experience, ongoing scholarship, and ongoing professional engagement. In 2013, AACSB expanded the faculty classifications into four categories, which include Scholarly Academics (SA), Practice Academics (PA), Scholarly Practitioners (SP), and Instructional Practitioners (IP).

The new standards emphasize that faculty members' credentials must be both current and relevant and that engagement activities have to be aligned with their primary teaching responsibilities and with the overall mission.

These new criteria require our school of business to reassess the academic preparation and professional experience of each faculty member. A hypothetical matrix is included showing how a school of business can assign priority and value to different continuing academic and professional engagement activities consistent with its target portfolio of SA, PA, SP, and IP faculty. Afterward, we explain how this matrix is consistent with a hypothetical mission statement and expected outcomes. The contribution of the paper is that other faculty can use the matrix as a point of discussion when determining the depth, breadth, and sustainability of academic and professional engagement. We show the matrix in the Appendix. The expanded classifications should better enable School of Business administration to document faculty/student engagement, innovation and instruction impact. This enables AACSB to have a tiered accreditation system that creates standards for schools based upon their strategic mission. AACSB Standards require that each school have at least 90 percent of faculty resources are SA, PA, SP, and IP, in which at least 40 percent of faculty resources are SA and at least 60 percent of faculty resources are SA, PA, and SP.

HYPOTHETICAL MISSION STATEMENT

The School of Business serves our state, region, and the global business world by educating socially responsible graduates through practical undergraduate, graduate and professional programs, and by advancing the development of our community of scholars in their intellectual pursuits. As an AACSB accredited business, we fulfill this Mission by:

Engaging diverse students in personalized educational experiences that encourage a global mindset, inspire creativity and innovation, and developing leadership skills in preparation for business challenges and opportunities.

Building a globally oriented faculty, whose teaching, research, and service influence students, the business community, and other constituents.

Notice that the mission statement emphasizes engagement with state, region, and global constituents. As a result, these goals must be reflected in faculty activities from a research, teaching, service, professional, and community service perspective. The instructors' responsibilities must coincide with each of the goals.

Social Responsibility

The mission statement states that faculty will educate socially responsible graduates through practical undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. What has to be clear in the mission statement is the definition of social responsibility. One definition for social responsibility is that individuals and organizations understand ethics and are sensitive toward social, cultural, economic and environmental issues (Schaefer, 2008). As noted by Garriga and Mele (2004), another definition differentiates individual social responsibility (ISR) from corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Garriga and Mele (2004) outline four different CSR approaches: (1) instrumental theories, in which the corporation is seen as only an instrument for wealth creation, and its social activities are only a means to achieve economic results; (2) political theories, which concern themselves with the power of corporations in society and a responsible use of this power in the political arena; (3) integrative theories, in which the corporation is focused on the satisfaction of social demands; and (4) ethical theories, based on ethical responsibilities of corporations to society. All four CSR theories should be incorporated into the curriculum.

Intellectual Pursuits

The mission statement also should address the types of publications each type of faculty is responsible for creating. In our opinion, the above mission statement is consistent with faculty publications on pedagogy, international, domestic, economic, and topics related to state, region, and United States industrial activities issues.

Diversity

Each academic program and curriculum should clearly address how a diverse group of students are being reached, what personalized educational experiences are provided, and how the students will create a global mindset and be innovative. Moreover, the program will have to specify what leadership skills are being taught and how they are making their faculty globally oriented.

What does diversity mean to a specific School of Business? Is diversity based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, or sexual orientation or does it refer to age and geography? The type of school and the population within the state or region will partially guide the definition as well as the university's mission statement on diversity. Moreover, a diverse faculty is needed to mentor a diverse group of students. Therefore, the faculty qualifications should include specific diversity goals and an explanation of how each department will accomplish them as part of the AACSB report. Departmental Oversight of the Faculty Recruitment process can be accomplished with a Diversity Liaison for the School of Business. The liaison makes sure that the department has a conscious discussion about diversity and acknowledges any potential hidden bias during the recruitment process.

Excellence with respect to inclusion requires academic leaders to create an environment that welcomes, affirms and empowers students from every background. Diversity should reflect the demographics of the state, region, nation, and global. In addition, the department chairperson should attend Diversity training workshops each year and faculty efforts have to be publicly rewarded.

AN EXAMPLE OF AACSB DOCUMENTATION

The following is an example of a matrix that defines the expectations for faculty in the different classifications that directly link faculty expected activities and outcomes to the sample mission statement. The four different classifications enable the school of business to clearly define the different participating or supporting roles that each person performs. Notice that in our hypothetical rubric every type of faculty member must participant in the life of the school beyond direct teaching involvement. All roster faculty members (including visiting appointments) and those faculty members on adjunct contracts teaching more than two courses are expected to satisfy the school of business requirements for participation. Adjunct faculty teaching two or fewer courses will generally be considered supporting but may be classified as participating by meeting the required criteria. Executives in residence should also satisfy the requirements for participating.

CONCLUSION

The process of creating criteria for faculty qualifications under the new 2013 AACSB standards is beneficial because it requires faculty, administration, students, business leaders and other constituents to clearly understand their mission statement and be able to create a strategy for employee resource management that is objective and measurable. From the example in the paper, we have shown that the standards and supporting processes provide mechanisms for implementing mission-driven criteria that can be presented in a way that enables external stakeholders to understand the return on investment that students will earn after graduating from a specific school of business. The transparency in the approach that we recommend hopefully will minimize concerns related to the vagueness associated with no absolute minimum standards and improve the quality of academic business programs (Gregg and Stewart, 2013).

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APPENDIX

Qualifying Scholarly Activities				
	SA	**PA**	**SP**	**IP**
Minimum required to retain status to meet AACSB accreditation standards	One peer[1] reviewed journal article every three years with a total of two peer[1] reviewed journal articles in five years and five three other scholarly activities each year	One peer[2] reviewed journal article every five years	One peer[3] reviewed journal article every five years	No requirement
Additional Scholarly Activities	At least one from the following list every year	At least two from the following list every year plus three professional engagement activity	At least three from the following list every year plus two professional engagement activities each year	At least five from the following list every year that are focused on professional engagement activity
PEER REVIEWED JOURNALS				
[1,2,3]Articles in print/accepted	☑	☑	☑	
[2,3]Cases in print/accepted		☑	☑	
[2,3]Invited articles in print/accepted	☑	☑	☑	
[2,3]Invited cases in print/accepted		☑	☑	

Qualifying Scholarly Activities			
	SA	**PA**	**SP**	**IP**
[2,3]Articles presently under review or resubmission		☑	☑	
[2,3]Cases presently under review or resubmission		☑	☑	
SCHOLARLY BOOKS/CHAPTERS				
[2,3]Scholarly books		☑	☑	
[2,3]Textbooks		☑	☑	
[2,3]Scholarly chapters in an edited volume	☑	☑	☑	
[2,3]Edited scholarly book	☑	☑	☑	
[2,3]Published cases, instructional materials, instructional software		☑	☑	
Published book review		☑	☑	
[2,3]Test banks, study guides, instructor's manuals		☑	☑	
[2,3]Books, chapters in books, and/or book reviews under review or resubmission		☑	☑	
[2,3]Edited scholarly book		☑	☑	
PEER REVIEWED PRESENTATIONS				
Conference papers presented and published or abstracted in PR proceedings		☑	☑	
Conference papers presented but not published		☑	☑	
Conference papers presented in poster sessions, symposia, or roundtables and abstracted		☑	☑	
Conference papers accepted for presentations and/or publication in PR proceedings		☑	☑	
Reprints of PR conference papers appearing in other than original source		☑	☑	
Invited conference papers presented or accepted for presentation		☑	☑	
NON-PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS OR PRESENTATIONS				
Published materials describing the design and implementation of a course		☑	☑	
Invited presentation of research outside the College	☑	☑	☑	
Presentation of research at a conference	☑	☑	☑	
RESEARCH AND GRANTS				
Grants awarded/ completed	☑	☑		

Qualifying Scholarly Activities				
	SA	**PA**	**SP**	**IP**
Grants in progress/ outcome reports distributed	☑	☑		
Grant proposals submitted for review	☑	☑		
OTHER RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY				
Journal or associate editorship or member of review board of PRJ	☑	☑	☑	
Scholarly review for PR outlet	☑	☑	☑	
Leadership positions in academic and professional organizations	☑	☑	☑	
Chair or discussants duties at professional conferences	☑	☑	☑	
PROFESSIONAL AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES				
Creating and delivering executive education seminar	☑	☑	☑	☑
Maintaining an active consulting practice with evidence of major, multiple clients		☑	☑	☑
Owning and/or operating a profitable/successful business that is a major portion of one's annual income			☑	☑
Obtaining new or maintaining a professional certification appropriate to teaching responsibilities	☑	☑	☑	☑
Authoring a report from sponsored research that is widely disseminated	☑	☑	☑	☑
Serving on the Board of Directors for a major not-for-profit or for-profit organization	☑	☑	☑	☑
Serving on the Board of Directors for a major industry/trade association	☑	☑	☑	☑
Attending an academic or professional conference in the area of the faculty member's primary teaching responsibility		☑	☑	☑
Faculty internships	☑	☑	☑	☑
Significant participation in business professional associations and societies				☑
Participation in professional events that focus on the practice of business management and related issues				☑
Participation in other activities that place faculty in direct contact with business and other organizational leaders				☑

Qualifying Scholarly Activities				
	SA	PA	SP	IP
1	**Fully Qualified Doctoral Degree** in both a business field and in the area of primary teaching responsibilities			
2	**Qualified Doctoral Degree** EITHER in a business field but not in the area of primary teaching responsibilities OR outside of business but in an area of academic preparation that incorporates the primary teaching responsibilities			
3	**Topically Qualified Degree** outside of business and not in the area of primary teaching responsibilities, but engaged in development activities directly supporting the teaching field			
4	**Graduate degree in law** to teach business law and legal environment of business			
5	**Specialized Taxation Degree** or combination of graduate degree in law and accounting focused on taxation			
6	**BD in degree type above** or a faculty member may have a specialized master's degree in a business- related field and have sufficient prior research activity in their primary teaching field.			