



## **GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINATION OF FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS**

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This document codifies guidelines for the determination of faculty qualifications consistent with the 2020 AACSB faculty qualifications standard (Standard 3). Starting with the 2020 standards, AACSB expanded faculty qualifications and devised four categories: Scholarly Academics (SA), Practice Academics (PA), Scholarly Practitioners (SP), and Instructional Practitioners (IP). This document contains guidelines for new hires and current faculty members for each category and was updated in 2025 to align with AACSB's six-year term of accreditation. These guidelines are effective AY 2025-2026.

### **AACSB STANDARD 3: FACULTY AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF RESOURCES**

Faculty qualifications requirements as set by AACSB ensure that College of Business faculty have the appropriate initial academic credentials and sustain currency in their field through scholarly and/or practitioner activities. The guidelines that AACSB sets require that the definitions adopted by the school should be consistent with the school's mission (AACSB 2020, Standard 3, p. 31). The two sub-standards that relate to faculty qualifications are:

3.1: The school maintains and strategically deploys sufficient participating and supporting faculty who collectively demonstrate significant academic and professional engagement that, in turn, supports high-quality outcomes consistent with the school's mission.

3.2: Faculty are qualified through initial academic or professional preparation and sustain currency and relevancy appropriate to their classification, as follows: Scholarly Academic (SA), Practice Academic (PA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), or Instructional Practitioner (IP). Otherwise, faculty members are classified as Additional Faculty (A).

### **FACULTY SUFFICIENCY (Standard 3.1)**

Faculty Sufficiency is calculated using Student Credit Hours (SCH) taught by each faculty within each discipline during the evaluation year. AACSB requires schools to adopt and apply criteria for categorizing faculty members as Participating or Supporting, and AACSB stipulates that Participating faculty deliver at least 75% of the school's teaching globally (i.e., across the entire accredited unit) and at least 60% of the teaching within each discipline. There are no percentage requirements by degree, modality, or location. A faculty's designation as

Participating or Supporting is not dependent on the person's contractual status with the institution; it is related to the faculty member's level of involvement with the school's operations and activities.

The College of Business defines Participating and Supporting faculty as follows:

**Participating:** Faculty who are involved with all aspects of the College's mission and operations, beyond teaching, in areas such as governance and committee work, student mentoring, curriculum management, other service activities, and research (as applicable to faculty qualification).

**Supporting:** Faculty who are not assigned responsibilities/do not participate in activities beyond direct teaching functions (e.g., classroom, office hours, assessment) in the College of Business.

### FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS (Standard 3.2)

Faculty qualifications are based on both initial academic preparation/professional experience and sustained academic/professional engagement as detailed in this document. The guidelines below outline (1) specific criteria utilized to classify a member of the faculty according to initial academic preparation and (2) the *minimum* expectations for engagement activities sufficient to maintain that status. The implementation of this policy ensures that all George Mason business students learn from an appropriate blend of qualified faculty and that the faculty produces a portfolio of peer-reviewed journal articles and intellectual contributions concomitant with AACSB accredited business schools and AACSB standards.

Faculty qualifications are reviewed annually as part of the annual review and evaluation process. For the purpose of these standards, June 30 of the annual evaluation period represents the "evaluation date." Publications and activities (Scholarly Activities Worksheet and Practice Activities Worksheet) are valid within the five-year period ending with the evaluation date. For publications, the date in which the publication **is accepted** will determine the evaluation year in which the publication is placed.

**Figure 1: Model for Faculty Qualifications**

		Sustained engagement activities	
		Academic (Research/Scholarly)	Applied/Practice
Initial academic preparation and professional experience	Terminal degree	Scholarly Academics (SA)	Practice Academics (PA)
	Master's degree; professional experience, substantial in duration and level of responsibility	Scholarly Practitioners (SP)	Instructional Practitioners (IP)

Figure 1 depicts the academic credential and sustaining activities required for each faculty qualifications category. Below are the standards that faculty members are expected to meet to be defined as Scholarly Academic (SA), Practice Academic (PA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), or Instructional Practitioner (IP). Unless otherwise specified, faculty contractual status (e.g., full-time, part-time, tenure-track, non-tenure track, tenured) does not factor into categorical standards. Faculty who do not meet the criteria for one of the four categories below will be categorized as Additional (A). AACSB requires that no more than 10% of faculty in any discipline and overall are classified as Additional.

Percentages by Area and School-wide as required by AACSB:

1.  $SA \geq 40\%$
2.  $SA + PA + SP + IP \geq 90\%$
3.  $A \leq 10\%$

**Scholarly Academics (SA)**

Scholarly Academics (SA) are faculty who have normally attained a terminal degree in a field related to their area of teaching and who sustain currency and relevancy through scholarship and activities related to their field of teaching (AACSB 2020, Standard 3, p. 30-31).

*New Hires/Initial Qualifications:*

1. A terminal degree in a field related to their area of teaching, received within the five-year period ending with the evaluation date, OR
2. All But Dissertation (ABD) status in a PhD program in a field related to their area of teaching, received within the three-year period ending with the evaluation date, OR
3. A JD degree in law for the teaching of business law (and related legal environment courses), if the degree is earned within the five-year period ending with the evaluation date, OR
4. A graduate degree in taxation or an appropriate combination of graduate degrees in law and accounting for the teaching of taxation, received within the five-year period ending with the evaluation date.

*Sustaining SA Status:*

1. At least two (2) journal articles from the Australian Business Dean's Council (ABDC) or College of Business Supplemental Journal List, AND
2. Twenty-four (24) points accumulated from the Scholarly Activities Worksheet within the six-year period ending with the evaluation date.

## **Practice Academics (PA)**

Practice Academics (PA) are faculty who have normally attained a terminal degree in a field related to their area of teaching and who sustain currency and relevancy through professional engagement, interaction, and activities related to their field of teaching (AACSB 2020, Standard 3, p. 31).

### *New Hires/Initial Qualifications:*

1. A terminal degree in a discipline related to their field of teaching, within the five-year period ending with the evaluation date, OR
2. A JD degree in law for the teaching of business law (and related legal environment courses), if the degree is earned within the five-year period ending with the evaluation date, OR
3. A graduate degree in taxation or an appropriate combination of graduate degrees in law and accounting for the teaching of taxation, within the five-year period ending with the evaluation date.

### *Sustaining PA Status:*

1. Thirty (30) points accumulated from the Practice Activities Worksheet within the six-year period ending with the evaluation date, with at least twelve (12) points from industry-engagement activities. Industry-engagement activities are denoted on the Practice Activities Worksheet with an asterisk (\*).

## **Scholarly Practitioners (SP)**

Scholarly Practitioners (SP) are faculty who have normally attained a master's degree related to their field of teaching; have professional experience substantial in duration and responsibility at the time of hire; and who sustain currency and relevancy through scholarship related to their professional background and experience in their field of teaching (AACSB 2020, Standard 3, p. 31).

### *New Hires/Initial Qualifications:*

1. Significant and substantive professional experience, AND
2. Typically, a master's degree in a discipline related to their field of teaching, but no terminal degree.

### *Sustaining SP Status:*

1. At least one (1) peer-reviewed publication from the Australian Business Dean's Council (ABDC) or College of Business Supplemental Journal List within the five-year period ending with the evaluation date, AND
2. Twenty-four (24) points accumulated from the Scholarly Activities Worksheet within the six-year period ending with the evaluation date.

## **Instructional Practitioners (IP)**

Instructional Practitioners (IP) are faculty who have normally attained a master's degree related to their field of teaching; have professional experience substantial in duration and responsibility at the time of hire; and who sustain currency and relevancy through continued professional experience and engagement related to their professional background and experience in their field of teaching (AACSB 2020, Standard 3, p. 31).

### *New Hires/Initial Qualifications:*

1. Significant and substantive professional experience, AND
2. Typically, a master's degree in a discipline related to their field of teaching, but no terminal degree.

### *Sustaining IP Status:*

1. Thirty (30) points accumulated from the Practice Activities Worksheet within the six-year period ending with the evaluation date, with at least eighteen (18) points from industry-engagement activities. Industry-engagement activities are denoted on the Practice Activities Worksheet with an asterisk (\*).

## **Other Faculty Qualifications Policies:**

1. Faculty members serving in administrative roles at the Dean, Area, or Program Director level shall require half the research productivity to achieve SA status (i.e., 1 qualifying publication in the six-year period). Faculty in these administrative roles must also continue to meet the full scholarly/practice points requirements for each category.
2. Faculty members who serve as a Dean, Area Chair, or Program Director will be granted a grace period upon return to their faculty line, during which their faculty qualification status shall be determined as if they maintained their administrative role. The grace periods are as follows:
  - a. 1 year served = 1 year grace period
  - b. 2 years served = 1 year grace period
  - c. 3 years served = 2 year grace period
  - d. 4 years served = 2 year grace period
  - e. 5+ years served = 3 year grace period