



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR FACULTY AND ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATORS



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
EQUAL ACCESS/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.....	4
ACCREDITATION	4
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS	5-15
I. INITIAL EMPLOYMENT CRITERIA.....	5-15
A. Academic Administrative Personnel.....	5
B. Librarians	5
C. Counselors	5-6
D. Instructional Personnel.....	6-15
1. Baccalaureate Courses	6
2. College Credit Transfer Courses	6-7
3. Occupational Clock Hour Courses	7
4. Adult Education.....	7
5. Community and Continuing Workforce Ed.	7
6. Specialized Programs.....	8-15
a. Criminal Justice Programs	8-9
b. Dental Education Programs.....	9-10
c. Emergency Medical Services Programs	10-11
d. Fire Science Programs.....	11-12
e. Nursing Programs	12-14
f. Radiography Program	14
g. Surgical Services Program.....	14-15
II. RANK.....	16
III. GENERAL PROVISIONS.....	17-18
IV. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FULL-TIME FACULTY	18

INTRODUCTION

Beginning July 1, 1979, the Florida Legislature authorized community colleges to perform their own certification of professional staff. This change empowered local boards of trustees to adopt criteria consistent with institutional objectives, the role which employees are expected to fulfill, competencies related to successful professional performance, policies for selection and retention of personnel, laws and regulations, and accreditation standards. The initial *Certification Standards* were adopted March 14, 1986, by the South Florida Community College District Board of Trustees and continue to exist in accordance with board policy 5.06 (Credentials). Revisions have been approved periodically to incorporate recommended changes. In July of 2003, the document's focus changed from "certification" to initial employment criteria and ongoing professional development.

As South Florida State College (effective July 1, 2012), the College continues to strive for excellence in its educational programs. The College will continue to seek faculty, staff, and administrators who are capable, dedicated to the College mission and objectives, and committed to providing a meaningful educational program which meets the needs of citizens in the College's service district and is in keeping with State of Florida Department of Education guidelines.

The College is committed to encouraging and supporting faculty and administrative staff to continuously develop their professional skills and abilities. These standards outline the College's criteria for assessing the credentials of faculty and academic administrators for initial employment in compliance with the guidelines provided in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges' *Criteria for Accreditation* and to ensure appropriate professional development.

EQUAL ACCESS/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

South Florida State College (SFSC) is committed to Equal Access and Equal Opportunity. The College will not discriminate in its employment practices or in the admission and treatment of students on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, genetic information, or pregnancy. The administration of the College adheres to federal and state laws governing equal access/equal opportunity. This commitment covers all aspects of the educational and employment relationship with our students, employees, and applicants. Concerns regarding this commitment are to be addressed to the appropriate EA/EO Coordinator.

ACCREDITATION

South Florida State College (SFSC) is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award the associate and baccalaureate degree. Contact the SACSCOC at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of SFSC.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

I. INITIAL EMPLOYMENT CRITERIA

The College bases decisions of employment solely upon an individual's qualifications and experience for the position being filled. All employees are required to comply with Federal and State laws, State Board of Education Regulations, Policies of the District Board of Trustees, and such other policies, procedures, regulations, memoranda, bulletins, and handbooks as pertain to their duties with the College. It shall be the responsibility of a prospective employee to provide transcripts and/or verifications of work experience as appropriate and to document that the minimum criteria for employment have been met. Degrees and/or coursework used to meet employment criteria must be from an institutional accredited organization unless approved by the SFSC Professional Standards Committee as appropriate academic preparation. The dean responsible for oversight of the program area will evaluate the educational/experiential qualifications of all proposed instructors and educational/student support professionals. The Office of Human Resources will ensure that evidence of appropriate academic preparation and/or experience is documented and maintained.

A. Academic Administrative Personnel

Academic administrative personnel must possess:

- a. the minimum of a Bachelor's degree, dependent upon the position, plus extensive, directly related work experience or the equivalent educational qualifications; and
- b. verified success in educational endeavors and/or previous employment.

B. Librarians

Librarians must possess:

- a. the minimum of a master's degree in Library Science, Library and Information Science (M.L.I.S.), or Information Technology; and
- b. verified success in educational endeavors and/or previous employment.

Note: In exceptional cases, outstanding professional experience and demonstrated competence may substitute for this academic preparation.

C. Counselors

Counselors must possess:

- a. the minimum of a master's degree in the field of Counseling; or

- b. 18 graduate semester hours in the field of Counseling, and a master's degree; and
- c. verified success in educational endeavors and/or previous employment.

D. Instructional Personnel

1. Baccalaureate Courses

Instructors must possess:

- a. the minimum of a master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline); doctorate preferred; and
- b. verified success in educational endeavors and/or previous employment.

Note: Instructors may be required to maintain appropriate State of Florida or national certification/licensure, when applicable, to teach core courses within the major of a baccalaureate program.

2. College Credit Transfer Courses (Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree courses designed for college or university transfer):

Instructors must possess:

- a. the minimum of a master's degree with a major in the teaching discipline, or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline and a master's degree; and
- b. verified success in educational endeavors and/or previous employment.

Note 1: In exceptional cases, outstanding professional experience, and demonstrated competency in the teaching discipline may be presented in lieu of formal academic preparation. To assist in the assessment of alternate qualifications, the Florida College System has published *Guidelines on Transfer Agreements and Faculty Credentials and Qualifications* for selected programs. This publication was originally adopted by the Council of Presidents on Nov. 18, 2011.

Note 2: Instructors hired to teach developmental (college preparatory) courses must possess a bachelor's degree in a discipline related to their teaching assignment and have either classroom experience in a discipline related to their teaching assignment or graduate training in developmental education.

Note 3: Instructors hired to teach interdisciplinary courses must possess a

master's degree in one of the teaching disciplines incorporated in the course (or 18 graduate semester hours in one of the teaching disciplines and a master's degree).

3. Occupational Clock Hour Courses:

Instructors must possess:

- a. the minimum of an occupational certificate in the teaching field, (associate or higher degree preferred), except as noted; and
- b. a minimum of two (2) years of on-the-job work experience in the occupation to be taught; and
- c. appropriate State of Florida or national certification/licensure, when applicable.

Note: Extensive occupational experience and other skill qualifications may be determined by the designated academic dean as equivalent to a. and b. above.

4. Adult Education Programs (Adult Basic Education, G.E.D., E.S.O.L.)

Instructors must possess:

- a. the minimum of a bachelor's degree; and
- b. attributes or experiences which help them relate to the particular needs of the adults they teach.

5. Community and Continuing Workforce Education (C.W.E.)

Instructor credentials must be reviewed and approved by the instructional supervisor. Instructors must demonstrate adequate educational background or special expertise in the area to be taught. Documentation of expertise shall be provided to the Office of Human Resources.

6. Specialized Programs

a. Criminal Justice Programs

- 1) The **Program Director** must possess:
 - a. a minimum of a bachelor's degree from an institutional accredited organization (master's degree or higher preferred); and
 - b. a minimum of five (5) years of experience in the Criminal Justice field pursuant to Rule 11B-21.005(8), Florida Administrative Code (FAC) and Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Form Criminal Justice Standards & Training Commission CJSTC-204.

- 2) **Program Coordinators** must possess:
 - a. a State of Florida Instructors Technique Workshop (ITW) certification; and
 - b. a minimum of five (5) years of experience in either law enforcement or corrections depending on the instructional program that they are responsible for coordinating; and
 - c. FDLE certification in all four high liability topics (i.e., firearms, vehicle operations, first aid, and defensive tactics) or be able to attain them within one year.

- 3) **Instructors** in the Associate in Science degree in Criminal Justice Technology program must possess:
 - a. a minimum of a master's degree in Criminal Justice or a related field, or 18 graduate semester hours in Criminal Justice or a related field and a master's degree; and
 - b. a minimum of five (5) years of experience in Law Enforcement or Corrections.

- 4) **Instructors** in the Career Certificate Criminal Justice programs (Auxiliary Law Enforcement Officer, Correctional Officer, Correctional to Law Enforcement [Crossover], Law Enforcement [Basic], and Law Enforcement to Correctional [Crossover]) must possess:
 - a. State of Florida ITW certification; and

- b. a minimum of five (5) years of experience in law enforcement or corrections depending on the area they are assigned to teach; and
- c. if assigned as a high liability topic instructor, FDLE certification in the specific high liability topic that they are assigned to teach.

5) **Instructors** in the Public Safety Telecommunication program must:

- a. Be a State certified dispatcher: and
- b. Possess three (3) years of experience.

b. Dental Education Programs

1) The program administrator must be a dental hygienist or a dentist who is a graduate of a program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation and possesses a master's or higher degree, who has background in education and the professional experience necessary to understand and fulfill the program goals. A dentist who was appointed as program administrator prior to July 1, 2022 is exempt from the graduation requirement (Commission on Dental Accreditation: DH Standards, 3-3, 2025). The program administrator must also be a Dental Assisting National Board-Certified Dental Assistant or dentist licensed to practice in the state of the program location*, with occupational experience in the application of four-handed dentistry principles, either as a dental assistant or working with chairside assistant (Commission on Dental Accreditation: DA Standards, 3-3, 2024).

2) **Dental Hygiene** (Associate in Science - PSV)

Instructors must possess:

- a. All faculty of a dental hygiene program who teach in a didactic course must possess a baccalaureate or higher degree. All faculty whose teaching is limited to a clinical and dental science laboratory course must possess an associate or higher degree (Commission on Dental Accreditation: DH Standards, 3-6, 2025).
- b. a minimum of two (2) years professional clinical experience; and
- c. current U.S. licensure as a dental hygienist in good standing (eligible for Florida licensure); and
- d. current Florida certification to administer local anesthesia.

Note: Instructors who are dentists must be licensed in the state of Florida to practice dentistry and are exempt from c) and d) above.

3) **Dental Assisting** (Occupational Certificate - PSAV)

Instructors must possess:

- a. Faculty providing didactic instruction must have earned at least a baccalaureate degree within three years of the date of initial hire as a didactic faculty. (Commission on Dental Accreditation: DA Standards, 3-6, 2024) ***Intent:** * Military program faculty with a rank of staff sergeant, E-5, or non-commissioned officer are exempt (Commission on Dental Accreditation: DA Standards, 3-6, 2024).
- b. a minimum of two (2) years of experience as a dental assistant.

Note: Laboratory, preclinical, and clinical faculty must hold any current dental assisting credential required by the state in addition to a Dental Assisting National Board “Certified Dental Assistant” credential (Commission on Dental Accreditation: DA Standards, 3-7, 2024).

c. **Emergency Medical Services Programs** (Associate in Science), Emergency Medical Technician (Advanced Technical Diploma), and Paramedic (College Credit Certificate)

- 1) **The Medical Director** must meet all the qualifications listed in Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) 64J 1.002(l). The medical director must be a Florida licensed M.D. or D.O. and active in a broad-based medical specialty such as emergency medicine, internal medicine, anesthesiology, or other surgical specialty, with demonstrated experience in pre-hospital care and hold credentials as determined in Chapter 64J-1.022, F.A.C.
- 2) **The Program Director** must have successfully completed the coursework prescribed in 64J-1.0201, F.A.C., possess the minimum of a bachelor’s degree, be certified as a Florida paramedic in good standing with the Florida Department of Health, Division of Medical Quality Assurance (hereafter “the department”), with at least four (4) years of field level provider experience in the pre-hospital environment with an Advanced Life Support (ALS) provider, and at least two (2) years’ experience as a Level B EMS instructor.
- 3) **The Program Coordinator/Lead Instructor** must have successfully completed coursework prescribed in 64J-1.0201, F.A.C., possess the

minimum of an associate degree, be certified as a Florida paramedic in good standing with the department with at least four (4) years of field level provider experience in the pre-hospital environment with an ALS provider, and at least two (2) years of teaching experience in EMS education.

4) **Adjunct Instructors:**

- a. must possess the minimum of an associate degree; and
- b. have successfully completed the coursework prescribed in 64J-1.0201, F.A.C.
- c. for first responder or emergency medical technician training programs, instructors must be certified as a Florida emergency medical technician-basic, paramedic, or licensed registered nurse in good standing with the department and have at least three years of field provider experience with an ALS provider.
- d. for paramedic training programs, instructors must be certified as a Florida paramedic in good standing with the department or be a Florida licensed registered nurse in good standing and have at least three years of field provider experience with an ALS provider.

d. **Fire Science Programs**

1) **Associate Degree in Fire Science Technology**

Instructors must possess:

- a. the minimum of an associate degree in the field of Fire Science*; and
- b. current Florida state certification as a firefighter with confirmation of compliance from the Florida Bureau of Fire Standards; and
- c. current Florida Bureau of Fire Standards Fire Instructor II certification; and
- d. currently holds the certification from the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training that is required to teach each course. Such documentation is to be maintained by the director, EMS and Fire Science programs (or designee).

Note: An associate degree or higher is required for Fire Instructor II certification. A bachelor's degree is preferred.

2) **Basic Fire Standards (Occupational Certificate)**

Instructors must possess:

- a. current Florida state certification as a firefighter with confirmation of compliance from the Florida Bureau of Fire Standards; and
- b. current Florida Bureau of Fire Standards Fire Instructor I certification.

Note 1: An associate degree in Fire Science is preferred.

Note 2: Additional courses or certifications may be required for teaching some specific courses. For live burn activities, all participating instructors must also have current Live Fire Training Instructor I certification.

3) **Fire Science Program Coordinators** must possess:

All of the requirements listed in section 7.d.1), Associate in Science degree in Fire Science, above.

e. **Nursing Programs**

- 1) **The Director of Nursing** must possess the minimum of a master's degree in Nursing (doctoral degree preferred), five (5) years' experience in clinical practice as a registered nurse (RN), two (2) years of which should be in a health care institution; a minimum of two (2) years of full-time instructional experience in Nursing Education; and current Florida State Board of Nursing RN licensure.

2) **Bachelor of Science, Nursing (BSN)**

Instructors must possess:

- a. the minimum of a graduate degree with a major in Nursing; and
- b. a current RN license issued by the Florida State Board of Nursing or compact licensure; and
- c. a minimum of two (2) years of experience in clinical practice as an RN.

Note: Faculty providing instruction for non-Nursing courses within the BSN program must meet SFSC Professional

Standards for the specific discipline.

3) **Registered Nursing** (Associate in Science degree - PSV)

Instructors must possess:

- a. the minimum of a bachelor's degree with a major in Nursing (master's degree or higher preferred); and
- b. current RN license issued by the Florida State Board of Nursing or compact licensure; and
- c. a minimum of two (2) years of experience in clinical practice as an RN.

Note: A bachelor's degree in Nursing is the minimum educational requirement for an Associate in Science degree in Nursing faculty. For a professional Nursing Education program, at least 50% of the program's faculty members are registered nurses who have a master's or higher degree in Nursing or a bachelor's degree in nursing and a master's or higher degree in a field related to nursing (Florida Statutes 464.019, 2025).

2) **Practical Nursing** (Occupational Certificate - PSAV)

Instructors must possess:

- a. the minimum of an associate degree with a major in Nursing (bachelor's degree or higher preferred); and
- b. a current Registered Nurse license issued by the Florida State Board of Nursing or compact licensure; and
- c. a minimum of two (2) years of successful occupational experience in the field of nursing is required, of which six weeks must have been worked within the last five years.

Note: For a Practical Nursing education program, the program director and at least 50% of the program's faculty members are registered nurses who have a bachelor's or higher degree in Nursing (Florida Statutes 464.019, 2025). Faculty without bachelor's degrees (or higher) must meet two of the following requirements:

- (1) have the equivalent of at least two (2) years of full-time experience in clinical practice as a registered nurse;

- (2) be actively engaged in studies leading to the next highest degree for which eligible. This degree must be in Nursing or a related field.
- (3) have the equivalent of at least two (2) years of full-time instructional experience in Nursing Education.
- (4) have current certification as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Practitioner (APRN) in Florida;
- (5) demonstrate theoretical and clinical competence by alternative means for each assigned area of instruction.

f. Radiography Program (Associate in Science degree - PSV)

- 1) **The Director** must possess the minimum of a master's degree, the equivalent of three (3) years of full-time experience in the professional discipline, two (2) years as an instructor in a JRCERT (Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology) accredited program, and hold ARRT (American Registry of Radiologic Technologists) certification (or the equivalent).
- 2) Instructors must possess: a minimum of an associate degree in the discipline; and
- 3) a minimum of two (2) years of experience as a radiographer; and
- 4) AART certification (or the equivalent).

Note 1: Full-time instructors must hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree.

Note 2: In exceptional cases, outstanding professional experience and demonstrated competency in the teaching discipline may be presented in place of formal academic preparation

g. Surgical Services Program (Associate in Science degree - PSV)

- 1) **The Director of Surgical Services** must possess a minimum of an associate Degree; and recommended level of education for program director is a baccalaureate degree or higher.
Be a graduate of an education program in Surgical Technology accredited by a nationally recognized programmatic accreditation agency; and

Possess a credential in the field of Surgical Technology through a national certification program that is accredited by the National Commission on Certifying Agencies (NCCA); and

a minimum total of five years of experience, either in the operating room scrub role or as an instructor in surgical technology, or a combination of both, within the past 10 years (ARC/STSA Best Practice Guide – ST, 2022).

2) a) Faculty with instructional responsibilities in core Surgical Technology courses must: be a graduate of an education program in Surgical Technology accredited by a nationally recognized programmatic accreditation agency and,

b) possess a credential in the field of Surgical Technology through a national certification program that is accredited by the National Commission on Certifying Agencies (NCCA). (ARC/STSA Best Practice Guide – ST, 2022).

II. RANK

- A. **Different Types of Ranks** - The College will recognize the following ranks for the purpose of assessing faculty credentials for initial hiring and placement on (and movement within) the College's faculty salary schedules:

Level 4

Rank I Earned doctorate.

Level 3

Rank IA Successful completion of all course work in a doctoral program and admission to candidacy for the doctorate, or a specialist degree.

Rank IIA Completion of a master's degree plus 30 additional graduate hours in a related field.

Level 2

Rank II Master's degree.

Level 1

Rank III Bachelor's degree.

Rank IIIA Discontinued (November, 2008)

Rank IIIB Associate degree and two years of related occupational experience.

Rank IV Shall be issued to persons who do not hold a college degree but who have met the credentialing standards in the teaching discipline, either by a combination of formal training and related occupational experience or approval by the academic dean for standard approval based on extensive related occupational experience and/or special skills.

B. Advancement in Rank

Faculty are encouraged to pursue professional development activities and/or degree coursework to maintain currency in field and to obtain higher levels of educational achievement. Rank changes will be recognized in accordance with the SFSC Salary Schedule. For details on how to apply for advancement in rank, see SFSC Administrative Procedure - 5061.

III. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. The Professional Standards Committee, comprised of the academic deans, the director of human resources, and the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA), will meet periodically to review the SFSC Professional Standards for Faculty and Academic Administrators to ensure compliance with accreditation criteria and other governing policies or regulations.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the applicant/employee to provide transcripts and/or verifications of education and work experience as needed to meet initial and ongoing credentialing requirements. Failure to provide documentation in a timely manner may result in cancellation of employment agreements and/or adjustment of salary payments.
- C. Instructional supervisors are responsible for submitting their recommendations for proposed instructors through the credentialing process on a "Credentialing Request" form. The dean, off-campus instructional sites (OCIS) must forward this form to designated department chairs or program directors/managers for further recommendation. The "Credentialing Request" form must be submitted to and approved by the designated academic dean prior to the class beginning date.
- D. The designated academic dean will evaluate the proposed instructor's credentials and approve or deny the request. In the event of an appeal, the VPAA may call an ad hoc committee consisting of the requesting party, the department chair (if applicable), the dean, a representative from Human Resources, and faculty members from the teaching discipline to make a final determination.
- E. Required degrees must be earned from institutions of higher education which have been fully accredited by an institutional accrediting body approved by the US Department of Education.
- F. College Credit - All college credit for credentialing purposes shall be by "semester" hours. Quarter hours shall be converted to semester hours by multiplying the number of quarter hours by .667.
- G. The employment process shall include a personal interview prior to any offer of employment. Interviewers will ensure that each faculty member is proficient in verbal and written communication in the language in which assigned courses will be taught.
- H. Verification of educational background as stated by the applicant and/or determined by the College will be obtained by the College along with written and/or verbal communications from former employers, colleges, and/or persons associated with the applicant. The Human Resources director (or designee) will review these materials and communicate any concerns with the instructional supervisor and, as needed, the designated dean and/or VPAA.

IV. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FULL-TIME FACULTY

A. Faculty development and scholarship are integral expectations of employment at South Florida State College. Full-time faculty members are expected to engage in continuous professional development to enhance student learning experiences and maintain excellence in their disciplines. This includes pursuing deeper understanding of their fields of study, preparing for instruction in emerging areas, mastering educational technologies and pedagogical methodologies, and staying attuned to student needs and expectations. As part of their professional responsibilities at SFSC, faculty members are expected to demonstrate ongoing growth as teachers, scholars, and particularly in professional and occupational programs as active practitioners in their fields.

B. Appropriate Activities

Appropriate professional development activities may include, but are not limited to: university/college coursework, non-credit coursework, seminars, CEU courses, workshops, conference attendance, return to industry, educational travel, lecture attendance, academic readings/study, scholarly projects and/or research, meetings with other professionals in the appropriated academic field, scholarly papers and/or journal articles, development of instructional materials for new or existing courses, revision of existing course materials, and study of methods to improve instruction, or other projects/activities as agreed upon by the faculty members and the supervisor.