

POLICY ON TERMINAL DEGREES

1. Possession of an earned doctorate or other recognized terminal degree in an area appropriate to the individual's teaching / service area¹ is normally required for appointment to a tenure track or tenured faculty position.
2. Rare exceptions to the requirements of the earned doctorate or other recognized terminal degree may be made by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, but only upon request of the department and college/school or service area. One or more of the following circumstances may justify approval of an exception to the requirement of the doctorate.
 - (a) A candidate possesses, at the time of appointment, the highest (i.e., "terminal") degree appropriate to the teaching / service area, and the field or discipline represented by the vacant position.
 - (b) A candidate has demonstrated, in well-documented form, significant preparation and attainment equivalent to, or surpassing, the educational attainment represented by the terminal degree. The preparation and attainment should be clearly as rigorous and as valuable in the actual performance of the position's duties and responsibilities as the appropriate terminal degree.
 - (c) A faculty member has demonstrated exceptional preparation to offer instruction in a teaching area although the faculty member may possess a doctorate in another area. A member of the faculty tenured in one teaching area in which an appropriate doctorate has been earned, who may be changing to a second teaching area, should be expected to meet current continuing preparation standards applied to a tenured faculty member in this second teaching area.
3. Terminal degree requirements for appointment to a tenure track position shall be clearly stated in any vacancy announcement. Particular attention should be paid in those disciplines where more than one kind of terminal degree may be accepted and/or recognized. The vacancy announcement must also clearly state what degree, if any, may be considered an acceptable equivalent.
4. In exceptional circumstances, and with prior approval from the Provost, individuals who are nearing the completion of the doctorate (ABD) may be appointed to a probationary appointment for an initial period of one year. Completion of the doctorate during that year will be stipulated (in the appointment letter) as a condition for subsequent retention in the probationary position.²
5. At least once a year, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee shall discuss with the Personnel Committee of the Academic Senate the actions taken under this policy.

Approved by President
Amended

May 1977
November 1999; July 2012 (as interim), April 2013

¹ "Service area" refers to the Library and Student Affairs areas only.

² Refer to APM 301 for a complete set of instructions regarding ABD recruitments and appointments.