



## Unique Challenges When Hiring Foreign-Educated Faculty

Human Resources professionals play a crucial role in the faculty hiring process within our colleges and universities. Typically, candidates for faculty positions are required to submit transcripts demonstrating their academic preparedness and qualifications. These qualifications are typically measured against the minimum faculty credentialing standards as established by the regional, national or specialized bodies that accredit the institution and/or its various professional programs.

HR professionals engaged in the faculty hiring process face complex challenges when dealing with the credentials of foreign educated candidates. Among the key challenges are:

- **Gathering the correct foreign academic documentation**  
Unlike post-secondary transcripts from U.S. colleges and universities, foreign academic documentation may take varied forms and formats and may or may not be in English. Originals may be available from some countries and not from others.
- **Determining the authenticity of documentation submitted**  
Sophisticated digital technologies make it easier than ever for those wishing to fabricate or alter credentials to do so convincingly. While it is fairly simple and inexpensive to verify legitimate U.S. credentials, authenticating foreign credentials requires specialized knowledge, contacts and experience.
- **Determining the legitimacy of foreign institutions**  
While HR staff can access a variety of printed and online resources, these are often limited in terms of currency and completeness due to changes in foreign academic systems, the establishment of new institutions, institutional name changes, etc. that occur on an ongoing basis.
- **Establishing U.S. equivalencies for foreign credentials and course work**  
This represents a truly complex challenge that goes far beyond simple linguistic translation. Academic terminology used in other systems may be entirely different from that used in the U.S., or terms may be the same but have entirely different meaning. Therefore, a simple linguistic translation into English will not suffice in determining academic equivalencies. For example, the “Bachiller” issued in most Latin American countries may literally translate as “bachelor”, but the equivalency of this degree is typically only a high school diploma.
- **Demonstrating that your institution’s due diligence in verifying that candidates meet your accrediting body’s standards**  
If policies and processes have been established to manage the four steps outlined above, your office will be in a position to present the credentials of foreign educated faculty to your accrediting body’s visiting team member with confidence.

Recognizing the specialized expertise necessary to authenticate and accurately assess foreign academic credentials, HR managers may wish to consider implementation of a policy requiring external evaluation of foreign academic documentation in the hiring process.

**World Education Services (WES) can relieve HR staff of the burden and risks associated with determining the legitimacy and equivalency of foreign academic credentials.** WES has the specialized expertise required to properly authenticate and evaluate foreign academic credentials in conjunction with the faculty hiring process or your school’s accreditation review.

Please contact WES at 212-219-7991 or [faculty@wes.org](mailto:faculty@wes.org) to learn more, or find more details at:

[www.wes.org/faculty](http://www.wes.org/faculty)