

SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**SUBJECT: Oral and Written English Proficiency for Faculty****EFFECTIVE DATE: 2002 Summer; Revised February 9, 2023; Revised Oct. 15, 2026****Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all faculty employed by Southwest Tennessee Community College (“Southwest” or “the College”) possess the oral and written English language skills necessary to communicate effectively in an academic environment and fulfill their instructional responsibilities.

Policy

The ability to communicate effectively is an essential skill necessary for faculty to perform successfully. The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) requires Southwest to assess the English proficiency of all candidates for faculty positions, including part-time and adjunct faculty, to determine their adequacy for the direct instruction of students.

No individual shall be appointed to a teaching position or recommended for tenure in such a position unless the Executive Vice President of Academic Strategy and Student Outcomes (EVP of ASSO) has certified that the individual can communicate effectively with students in the English language.

Minimum criteria for evaluation of English proficiency are the ability to:

1. Clearly speak and write using English;
2. Understand written and spoken English; and
3. communicate effectively in an academic environment (for example, previous successful employment ~~in~~ at an academic institution.)

The EVP of ASSO may appoint deans and department chairs as designees to determine oral and written English proficiency. The EVP of ASSO or designee must certify the candidate’s English proficiency through:

1. The interview process (A teaching demonstration may be a part of this process); or
2. A holistic writing activity administered by the EVP of ASSO or designee.

Written certification of the candidate’s oral and written English proficiency shall accompany the recommendation for appointment or tenure, as applicable, and shall be maintained in the faculty member’s personnel record.

The foregoing criteria are to be used strictly as a measure of a candidate's ability to communicate effectively as an instructor and shall not be utilized to arbitrarily disqualify applicants on the basis

* This policy was formerly policy number 2:06:01:00/37 in Section 2 (Academic Affairs) of the policy manual. It was revised and moved to Section 5 (Human Resources) during the spring of 2023.

of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, or any other status protected by applicable law. Evaluation of English proficiency shall be conducted consistently and solely to determine the candidate's ability to communicate effectively in the academic environment.

If assistance is needed to bring an existing faculty member into compliance with this policy, the Office of People and Culture (HR) must be immediately notified via email at myHR@southwest.tn.edu.

Source of Policy: _____	Responsible VP of People and Culture (HR) Administrator: <u>and EVP of ASSO</u>
	TBR Policy Reference: <u>5.02.01.03</u>
Related Policy: <u>5:01:00:00/20</u>	TBR Guideline Reference: _____
Approved: <u></u> President	Date: <u>October 15, 2026</u>