**Faculty Teaching Qualifications**

**Academic Qualifications in the Teaching Topic**

A faculty member possesses the appropriate academic credentials to teach when (s)he possesses the appropriate degree level and major for the course topic that is taught. To be academically qualified to teach:

- Graduate courses – the faculty member must possess a terminal degree and major in the topic of the course being taught.
- Undergraduate courses – the faculty member must possess a master’s degree and major in the topic of the course being taught.

Degree information should be provided in Part II of the Faculty Qualification Form. The department chair should obtain exact information (dates of degrees, titles of majors, name of degree(s), and names of awarding institutions from the instructor’s official transcripts.

In Part III of the Faculty Qualification Form, the department chair should check off (1) the one type of qualification for the undergraduate courses for which the person is qualified, and (2) the one type of qualification (if any) for the graduate courses for which the instructor is qualified.

**Lack of Appropriate Academic Qualification in the Teaching Topic**

If the faculty member lacks the appropriate academic credential, then (s)he must be qualified by having either:

- 18 graduate credit hours directly related to the topic of the course, completed prior to the start of the course. **This alternate qualification cannot be applied to graduate courses.**
- Significant alternate qualifications directly related to the course topic. **This alternate can be applied to both undergraduate and graduate courses.**

See detailed explanations on the following pages.

**Eighteen Graduate Credit Hours in the Teaching Topic**

This information must be entered in Part IV of the Faculty Qualification Form by the department chair, using the faculty member’s transcript(s) to locate appropriate information regarding the credit hours earned. The 18 graduate hours must all be coursework that has been successfully completed prior to the start of the semester the faculty member is assigned to teach. Also, as noted above, it may only be applied to instructors teaching **undergraduate courses** who lack applicable academic degrees. The
department chair cannot qualify a person who lacks academic or alternate qualifications to teach a graduate course through identification of 18 graduate credit hours.

List all courses separately unless the course may be repeated for credit. Do not combine the graduate hours earned in several courses under one topic. The (a) course prefix, (b) course number and (c) course title, as well as (d) the number of hours earned in each course must be entered for each graduate course being used to qualify the faculty member.

There is no need to complete this part of the Faculty Qualification Form if the faculty member is academically qualified for the course assigned.

**Significant Alternate Qualifications**

Part V of the Faculty Qualification Form should be completed by the department chair, based on information from the instructor’s vita, supported by reliable documentation. This information must only be provided when academic credentials do not qualify the person as an instructor for a class. The person must have significant alternate qualifications if the person lacks the appropriate academic credentials, and:

- Is assigned to teach an undergraduate class, without having 18 graduate credit hours completed in the discipline, OR
- Is assigned to teach a graduate class

Significant alternate credentials must reflect depth of experience and expertise. One or two years employed in the field related to the course topic would not be considered to be significant experience. Also, teaching the topic alone, without experience in the course topic, is not considered to be an alternate qualification. For example, if one has taught courses related to a career field but has never worked in that career field, (s)he would not be considered to be alternately qualified.

A department should only hire persons requiring alternate qualifications in rare circumstances, and their qualifications must specifically address the topic of the course(s) to be assigned.

The qualifications must be provided with details sufficient to be persuasive. Qualifications must be supported by documentation. The department chair must obtain the instructor’s curriculum vita (not sufficient alone), and letters from employers, copies of licensures, certifications, newspaper reviews or articles, awards, or other documents that provide evidence to support vita information upon which (s)he is relying. These documents should be kept in the faculty member’s personnel file in the department office.

If alternate qualifications are needed to qualify the faculty member, the department chair must persuasively answer the question, “What about this faculty member’s research or experience qualifies her or him to teach this particular class?” Make the argument as
brief as possible with short, concentrated, but complete statements that address qualifications specific to the course topics assigned

The list below provides common acceptable justifications for alternative qualifications. The list is not intended to be all-inclusive.

• Number of years of work experience relevant to the topics of the course(s) assigned
  o Examples should be specific. Include the names of employers, the date(s) employed, ranks and roles the instructor held, significant duties and accomplishments while employed.
  o How the relevant experience has been used to enrich the faculty member’s qualification to teach the course(s) to be assigned
• Examples of consulting experience (faculty member’s area of expertise relevant to course(s) to be assigned
• Active memberships and participation in organizations whose activities relate to the course topic
• Service on Board(s) of Directors (describe) relevant to the course topic(s) to be assigned
• In the arts, presentations, performances, creative work, etc. relevant to the course(s) to be assigned
• Publication of intellectual works (academic, professional, trade, etc. – include citation) relevant to the course(s) to be assigned
• Publications of other intellectual contributions (technical reports, textbooks, teaching materials, etc. – include citation) relevant to the course(s) to be assigned
• Other intellectual contribution (not published) which are relevant to the courses to be assigned (case studies, learning aids, external reports, data analysis – provide copies of examples)
• Grants relevant to the topics of the course(s) to be assigned
• Professional certifications (include dates) relevant to the course(s) to be assigned (obtain copy of certificate/licenses)
• Active/significant role in a business or other enterprise related to the course topics (include dates) relevant to the course(s) to be assigned

Feel free to call the Office of the Vice Provost for Accountability and Institutional Effectiveness (458-5242) if you would like advice regarding a potential instructor.