



**THE UNIVERSITY of  
NEW ORLEANS**

**ADMINISTERED BY: Office of Vice  
President for Academic Affairs**

**Policy No: AP-AA-13.2**

**TITLE: Teaching Credentials for the  
Faculty and Graduate Teaching  
Assistants**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: August 1, 2014**

**CANCELLATION:**

**REVIEW DATE: Fall 2017**

**PURPOSE**

To promulgate the university’s policy regarding minimum teaching credentials and to set forth the administrative procedures for ensuring that members of teaching faculty and graduate assistants have the required minimum teaching credentials.

**AUTHORITY**

*Part Two, Chapter III, Section X of the Bylaws and Rules of the University of Louisiana System.*

**DEFINITIONS**

*Faculty member.* Any full-time or part-time member of the academic teaching staff at the rank of instructor or above whose duties include teaching courses that are available for academic credit in one or more academic programs.

*Graduate teaching assistant.* Any graduate student who is assigned responsibility for teaching courses that are available for academic credit or assisting a faculty member in the teaching of courses that are available for academic credit.

*Offer letter.* The approved, standard letter offering a teaching position at the university.

*Faculty member of record.* The faculty member or graduate teaching assistant with primary responsibility for teaching the course and who signs the grade sheets.

**Part I. Faculty**

**GENERAL POLICY**

The university aspires to seek the best possible faculty member for a given position, as evidenced in part by possession of the terminal degree in the discipline. Only rarely is permission granted to fill a tenure-track position with someone who does not possess or expect to possess the terminal degree at the start of his or her appointment.

The university adheres to the following minimum credentials, which are aligned with guidelines of our regional accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and they apply to both full-time and part-time faculty members:

1. To teach at the undergraduate level. A master's degree in the discipline or any master's degree and 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline.
2. To teach at the graduate level. The terminal degree for the discipline.

Other qualification or experiences that justify the teaching assignment may be substituted in lieu of formal academic preparation. In requesting substitution of experience for formal academic preparation, the department chair must first consult with the appropriate department faculty members to review the candidate's work experience, professional accomplishments, certifications, etc., to determine that they justify a particular teaching assignment.

The university will keep on file, for both full-time and part-time faculty members, documentation of formal academic preparation, such as official transcripts and, if appropriate for certifying competency, records of additional qualifications such as publications and certifications.

### **Graduate Faculty**

In addition to the requirements above, faculty teaching graduate-level courses (5000, 6000, 7000) shall have been nominated and approved to be members of the Graduate Faculty. The nomination process shall begin with an evaluation of the professional qualifications of the individual by the Department Chair, following the established College/Department procedure. Acting on written recommendation from the Department Chair, the Dean of the College shall submit the nomination for Graduate Faculty appointment to the Executive Director of Graduate Programs. The Graduate Council, upon review of the nomination according to the respective College/Department procedure, shall advise the Executive Director of the Graduate Programs, who shall make final recommendation to the Provost/Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.

### **Terminal Degree Equivalency Statement**

The University of New Orleans recognizes the Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) as a terminal degree in the visual arts, performing arts, and creative writing. The university recognizes the Master of Music (M.M. or M.Mus.) as a terminal degree in music. The university recognizes the Master of Library Science as a terminal degree. These degrees demand the highest level of professional competency in these creative activities and are accepted as an indication that the recipient has reached the end of the formal aspects of his or her education; thus, these degrees are considered equivalent to terminal degrees in other disciplines.

## **Procedures for Hiring**

For all candidates:

1. If an official transcript showing that the candidate possesses the appropriate minimum academic credentials for the position has not been received prior to making an offer, the offer letter must request such a transcript. The transcript should accompany the Appointment Form 101 to be placed in the employee's file in the Office of Academic Affairs.
2. The offer letter must indicate the inability or failure to supply appropriate certification of formal academic training\* before the first day of the appointment will result in the candidate not being allowed to teach.

\*In those legitimate cases where a transcript cannot be provided by the deadline, the university will accept temporarily a letter from the University Registrar of the candidate's institution stating that the appropriate degree has been awarded or that all requirements for the degree have been completed and that the degree will be awarded at the next graduation ceremony. An official transcript must ultimately replace a registrar's letter.

For candidates without the appropriate terminal degree or other qualifications or experience but who have the minimum academic credentials to teach at the undergraduate level, in addition to the requirements listed for all candidates, the offer letter must state clearly that no teaching at the graduate level will be permitted. This will include 4000-level courses available for graduate credit.

For candidates without the minimum academic credentials to teach at the desired level but who have other qualifications or experience, in addition to the requirements listed for all candidates' s professional vita, a list of courses that the candidate has been deemed qualified to teach, and a summary of the specific qualifications or experience that justifies the teaching assignment. If the faculty member is to teach graduate-level course, this summary may be used to support the request for appointment to the graduate faculty.

## **Procedures for Assigning Courses to Faculty Members Outside of the Discipline**

When offering a course in a discipline that will be taught by a faculty member from another discipline (including cross-listed courses):

1. After consultation with appropriate members of the faculty, the chair of the department offering the course must certify that the faculty member has the necessary minimum academic credentials to teach the course or, if not, must specify qualifications or experience the faculty member has that justifies the teaching assignment.
2. The department chair must submit the appropriate certification or justification through channels to the Office of Academic Affairs for approval prior to making any commitment to the faculty member.

3. For subsequent assignments when the approved certification or justification is one file, the department must notify the Office of Academic Affairs of the assignment prior to making any commitment to the faculty member.

## **Part II. Graduate Teaching Assistants**

### **General Policy**

The university recognizes teaching experience as an important part of the graduate training and permits graduate students with appropriate credentials to participate in course instruction. The university adheres to the following minimum credentials which are aligned with those of our regional accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and they apply to graduate teaching assistants:

1. For all graduate teaching assistants. The Graduate School provides a set of guidelines for the university-wide administration of graduate teaching assistants, including appointment criteria, remuneration, rights and responsibilities, evaluation, and reappointment.
2. Students employed as Teaching Associates (Instructor of Record) must have a master's degree or 18 graduate credit hours in the specified teaching field to satisfy requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). If a student on an F-1 Visa is to be hired as a Teaching Associate, they must provide evidence of above average English proficiency. Graduate Assistants are not permitted to be employed as a part-time faculty member.

There are two sub-types of Teaching Assistants depending on the nature of their duties and teaching credentials:

- a. Teaching Assistant. These students provide instructional or tutorial support for faculty teaching undergraduate students. Examples of Teaching Assistant duties include preparing examinations, grading assignments, conducting and assisting in preparation of lectures, leading discussion groups, maintaining class records, as well as tutoring students outside of formal lecture and laboratory classes. The Teaching Assistant is neither the instructor nor responsible for assigning course grades.
- b. Teaching Associate. These students provide instruction to undergraduate students and are instructor of record for undergraduate courses. Only students who have a master's degree or 18 graduate credit hours in the area of instruction are eligible to be employed in this capacity. Teaching Associate never provides instruction to graduate students.

**Procedures for Hiring**

1. The department chair is responsible for certifying the type of teaching assignment on the Appointment Form 101.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PJF', written in a cursive style.

Peter J. Fos, Ph.D., M.P.H.  
President  
University of New Orleans