



THE UNIVERSITY of  
NEW ORLEANS

**ADMINISTERED BY:** Office of the Provost  
and Senior Vice President for Academic  
Affairs

**Policy No:** AP-AA-13.3  
**TITLE:** Teaching Credentials for the  
Faculty and Graduate Teaching  
Assistants  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 1, 2014\*  
(\*Policy Revised, see below)  
**CANCELLATION:**  
**REVIEW DATE:** Fall 2020

#### **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 any rank 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 of New Orleans 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. The university will not grant any department, program, school or college authority 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, temporary (not tenured-track) faculty members:

1. To teach at the undergraduate level.

A master's degree in the discipline or a related field (as approved by the Chair and Dean of the appropriate department and college, and/or the Associate Provost for Academic Programs) or any master's degree and 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline.

OR

A bachelor's degree in the discipline or a related field (as approved by the Chair and Dean of the appropriate department and college, and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs) plus at least 6 years of directly related work experience (as approved by the Chair and Dean of the appropriate department and college, and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs).

2. To teach at the graduate level.

The terminal degree for the discipline or a related field (as approved by the Chair and Dean of the appropriate department and college, and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs) is required.

OR

An advanced degree (MS/MA or equivalent) in the discipline or a related field (as approved by the Chair and Dean of the appropriate department and college, and the Provost) plus at least 6 years of directly related work experience (as approved by the Chair and Dean of the appropriate department and college, and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs).

In requesting substitution of work experience in lieu of formal academic preparation or assessment of "closely related field", the department chair must first consult with the appropriate department faculty members to review the candidate's work and educational experience, professional accomplishments, certifications, etc., to determine that they justify a particular teaching assignment. This substitution recommendation must be approved by the Dean of the appropriate college and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs.

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.

### **Terminal Degree Equivalency Statement**

Presently, 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. However, increasingly a doctoral degree is becoming available in these fields. 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 (M.L.S.) 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. Other terminal degrees such as Juris Doctorate (JD) is also recognized as a terminal degree. The determination of a faculty with a terminal degree requires a thorough review by the faculty and Chair of the appropriate department and recommendation and approval by the Dean of the appropriate college and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs.

### **Procedures for Hiring**

For all candidates:

1. An official transcript showing that the candidate possesses the appropriate minimum academic credentials for the position must be in the employee's file, in the Office of Human Resource Management, before the commencement of any employment. If the appropriate transcript has not been received prior to making an offer, the offer letter must request such a transcript. The transcript should accompany the hiring paperwork and be placed in the employee's file in the Office of Human Resource Management.
2. Academic Affairs will review and scan the transcript into an electronic file for assessment and accreditation purposes.
3. The offer letter must indicate the inability or failure to supply appropriate certification of formal academic training<sup>1</sup> before the first day of the appointment will result in the candidate not being allowed to teach. In the case of an emergency or last minute hire, an official transcript must be received within 30 days of the acceptance of the offer.
4. In addition to the requirements listed above, for all candidates' 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 must be provided. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## **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 the Dean's office 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, teaching undergraduate laboratories

with direct supervision and training by faculty, 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 of record nor responsible for assigning course grades. All Teaching Assistants must be supervised by a faculty member.

- 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 Personnel Action Form (101 Form).



John W. Nicklow  
President  
University of New Orleans

*\*Policy Updates:  
Revisions: 1/26/2018*