



THE UNIVERSITY of  
NEW ORLEANS

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

**Policy No:** AP-AA-13.5  
**TITLE:** Teaching Credentials for the  
Faculty and Graduate Teaching  
Assistants  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 1, 2014\*  
(\*Policy Revised, see below)  
**CANCELLATION:**  
**REVIEW DATE:** Spring 2025

#### **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.

*Instructor of record.* The faculty member or graduate teaching assistant with primary responsibility for teaching the course and signing 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 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 tenure-track) faculty members<sup>1</sup>:

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/school and college, and the Provost or designee) 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 or a related field (as approved by the Chair and Dean of the appropriate department/school and college, and the Provost or designee) is required.

For none-doctoral courses (i.e., 5000 level or below), the following substitute may be permitted. An advanced degree (MS/MA/MEd or equivalent) in the discipline or a related field (as approved by the Chair and Dean of the appropriate department/school and college, and the Provost or designee) plus at least 6 years of directly related work experience (as approved by the Chair and Dean of the appropriate department/school and college, and the Provost or designee).

In requesting substitution of work experience in lieu of formal academic preparation or assessment of "closely related field", the department/school chair must first consult with the appropriate department/school 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 Provost or designee.

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

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<sup>1</sup> Please see AP-AA-21 for the policy on faculty appointment

### **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/school and recommendation and approval by the Dean of the appropriate college and the Provost or designee.

In rare cases, faculty who do not fully meet the qualifications outlined above may be recommended by the department/school chair with approval of the dean to teach with a strong justification. Such cases must be approved by the Provost or designee.

### **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>2</sup> before the first day of the appointment will result in the candidate not being allowed to teach.
4. In addition to the requirements listed above, a professional vita, a list of courses that the candidate has been deemed qualified to teach, and a summary of the specific qualifications or

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<sup>2</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.

experience that justifies the teaching assignment must be provided for all candidates. If the faculty member is to teach a 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/school 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/school 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/school 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 guidelines of our 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. 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. A Teaching Associate never provides instruction to graduate students.
2. Students employed as Teaching Assistant-Instructor of Record must have a master's degree or 18 graduate credit hours in the specified teaching field. If a student on an F-1 Visa is to be hired as a Teaching Assistant-Instructor of Record, they must provide evidence of above average English proficiency. Graduate Assistants are not permitted to be employed as a part-time faculty member.

### **Procedures for Hiring**

1. The department/school chair is responsible for certifying the type of teaching.
2. Teaching Assistants and Teaching Assistant-Instructor of Record must be approved by the Graduate School.



John W. Nicklow  
President  
University of New Orleans

*\*Policy Updates:*

*Revisions: 02/16/2023*

*12/06/2021*

*01/26/2018*