



# Eastern Kentucky University

## Policy and Regulation Library

Academic Regulation: 4.6.1ACR

Responsible Office(s): Office of the Provost

Effective: January 6, 2009

Next Review Date:

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### Determining Qualifications for Faculty Teaching Credit-Bearing Courses

#### Statement

Eastern Kentucky University will employ qualified faculty to teach credit-bearing courses. The University places primary importance on academic credentials, which must be awarded from accredited institutions. In addition to academic credentials, other competencies may be identified, as appropriate, when establishing qualifications. Faculty qualifications will be linked to the course(s) a faculty member is assigned to teach and will be initially determined by the department. Approval of faculty qualifications must be made by the dean and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The criteria for qualifications are outlined in this policy.

#### Purpose

This policy ensures that the University uses instructional faculty that are academically prepared to teach at the undergraduate and graduate levels. When other credentials are used in lieu of certain advanced degrees, this policy ensures that those credentials are appropriate for teaching college-level courses. Finally, this policy ensures that the University will stay in compliance with its accrediting bodies.

#### Entities Affected

- Colleges
- Departments
- Faculty
- Provost Office

#### Background

Because Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) is “a student-centered, comprehensive public university dedicated to high-quality instruction, scholarship, and service,” it is vital that the University hire and retain highly qualified faculty. EKU is committed to meeting

not only the minimum credential guidelines established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) but, where appropriate, exceeding those guidelines. Therefore, the University has established this policy, including credential guidelines and procedures for following the policy.

EKU's faculty and administration jointly accept the responsibility of ensuring the integrity of faculty qualifications. The University recognizes that the initial determination of appropriate qualifications rests at the department level. In making this determination, departments must examine all relevant documentation (see below) and must provide a cogent justification when qualifications may appear to be outside the policy's guidelines. Subsequent to the departmental recommendation, faculty qualifications are subject to review and approval by the dean and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

## Criteria for Faculty Qualifications

The following are *minimum* criteria for credentials.

### **A. Faculty Teaching Developmental Courses**

Faculty teaching developmental courses must hold a terminal or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours) or an emphasis in adult or developmental education (a minimum of 12 graduate hours) or a bachelor's degree in the teaching discipline and relevant teaching experience.

### **B. Faculty Teaching Undergraduate Degree Courses**

Faculty teaching undergraduate courses, including general education courses, must hold a doctoral/terminal or master's degree in the teaching discipline or in a related field or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline). For physical activity courses, a minimum of a bachelor's degree plus certification in the activity, experience in teaching/coaching/playing in the discipline, or both is required. For faculty teaching clinical, practicum, studio or internship courses must hold at least a master's degree in the teaching discipline and must have certification/licensure or demonstrated clinical/practice leadership in a specialization relevant to the course content.

### **C. Faculty Teaching Graduate Degree Courses**

Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate courses must hold a doctoral/terminal degree in the teaching or related discipline—or—faculty teaching graduate or post-baccalaureate clinical, practicum, studio, or internship courses must hold at least a master's degree in the teaching discipline and must have certification/licensure or demonstrated clinical/practice leadership in a specialization relevant to the course content.

### **D. Secondary Instructors for Courses**

Faculty not designated as primary instructors must have at least 18 graduate hours in the teaching discipline or hold a bachelor's degree in the teaching or related discipline. Responsibilities of the secondary instructor must be clearly documented but must not include sole responsibility for curriculum/course development or for evaluation of students. Secondary instructors must be under the direct, documented supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline and be subject to planned and periodic evaluations.

### **E. Teaching Assistants (including Instructor of Record)**

Teaching assistants who are the instructor of record for a developmental course must meet the qualification guidelines in section A above; for all other undergraduate courses or laboratories that bear credit, teaching assistants who are the instructor of record must have at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching or related discipline or, for physical activity courses, must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree plus certification in the activity, experience in teaching/coaching/ playing in the discipline, or both. Additionally, all teaching assistants who are the instructor of record must be under the direct, documented supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, participate in regular in-service training, and be subject to planned and periodic evaluations.

### **Justifications for Faculty Not Meeting Minimum Qualifications**

Under exceptional circumstances, the University may desire to employ faculty members who do not meet minimum qualifications. Justifications may be made for faculty teaching developmental or undergraduate courses who do not meet minimum qualifications but who may have other documented competencies. All such justifications must be approved by the College Dean and the Provost prior to the faculty member teaching relevant courses.

For faculty teaching graduate courses, justifications may be made for non-terminally qualified faculty who demonstrate external validation of qualifications in the teaching field, such as regional or national recognitions, refereed publications, or leadership activities. All such graduate faculty justifications must be approved by the College Dean, the Graduate Dean, and the Provost prior to the faculty member teaching relevant courses.

The handling of emergency vacancies will be on a case by case basis and in consultation with the College Dean and the Provost.

For additional information, refer to Guidelines for Justifications for Faculty Not Meeting Minimum Qualifications.

## **Procedures**

### **Initial Determination of Qualifications**

1. Prior to hiring, the department must ensure that potential faculty, regardless of full-time or part-time status, meet or exceed the criteria outlined in this policy.

Therefore, the department is responsible for ensuring that all credential documents are provided to the Dean.

2. The department chair will provide to the college dean all relevant materials regarding qualifications. In situations where the basis for qualification is nonstandard, the chair will provide a letter of justification providing specific details in support of that justification as well as a detailed list of courses the faculty member is qualified to teach.
3. The dean, after evaluating the materials and providing an approval recommendation, will submit all relevant materials to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
4. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will evaluate the materials and provide a decision regarding the hiring of the faculty member to teach. A written response will be provided to the dean and to the chair. A signed copy of the approval form will be placed in the faculty member's file.

### **Ongoing Determination of Qualifications**

1. The Office of The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for ensuring ongoing compliance with this policy and with the University's accrediting agencies. This Office will maintain a systematic, periodic review of at least 1/3 of the teaching faculty every year.
2. The deans of each college will be notified of any faculty member who appears to be out of compliance with qualification guidelines. The dean's office must notify the appropriate department chairs.
3. Department chairs, once notified, must provide a letter of justification and any supporting documentation. The letter of justification will provide a sound argument for qualifications and will provide specific details and documentation in support of that justification.
4. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will review all letters of justification and supporting materials and will make a determination.
5. The dean, the department chair, and the graduate dean (as appropriate) will be notified in writing of all decisions.

### **Determining Terminal Degrees**

Each department will determine the appropriate terminal degree(s), as defined above, for its discipline. Written justification for this determination must be provided to the Dean and to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will provide a final review for terminal degree designations. The list of terminal degrees will be reviewed every three years by the Office of Academic Affairs and updated as appropriate.

### **Maintaining Faculty Files**

An official file or portfolio on each member of the faculty must be maintained by the dean's office. The faculty file will include pertinent, up-to-date information describing the qualifications of the faculty member, such as curriculum vitae, and institutional

qualification justifications in nonstandard situations (i.e. copies of certificates, licenses, etc). These files should also be made available in electronic format (i.e. through databases and imaging). Updated CVs will be submitted to the Chair and to the Dean each academic year.

### **Determining Percentage of Student Credit Hours Taught by Faculty with Terminal Degrees**

Each department will ensure that at least 25 percent of the discipline course hours in each undergraduate major are taught by faculty members holding a terminal degree in the discipline.

### **Appeals**

1. The department chair may appeal the decision regarding faculty qualification within five working days by submitting an appeal letter and any additional relevant information to the Dean and the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.
2. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will review the appeal and will make a final determination of faculty qualification.
3. Further appeals are permitted only if the circumstance for the faculty member changes (i.e. additional graduate coursework, new professional development and/or scholarship in the field, new certificates or licenses, etc.)
4. The dean, the department chair, and the graduate dean (as appropriate) will be notified in writing of all decisions.

## **Definitions**

- **Clinical Course:** A course that requires application of professional or advanced knowledge and skill in the direct care/teaching of clients in laboratory settings including acute and community based systems.
- **Credit-bearing Course:** Any course that is transcribed.
- **Documentation of Qualifications:** Suitable documentation for faculty qualifications includes but is not limited to:
  - Required**
    - Transcripts from all institutions where academic credit has been awarded. The emphasis is on graduate work unless undergraduate coursework is necessary to demonstrate relevance.
    - Current *dated* curriculum vita or resume
  - As Relevant**
    - Copies of current certificates
    - Copies of current licenses
    - Documentation of relevant awards or honors
    - Documentation of teaching effectiveness
    - Syllabi for courses taught
- **Documented Competencies:** Types of demonstrated competencies are as follows:
  - Graduate degrees/certificates

- Certifications (non-academic)
  - Licensures
  - Related work experience
  - Scholarly/creative achievements
  - Teaching awards and/or teaching evaluations
- **Graduate Hours:** The minimum graduate hours in the teaching discipline is determined by semester hours. Therefore, any graduate hours earned by another calculation must be demonstrated as equivalent.
- **Internship:** A course that requires application through practical work in an applied setting.
- **Practicum:** A course that requires application through practical work in an applied setting.
- **Primary Instructor (Instructor of Record):** Refers to a faculty member who is responsible for:
  - The quality of course content
  - Assessment of students' fulfillment of learning outcomes for the course
  - Course grades
  - Coordinating/supervising secondary instructors, if applicable
- **Provost:** Refers to either the Provost or his/her designee.
- **Related Field:** A related field may be any field that reasonably can be demonstrated to provide the appropriate knowledge base for the course content.
- **Secondary Instructors:** Refers to an individual who is under the direct supervision of a primary instructor and who may be responsible for the delivery of instruction for some or all parts of a course but who does **not** have the authority to:
  - Assign final course grades
  - Create or alter a syllabus or the assignments for the course
- **Teaching Discipline:** The teaching discipline is defined as the field most appropriate for the course content.
- **Teaching Faculty:** Teaching faculty is defined as any faculty member, whether full-time or part-time, who teaches a course transcribed as institutional credit (including those courses offered in the developmental program) by Eastern Kentucky University. This includes full-time or part-time administrators who may occasionally teach.
- **Terminal Degree:** The terminal degree is generally, for teaching purposes, the highest academic degree awarded in a field. In most cases, the terminal degree will be the doctorate; however, sometimes an advanced professional degree or a master's degree will be the terminal degree in a particular field (i.e. MFA in Creative Writing). On rare occasions, the terminal degree may be a bachelor's degree in the field. A distinction is made here between a terminal degree appropriate for teaching in higher education and a degree appropriate for autonomous practice outside the academy.

## Responsibilities

- Faculty (full-time)
  - During the hiring process, provide official copies of all transcripts to the dean's office.
  - Within two months of the completion of a semester, provide official copies of transcripts for all graduate coursework completed after employment commences.
  - Provide a **dated** copy of curriculum vitae to the college dean every year.
  - Provide copies of all other relevant documentation of qualifications and keep updated as appropriate.
- Faculty (part-time)
  - During the hiring process, provide official copies of all transcripts to the dean's office.
  - Within two months of the completion of a semester, provide official copies of transcripts for all graduate coursework completed after employment commences.
  - Provide a **dated** copy of curriculum vitae to the college dean within one month of the beginning of the semester in which part-time faculty member is hired. Part-time faculty teaching in both fall and spring semesters do not need to submit a CV in the spring semester.
  - Provide copies of all other relevant documentation of qualifications and keep updated as appropriate.
- Department Chair
  - Ensure that all faculty hired to teach courses within his/her department meet the criteria outlined in this policy.
  - Ensure that all faculty have provided the dean's office with the appropriate documentation.
  - Provide justifications for faculty with non-standard qualifications.
  - Determine terminal degree(s) appropriate for coursework in the department and provide justification to the Dean and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
  - Ensure that at least 25% of discipline credit hours toward each major are taught by terminally-qualified faculty.
- College Dean
  - Ensure that departments are adhering to the policy criteria.
  - Maintain up-to-date and complete files on all teaching faculty within the college.
  - Provide information to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs when requested.
- Provost
  - Ensure that all teaching faculty are in compliance with this University policy and with accrediting standards.
  - Maintain a system for ongoing compliance.

## Violations of the Policy

Failure to follow this policy will result in faculty not being rehired or being reassigned to an area that matches qualifications. Depending on the circumstance, a faculty member whose qualifications cannot be approved based on this policy may be immediately removed from the course, even if a semester has begun.

## Regulation Adoption Review and Approval

### Regulation Revised

**DATE**

October 18, 2024

**ENTITY**

University Counsel

**ACTION**

Editorial Revision

### Regulation Issued

**DATE**

January 26, 2009

December 19, 2008

December 3, 2008

October 6, 2008

**ENTITY**

Board of Regents

President Whitlock

Provost Council

Faculty Senate

**ACTION**

Adopted

Approved

Approved

Approved