

# POLICY ON DOCUMENTATION OF MINIMUM TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS OF RECORD

## I. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy identifies the minimum qualifications that a person must have before serving as the instructor of record for a for-credit course at Auburn University and the documentation required as evidence of those qualifications.

## II. POLICY PRINCIPLES

Auburn University must be able to determine and document the qualifications of its instructors of record (i.e., faculty members, appropriately credentialed staff, and graduate students as instructors).

A. Determining that an instructor is qualified to teach a course

Most often, instructors are determined to be qualified to teach a given course because they have presented an appropriate credential, such as a graduate diploma in the discipline of the course they are being assigned to teach or, lacking that, a transcript showing that they have successfully completed a number of graduate courses in that discipline. When using credentials to confirm that an instructor of record is qualified to teach a course in a given discipline at a given level, Auburn follows the guidelines for faculty credentials approved by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC):

- **Faculty teaching baccalaureate courses:** doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline.
- **Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work:** both a doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline and departmental approval.
- **Graduate teaching assistants who are the instructor of record:** master's degree in the teaching discipline or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, plus direct supervision by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, regular in-service training, and planned and periodic evaluations.

An individual who does not possess the appropriate credential identified in these SACSCOC guidelines may nevertheless be determined to be qualified to be an instructor of record for a for-credit course. This alternative evidence of qualification typically includes one or more of the following types and must be directly relevant to the discipline and level of the course assignment:

- Professional Experience
- Licensure and certifications
- Demonstrated competence in teaching
- Honors and awards
- Scholarly publications and presented papers
- Other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes

B. Documenting that an instructor is qualified to teach a course

If additional documentation beyond transcripts is necessary, a written statement - in addition to the provided evidence - must be submitted by the academic department to the Faculty Qualifications Committee to clearly describe the relationship between the qualifications and the course content and/or expected outcomes of the courses assigned to the faculty member. Such a justification should be no more than 200 words. Curriculum vitae and resumes will not be accepted for this purpose.

### **III. EFFECTIVE DATE**

May 1, 2020

### **IV. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all instructors of record teaching Auburn University for-credit courses.

### **V. POLICY MANAGEMENT**

*Responsible Office:* The Office of the Provost

*Responsible Executive:* Provost

*Responsible Officer:* SACSCOC Liaison

### **VI. DEFINITIONS**

Instructor of Record - A person in the Banner system that is assigned to teach at least a portion of a for-credit course and is listed as the primary instructor. This person must be qualified to teach the course and has responsibility for the development of the syllabus, design of the course, and issuing grades.

### **VII. POLICY PROCEDURES**

Academic departments will be required to upload qualifications as noted above centrally for all instructors of record for each assigned course section. It is ultimately the academic dean's responsibility to ensure that proper documentation is entered into the central repository for every instructor of record in his/her college or school. The dean may appoint a designee (e.g., Associate Dean, Department Heads/Chairs) to carry out this work. In the event that an instructor is hired to teach a course on a 'one-time' basis (e.g., due to an emergency situation), the dean must appoint a properly credentialed faculty member to supervise, orient, evaluate, and support the instructor and document how this will be accomplished. The Faculty Qualifications Committee can evaluate any case and provide recommendations to the Provost.

### **VIII. SANCTIONS**

Failure to comply with this policy could result in the instructor of record being removed from the course and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **IX. EXCLUSIONS**

No exclusions.

### **X. INTERPRETATION**

The Provost will interpret and apply this policy.



## **FACULTY CREDENTIALS**

### **- Guidelines**

Standard 6.2.a (*Faculty qualifications*) of the *Principles of Accreditation* reads as follows:

For each of its educational programs, the institution justifies and documents the qualifications of its faculty members.

When an institution defines faculty qualifications using faculty credentials, institutions should use the following as credential guidelines:

- a. Faculty teaching general education courses at the undergraduate level: doctorate 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 in the teaching discipline).
- b. Faculty teaching associate degree courses designed for transfer to a baccalaureate degree: doctorate 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 in the teaching discipline).
- c. Faculty teaching associate degree courses not designed for transfer to the baccalaureate degree: bachelor's degree in the teaching discipline, or associate's degree and demonstrated competencies in the teaching discipline.
- d. Faculty teaching baccalaureate courses: doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
- e. Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work: earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline.
- f. Graduate teaching assistants: master's in the teaching discipline or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, direct supervision by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, regular in-service training, and planned and periodic evaluations.

*Approved: College Delegate Assembly, December 2006  
Updated for Revised Principles: April 2018*