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Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 3337-18-01 Faculty credentials and tested experience.

Effective: November 9, 2026

(A) Overview

Ohio university is committed to assuring academic quality in its courses and curricula through the hiring and support of high-quality faculty and instructional personnel. This policy determines the minimum credentials or qualifications for all faculty and instructional personnel at Ohio university inclusive of all locations and delivery modes.

(B) Statement

The following guidelines represent the minimum qualifications of all faculty/ instructional staff teaching courses or developing courses for college credit at Ohio, including part-time, adjunct dual-credit, temporary, non-tenure track, and those involved in consortial or contractual programs and independent of delivery mode. While individual colleges, departments, or schools may create their own faculty credential policies that are more stringent than the policy listed in this rule and in accordance with programmatic accreditation standards if applicable, the university policy represents the minimum accepted standards for instructional staff at Ohio.

Individuals who have hiring authority or are serving on search committees for faculty and instructional personnel are responsible for understanding and working within the parameters of this policy.

Additional clarification with respect to the higher learning commission's expectations related to instructional personnel can be found in the higher learning commission's (HLC) determining qualified faculty guidelines on faculty qualifications.

As pertains to the HLC assumed practices B.2 faculty roles and qualifications, qualified faculty members are identified primarily by credentials, but other factors, including but not limited to equivalent experience, may be considered in determining whether a faculty member is qualified (see exceptions and tested experience listed in this rule).

(1) Using academic credentials to minimally qualify faculty

(a) Dual enrollment (college credit plus) courses

Faculty/instructional staff teaching dual enrollment (college credit plus) courses are minimally qualified if they meet one of the following:

(i) Possess a master's or doctorate degree in the content area of the course in which they are teaching.

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(ii) Possess a master's degree and at least eighteen credit hours completed at the graduate level in the content area in which they are teaching.

Additional information on minimum qualifications to teach specific courses can be found at Ohio university's criteria for dual enrollment teacher approvals.

(b) Technical associate degree courses

Faculty/instructional staff teaching technical associate degree courses are minimally qualified if they possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree in the technical field, or in a closely related discipline or subfield as determined by the academic department/unit.

(c) General education or non-professional courses

Faculty/instructional staff teaching general education or non-professional courses are minimally qualified if they possess a master's degree or higher in any discipline or subfield with at least eighteen credit hours in the teaching field or a closely related field as determined by the academic department/unit.

(d) Associate or bachelor's degree level courses

Faculty/instructional staff teaching associate or bachelor's level courses are minimally qualified if they possess a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield relevant to what they are teaching, or in a closely related discipline or subfield as determined by the academic department/unit.

(i) Supervised graduate teaching assistants may be minimally qualified if they are enrolled in a graduate program of study, assist the instructor of record, utilize a faculty-approved syllabus and subject to regular supervision and assessment by a minimally qualified faculty member.

(ii) Unsupervised graduate teaching assistant must be otherwise minimally qualified to teach at the undergraduate level as described in paragraph (B)(1)(d) of this rule.

(e) Master's degree (5000 and 6000) level courses

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Faculty/instructional staff teaching master's degree (5000 and 6000) level courses are minimally qualified if they possess a terminal degree in the discipline or subfield and have a record of research, scholarship, clinical, creative activity or relevant achievement appropriate for the graduate program as determined by the academic department/unit.

(f) Doctoral degree (7000 and 8000) level courses

Faculty/instructional staff teaching doctoral degree (7000 and 8000) level courses are minimally qualified if they possess a terminal degree in the discipline or subfield and have a record of research, scholarship, clinical, or creative activity, and preparation to teach at the doctoral level. Research, scholarship, or creative activity should be appropriate to the program and degree offered as determined by the academic department/unit.

(2) Using equivalent or tested experience to minimally qualify faculty

In all cases where equivalent or tested experience is being used to substitute for minimal required academic credentials, the faculty qualification form along with appropriate documentation must be provided as indicated on the form, demonstrating that the individual possesses the unique, tested qualifications appropriate to the field in which the course is being offered. All faculty considered eligible to teach through tested or equivalent experience must be approved by the chair of the academic department/unit, dean of the college, and the executive vice president and provost prior to hiring.

The tested and equivalent experience listed below should only be allowed in extraordinary cases and must adhere to the faculty credential and tested experience policies specified by the higher learning commission, the state of Ohio, and the appropriate specialized programmatic accreditor, as necessary.

(a) Equivalent experience

(i) University first year experience or student transition courses

Faculty/instructional staff teaching university first year experience or student transition courses (e.g. UC 1000, UC 1100, UC 1101, UC 1150, UC 1500, UC 1900, and UC 2900) must possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree and five years of experience in higher education.

(ii) Reserve officer training corps program courses

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Faculty/instructional staff teaching reserve officer training corps program courses must be qualified by the department of defense.

(iii) Physical activity and wellness (PAW) courses

Faculty/instructional staff teaching in undergraduate physical activity and wellness (PAW) courses must possess a bachelor's degree in a closely related field, an appropriate certification or license, a documented high level of achievement in the activity, or a high-level of understanding of the pedagogy pertaining to the activity.

(iv) Other skills/ technical courses

Faculty/ instructional staff teaching skills-based or technical courses, for example aviation flight or ground courses, must possess the appropriate certification or license from a recognized body or industry credentialing agency and be approved by the executive vice president and provost.

(b) Tested experience

In the unusual circumstance that faculty/instructional staff are hired without meeting the faculty credentials or equivalent experience requirements, the faculty may be qualified through tested experience. Institutionally, faculty/instructional staff must possess; (i) unique experience and expertise that qualifies the individual for the disciplinary area of the specific course or courses they will teach (this may include discipline -specific certifications, licensure, and/or other nondegree credentials) and (ii) possess a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline or subfield for the specific course or courses they will teach. It must be noted that years of teaching in a field or discipline does not count toward tested experience. While academic departments/units may apply their own tested experience policies in their disciplines, these policies must meet or exceed the university minimums.

(i) Associate or bachelor's degree level courses

Faculty/instructional staff teaching in associate or bachelor's degree level courses must possess a minimum of five years of experience as indicated in both areas described in paragraph (B)(2)(b) of this rule.

(ii) Graduate level courses

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Faculty/instructional staff teaching in graduate degree courses must possess a minimum of fifteen years of experience as described in paragraph (B)(2)(b) of this rule, possess a bachelor's degree in any discipline and a minimum of ten years of experience as described in paragraph (B)(2)(b) of this rule, possess a master's degrees in any discipline and a minimum of seven years of experience as described in paragraph (B)(2)(b) of this rule, or possess a doctoral degree in any discipline and a minimum of five years of experience as described in paragraph (B)(2)(b) of this rule.

Colleges may identify relevant discipline specific certifications and/or licensure that they have determined may satisfy up to half of the required work experience at each degree level. Once this list has been approved by the provost's office, colleges may hire individuals using these new approved minimums.

(3) Disputes

In the event of questions or disputes regarding a faculty member's academic qualifications, the executive vice president and provost or their designee will have the final decision.

(4) Responsibilities

(a) Offices of the president and provost

As stated on page fourteen of the "Faculty Handbook" revised August 2019: Appointment of any faculty member to a particular department should be made by the president upon recommendation initiated by the department concerned and approved by the dean of the college involved and the provost of the university. In cases where an appointment has been recommended by the academic department and the dean of the college but not approved by higher administrative officers, the reason for the denial of appointment shall be conveyed in writing to the person concerned, to the dean of the college, and to the department chair.

Associate provost for faculty and academic planning in the office of the provost is responsible for the verification and validation of all faculty credential requirements and maintains in collaboration with university human resources a personnel folder with documentation such as official transcripts, certifications, licensure, or other justifications for each faculty member.

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(b) Deans and department heads

Deans and department heads are responsible for ensuring all faculty members are qualified to teach each of the courses to which they are assigned. All documents needed to demonstrate appropriate qualifications such as transcripts, certifications, licensure, etc. should be reviewed to ensure the faculty is academically qualified to teach the courses assigned and submitted to the associate provost for faculty and academic planning in the office of the provost. Deans and department heads must compile documentation to justify cases where faculty with credentials in a related field are approved to teach courses. The determination of a related field rests with the department and college and is approved by the associate provost for faculty and academic planning.

(i) Prior to a faculty member teaching a course they has not previously been approved by the dean to teach, the department head must examine the course description and student learning outcomes and determine if the faculty member is qualified according to the department's or college's guidelines to teach the course, or if none exist the university's minimum standards.

(ii) If necessary, additional documentation to justify faculty qualifications must be submitted to the associate provost for faculty and academic planning prior to the term the course is taught for the first time.

(iii) Deans must ensure appropriate documentation is submitted to the associate provost for faculty and academic planning for each faculty member.

(c) Faculty

It is the responsibility of prospective full-time or part-time faculty to provide the university with all of the documentation needed to verify credentials. The documentation includes, but is not limited to, a curriculum vita, official transcripts, and information regarding training/certification to teach online courses submitted directly to hiring department/college from the issuing institution; appropriate licenses or certifications; and verification of work related to teaching experience (as needed). The hiring department/ college is responsible for ensuring these documents are uploaded to the faculty member's credential folder in, the university approved document management platform, along with the required faculty qualification form and justification for alternative teaching credentials form if required in this paragraph.

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The cost to obtain documents required is borne by the prospective faculty member. The university may periodically request updated documents in order to maintain credentialing files.

(i) Transcripts from foreign universities

Prospective faculty submitting transcripts from foreign universities or schools must have the coursework evaluated for equivalence to United States-accredited coursework by a university-approved agency. The prospective faculty member is responsible for the cost of the evaluation. Examples of companies that perform evaluations include: "World Education Services (www.wes.org) or Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc. (www.ece.org)."

(ii) Transcripts from domestic non-regionally accredited institutions

The hiring of faculty whose qualifying degree is from a nonregionally accredited institution in the United States will be considered on a case by case basis. Specific colleges or departments may have guidelines that prevent hiring faculty from nonregional accredited institutions. Should a dean and department head consider the credential from a non-regionally accredited institution, significant additional criteria beyond the usual must be documented and submitted to the associate provost for faculty and academic planning for review and consideration.

(d) Guidelines for justification of alternative teaching credentials

When reviewing qualifications for specific teaching responsibilities, Ohio gives primary consideration to the faculty member's academic preparation as specified by the university faculty qualifications policy which outlines the minimal qualifications for anyone to teach a credited university course. The university policy is informed by HLC requirements for faculty qualification.

Qualifying faculty to teach when they do not possess the traditional academic preparation and credentials should only be allowed in extraordinary cases and must adhere to the faculty credential and tested experience policies specified by the higher learning commission, the state of Ohio, and the appropriate specialized programmatic accreditor, as necessary.

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Complete the justification for alternative teaching credentials form and attach appropriate and complete documentation, including a matrix matching course student learning outcomes and/or program learning outcomes with specific competencies, must provide compelling evidence for qualification.

Other indicators of competence and appropriate qualifications that are documented may include:

(i) Undergraduate and graduate degrees and coursework taken by the potential faculty member (in addition to the highest degree earned) closely related to the teaching discipline;

(ii) Number of graduate credit hours earned in the teaching discipline or related teaching discipline;

(iii) Professional licensure and certifications applicable to the teaching discipline;

(iv) Possession of national recognition/commendations in the teaching discipline;

(v) Documented successful work-related experience in the field, including length of service, complexity of work, and closeness of work performed to the course's student learning outcomes;

(vi) Scholarly publications in the teaching discipline (other than "vanity" press publications as determined by the department/college); and/or

(vii) Other extraordinary excellence or competence in the discipline along with demonstrated success in training.