Policy *309* Version *1* *February 18, 2017*

**Policy Change Cover Sheet**

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| **This form must be attached to each policy presented. All areas in red, including the header, must be completed; if not, it will be sent back to you for completion.** | | |
|  | *I****f the changes you are requesting include housekeeping, please submit those changes to*** [***ndsu.policy.manual@ndsu.edu***](mailto:ndsu.policy.manual@ndsu.edu) ***first so that a clean policy can be presented to the committees.*** | |
| **SECTION**: | Policy 309 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY POLICY | |
| 1. **Effect of policy addition or change (explain the important changes in the policy or effect of this policy). Briefly describe the changes that are being made to the policy and the reasoning behind the requested change(s).** | | |
| * Is this a federal or state mandate?  Yes X **No**   This policy is required by Higher Learning Commission (HLC is the regional accreditation agency that accredits NDSU as a degree granting higher education institution). Guidelines published in October 2015 and March 2016 state HLC’s requirement that faculty members have “appropriate expertise in the subjects they teach.” All HLC-accredited institutions must be in compliance with this requirement no later than Sept. 1, 2017.   * Describe change: Instructional faculty can be qualified to teach based on a combination of academic and tested experience-based credentials. Specifically,  1. Faculty teaching in undergraduate programs should hold a degree at least one level above that of the program in which they are teaching. 2. Faculty teaching graduate courses or cross listed undergraduate/ graduate courses (400/600) should have earned a terminal degree. 3. Tested experience qualifications should be established for specific disciplines and programs. 4. The faculty hiring qualifications related to tested experience should be reviewed and approved through the faculty governance process. | | |
| 1. **This policy change was originated by (individual, office or committee/organization):** | | |
| * Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee and Office of the Provost * Email address of the person who should be contacted with revisions: canan.bilen.green@ndsu.edu | | |
| ***This portion will be completed by Mary Asheim.***  Note: Items routed as information by SCC will have date that policy was routed listed below. | | |
| 1. **This policy has been reviewed/passed by the following (include dates of official action):** | | |
| **Senate Coordinating Committee:** | | 2/27/17 |
| **Faculty Senate:** | |  |
| **Staff Senate:** | |  |
| **Student Government:** | |  |
| **President’s Cabinet:** | |  |

The formatting of this policy will be updated on the website once the **content** has final approval. Please do not make formatting changes on this copy. If you have suggestions on formatting, please route them to [ndsu.policy.manual@ndsu.edu](mailto:ndsu.policy.manual@ndsu.edu). All suggestions will be considered, however due to policy format guidelines, they may not be possible. Thank you for your understanding!

**North Dakota State University  
Policy Manual  
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**SECTION 309  
MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY POLICY**

SOURCE: NDSU President

1. **INTRODUCTION**
   1. In order to ensure high quality teaching and learning in its curricula, this policy establishes the minimum standards for ensuring all instructors of record are qualified to teach credit-bearing NDSU courses. A faculty member can be qualified based on a combination of academic and other credentials. For description of Academic Appointments see [Policy 350.1](https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/350_1.pdf). In general all instructors will be judged primarily on the basis of earned degrees in a field or subject area relevant to the courses taught, obtained from academic institutions that are accredited by regional higher education associations and/or professional accrediting organizations.
   2. In particular cases, a faculty member may be deemed qualified based on other credentials appropriate for a given course, which may include, but not limited to, licensure or certification; honors, awards and other recognitions; relevant work or teaching experience in the field; research record; or graduate level course work.
   3. For all cases academic units are responsible for documenting and justifying the qualifications of its instructional faculty prior to appointment.
2. **GENERAL STANDARDS for INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS**

NDSU applies the following guidelines in establishing minimum credentials for teaching credit-bearing and developmental courses:

* 1. **Academic Qualifications.** Qualification to teach a given course is usually based on the faculty member’s highest earned degree in the teaching discipline, with exceptions for areas where terminal degree is awarded at the Masters level and faculty possesses a doctorate in a related field.

For **undergraduate courses** (enrolling only baccalaureate students), faculty will be deemed academically qualified if they have earned a master’s degree or higher in:

* the subject being taught;
* a closely related field, as defined by program/ academic department and accrediting body; or
* any discipline with at least eighteen (18) graduate credit hours in the subject being taught or a closely related field, as defined by the program/academic department.

For **general education** courses at the undergraduate level, faculty will be deemed academically qualified if they have earned:

* 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).

For **graduate courses** and for **cross listed undergraduate/ graduate courses** (400/600), faculty will be deemed academically qualified if they have earned a terminal degree in the subject being taught or in a closely related field as defined by program/ academic department and have a record of research, scholarship or achievement appropriate for graduate program.

* 1. **Tested Experience-based Qualifications.** If the academic qualifications articulated in 2.1 are not present, qualification to teach in a particular field must be based on other credentials which may include, but not limited to, licensure or certification; honors, awards and other recognitions; relevant work or teaching experience in the field; research record; or graduate level course work. Academic units must define minimum tested experience-based qualifications for their programs.

1. **TO WHOM THIS POLICY APPLIES**

This policy applies to all faculty members who teach courses, including tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure-track, part-time, visiting, and adjunct faculty. This policy does not apply to graduate teaching assistants who work under the direct supervision of a faculty member. *All graduate students assigned as instructors of record should have either a master’s in the same discipline or have satisfactorily completed at least 18 graduate credit hours in the same discipline to that of instruction. Graduate student instructors of record must receive appropriate training prior to instruction.*

1. **APPROVAL OF MINIMUM STANDARDS AND INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY APPOINTMENTS**

4.1 The academic units are responsible for reviewing and verifying the teaching qualifications for instructors of record, including graduate assistants who serve as instructor of record, adjuncts, visiting professors, and part-time academics, at the time of hire. Verification and validation must be conducted for each separate course taught. This process will occur prior to any instructor’s initial appointment with the University, regardless of the mode of course delivery.

4.2 The academic units (chairs/heads/program directors working with program faculty) will define criteria (minimum academic and/or tested experience-based qualifications) that will be used to ensure that all individuals who are selected as instructional staff have the appropriate knowledge and expertise to teach courses for the program. Instructor of Record Qualifications determined by academic units for each program will be reviewed and approved through the regular faculty governance process. Approved Instructor of Record Qualifications will be kept on file at the department and college levels and consulted when appropriate. Any changes to the instructor of record qualification must be approved.

4.3 Faculty who are deemed qualified to teach based on credentials other than those approved academic and tested experience-based qualifications will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis. Decisions to hire faculty under this provision will be relatively rare.

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HISTORY:

New \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2017

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