



30.038 Teaching (Instructional) Faculty Credentials Certification Policy

Responsible Executive: Vice President for Academic Affairs
Responsible Office: Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Revision Date:

Policy Statement

The Norfolk State University Teaching (Instructional) Faculty Credentials Certification Process was adopted as part of the *Norfolk State University 2007 Teaching Faculty Handbook*.

Purpose

This Teaching (Instructional) Faculty Credentials Certification Policy establishes the administrative procedures and responsibilities for certifying faculty within each academic department at the University. It also guides the effective implementation of the process needed for each academic unit—department, school, and Office of Academic Affairs—to certify the academic qualifications and preparedness of a faculty member to teach within a specified teaching discipline.

Scope

Norfolk State University employs competent faculty members who are well qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the University. When hiring faculty to teach courses, the University gives primary consideration to the highest degree earned. The University also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, and other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes that are in alignment with the mission of the University.

Procedures

The Office of Academic Affairs is ultimately responsible for the verification and validation of all credentialing requirements for the Teaching (Instructional) Faculty of the University.

1. The department chair is responsible for certifying, verifying, and validating faculty credentials for any assigned course that falls within the jurisdiction of that department. The certification process is completed by submitting to the Office of Academic Affairs

the required documents listed on the Checklist and Certification Form for New Faculty Hire.

The following documents are required:

- Current curriculum vita
- Official academic transcript(s) of highest degree earned and/or master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline or related teaching discipline. Degrees must have been conferred by regionally accredited colleges or universities. Additionally, degrees/credentials from international institutions must be evaluated to determine the U.S. equivalency.

It is the responsibility of the prospective faculty member to provide the official transcript(s) or evaluation of credentials (by a credible company or organization) from international institutions.

- An official transcript must have the following--the University's official seal, the signature of the University's registrar or designee, the University's watermark or other official identifier, the date of issuance, and the date the degree was conferred if listed on the Certification Form.
 - Degree evaluations must have the following--the company's or organization's official seal or watermark or letterhead, the signature of the company's designee or other official identifier, the date of issuance, and the date the degree was conferred if listed on the Certification Form.
- Certification of Credentials Form

The Teaching (Instructional) Faculty Credentials Certification form must be signed by both the prospective faculty member and the department chair. The affixed signature of the prospective faculty member certifies that all entries are true and complete and agrees to the condition that any falsification of information, regardless of time of discovery, may cause forfeiture of employment at the University.

- Letter of application
- Official Commonwealth of Virginia application form
- Three letters of recommendation (signatures required) or documentation of three references checked by the hiring department
- Permission to verify previous employment
- Permission to conduct a criminal background check
- Official documentation of professional work experience, technical and performance competency, records of publications and certifications or other qualifications

2. The department chair certifies the credentials of the prospective faculty member by completing the Teaching (Instructional) Faculty Credentials Certification form prior to recommending the prospective faculty member (full-time or part-time) for employment by listing the graduate courses (a minimum of 18 credits) in the teaching area(s)/discipline that qualify the faculty member to teach within the specified discipline. Faculty hired to teach graduate courses must have the terminal degree or the equivalent of the terminal degree in the teaching discipline or related teaching discipline.

In extraordinary cases, teaching faculty appointments may be conferred on persons not holding the master's degree in the teaching discipline or related teaching discipline or the 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline or related teaching discipline. These cases are not the norm. These appointments are only approved if such persons have demonstrated outstanding professional or creative accomplishments and are nationally or internationally renowned. Exceptions must have prior approval from the Office of Academic Affairs. The department chair will seek approval through the dean. If an exception is approved, the department chair will complete an "Alternative Justification Form" with supporting documentation.

3. The department chair forwards the Checklist and Certification Form for New Hire and the completed packet to the dean for approval. If approved, the dean signs the form or submits a Memorandum/Letter of Approval and forwards the completed packet to the Office of Academic Affairs.
4. The Office of Academic Affairs reviews and certifies the academic credentials and notifies the dean and department head of hiring status. The academic credentials of the teaching (instructional) faculty member must be approved before employment.

NOTE: This policy supports the Commission of Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, FACULTY CREDENTIALS¹ Guidelines for Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 of the *Principles of Accreditation*, which reads as follows:

The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty.

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).

¹ *Approved: College Delegate Assembly, December 2006*

- 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.