

Marshall University

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Recommendations

Faculty Senate

5-12-2021

SR 20-21-44 EC

Marshall University Faculty Senate

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**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATION**

SR 20-21-44 EC

Recommends that Faculty Senate endorse the attached criteria and procedures for faculty qualifications.

RATIONALE:

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) requires that faculty hold an academic degree relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees or when equivalent (tested) experience is established. As such, Marshall must develop criteria and procedures for faculty teaching in programs with terminal degrees and/or teaching with equivalent (tested) experience. Such criteria and policies are also required for dual credit instructors.

FACULTY SENATE CHAIR:

APPROVED BY THE 
FACULTY SENATE: _____ DATE: 3 May 2021

DISAPPROVED BY THE
FACULTY SENATE: _____ DATE: _____

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT:

APPROVED:  DATE: 5-12-21
DISAPPROVED: _____ DATE: _____

COMMENTS: _____

Minimum Acceptable Qualifications for Faculty Academic Unit Criteria and Procedure for Approval

1. **Faculty submit official transcripts** to the appropriate academic unit.
 - If the degree is relevant to the area of instruction and at least one level above that being awarded in the program in which the faculty member will teach (*except in terminal degree programs, where the faculty member's degree will be at the same level*), they are qualified to teach.
 - If the degree is one level above that being awarded in the program in which the faculty member will teach but is not in the discipline in which they will teach, the faculty member must have at least 18 graduate semester hours in the discipline in which they will teach. Courses in the pedagogy of teaching college-level courses in that discipline may comprise a portion of the 18 semester hours.
 - If the degree is at the same level as that being awarded by the (non-terminal degree) program in which the faculty member will teach, the faculty member must provide evidence of sufficient experience and other evidence that they are qualified to teach courses in the discipline. This evidence must include at least five years of non-academic experience in the discipline and at least one of the following:
 - Specialized credentials or certifications in the discipline in which they will teach
 - Documented professional development in the discipline, e.g., continuing education
 - Leadership in discipline related organizations or learned societies
 - Record of scholarly presentations or publications on topics related to course/s they will teach.

2. **Review Process**
 - All evidence presented must be reviewed by the unit's head (e.g., school director, department chair, program director, etc.) who will determine if the prospective faculty member is qualified to teach in the discipline.
 - All evidence presented must be approved by the dean of the prospective faculty member's college.
 - In the case of dual credit instructors, evidence will first be reviewed by the program manager for dual enrollment, followed by the chair of the department of the discipline in which the student will receive dual credit, the dean of the college, the associate dean of undergraduate studies, and the dean of undergraduate studies.
 - Appropriate deans will deliver original transcripts to the Office of Academic Affairs.
 - The Office of Academic Affairs will maintain official transcripts in a locked file cabinet and upload scanned copies to a secure Faculty Credential Banner Database.

Please refer to the following page for a summary of the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) Guidelines concerning Faculty Qualifications.

Summary of Main Points from *Determining Qualified Faculty through HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices: Guidelines for Institutions and Peer Reviewers, September 2020.*

- I. **General Rule** = Faculty hold academic degree relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees or when equivalent (tested) experience is established.
 1. **Terminal degree programs** = faculty have same level of degree.
 2. **Equivalent (tested) experience** = institution defines a minimum threshold of experience and an evaluation process that is used in the appointment process.

- II. **Credentials**
 1. **General education courses** (or other non-occupational courses) = hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If master's degree or higher is in a discipline or subfield other than the one in which they are teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.
 2. **Graduate programs** = hold a terminal degree determined by the discipline and have a record of research, scholarship, or achievement appropriate for the graduate program.
 3. **Career and technical education college-level certificate and occupational associate degree programs** = should hold a bachelor's degree in the field and/or a combination of education, training, and tested experience.

- III. **Equivalent (Tested) Experience** (may substitute for earned credentials)
 1. Institution determines that tested experience is equivalent to the degree it would otherwise require for a faculty position.
 2. Tested experience must include breadth and depth of experience outside the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be teaching. (typically, not based exclusively on years of teaching experience).
 3. Institution must have well-defined policies, procedures, and documentation that demonstrate when such experience is sufficient to determine the faculty member has expertise necessary to teach students in that discipline.
 4. Policy should include a minimum threshold of experience and a system of evaluation.
 5. Qualifications should be established for specific disciplines and programs and could include
 - skill sets
 - types of certifications or additional credentials
 - specific types of experiences
 - regular professional development
 - experience in the discipline outside of classroom teaching
 - being active in professional societies and learned organizations through presentations and publications on topics relevant to the (dual credit or other) courses they teach.
 6. All policies and procedures should be reviewed and approved by the faculty governance process.

- IV. **Dual Credit**
 1. Faculty credentialing guidelines are the same as above. Guidelines note that if credentialing alone is used (i.e., not tested experience), and if the master's or terminal degree (whichever is applicable) is in the field of education, the faculty member must have 18 graduate hours in the discipline they are teaching. Courses in the pedagogy of teaching college-level courses in that discipline may comprise a portion of the 18 semester hours.
 2. Tested experience (as outlined in III applies to faculty teaching dual credit courses).