

UW Oshkosh Policy on Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Instructional Staff

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to create university-wide criteria for the appointment of faculty and instructional staff to teach courses for credit at UW Oshkosh. The criteria will establish standardized qualifications across the University and to demonstrate how the University fulfills the new accreditations standards adopted by the Higher Learning Commission in March 2016. The criteria will apply to all UW Oshkosh staff who teach with appointments as faculty or instructional academic staff.

Criteria: Minimum faculty qualifications will be judged on the basis of earned degrees in a field or subject area relevant to the courses taught. The degrees should be earned from academic institutions that are accredited by regional or professional accrediting organizations or the equivalent in countries outside of the United States.

Faculty and Instructional Academic Staff

All faculty and Instructional Academic Staff will have earned a terminal degree appropriate to the discipline and relevant to the content they are teaching, or a degree at least one level higher than the coursework in which they are providing instruction.

- a. A minimum of a Master's degree for teaching courses at the Bachelor's degree level. If the Master's degree is in another area other than the content area, the faculty or staff member should have at least 18 graduate credits in the content area. Faculty who do not meet these criteria must have a documented plan for completion that is approved by the relevant dean and chairperson.
- b. A minimum of a Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree is required for teaching courses at the graduate level.
- c. Additional information about graduate faculty appointments is available in the Graduate Bulletin.
- d. Accredited programs may have additional criteria as required by accrediting bodies.

Exceptions: In cases when these criteria are not met, the University may hire faculty or instructional academic staff if they meet the following general criteria for equivalent experience. To be qualified on the basis of equivalent experience, instructors must have a documented record of discipline-related practice at a level that ensures mastery of the content of the courses taught and ongoing currency in the field. This experience must provide evidence of a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline. The Provost and Dean will authorize the exception at the point of hire by the department. Each academic program may identify additional ways to document equivalent experience such as:

- Years of professional experience relevant to the content they are teaching,
- Tested or documented experience and advancement or recognition in the field,
- Publications, recognition of scholarly activity,
- Licensure or professional certification,
- Documentation of excellence in practice.
- Criteria determined by specialty accreditation agencies