



# FACULTY TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

## COMPLIANCE OVERVIEW

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### BACKGROUND

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As part of its continued accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), the university must provide evidence of compliance with the commission's *Principles of Accreditation*. Section 6, concerning faculty, reads as follows:

Qualified, effective faculty members are essential to carry out the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic program. The tradition of shared governance within American higher education recognizes the importance of both faculty and administrative involvement in the approval of educational programs. Because student learning is central to the institution's mission and educational degrees, the faculty has responsibility for directing the learning enterprise including overseeing and coordinating educational programs to ensure that each contains essential curricular components, has appropriate content and pedagogy, and maintains discipline currency.

Achievement of the institution's mission with respect to teaching, research, and service requires a critical mass of full-time qualified faculty to provide direction and oversight of the academic programs. Due to this significant role, it is imperative that an effective system of evaluation be in place for all faculty members that takes into account the institution's obligations to foster intellectual freedom of faculty to teach, serve, research, and publish.

**For each of its educational programs, the institution justifies and documents the qualifications of its faculty members.**

### MINIMUM FACULTY TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

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To help assure the delivery of high-quality academic programming and to support compliance with SACSCOC's *Principles of Accreditation*, the university has established internal guidelines concerning minimum faculty teaching qualifications. For specific details on acceptable means of qualification and required supporting documentation, please refer to the complete guidelines available at <https://apq.ucf.edu/fq/fqteaching/>.

#### Key points

SACSCOC holds its member institutions responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty members.

The department chair or comparable unit head must make a clear and compelling case to sufficiently support each faculty hire and teaching assignment.

Appropriate supporting documentation must be provided as evidence of each faculty member's qualifications (e.g., official transcript, curriculum vitae).

Primary consideration is given to the highest earned degree in the teaching discipline or in a related discipline.

All hiring decisions and teaching assignments should take into consideration faculty members' competence, effectiveness, and capacity.

Academic credentials (e.g., degrees, coursework) may be in the teaching discipline or in a broadly or selectively related discipline, differentiated by scope.

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Consideration of other teaching qualifications either in conjunction with or in lieu of academic credentials is made on a case-by-case basis; such cases are exceptional, and the evidence provided of other demonstrated competencies and achievements must be compelling.

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The qualifications outlined in the complete guidelines establish university-wide *minimum* teaching qualifications standards; the various colleges and their constituent units may establish and enforce higher standards.

## REVIEWING FACULTY TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

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**Discipline descriptions** Departments and academic programs develop statements of good practices with respect to faculty teaching qualifications within their individual teaching disciplines to provide an appropriate context for review; see <https://apq.ucf.edu/fq/fqteaching/dd/>.

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**CIP codes** At UCF, each academic program and each course is assigned a code from the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) taxonomy developed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Programs and their affiliated courses typically share the same six-digit CIP code, but this is not always the case. Teaching certifications are prepared and reviewed at the course level.

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For more information on CIP codes, see <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/>.

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For a comprehensive list of the university's active course CIP codes, see <https://apq.ucf.edu/fq/fqteaching/>.

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**Faculty teaching certifications** Teaching certifications are completed at the time of hire for all full-time and part-time faculty members who will serve as instructor of record; teaching certifications must be resubmitted for approval if teaching assignments change.

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Teaching certifications require sign-off by the department chair or comparable unit head, the dean or the dean's designee, and Academic Affairs.

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Approval by Academic Affairs is not required for a faculty member to begin teaching; rather, review by Academic Affairs serves as a quality assurance audit and risk assessment concerning the sufficiency of justification and documentation provided.

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If a faculty member teaches courses for more than one unit, each teaching unit must submit its own teaching certification for the courses it oversees.

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Within each teaching discipline, a faculty member may be certified to teach throughout the broad scope of the discipline or may be certified to teach a more restricted set of courses.

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Teaching certifications are completed online using the university's Faculty Qualifications Management System accessible to authorized users through the myUCF portal; for instructions and user manuals, see <http://apq.ucf.edu/fq/fqteaching/>.

## CONCURRENT REVIEWS

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### **Graduate faculty reviews**

Faculty members who will participate in graduate education must undergo an additional review for appointment to the graduate faculty.

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Graduate faculty reviews are facilitated by the College of Graduate Studies; this review serves a related but ultimately different purpose than the review of teaching qualifications; thus, approval of a faculty member's teaching certification by Academic Affairs does not automatically result in appointment to the graduate faculty, nor does appointment to the graduate faculty guarantee approval of a faculty member's teaching certification by Academic Affairs.

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When applicable, the teaching unit should simultaneously submit a teaching certification to Academic Affairs and a Nomination and Appointment to Graduate Faculty and Graduate Faculty Scholars form to the College of Graduate Studies (see <http://admin2.graduate.ucf.edu/formsandreferences/>).

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Criteria beyond the university's guidelines for minimum teaching qualifications are applied for faculty members who will be engaged in certain aspects of graduate education (e.g., chairing a dissertation committee).

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### **Academic program review**

Discipline descriptions are reviewed, and feedback is offered, by external experts in the field, providing third-party validation of the university's local practices.

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Teaching assignments are reviewed, and teaching certifications are submitted if they are missing or need updating.

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Graduate faculty appointments are reviewed; renomination is required at this time.