



AOP 13.09: CREDENTIALS FOR TEACHING AND DEGREE PROGRAM COORDINATION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy (AOP) is to define the credentials for an individual to teach courses.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Credentials for Teaching

Standard Faculty Credentials for Teaching

The instructor of record for each academic credit course offered at Mississippi State University must possess the proper credentials for the discipline in which he or she is teaching. Credentials are determined as follows:

1. Undergraduate courses: The instructor of record must possess a doctorate or master's degree with at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline or related discipline.
2. Graduate and post-baccalaureate courses: The instructor of record must possess an earned doctorate/terminal degree in the same or related teaching discipline.
3. Online instructors of record must either acquire or demonstrate proficiency in suitable online education methodologies by **one of the following**:
 - a. Successful and verified completion of the MSU Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) course focusing on best practices in online education methodologies (Online Teaching 101) before or during the first semester of teaching an online course.
 - b. Successful and verified completion of a course equivalent to Online Teaching 101 before or during the first semester of teaching an online course. The appropriateness of a proposed substitute will be determined by the CTL.
 - c. Successful and verified completion of 4 hours of workshops and/or seminars focused on online teaching methodologies and best practices **and** successful completion of module 2 from the Online Teaching 101 course, "*Regular and Substantive Interaction.*" Suitable workshops or seminars include CTL online teaching workshops, Center for Distance Education (CDE) pedagogical lunch and learns, College/Department-led workshops offered by individuals certified by

Quality Matters and/or professional development courses provided by disciplinary professional associations.

- i. Module 2, *Regular and Substantive Interaction*, from the Online Teaching 101 course must be completed before or during their first semester of teaching an online course at MSU.
 - ii. The remaining 4 hours of workshops and/or seminars must be completed by online instructors of record within 2 years of the beginning of their initial online class at MSU.
- d. Instructors who have recent (within the last three years), extensive experience teaching online courses (defined as teaching either the same course at least three different times or different courses a combined total of at least six times) may substitute the above requirements with a successful evaluation of their course(s) and the methodologies used in the course(s) from the CTL. CTL in conjunction with the College will elect credentialed evaluators proficient in the assessment of online teaching methodologies to perform the evaluation.

Graduate Teaching Assistants as Instructors of Record.

Graduate teaching assistants may serve as instructors of record only for undergraduate courses. These graduate students must possess a master's in the teaching discipline, or at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline and obtain classroom certification from the Graduate School. Graduate teaching assistants must receive direct supervision by a faculty member experienced in the same teaching discipline, regular in-service training, and planned periodic evaluations. Graduate teaching assistants cannot serve as instructors of record for graduate level courses, regardless of qualifications.

Alternative Certification through Commensurate Experience.

An individual may be certified to teach courses at the undergraduate or graduate level based on commensurate experience in the same or related discipline. Professional certification, licensure or documented record of professional practice will be utilized to evaluate commensurate experience. The alternative certification of an instructor should be requested in a letter of justification by the department head, recommended by the academic dean, supported by Institutional Research and Effectiveness, and approved by the Provost.

Instructor of Record.

An official transcript for each degree earned, along with any other documentation required or associated with the discipline that demonstrates experience or expertise (e.g. licensure, certification) must be on file with Human Resources Management in order for the individual to be listed as the instructor of record for any academic credit course.

Assignment of Instructor of Record.

The official instructor of record must be assigned for each academic credit course by the end of

the 10th day of classes during each fall and spring semester. The official instructor of record for each academic credit course offered during any summer term must be assigned by the end of the 3rd day of classes.

Primary and Secondary Instructors

In the case of two or more instructors being assigned to teach a course, there will be a primary instructor and one (or more) secondary instructors. The primary instructor must be an individual who is credentialed to serve as the instructor of record for the course. The primary instructor has full responsibility for all aspects of the development and delivery of the course, and determination of final grades for the students. If utilized, a secondary instructor provides support to the primary instructor. In this capacity, a secondary instructor may teach lectures and/or labs, grade papers or provide other support functions. In the case that the secondary instructor is credentialed to serve as an instructor of record for the course, he/she would have the same rights and responsibilities as the primary instructor.

When there is a primary and one or more secondary instructors assigned to a course, it is the responsibility of the department head each semester to ensure that each individual has a complete understanding of their role and responsibilities. In such cases where a secondary instructor is not credentialed to serve as the instructor of record, the dean's office of the college will maintain a signed record of the primary and secondary instructors' acknowledgment of their roles and responsibilities. A copy of the signed acknowledgment will be maintained in the Faculty Credentials database.

Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Instruction

Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary programs need to follow the Standard Faculty Credentials for Teaching; however, further information is needed to explain how the instructors' disciplines are related to the mission of the program. Each program may submit one justification letter stating the mission of the program and the types of disciplines that support this mission. This letter must be submitted by the department head, recommended by the academic dean, supported by Institutional Research and Effectiveness, and approved by the Provost. A brief summary of qualifications for each instructor of record will be needed in the Faculty Credentials database, and a letter of justification is only needed if the instructor does not meet the Standard Faculty Credentials for Teaching.

Non-Degree Program Instruction

Certificate programs, developmental courses, and courses that do not contribute to a degree program (e.g., English as a Second Language) have unique missions that may not fit the Standard Faculty Credentials for Teaching. In these cases, the course content may be more valuable to students when the instructor has commensurate experience rather than academic qualifications. Each program may submit one justification letter stating the mission of the program and the types of commensurate experiences desired to support this mission. This letter must be submitted by the department head, recommended by the academic dean, supported by Institutional Research and Effectiveness, and approved by the Provost. A brief summary of qualifications for each instructor of record will be needed in the Faculty Credentials database, and a letter of

justification is only needed if those qualifications do not clearly align with the commensurate experience detailed in the program justification letter.

2. Program Coordination

Program review, curriculum, and assessment are the responsibility of faculty. In addition, ensuring the success of an academic program and its students often requires the expertise of faculty members. To ensure qualified oversight, each department will select a member or members of the faculty responsible for program coordination for each graduate and undergraduate program. The department head, in consultation with the program faculty, will coordinate the selection process. Program coordination will be included in the annual review process as a part of the teaching responsibilities of the assigned coordinator(s). If circumstances warrant, departments may provide the program coordinator(s) a course release or additional departmental support for another University assigned effort (e.g., additional travel funds). Program coordinators on 9-month contracts may also receive additional compensation if they perform duties for these positions in the summer. Any additional compensation or release from teaching will be agreed upon by the faculty member, department head, and dean.

The number of faculty members responsible for program coordination will vary based on the needs of the department and the size and nature of its programs. One faculty member may serve as coordinator for multiple programs. Any faculty member serving as a coordinator must meet the following qualifications. Collectively, coordinators must meet the following responsibilities; additional qualifications and responsibilities may be determined by the department head and/or dean.

Qualifications:

- Be academically qualified in the field
- Be a member of the graduate faculty (for graduate programs)

Responsibilities in conjunction with the department head and/or dean:

- Ensure each program adheres to all University policies and procedures.
- Lead program faculty in regular curriculum review and development. When changes are needed, coordinate with the curriculum committee to develop new courses, revise existing courses, and review all completed course and curriculum proposals required by the UCCC.
- Facilitate the annual assessment of each program.
- Provide guidance to ensure appropriate academic advising for each program.
- Interact with other faculty or professional staff regarding advising and/or recruitment.
- Interact with current and prospective students.

- Participate in University undergraduate and graduate coordinator workshops.
- Interact with the Dean of the Graduate School to ensure adherence to all Graduate School policies and procedures (graduate programs).
- Review and complete graduate student paperwork as required by the Graduate School (graduate programs).

REVIEW

This AOP will be reviewed every four years or whenever circumstances require an earlier review by the Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs with recommendations for revision to the Provost and Executive Vice President.

REVIEWED:

/s/ Peter Ryan
Executive Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

7/26/21
Date

/s/ David Shaw
Provost and Executive Vice President

7/26/21
Date

/s/ Rebecca Robichaux-Davis
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate

7/26/21
Date

/s/ Tracey Baham
Assistant Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness

7/26/21
Date

/s/ Joan Lucas
General Counsel

7/26/21
Date

APPROVED:

/s/ Mark Keenum
President

7/26/21
Date