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# Faculty Credential Policies

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Policy Approval Authority: Faculty Senate Personnel Committee

Responsible Division: Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost

Responsible Office: Academic Affairs

Responsible Officer (title only): Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

Contact Person: Chad McEvoy

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## Purpose and Summary

In support of its goal to ensure high-quality teaching and learning in its curricula, Northern Illinois University ensures that faculty members are qualified to teach students enrolled in credit-bearing courses. This policy establishes the minimum qualifications for faculty teaching assigned courses.

This policy is based on and uses language from the [Assumed Practices of the Higher Learning Commission](#).

## Scope

This policy applies to all faculty, including tenured and tenure-track faculty, full- and part-time instructors, clinical faculty and others, assigned an instructional role in a credit-bearing class that will appear on a student transcript as an NIU-offered course. Graduate assistants under the supervision of a faculty member are exempt from the policy.

## Policy

Faculty members must be qualified to teach the courses to which they are assigned either through credentials or tested experience.

## Credentials

Faculty possess an academic degree relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees or when equivalent experience is established. In terminal degree programs, faculty members possess the same level of degree. Faculty teaching general education courses, or other non-occupational courses, hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which they are teaching,

that faculty member must have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.

Faculty teaching in graduate programs must hold the terminal degree determined by the discipline and have a record of research, scholarship or achievement appropriate for the graduate program.

Faculty teaching at the doctoral level have a record of recognized scholarship, creative endeavor, or achievement in practice commensurate with doctoral expectations.

### **Tested Experience**

Departments that employ faculty based on equivalent experience must define in writing a minimum threshold of experience and an evaluation process that is used in the appointment process. Such appointments must be reviewed and approved by the dean or dean's designee. Departments and their respective colleges are responsible for ensuring that faculty meet minimum qualification standards.