

## **Documentation Required by the Higher Learning Commission to Satisfy Faculty Qualifications for Instruction**

**April 11, 2019**

**Gail D. Burd**

*Faculty qualifications for instruction must be made by the Department Head and must be approved by the Academic Associate Dean of the College in accordance with Higher Learning Commission (UA Regional Accreditor) policies. In some cases, faculty will have different disciplines represented by a master's degree than a PhD or other similar degree. Degrees in two disciplines broaden the instructional qualification of the faculty member.*

Documentation that will suffice for **current faculty** qualifications for instruction (only one of the below documents or verification of qualification is needed):

- 1) **Verification via Truescreen of the degree awarded and major in the area of instruction.** Verification of the master's degree, PhD, and/or terminal degree by Truescreen.
- 2) **Diploma** that indicates the degree and major in the area of instruction.
- 3) **Transcripts that show graduate degree awarded, major, and courses to support instructional expertise.**
- 4) Diploma and major are different from instructional area, but supporting evidence from **published documents that show faculty scholarship relates to the fields of instruction.**
- 5) Diploma and major are different from instructional area, but a transcript that demonstrates **18 graduate credits of course work in the areas of instruction.**
- 6) Diploma and major are different from instructional area, but faculty member is considered a **professional expert working in the field of instruction for a minimum of three years** (i.e. English major who is CFO of Macy's teaching in the MBA program).
- 7) Diploma and major at the BA or BS level, but faculty is **licensed and working as a professional for three years** or is considered a **professional expert in the field of instruction with three years of experience**, may teach undergraduate and graduate students.
- 8) Official transcripts or clear **copies** are okay; clear copy of the diploma is okay.
- 9) Official letter from the institution that a degree has been awarded and the major of study (not as strong as a transcript, verification by Truescreen, or copy of the diploma).

Documentation that **newly hired faculty** will need for faculty qualifications for instruction beginning July 1, 2019 (only one of the below documents or verification of qualification is needed):

- 1) **Verification via Truescreen** of the degree awarded and major in the area of instruction. Verification of the bachelor, master's degree, and PhD (or terminal degree) may provide additional breadth of teaching areas for which the instructor is qualified.
- 2) Official transcript or official diploma is needed for new hires that cannot be verified by Truescreen. **The transcript may be useful to broaden the teaching areas in which the instructor is qualified based on 18 graduate credits in the field of instruction.**
- 3) Transcript of graduate degree and major showing completion to the degree and major in the area of instruction.
- 4) Transcript of graduate degree and major showing completion of the degree, diploma, or verification by Truescreen, but the major is in an area different from the discipline of instruction; faculty member may teach in the discipline if they have **published scholarship in the discipline of instruction.**

- 5) Transcript of graduate degree and major showing completion of the degree and major, diploma, or verification by Truescreen is in an area different from the discipline of instruction, but faculty member has **18 graduate credits in the discipline of instruction**.
- 6) Transcript, diploma and major, and Truescreen verification are different from instructional area, but faculty member is considered a **professional expert working in the field of instruction for a minimum of three years** (i.e. English major who is CFO of Macy's teaching in the MBA program).
- 7) Transcript, diploma and major, and Truescreen verification is at the BA or BS level, but a faculty member is **licensed and working as a professional in the field of instruction** with three years of experience, may teach undergraduate and graduate students.

Notes:

- a) A master's degree is needed to teach bachelor level students (except as noted above); a PhD or terminal degree is need to teach master's level students (except as noted above).
- b) A **terminal degree** is the highest level of degree offered in the field of study. For example, the MFA in fine arts, MBA in business, MD in medicine, Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD), and Doctor of Education (EdD) are all considered terminal degrees.
- c) Where possible, Truescreen should verify the bachelor, master's, and PhD (or terminal degree) in cases where the PhD is different from the lower degrees.
- d) A **CV** is not a verified document for purposes of certifying faculty qualifications.
- e) Teaching courses that do not neatly fall within a particular discipline or that cross boundaries between two or three discipline areas serve a valuable educational purpose and one that students often prefer. UA is very interdisciplinary in research and teaching and many of our graduate programs and increasingly our general education courses are interdisciplinary.

Department heads, graduate program directors, academic associate deans, however, still need to certify that faculty teaching these **interdisciplinary courses and programs** are qualified through:

- Degrees at the appropriate level for the course,
- Degrees in a related family of one of the disciplines represented in the course,
- Scholarship in an area of the course or in a closely related area taught in the course,
- Have a level of expertise that contributes to the educational experiences of the students, and
- Have ability to assess student assignments in the discipline(s) taught in the course.

*Examples of interdisciplinary programs and courses include:*

- *Cancer biology,*
- *Neuroscience,*
- *Arid Lands Studies,*
- *Water resources,*
- *Second Language Acquisition and Teaching,*
- *Digital Humanities,*
- *Impact of computers on society,*
- *Twentieth century art and science,*
- *Narrative medicine, and*
- *Impact of music education on brain development.*

Approved by Provost Council, 4/15/19

Approved by Faculty Senate, 5/6/19