

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Office of Academic Affairs

Dept. 3302 1000 E. University Avenue • Laramie, WY 82071

(307) 766-4286

December 2018

To: Deans and Department Heads
From: Kate Miller, Provost
Re: Higher Learning Commission faculty credentialing requirements

You may recall that last Fall of 2017, we sent you a notification that the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), our accrediting agency, issued specific requirements for faculty credentials to teach university-level courses. As a requirement of our continued accreditation, all instructors who teach at or for UW must hold:

- A master's degree or higher in the discipline in which they are teaching,
OR
- A master's degree or higher in another discipline **AND** a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline in which they teach,
OR
- A combination of education, training, and tested experience (testable/measurable experience, significant research, training, industry certification, professional licenses) that the department can verify and demonstrate qualifies the person at the appropriate level,
AND
- A degree one level above the coursework they are teaching

These requirements apply to **all academic personnel and staff who teach UW courses, regardless of modality or FTE (e.g., full-time, part-time, or temporary). This includes Academic Professionals (extended-term and non-extended term), Visiting Professors, Professors of Practice, Clinical Faculty, and Tenure-stream faculty. It also includes staff who have been approved to teach courses. Teaching assistants enrolled in a graduate program and supervised by faculty are excepted from this policy.**

We must demonstrate compliance with this requirement for every person teaching our courses, from 1000 level to graduate level. When the HLC Peer Review team visits UW in the Fall of 2019, for the most part, they will not be considered auditors. However, **in this area, they will audit every section for the instructor's appropriate expertise and training.** Academic Affairs must have the credentials or other appropriate documentation every semester and term in order to comply with this requirement – thus, every hire you make and every section assignment to a new person must be accompanied by this documentation.

Each semester, your department, school, and/or college or unit should ensure that you have transcripts or other appropriate documentation (for tested experience) that document your teaching faculty and staff have credential commensurate with their instructional appointment. These credentials can be gathered one time for each person within the annual review process or at hiring, but must be on record for every instructional appointee.

Guidelines for documenting and establishing expertise and other FAQ can be found below. If you have any questions, contact Anne Alexander at aalex@uwyo.edu.