

 Prescott College	Policy Number: 250	
	Policy Category: <i>Personnel Policies</i>	
	Faculty Qualifications	
	Policy Summary: <i>This policy describes the methods used to ensure that faculty have the necessary qualifications to teach in particular subject areas.</i>	
	Approval Date: 10/3/22	Effective Date: Upon approval
Policy Owner: <i>President</i>	Scheduled for Review: <i>Fall 2027</i>	

Policy Statement

Prescott College is committed to offering academic programs of demonstrable quality and effective teaching and learning. The College recognizes that to deliver quality academic programs, faculty must meet the qualifications expected by our accrediting bodies. Such qualifications are primarily met by academic credentials, and, under certain specific circumstances, by tested experience in the field of instruction. Faculty must also be qualified to engage in the non-teaching responsibilities of the College, including but not limited to oversight of curriculum, research and other scholarly activities, program review, assessment, and service to the institution and broader community, as contracted.

Qualification by Credentials

Determination by credentials is the primary method utilized to determine faculty qualifications. Faculty credentials refer to the degrees that Faculty earned and the graduate level coursework Faculty have completed that provide evidence of knowledge of specific disciplines or fields of study. The degree awarded forms the basis for Faculty knowledge of what students of the discipline should learn and/or be able to do as a graduate in the discipline or field. Successful completion of a comprehensive degree is the best indication that a Faculty member is qualified to teach in the discipline or field.

To be qualified to teach at Prescott College, Full Faculty must hold a terminal academic degree in the discipline, or subfield of the discipline, in which they teach, and/or for which they develop curricula. To be qualified to teach in interdisciplinary programs, Full Faculty must hold a terminal degree in a discipline that contributes to the interdisciplinary field.

While Prescott College Full Faculty must hold terminal degrees, all other Faculty have an academic degree in the discipline, or subfield of the discipline, in which they teach, and/or for which they develop curricula. The academic degree is at least one level above that of the courses being taught or developed, except in programs for terminal degrees or when full-time equivalent experience is established as described by "Qualification by Factors other than Credentials".

An academic subfield refers to a component of the discipline in which the instruction is delivered. The key consideration is whether a degree in the field or a focus in the specialization held by a faculty

member appropriately matches the courses, including General Education courses, the faculty member would teach in accordance with the conventions of the academic field. All Faculty may document the completion of at least 18 graduate credit hours in a discipline or subfield in order to teach or develop curriculum in that discipline.

In addition to the abovementioned criteria:

Faculty teaching in Prescott College undergraduate programs will hold at least a master's degree in the discipline or subfield in which they will teach and/or for which they develop curricula.

Alternatively, a Faculty member teaching General Education courses may hold a master's degree in a different field and have completed at least 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline in which they will teach, or meet the criteria for "Qualification by Factors other than Credentials".

Faculty teaching in Prescott College graduate programs must demonstrate a record of research and scholarship appropriate for the graduate program/s in which they teach.

Faculty teaching and supervising scholarly activity in terminal degree programs (for example, a Ph.D. or M.B.A. program) have the same level of degree.

Faculty guiding doctoral education have a record of scholarship and preparation to teach and supervise scholarly activity at the doctoral level. Research and scholarship are appropriate to the program and degree offered.

Faculty who are not the instructor of record (often leading a discussion, a field experience or lab section) have at least the same level of degree as the course being taught. In such cases, the instructor of record has the qualifications outlined above, and has regular interaction with, and guidance of, the Faculty members who are not the lead instructors in the course.

Exceptions to the above: **Graduate teaching assistants** enrolled in a Prescott College graduate program and supervised by faculty may be considered qualified.

Qualification by Factors other than Credentials

Earned credentials are the primary evaluation mechanism for determining faculty qualifications. However, other/alternate credentials, with appropriate documentation, may be considered for specific disciplines such as practice-oriented, interdisciplinary or language instruction, if academic credentials are not met. Examples of these alternative credentials include:

1. tested experience in practice-oriented disciplines, such as board or licensure exams
2. industry certification
3. recognition of language competence by tribal elders or a nationally recognized rating of proficiency in the language
4. peer review of a significant body of work in the field
5. significant professional experience.

Prior teaching experience in the discipline or subdiscipline is not used to determine alternative qualifications.

Faculty teaching bachelor's-level courses have a minimum of a bachelor's-level degree in the discipline or subfield, AND hold documented, alternative credentials. When professional experience is the basis for alternative qualification, a minimum of three (3) years full-time equivalent of professional experience in a related discipline to the courses is expected; OR,

Have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in any discipline, AND a nationally recognized credential (certification, license, etc.) for the discipline or subfield, AND a minimum of three (3) years full-time equivalent of professional experience in a related discipline to the courses.

Faculty teaching master's-level courses have a minimum of a master's degree in the discipline or subfield, AND hold documented, alternative credentials. When professional experience is the basis for alternative qualification, a minimum of five (5) years full-time equivalent of professional experience in a related discipline to the courses is expected; OR,

Have a minimum of a master's degree in any discipline, AND a nationally-recognized credential (certification, license, etc.) for the discipline or subfield, AND a minimum of five (5) years full-time equivalent of professional experience in a related discipline to the courses; OR,

In limited special circumstances, a faculty member may teach a master's-level course with a bachelor's degree if they are recognized by their peers for distinguished professional accomplishments, AND are considered an expert in the content covered in the course.

Faculty teaching doctoral-level courses have a doctoral degree in any discipline, AND a nationally-recognized credential (certification, license, etc.) for the discipline or subfield, AND a minimum of ten (10) years full-time equivalent of professional experience in a related discipline to the courses; OR,

In limited special circumstances, a faculty member may teach a doctoral-level course with a master's degree if they are recognized by their peers for distinguished professional accomplishments, AND are considered an expert in the content covered in the course, AND have a minimum of ten (10) years full-time equivalent of professional experience in a related field to the course.

Definitions

Adjunct: Adjunct faculty are those who are hired on a course-by-course, contractual basis.

Academic Subfield: An academic subfield refers to a component of the discipline in which the instruction is delivered.

Faculty: Faculty members are those with instructional and/or curriculum development roles and responsibilities at PC. The general term "faculty" may apply to clinical faculty, associate faculty, or visiting faculty. The general term "faculty" may also include Full Faculty and/or Adjuncts.

Full Faculty: Full Faculty members are full-time, salaried persons whose primary responsibilities are: instructing; developing and/or improving curriculum; and advising students. Other principal responsibilities include assessment of learning, learning support, mentor support, program development, committee work, scholarship, professional development, and community service. This category of faculty also includes persons who occupy administrative positions at the College but who

retain their underlying faculty appointments. The nature and extent of individual faculty member's duties are described in applicable Letters of Agreement. This category does not include associate, clinical, visiting, nor adjunct faculty members.

Graduate Teaching Assistants: Graduate teaching assistants are graduate students enrolled in a Prescott College graduate program who apply for or are appointed as graduate teaching assistants. Graduate teaching assistants are distinguished from Adjunct faculty.

Terminal Degree: A terminal degree is the highest academic degree that can be awarded in an academic field or professional discipline.

Reason for Policy

This policy outlines the academic qualifications required to teach various levels and types of courses.

Responsibilities

For following policy:	All administrators and faculty scheduling faculty.
For enforcement of policy:	President or designee
For oversight of policy:	Dean of Academic Affairs
For procedures implementing the policy:	Dean of Academic Affairs
For notification:	Policy Librarian

Cross Referenced Policies

Higher Learning Commission a - Determining Qualified Faculty Through HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices Guidelines for Institutions and Peer Reviewers
https://download.hlcommission.org/FacultyGuidelines_OPB.pdf

Higher Learning Commission b - Policy Title: Assumed Practices; Number: CRRT.B.10.020
<https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/assumed-practices.html>

Revision History