

1 2024-2025 comprehensive policy review: Academic Appointments with Teaching

2 Functions

3

4 Proposed redlined revisions include:

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6 (1) New language that addresses qualifications of faculty and instructional staff teaching
7 courses for credit. The language clarifies assumed practices for instructional appointee
8 qualifications such as terminal degree requirements. The policy language provides new
9 guidance with respect to determining, approving, and documenting equivalent experience for
10 instructional appointments, who do not hold a terminal degree in the area of instruction.

11 Pp: 2-4; 10-11

12 (2) Minor edits; clarifying language.

13

14 Academic Appointments with Teaching

15 Functions

16 Policy Statement

17 The academic appointments policy establishes the standards and procedures for
18 appointments of individuals who will have teaching functions. The University asserts
19 the importance of ensuring that our students are taught by individuals who have
20 appropriate qualifications, are recognized as teachers, and enjoy the privilege of
21 academic freedom. The University affirms that an appropriate complement of regular
22 faculty will direct the University's ongoing intellectual programs, accompanied by
23 term (non-tenure track) faculty, academic professional and administrative employees
24 (P&A), and graduate teaching assistants. The University will strive to ensure that all
25 such faculty and P&A employees be appropriately selected, reviewed, and fairly
26 treated.

1 This policy also establishes common expectations for the appointment of all
2 instructors of record teaching courses for academic credit at the University of
3 Minnesota. It meets the new faculty qualifications guidelines adopted by the Higher
4 Learning Commission (HLC) in 2023, including guidance for review of faculty and
5 instructional staff, who have progressed towards earning academic credentials in
6 the discipline or subfield in which they teach, but who have not yet attained a
7 terminal degree in the discipline.

8 **Appointment Categories**

9 In order to be able to assure our students that quality instruction is provided, to
10 provide appropriate certification to accrediting organizations, and to comply with
11 University regulations, instruction in courses for credit may only be offered by
12 persons who hold appointments in one of the following five categories.

- 13 1. Regular (Tenured and Tenure-Track) Faculty:
14 Members of the tenured and tenure-track faculty.
- 15 2. Term (Non Tenure-Track) Faculty:
16 2A. Contract Faculty. Members of the faculty on annual, renewable, or
17 multi-year contracts.
18 2B. Temporary Faculty. Members appointed to address temporary needs of
19 1-2 years.
20 2C. Visiting Faculty. Faculty at other universities who are temporarily here.
- 21 3. Adjunct Faculty:
22 3A. Adjunct Faculty from Within the University. Persons who hold regular or
23 term (contract or temporary) faculty status in one main department and who
24 are appointed by a second department or college.
25 3B. Adjunct Faculty from Outside the University. Professionals in the
26 community who offer instruction on an occasional, part-time basis.
- 27 4. Academic Staff:
28 4A. Academic Professional Staff Who Hold Primary Responsibility for
29 Teaching.
30 4B. Academic Professional or Administrative Staff with Primary
31 Non-Instructional Duties Who Assume Part-Time Instructional Duties.

5. Graduate Teaching Assistants:

Students registered in a graduate or post-baccalaureate professional degree program may also provide assistance to the faculty in teaching or advising students registered for specific courses, or may be the instructor of record for an entire course, in accordance with the standards of the academic unit and those in the Policy and Guidelines for Graduate Assistants.

Qualifications for academic appointments with teaching functions

The primary qualification for academic instructional appointments with primary teaching functions is a degree earned from an accredited academic institution in the United States or a college or university of equivalent quality outside the United States, in a field or subject area relevant to the courses being taught. The assumed standard for all instructional appointments is a terminal degree or a degree at least one level higher than the degree in the area or related area of the course being taught. Examples of the latter include a master's degree to teach a course that counts toward a bachelor's degree or a doctoral degree to teach a course that counts toward a master's degree. Exceptions include cases where the norm in the discipline (e.g., J.D. holders teaching Ph.D. students in law-related fields or M.F.A. degree holders teaching Ph.D. students in the arts) or the accreditation standards of the profession require otherwise.

The unit hiring authority determines whether an instructional appointee's earned academic degree, or work toward an academic degree, is relevant for the discipline or field in which courses are taught. The importance of multidisciplinary instruction in many fields must be kept in mind, as it may require instructors who teach courses offered through the same department or program to have degrees in different, but cognate, areas. If an instructional appointee holds no master's degree or higher in a related discipline or field, the appointee must have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in a discipline or field relevant to their instructional areas. Teaching in graduate programs requires a relevant terminal degree and a record of research, scholarship, or achievement appropriate for the graduate program.

Individuals who do not have the academic credentials described above can be otherwise qualified to teach courses if they possess substantial equivalent experience. The unit hiring authority should follow the guidelines for assessing equivalent experience as described in this policy, in collegiate academic personnel plans, and in communication from the Office of the Provost. Equivalent experience is not based exclusively on teaching experience and previous years of classroom instruction does not alone constitute equivalent experience. Instructor qualifications on the basis of equivalent experience must be determined by the academic unit

1 hiring authority where the courses are taught and are subject to the approval of the
2 relevant campus, school, or college and the Office of the Provost.

3
4 Some characteristics of equivalent experience that may be considered relevant
5 include, but are not limited to:

- 6
7 • Substantial graduate-level academic coursework and/or methodological
8 training in a related discipline appropriate to the field of instruction;
- 9
10 • A record of research, creative activity, scholarship, or achievement
11 appropriate to the field of instruction;
- 12
13 • Related research experience in industry;
- 14
15 • Practical and professional experience and accomplishments in, for
16 example: arts, business, engineering, legal, media, or public service;
- 17
18 • Relevant clinical experience;
- 19
20 • Relevant certifications or additional credentials;
- 21
22 • Demonstrated competency or fluency in a relevant skill or skill set.

23
24 Any hiring decision based on equivalent experience shall be made with the goal of
25 providing students with the best possible learning experience. When someone has
26 been hired with the equivalent experience qualifications, the academic unit shall
27 maintain the satisfactory qualification to teach in the instructor's personnel record.

28 29 **Procedure**

30 Unit/departamental faculty will define the minimum threshold of experience for
31 alternative qualification and an evaluation process to be used in the appointment
32 process.

33
34 Documentation for instructors who are qualified by tested experience must be
35 recorded for each instructional appointee in the academic qualifications screen in
36 *Works* (works.umn.edu).

37
38 Refer to Appendix: [Academic Appointment Category Details](#) for more complete
39 information regarding appointments within each category and sub-category.

40 **Caveat**

1 This policy is intended to provide general information to University employees and to
2 serve as internal guidelines for University administrators. The information described
3 in this policy is not a condition of employment, and the language is not intended nor
4 does it create a contract between the University and any employee. Employees may
5 resign their employment in accordance with the terms of their contracts and
6 appointments, and the University may terminate an individual employee's
7 employment as provided in the applicable University policies and in accordance with
8 the procedures established for that class of employee. The University reserves the
9 right to change, add to, eliminate, or modify any of the requirements and procedures
10 described in this policy at its discretion, with or without notice, and in accordance
11 with any applicable University consultative processes.

12 **Provisions and Terms**

13 **Collegiate Personnel Plans**

14 Each college or campus as appropriate, led by the dean or vice chancellor for
15 academic affairs, must adopt a personnel plan that articulates which of the
16 appointment options will be used by the college/campus, in addition to its regular
17 faculty, to carry out its teaching functions and ensure the academic quality of its
18 programs. The plan is to indicate the necessary qualifications for the different
19 teaching functions and the appropriate balance of responsibilities carried out by
20 faculty and those carried out by academic staff (e.g., types of courses,
21 ~~advising~~advisement, clinical supervision, etc.) for which members of each group will
22 be responsible. The plan should also indicate opportunities for professional
23 development available to employees in the relevant appointment categories. The
24 overall collegiate personnel plan must be developed through a process that includes
25 substantial representation of tenured and tenure-track faculty, term faculty and
26 academic professional and administrative staff , as applicable, and must be
27 approved by the normal college/campus governance processes and by the dean or
28 vice chancellor for academic affairs. Appointments made to any position with
29 responsibilities primarily for instruction (term [non-tenure track] faculty, teaching
30 specialists, senior teaching specialists, lecturers, and senior lecturers) must also be
31 made only in accordance with the plan.

1. Supplemental Plans

The collegiate personnel plan must include the rationale for any significant variations from the established collegiate patterns in making academic appointments in specific academic units within the college/campus. In addition, the collegiate plan must include a specific supplemental plan for any unit in which the number of FTE contract faculty positions (category 2A) plus the number of FTE academic professional positions with primary responsibility for teaching (category 4A) exceeds 25% of the FTE tenured and tenure-track faculty. Each supplemental plan should indicate the appropriate balance of faculty and academic staff responsibility, to include the levels and types of courses for which members of each group will be responsible. This supplemental plan must be developed in broad consultation with the leadership, faculty, and academic staff of these units.

2. Plan Approval

The Executive Vice President and Provost will review and approve all collegiate personnel plans, in consultation with the Vice President for Human Resources, other appropriate vice presidents and vice chancellors/chancellors, and the Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure. For units in the health sciences, college plans will first be reviewed and approved by the Vice President for Clinical Affairs prior to submission to the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost. For system campuses, plans must be approved by the respective vice chancellor/chancellor prior to submission. This process for units in the health sciences and system campuses applies throughout this document, even though it may not be restated.

Once a collegiate personnel plan has been approved by the Executive Vice President and Provost, it need only be updated if there are substantial modifications in the plan. Each collegiate personnel plan should be reviewed at least once every five years.

3. Reporting and Monitoring

The Executive Vice President and Provost, in conjunction with the Vice President for Human Resources, will produce a report documenting the numbers of individuals falling within each of these categories, broken out by department, college and campus, as well as aggregated. This information will inform the collegiate dean, vice chancellor/chancellor, and other central officers involved in the annual collegiate academic planning and budgeting

compact process, and will also be available to inform the Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which will review this information for consistency with the approved plan and the academic mission of the University.

4. Review of Policy

This policy will undergo a comprehensive review every four years. This review should examine both the success of the policy in meeting the University's goals of providing appropriate instruction of the highest possible quality for all students and the suitability of its provisions for the future of the University.

This periodic review does not preclude earlier changes, should the need arise.

Reason for Policy

This policy implements Board of Regents Policies: Employee Group Definitions and Faculty Tenure. The University establishes the standards and procedures for academic appointments with teaching functions to (1) assert the importance of well-qualified individuals teaching the University's students and (2) assure that an appropriate complement of regular faculty directs the University's ongoing intellectual programs.

Procedures

There are no procedures associated with this policy.

Forms/Instructions

- 1 • [UM 1538: Contract Term Faculty Template Request \(pdf\)](#)

2 Appendices

- 3 • [Academic Appointment Category Details](#)

- 4 • [Academic Personnel Plan Template](#)

5 Frequently Asked Questions

6 There are no FAQs associated with this policy.

7 Contacts

Subject

Contact

Phone

**Ema
il**

**General
Information or
Procedural
Assistance**

- Primary: Responsible administrator/supervisor 612-624-U OHR (8647); ohr@u mn. edu
- Secondary: Local campus, college, or administrative unit HR administrator 800-756-23 63
- Other (as needed): Office of Human Resources specialist or consultant
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**Document
Processing**

- Office of Human Resources Call Center 612-625-20 16

Responsible Officer

Policy Owner

**Primary
Contact**

- Executive Vice President and Provost

- Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs

- See Contacts

1 Definitions

2 **Academic Unit**

3 A department or similar unit. A campus, school, college, or division that is not further
4 subdivided is also an academic unit. This definition of unit is consistent with the
5 language in Board of Regents Policy: Faculty Tenure and applies throughout this
6 document.

7 **Instructor of Record**

8 The instructor of record for any given course is the primary instructor listed within
9 the course catalog. The academic unit assigns the instructor of record via the class
10 schedule for each semester.

11 **Equivalent experience**

12 Equivalent experience is experience that the academic unit faculty determines is
13 equivalent to the degree it would otherwise require for an instructional position.
14 Equivalent experience typically includes professional or substantial related
15 experience outside the classroom appropriate for the subject the instructor will be
16 teaching. Departments should refer to the characteristics of equivalent experience
17 listed in this policy as a guide. Previous years of classroom instruction does not
18 alone constitute equivalent experience.

Responsibilities

2 Dean/College or Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (as appropriate)

3

4 Each college or campus, led by the dean or vice chancellor for academic affairs,
5 must adopt a Collegiate Personnel Plan that identifies which of the appointment
6 options will be used by the college/campus, in addition to its regular faculty, in
7 carrying out its teaching functions and to ensure the academic quality of its
8 programs.

9

10 Consult with faculty and affected P&A employees in the initial development process
11 and with subsequent revisions move plan approved through the normal collegiate
12 governance processes to obtain appropriate approvals.

- 13 ● Operate in compliance with approved collegiate personnel plan.
- 14 ● Review plan at a minimum every five years.

15 Vice President for Clinical Affairs and Chancellors

- 16 ● Review and approve collegiate personnel plans of appropriate colleges or
17 campuses prior to submitting the initial plan for final approval.

18 Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure

- 19 ● Review all Collegiate Personnel Plans and recommend approval to the Vice
20 President for Human Resources and Executive Vice President and Provost.

- 1 • Review the Collegiate Personnel Plan annual report data for consistency with
2 the approved plan and the academic mission of the University.

3 Vice President for Human Resources

- 4 • Consult with the Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and
5 Tenure on initial Collegiate Personnel plans.
- 6 • Consult with the Executive Vice President and Provost in the review and
7 approval of all initial Collegiate and Personnel Plans.
- 8 • Review and approve revisions to existing Collegiate Personnel Plans,
9 consulting with the Executive Vice President and Provost regarding significant
10 modifications.
- 11 • Produce an annual report of Collegiate Personnel Plan data which is shared
12 with the Executive Vice President and Provost and various subcommittees of
13 the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs.

14 Executive Vice President and Provost

- 15 • Approves all initial Collegiate Personnel Plans and subsequent significant
16 provisions in consultation with the Vice President for Human Resources.
- 17 • Reviews Collegiate Personnel Plan annual reports for compliance and
18 alignment with the University's University's academic mission.

19 Related Information

- 20 • Board of Regents Policy: Faculty Tenure

- 1 ● Procedures for Reviewing Candidates for Tenure and/or Promotion:
2 Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty (PDF)
- 3 ● Administrative Policy: Graduate Assistant Employment
- 4 ● Administrative Policy: Appointments of Academic Professional and
5 Administrative Employees
- 6 ● Administrative Policy: Hiring Faculty and Staff
- 7 ● Administrative Policy: Non-Renewal of Appointment for Academic
8 Professional and Administrative Employees
- 9 ● Administrative Policy: Performance Reviews for Academic Professional and
10 Administrative Employees
- 11 ● Academic Job Codes and Titles - see Job Families and Salary Ranges
12 (Expand Job Family Structure)

13