



Graduate Teaching Requirements

Issue & Background

Though the NWCCU doesn't provide detailed specifications regarding requirements for undergraduate or graduate teaching credentials, other regional accrediting bodies (such as SACS) do. These teaching standards are best practice at most top tier institutions and ensure quality and excellence of instruction at all levels. In spring 2018 the Graduate College, Graduate Council, and GC Executive Committee endorsed a measured and thoughtful transition to the guidelines outlined below.

Current faculty successfully teaching at any graduate level without meeting the new requirements may be grandparented in with approval of department chair, academic dean, and the Graduate Dean. These guidelines should be kept in mind when making new hiring decisions as new faculty, FIR, and PTI hires should have the qualifications outlined below to teach at the desired level. Likewise, graduate program teaching assignments should conform to the guidelines described below. For additional information about Graduate Faculty Status requirements and the graduate teaching, advisement, mentorship rights thereof, please refer to the Graduate Faculty Status guidelines.

Key Info and Tips

- Minimum Qualifications for Graduate Students to Teach Undergraduates
 1. Graduate student instructors of record (GAs, PTIs, etc.) for 100-400 level courses should hold a master's degree or higher in the field of instruction, or a closely related field. For those who do not have a graduate credential in the field of instruction, they must have successfully completed a minimum of 9-18 graduate credits in the discipline (or a closely related discipline) in which they are teaching, or be approved as nationally/internationally recognized as experts in their field. More specifically:
 - a. Graduate students who are TA-ing for classes, leading recitations, labs, or discussions sessions (not as instructor of record) may do so at any time under close supervision of faculty.

- b. For students who are instructors of record for 100/200-level courses, a minimum of 9 successfully completed (B or better) graduate credits in the field of instruction are required.
 - c. For those graduate students who are the instructor of record for higher-level UG courses (300/400), 18 graduate credits must be successfully completed (grades of B or better) in the field of instruction.
 - 2. Departments, Schools, and Colleges may have stricter guidelines or additional requirements for instructional faculty.
 - 3. Graduate students must demonstrate sufficient English language abilities, as delineated in the Graduate Catalog and GC website. Proof of English proficiency will be assessed by standardized tests like TOEFL, IELTS, the MTELP, SPEAK, or Duolingo test for non-English language speakers, prior to being approved as an instructor of record.
 - 4. Graduate students should complete a pedagogy class, the Graduate College teaching certificate program, and/or other substantive teacher training before and/or during their time as the instructor of record in any class.
 - 5. Graduate students must be closely supervised by a UNLV faculty member while engaged in autonomous instruction. There must be ongoing oversight and mentorship of all GTAs and graduate student instructors from academic faculty to ensure excellence, rigor, and compliance with appropriate norms, guidelines, and standards of the discipline and UNLV.
- Minimum Graduate Faculty Teaching Qualifications
 - 1. Faculty teaching graduate classes (500-700 level) must have a terminal degree in the field of instruction or a closely related discipline.
 - a. Master's credentialed individuals who have distinguished themselves in a field for which the terminal degree is a doctoral degree, have a national or international professional reputation, and/or engage in quality research, scholarship, or creative activities may, on a limited and special basis, be approved to teach master's level students, particularly in professional degree programs.
 - b. These exceptions shall be rigorously reviewed and adjudicated on a case-by-case basis through the department/school, academic dean, and graduate dean and handled via the Graduate College's Graduate Faculty Appeal Form when necessary.
 - 2. Instructors teaching doctoral students must hold a terminal degree in the field of instruction, or in a very closely related field with evidence of research, scholarship, performative or creative activity in the teaching area.

3. Graduate students may not teach graduate courses as the instructor of record, nor may they evaluate fellow graduate students in any capacity. The only exception is if they are simultaneously tenure-track or tenured faculty in another program at UNLV.
4. Departments, Schools, and Colleges may have stricter guidelines or additional requirements for graduate instructors as appropriate.

Action Items

- Check the Graduate Faculty Status webpage for updated guidelines and GFS information!

Project Timeline & Important Dates

- We will implement these guidelines as they arise in fall 2018 with full implementation in spring 2019.

Who to Contact with Questions

- Name(s): Dr. Emily Lin, Associate Dean
- Email: AssociateGradDean@unlv.edu
- Phone: 702-895-0446