

## Oklahoma State University Policy and Procedures

<b>VERIFICATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS</b>	<b>2-0906 ACADEMIC AFFAIRS October 2020</b>
---	---

### **POLICY**

1.01 It is the policy of Oklahoma State University (OSU), including Oklahoma State University-Center for Health Sciences (OSU-CHS) and Oklahoma State University-Tulsa (OSU-Tulsa), for each academic unit within the institution to identify the minimum academic credentials, certifications, and/or experience a faculty member must have to teach courses in the programs within their department.

1.02 The qualifications of each member of the instructional faculty, regardless of rank or title, shall be verified annually by the unit administrator. Verification may be based on credentials involving earned academic degrees or on tested experience demonstrable in its breadth and depth. Instructional faculty are all faculty members whose primary responsibility is teaching, including part-time, adjunct, dual credit, temporary, and/or non-tenure track faculty.

1.03 A Tested Experience Exception Form (attached) must be completed by the unit administrator for each faculty member assigned to teach a course for which the qualification to teach said course was not evidenced by academic credentials. In the case of graduate-level courses, appropriate Graduate Faculty membership is also required.

1.04 Each graduate student holding a teaching assistantship and identified as the Instructor of Record for a course must be enrolled at OSU and directly supervised in their teaching responsibility by a member of the instructional faculty at OSU who holds the appropriate qualifications to teach said course.

### **PROCEDURE**

2.01 Each academic year, within the first month of the fall semester, the unit administrator will log into a Research Information Management System (RIMS) containing the records of Oklahoma State University faculty. For each instructional faculty member, an indication will be provided whether the qualification to teach is credential or tested experience based. If the qualification is credential based, the unit administrator will verify the accuracy of the terminal degree. If the qualification is based on tested experience, a completed, approved Tested Experience Exception Form (attached) will be added to the faculty member's record.

2.02 Letters of offer of employment in which teaching is a responsibility should state whether the qualification to teach is based on academic credentials or tested experience. If the qualification to teach is verified through tested experience, then a completed and approved Tested Experience Exception Form (attached) is required prior to the offer of employment.

2.03 When a graduate teaching assistant is assigned to teach a course, the faculty member who directly supervises the teaching assistant shall be identified in the course material inside Banner and/or in departmental records.

Approved:

Faculty Council, February 2019

Council of Deans, March 2019

Executive Team, October 2020

**TESTED EXPERIENCE EXCEPTION FORM**  
**Oklahoma State University**

This dual purpose form is used to document the breadth and depth of the tested experience that would be needed to substitute for academic credentials for a faculty member teaching in a particular program or specified courses within a program.

**Part One** states the minimum qualifications necessary to meet the tested experience exception. These qualifications for an exception will be identified by the unit; approved by the unit administrator, dean, and provost; and held in the unit and in Human Resources to be referenced and applied during hiring decisions.

**Part Two** should be completed when a unit proposes to hire a faculty member who does not meet the standard qualifications for a faculty position, based on academic credentials, but does meet and qualifies for the tested experience exception as previously specified in Part One. Part Two should be completed by the unit head and approved at the college and university level before a Letter of Offer is extended to the named prospective faculty member. A form with a fully approved Part Two should be uploaded into the faculty member's record to provide an exemption from recognized academic credentials. This form should be viewable by accreditation reviewers, but not publicly available.

**Part One – Tested Experience Exception – Minimum Standards**

(1) List the degree program to which this tested experience exception applies:
(2) If this tested experience exception is applicable to only certain courses within the above program, list the courses below (prefix and course numbers).
(3) Complete the following to indicate the type of degree or other credential for which tested experience can be substituted:  Faculty member with a _____ degree can use tested experience to substitute for a _____ degree in order to teach at the _____ level.
(4) Indicate the minimum degree level and discipline/subfield that an individual with tested experience should have in order to teach in the preceding program or course(s). (Note: In some instances, more than one degree could be listed, e.g., an M.S. in Management or an MBA.)

(5) Indicate the area(s) of practical, real-world work in which this tested experience would need to occur in order to be considered directly relevant to the area in which the individual is teaching. (Example, an individual teaching sports management might need experience in a professional sports organization, whereas an individual teaching human resources management might need experience in a human resources office or with a recruiting firm.)

(6) Stipulate the minimum number of years of practical, real-world experience an individual would need to have in order to substitute for the “missing” degree. (For example, if an individual with a bachelor’s degree will be teaching an undergraduate class, how many years of real-world experience are needed to substitute for the missing master’s degree? If an individual with a master’s degree is teaching a master’s-level class, how many years of real-world experience are needed to substitute for the missing doctoral degree?) Provide a specific number of years.

(7) Describe the breadth and depth of experience an individual should have to substitute for the degree stipulated in Item (2). (This discussion might include job levels the individual should have attained, skill sets they may have achieved, or specific experiences that they may have had in their real-world experience.)

(8) What certifications (if any) should the individual have attained?

(9) List names of faculty members in the program who authored the preceding tested experience exception.

(10) Signature of Unit Administrator:

(11) Signature of College Dean:

(12) Signature of Provost:

**Part Two – Tested Experience Exception – Evidence Individual Meets Standards\***

(13) Name of proposed faculty hire under this tested experience exception:
(14) If this tested experience exception is applicable to only certain courses within the above program, list the courses below (prefix and course numbers).
(15) Provide a brief description of how the proposed faculty member meets the standards identified in Part One.
(16) Upload a current vita for the above listed individual.
(17) I certify that the above listed individual meets the requirements for a tested-experience exception as specified in this document. <i>Small check box</i>  Signature of Unit Administrator:
(18) Signature of College Dean:
(19) Signature of Provost:

\*In the case of graduate-level courses and student advisory committees, appropriate Graduate Faculty membership is also required.

## Information to have on the website where the blank form is available:

### Background

- Tested experience should be defined by qualified faculty in the program and subsequently reviewed and approved by the respective unit head, dean, and provost.
- Normally, an individual would need a master's degree to teach at the undergraduate level or a terminal degree to teach at the master's level. However, the tested experience exception makes it possible for an individual with only a bachelor's degree to teach at the undergraduate level or for an individual with only a master's degree to teach at the master's level—providing the individual has appropriate tested experience. This exception is not required for master's programs in which a master's degree is the accepted terminal degree.
- ***Tested experience*** can potentially substitute for an earned credential or portions thereof under the following conditions:
  - The experience must be outside the classroom and in real-world situations.
  - The experience must be relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member is teaching.
  - The experience must have breadth and depth.
  - There must be well-defined policies approved by appropriate councils, procedures, and documentation that demonstrate when such experience is sufficient.
- In colleges or programs that have accreditation, it is advisable to ensure that the tested experience exceptions comply with their other accreditation guidelines in addition to HLC guidelines.
- The tested experience exception should be used sparingly and is only appropriate in professional/occupational programs.
- In the case of graduate-level responsibilities, appropriate Graduate Faculty membership is also required.