COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS
GRADUATE TEACHING CERTIFICATION STANDARDS
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According to the Faculty Handbook of Old Dominion University: “Faculty are to be certified for graduate instruction in their field of specialization based on the appropriate college’s published criteria of required scholarly and/or professional accomplishments, satisfactory teaching performance at the advanced level in appropriate disciplines, and necessary terminal graduate degrees.” (p. 151)

The effective instruction of doctoral candidates and Master’s students requires faculty who are informed of and actively contribute to the most current innovations in research, scholarship and creativity. The College recognizes this intimate connection between scholarly productivity and graduate instruction at all levels, from teaching Master’s students to the supervision of doctoral dissertations. For this reason, the College of Arts and Letters has developed certification standards for graduate instruction that reward scholarly productivity; encourage accountability in research; and nurture mutual support in our scholarly community. Faculty representatives on the Graduate Studies Committee of the College of Arts and Letters develop, approve, and uphold the following criteria and standards when recommending to the Dean the certification of faculty for graduate instruction.

Several principles guide the Committee’s consideration of certification for graduate instruction:

- The Committee exercises a presumption of approval—that is, in its evaluation of faculty applications for certification, the Committee requires compelling evidence of a failure to meet the following standards in order to deny certification. In the event of ambiguity concerning a candidate’s qualifications, the Committee will interpret these standards and the faculty member’s scholarship in the manner most favorable to the candidate’s successful certification.
- The Committee recognizes the College of Arts and Letters encompasses fields of scholarship with diverse standards, practices, norms and paradigms. For this reason, it recognizes the inherent arbitrariness of comparison of scholarship across departments, disciplines, and fields of specialization.
- For this reason, the Committee recognizes that members from a candidate’s department, discipline or field of study can best evaluate the scholarship, research and creativity of candidates. Accordingly, the Committee will exercise deference to the judgment of the graduate program director of the Department in which the candidate works.
In all applications for regular and provisional certification, the faculty member must show continuous and ongoing scholarship during the past five-year period under review; i.e., all of the publications, presentations, shows, commissions, or performances should not be concentrated in one year unless the faculty member demonstrates in other ways that scholarship is ongoing and that it is intended for eventual publication and/or creative dissemination. The following criteria for certification should be considered minimal; it is expected that most applicants shall exceed them.

Definitions

“The College” refers to the entire faculty of the College of Arts and Letters, as represented by colleagues who serve on the Graduate Studies Committee.

A “five-year” period of certification refers five consecutive three-semester (i.e. fall, spring and summer) academic years. The period of certification expires at the end of five years and before the start of five-year anniversary semester. For example, certification granted in fall semester 2015 expires in summer 2020, not fall 2020.

A “reputable press” refers to one that is appropriately cataloged, indexed, and distributed in the specified field or fields of research. The College recognizes that open access journals have flourished in many fields of research, providing scholars with quicker times to publication than print journals and readers with lower-cost access to current scholarship. Nevertheless, the rise of so-called “predatory publishers” requires differentiating between publications that subject scholarship to critical evaluation, and those that do not. Indicators of a reputable press include (but are not limited to):

- the press’s clear articulation of its scope, target readership, peer review procedures, and rejection rates;
- an editorial board and list of referees consisting of recognized experts in the field;
- membership in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and/or the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA); and
- a documented impact factor calculated by Thomson Reuters.

Potential indicators of a questionable journal include the requirement for a substantial author subvention (“article processing charges”) for publication; a lack of transparency in peer review; and a prior history of questionable or fraudulent publication.

Finally, the Committee recommends that faculty consult their Department’s Statement for Evaluation of Scholarly Activity and Research for guidance concerning the types of journals and presses that constitute reputable venues for scholarship.
The certification standards are as follows.

I. **Regular Doctoral Certification**

   Doctoral certification enables faculty members to participate in all phases of graduate education, including the chairing of doctoral dissertation committees and instruction at the 800-level.

   Candidates for doctoral certification must meet one of the following criteria. The emphasis in each of the criteria is on both quantity and quality of scholarship as indicated through peer or professional validation:

   1. **Publications**: During the previous five years, a faculty member must have at least three articles in refereed journals and/or refereed book chapters, or one scholarly book published by a reputable press. Up to three research reports for grants of which the faculty member was the principal investigator may be substituted for up to three refereed journals and/or refereed book chapters or for a scholarly book. The Committee will consider one edited book as meeting this standard in part or in full, if the faculty member provides evidence that his or her contribution is equivalent of up to three refereed articles.

      For doctoral-level certification, a faculty member may not substitute presentations of papers or participation in academic conferences for publications.

      In situations where the faculty member exerts editorial control over or input into the publication in question, he or she must provide evidence to the Committee that a double-blind peer review process evaluated the publication.

   2. **Journal Editorships**: Generally, the Committee considers the editing of academic journals to fall under the category of service rather than scholarship. In cases where the faculty member wrote original scholarly content, the Committee may consider this as meeting publication certification standards on a case-by-case basis.

   3. **Commissions and Exhibitions**: In studio art, a faculty member must have at least three private or public commissions, or three juried or invitational exhibitions at the state, regional, national, or international level during the past five years.

   4. **Performances**: In music or theatre arts, a faculty member must have at least three state, regional or national reviewed performances during the past five years.
5. **Creative Writing**: During the previous five years, a faculty member must have at least three essays, three short stories, twenty pages of poetry, one book, one novel, one full-length play, or one screenplay published by a reputable press or journal. Creative works that are optioned or are produced at the state, regional or national levels may be considered a form of publication.

II. **Regular Master’s Certification**

Regular or Adjunct faculty who receive a regular five-year certification to teach graduate-level courses must normally have the terminal degree in their field (in most cases, Ph.D. or M.F.A., depending on the discipline). In exceptional cases, faculty members who do not have the terminal degree will be certified for graduate-level teaching if they have fulfilled the other criteria listed in Section V: Exceptional Credentials for Graduate Certification.

In the literary, performing or visual arts (studio art, music, or theatre arts) the Committee will grant certification for teaching lecture or seminar courses whose content emphasizes theory or history to a regular or adjunct faculty member who fulfills the following criteria. Certification for teaching classes whose content emphasizes writing, performance, or studio skills will be granted a faculty member who meets one of the following criteria.

Candidates for regular five-year master’s certification must meet at least one of the following criteria. The emphasis in each of the criteria is on both quantity and quality of scholarship as indicated through peer or professional validation:

1. **Publications**: During the previous five years, the faculty member must have produced at least two articles in refereed journals (print or online) or one book published by a reputable press. The Committee will consider publications comparable to refereed journal articles, such as book chapters in anthologies published by reputable presses, if the faculty member provides evidence of scholarly review through editorial assessment or similar peer evaluations. The Committee will consider one edited book as sufficiently meeting this standard if the faculty member provides evidence that his or her contribution is equivalent to two refereed articles.

   In situations where the faculty member exerts editorial control over the publication in question, the faculty member must provide evidence to the committee that the publication was subjected to a double-blind peer review process.
2. **Publications/Presentations:** If one article or comparable publication has been published during the previous five years, then the faculty member may substitute at least two presentations at international or national conferences for a second publication. One regional conference presentation may be substituted for a national or international presentation if significant participation comes from beyond the region. Faculty who satisfy certification requirements under this standard must meet the requirements under section II.1 in the subsequent five-year certification period.

3. **Presentations:** During the previous five years, the faculty member will have made at least four different presentations at international or national association meetings if he/she had no publications in that period. One regional conference presentation may be substituted for a national or international presentation if significant participation comes from beyond the region. Presentations made at national or international conferences may include either a faculty member’s research or comments made as part of a conference panel in which the faculty member serves as the invited panel commentator/respondent. Only one of the total four presentations may be a commentary/response. In his or her application for certification, the faculty member must demonstrate that he/she is engaged in ongoing research intended for publication. Faculty who satisfy certification requirements under this standard must meet the requirements under section II.1 in the subsequent five-year certification period.

4. **Grants:** A grant received from an external grant-giving agency may be substituted for one article or two presentations. One summer or short-term grant from an external grant-giving agency may be substituted for two conference presentations, and one year-long or multi-year grant from an external grant-giving agency may be substituted for one published article. Faculty must meet the requirements under section 1 in the subsequent five-year certification period.

5. **Journal Editorships:** The editing of academic journals is generally considered to fall under the category of service, but in instances where the editor wrote original scholarly content, this may be considered as meeting publication standards under regular Master’s certification on a case-by-case basis.

6. **Commissions and Exhibitions:** In studio art, a faculty member must have at least two private or public commissions or two juried or invitational exhibitions at the state, regional, national, or international level during the past five years.
7. **Performances:** In music or theatre arts, a faculty member must have at least two state, regional or national reviewed performances during the past five years.

8. **Peer Evaluations in Lieu of Published Reviews of Performances:** In any of the performing arts, a committee of peers made up of one external evaluator and two members of the Old Dominion University faculty, may be appointed by the departmental chair to evaluate the work or performance level of the candidate when published reviews are unavailable. In such cases, the written evaluation of the committee shall be submitted with the recommendation of the chair of the Arts and Letters Graduate Studies Committee.

9. **Creative Writing:** In creative writing and related fields, a faculty member must have at least two essays, two short stories, fifteen pages of poetry, one book, one novel, one play, or one screenplay published by a reputable press or journal during the past five years. Creative works that are optioned or are produced at the state, regional or national levels may be considered a form of publication.

10. **Grants:** In studio art, one summer, year-long, or multi-year grant from an external grant-giving agency may be substituted for one private or public commission or one juried or invitational exhibition at the state, regional, national, or international level during the past five years. In music or theatre arts, one summer, year-long, or multi-year grant from an external grant-giving agency may be substituted for one state, regional, national, or international juried/reviewed performance during the past five years. In creative writing and related fields, one summer, year-long, or multi-year grant from an external grant-giving agency may be substituted for one short story, essay, block of poetry, or their equivalents. Faculty must meet the requirements under sections 6, 7, 8 or 9 in the subsequent five-year certification period.

### III. Provisional Doctoral Certification

The Committee will certify for doctoral-level graduate instruction a faculty member (a)(i) who has held a terminal degree for fewer than four years; or (a)(ii) has returned to teaching and research from an assignment for which at least half the responsibility was administrative; and (b) whose specialty the department chair or graduate program director deems to be essential to a given doctoral or other terminal degree program. The provisional doctoral certification will not exceed five years, and is not renewable.
Fast-Track Approval: Because provisional certification does not require an evaluation of the candidate’s scholarship or creativity, faculty seeking provisional certification will receive “fast track” consideration. Such an expedited decision is particularly important for junior faculty who are likely to assume graduate instruction duties in their first semester of employment. The fast-track procedure is as follows. Upon receipt of the Graduate Teaching Certification Form and the Associate Dean’s verification of the applicant’s terminal degree, the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee will sign the Certification Form and forward it to the Dean for final approval. Faculty seeking fast-track approval should submit their certification materials no later than the end of the first month of hire.

IV. Provisional Master’s Certification

The Committee will certify for Master’s-level graduate instruction any faculty member who has held a terminal degree for less than four years, or who has returned to teaching and research from an assignment for which at least half the responsibility was administrative. Provisional master’s certification will not exceed one five-year period, and is not renewable.

Candidates seeking provisional Master’s certification may receive fast-track approval under the procedure specified in “Section III. Provisional Doctoral Certification”.

V. Exceptional Credentials Graduate Certification

The Faculty handbook states that “In unusual cases, faculty members who have demonstrated exceptional scholarly or creative activity, or professional experience, but who may not possess the required academic credentials may be approved as graduate faculty. Evidence of competence or academic credentials other than the doctorate in the discipline for graduate faculty must be presented as justification…” (p. 15).

The Committee may award regular five-year doctoral or Master’s certification to a faculty member who over the course of his or her career has attained national or international preeminence as a result of scholarly or professional activities (e.g., as a writer, political figure, artist, practitioner or research grant writer). Any request under this provision must contain compelling evidence about the national or international reputation of the individual.

The exceptional practitioner who lacks a terminal degree may establish his or her national or international reputation by providing the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies a portfolio of his or her scholarship and a
recommended list of peer reviewers. The Associate Dean in consultation with
the department’s Promotion and Tenure Committee will nominate three peer
referees at comparable academic institutions to evaluate the exceptional
practitioner’s portfolio and to comment on his or her national and
international reputation.

As specified in the Faculty Handbook (p. 152), certification under the
Exceptional Credentials standard requires approval of the Department Chair
or program director; College Graduate Studies Committee; Dean of the
Academic College; and Vice Provost for Graduate and Undergraduate
Academic Programs.

VI. Certification of Outside Readers for Dissertation and Thesis Committees

The Committee may certify faculty and scholars from outside the College to
serve on doctoral dissertation and Master’s thesis committees (“outside
readers”).

If the faculty member is an outside reader from another college at the
University, the Committee will accept the certification of his or her home
college as equivalent to Arts and Letters certification.

If the outside reader is a tenured or tenure-track faculty at another
university, the Committee will accept that institution’s graduate instruction
certification as equivalent to and satisfying Arts and Letters certification.
If the outside reader is from an institution other than a college or university,
the Committee will certify the reader for graduate instruction if he or she
possesses a terminal degree in the field of specialization as defined by the
discipline.

Certification under this standard is on a per-student basis. An outside reader
who serves on more than one committee concurrently requires only one
certification; a reader who serves on several committees sequentially
requires recertification for each student. Graduate certification under this
standard expires when the doctoral candidate or Master’s student
successfully defends his or her dissertation or thesis, or terminates his or her
course of study.

Appeals Process for a Graduate Certification Decision

If the faculty member disagrees with the committee’s decision, he/she may
appeal the decision directly to the dean of the College. To initiate the process,
the faculty member must resubmit all certification materials, along with a
cover letter that justifies his/her case. The dean shall reach his/her decision within one month of the appeal. The dean’s decision is final.

Materials to be submitted when seeking Graduate Certification

1. The College form (available from the College website).
2. A current curriculum vitae
3. A letter from the candidate explaining his or her participation in graduate education during the past five years.
4. An optional statement of support from the department chair or director in the candidate’s department or program.
5. Copies of publications, other research or creative work and/or conference programs and papers presented during the previous five years.

Submit only materials necessary to meet the minimum requirements. Materials will be returned promptly after the certification decision is made.

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