

**SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF MINES &  
TECHNOLOGY**

**Policy Manual**

**SUBJECT: Faculty Qualifications**

**NUMBER: Policy II-2**

**REVISED:**

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Each academic department must ensure that faculty in the department with teaching responsibilities are appropriately qualified. South Dakota Mines utilizes academic credentials as the primary mechanism to determine faculty qualifications. When appropriate for the discipline, alternative qualifications may be established.

The following requirements are rooted in faculty qualification expectations set forth by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

The [Faculty Qualification Guidelines](#) for each academic department can be accessed in the SNAP portal.

1. Academic Credential Qualification:

- Each faculty member with teaching responsibilities must possess an academic credential in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.
- The academic credential must be at least one level above that of the courses they are teaching:
  - Faculty teaching in undergraduate programs must possess a degree in the discipline or subfield at least one level above (i.e. Master's degree). A faculty member who possesses a master's degree or higher in a discipline other than that in which they are teaching, the faculty member must have completed at least 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they are teaching.
  - Faculty teaching in graduate programs must possess a terminal degree in the discipline or subfield (i.e. doctoral degree), with an appropriate record of scholarship, research, or achievement.

2. Alternative Qualifications:

- In limited circumstances, it may be appropriate for a discipline to establish and utilize alternative qualifications.
- Alternative qualifications must demonstrate that a prospective faculty possesses extensive breadth and depth of experience outside the classroom in real-world situations that are equivalent to the degree level and specific content relevant to the discipline that will be taught to ensure the faculty

member possesses the content knowledge and expertise necessary and appropriate to deliver quality instruction in the discipline.

- Because alternative qualifications are unique to a particular discipline, an academic department seeking to utilize an alternative qualification process must ensure departmental processes and guidelines exist for the process that meet the following requirements:
  - Identify a minimum threshold of experience
  - Articulate the system and process through which the experience will be evaluated to determine appropriateness and equivalence
  - Developed and approved through the faculty shared governance process of the academic department and institution.

Department heads shall complete a [Faculty Qualification Verification Form](#) for instructional faculty.

**Originated: Academic Affairs, October 2023**

**Revision History:**

**BOR Policy/Committee References:** [BOR Policy 4.4.7](#), [BOR Policy 4.4.6](#), [BOR Policy 4.4.2](#), [AAC Guidelines 2.7.1.B\(1\)](#)