

Credentials of faculty teaching graduate courses

The University of Vermont (UVM) is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Expectations for graduate faculty are noted in Standard 4 of the Standards for Accreditation:

4.22 Faculty responsible for graduate programs are sufficient by credentials, experience, number, and time commitment for the successful accomplishment of program objectives and program improvement. The scholarly expectations of faculty exceed those expected for faculty working at the undergraduate level. Research-oriented graduate programs have a preponderance of active research scholars on their faculties. Professionally-oriented programs include faculty who are experienced professionals making scholarly contributions to the development of the field.

The Graduate College is a unit of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College and has, subject to the authority delegated to the Colleges by the Board of Trustees, academic jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to and related to graduate degree programs, with the exception of the Degree of Doctor of Medicine. As defined in the Constitution of the Graduate College, duties of the Executive Committee of the Graduate College (GEC) includes approval for graduate credit of courses, research, and similar scholastic activity.

When the GEC reviews new graduate course proposals, the GEC confirms that faculty proposing the course are either members of the Graduate Faculty or have appropriate graduate level credentials to teach the course. However, once the course is approved there is no oversight of who is actually teaching the course in any given year.

In many institutions, only members of the Graduate Faculty are allowed to teach graduate courses. UVM does not have that restriction. However, the GEC expects that those teaching graduate courses meet a minimum standard of having a terminal degree and a level of advancement in their field consistent with accreditation expectations. Specific requirements are that:

1. Faculty teaching graduate courses are expected to have a terminal degree
2. Exceptions may be made for faculty teaching master's level courses by petition* to the Graduate College, provided faculty credentials meet or exceed the level of the course they are teaching; thus
 - a. Faculty teaching 300 level courses and 200 level courses approved for graduate credit must minimally have a master's level degree, and
 - b. Justification of the petition must include either
 - i. history of exceptional teaching at the undergraduate level before consideration to teach master's level courses, or
 - ii. indication that it is the norm in the discipline for faculty at the master's level to teach master's level graduate curriculum

*Petition only need be made one time for a faculty member in a given unit. The process will be a short memo from the Chair or equivalent, with a copy of the proposed faculty's CV. Petition will be reviewed by GEC and decision made by Dean of the Graduate College.