



Guidelines for Classifying Associate Dean and Assistant Dean Positions

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a set of guidelines and factors to consider for the structure, creation and/or classification of positions of assistant dean and associate dean.¹ They are not intended to be prescriptive or restrictive but are proposed to foster consistency across the positions in units wherein they are assigned.

It is important to note that the scope of these guidelines is limited to distinguishing between the titles of assistant dean and associate dean. Titles such as director or senior associate dean are not included in this document.

Process for Developing These Guidelines

In 2023, the Office for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs (FASA) reviewed the university-level specified minimum qualifications and roles and responsibilities for associate dean and assistant dean classifications.² The overall scope of the review was attentive to MSU's institutional context and needs, trends within the higher education landscape, and legal requirements. The following activities were undertaken as part of the process:

External

- A literature review
- An examination of employment legal requirements
- An analysis of job postings for associate dean and assistant dean positions within the Association of American Universities (AAU) that were advertised in the Chronicle of Higher Education
- A review of benchmarking data for the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA)

¹ These guidelines apply as of Feb. 10, 2025, and are not retroactive.

² These classifications had not been reviewed since 2008.

Internal

- An analysis of MSU associate dean and assistant dean job advertisements
- A review of organizational charts of the dean's office for each college/administrative unit and the assistant and associate dean positions for each college

Additionally, FASA consulted with several stakeholders³ during this process, which helped shape and inform the content of this document.

The Dean Role

The roles and responsibilities of the assistant dean and associate dean positions are guided by the university's [mission](#) and organizational structure. The provost leads academic affairs on behalf of the president. The provost's primary role is as chief academic officer for the university. Deans are the chief academic executives of their colleges, who report to the provost. Similarly, the deans in the health colleges report to the executive vice president for health affairs. To that end, assistant deans and associate deans are an extension of the dean's role in supporting the academic mission.

The *Bylaws for Academic Governance* specify that a dean, as an academic administrator of Michigan State University, is a faculty member who has authority and responsibility delegated by the president and the Board of Trustees for the administration of a unit. At MSU, there is a distinction between college deans and academic/administrative unit deans.

College deans provide academic and scholarly leadership for their individual college's teaching, research, and outreach missions; are responsible for the budget and administrative functions of their colleges; and work to align with and advance university-level priorities at the college level.

Academic and administrative unit deans are deans under the Office of the Provost who provide leadership and support to the colleges in core academic areas. These include the deans of The Graduate School, Undergraduate Education, International Studies and Programs, and the Libraries.

³ FASA consulted with the Office for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, the Academic Specialist Advisory Committee, the University Committee on Faculty Affairs, the University Committee on Academic Governance, the Council of Diversity Deans, the Council of Faculty Affairs Deans, and the Council of Deans.

Organizational Factors

The Office for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs recognizes that the mission and a set of organizational factors for each college or academic/administrative unit can vary. The set of associate dean and assistant dean positions necessary for the college/unit, as well as the structure in terms of roles and responsibilities for the set of positions requires flexibility and what is appropriate in one college/unit may not be appropriate in another college/unit; there is no one-size fits all approach that can be applied to serve the needs of every college/unit. A host of organizational factors informs and guides how a dean decides to structure the work across their academic leadership team in the dean's office. Key among those organizational factors is:

- Mission
- Size of the faculty/academic staff
- Size of the budget
- Size of undergraduate and graduate students
- Size of research expenditures
- Number of courses provided
- Whether the unit is departmentally organized or not
- Whether the unit is spread across multi-site locations (i.e., East Lansing, Grand Rapids, Flint, Detroit)

These factors inform and guide the needs of the college/unit and, thus, the structure of the associate dean and assistant dean positions. For instance, a college smaller in size, in terms of students and faculty, may bundle the areas of research and faculty affairs within one associate dean position, while a larger college may have two associate dean positions, one focusing on research and the other focusing on faculty affairs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Assistant and associate dean roles are held at the college-level⁴. The titles of associate dean and assistant dean reflect the role and set of responsibilities assigned to advance the **academic mission**.⁵

⁴ Or, for non-college units, at the level of the major administrative unit.

⁵ Roles with responsibilities in areas such as budget, human resources, information technology, development, and communications are considered support functions and are indirectly related to the strategic academic mission of the units.

Pragmatically, this means deans should:

- Differentiate titles of associate dean and assistant dean in the following way: the associate dean has a **strategic** role and broad scope of responsibilities within a functional area directly related to the academic mission of the unit, whereas the assistant dean has an **operational** role and a narrow, specialized scope of responsibilities within a functional area directly related to the academic mission of the unit.
- Utilize titles other than “dean” (e.g., administrative associates, administrative business managers, management analysts, chiefs of staff) for administrative/management roles assigned to functions that support the advancement of the unit’s mission (advancement/development, technology/digital services, communications/marketing, budget, operations, human resources) that by their nature are indirectly related to the strategic academic mission of the units. In other words, administrators in these areas would not oversee personnel engaged in teaching, research, or service/outreach of an academic unit.

Defining Characteristics

The defining characteristics that differentiate the roles and responsibilities of associate dean and assistant dean include scope, impact, and level of authority for strategy and decisions.

An associate dean position has a **strategic** role and broad scope of responsibilities within a functional area directly related to the academic mission of the unit, whereas an assistant dean position has an **operational** role and narrow, specialized scope of responsibilities within a functional area directly related to the academic mission of the unit.

Associate dean responsibilities typically include a broad/highly diversified mixture of responsibilities with broad scope and impact on the academic mission of the unit, while assistant dean responsibilities typically involve a wide range of support services and/or may focus on a specialized area. At MSU, associate deans/assistant dean titles are also utilized outside of the colleges in the following major administrative units with deans: International Studies and Programs, Libraries, Undergraduate Education, and the Graduate School. Within these units, the functional areas for the associate deans/assistant deans are specialized toward the unit’s mission.

Refer to ***Appendix A: Key Differences Between the Assistant Dean and Associate Dean Classifications*** that highlights the key differences in table form.

Associate Dean Roles

Associate deans are responsible for performance in a functional area in the **strategic scope** of the academic mission of an administrative unit. Associate deans must interface vertically with the relevant academic units and unit leaders in the college and with advisory bodies for the vice provosts or vice presidents. In addition, associate deans must interface horizontally with peers in other colleges who oversee the same functional area, and with other associate deans in their college who oversee different functional areas. Assigning associate deans to specific functional areas should lead to a rational basis for communication and reporting in that the areas of responsibility are clear and do not overlap significantly with other associate deans.

Currently within the colleges, it is typical for associate deans to be assigned to oversee the following areas: research, faculty affairs, graduate education, and undergraduate education. In some instances, to accommodate the size of the college, these areas may be combined into a single administrative position. For example, a single associate dean may oversee both research and graduate education, or a single associate dean may oversee both faculty affairs and diversity, equity, and inclusion. The percentage of time assigned to the administrative responsibilities of associate deans may vary, but fulfillment of the responsibilities should require a majority appointment (51% or more). Their appointments typically receive an administrative increment in addition to their faculty salary. Associate deans are at-will appointments, and they may be relieved from the position at any time upon action by the Dean. Associate deans hold term-limited appointments (that can be discontinued at any time) that range in length from 3-5 years, with reappointment to an additional term possible after a comprehensive performance review.

Some of the functional areas assigned to the associate deans can be large and complex, which can result in additional personnel and offices staffed with assistant deans and skilled professionals responsible for key areas such as undergraduate student advisement, undergraduate student success, undergraduate career advisement, enrollment management, etc.

Assistant Dean Roles

Assistant deans are responsible for a **specialized or narrower scope** of duties performed within a functional area, and direct oversight of the assistant dean may be assigned to an associate dean or the dean. The breadth of the area and impact is narrower in comparison to that of associate deans. The duties of assistant deans are more operational than strategic and include support activities in academic areas, such as curriculum development and implementation, academic support services for students and academic support services for faculty. While they may engage with relevant academic units and peers in other colleges who oversee those domains, it is within a specialized scope of duties. For example: assistant dean for student success or an assistant dean for teaching, learning and curriculum design represents important

sub-functions necessary to advance the academic mission of undergraduate education but does not have the full scope of responsibilities as an associate dean for undergraduate education.

Typically, assistant deans are appointed with the expectation that they will devote 90-100% of their time to their administrative roles. Like associate deans, assistant deans are typically appointed on an annual year rather than an academic year basis. Assistant deans are at-will appointments, and they may be relieved from the position at any time upon action by the dean.

Determining Minimum Qualifications

In alignment with federal hiring guidance, minimum qualifications for positions must be set at the lowest predictive or anticipated marker of capacity for successful performance and/or may, as appropriate, be set at a level required by law for licensure/certification/practice or an external review/accreditation body. Each position must be posted with validated qualifications for the specific duties and responsibilities of the position. In the section below, we outline **university-level guidance** on minimum qualifications and preferred qualifications for these positions.

After the college/unit defines the roles and responsibilities of the specified position, a careful analysis needs to be undertaken to identify the qualifications (e.g., knowledge, skills, experiences, abilities, licensures, certifications). Qualifications can be categorized as either minimum qualifications or preferred qualifications.

- **Minimum qualifications** are those an applicant must possess to be considered a candidate for the position.
- **Preferred qualifications** are not required for an applicant to be considered a candidate for the position. They are desired qualifications beyond the minimums that demonstrate additional experience, education, or credentials.

Minimum qualifications establish the baseline requirements for being considered for a position by a hiring committee. Preferred qualifications represent additional skills, experiences, or credentials that make a candidate stand out in the selection process and assessed more favorably for a position.

University Expectations on Minimum Qualifications for Assistant and Associate Dean Positions

Minimum qualifications are to be stipulated by the college/major administrative unit housing the appointment, with consideration given to any specialized accreditation requirements and disciplinary norms. Minimum qualifications must be directly related to and essential for the successful execution of the specific responsibilities assigned to the position.

Example Qualifications for Consideration as either Additional Minimum Requirements or Preferred Requirements by Functional Area

Provided are example qualifications that a dean may use as minimum requirements or preferred requirements. These examples are for illustrative purposes only; qualifications must be validated to the specific roles and responsibilities of each unique position.

Note that in these examples they do not specify the requirement of appointment in the tenure system. Whether a tenure-system appointment is needed as a minimum or preferred requirement depends on the scope of the position. Please refer to **Appendix B** for guidelines on how to determine a minimum qualification versus a preferred qualification.

Graduate Education:

- Demonstrated excellence in teaching and mentorship of graduate students.
- Substantial experience supervising graduate students at both the master's and doctoral levels.
- Extensive experience teaching in master's and doctoral degree programs.
- Proven experience in managing a laboratory or leading research teams.
- A strong track record of securing funding to support research, scholarship, and/or creative activities.

Undergraduate Education:

- Demonstrated excellence in teaching and mentorship at the undergraduate level.
- Substantial experience in undergraduate teaching, student support services, advising, career counseling, or curriculum development.
- Proven ability to support and guide undergraduate students in their academic and professional development.

Research:

- Demonstrated excellence in scholarly and creative contributions relevant to their field or discipline.
- A strong track record of securing funding to support research, scholarship and/or creative activities.
- A history of publishing in high-quality, discipline-related outlets.
- Strong commitment to advancing research excellence within the academic community.

Faculty Affairs:

- Demonstrated experience in successfully recruiting, hiring, appointing and promoting faculty members (tenure system and/or fixed term) in accordance with institutional policies and best practices.
- Proven expertise in conducting faculty performance reviews, including assessments for salary adjustments, career progression, and award nominations.
- Experience in managing faculty personnel matters, including grievances, disciplinary actions and workload assignments.

Appointment Considerations

Consistent with the [Salary, Appointment, and Faculty Status of Faculty Members Who Assume Administrative Responsibilities - Faculty Handbook](#), an administrator role is separate and distinct from a faculty position. When appointing individuals to assistant or associate dean roles, it is key to consider the at-will or end-dated nature of these positions and the inherent unpredictability associated with non-continuing appointments. An assignment as an administrator is subject to change at any time. While associate dean roles are typically rotational, allowing individuals to transition in and out over time, assistant dean roles are often regarded as more long-term, career-oriented positions.

Before making an appointment, deans should carefully evaluate the individual's current employment status (internal vs. external to MSU) and the expectations they might have regarding the role. For internal candidates with tenure, the individual has a base appointment to which they can return after concluding their dean role. Consistent with the above-referenced policy, a tenured faculty member may return to regular faculty duties in their primary academic unit (e.g., department, school, college, residential college) at any time.

For individuals without a tenured base appointment, or for those who may forfeit a role within the university (e.g., a teaching role) to accept the assistant or associate dean position, it is critical to proactively address potential future exit or transition scenarios. The offer letter should state the expectations around the potential for termination. For instance, "This appointment is at the dean's discretion and may be terminated at any time without notice or cause."

If appropriate for the needs of the college/unit, deans may consider incorporating the following step-back options in the offer terms:

- **Transitional Payment:** Offer a transitional payment (e.g., two months' salary) to facilitate their career adjustment.
- **Return to a Prior Role:** Include provisions for the individual to return to a role with responsibilities like their prior position within the college.
- **Special Assignment:** Provide a defined special assignment within the college or Dean's Office for a transitional period following the conclusion of their dean role.

Any transition, step-back, or separation arrangements must be consistently applied across similar appointments within the college/unit and documented in the offer letter.

Additionally, any step-back provisions outlined in an offer letter can be made contingent upon the individual fulfilling their role in good faith and adhering to university policies and standards of conduct. To ensure clarity and mutual understanding, language specifying that step-back provisions do not apply in cases of termination for misconduct must be included in the offer letter.

Before finalizing such provisions, deans are required to consult with the Office for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs to ensure compliance with university policies and to align expectations.

Promotional Pathway for Assistant Deans

Assistant deans who serve a substantial time in their role may be promoted to senior assistant dean based on exceptional performance and in recognition of their significant contributions to advancing the mission of the College. This designation reflects an elevated distinction of achievement in advancing the strategic goals of their unit and institution. While the senior assistant dean title is not available upon hire, it serves as an acknowledgment of outstanding performance and professional growth, marking a clear progression in leadership within academic or administrative settings.

University-level criteria for promoting an assistant dean to senior assistant dean are currently being developed.

Appendix A: Key Differences Between the Assistant Dean and Associate Dean Classifications

Provided is a chart summarizing the key differences between assistant deans and associate deans based on the roles and responsibilities.

Aspect	Associate Dean	Assistant Dean
Scope	Strategic, broad scope of responsibilities within a functional area directly related to the academic mission.	Operational, narrow and specialized scope of responsibilities within a functional area related to the academic mission.
Impact	Broad and significant impact on the academic mission of the unit.	Limited and specialized impact focused on specific operational areas.
Primary Focus	Strategic planning, oversight and leadership in assigned functional areas.	Execution and support of specific tasks and initiatives in assigned areas.
Functional Areas	Research, faculty affairs and graduate education, undergraduate education, etc.	Sub-functions within areas, such as research grant support, student success, curriculum design, etc.
Collaboration	Interfaces vertically with unit leaders and horizontally with peers in other colleges and within the college.	Interfaces primarily with peers and colleagues in related sub-functional areas within their specialization.
Reporting Lines	Typically reports directly to the dean.	May report to an associate dean or the dean.
Decision-Making Authority	High-level strategic decisions and primary point of contact in lieu of the dean for assigned functional areas.	Operational decisions within a specialized domain.
Personnel Oversight	May oversee large and complex teams or offices, including assistant deans and professionals.	Limited oversight, typically focused on specific support areas or teams within the unit.
Example Titles⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate dean for research • Associate dean for undergraduate education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant dean for grant support • Assistant dean for student success

⁶ These titles are examples; each college/unit will have a different dean leadership structure that may not be consistent with these examples.

Appendix B: Guidelines on Determining Minimum Qualifications vs. Preferred Qualifications

Introduction

It is essential to align qualifications with the responsibilities and expectations of the role. Doing so can:

- ensure competency of the candidate to perform the job effectively,
- promote equity and transparency fairness in the hiring process by creating a fair and consistent hiring process, minimizing bias and ensuring all candidates are evaluated against the same criteria, and
- reduce turnover by preventing hiring mismatches due to misalignment in the qualifications and job responsibilities.

Several issues can arise when qualifications are misaligned with job responsibilities. Some of the issues are summarized in the table below.

#	Issue	Impact of Under-Qualification	Impact of Over-Qualification
1	Performance Gaps	Lack of necessary skills leads to poor performance and unmet expectations.	Employees feel underutilized and may disengage.
2	Increased Turnover	Higher turnover as employees struggle with job responsibilities.	Employees leave for roles that better match their skills.
3	Team and Organizational Impact	Colleagues take on extra work, causing frustration and delays.	Overqualified employees feel bored, reducing morale.
4	Equity and Legal Risks	Failure to meet required certifications or legal standards.	Perceived unfairness in hiring processes due to arbitrary qualifications.
5	Inefficiency in Recruitment	Attracts unqualified candidates, wasting recruitment resources.	Overqualified candidates may leave quickly, increasing recruitment costs.
6	Employee Dissatisfaction	Stress and low job satisfaction from feeling unprepared.	Boredom and resentment from lack of challenge.

Distinction between Minimum Qualifications and Preferred Qualifications

When distinguishing between minimum qualifications and preferred qualifications, it is essential to frame them within the context of the job responsibilities for a position.

How Minimum Qualifications Relate to Job Responsibilities

Minimum qualifications are directly tied to the essential duties and requirements of the position. They represent the foundational education, skills and experiences a candidate must possess to perform the job's core functions.

How Preferred Qualifications Relate to Job Responsibilities

Preferred qualifications are those that enhance a candidate's ability to excel in the role but are not essential for fulfilling its basic responsibilities. These qualifications often support higher-level functions, contribute to long-term success or align with desirable attributes.

Key Considerations

Answering the questions below can help in determining whether a qualification is minimum or preferred.

Minimum Qualifications

The job descriptor is considered a "Minimum Qualification" if the response is "Yes" to any of the questions below.

- *Legal or Policy Requirements:* Is this qualification mandated by law, accreditation standards, or institutional policy?
- *Job Necessity:* Is this qualification necessary to complete the essential duties? Would a candidate be unable to perform core job functions without this qualification?
- *Baseline Eligibility:* Does this qualification reflect the absolute minimum skillset needed to succeed?

Preferred Qualifications

The job descriptor is considered a "Preferred Qualification" if the response is "Yes" to any of the questions below.

- *Enhancing Success:* Does this qualification allow a candidate to perform the role at an elevated level?
- *Flexibility of Requirement:* Can the job be performed effectively without this qualification?

Using Job Responsibilities to Inform Qualifications

The position qualifications should stem from a careful analysis of the job description. Methods such as job audits, competency matrices or consultation with stakeholders can help you to: 1) identify up-to-date and accurate job responsibilities and 2) link each qualification directly to job responsibilities. This approach can help ensure both the accuracy and relevance of the qualifications.

Aligning qualifications to job responsibilities includes the following approach:

- 1) *Break Down Responsibilities*: Identify core and secondary tasks in the job description.
- 2) *Match Skills and Knowledge*: Link each task to the skills, education and experience required to perform it.
- 3) *Prioritize*: Assign non-negotiable knowledge, skills, experiences and abilities (KSAs) as minimum qualifications and desired KSAs as preferred qualifications.

Methods

The methods outlined below establish a comprehensive process for identifying job qualifications, helping to ensure that they are closely aligned with the actual demands of the role. By using evidence-based tools, the process evaluates the relevance and accuracy of qualifications, ensuring that they align with the actual needs of the position. This approach not only supports fairer and more inclusive hiring practices but also improves the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the hiring process (Patterson, 2019; Fogg & McMullen, 2020). By grounding qualifications in real job responsibilities, institutions can better identify the most suitable candidates, leading to more informed and transparent decisions.

1 - Job Audits

The first step in determining qualifications is to identify the responsibilities of the position. If a prior job description is available, thoroughly review and analyze its contents to identify the key responsibilities. A job audit involves a thorough review of the tasks and responsibilities associated with a position. This method ensures that the qualifications listed in a job description are necessary and relevant. Examples of how this works includes:

- Conducting interviews or surveys with current or past incumbents of the role.
- Reviewing the day-to-day tasks, key responsibilities and expected outcomes and impact of the position.
- Documenting recurring tasks, technical requirements and interpersonal demands.

2 - Competency Matrices

A competency matrix identifies the knowledge, skills, experiences and abilities (KSAs) required to perform a role successfully. This tool helps break down the specific attributes tied to job responsibilities and categorizes them as minimum or preferred qualifications. To develop a matrix:

- List each job responsibility in one column.
- Map the KSAs required to perform those responsibilities in adjacent columns.
- Rank the importance of each competency (e.g., essential vs. desirable). Many requirements can seem essential; however, the distinction between what is truly necessary for the role and what would be beneficial can help prioritize qualifications and avoid unnecessary exclusions of qualified candidates.

3 - Consultation with Stakeholders and HR Professionals

Stakeholders (e.g., colleagues, team members, peers) can be defined as those who frequently interact with the position and have a reasonable understanding of the responsibilities, needs and impact of the position. These individuals can provide valuable information into the practical and strategic requirements of a role. This collaborative approach ensures the qualifications reflect the totality of a position's needs and the broader organizational goals.

Considerations Related to Terminal Degrees and Tenure System Requirements

Background

In higher education, there is a risk for inadvertently inflating position qualifications—often driven by a meritocratic culture. This runs counter to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements and can present legal risks for MSU as a public university that must adhere to EEO requirements. While meritocracy is intended to reward individual achievement and capability, in practice it can sometimes result in the setting of qualifications that are overly specific and exclude qualified candidates. For instance, having highly specialized degrees or experience as minimum requirements may inadvertently limit the applicant pool and disproportionately affect underrepresented groups. Research has shown that an inflation of qualifications can restrict diversity, as candidates from marginalized backgrounds may have equivalent or relevant experience but lack the exact credentials being emphasized (Binns, 2020; Smith, 2021).

Beyond the implications for diversity and inclusion, this practice also creates legal concerns, especially for MSU as a public institution subject to EEO regulations. Under federal laws, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), MSU is required to avoid employment practices that disproportionately exclude candidates based on race, gender, disability or age unless such qualifications are directly tied to the job's responsibilities (EEOC, 2020; U.S. Department of Labor, 2019). Inflated qualifications may lead to disparate impact discrimination, a form of unintentional discrimination where hiring practices unintentionally favor certain demographic groups over others.

To mitigate this risk, it is crucial for search committees to ensure that qualification requirements are genuinely aligned with the responsibilities of the role and are not artificially inflated. Qualifications should be essential to performing the core duties of the position, and all hiring criteria must be transparent, relevant and inclusive. Regular reviews of job qualifications through evidence-based tools, such as job audits or competency matrices, can help ensure that

qualifications are necessary, legally compliant and open to a diverse range of qualified applicants. By setting realistic and relevant qualifications, higher education institutions can both mitigate legal risks and promote a more inclusive and diverse hiring process, ultimately supporting their academic mission (Patterson, 2019; Fogg & McMullen, 2020).

Considerations Specific to the Assistant Dean and Associate Dean Role

Previously, MSU's guidance indicated that an appointment to the role of associate dean should be for someone with either a tenure system or HP faculty appointment, while an assistant dean role should be for someone with faculty appointment or an academic specialist position with a terminal degree that would allow appointment as a faculty member.

This guidance is no longer applicable for both the assistant and associate dean role. It is important that qualifications align with the specific responsibilities and duties of each role and linked to knowledge, experiences, abilities and skills, rather than predetermined faculty/appointment status.

Such qualifications related to faculty/appointment status must be based on evidence of job relevance and should be validated by the job duties and responsibilities to ensure a fair and inclusive hiring process.

However, appointment in certain categories of employees (e.g., tenure system) or possession of a terminal degree may be necessary qualifications for the position. The dean is responsible for determining whether these qualifications are essential, based on the specific responsibilities of the job. To aid in this decision-making process, the following guiding questions have been developed for deans to consider:

- **How do the scope of duties and responsibilities assigned to the position translate into the qualifications for the position and the type of appointment needed?**
- **Are there certain duties and responsibilities assigned to associate deans or assistant deans for which tenure system appointment is required or preferred?** Note: This could exclude fixed term faculty and academic staff.
- **Are there certain duties and responsibilities assigned to associate deans or assistant deans for which faculty appointment in either the tenure system or fixed term system is required or preferred?** This could exclude academic staff who may have terminal degrees but are not appointed as faculty.
- **Are there certain duties and responsibilities assigned to associate deans or assistant deans for which a terminal degree is required or preferred?** This could exclude academic staff who have not attained a terminal degree.
- **Are there certain duties and responsibilities assigned to associate deans or assistant deans for which a terminal degree nor faculty status is required or preferred but a combination of degree below terminal degree and experience would be sufficient?** This would exclude no academic staff or faculty.

To the degree that the activities undertaken are discipline/field specific, can an argument be made that the individual must have a terminal degree in those disciplines/fields? For some fields/disciplines, there may be additional specialized accreditation standards that may require a terminal degree and a specific area for that terminal degree.

To the degree that the decisions made by associate or assistant deans will involve and shape the **experiences of those engaged in graduate education**, can an argument be made that the individual have experience in the supervision of graduate students at the master and doctoral levels, experience in teaching in master and doctoral degree programs, experience in managing a lab or research teams, success in securing funding for support of research, scholarship and/or creative activities?

To the degree that the decisions made by associate or assistant deans will involve and shape the **experiences of those engaged in research and scholarship**, can an argument be made that the individual must have experience in securing funding for support of research, scholarship, and/or creative activities, publishing in high quality discipline-related outlets, etc.? To the degree that a terminal degree is required to engage in these endeavors as a principal investigator or a lead author, then does it by default become a requirement for the position?

To the degree that the decisions made by associate or assistant deans will involve and shape the **experiences of those engaged in undergraduate education**, can an argument be made that the individual have experience in undergraduate teaching, student support services, advising, career counseling, curriculum development, etc.? To the degree that a terminal degree is required to engage in these endeavors, does it by default become a position requirement?

To the degree that the decisions made by associate or assistant deans will involve and shape **the career progression of tenure system faculty members**, can an argument be made that the individual must have an appointment in the tenure system? For example, experience in the areas related to faculty affairs—promotion, hiring, salary, performance review, grievances, etc.

References

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