



Frank Batten College of Engineering and Technology

Certification of Faculty for Graduate Instruction

The following faculty member is approved for participating in graduate education in accordance with the Frank Batten College of Engineering and Technology Policy on Certification of Faculty for Graduate Instruction and the Faculty Handbook.

Faculty Name	
Certifying Department	
Home Department (if different)	
Period of Certification (indicate month/year 5-year term ends)	
Highest Degree Earned (include discipline)	

CERTIFICATION LEVEL (Check One):

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

 Certifying Program Graduate Committee Chair Date

 College Graduate Committee Chair Date

 Certifying Program Department Chair Date

 Dean (or Designee) Date

 Home Program Department Chair (If different) Date

Instructions:

- Documentation of the faculty member’s qualifications should accompany this form (e.g. Curriculum Vitae).
- Save with a file name in this format: *YEAR LASTNAME, FIRSTNAME (DEPT)- Grad Certification.pdf*. For example, “*2026 Smith, Jean (ECE) - Grad Certification.pdf*”. Original (with supporting documents) should be filed in the Dean’s Office with copy in the certifying department.
- After dean approval, provide a copy (without supporting documents) to Academic Affairs.

FRANK BATTEN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

CERTIFICATION OF FACULTY FOR GRADUATE INSTRUCTION

All faculty assigned to teach graduate level courses or supervise graduate research in the Batten College of Engineering and Technology (BCET) should be certified in their “home” program where they will most commonly perform these duties. Certifications for graduate instruction are broad affirmations that a faculty member meets a minimum standard for involvement in graduate education at ODU. It is not a certification to teach or advise in a particular academic program. I.e., graduate faculty certifications shall ordinarily be recognized reciprocally by all other programs and academic colleges across campus.

Graduate certification (by itself) does not authorize a faculty member to instruct or supervise research in a particular discipline or subject area. Such specific assignments and duties must additionally be authorized through other processes at the program and college level. Graduate certification is (only) the first step. Teaching assignments additionally require faculty appointments (full time, adjunct, etc.) that are subject to department chair and additional approval, and all thesis and dissertation committee roles (e.g., chair or committee member) must be approved through multi-level reviews led by GPDs and department chairs that culminate in completion of the Graduate School’s M1, D1, and D2 forms for committee membership.

The certification process for faculty in programs in the Batten College of Engineering and Technology is in accordance with campus policy¹ and is outlined below.

Certification

Faculty may be certified at one of three levels for a five-year period. At the end of the five-year period, a review is required for renewal of the certification. Refer to the Recertification section (farther below) for additional requirements for established faculty on teaching and/or research supervision performance and effectiveness. The three levels of certification (in order of increasing authorizations) are:

Level 3 Certification

Level 3 certification is the base certification level required for faculty to teach graduate courses (500-899) at ODU. Specific instructional assignments are subject to program and college-level approvals. Level 3 certification normally requires a terminal degree in a related field to the certifying program. Exceptions may be made for candidates with a master’s degree, provided it can be demonstrated that they have *advanced professional expertise* in a relevant field. Such exceptions may be requested by the chair of the certifying department using the *Exceptional Certification of Faculty for Graduate Instruction* form and require approvals as described in the Faculty Handbook. On a case-by-case basis, Level 3 certified faculty may serve on dissertation and thesis committees at ODU (but not chair) if the need for their expertise is adequately justified (subject to approval process outlined in the Faculty Handbook). Recertification of Level 3 faculty is required every 5 years, in which they must demonstrate satisfactory performance (effectiveness) of their graduate faculty duties (graduate teaching, etc.) over the prior period of certification.

¹ These college-level guidelines apply in addition to the campus-level policies described in the *Old Dominion University Teaching & Research Faculty Handbook*, in the *Certification of Faculty for Graduate Instruction* section as well as policy details found at: <https://www.odu.edu/graduateschool/faculty-resources/instruction-certification>

Level 2 Certification

Level 2 certification allows graduate faculty to teach graduate courses (500-899) at ODU and serve as a committee member (but **not** chair) on thesis and dissertation committees at ODU (subject to other program and college approvals). Level 2 Graduate faculty must hold a terminal degree in a related field to the certifying program. Certification for Level 2 requires that faculty demonstrate their qualifications through **sufficient scholarly or creative activity that will enable them to contribute to the success of a student's research program**. This determination is made first by the primary graduate program that is certifying the faculty, followed by the college's graduate committee and the dean (or designee). Evidence of scholarly or creative activity may include publications, conference presentations, successful grant activity, or other standard indicators of experience or productivity expected of research-active faculty. Recertification of Level 2 faculty is required every 5 years, in which they must demonstrate satisfactory performance (effectiveness) of their graduate faculty duties (teaching, research supervision, etc.) over the prior period of certification.

Level 1 Certification

Level 1 certification is the highest level of graduate certification at ODU. It allows graduate faculty to teach graduate courses (500-899) at ODU and act as a primary research advisor and chair or serve on thesis and dissertation committees at ODU (subject to other program and college approvals). Level 1 Graduate faculty must hold a terminal degree in a closely related field to the discipline of their certification and should have a full-time faculty appointment in a program within BCET (exceptions may be granted – see below). Certification for Level 1 requires that faculty demonstrate their qualifications through **sufficient scholarly or creative activity that will enable them to direct a student's research program**. This determination is made first by the primary graduate program that is certifying the faculty, followed by the college's graduate committee and the dean (or designee). Evidence of scholarly or creative activity may include publications, conference presentations, successful grant activity, or other standard indicators of experience or productivity expected of research-active faculty. Recertification of Level 1 faculty is required every 5 years, in which they must demonstrate satisfactory performance (effectiveness) of their graduate faculty duties (teaching, research supervision, etc.) over the prior period of certification.

Summary of Certification Levels

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Terminal Degree Required (in a related field)	Yes	Yes	Yes* Exception pathway for master's degree
Scholarly or Creative Activity Record Required	Yes sufficient to direct a research program	Yes sufficient to contribute to a research program	No
Full Time Appointment in BCET Required	Yes* Exception pathway	No	No
May teach graduate courses (500-899 course numbers)	Yes	Yes	Yes
May serve on thesis or dissertation committees	Yes	Yes	No* Exception pathway for specialized experience
May chair thesis or dissertation committees	Yes	No	No

Re-certifications

The criteria for initial Certification of faculty for Graduate Instruction in the Batten College of Engineering are described above. At the conclusion of each five-year certification period, a faculty member must be reviewed and re-certified for continued engagement in graduate education at ODU.

The process and criteria for re-certifications shall be analogous to the criteria for initial certification but shall use a period of performance limited to the prior 5 years and should consider their performance as a graduate faculty over the prior certification period. I.e., the faculty will be expected to have demonstrated satisfactory performance (effectiveness) of their graduate faculty duties (teaching, research supervision, etc.) over the prior period of certification.

Certification Process

1. The chair of the faculty's home or primary department, in consultation with the appropriate departmental committee and the graduate program director, assembles, reviews, and makes a recommendation for approval (or not) of the certification package, including the form and supporting documents (e.g. CV, transcript, etc.).
2. The Certification Package is submitted to the BCET Graduate Committee. The chair of this committee (or designees) works on the committee's behalf to review the package and make a recommendation for approval (or not) and forward the package (with necessary signatures) to the BCET Dean's Office.
3. The Dean (or designee) approves or disapproves the recommendation from the BCET Graduate Committee
4. The Dean's Office returns a signed copy of the Certification of Faculty for Graduate Instruction form to the department and archives a copy in the Dean's Office.
5. The Department notifies the parties and forwards a copy of the signed certification form (without supporting documents) to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (or designee).
6. Level 1 certifications enable faculty members to serve as chairs for thesis or dissertation committees – an important role in guiding student research projects. Although Level 1 certification typically requires a full-time appointment in BCET to ensure familiarity with the college's graduate program practices and standards, exceptions can be made. Faculty members such as external faculty or those from departments without graduate programs may not fully understand these practices and standards. In such cases, Level 1 certification can still be granted if the certification package includes a memo from the certifying program's Department Chair and Graduate Program Director. This memo for exception should outline plans for mentorship or collaboration with co-chairs to help the faculty member effectively guide projects and develop the necessary familiarity.

Level 1 certification may also be granted to new full-time faculty in BCET or other full time BCET faculty who are not yet familiar with our graduate program practices and standards (e.g. new faculty). Although such cases for Level 1 certification are not considered exceptions to the requirement for a full-time BCET appointment (i.e., no memo for exception is necessary), the certifying program's Department Chair and Graduate Program Director will evaluate the faculty to determine if they are

sufficiently prepared for Level 1 responsibilities, and if needed, may implement a mentoring or collaboration process for the new Level 1 graduate faculty to direct thesis or dissertation projects.

7. If questions arise concerning the qualifications of faculty for certification, these must be addressed to the prior level of recommendation for approval. Attempts should be made to resolve them among the recommending and approving authorities. Similarly, if a reviewing authority determines that the requested certification level is not supported, but that a different certification level may be appropriate, the package shall be returned to the recommending program for consideration of revision and resubmission at the suggested level. An appeal may be made to the provost and executive vice president for academic affairs (or designee) if these efforts fail to resolve any problems.
8. Faculty who can demonstrate that they are resuming research activity after an extended period of inactivity may be certified using the “Initial Certification” criteria, which permits consideration of earlier research engagement than (only) the prior 5 years. Subsequently, they will enter into the normal 5-yr recertification cycle.
9. In cases where the faculty member's home department is different from the certifying department/program, approval by the home department chair is also required.

Approved by BCET Faculty Vote: May 1, 2026