

**EVALUATION OF LIBRARY ACADEMIC FACULTY
FOR PROMOTION AND CONTINUING APPOINTMENT
Section 3.2.1 Library Faculty Handbook**

A. Introduction

The Policies of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York define librarians as academic faculty. The Academic Faculty of the University Libraries shares the University's goals of pursuing, achieving, and maintaining academic excellence. Progress toward these goals requires a faculty of librarians with a high level of expertise.

The Association of College and Research Libraries has adopted the following statement on the role of academic librarians:

The academic librarian makes unique contributions to the academic community and to higher education itself. These contributions include developing collections, providing bibliographic access to all library materials, and interpreting these materials to members of the college and university community. Specific services include instruction in the use of print and online library resources and the creation of new tools to enhance access to information available locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally. Librarians contribute to the sum of knowledge through their research into the information process and other areas of study. Service improvements and other advances in the field result from their participation in library and other scholarly organizations.

Librarians should be promoted in rank based on their professional proficiency and effectiveness (performance, service, and scholarship) consistent with stated campus standards. The peer review system should be an integral part of procedures for promotion.

(excerpted from "Standards for Faculty Status for Academic Librarians" Approved by ACRL Board, June 2007. Revised October 2011. Prepared by the ACRL Committee on the Status of Academic Librarians)

"Administrative Procedures for the Preparation of Recommendations for Promotion and Continuing Appointment", issued by the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, identifies the criteria for the evaluation of faculty as Teaching, Scholarship, and Service. The University Libraries Faculty recognizes each of these categories (using Effectiveness in Librarianship as analogous to the category of Teaching). While progressive development in all criteria is expected as a librarian's career develops, the primary mission of the Library Faculty is to provide the best possible library service to meet the teaching and research needs of the University's students and faculty. Consequently, when evaluating candidates for promotion and continuing appointment, librarians place primary emphasis on Effectiveness in Librarianship.

Librarians are required to fulfill their professional responsibilities throughout the calendar year, ensuring that service to the campus and local community is available seven days a week, twelve months a year. This commitment reduces the discretionary time available to librarians for research, scholarship, and service outside the University Libraries.

B. Criteria for Promotion and Continuing Appointment

1. Effectiveness in Librarianship

This criterion is analogous to the teaching faculty's criterion for effectiveness in teaching. It is the most important criterion by which librarians are judged. Librarian specializations are diverse and constantly evolving. They may focus on development of collections and outreach to departments; reference and information services; teaching information literacy competencies; management of collections; archival administration; facilitating access to collections, including resource analysis and description; or administration of operations and services.

The peer review discussion by library faculty serves an important role in determining the effectiveness of a candidate. Librarians must be evaluated on the effectiveness with which they perform the responsibilities in their areas of specialization. Some factors to be used in assessing effectiveness are knowledge, skill, innovation, initiative, and professional growth.

2. Scholarship

Scholarship on the part of academic librarians may take different paths in addressing the needs of an applied discipline. It may advance knowledge through an agenda of related research questions; it may seek to address emerging needs in the field; or it may be concerned with a selection of topics relevant to the librarian's areas of specialization.

It is the responsibility of candidates to place their scholarship in the context of the field, whether it is related to library science or another discipline. In their research statements, candidates should reflect upon the research questions they have chosen and the research paths they have pursued, including attendant decisions about appropriate venues for presentation and publication.

For the purposes of this document, scholarship is evidenced by scholarly works and mastery of the subject matter.

a. Scholarly Works

This category includes original work such as books, journal articles, critical literature reviews or annotated bibliographies, grant-supported scholarly projects, computer software, databases, web-based publications.

Given the nature of the discipline, librarians' research is often applied and co-authorship is common.

Some librarians conduct scholarly research in subject disciplines other than librarianship. The Library Faculty considers such scholarly research to be of equal significance for promotion and continuing appointment as long as such work meets the scholarly standards expected in the discipline.

Scholarly works are shared with others and are subject to the criticism of peers with recognized expertise in the pertinent scholarly field. Peer review is a crucial factor in the evaluation of scholarly works. The evaluation of scholarly works will consider both their quality and their influence.

b. Mastery of the Subject Matter

Mastery of the Subject Matter may be demonstrated by advanced degrees beyond the terminal master's degree in library or information science, or by increased language or subject expertise relevant to librarianship. Mastery may be evidenced by the candidate's knowledge of the field or professional reputation as demonstrated by certificates, honors, awards, grant support for projects, research-based presentations, or original materials published in non-research-based periodicals, newspapers, non-traditional formats, and other publications.

3. Service

This category includes contributions to the library profession, to the University at Albany, and to the community. Service should be appropriate to the candidate's rank and experience, and involve increased responsibility and leadership as the candidate's career progresses.

a. Professional Service

Professional library organizations promote services, examine public policy issues, develop technical standards, encourage cooperative endeavors, foster the application of new technologies, and provide opportunities for sharing research. Because these functions are critical to the advancement of the profession and the development of library services, the University Libraries' Faculty considers active participation in state, regional, or national professional organizations to be essential.

Initial professional service may include contributions such as active participation on committees; making practice-based presentations, including poster sessions; or moderating or chairing a forum or panel. As careers progress, participation should evolve to leadership roles such as holding elective or appointed offices; organizing workshops or meetings; developing policy; or serving as a consultant, editor, or reviewer.

To be significant, these activities should take place beyond the local level and involve originality, responsibility, or the application of intellectual or managerial skills. Evaluations will be solicited from persons who are familiar with the candidate's work, either from a leadership or collaborative perspective.

b. University and Community Service

Librarians contribute to the direction and development of the institution through their involvement in the governance structure and academic life of the Libraries and the University. This involvement may take different forms, such as effective participation on committees, councils, task forces, or University events. Effectiveness is evidenced by leadership or other relevant and timely contributions toward the successful accomplishment of the mission and goals of the group.

Service to the community includes activities such as consultancies (both paid and pro bono), presentation of testimony, and leadership involvement for community groups whose interests are related to the candidate's field of expertise.

C. Guidelines for Application of Criteria for Appointment and Promotion

Appointment to any rank requires a master's degree accredited by the American Library Association or the equivalent library professional degree accredited by an appropriate foreign association. The academic rank assigned will reflect achievement in the areas of librarianship, scholarship, and service. Effectiveness as a librarian is of primary importance at all levels. Assessment of scholarship and service contributions is based on the quality and sustained evidence of those activities.

1. Assistant Librarian

To be appointed to the rank of Assistant Librarian, librarians are normally within the first year of their careers in librarianship. Initial appointment is made on the promise of future contributions of high quality, as indicated by the individual's educational record and professional performance.

2. Senior Assistant Librarian

To be appointed or promoted to the rank of Senior Assistant Librarian, librarians normally have at least one year of professional experience. The candidate should show evidence of effectiveness in librarianship, as well as engagement in scholarly activity and professional service.

Promotion to the rank of Senior Assistant Librarian is concurrent with a term appointee's first successful term review, i.e. promotion is contingent upon a term renewal of at least two years.

3. Associate Librarian

To be promoted to the rank of Associate Librarian, librarians should show evidence of:

- sustained effectiveness in librarianship, as described in section B1;
- a record of significant scholarly activity, as described in section B2, such as the acceptance for publication of at least two scholarly articles or equivalent scholarship;
- a record of meaningful service, as described in section B3, including evidence of leadership or significant committee participation.

For Senior Assistant Librarians, promotion to Associate Librarian and continuing appointment are concurrent activities.

To be appointed to the rank of Associate Librarian: The University Libraries acknowledge that the interpretation of faculty status for academic librarians varies among institutions with respect to scholarship and/or service. Therefore, librarians appointed to the rank of Associate Librarian without continuing appointment must have evidence of sustained effectiveness in librarianship and have some record of scholarly activity and service.

At the point of consideration for continuing appointment all Associate Librarians must fully meet the qualifications for promotion to this rank.

4. Librarian

To be promoted or appointed to the rank of Librarian, librarians must have attained:

- excellence in the criterion of effectiveness in librarianship;
- excellence in one of the two remaining criteria, scholarship or service;
- a significant and sustained record of contributions in the third.

They should have a record of outstanding achievement as librarian, and there should be clear evidence that the candidate's scholarship and service have had a significant impact on the profession.

In rare cases, an individual may be considered for promotion to Librarian on grounds other than those listed above, after making a truly outstanding contribution to the University or the external community over a period of many years.

In some cases, initial appointment to the rank of Librarian carries with it continuing appointment.

D. Guidelines for Application of Criteria for Continuing Appointment

To be granted continuing appointment, it is expected that librarians being considered meet the guidelines for promotion to the rank of Associate Librarian as outlined in section C3.

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