UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Interim Report:

Task Force to Create Promotional Paths for Academic Professionals

Rebecca Bryant, Tom Habing, MJ Han (co-chair), Josh Harris, Greg Knott, Beth Namachchivaya (co-chair), Richard Stokes, Jen-Chien Yu

4-29-2016
1. Background and Membership

The task force to Create a Promotional Path for Academic Professionals (APs) was formed in March 16th, 2016 after the Executive Committee decided not to pursue the use of Specialized Faculty in the University Library. After its first meeting on March 31st the task force has met weekly to continue the discussion on development of a promotion program for APs. The task force includes the following Academic Professionals and faculty:

- Rebecca Bryant, Manager, Researcher Information Systems
- Richard Stokes, Patron Service Manager
- Jen-Chien Yu, Coordinator of Library Assessment
- Joshua Harris, Media Preservation Coordinator, L-CAP representative
- Tom Habing, Interim Director of Library IT
- Greg Knott, Asst. Dean for Library Business & Human Resources
- MJ Han, Metadata Librarian, EC representative, co-chair
- Beth Namachchivaya, AUL for Research, co-chair

2. Activities and Progress: March 31 - April 30 2016

A. Internal (Library) Foundations

The task force’s main goal is to identify and recommend to the Executive Committee the steps required to establish within the Library a promotional program for APs. Through the past month of conversations about what it means for the Library to establish “promotional paths” for APs in the Library, our working definition is that the Library may develop a promotion program that contains more than one path for professional and career development. Moving forward, the task force intends to make recommendations that include establishing an overarching program that includes one or more paths. In order to shape these recommendations the task force needed to have high-level agreement on what sort of professional advancement the promotional paths ought to support. We also needed to examine existing programs in other units/institutions. As we do that, we want to be able to assess the elements of these programs that resonated positively with what the task force sought to develop for the Library. With these needs in mind, the task force established a set of principles to guide the work of identifying/developing promotional paths for APs (Principles for Establishing AP Promotional Paths in the University Library). We then developed a set of criteria that we intend to use in assessing existing programs (Assessment Criteria for an AP Promotion Program). In addition to guiding the work of the task force, these two documents are intended to facilitate early conversations among Library APs, faculty, and staff about the important high-level goals (Principles) and desired elements of the Library’s AP promotion program (Criteria). These draft documents are included in Section 3.

---

1 http://www.library.illinois.edu/committee/task_force_promotional_path_APs_library/Membership_Charge.html
B. Campus AP Promotion Information

The task force has identified the University HR and policy landscape that currently governs the establishment of Academic Professional positions, their available promotional paths, and the structure with which position titles must conform. Campus level policy statements primarily address the structural framework for creating Academic Professional positions, with a focus on these positions supporting the operational needs of units. These include Provost Communication 2, Attachment 1, related to title change and promotion of Academic Professionals, and two tables (commonly referred to as P-Class codes) that summarize the numerous possible permutations of alpha codes assigned in Banner for AP appointments. The task force reviewed Provost Communication 22, which governs the annual performance review of APs, but found that there is no direct relationship between the annual performance review and the establishment of AP positions, nor does any relationship exist between the performance review and promotions.

In Communication 2, Attachment 1, the campus identifies the process and necessary approvals/review required to either make a significant change in the responsibilities and title or to promote an Academic Professional employee. If a title change is requested due to a significant change in responsibilities, the requesting unit must submit a PAPE form to campus Academic HR, which will be reviewed and approved by that unit.

Regarding promotion of Academic Professionals, Communication 2, Attachment 1 states that these changes are primarily driven by the needs of the unit:

“Natural promotional lines or ladders for academic professional employees, e.g., assistant director to associate director within a unit, are sometimes appropriate to the needs of a unit. Where appropriate, the Campus encourages their establishment as a means of providing promotional opportunities to our best academic professional employees...Even where natural promotional lines or ladders do not exist or are inappropriate, academic professional positions can sometimes be revised to reflect both the needs of the unit and the capabilities of the incumbent. Such revisions could involve both a redefinition of the job to involve higher-level assignments and an upgrading of the title as well as the salary.”

---

2 Communication 2, Attachment 1: Academic Professional Position and Title Approval
http://provost.illinois.edu/Communication/02/2013/Communication_2_Attach_1_Academic_Professional_Position_and_Title_Approval.pdf

3 The Administrative/Academic Professional Position Class Structure (P-Class) table, and the Administrative/Academic Professional Position Class—Third and Fourth Characters Function Values List (both tables maintained by the Division of Management Information (DMI) http://www.dmi.illinois.edu/baneraids/banaid.asp.

4 Communication 22: Annual Review of Academic Professional Employees
http://www.provost.illinois.edu/communication/22/
Communication 2 goes on to specify that any revisions require a PAPE review, potentially the establishment of a new PAPE, and the approval of two units on campus—AHR and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access (now ODEA). The policy also recommends that these changes be made at the time of reappointment or August 16 if an individual is in a permanent budgeted position. Requests for mid-year promotions with salary increases must be justified “…under extraordinary circumstances involving a clear change in duties, a salary inequity, or a counter offer.”

After a review of the policy outlined in Communication 2 and the Banner tables governing AP titles and descriptors, the task force concluded that there are no campus or University-level promotional paths or programs for APs, and individual units are largely responsible for developing and implementing free-standing promotion programs for APs that work within the process-focused review and approval framework on campus.

C. Exploring AP Promotional Programs in Campus/University Units

The task force has obtained information about several existing AP promotional programs on campus, including those from AITS, Technology Services, the College of ACES, and the College of Engineering. The task force met on April 6 with AITS HR leadership for a conversation about the AITS promotional paths, which are closely tied to the organization’s strategic goals and mission. Tom Habing has shared information about potential Library IT AP promotional paths. The task force has had preliminary conversations about these several examples, and we intend to systematically analyze their strengths and weaknesses using the assessment criteria that the task force has developed in the May/June time frame. The task force will also seek examples of similar promotional paths on campus and at other institutions.

3. Draft Foundation Documents: Principles and Assessment Criteria

A. Principles for Establishing an AP Promotion Program: University Library

Overarching goal: Provide professional advancement opportunities for Academic Professionals in all positions in the Library

- The Library is committed to the ongoing stewardship of the professional advancement process for APs.
- By creating a well-defined promotional path for APs, the University of Illinois Library will benefit by improved talent development, succession planning, and employee retention.
- Provide promotional opportunities that can be recognized by other campus units, other institutions.
- Recognize the incremental development of academic professional skills and experience as part of a cohesive framework for professional advancement in the organization.
• Provide academic professionals with options to participate in the promotional paths identified by the Library.
• The promotional accomplishments identified in the framework are based on functional roles and individual professional achievements.
• Promotional salary increases become part of the base salary, and are determined separately from salary increases related to merit/annual performance review.

B. Assessment Criteria for AP Promotion Program

These criteria are intended to serve two purposes: Initially we have developed a set of criteria to provide guidance to the task force as it reviews existing frameworks available in other campus units and other institutions. Next, as the task force turns its efforts toward articulating a future AP promotional program in the Library, it can serve as an assessment foundation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Promotion program states the **mission** of an AP promotion program for the University Library | • Echoes institutional/organizational needs (e.g. campus or library strategic plans)
• States AP career paths within the University Library
• Has a natural career path for both managers/non-managers (suitable for Library IT) or operational and supervisory tracks (suitable for non Library IT)
• Heads towards building career tracks based on functional similarities/core functions Empowers APs to take charge of their career progression
• Affords opportunities for lateral movement between tracks
• Clearly states that APs should be promoted by merit
• Other |
| Promotion program articulates **elements** of an AP promotion program | • Specifies internal policies, procedures and documents that need to be consulted for AP promotion (e.g. Position Descriptions, Principal Administrative Positions Exemption (PAPE), etc.)
• Specifies campus policies, procedures and documents that need to be consulted (e.g. Provost Communications, P-class definition, etc.) |
4. Next Steps
The task force intends to concentrate over the next 3-4 months in the following areas:

A. Work Plan
May/June
Review promotional programs on campus and at other institutions, and evaluate their suitability using assessment criteria. (Q: How many programs should the task force aim to review?)

Review AP P-Class codes developed and used by the campus to gain an understanding of whether and how these codes could be used systematically to reflect promotional paths within an overall program (Q: What type of P-Class framework exists in Library? What logic or organizational strategy is embedded in it? Are there campus units that successfully apply a framework/logic using P-Class codes? Can the Library use P-Class codes to indicate steps along promotional paths, so that whatever the Library adopts relates to campus framework?)

June/July

- Develop a draft Library AP promotional program using principles and task force assessment criteria, working with Communication 2 as well as existing HR AP P-Class framework, where appropriate/possible.

August

- Share the draft Library AP promotional program with the Library to solicit any feedback.
- Hold open forum meetings with Library APs to discuss the draft program and promotional paths, and to glean feedback and suggestions from APs.
- Hold public open forum for any Library faculty/staff who are interested to provide background on the draft AP promotional program and paths.

September/October

- Task force reviews recommendations and feedback from open forums and makes adjustments, as necessary, to draft promotional program and paths.
- Report with recommendations delivered to the University Librarian and EC.

B. Communication

The task force is intent on keeping an open bi-directional channel of communication with the Library, and especially with Academic Professionals in the Library throughout the process of collecting and analyzing information, and developing a draft promotional program. Key communication channels and activities include the following:

L-CAP: Josh Harris, a task force member and a member of the L-CAP, is responsible for updating L-CAP on the work of the task force, and for ensuring that any questions or suggestions that come to L-CAP regarding AP promotional paths are shared with the task force. MJ Han and Beth Namachchivaya have been invited to the May L-CAP meeting to discuss the task force progress and to gather feedback from the committee.

Web site: All meeting notes are made available on the task force webpage: http://cms.library.illinois.edu/cms/committee/task_force_promotional_path_APs_library/Membership_Charge.html
Library Office Notes: Task force updates will be posted in Library Office Notes monthly, beginning May 2016.

L-CAP Newsletter: An update will be posted in a forthcoming issue of an Academic Professional newsletter.

Open Forum: The task force intends to hold open forum meetings starting in August to discuss and provide feedback on a draft promotional program and paths.

C. Questions and Challenges

The task force continues to discuss several questions and challenges associated with professional advancement programs. Key among these is the question of how many promotion paths the Library ought to adopt, and whether or not complexity is a wise route to pursue at this point in time. Additional challenges that the task force is discussing include:

- How many different promotional paths does the Library need in an AP promotion program?
- What are the benefits for promotion (monetary, multi-year contract, title change, other?)
- In what ways can the Library provide mentoring and support APs for promotion? What is the promotion evaluation and approval process (most AP jobs are unique)?
- What happens when the request for promotion is denied?
- What happens when one reaches the highest rank in the path?
- Should there be caps on promotional opportunities (i.e., one must wait until an opportunity becomes available in the Library in order to be promoted)?
- Questions about a channel for AP participation in the Library’s faculty governance structure—is this in scope for this work?