

Statement on Promotion and Tenure to the Library Faculty at UIUC

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Overview

The Library has established these guidelines to determine which faculty should be recommended to the campus committee and Provost for consideration of promotion and/or tenure. The decision to recommend faculty for promotion and/or tenure is one of the most important made by the University, because it determines the quality of the faculty and Library services for decades to come. Because tenure has consequences of long life and great magnitude, it should be awarded only when the best interest of the University of Illinois is clearly served by doing so. This is the overriding criterion.

These guidelines a) describe the role of the Faculty in the Library and University; b) define the ways in which campus domains of evaluation for faculty contributions are applied in the Library; c) establish criteria for evaluating contributions; and d) describe the process by which the Library assesses individual promotion and/or tenure cases.

Role of Faculty in Contributing to Library and Campus Excellence

The University of Illinois Library faculty offer expertise and professional leadership in knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, the curation and provision of access to information and scholarly resources, and teaching. Library faculty advance the University's educational mission and its goals for teaching, research, and service. Librarians create and apply professional knowledge, as well as lead innovative and collaborative programs, services, and instruction. Library faculty further the Library mission by providing world-class library services and collections, acting as critically informed stewards of collections and content.

As noted in the ACRL Standards for Faculty Status for Academic Librarians, “The academic librarian makes unique contributions to the academic community and to higher education itself. Faculty librarian institutional contributions have continued to evolve, with job descriptions which include teaching and communication skills, flexibility, and the ability to work collaboratively and independently with other strategic decision-makers within the institution.” Additionally, library faculty “have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. Professors do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates, even when it leads to findings and conclusions that differ from their own. Professors acknowledge academic debt and strive to be objective in their professional judgment of colleagues. Professors accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of their institution.” (AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics).

Domains of Evaluation

Areas of review for promotion to all ranks are expressed in a general fashion in the *Statutes*. Section 3e of Article IX states:

In determining appointments to, and salaries and promotion of the academic staff, special consideration shall be given to the following: (1) teaching ability and performance; (2) research ability and achievement; and (3) ability and performance on continuing education, public service, committee work, and special assignments designed to promote the quality and effectiveness of academic programs and services.

Library faculty members’ contributions to excellence are evaluated in three domains:

1. the practice of librarianship, which is considered the equivalent of teaching in other campus departments,
2. research, creative, and scholarly activities,
3. service, which includes service to the University Library, the campus, the profession, and society.

The Library and University mission is served by faculty activities that enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion on our campus and in the community. Library Faculty are expected to contribute toward a diverse community characterized by equity and inclusion and contributions to these goals are assessed as integral to each of the three primary domains. Although the nature and extent of the activities will vary, all faculty are expected to make diversity, equity, and inclusion contributions in at least one of the three domains.

Faculty may also make public engagement contributions in or more of the three domains. In this case, faculty draw on their expertise to address concerns or issues relating to the public good or involve the public more fully in the work of the university. The Library values these contributions, but they are not required for promotion to associate or full professor. They should be described by the faculty member as an element of each domain and will be evaluated as supplemental evidence of achievement and excellence.

The level of scope of administrative responsibility shall not in and of itself be a criterion for promotion or tenure. However, administrative responsibilities and accomplishments may demonstrate and contribute to excellence in one or more domain. Similarly, the Library values interdisciplinary contributions across the three domains, including partnerships with faculty in other colleges. While there is no formal requirement for interdisciplinary research, librarianship

or service, such contributions may provide tangible evidence of excellence.

General Criteria

Given the preponderance of responsibilities in the field of librarianship, the standard in the Library for promotion and tenure requires excellence in librarianship, a strong record of research and creative accomplishments, and evidence of valuable service.

For Promotion to Associate Professor

Candidates for promotion to Associate Professor shall show tangible evidence of achievement and a high likelihood of sustaining contributions to the field and to the department in the future, including:

- Excellence in librarianship, including a demonstrated high level of expertise;
- A strong record of scholarly publishing, constituting a significant contribution to the literature;
- Evidence of valuable service at national or international levels. Local and regional service may also contribute.

For Promotion to Professor

Candidates for promotion to Professor shall demonstrate promise fulfilled, including:

- Excellence in librarianship through outstanding performance over a sustained period of time;
- A sustained record of research and publication demonstrating a major impact in the field;
- Evidence of attainment of national or international stature in the field.

In making an assessment, it is the totality of the contribution since the promotion to associate professor, rather than the amount of time that has passed or the consistency in research production, that is relevant. Promotion to full professor is based on an assessment that, since the last promotion, the candidate has made contributions of appropriate magnitude, independence, and quality. The candidate should demonstrate the ability to sustain such contributions to their field and the University.

Full professors model librarianship, scholarship, and service in the Library, the university, and the discipline. They are not only grounded and recognized as experts in their specialty areas of librarianship, but they also function as ambassadors for the University Libraries within the university community, the state, regional partnerships, and the larger national and international academic library community. Full professors take on leadership roles in library and university committees, professional organizations, and initiatives backed by consortia and other partnerships. Wisdom, disciplinary and institutional knowledge, and expertise developed through ongoing successful practice give full librarians the foundation and standing to explore, innovate, and implement ideas that further the profession.

Domain-Specific Criteria

A. Librarianship

As members of the academic community, academic librarians engage in a number of key areas: communicating knowledge, discovering knowledge, sharing knowledge, preserving knowledge, creating, and applying knowledge. Academic librarians also play a preeminent role in the

provision of knowledge for students, scholars, and society at large.

Excellent librarianship at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is:

- Well-designed and well-delivered
- Collaborative and inclusive
- Reflective and evolving

Librarians have unique and deep expertise in respective specializations that inform and are reflected in interactions with colleagues and faculty, staff, and students across campus. Excellent librarianship requires both individual achievement and effective collaboration with campus and Library colleagues as library services and operations are often interdependent and require teamwork to be successful. Individual achievement is demonstrated through sustained and meaningful contributions and in applying one's expertise and independent judgment to library services and programs embedded within the University's educational mission. It may include innovation in practice. Effective collaboration is demonstrated by responsible participation and follow-through, as well as by inclusion, respect for others, and, when needed, the expression of controversial opinions or dissenting voices. Both individual achievement and collaboration provide opportunities to lead specific programs or initiatives.

The varied nature of faculty responsibilities and contributions constitutes a strength of the University Library. We value variety in thought, expertise, contributions, and working styles among our faculty. The categories outlined below provide potential areas in which candidates may contribute to knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, and teaching.

- Leadership in selecting, evaluating, acquiring, and preserving Library materials
- Undertaking activities that promote and facilitate discovery, scholarship and the creation of new knowledge by members of the Illinois community and other researchers
- Delivering excellent and/or innovative services or other contributions that advance the mission and goals of the University Library and the campus community
- Innovating and guiding new methods for describing and providing intellectual access to our broad, diverse collections in all formats
- Mentoring other faculty, academic and non-academic staff, graduate students, or undergraduate students
- Providing programmatic leadership within the Library system

Reviewers who comment on the quality of the candidate's librarianship are drawn from among a pool of people the candidate serves (whether internal to the campus or to the Library faculty). Reviews are included in the materials used by every level of review up to and including the Provost.

B. Research, Creative, and Scholarly Activities

A candidate's scholarly and creative work shall be evaluated in terms of its originality, depth, and significance in the field. Advanced research makes us better scholars, librarians, and academics. Library faculty have an intellectual and professional identity and develop a cohesive body of research. There must be evidence the faculty member has been progressively and effectively engaged in scholarly activity of high quality and significance. The Faculty Review Committee and the Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee shall look for evidence that the

scholarly accomplishments of the candidate make a significant contribution to the field of librarianship or other discipline.

The Committees shall consider the type, scope, and impact of the research or other creative work, and consider both the evidence offered by the candidate and that solicited from external referees at other research institutions. The dossiers of candidates must demonstrate a strong record of publication.

Research may be theoretical or applied and may be specific to the fields of library science and information studies or may pertain to a disciplinary area to which the faculty member brings particular expertise. Methodologies shall be appropriate to the type of research conducted. Research that leads to public engagement activities shall also be considered in the evaluation of the candidate's research impact. Both single- and multi-authored publications are a strong part of the tradition in librarianship. The faculty member's degree of responsibility for jointly produced scholarship and creative works shall be noted by the candidate and considered in the evaluation. There is no standard pattern for the order of authors in multi-authored works.

Research publications will be considered as part of the tenure review when they meet the following criteria:

- Articles, books, chapters, or other monographic material when the final manuscript has been accepted by the publisher.
- Uncompleted manuscripts or works not accepted for publication will be considered only as supplemental evidence in the promotion decision.

In general, works that undergo considerable scrutiny before publication (e.g., by referees, editorial boards, anthology editors, etc.), will be deemed of highest value. Consideration will be given to the significance and reputation within its field of a journal or publisher.

Specifically, publications and creative works, in print or digital form, are evaluated in the following manner:

- Books, monographs, critical editions, refereed articles, chapters in books, and other publications (print or digital) based on original research shall be accorded special importance as evidence of scholarly achievement.
- Innovative and emerging approaches, methodologies, and platforms, particularly in digital scholarship, with evidence of scholarly impact and recognition, will be considered.
- Papers in published conference proceedings shall be evaluated in terms of the extent to which they present original research.
- Reference works shall be judged scholarly works when they present new data, knowledge, or theoretical frameworks, widely disseminate practical or theoretical knowledge in new and needed forms, and/or incorporate scholarly research findings and interpretations.
- Reviews of scholarly works shall be evaluated in terms of the depth and scholarship of the review and the type and quality of the journal in which it is published and the importance of the work being reviewed.
- Journal and book editorships shall be evaluated in terms of the depth and degree of scholarship demonstrated and the importance of the publication to the field.

C. Service (University, Disciplinary/Professional, and Public)

Service to the Library, University, the candidate's field, and the community/public are an important element of faculty work. Candidates for promotion to associate professor must demonstrate evidence of valuable service within the Library or campus, and at the national or international levels. Local and regional service, as well as service to the public or society, may also contribute. For promotion to Professor, candidates must show evidence of attainment of national or international stature in the field. Valuable public service and recognition is considered a marker of particular distinction.

The Library's evaluation of service shall recognize the disproportionate service burdens of some faculty, particularly those from groups historically underrepresented and/or marginalized in academia. Examples are noted in Communication Nine.

Service to University and Library: Participation in faculty governance at the college and campus levels constitutes an important service component and is an expectation of all faculty. Relevant activities include membership and/or leadership of Library and University groups, including but not limited to elected committees; the writing, editing, or development of Library or University working papers, reports, recommendations, and plans; and the development of workshops and presentations serving the campus community.

Service to Disciplines and Professions: Engagement in professional organizations facilitates, directs, sustains, and enhances the practice of librarianship, demonstrating a faculty member's impact and importance in service outside of the campus and University. Accordingly, faculty members are expected to carry out professional activities within organizations at the local, regional, national, and international levels. Service may include such activities as holding offices or committee memberships in professional societies, delivering invited papers or public lectures, serving on editorial boards, refereeing manuscripts or grant applications, organizing conferences, preparing grant proposals for campus or public agencies, serving as a consultant, serving as an external reviewer for tenure cases at other institutions, and leading groups that develop professional white papers, reports, and standards. Special recognition shall be given to committee work and offices held at the state, national, or international level, particularly elected offices and major leadership roles.

Service to Society and the Public: The Library also values service to society and to the public. Representative examples include participation in community affairs as a representative of the University; providing assistance in the faculty member's field of expertise to groups, organizations, corporations, government, and communities; and the development and leadership of grants serving a public purpose. While public service is not required for tenure or promotion, contributions in these areas often demonstrate a level of influence that warrants special distinction that is associated with promotion to full professor.

D. Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

A faculty member's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts will be related to their scholarly expertise and/or role as a librarian at the University. Regardless of their area of scholarship, all library faculty are expected to and can make efforts toward enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. How an individual faculty member decides to do so will vary, as will the extent of their efforts. The University recognizes that diversity, equity, and inclusion activities will be more central for some faculty than others. DEI activities may take place in a faculty member's librarianship, research, or service area and may be at the individual, programmatic, or institutional level. In general, efforts will contribute to the diversity, equity, and inclusion mission

within the broader context of a faculty member's research, librarianship, and service accomplishments. It is not expected that any individual faculty member will perform diversity, equity, and inclusion activities in all domains or at all levels.

Review Process for Promotion and Tenure

The decision to tenure or promote a member of the UIUC Library faculty is governed by University statements on promotion found in Article IX of the *Statutes*, in Communication Number 9 from the Office of the Provost, and in Communication Number 13 from the Office of the Provost regarding "Review of Faculty in Year Three of the Probationary Period." The Library Statement on Promotion and Tenure articulates our implementation of these standards and the criteria used in evaluating candidates for promotion. The Provost makes the final promotion and/or tenure decision, with advice from the Campus Committee on Promotion and Tenure.

The University Library employs a two-level review process for tenure and promotion cases, in order to submit recommendations to the campus committee.

1. The Faculty Review Committee, composed of one tenured faculty member of the rank of associate professor or professor elected from each of the Library's eight divisions, serves as the first level of review.
2. The Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee, composed of seven elected associate professors or professors who may not simultaneously serve on the Faculty Review Committee, serves as a second level of review.

Each review committee submits official votes and recommendations to the Dean of Libraries. In order for a case to advance to the campus level, it must be independently endorsed by the Dean of Libraries.

Supplemental documentation:

[University Library Bylaws](#)

[Communication Number 9: Promotion and Tenure](#)

[Communication Number 13: Review of Faculty in Year Three of the Probationary Period](#)

[University Library Strategic Plan](#)

[ACRL Standards for Faculty Status for Academic Faculty](#)

[AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics](#)

[Communication Number 10: Guidelines and Procedures for Notice of Nonreappointment for Nontenured Faculty Members and for Denials of Promotion Not Linked to Tenure Decisions](#)

This document supersedes the following previous statements:

"Statement of Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointment, Promotion and Tenure, and Termination," adopted April 3, 1981 by the Library Faculty; "Criteria and procedures for appointment, promotion, and tenure approved by the University of Illinois Library faculty February, 1975," and "Criteria for tenure below the rank of associate Professor" adopted April 30, 1976 and amended July 28, 1976; Statement on Promotion, Tenure, & Appointments to the Library Faculty at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign" adopted June 17, 1994. **This document was approved and adopted by the University of Illinois Library Faculty February, 2000, then updated by faculty vote December, 2014.**