

**Prefatory note to be removed before AY 25/26:** Consistent with campus and Library expectations, a discussion of DEIA contributions made by specialized faculty will be required starting in AY 25/26.

## STATEMENT ON PROMOTION OF SPECIALIZED LIBRARY FACULTY AT UIUC

### Document Background

This statement incorporates the principles and standards outlined in Provost Communication #25: Employment Guidelines for Specialized Faculty Holding Non-Tenure System Positions (AY2023-24) and in Provost Communication #26: Promotion to Teaching, Research, or Clinical Associate or Full Professor Titles (AY2023-24). The promotional criteria for Specialized Faculty (excluding visiting appointments) parallels many of the same benchmarks and expectations as tenure system faculty, so this statement is closely modeled after the Library's Statement on Promotion and Tenure (as approved by the Faculty, April 21, 2022). The Library Executive Committee's approval of the Specialized Faculty Task Force report serves as the official record for the employee categories and associated evaluative percentages of appointment type expected for librarianship, research, and service for Specialized Faculty in the Library (approved June 26, 2023).

### Overview

The University Library has established these guidelines to determine which Specialized Faculty should be considered for promotion in keeping with Provost Communication #26: Promotion to Teaching, Research, or Clinical Associate or Full Professor Titles. This Communication states that "A promotion dossier, including letters and the cover sheet with votes, is required for specialized faculty members to be promoted to the associate or full rank. Each department must develop written criteria and procedures for specialized faculty promotions."

These guidelines a) describe the role of the Specialized Faculty at the University and in the Library; b) define the ways in which campus domains of evaluation for Specialized 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 cases.

### Role of Specialized Faculty at the University and in the Library

Provost Communication #25 states that "The University Statutes recognize a category of employees called 'other academics.' University Statutes, Art. IX, Section 3c. In contrast to faculty, defined by the Statutes as being the tenure system faculty, 'other academic' positions are often singularly focused on either the teaching or the research mission of the University. These individuals perform specialized functions and their scope of work is more specific than their tenure-system peers. In recognition of the specialized nature of these positions and the contributions made by this group of employees, we will refer to this group of employees as 'specialized faculty.'"

Per the Executive Committee's approval of the Specialized Task Force report, Specialized Faculty appointments in the Library fall into the following categories with evaluative percentages as shown:

- Clinical Faculty are focused primarily on librarianship, but they also contribute to the University's service and/or public engagement mission and conduct research. Specific expectations for research and/or service will be reflected in the responsibilities of the position to which the individual has been appointed, following the guidelines in Communication 26, with the appointment percentages as follows: 80% librarianship, 10% research and 10% service.
- Research Faculty are focused primarily on research, but they also contribute to the University's service and/or public engagement mission and librarianship. Specific expectations for research and/or service will be reflected in the responsibilities of the position to which the individual has been appointed, following the guidelines in Communication 26 with the evaluative percentages as follows: 70% research, 20% librarianship, and 10% service.
- Teaching Faculty. It is not expected that the University Library will hire into the Teaching Faculty category. In the University Library, teaching responsibilities are categorized as librarianship, and thus would be classified as Clinical Faculty.

## **Domains of Evaluation**

*Note that throughout the sections below, quality and significance are always emphasized as these are hallmarks of excellence. However, the percentages in each area of an appointment used for evaluative purposes is dictated by the nature and focus of a specific Specialized Faculty member's appointment as indicated above. Therefore, while all activities must be excellent, the extent of those activities will reflect the specific percentages of the appointment. For example, given the 80-10-10 distribution, a Clinical Faculty member in the Library will have a portfolio focused more heavily on librarianship than Research Faculty member or a tenure system Faculty member, which is then reflected in promotional review.*

Provost Communication #25 states that "Specialized faculty members are important members of our campus community who collectively make significant contributions to the teaching, research, and service missions of their individual units and to the campus." Following the precedent of substituting "teaching" for "librarianship", Library Specialized Faculty members' contributions to excellence are evaluated in three domains:

1. the practice of librarianship
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 Specialized Faculty activities that enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion on our campus and in the community. Library Specialized 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 Specialized Faculty are expected to make diversity, equity, and inclusion contributions in at least one of the three domains.

Specialized Faculty may also make public engagement contributions in one or more of the three domains. In this case, Specialized 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 Specialized Faculty member as an element of each domain and will be evaluated as supplemental evidence of achievement and excellence.

### **General Criteria for Specialized Faculty**

In making these assessments, it is the totality of the contribution since appointment or promotion, rather than the amount of time that has passed or the consistency in output, that is relevant. Promotion is based on an assessment that, since appointment or last promotion, the candidate has made contributions of appropriate magnitude and quality. As such, there is no specific timeline that must be followed.

#### **For Promotion to Associate Clinical Professor**

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

- Excellence in librarianship, including a demonstrated high level of expertise;
- Evidence of scholarly publishing, constituting a significant contribution to the literature consistent with the candidate's appointment;
- Evidence of valuable service at local, regional, and/or national levels. International contributions are laudable.

#### **For Promotion to Clinical Professor**

Candidates for promotion to Professor shall demonstrate promise fulfilled, including attaining national and/or international stature through:

- Excellence in librarianship through outstanding performance over a sustained period of time;
- A sustained record of research and publication demonstrating impact in the field;
- Evidence of distinguished service and leadership.

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 or cognate field, but they also function as ambassadors for the University Library within the university community, the state, regional partnerships, and the larger national and international academic library communities. Full professors take on leadership roles in library

and/or 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.

### **For Promotion to Associate Research 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 Library in the future, including:

- A strong record of scholarly publishing, constituting a significant contribution to the literature;
- Demonstrated expertise in librarianship;
- Evidence of valuable service at local, regional, and/or national levels. International contributions are laudable.

### **For Promotion to Research Professor**

Candidates for promotion to Professor shall demonstrate promise fulfilled, including attaining national and/or international stature through:

- A sustained record of research and publication demonstrating a major impact in the field;
- Demonstrated expertise in librarianship over a sustained period of time;
- Evidence of distinguished service and leadership.

## **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 knowledge, 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 academic 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 Specialized Faculty responsibilities and contributions contribute to the strength of the University Library. We value variety in thought, expertise, contributions, and working styles among our Specialized 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 Specialized Faculty, academic and non-academic staff, graduate students, or undergraduate students
- Providing programmatic leadership within the Library system.

During the evaluation of promotion case for Specialized Faculty, reviewers who comment on the quality of the candidate's librarianship are drawn from among a pool of people the candidate serves.

## **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 Specialized Faculty have an intellectual and professional identity and produce a cohesive body of research. 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.

Research may be theoretical or applied and may be specific to the fields of library and information science or may pertain to a disciplinary area to which the Specialized 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 Specialized 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 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 important elements of Specialized Faculty work. Consistent with tenure-system faculty, the Library's evaluation of service shall recognize that service burdens may be disproportionate, particularly those from groups historically underrepresented and/or marginalized in academia. Examples are noted in Provost Communication #9.

**Service to University and Library:** Relevant activities include membership and/or leadership of Library and University groups, including but not limited to 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. Specialized Faculty may also choose to participate in governance at the college and campus levels where opportunities exist.

**Service to Disciplines and Professions:** Engagement in professional organizations facilitates, directs, sustains, and enhances the practice of librarianship, demonstrating a Specialized Faculty member's impact and importance in service outside of the campus and University. Accordingly, Specialized Faculty members may 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 Specialized 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 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**

Library Specialized Faculty members value diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and are intentionally engaged in DEI efforts to advance the mission of the Library and the University. All Library Specialized Faculty are expected to and can make efforts toward enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. How an individual Specialized 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 Specialized Faculty than others. DEI activities may take place in a Specialized Faculty member's librarianship, research, and/or service areas and may be at the individual, programmatic, institutional, professional, scholarly and/or societal levels. DEI contributions will be unique to each Specialized Faculty member, drawing on their areas of expertise and interest, in accordance with the broader context of a Specialized Faculty member's area of focus. Thus, it is not expected that any individual Specialized Faculty member will perform DEI activities in all domains or at all levels, but rather demonstrate deliberate and sustained DEI practice.

#### **Review Process for Promotion of Specialized Faculty**

The decision to promote a Specialized Faculty member of the UIUC Library is governed by the University statements on promotion found in Article IX of the *Statutes* and in Communication 26 from the Office of the Provost. After the Library review, Specialized Faculty promotion cases are administratively reviewed by the Provost's Office to ensure that the criteria and standards for promotions of the unit, college and campus have been met.

The University Library employs a two-level review process for promotion of Specialized Faculty cases utilizing the standing Faculty Review Committee (FRC) and Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee (PTAC). Provost Communication 26 states that “Units should consider involving specialized faculty in the review process but, as noted in Provost Communication No. 25, it is important to ensure that significant tenure system faculty involvement occurs in promotion reviews of specialized faculty.” To provide representation, ideally Specialized Faculty would join each standing committee during consideration of Specialized Faculty promotion cases. Consistent with the review of tenure system faculty, the Specialized Faculty members must be at the associate or higher level to participate in promotional review and no individual can simultaneously service on both committees. In the absence of a large pool of Specialized Faculty to necessitate voting, members will be asked to serve by the Library Executive Committee. Until such time as there are at least two individuals (one to serve on each committee), preference will be for the Specialized Faculty member to join PTAC during the deliberation of any Specialized Faculty promotion cases put forward. If no individuals are available to serve, then each standing committee conducts the review without further changes in membership.

Using relevant Provost Communications in place of Communication 9, the committees will follow the same deliberative policies and procedures as done for tenure system faculty, including the same commitment to a fair and full review. As such, the evaluative percentages of each appointment type relevant to librarianship, research, and service for a candidate’s specific appointment will be key to assessing individual cases.

Each review committee submits official votes and recommendations to the Dean of Libraries. For a case to advance to the Provost’s Office, it must be independently endorsed by the Dean of Libraries.

**Supplemental documentation:**

- [University of Illinois Statutes](#)
- [Communication #25: Employment Guidelines for Specialized Faculty Holding Non-Tenure Systems](#)
- [Communication #26: Promotion to Teaching, Research or Clinical Associate or Full Professor Titles](#)
- [Specialized-Faculty-Task-Force-2023-Final.docx](#)
- [Statement on Promotion and Tenure to the Library Faculty at UIUC](#)
- [ACRL Standards for Faculty Status for Academic Faculty](#)
- [AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics](#)
- [Library PTA Committee Deliberative Policies & Procedures When Considering P & T Cases](#)

**Approved by the Executive Committee 8/26/24**