

Specialized Faculty Task Force Report

June 5, 2023 by Task Force

August 7, 2023 as amended by the Executive Committee

Charge: <https://www.library.illinois.edu/staff/committee/specialized-faculty-task-force/>

Although a 2015 task force investigated what role “specialized faculty” (non–tenure system) might play within the University Library, it has gone largely unimplemented. Nevertheless, in response to special administrative circumstances, individuals have been appointed to positions as specialized faculty, as the State Universities Civil Service System (SUCSS) has revised the criteria for administrative (Academic Professional) positions that can be exempted from the civil service system in 2018 (see Appendix A for more information). However, the University Library bylaws and other documentation and processes do not currently meet campus requirements for inclusion of specialized faculty, including clear definitions, roles or expectations.

The Specialized Faculty Task Force is charged to do the preliminary work necessary for the University Library to be in compliance with campus standards and lay the groundwork for a subsequent broader discussion within the Library. The Specialized Faculty Task Force will work on identifying gaps in Library documentation regarding the function of specialized faculty, discussing and soliciting feedback from appropriate committees and investigating the need for any new documentation concerning these roles.

The duration of the Task Force is February 2023 – June 1, 2023.

Tasks:

1. Review existing Campus and Library documentation regarding specialized faculty, such as:
 1. Current [Statutes](#) language on the definitions (Article II, Section 3 (a)) and rights (Article II Section 3(b) and Article III Section 2 (b)) of tenure and non-tenure ,system faculty
 2. Communications [25](#) & [26](#)
 3. Library Roles on Policies and Procedures page:
 1. [Distinction Between Faculty, Academic Professional, and Staff Positions](#)
 2. [Distinctions in Expectations and Responsibilities between Senior Library Specialist, Library Operations Associate, Academic Professional, and Library Faculty Positions](#)
 4. Relevant University of Illinois System *Statutes* or Bylaws
 5. Other relevant documents
2. Review roles and responsibilities for the use of specialized faculty in the Library, and identify gaps or areas of work in Library documentation including but not limited to:
 1. Library Bylaws

2. Promotion
3. Nominations, Elections, and Voting Procedures
4. Define the kinds of positions in the Library that would utilize “specialized” faculty

Outcomes:

1. Identify appropriate committees and/or groups to address these gaps.
2. Identify steps including what additional group (or groups) to recommend the Executive Committee formally commissions.

Members

- Robert Geraci (Feb 2023 - *No End Of Term Date Available*)
- Sara Holder (Feb 2023 - *No End Of Term Date Available*)
- Mary Laskowski (Feb 2023 - *No End Of Term Date Available*)
- Jennifer Teper, **Co-Chair** (Feb 2023 - *No End Of Term Date Available*)
- Kelli Trei, **Co-Chair** (Feb 2023 - *No End Of Term Date Available*)
- Jen-chien Yu (Feb 2023 - *No End Of Term Date Available*)

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Executive Summary

The task force met from March 1, 2023 to June 1, 2023 to respond to the tasks and outcomes listed in the charge. The timetable was brief as our work is a stepping-stone to the work of other committees tasked with review of committee charges, the bylaws, and promotional paths in the Library. Additionally, [the previous task force report from 2015](#) was comprehensive and already collected much of the relevant information. Thus, this report details our work defining roles in the Library and our suggestions for existing committees to carry out the implementation of filling the gaps in supporting our existing and future specialized faculty. In carrying out this work we reviewed several existing job descriptions for specialized faculty members and met with the chairs of the Faculty Review Committee (FRC) and Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTAC). The Library currently employs clinical, research, and visiting faculty which are all members of specialized faculty at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign as described in [Provost Communication #3 \(II, B\)](#). This document is intended to guide formalizing the involvement of existing and future specialized faculty in the library and is not intended to limit the Library’s ability to hire or retain tenure-track faculty.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Position Definitions

The task force proposes an updated version of “Distinctions in Expectations and Responsibilities between Civil Service Professionals, Academic Professional, and Library Faculty Positions” to include specialized faculty. Our recommendation is that this document will replace both “distinctions” documents located in the “[Policies & Procedures Index](#)” located on the staff page:

- [Distinction Between Faculty, AP, and Staff Positions](#)
- [Distinctions in Expectations and Responsibilities between Senior Library Specialist, Library Operations Associate, Academic Professional, and Library Faculty Positions](#)

The complete updated version can be reviewed in **Appendix A**, moving forward the suggested percentages for specialized faculty are as follows:

- 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 appointment 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.
- Visiting Faculty, Visiting Clinical Faculty, and Visiting Research Faculty may be appointed with a term of up to three years, following the percentage of appointment (librarianship/research/service) appropriate to their appointment type.

Recommendation 2: Library Committees

The task force proposes that the Executive Committee Task Library Divisions to review their bylaws and every Library committee (elected and non-elected) to review their charge, and if allowable consider the benefit of adding specialized faculty to the committee, as well as suggesting language to make the membership by classification as clear as possible, and submit suggestions to EC. Please pay special attention to use of the word “faculty” throughout and

clarify if it means tenure-system or specialized or both. Additionally, the task force makes certain specific suggestions as detailed below:

Elected Committees:

Existing rules for election are on the Library NEVP Website:

library.illinois.edu/staff/committee/nominations-elections-and-voting-procedures-committee/

Bylaws Committee

- See Recommendation #4

Faculty Review Committee

- See Recommendation #3

Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee

- See Recommendation #3

Secretary of the Faculty

- Consider allowing specialized faculty to serve.

At-Large Designee for the Faculty Agenda Committee

- Consider allowing specialized faculty to serve.

Nominations, Elections and Voting Procedures Committee (NEVP)

- We recommend NEVP replaces all references in voting rights from “visiting faculty” to “specialized faculty” to encompass all the specialized faculty we have in the Library.
 - Caveat: in keeping consistent with [Senate Election Rules for the Faculty Electorate](#) visiting faculty are not eligible to serve on Senate and that section in the NEVP guidelines can remain as written.
- Consider allowing specialized faculty to serve.
- Work with Bylaws committee to determine who supervises and conducts a vote of the tenure-system faculty on changes to the bylaws, and if it is to be NEVP, add documentation encompassing that process in accordance with the *Statutes*, Article II, Section 3(2).

Executive Committee

- We recommend conversations continue broadly around shared governance before any specific changes are recommended.

Non-Elected Committee Rules

Collection Development Committee

- Consider allowing specialized faculty to serve (make any necessary recommendations to the Bylaws Committee).

Research and Publishing Committee, [Policies for Award Approval](#)

- Replace “Visiting faculty, and post-doctoral fellows” with “specialized faculty” to encompass all the specialized faculty we have in the Library.
- May wish to revisit funding structure and allocations.

Recommendation 3: Promotion

As FRC and PTAC are already reviewing the performance of faculty and are entrenched in the tenure promotion of faculty, we feel they are the appropriate bodies to develop the promotional documentation and procedures necessary for specialized faculty as well. Consideration should be given to the reduced service requirement for specialized faculty in not overloading potential members of these committees, particularly until we have a larger body of specialized faculty to serve.

We recognize this will be a nimble and iterative process and we encourage FRC and PTAC to reach out to existing specialized faculty for feedback in this process. However, membership changes in these committees will need to be codified in the bylaws.

We recommend FRC discuss and consider the following:

- Consider adding specialized faculty members at the rank of Associate or Full who will serve on FRC when issues related to promotion of specialized faculty are being discussed. These members would have voting rights only as they pertain to promotion of specialized faculty, in keeping with the [Provost Communication #9](#), “Role and Composition of Promotion and Tenure Committees”.
- Update documentation related to annual review of specialized faculty.
 - Due to the limited number of specialized faculty currently employed in the Library, and the lower service requirement, we recommend that the committee only require specialized faculty to review other specialized faculty.
- Conduct promotional reviews of specialized faculty.

We recommend PTAC discuss and consider the following:

- Consider adding specialized faculty members at the rank of Associate or Full who will serve on PTAC when issues related to promotion of specialized faculty are being discussed. These members would have voting rights.
- Create documentation for the process specialized faculty need to follow to be considered for promotion, see [Provost Communication #26](#).
- Conduct promotional reviews of specialized faculty.

Recommendation 4: Bylaws

The task force recommends that the Bylaws Committee review the Library Bylaws to address necessary changes for the inclusion of specialized faculty in our classifications and representation. We suggest particular areas below, but it is by no means exhaustive.

Suggested areas for review of the [Library Bylaws](#):

- Please pay special attention to use of the word “faculty” throughout to clarify if it means tenure-system or specialized or both.
- Determine who supervises and conducts a vote of the tenure-system faculty on changes to the bylaws, and if it is to be NEVP, work with NEVP to add documentation encompassing that process in accordance with the *Statutes*, Article II, Section 3(2).
- Specific Sections:
 - ARTICLE III, Section 1: Library Faculty, MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE
 - ARTICLE VI. STRUCTURE
 - ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

Appendix A:

Distinctions in Expectations and Responsibilities between Civil Service Professionals, Academic Professional, and Library Faculty Positions

Proposed by the Specialized Faculty Task Force, June 1, 2023. Accepted by the Executive Committee August 7, 2023.

The Civil Service Positions in the library series are defined by the State Universities Civil Service System ([SUCSS](#)), and they are required to maintain written class specifications, as approved by the [Merit Board](#), for each class in the classification plan.

Civil Service Professionals in the Library are positions classified as professional (occupational area 01) by the [SUCSS Occupational Area List](#). As such, each classification has its own Class Spec defining the functions of the job and the characteristic duties and responsibilities. As professionals, these positions engage in professional activities that directly support Library activities and services, but which do not necessarily require an advanced degree or extensive experience in the field of library and information science. While civil service professionals function with a degree of independence and autonomy, their activities are directed toward providing key support for the services and policies instituted by the Library.

**All of the academic appointments listed, below, may also be guided by the “Standard Title Positions” document for academic appointment titles as documented by the University of Illinois System Human Resources Services, [Standard Title Positions](#). Various titles applied to Academic Professionals such as coordinator and specialist, as well as assistant and associate dean, directors, and other titles used by the University Library are outlined within that document.

Appointment information for faculty, specialized faculty, and academic professionals can be found in [Provost Communication #3](#).

The Academic Professional’s primary role is to engage in professional activities that directly support Library activities and services, but which do not necessarily require an advanced degree or extensive experience in the field of library and information science, though they may require an advanced degree or extensive experience in some other field. The shape of the position and the range of responsibilities are determined by the needs of the unit as defined by the supervisor. While academic professionals function with a degree of independence and autonomy, their activities are directed toward providing key support for the services and policies instituted by the Library. APs are encouraged to exercise their investigation time options, up to 10% as negotiated between the AP and the supervisor. For more specifics refer to the [Investigation Time Policy](#).

Specialized Faculty contribute specialized knowledge and skills gained through an advanced degree in combination with practical experiences in the field of library and information science and/or other pertinent disciplines.

- 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 appointment 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.
- Visiting Faculty, Visiting Clinical Faculty, and Visiting Research Faculty may be appointed with a term of up to three years, following the percentage of appointment (librarianship/research/service) appropriate to their appointment type.

Expectations of clinical faculty can be found in [Provost Communication #25, Employment Guidelines for Specialized Faculty Holding Non-Tenure System Positions](#). Promotional paths for clinical faculty and the criteria and expectations for promotion are outlined in [Provost Communication #26](#).

Tenure System Faculty bring a terminal degree in library and information science and/or a doctorate in other pertinent disciplines into their roles and provide leadership and strategic direction to all Library activities. A critical function of the tenure system faculty, both individually and as a whole, is to set policy within the Library and to help shape the larger academic policy on Campus, for more information on shared governance see [Provost Communication #27](#). Tenure system faculty both investigate and create best practices in the field through combinations of their librarianship, research, and service activities. In addition, tenure system faculty members engage in service work that benefits the Library

Tenure system faculty are focused on librarianship, the University's service and/or public engagement mission, and research with the appointment percentages as follows: 50% librarianship, 30% research, and 20% service. All tenure system faculty members are expected to meet the requirements and guidelines found in Article IX of the [University Statutes](#), [Provost Communication #9](#) and [Provost Communication #13](#), and those found in the [Campus Administrative Manual](#).

All Library faculty, both specialized and tenure system, work within the overarching Library administrative structure and under the parameters set forth in their job description to design, implement, and support Library activities and services. Under these parameters, faculty function autonomously and independently within their positions while at the same time working collegially and cooperatively to fulfill the mission of their unit, the Library, and campus. Library faculty members have a responsibility to work with members of their units to achieve the articulated goals for that unit and the Library as a whole.