

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Academic Professional Promotion Program Description:
2019-2020

Background and Purpose of this Document

A committee called the Task Force to Create Promotional Paths for Academic Professionals formed in 2015 and developed a set of recommendations for an AP promotion program called **Final Report and Recommendations: Library Framework for Academic Professional Promotion** (dated Nov 21, 2016). The subsequent AP Promotion Implementation Team (APPIT) further developed these recommendations, including determining a process for reviewing promotion candidates and conducting an initial review for all appointed APs in the Library to establish baseline ranks. APPIT also submitted a set of recommended next steps for implementing the full program (dated Aug 30, 2017). As part of these next steps, the Business and Human Resource Service Center became the administrative home of the program, and a new committee for reviewing promotion candidates, the AP Peer Review Promotion Advisory Committee was formed in late Fall 2018. The program was launched as a two-year pilot in Spring 2019 with the first promotions taking effect August 2019.

The original recommendations included open-ended or unresolved questions for subsequent committees to determine, in part through the trial and error process of implementing the program. Furthermore, several of the original recommendations from the 2016 Final Report have been modified by subsequent committees or the BHRSC based on feedback during open sessions and via the Library Committee for Academic Professionals (LCAP), and through the AP Peer Review Promotion Advisory Committee's review of the program's first year pilot, which included anonymous surveys of APs and supervisors of APs, and feedback about the program from EC, LCAP, and the Dean. **Therefore, this document closely follows the structure and content of the 2016 Final Report but has been updated to reflect changes as the AP Promotion Program has developed over the past 3 years.**

I. Principles

The overarching theme is to provide a path for career advancement for Academic Professionals in all permanent positions in the Library. The principles that guide this framework include:

- Create a well-defined promotional path for Academic Professionals to improve talent development, succession planning, and employee retention at the Library
- Recognize the incremental development of academic professional skills and experience as part of a cohesive framework for professional advancement in the organization
- Provide promotional opportunities that can be recognized by other campus units and institutions
- Demonstrate an organizational commitment to the ongoing stewardship of the professional advancement processes for academic professionals.

This framework outlines the promotion process using the following guidelines related to participation, achievement, and rewards:

- All Academic Professionals have initial rank established for consistency, but seeking promotion is voluntary and up to the individual Academic Professional

- 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 annual performance review.
- There is no promotional clock for the AP Promotion Program, i.e., APs can decide whether or not, and when to request consideration for promotion.
- There is no penalty if the promotion case is declined.

II. Eligibility

To be eligible for promotion under this program, one must

- Be an Academic Professional in a permanent (non-visiting) role. Visiting Academic Professionals are not eligible for promotion; however, their time in the Library counts toward professional experience if the visiting position becomes permanent.
- Have a minimum of two consecutive full years of annual performance reviews with an overall rating of “solid performer” or “outstanding”
- Have an initial rank established (as of January, 2019, all existing Library APs have had their initial rank established and new AP hires have their rank established soon after their start date).

It is expected that the standard timeline for promotion requests would be a minimum of three years between promotions from assistant to associate and associate to senior associate. A minimum of five years is anticipated for promotion from senior associate to senior. Requests must follow the promotional pathway and may not request to skip a promotional level. However, all promotion candidates are reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine promotion readiness.

III. Guidance & Resources

The AP Promotion Process web site, located at <https://www.library.illinois.edu/staff/ap-promotional-process-page/>, has guidance on resumes and personal statements, sample statements and letters of support to use as examples, and links to professional development resources, such as the AP Professional Development Fund.

IV. Promotion Procedure Overview

This program is intended to be largely self-driven by the Academic Professional, in that each individual can choose if and when to seek promotion via **self-nomination**. Academic Professionals are strongly encouraged to discuss their interest in promotion with their supervisor, who can provide guidance in developing the self-nomination’s rationale for promotion and submit an optional (but recommended) letter of support. For the purposes of clarity, the AP Peer Review Promotion Advisory Committee defines the supervisor as the person who writes the AP’s annual performance evaluation. If the AP has had a recent change in supervisor, they should reach out to one or both AULs on the AP Peer Review Promotion Advisory Committee for guidance on how to handle the optional but recommended letter of

Version Date: October 22, 2019

support from the supervisor or similar concerns. Committee members are listed on the AP Promotion Process web site, located at <https://www.library.illinois.edu/staff/ap-promotional-process-page/>.

The program has an annual cycle. See chart on next page.

Promotion Procedure Timeline

Timing	Procedural Phase	More Details
Between annual review and submitting self-nomination	Notification and informal conversation between AP and supervisor (recommended)	Before self-nominating, the Academic Professional should send a letter of intent to their direct supervisor, briefly stating their intention to apply for a promotion. We strongly recommend (but not require) that the Academic Professional and direct supervisor have an informal conversation at this point to confirm the candidate's readiness to apply for promotion.
Early January (typically the first non-holiday Monday)	Call for Self-Nominations	The period for Academic Professionals to self-nominate is announced on LibNews with a specific due date.
Early March (typically the first business day of the month)	Self-Nominations due	The self-nomination is a form that asks the candidate to address the four promotion criteria for the rank (see Section VIII & IX) in the form of brief personal statements, and upload a current resume or CV. Eligibility is verified by the BHRSC and the AULs of the AP Peer Review Promotion Advisory Committee, and self-nominations and accompanying materials are reviewed by the full AP Peer Review Promotion Advisory Committee.
Early May	Committee completes review & submits recommendations	The AP Peer Review Promotion Advisory Committee completes reviews of nominations (see Section VI for more details) and submits recommendations to the Dean
Late May	Dean reviews recommendations & makes promotion decisions	Dean reviews recommendations and makes final decisions. As part of this, the Dean consults with the BHRSC to determine the annual Academic Professional promotion budget, and seeks advice to prioritize recommendations if there are not sufficient funds to support all promotion recommendations in a given year.
June	Notifications & Appeal window	APs are notified of promotion decisions via an individual meeting with the Assistant Dean of the BHRSC. A 3-week appeal window begins.
Mid August	Promotions effective & announced to the Library	Approved promotions become effective after all campus-level processes for Banner changes and salary increases successfully complete.

Note: This timeline may be adjusted in future years based on feedback and review of the two-year pilot over the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 academic years, respectively.

V. Promotional Ranks

Upon their initial appointment in the Library, Academic Professionals are classified into one of four ranks that represent both the depth and breadth of their career-track achievements. Library units that have non-library-specific professionals (e.g., IT, Advancement, Business, or HR) may articulate additional specific criteria required for promotion within each rank; for these academic professionals, deference should be made to already-established Library and campus-wide promotional criteria, either formal or de facto, as appropriate. Any additional criteria will be vetted by the BHRSC and will be made available for review by Library staff and faculty. For a comparison chart, please go to:

<https://go.library.illinois.edu/appromotioncriteria>.^{1 2}

- **Assistant:** Candidate is at the beginning of his/her career, developing identity and competence in his/her area of expertise; beginning professional activities and contributions to library/university community; demonstrates basic skills as a professional in area of expertise; under supervision, contributes in the context of a unit include work that is well-defined and limited in scope.
- **Associate:** Candidate is competent in his/her area of expertise; contributes to planning and managing within a unit; exerts some influence and impact within the unit and larger organization; works in context of area of expertise doing complex yet well-defined tasks; contributing to professional organizations and activities (editing, co-authoring, member of committees, etc.) and active on committees and service groups in the library/university and broader professional community; demonstrates broader skills, speaking and writing for varying audiences.
- **Senior Associate:** Candidate is experienced, and is recognized for his/her expertise and contributions to the library; demonstrating well-developed skills in all aspects of his/her field, in particular as they support the research library community; displays breadth and depth of skills and organizational knowledge, working with an array of audiences and applications; actively participates in unit or organization-wide efforts as part of primary position responsibilities, occasionally assuming leadership roles; contributes to professional, Library, and university service through committee and group participation; demonstrates involvement in projects, career enhancement, grants, research and publication, etc.; works with service groups having a wider scope within the Library, university, and/or community; exerts significant influence and impact within unit, other particular areas of the library, and the profession.
- **Senior:** Candidate is an acknowledged leader in the organization or a recognized expert or leader in his or her chosen field and a 'master' at his/her expertise; demonstrates sustained professional accomplishment and outstanding performance as a Senior Associate at the University of Illinois Library or as a professional staff member elsewhere; leads unit or organization-wide efforts as part of primary position responsibilities; contributes to professional service such as chairing committees, initiating activities and leading working groups and task forces in the Library, on campus, and in the candidate's professional community; mentors colleagues; initiates and is involved in projects, career enhancement, grants, research and publication, etc.

¹ All professional expertise, service and research required for each rank are cumulative from the previous rank(s).

² Promotional ranks are noted as secondary titles in the Banner system.

VI. Review and Evaluation

The *Academic Professional Peer Review Promotion Advisory Committee*, an elected committee of three Library Academic Professionals (preferably in Senior or Senior Associate ranks), and two AULs, reviews applications submitted by Academic Professionals annually, as well as accompanying letters of support from supervisors and other materials, and provides their recommendations to the University Librarian for the final decision.

VII. Promotion Award

Promotion awards are a set increase to the base salary and subject to annual review by the University Librarian. They are currently awarded as follows:

- Assistant to Associate: \$2,000
- Associate to Senior Associate: \$3,500
- Senior Associate to Senior: \$5,000

VIII. Promotion Review Criteria

This program is intended to recognize sustained excellent performance and accomplishments in an Academic Professional's area of expertise and professional assignment over the course of their career. As such, in addition to the eligibility requirement of two consecutive full years of annual performance reviews with an overall rating of "solid performer" or "outstanding", the promotion review comprises **four criteria**:

- **Overall Experience**
- **Professional Service**
- **Professional Knowledge**
- **Institutional Leadership or Contribution**

The breadth and depth of each of these four criteria increases with rank. For a description of each rank's corresponding criteria, go to: <https://go.library.illinois.edu/appromotioncriteria>

IX. Promotion Candidate Supporting Documents

The Academic Professional candidate should prepare and submit the following documents for consideration for promotion (both via the same form).

1. Update resume or curriculum vitae (CV)
2. A personal statement that makes the case for how his or her professional activities and accomplishment demonstrates readiness for promotion to the next level, in the form of four responses (one for each of the four promotion criteria listed in Section VIII).

In their personal statement, Academic Professionals promotion candidates are strongly recommended to include salient examples of accomplishments and growth when building a case for how they meet the four promotion criteria. Examples may include:

- Additional skills/expertise (including advanced degree or certifications) acquired after last promotion or hiring
- Recognition from a broader community inside or outside of the Library, such as awards, leadership roles, speaker/presentation invitations, etc.
- Particularly strong, sustained performance
- Contributions to the Unit and the Library

In addition to the materials the candidate provides via their self-nomination, the BHRSC may provide the candidate's current and previous job description(s) to the review committee.

An accompanying letter of support from supervisors is recommended but not required. Supervisors may submit these letters to <https://go.library.illinois.edu/APletters> before the candidate self-nomination period ends.

X. Appeal Process

Candidates whose promotion is declined may

- choose to appeal decision within 21 days of being notified of the decision by writing to the University Librarian and Dean of Libraries. The Dean has final approval.
- reapply in future promotion cycles.

XI. Startup Considerations

As Bill Mischo, Interim Dean of Libraries, shared from the AP Promotion Implementation Team (APPIT) in the August 2017 memo, "The process of establishing a promotional process where none existed is one of culture change for both supervisors and incumbents. And, the process of establishing the program is one that will take many years of trial and error."

The 2016 Final Report recommended that the AP Promotion Program initially be conducted as a two-year pilot, with feedback collected and analyzed annually by the Assistant Dean for the BHRSC, working in conjunction with the University Library and LCAP.

In addition, LCAP maintains an anonymous feedback form through which APs can submit feedback or ask questions about the program at any time.