

**American University Library
Guidelines for Tenure-Line Library Faculty Members for
Reappointment and Promotion
University Library Committee on Faculty Actions**

7/19/11

10/31/17

The *Faculty Manual* is the official source of information on requirements for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. These guidelines are designed to orient tenure-line library faculty members and evaluators by providing information about and examples of the types of activities that fulfill the three criteria of primary responsibilities, scholarship, and service described in the *Manual*.¹

There are three sources of evaluation for library faculty: review by administrative heads, external reviews by library professionals outside American University, and peer reviews of American University library faculty.

The quality of the performance of a library faculty member in carrying out his/her primary responsibilities is the chief criterion for evaluation. The percentages assigned below to primary responsibilities (55% pre-tenure and 70% post-tenure), scholarship (30% pre-tenure and 15% post-tenure), and service (15%) represent the customary distribution of workload. In order to be eligible for tenure and promotion, library faculty members are expected to demonstrate excellence in all three areas.

¹ For further information about promotion and tenure of librarians, see Association of College and Research Libraries. A Guideline for the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Academic Librarians. <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/promotiontenure.cfm> (Accessed April 11, 2011).

Primary Responsibilities (55 % pre-tenure; 70 % post-tenure)

These activities—the main functions performed by library faculty members—account for approximately fifty-five percent of their time prior to receiving tenure and seventy percent of their time after receiving tenure. As the library is a complex organization where many different functions that support the educational mission of the university take place at the same time, a library faculty member's job may include some of the following:

- Assisting researchers at a research assistance desk, during individual research consultations, through electronic mail or an instant messaging service, over the phone, through the maintenance of office hours, or through online subject guides. These activities facilitate research and learning for all members of the AU community, through helping students and faculty find and use the appropriate information resources and through providing advice on topic development.
- Participating directly in classroom instruction, either within the library or elsewhere on campus. This activity directs students to information resources that are relevant to the curriculum and research required by their courses. It also serves to build liaisons with teaching faculty.
- Developing, implementing, and maintaining a collections infrastructure which is fundamental to the library's role in developing, maintaining, providing access to and curating a collection which promotes academic success and provides support for new and continuing programs, courses, and areas of research.
- Selecting and acquiring, as well as administering and maintaining resources that meet the library's collection development priorities. Establishing acquisitions policies, selecting vendors, maintaining vendor relationships, negotiating license agreements, maintaining usage statistics as well as reviewing and implementing new acquisitions programs. Developing, allocating, and managing all aspects of the library's collections budget. Preparing budget requests, budget reports, and understanding market forces that impact the library's ability to purchase new titles.
- Evaluating, implementing, developing, and maintaining systems, databases, knowledge bases, etc., which support the activities related to accessing library resources. Creating bibliographic descriptions that demonstrate knowledge of local and national standards as well as enhancing discoverability of and access to library resources for the university community.
- Undertaking knowledge preservation of locally produced content and content at risk of loss.
- Ensuring that the library acquires and maintains all appropriate information technology and maintains an appropriate web presence. As more and more materials necessary for research become digital, ease of access is expected. Digital materials also enable online learning.
- Working closely with teaching faculty in curriculum development, library instruction, and collection development and in special curricular programs such as living-learning communities when assigned as primary responsibilities. This

activity builds liaison relationships with teaching faculty and supports university goals for learning and research.

- Working closely with students and faculty in the use of research tools and data management as well as decision-making about copyright and fair use in research production.
- Promoting awareness of library services and resources for students, staff, and faculty through social media and online and other publications, through university and library events, including enrollment activities, and through other related outreach efforts.
- Hiring, training, supervising, and evaluating library staff and faculty. Some library faculty positions have a significant administrative component.
- Participating in the committees or task forces of the Washington Research Library Consortium, which coordinates many shared functions. Participation on a WRLC committee or task force may be included in primary responsibilities.

Engagement in outreach activities that support library events, programs, publications, orientations, and other related activities is an expectation for every library faculty member, whether this engagement is directly related to a faculty member's primary responsibilities or an activity related to service.

For library faculty members, statistics on activities will vary. There is no typical number of classes taught, no benchmarked number of reference interviews, or number of titles cataloged. Activities and time spent will vary function to function and from semester to semester. Library faculty members can differ widely in their case-by-case primary responsibilities so it is not possible to determine what a typical workload would be. It is the duty of the library faculty member to discuss his or her workload and how it compares from year to year. It is also the expectation that evaluative letters from the administrative head, the University Library Committee on Faculty Actions (ULFCA), and the University Librarian will contextualize the workload.

Scholarship (30 % pre-tenure; 15 % post-tenure)

This criterion of scholarship includes scholarly, creative, and certain kinds of professional publications. Library faculty are customarily expected to allocate thirty percent of their workload, or approximately six working days per month, prior to tenure and fifteen percent of their workload, or approximately three working days per month, to scholarly activities after receiving tenure.

Librarians in the profession, unlike library faculty in a school of library or information science, are generally focused on practical applications in the profession. Scholarship for library faculty at AU may be theoretical or applied and may be specific to the fields of library and information sciences. Advancement in the field of librarianship is often achieved through the work of individual librarians under the auspices of professional organizations. Leadership in associations and on committees that advances theory and contributes to best practices in the library profession is recognized as scholarship in the field.

Scholarship in any field deepens the practitioner's knowledge of that field and is valuable in many areas of librarianship. Scholarship for a library faculty member may also pertain to disciplinary areas to which the faculty member brings additional expertise.

To be considered for tenure and promotion to Associate Librarian, library faculty are expected to achieve a significant scholarly record. Library faculty should publish articles in peer-reviewed general or subfield journals (see Appendix A for titles in librarianship), and presentations should be at well-respected venues (see Appendix B for venues). Some library faculty participate in peer-reviewed or juried performances or creative works. These peer-reviewed or juried performances or creative works are seen as equivalent to peer-reviewed presentations. As a member of the academy, a library faculty member may choose to publish in their area of scholarly interest.

While candidates are expected to publish in the peer-reviewed journal literature or major book presses, consideration will also be given to book chapters, columns, guest editorships, committee publications, and conference proceedings (see Appendix C for book or monograph presses).

Additional evidence of scholarship can be represented by completing influential work in the following formats: abstracts, reviews, grant proposals, grant awards, peer-reviewed poster presentations, exhibits, non-refereed publications and presentations, textbooks, testimony on legislative issues, judging awards competitions, and professional web contributions in appropriate formats.

Items not yet published or verifiably in press (accompanied by appropriate documentation) are considered mainly as evidence of potential or as an indicator of a level of continuing research activity. Items available in peer-reviewed venues that may be "open access," are acceptable. For evidence of scholarly or professional contributions not listed or named in this document, a library faculty member may submit that evidence at the time of review for consideration by the University Library Committee on Faculty Actions and other reviewers.

Much of the advancement of librarianship also depends on formal cooperative efforts, usually conducted under the auspices of professional organizations. Such activities are acknowledged as requiring application of knowledge and expertise equivalent to that demonstrated in independent research and publication. Although the outcome of such activities often results in publications in which authorship is credited to an organizational body rather than to individuals, it is understood that the members of the group that wrote the publication are its co-authors. The faculty member should describe his/her role in projects or publications sponsored by a professional organization. The faculty member may also include letters from project leaders or others who can verify the scope of his/her contribution.

Impact in the field of librarianship is sometimes driven by influence on practice. Because peer-reviewed scholarly research is not a standard requirement throughout the profession, librarians tend to be consumers of scholarship that will help them change practice rather

than contributors to theoretical literature. For example, specific evidence that peers are consulting research or that innovations are being adopted at other institutions shows impact in librarianship. Views, downloads of articles, follow-up requests for information, and inclusion of articles in working groups on scholarly networks and references to work in social media also show impact because they indicate spread of ideas that lead to change of practice. It is up to the candidate to demonstrate evidence of such impact.

Conference presentations are of secondary importance, however, they can serve as a timely conduit between librarians seeking to spread innovation and influence practice and those seeking to find innovations that will improve practice. Contributing to publications sponsored by professional associations also shows impact because these works influence developments in practice in librarianship. Examples include standards, best practices, and major studies to advance the field, among others.

Candidates should describe their growth in scholarship as well as plans to sustain growth during the post-tenure period. They should include evidence of how their scholarly publications or activities are having an impact on the profession.

Service (15%)

The Library is an essential component in the higher education environment, and library faculty partner with teaching and research faculty to provide quality education. Through their service, library faculty further develop this partnership. All members of the library faculty are expected to participate in different aspects of university life, and to demonstrate how their individual service activities contribute to library and university achievement of strategic goals. Library faculty typically devote fifteen percent of their time to service, which may also include service beyond the university to professional and scholarly organizations.

Contributions may include some of the following:

- Service on the University Senate or on any of its committees
- Participation on task forces and special committees of the university
- Involvement with student organizations and activities
- Service to professional organizations
- Participation in library events

Service on other entities involved specifically in library faculty governance, such as designated roles in the University Library Faculty Council, the University Library Committee on Faculty Actions, and the Merit and Annual Review Committee, are also important contributions to the university as well as service on other internal committees and project and other teams, as long as they are not linked to primary responsibilities.

Library faculty members should demonstrate growth with evidence of increased levels of activity and leadership in this third criterion for evaluation.

Primary Responsibilities: Promotion to Rank of Librarian (70%)

For promotion to Librarian, library faculty are expected to demonstrate increasing growth, initiative, and leadership in their professional work, and to take on increasing responsibility whether or not they hold management positions. It is up to the candidate for promotion to explain how he or she has grown in the career path and to put that growth into the context of the profession. It is important for the administrative head, the University Library Committee on Faculty Actions, and the University Librarian to speak to that growth, initiative, and increased responsibility of the candidate when writing the evaluative letters. The work of librarianship cannot be quantified using the same methods (i.e. teaching evaluations) that the teaching faculty use. It is necessary for the candidate to describe the growth over his or her career and for the evaluative letters to put that growth into the context of the profession.

Scholarship: Promotion to Rank of Librarian (15 %)

To be considered for promotion to the rank of Librarian, library faculty members are expected to exceed the qualifications for scholarship for Associate Librarian. In addition, they must show a continued record of growth and influence in their scholarly activity.

Candidates must document that they have impactful publications and/or activities from the above criteria after their tenure decision.

These activities must show impact, and it is up to the candidate to explain evidence of impact. Some methods of demonstrating impact (but not all methods are required at once) include direct citation, acceptance rates, views and downloads, documentation of a peer adopting an innovation or practice, invitations to speak or engage in further scholarly activity because of previous publications or activities, mentions in social media, high attendance counts at presentations, etc. The totality of a library faculty member's record since achieving tenure must be considered.

Service: Promotion to Rank of Librarian (15 %)

To be promoted to Librarian, library faculty members must have increased their level of responsibility or leadership in their service commitments. For example, chairing a committee would show increased responsibility. They must have a record of active and constructive contributions to American University faculty governance at all levels of the university community.

Appendix A

Refereed² journal titles in the field of library science may include, but are not limited to:

[*American Archivist*](#)
[*Art Documentation*](#)
[*Behavioral and Social Sciences Librarian*](#)
[*Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*](#)
[*Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*](#)
[*Collection Management*](#)
[*College and Undergraduate Libraries*](#)
[*College and Research Libraries*](#)
[*EDUCAUSE Quarterly*](#)
[*Internet Reference Services Quarterly*](#)
[*Journal of Academic Librarianship*](#)
[*Journal of Access Services*](#)
[*Journal of the American Society for Information Science & Technology \(JASIST\)*](#)
[*Journal of Business and Finance Librarianship*](#)
[*Journal of Electronic Resources Librarianship*](#)
[*Journal of Library Administration*](#)
[*Journal of Library and Information Services in Distance Learning*](#)
[*Journal of Library Metadata*](#)
[*Journal of Web Librarianship*](#)
[*Libraries & the Cultural Record*](#)
[*Library Hi Tech*](#)
[*Library Journal*](#)
[*Library Technology Reports*](#)
[*Library Trends*](#)
[*Library Quarterly*](#)
[*Music Reference Services Quarterly*](#)
[*portal: Libraries and the Academy*](#)
[*Public Services Quarterly*](#)
[*Reference and User Services Quarterly*](#)
[*The Reference Librarian*](#)
[*Reference Services Review*](#)
[*Science & Technology Libraries*](#)
[*The Serials Librarian*](#)
[*Technical Services Quarterly*](#)

The University Library Committee on Faculty Actions regards the publication of research in these journals to be noteworthy and important. However, there are other avenues library faculty may take in fulfillment of this criterion.

² The term “refereed” means peer-reviewed. Most journal titles listed above employ a double-blind peer-review process.

Reviews of books and other materials (such as scholarly websites) by librarians are considered extremely useful by the profession. These reviews influence selection decisions made by libraries that support the curriculum and research in universities around the world. In addition to the titles listed above, reviews may be published in professional library association newsletters such as *ANSS Currents* (published by the Anthropology and Sociology Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries), which reviews library resources in Anthropology and Sociology; *STS Signal* (published by the Science and Technology Section); and other association and section media.

Library faculty also support the intellectual mission of the university and research by contributing abstracts to indexing resources in many different subject areas.

Appendix B: Conference Venues

American Library Association (annual, midwinter, state & regional conferences)
ARLIS/NA
Association of College & Research Libraries
Brick & Click Library Forum
Charleston Conference
CILIP
The Collective
Computers in Libraries (and Internet Librarian)
Digital Library Federation Forum
EDUCAUSE Learning Institute
Electronic Resources and Libraries
International Federation of Libraries Association
LIBER
Library Assessment Conference
Library Orientation Exchange (and LOEX West)
LITA Forum
Living the Future: The University of Arizona Library Conference
Medical Library Association
Music Library Association
National Diversity in Libraries Conference
RBMS Conference
Special Libraries Association
WILU

Appendix C: Practitioner Library Science Presses

ABC CLIO

- Libraries Unlimited Press
- Greenwood Press

American Library Association

- ACRL monographic series
- ALA Editions

- Neal Schuman

Elsevier's Chandos Publishing

IGI Global

Library Juice Press

Litwin Press

The MIT Press

Purdue University Press

Rowman & Littlefield

Taylor & Francis