

**Library Criteria for the
Promotion and Tenure of Faculty Librarians:
Documentation for Review of the Criteria**

Revised November 4, 2003

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Assumptions (included for context; not part of the criteria proper)



Library Criteria for Promotion and Tenure

Librarianship

Within the context of a librarian's evaluation, librarianship shall be considered that body of work which constitutes the primary roles for which the individual was hired. Typically, the elements comprising librarianship for an individual will differ based on the particular position and its library department. For a reference librarian, for instance, librarianship would normally encompass activities in collection development, reference, instruction, and liaison support to certain academic departments. **In terms of the usual tenure evaluation criteria of teaching, scholarship, and service, librarianship takes the place of teaching in librarians' evaluations.**

The library's primary role is to support the teaching and research mission of the university and its faculty. Librarians will be evaluated in this category most strongly on how their performance in particular roles—collection development, organization of knowledge, reference, instruction, systems, or management—contributes to effective teaching and to faculty research. While some librarians hold positions in which contact with our users is frequent and easily seen as teaching-oriented, this does not imply that other positions cannot be evaluated for the same values nor that they are any less “faculty” in nature. In other words, librarianship will be considered as a related but different category of activity from teaching. Librarians will be evaluated on the quality of their librarianship in all of its appropriate facets, not on whether librarians model the teaching activities of other faculty. Implementation of computer systems and original cataloging of materials, for example, should both be based on priorities that consider the effects on our users and their academic success. Additionally, it is expected that librarians will demonstrate strong abilities as generalists, able to perform effectively in a variety of tasks and, often, a variety of departmental disciplines as selectors, reference experts, and information literacy instructors. Strong generalist skills will be preferred over narrow specialization.

Expectations of the department

Based on the library's mission within this university, librarianship will receive the majority of weight when a candidate for promotion or tenure is evaluated.

Evidence of effective librarianship may be demonstrated by (but not limited to) the following:

- Development of productive liaison relationships with the faculty and students of designated departments;
- Development and implementation of programs that encourage information literacy in our users;
- Effective point-of-use instruction with library users through reference desk assistance, office consultations, electronic assistance, and so on;

- Creation of user assistance materials that serve curricular objectives, such as bibliographies, subject guides, web pages, and other tangible information products;
- Development and implementation of effective methods for organizing, classifying, or cataloging information resources;
- Effective management of library collections, in any media, through selection and deselection activities;
- Effective management of library staff and operations, especially in terms of the effects on university teaching and research.

As exemplified by the previous list, librarianship at an academic library is characterized by team processes and frequent communication within a complex organization. Librarians cannot be effective unless they are effective in a collegial environment. Candidates will be evaluated in librarianship on their competence in communication and other interpersonal skills that relate to their roles.

When candidates are evaluated during formal reviews, all relevant areas of librarianship will be considered. However, certain areas which are core to a particular position will receive the greatest weight, and failure to perform commendably in these core areas will be considered especially problematic for continued appointment during the probationary period, as well as for promotion and tenure. These core areas will be defined clearly by the University Librarian for each librarian at the beginning of the probationary period and whenever these core areas are substantially changed.

Scholarship, Research, or Professional or Artistic Achievements

The university “Criteria for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion” (*Faculty and Contract Staff Handbook*) states that scholarship should be considered important, though nothing supersedes the importance of teaching or librarianship. Basing its ranking on a strong service orientation to our students and faculty, the library gives less weight to scholarship than librarianship, while still giving scholarship slightly greater weight than service.

Scholarship encompasses activities which engage the individual in additional learning related to an appropriate area of inquiry, which is then made available to other professionals through publication or other tangible means. Professional achievement is often a significant factor for librarians, who do considerable collaborative work in professional organizations. Professional achievement includes those activities in which a librarian is distinguished in terms of professional recognition or responsibilities, such as election to an office, appointment to an editorial board, or involvement in the creation of professional standards, guidelines, etc. General participation in professional organizations should be considered professional service.

Expectations of the department

Librarians should demonstrate steady involvement in scholarship throughout their careers. This will occasionally result in traditional publications, such as journal articles or monographs. Librarians’ involvement in the evaluation of materials also may result in the writing of book and

other media reviews. However, other demonstrations of scholarship and professional achievement are also valued. While strong weight may be given to scholarship published in national, peer-reviewed sources, alternatives at the regional level and even within the campus may also receive favorable consideration. Librarians are encouraged to explore issues and problems concerning the library's services to our users and develop informed programs to improve these services. Additional education that supports the changing needs of the campus is another form of scholarship that suits the library's mission. In all cases, scholarly activity should be documented in some tangible form that allows for disseminating this information to other educators or professionals.

Since librarianship is a highly collaborative profession, it should be expected that many scholarly activities will result in co-authored projects and publications. In fact, the nature of this collaborative scholarship—the integration of the perspectives of different library units, campus departments, or academic disciplines—may often add to the value of the work. When this work is reviewed for its merit in the promotion and tenure process, the candidate for promotion should indicate the degree of his or her contributions to the work.

Alternatives to traditional peer-reviewed printed publications will receive full consideration. Shorter and practical presentations of scholarship, such as poster sessions and presentations at conferences, may sufficiently demonstrate effective scholarly learning and publication to peers.

Some types of publication may seem similar to activities considered under the categories of librarianship or service. This is also true for teaching faculty, who may offer one lecture as a part of his or her teaching, another as a conference presentation considered scholarship, and a third for a local organization as a form of service. Assigning an appropriate category will depend on characteristics such as the audience of the work, its long-term value vs. immediacy of purpose, and its depth of intellectual content.

It is considered normal and acceptable for a new librarian with probationary status to come to Trinity without an established research agenda. While it is not expected that significant scholarship be demonstrated during each year, it is expected that librarians will have shown some initiative in this area by the second-year formal review and tangible evidence of scholarship by the fourth-year formal review. In order to receive tenure, the candidate must have demonstrated evidence of successful scholarly achievements and the ability to continue this work in the future.

Evidence of effective scholarship, research, or other professional or artistic achievements may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Publications, including but not limited to authoring of journal articles, books, book chapters, and electronic productions; work as editor for any of these types of sources. Peer-reviewing of the publications provides additional evidence of quality, but its absence does not invalidate the value of the work.
- Reviews of books or other media
- Activity as a publication referee or on editorial boards
- Presentations at scholarly or professional conferences

- Poster sessions at conferences
- Original cataloging of library materials
- Bibliographies or other substantial user guides
- Significant library exhibits
- Grants received
- Web-based user training materials or other instructional media that teach users how to do research or use a library
- Professional guidelines or training materials
- Contributions to professional clearinghouses, such as LOEX and ERIC
- Awards and honors
- Additional education that results in tangible dissemination of related scholarship
- Significant analysis of library collections or services, disseminated internally or externally, that clearly relates current problems and solutions to other scholarship informing those issues.

Service

Librarians have a unique role on campus, as much of our activity as faculty is directly in service to other departments. Because service is integral to our work as librarians, many activities that serve others on campus will therefore be classified as librarianship rather than service.

Expectations of the department

Our department values traditional university service (such as university committees, the Senate, UCC, and Commission on Promotion and Tenure), because this participation enhances communication and relationships between the library and teaching faculty. Service, especially to the university, is weighted heavily by our department. Types of service for which librarians will be evaluated may include the following:

1. University service: This includes service outside of one's normal librarian role, such as participation on university committees, other forms of campus governance, student recruitment activities, and other similar contributions to the mission of the university.
2. Departmental service: This includes contributions to the mission of the library outside of one's normal responsibilities to the library, such as participation in interdepartmental committees, special projects and events, and so on.
3. Professional service: This includes participation in and contributions to the profession of librarianship principally through activities with professional and scholarly organizations. When those contributions to the profession result in tangible outcomes, including but not limited to published guidelines, training materials, best practices, and conferences, they should be considered under the category of professional achievements rather than service.

4. Community service: Librarians are encouraged to use their knowledge and skills to contribute to the community in which our university operates through consultation, volunteer activities, and other forms of assistance.

Differences in Expectations of Performance:

Promotion to Associate Professor and to Professor

Promotion to associate professor with tenure at Trinity University is based not solely on a candidate's demonstration of effectiveness in the three major areas of review, but also in the candidate's demonstration of promise for the future. Considerable weight will be given to evidence that the candidate has progressed in effectiveness from the time of hire through the tenure review. On the other hand, promotion to professor is evaluated largely in terms of the candidate's accomplishments. Promotion to professor has been based on demonstrating a record that is, on the whole, outstanding. An outstanding record is one in which the candidate can establish evidence for his or her continued development after promotion to associate professor that exhibits a level of mastery, distinction, and/or professional reputation. The department's weighting of the criteria does not change between these two ranks; librarianship continues to be weighted most heavily for the promotion to professor, followed by scholarship and service.

The tenured members of the library faculty will follow all normal university procedures for this process as noted in the Faculty Handbook.

Evidence expected for promotion:

	Examples of Evidence	To Associate Professor with tenure	To Professor
Librarianship	Liaison activities; information literacy programs; reference assistance; curricular support materials; organizing, classifying, or managing resources; managing staff effectively.	Commendable performance in core areas; competence or demonstrated promise in other areas of responsibility	Mastery of core areas; expertise or distinction in librarianship; innovations with long-lasting influence; positive impact on the university's mission
Scholarship/Professional Achievements	Journal articles; monographs; reviews; professional presentations and poster sessions; original cataloging; bibliographies or other substantial research guides; major library exhibits; grants; significant web site content.	Demonstrated ability to produce useful scholarship or professional achievements and to continue this achievement throughout the career; quantity of this work is secondary to quality	Significant and ongoing (though not necessarily constant) scholarship that demonstrates maturity and depth of thought as well as usefulness to the university or the profession
Service	University committees or other governance activities; student recruitment efforts; professional and scholarly organization activities; community volunteer work.	Effective departmental and university service	Significant departmental, university, and professional or community service with an emphasis on activities that support library and university goals

Documentation For Candidates For Promotion And Tenure

[This document is a departmental revision of text found in the *Faculty and Contract Staff Handbook*, Chapter 3B. Changes concern examples of activities that are more appropriate for librarianship than for teaching and in procedures for selecting external reviewers.]

The Constitution of the Faculty Organization at Trinity University (Chapter 2A) Article V.A.1 instructs members of the Commission on Promotion and Tenure to “review every departmental recommendation to grant or deny tenure, or to grant or deny promotion, to a member of the faculty. In making its review and formulating its recommendations, the Commission shall have as its primary concern the maintenance of fair and objective standards for peer-review decisions across the University.” Evaluations of each candidate are to be based on the criteria stated in Chapter 3A: Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Employment of Faculty (Policy Statement) Article IV.G:

- “1. Quality of librarianship,
2. Quality of scholarship, research, or professional or artistic achievements, and
3. Service to the department, the University, the profession, and the community.”

In preparing documentation addressing the above criteria, candidates and departments should follow guidelines below in order to provide the most complete and informative presentations to the Commission.

In particular, candidates and departments are encouraged to submit materials in a common format, not only in the documentation but in addressing each of the criteria. The experience of the Commission indicates that the inclusion of certain critical items in a uniform way facilitates fairness and more informed decisions. Of particular importance to the Commission is the review by each tenured member of the department, including the Chair, and the Chair’s written statement of the departmental recommendation including a summary of the reasons for this recommendation (see Chapter 3A Article IV.E: Evaluation of Probationary Faculty). Because the documentation will, under normal circumstances, include outside evaluations of the candidate’s scholarship, research, and professional or artistic achievements, each department shall devise a clearly stated policy for selecting outside evaluators and shall clearly describe the task which outside evaluators should perform.

To assist the candidate and the department, the Commission on Promotion and Tenure recommends the following format, which has been modified by the library faculty:

- I. A brief guide to the submitted material (i.e., a Table of Contents).
- II. A written explanation of:
 - a. The procedures of the department.
 - b. The relative weight of the criteria stated in Chapter 3A: Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Employment of Faculty (Policy Statement) Article IV.G.

- III. A description of any agreement between the University and the applicant concerning specific duties during the evaluation period, and an explanation of how this agreement should affect the relative weight of the three criteria.
- IV. A current expanded curriculum vitae.
 - a. Include standard entries pertaining to:
 - i. Education;
 - ii. Current and previous professional experience;
 - iii. Library responsibilities;
 - iv. Biographical data;
 - v. Service to department, University, profession and community;
 - vi. Honors and awards; and
 - vii. Other scholarly activities.
 - b. Identify bibliographical items carefully, using standardized citations and complete information on each entry. Indicate refereed articles or presentations, primary author and approximate percentage of contribution in multi-authored works, specific information about grants or fellowships, status of works-in-progress or works submitted for publication.
- V. A self-evaluation based on the three criteria identified in Chapter 3A: Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Employment of Faculty (Policy Statement) Article IV.G. The Commission emphasizes the importance of this document and urges the candidate to take great care in its preparation and to address each of the criteria: librarianship, research/professional/artistic achievement, and service.
 - a. Librarianship. Describe your major areas of responsibility and the activities that they have required. Describe goals, philosophy, expectations. Indicate how you have contributed to the department's and University's expectations on librarianship.
 - b. Scholarship, research and/or professional or artistic achievement. Describe goals, philosophy, expectations. Indicate your areas of interest and achievements in terms of publications, presentations, performances, exhibitions, and other forms of intellectual expression. Discuss the quality of the journals and/or the refereed nature of your publications or presentations. Provide information on future research goals.
 - c. Service. Describe your University, professional, and community activities. Discuss their impact on your self-development and on the other criteria.
- VI. Information concerning librarianship. Under normal circumstances this may include:
 - a. Campus user evaluations: feedback from students, faculty, and staff on the effectiveness of services provided for them by the librarian. (It is suggested that persons submitting materials for promotion to professor should include evaluations since their promotion to associate professor.)

- b. Instructional or other course-related materials, such as bibliographies, web or printed guides.
 - c. Descriptions of participation in curricular objectives with teaching faculty.
 - d. Development of new programs that encourage information literacy among our users.
 - e. Implementations of organizing and classifying information resources.
 - f. Documentation of effective management activities related to budgeting, collection management, and staff utilization.
- VII. Evidence of scholarship, professional achievement, and artistic achievement. Under normal circumstances this will include:
- a. Lists of publications, including journal articles, proceedings, presentations, exhibits, performances (audio or video tapes may be included).
 - b. Copies of publications. If publication is a portion of a collective work or a reference work, a photocopy of the candidate's contribution is sufficient.
 - c. Reviews of books, plays, performances, exhibitions, findings.
 - d. Examples of original cataloging and other high-level classification activities.
 - e. Reports of significant activities and analyses that required research and professional application to issues and problems in librarianship.
 - f. Evaluations by peers internal and external to the University. Inclusion of the following is required:
 - i. Procedures of the department in selecting external reviewers,
 - ii. Information solicited and materials provided to the reviewer, and
 - iii. Biographical information on the external reviewer.
 - g. Descriptions and examples of written research proposals.
 - h. Descriptions of grants received.
 - i. Descriptions of honors and awards.
- VIII. Evidence of service to the department, the University, the profession, and community. Under normal circumstances this will include:
- a. Lists and descriptions of activities.
 - b. Copies of reports completed.
 - c. Descriptions of results achieved.
- IX. Peer evaluations by each tenured member of the applicant's department.
- a. An evaluation from each member, including the Chair's individual evaluation. University policy requires that each tenured member evaluate the candidate in respect to all three criteria: librarianship, research/professional/artistic achievement, and service.

- b. Even if a tenured member is on academic or administrative leave, his or her contribution is highly desirable.
- X. The Chairperson's summary of the tenured members' evaluations and the departmental recommendation pertaining to the granting of tenure and/or promotion.

Procedures For External Reviewers

Letters evaluating the candidate's scholarship/professional achievements and service will be solicited from four members of the library profession who are employed in academic institutions or have a strong background in academic librarianship. The list of names will be compiled as a joint effort of the candidate and the department. Each will create a list of at least four names deemed appropriate for the review. The University Librarian will select two names from each list in consultation with the candidate's department head. In the case of the review of a department head or the Assistant University Librarian, the University Librarian will consult with the other librarians to choose the latter two names. If any of these potential reviewers declines to participate, the University Librarian will select another name from the appropriate list.

The external reviewers will be contacted by the University Librarian, who will request their participation, describe the expectations for their letters, indicate their confidential status, and instruct them on the deadline. Should a reviewer not be able to complete the evaluation by the deadline, the University Librarian may elect to replace that reviewer with another name from the lists. The University Librarian may decide to offer an honorarium to the reviewers; if this is done, the honorarium must be the same for all of the reviewers.

Reviewers will be instructed to review copies of publications and other documentation submitted by the candidate as evidence of scholarly or professional achievement and of service. The candidate's full curriculum vitae will be submitted for the reviewers' information. Reviewers will be asked to review the quality of the work presented and the contribution of the candidate to the profession of librarianship. The reviewers will not be asked to give an opinion on the candidate's suitability for tenure or promotion.

Letters received from external reviewers will be added to the candidate's portfolio subsequent to its submission to the University Librarian. These letters will be made available for review by the tenured librarians, the University Librarian, the Commission on Promotion and Tenure, the Vice President for Information Resources and Administrative Affairs, and the President. They will not be made available to the candidate and will be removed from the portfolio before it is returned to the candidate at the conclusion of the tenure or promotion review process.

Assumptions

1. Librarians are and will continue to serve as faculty at Trinity University. The previous debate on removing faculty status from librarians has been resolved.
2. It is in the best interests of both librarians and the entire campus that appropriate criteria for the promotion and tenure of librarians be developed, in order that excellence be encouraged and retained within the library faculty. Criteria which work against the retention of excellent librarians should be reconsidered. Likewise, criteria which make it exceptionally difficult for librarians to be promoted to the rank of professor should be reconsidered for appropriateness.
3. Trinity University holds teaching and the development of student learning to be paramount for its faculty. Librarians similarly hold librarianship and the development of student learning to be paramount in their work. Scholarship and service, while also important, do not exceed the importance of librarianship.
4. Librarians currently work twelve-month contracts with twenty days of vacation. They are expected to work the same full schedule during the summer and the break between the fall and spring semesters. Consequently, significant periods of time for personal research and other creative activities are limited.
5. While the numbers of students and faculty on campus have grown over the past several years, the number of librarians (including those with contract, not faculty status) has diminished from a high of fifteen during the late 1980s/early 1990s to an expected ten for 2003-04. This number is not expected to rise in the near future.
6. Over the past twenty years, the major difficulty that librarians have faced in the promotion and tenure process has been in the area of scholarship: they have typically produced fewer scholarly publications than does the average teaching faculty member at Trinity University. While many librarians have earned tenure and been promoted to associate professor, almost no librarian has then also gone on to be promoted to the rank of professor.
7. History suggests that the standards for promoting and tenuring librarians have been at least partly unrealistic. Present circumstances—the increasingly rapid change in information technologies that we implement and manage, the increasing numbers of students and faculty, and an increased emphasis on information literacy as it enhances student learning, along with the constraints imposed by our twelve-month contracts—would indicate that adherence to past criteria for scholarship, in particular, will lead to failure in retaining excellent librarians. Scholarship must be integrated appropriately into the contributions that librarians make to the campus and their profession.
8. What is scholarship? Scholarship refers generally to advancing one's learning in a particular area of knowledge. Universities have further required that their faculty disseminate what they have learned to others, especially through publication. Traditionally, the highest merit has been awarded to scholarship which has been published in peer-reviewed monographs and journal

articles, since this peer review helps demonstrate quality and usefulness. However, universities have recognized that certain scholarly and professional achievements, such as artistic creations, do not easily fit in the traditional box.

9. Librarians may and do publish in traditional peer-reviewed scholarly sources, but they also have a variety of other methods for sharing the results of their scholarship. Due to the aforementioned constraints on librarians' time for research, it should be expected that many of their scholarly activities will be communicated in less-structured media than academic journals and books.

10. Unlike faculty in many other disciplines, only a small percentage of all academic librarians publish in peer-reviewed journals and books. (Percentages are even lower for college librarians when compared to those employed by university or research libraries.) [1] In contrast, library school teaching faculty, usually possessing doctorates, often publish at a level similar to other academic faculty. Expectations of publication for practicing librarians should realistically be considered differently from this latter group.

11. When librarians do publish, they frequently collaborate and create products with multiple authors. For example, co-authored articles in *College & Research Libraries*, a leading journal in the field, recently comprised nearly 60% of all articles. [2]

12. While there may be disagreement among campus constituents about the appropriate level of scholarship and service that librarians should achieve, there is substantial agreement that librarians make their best contributions to the academic life of the university when they are engaged in activities that enhance the collections and services that we provide faculty, students, and staff. Thus, there is a rationale for giving locally-oriented and locally-disseminated scholarship significant weight as compared to scholarship which is published in national, peer-reviewed sources but has no local application.

13. Many activities which librarians perform on a regular basis have a substantial scholarly component. (New ways of looking at scholarship, such as Ernest Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* and the Association of College and Research Libraries "Redefining Scholarship Project," support this view.) [3] For example:

- Ordering a book is not a scholarly activity, but selecting books based on evaluations of their academic merit and their appropriateness for our users' needs is scholarly;
- Editing a catalog record before adding it to Quest is not a scholarly activity, but analyzing the content of an item and assigning appropriate subject terms so that our users may find the item when needed is a scholarly activity;
- Giving a tour of the library building is not a scholarly activity, but discovering effective methods to teach students when to use what types of resources and how to evaluate them is a scholarly activity;
- Solving specific hardware problems with a user's computer is not a scholarly activity, but designing, selecting, and configuring sophisticated online systems to meet university needs is a scholarly activity;

- Reconciling budget reports is not a scholarly activity, but analyzing publication and pricing patterns and applying that knowledge to the setting of budget priorities for the different disciplines for which we buy materials is a scholarly activity.

The scholarly importance of information analysis and classification should not be underestimated. These activities may be compared to those in other disciplines that require similar organization of knowledge, such as botanical taxonomy and the astronomical classification of galaxy types.

14. Trinity University is a primarily undergraduate institution. Librarians have particular specialties, but they operate as generalists in the liberal arts and sciences tradition. Librarians at Trinity work with numerous departments and subjects and must demonstrate strong generalist skills. Excellence as a generalist is therefore highly valued.

15. The library is a complex organization in which units depend on the quality and efficiency of work done in other units in order to complete their tasks. Additionally, collaborative work with other campus faculty and staff is a frequent occurrence. This functional interdependence requires that librarians work effectively in a collegial environment and possess strong communication and other interpersonal skills.

[1]. See, for example, W. Bede Mitchell and Mary Reichel, "Publish or Perish: A Dilemma for Academic Librarians?" *College & Research Libraries* 60 (May 1999): 232-243.

[2] Alice Harrison Bahr and Mickey Zemon, "Collaborative Authorship in the Journal Literature: Perspectives for Academic Librarians Who Wish to Publish," *College & Research Libraries* 61 (Sept. 2000): 412

[3] Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Princeton, N.J.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990; *Academic Librarianship and the Redefining Scholarship Project: A Report from the Association of College and Research Libraries Task Force on Institutional Priorities and Faculty Rewards*, March 1998. Available: http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ACRL/Publications/White_Papers_and_Reports/Academic_Librarianship_and_the_Redefining_Scholarship_Project.htm