

American University Library Guidelines for Reappointment and Promotion for Continuing Appointment Line Library Faculty Members

University Library Faculty Council
October 1, 2014
Revised June 11, 2020

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Introduction

The *University Faculty Manual* is the official source about requirements for reappointment and promotion. These guidelines are designed to provide continuing appointment library faculty members and evaluators with information about the specific process and criteria expected for reappointment and promotion.

There are three sources of evaluation for continuing appointment library faculty: review by administrative heads, peer reviews by American University library colleagues, and reviews by university administrators. To be considered for reappointment in a continuing appointment track, eligible library faculty members are evaluated on the performance of their primary responsibilities, professional contributions, and service to the library and to the university.

The quality of the performance of a continuing appointment library faculty member in carrying out his/her primary responsibilities is always the chief criterion for evaluation. The percentages assigned below to primary responsibilities (80%), professional contributions (10%), and service (10%) represent the customary distribution of workload. In certain circumstances, these percentages may be differently distributed to reflect special concentrations of effort in any of the three areas. For instance, special projects might be reflected in primary responsibilities, a research leave for professional contributions, or a “course release” in university service. Library faculty must make arrangements with their administrative heads and notify the University Library Committee on Faculty Actions (ULCFA) of the specific redistribution in advance of the

affected time period. The time period should also be substantial enough to merit such a change, usually one semester or more in a given year.

It is critical for library faculty members to give context for work related to primary responsibilities, professional contributions, and service in their narratives submitted for review in a file for action. For example, it is good practice to include a description of individual contributions for group projects conducted as part of primary responsibilities or in professional contributions such as co-authorship or work within a professional organization or committee.

Primary Responsibilities (80%)

These activities are the main functions performed by continuing appointment library faculty members. 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 responsibilities may include some of the following:

- Assisting researchers at a research assistance desk, through electronic mail or an instant messaging service, over the phone, or through the maintenance of office hours. These activities facilitate research, teaching, and learning for all members of the AU community, by helping students and faculty find and use the appropriate information resources.
- 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.
- Selecting, negotiating licenses for, acquiring, describing, and maintaining library materials to make them accessible to the university community. This work includes allocating and managing budgets, maintaining relationships with publishers and information providers, developing collection maintenance workflows, and providing discoverability of and access to resources through the application of national and local standards, record and data management, and use of systems. These activities are fundamental to the library's role as information gateway and facilitator of academic success and provide support for new and continuing programs, courses, and areas of research.
- Providing input to ensure that the library acquires and maintains all appropriate information technology. As more and more materials necessary for research become digital, ease of access is expected, and the support of the lifecycle of scholarly information, including that generated at AU, is vital. Digital materials also enable distance learning.
- Working closely with teaching faculty in curriculum development, library instruction, and collection development. This activity builds liaison relationships with teaching faculty and supports university goals for learning and research.
- Hiring, training, supervising, and evaluating library staff and faculty. Sometimes this is a significant component of a position.

- American University Library is a member of the Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC), which coordinates many shared functions and resources. Participation on a WRLC committee or task force may be included in primary responsibilities.

Additionally, library faculty are encouraged to incorporate inclusive practices including universal design in the execution of their primary responsibilities, as appropriate.

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 recommended number of research assistance transactions, or number of books cataloged. Activities and time spent may vary from function to function, from semester to semester, or from year to year.

Throughout their careers at American University Library, and for promotion, including promotion to full librarian, library faculty are expected to demonstrate increasing growth, initiative, and leadership in their professional work, and to take on increasing levels of responsibility whether or not they hold management positions.

Professional Contributions (10%)

Continuing appointment library faculty in the Assistant Librarian, Associate Librarian, and Librarian ranks are customarily expected to allocate ten percent of their workload, or approximately two working days per month, to these activities. Library faculty members have twelve-month contracts and a regular workload throughout the year. There are many ways to engage with and contribute to librarianship. These guidelines aim to capture the range of approaches and empower librarians to make the case for the work they value.

Librarians in the profession, unlike library faculty in a school of library or information science, are generally focused on practical applications. Advancement in the field of librarianship is often achieved through the work of individual librarians under the auspices of professional organizations. Participation and leadership in associations and on committees that advance theory and contribute to best practices in the library profession is important.

Library faculty members are active contributors in the intellectual community of the university, so professional contributions may also pertain to disciplinary areas to which the faculty members bring additional expertise. Professional contributions in any field deepen the practitioner's knowledge of that field and are valuable in many areas of professional practice.

Library faculty are encouraged to engage in scholarship, research, and creative works that apply principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, whether in intellectual content, theoretical

frameworks, processes and methodology, analyses of data, recruitment of research subjects, or engagement with the wider public.

A continuing appointment-line library faculty member may seek continuing appointment and/or promotion according to the following chart.

	Continuing Appointment	Promotion to Associate Librarian	Promotion to Librarian
Points Needed to Request an Action	15 points	25 points	50 points

Points are cumulative. For example, once an Assistant Librarian has twenty-five points, s/he can request both continuing appointment and promotion to Associate Librarian. Promotion to Librarian requires twenty-five additional points for a total of 50 points. Continuing appointment is customarily granted in six years at the conclusion of two contract periods as stated in the *Faculty Manual Supplement for Continuing Appointment-Line Library Faculty*, Section 3B.

Professional contributions earned at a previous institution may be counted toward an action. A minimum of fifteen points for a promotion must be earned while at American University.

For example, a continuing appointment-line library faculty member hired as an Assistant Librarian with experience and professional contributions from a former position could:

- Count previous publications for ten points of the twenty-five needed for promotion to Associate Librarian;
- Waive some years toward continuing appointment as permitted by the *Faculty Manual Supplement for Continuing Appointment-Line Library Faculty*, Section 3C;
- Earn fifteen points at American University in the time specified when requesting the waiver;
- Request continuing appointment and promotion to Associate Librarian at the same time at the conclusion of the time requested in the waiver.

Continuing appointment faculty may wish to consult the attached Table of Point Values as suggested areas of activities for their professional contributions. Continuing appointment library faculty should demonstrate continuous engagement in making professional contributions. Professional organization work is one of the ways library faculty members maintain or contribute to best practices in the profession and to current awareness of new services, products, resources, and technology. Library faculty may show evidence of engagement and responsibility through such organizational work.

Continuing appointment librarians may wish to publish in refereed or non-refereed outlets, but they are not required to do so. (For a list of some refereed journals in library and information science, see Appendix A). However, open access outlets are preferred when possible but not

required in line with the [ACRL Policy Statement on Open Access to Scholarship by Academic Librarians](#) (open access publications in Appendix A are notated appropriately). This includes not only publication in open access venues, but broader implementation of open access values as outlined in the statement, including serving in roles as peer reviewer, editor, or advisor for open access outlets.

Additional evidence of growth can be represented by the following areas: abstracts, grant proposals not directly related to primary responsibilities, exhibits, textbooks, testimony on legislative issues, judging awards competitions, and professional Web contributions in appropriate formats.

Much of the advancement of librarianship 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 outcomes of such activities often result 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.

Table of Point Values for Professional Contributions in Librarianship or Other Disciplines for Library Faculty

The following table gives point values for multiple aspects of professional contributions. To get the total point value for a particular contribution, add up the points across each column for the appropriate category. For example, a national-level, solo-authored, peer reviewed article would be 10 points. For evidence of scholarly or professional contributions not listed or named in this table (e.g., grant-writing, creating digital artifacts or projects, serving as a peer reviewer, etc.), a library faculty member may submit that evidence and propose a value for that contribution at the time of review for consideration by the University Library Committee on Faculty Actions.

	Pt	Audience	Pt	Level of Engagement	Pt	Type of Activity	Pt	Quality
PROFESSIONAL SERVICE (Minimum: 2 points)			3	Office Holder*				
	2	National/ International	2	Committee Chair/Co-Chair/Past Chair/Chair Elect				

	1	Regional	1	Committee member				
PUBLICATIONS (Minimum: 4 points)			4	Solo Author	10	Book	2	Peer - reviewed
	2	National/ International	3	Co-Author	2	Journal Article	1	Non-Peer-reviewed
	1	Regional	3	Lead Author of 3+	2	Conference proceedings		
			2	3+ author	2	Book Chapter		
			2	Editor	1	Book Review		
			1	Columnist	1	Editorial		
PUBLICATIONS 500 words or fewer (Minimum: 1 point)	2	National/ International						
	1	Regional						
IMPACTFUL WEB PRESENCE** (Minimum: 1 point)								
PRESENTATIONS /PERFORMANCES (Minimum: 3 points)			4	Keynote			2	Peer - reviewed
			3	Invited				
	2	National/ International	2	Solo (or any creative performance)			1	Non-Peer-reviewed
	1	Regional	1	Panel				
			1	Poster Session				
			1	Facilitator				
			1	Organizer				
AWARDS (Minimum: 2 points)	2	National/ International			1	Publication		
	1	Regional			1	Service		

*Office holder means a higher level position in the organization, such as president or section chair.

**Impactful web presence includes many web-based activities such as podcasts, blogs, twitter feeds, etc. To count, an activity must be a continuous effort over a significant period of time for which there is evidence of impact.

Service (10%)

The Library is an essential component in the higher education environment, and library faculty partner with teaching and research faculty to create and provide quality education and scholarship. 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. Continuing appointment library faculty typically devote ten percent of their time to service.

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 nonprofit organizations or communities or governments. This service must be clearly related to primary responsibilities and professional interests of the faculty member and cannot substitute for university service.
- Participation in library events.

Service on other entities involved specifically in library faculty governance, such as designated roles in the University Library Faculty Council and the Merit Committee, are also important contributions to the university. Likewise, service on other internal committee projects and other teams may be counted, 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.

To be promoted to Associate Librarian and Librarian, library faculty members must have increased their level of responsibility or leadership in their service commitments. For the rank of Associate Librarian, library faculty members must provide significant service to the library and to the university. For the rank of Librarian, library faculty members must have a record of active and constructive library and university contributions to faculty governance.

Conclusion

As stated above, performance of primary responsibilities will always be the main criterion for evaluation. Primary responsibilities take up the most significant amount of a continuing

This does not constitute an employment contract.

appointment line library faculty member's time, approximately 80%. The other two criteria are important but should never overshadow primary responsibilities.

Appendix A

Refereed¹ 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*](#)

[**Code4Lib Journal*](#)

[*Collection Management*](#)

[*College and Undergraduate Libraries*](#)

[**College and Research Libraries*](#)

[**Communications in Information Literacy*](#)

[*EDUCAUSE Quarterly*](#)

[**Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*](#)

[**IFLA Journal*](#)

[**In the Library with the Lead Pipe*](#)

[*Internet Reference Services Quarterly*](#)

[**Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship*](#)

[*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*](#)

[**LIBER Quarterly*](#)

[*Library & Information Science Research*](#)

[*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*](#)

¹ The term “refereed” means peer-reviewed. Most journal titles listed above employ a double-blind peer-review process.

[Science & Technology Libraries](#)

[The Serials Librarian](#)

[Technical Services Quarterly](#)

* *Open access publication*

The library faculty 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.

Reviews of books and other materials (such as scholarly websites and online databases) 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 may also support the intellectual mission of the university and research by contributing abstracts to indexing resources in many different subject areas.
