

**STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES  
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

**Evaluation and Criteria  
of Library Faculty for  
Promotion and Continuing Appointment**

**April 27 2014**

This document was revised by the Library Faculty of Stony Brook University in April/May 2014 and was ratified by Library voting faculty on May 13, 2014.

**I. Purpose of the Document**

This document provides context and outlines the activities of the Library Faculty at Stony Brook University. In anticipation of transitioning to the College of Arts and Sciences, it has updated this document, for use by all university faculty review bodies.

New library faculty members will be advised of this document and the criteria for appointment and promotion by the Assistant Director for Library Administration. They will be encouraged to review this document and to discuss it with supervisors and mentors.

## **II. Definition of Librarian**

Librarians at Stony Brook University are required to fulfill professional obligations throughout the calendar year (full year, i.e. 12 months), primarily within business hours. Many have managerial and supervisory duties. These responsibilities reduce the discretionary time available to librarians for research, scholarship, and service outside of the University Libraries.

Faculty holding academic rank are defined by the SUNY Board of Trustees as “those members of the professional staff having the titles of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, and assistant instructor... and ... members of the professional staff having the titles of librarian, associate librarian, senior assistant librarian, and assistant librarian.”[i]

Librarians are academic faculty.[ii] The role and impact of librarians in higher education is affirmed by the Association of College and Research Libraries.

The academic librarian makes unique contributions to the academic community and to higher education itself. These contributions include developing collections, providing bibliographic access to all library materials, and interpreting these materials to members of the college and university community. Specific services include instruction in the use of print and online library resources and the creation of new tools to enhance access to information available locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally. Librarians contribute to the sum of knowledge through their research into the information process and other areas of study. Service improvements and other advances in the field result from their participation in library and other scholarly organizations.

Librarians should be promoted in rank based on their professional proficiency and effectiveness (performance, service, and scholarship) consistent with stated campus standards. The peer review system should be an integral part of procedures for promotion.[iii]

### **III. Criteria: State University of New York**

The Library Faculty of Stony Brook University Libraries align its criteria for promotion and tenure with the *Policies of the Board of Trustees, State University of New York*, which indicate the elements to be weighed in evaluating candidates for promotion and continuing appointment (tenure) or promotion.[iv]

(a) Mastery of subject matter: as demonstrated by advanced degrees, licenses, honors, awards and reputation in the subject matter field.

(b) Effectiveness in teaching: as demonstrated by judgment of colleagues, development of teaching materials on new courses and student reaction, as determined from surveys, interviews and classroom observation.

(c) Scholarly ability: as demonstrated by success in developing and carrying out significant research work in the subject matter field, contribution to the arts, publications and reputation among colleagues.

(d) Effectiveness of university service: as demonstrated by university public service, committee work, administrative work, and work with students or community in addition to formal teacher-student relationships.

(e) Continuing growth: as demonstrated by reading, research or other activities to keep abreast of current developments in his/her fields and being able to handle successfully increased responsibility.

To further the commitment to affirmative action at Stony Brook University, the following additional criterion will be applied when evaluating candidates:

(f) Contributions to enriching the life of the university by correcting discrimination and encouraging diversity: as demonstrated by teaching, university service, or scholarship concerning women and minorities. Besides reports from professionals within a field, colleagues, and students, a candidate's effectiveness may be assessed by accepting a diverse range of publications and modes of service that address the contributions, interests and special needs of minorities or women and promote efforts to achieve equal opportunity.

## **IV. General Evaluation Standards**

The Following General Evaluation Standards are intended to give definition to the scholarly and professional standards of Stony Brook University librarians. These standards are meant to meaningfully expand on and provide definition to the criteria outlined in Section III.

### **1. Effectiveness in Librarianship**

Librarian specializations are diverse and constantly evolving. Librarians must be evaluated on the effectiveness with which they perform the responsibilities in their areas of specialization. Factors to be used in assessing effectiveness are knowledge, skill, innovation, initiative, and professional growth. Activities include but are not limited to:

- Establishment and curation of collections in all formats.
- Outreach and collaboration with academic and administrative departments.
- Development of effective and creative methods to teach students and faculty the technologies and strategies required to access information.
- Providing in-depth reference and referral services.
- Optimizing communication with library users to facilitate information transfer.
- Maintaining, reviewing, and evaluating the quality of intellectual content.
- Teaching information literacy competencies that meet curricular learning objectives.
- Data management.
- Archival processing.
- Facilitating access to collections, including resource analysis and description.
- Administration, supervision, management of operations and services.

### **2. Continuing Growth Activities**

Continuing growth may be demonstrated by activities such as attendance at continuing education courses, institutes, training programs and other activities intended to keep candidates current in their field; in-depth analyses of other libraries; development of professionally related skills; formal or informal course work; advanced degrees; adaptation to new research fields and opportunities; and/or increased responsibilities within the Libraries and the university.

### **3. Scholarship**

In the academic setting, scholarly ability is evidenced by research that serves to increase the body of knowledge in a given discipline. Librarians have opportunities to engage in pure and

applied research in librarianship, and, dependent on their professional specializations, academic backgrounds and intellectual interests, in areas outside librarianship.

## **Scholarly Works**

Scholarly contributions may include, but are not limited to:

- Books and chapters in books.
- Peer-reviewed articles.
- Grant-supported scholarly projects.
- Editing of journals.
- Conference papers presented and published.
- Significant book or media review.
- Audiovisual productions.
- Computer software, databases, and other electronic media.
- Significant Web-based publications that are peer-reviewed (i.e. MERLOT or Primo).
- Research aids such as indexes, thesauri, catalogs, and union lists.
- Significant published bibliographies.
- Scholarly exhibits (physical and/or virtual).

To be considered significant, bibliographies should be meaningfully organized and/or include features such as critical introductions and evaluative annotations, or they should contribute other special value to the information community. To be considered significant, a book or media review should be a review essay that not only critically evaluates the material but also places it in the context of the relevant literature. Shorter reviews that do not meet this standard are appropriately considered under Section 5a (Professional Service). In cases of joint authorship, care should be taken to recognize and evaluate the unique contributions of the candidate.

Librarians also conduct scholarly research in subject disciplines other than librarianship. The Library Faculty considers such scholarly research to be of equal significance for promotion and continuing appointment as long as such work meets the scholarly standards expected in the discipline.

Peer review is a crucial factor in the evaluation of scholarly works, which considers both their quality and influence.

#### **4. Mastery of the Subject Matter**

Mastery may be demonstrated by advanced degrees beyond the terminal master's degree in library or information science, or by increased language or subject expertise relevant to librarianship. Mastery may be evidenced by the candidate's knowledge of the field or professional reputation as demonstrated by certificates, honors, awards, grant support for projects, research-based presentations, or original materials published in non-research-based periodicals, newspapers, non-traditional formats, and other publications.

#### **5. Service**

This category includes contributions to the library profession, to Stony Brook University, and to the community. Service should be appropriate to the candidate's rank and experience, and involve increased responsibility and leadership as the candidate's career progresses.

##### **a. Professional Service**

Professional library organizations promote services, examine public policy issues, develop technical standards, encourage cooperative endeavors, foster the application of new technologies, and provide opportunities for sharing research. Because these functions are critical to the advancement of the profession and the development of library services, the Library Faculty consider active participation in state, regional, and national professional organizations to be essential.

Initial professional service may include contributions such as active participation on committees; making practice-based presentations, including poster sessions; or moderating or chairing a forum or panel. As careers progress, participation should evolve to leadership roles such as holding elective or appointed offices; organizing workshops or meetings; developing policy; or serving as a consultant, editor, or reviewer.

To be significant, these activities should take place beyond the local level and involve originality, responsibility, or the application of intellectual or managerial skills.

##### **b. University and Community Service**

Librarians contribute to the direction and development of the institution. This involvement may take different forms, such as effective participation on committees, councils, task forces, and

university events. Effectiveness is evidenced by leadership or other relevant and timely contributions toward the successful accomplishment of the mission and goals of the group.

## **6. Diversity**

For librarians, the establishment or identification of appropriate materials or collections helpful in attaining diversity are contributions to enriching the life of the university; see Section III, f.

## **V. Guidelines for Application of Criteria for Appointment and Promotion**

Appointment to any rank requires a master's degree accredited by the American Library Association or the equivalent professional degree. The academic rank assigned will reflect achievement in the areas of librarianship, scholarship, and service. Steady progress in all criteria and general standards cited above is expected as a librarian's career develops.

### **Assistant Librarian**

To be appointed to the rank of Assistant Librarian, librarians are typically within the first year of their careers in librarianship. Initial appointment is made on the promise of future contributions of high quality, as indicated by the individual's educational record and professional performance. This document recognizes that the first criterion, "Effectiveness in Librarianship" (Section IV, 1) is the most significant factor for this rank's promotion.

### **Senior Assistant Librarian**

To be appointed or promoted to the rank of Senior Assistant Librarian, librarians typically have at least one year of professional experience. The candidate should show evidence of effectiveness in librarianship, as well as engagement in scholarly activity and professional service.

Promotion to the rank of Senior Assistant Librarian is concurrent with a term appointee's first successful term review, i.e. promotion is contingent upon a term renewal of at least two years.

## **Associate Librarian**

For Assistant or Senior Assistant Librarians, promotion to Associate Librarian and continuing appointment are concurrent activities. At the point of consideration for continuing appointment, Associate Librarians must fully meet the qualifications for promotion to this rank.

To be promoted to the rank of Associate Librarian, librarians should show evidence of:

- sustained effectiveness in librarianship;  
a record of significant scholarly activity: publication of at least three scholarly articles or equivalent (books and monographs; non-refereed articles; book reviews and abstracts; miscellaneous published materials [v]) scholarship;
- meaningful service (Section IV, 4), including evidence of leadership or significant committee participation.

Librarians appointed to the rank of Associate Librarian without continuing appointment must have evidence of sustained effectiveness in librarianship as noted above, and have a record of scholarly activity and service.

## **Librarian**

To be promoted or appointed to the rank of Librarian, the candidate must have attained:

- excellence in the criterion of effectiveness in librarianship;
- excellence in either scholarship and service;
- a significant and sustained record of contributions to the profession.

In rare cases, an individual may be considered for promotion to Librarian on grounds other than those listed above, after making a truly outstanding contribution to the university or the external community over a period of many years.

In some cases, initial appointment to the rank of Librarian carries with it continuing appointment.

## **VI. Criteria for Continuing Appointment**

To be granted continuing appointment, librarians should meet the guidelines for promotion to the rank of Associate Librarian or Librarian.



## Notes

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[i] *State University of New York: Policies of the Board of Trustees. December 2013.*  
<http://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY-BOT-Policies-Dec2013.pdf>

[ii] *Ibid.*

[iii] *"Standards for Faculty Status for Academic Librarians" Approved by ACRL Board, June 2007. Revised October 2011. Prepared by the ACRL Committee on the Status of Academic Librarians.*

[iv] *Policies of the Board of Trustees, State University of New York, Art. XII, Title A (paragraph 4) and Title B (paragraph 2).*

[v] *Stony Brook University College of Arts and Sciences Promotion and Tenure Committee Procedures, 2.4.3.2*