

Tenure and Promotion Guidelines for Standards for Scholarship: Library

Introduction: This document articulates the library faculty members' interpretation of the University standards for scholarship in the context of both the University and library mission statements. Although librarians are eligible for sabbaticals and summer grants, library faculty members are hired under 12-month contracts and are generally fully engaged in the duties outlined in their position descriptions throughout the year. Interim periods when classes are not in session are used for major job-related projects not easily done during the semesters. Therefore, while librarians are expected to meet all of the standards for tenure and promotion of a Stetson faculty member and maintain a high level of quality in their scholarly activity, expectations for the quantity of scholarship are tempered by the realities of daily responsibilities.

Professional Association Standards for Promotion and Tenure: The professional association that represents academic librarians is the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of the American Library Association. (See the ACRL website at <http://www.acrl.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/promotiontenure.cfm>.)

ACRL publishes *A Guideline for the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Academic Librarians* (henceforth referred to as *ACRL Guidelines*). "The objective of this Guideline is to propose criteria and procedures for appointment, promotion in academic rank, and tenure (continuous appointment) for use in academic libraries. Utilizing these criteria and procedures will insure that the library faculty and, therefore, library services will be of the highest quality possible. These criteria are intended to be minimal only. These procedures may need to be adjusted in minor detail to conform to existing institutional procedures for other faculty. Any contractual procedures must be observed." *ACRL Guidelines* affirm that "all activities shall be judged by professional colleagues on and/or off campus on the basis of their contribution to scholarship, the profession of librarianship, and library service. The basic criterion for promotion in academic rank is to perform professional level tasks that contribute to the educational and research mission of the institution."

Definitions/Categories/Scope/Impact: While traditional research-based scholarship provides an outlet for high quality work and often brings recognition to the author, practitioner scholarship is also highly valued in the academic library community. As academic librarians are practitioners rather than classroom teacher/scholars, scholarship that addresses practical applications in various aspects of librarianship is considered of equal merit to research-based scholarship. Practitioner scholarship, which often involves demonstrating best practices, is consistent with the University's mission of fostering information and technological literacy, and with the library's mission of academic support.

Scholarship, regardless of type and application, must involve expertise in a specific field of librarianship and be subject to critical peer-review or be publicly tested. Scope and impact are important considerations and, for journal publications for example, may be judged based on such factors as journal quality and reputation, journal circulation, journal impact factors, quality of the publisher, publication length, the intended audience for the work, and the venue and audience for a presentation. Scope and impact for less traditional dissemination outlets, such as the creation of a significant website, may be judged by such factors as site visits, unique site visits, origin of visitors, publicity generated, user feedback, and other statistical or qualitative measures.

The non-exhaustive list of scholarly activities below, ranked in weighted order of importance given to each activity in the field of academic librarianship, may be used as a general guide in determining a candidate's scholarly work. It should be noted that while a publication in a peer reviewed journal is considered more important than a conference presentation, for example, the quality of the work carries significant weight regardless of the format or means of dissemination, and each work should be judged on its own merit.

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Scholarly Activity

- Publication of a peer-reviewed monograph
- Publication in a peer-reviewed journal
- Peer-reviewed publication of computer materials or other non-print media
- Refereed or invited conference papers
- Publication in a non-refereed journal
- Publication in non-journal outlets (conference proceedings, newsletters, etc.)
- Electronic-based, instructional media that teach users how to do research or use a library
- Other conference presentations (poster sessions, demonstrations, etc.)

Authorship: While multiple authors are acceptable in the field of librarianship, sole authorship is seen as the best demonstration of individual competence. If multiple author works are presented as evidence, the candidate's narrative should make clear his/her contributions to the work. In most cases, multiple authors in the field of librarianship are listed in alphabetical order, rather than in order of the level of contribution.

Professional activities can contribute to a candidate's body of scholarly work. The non-exhaustive list of activities below may be used as evidence of "Engagement" for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor and for promotion to Professor.

Professional Activity

- Receipt of awards, grants, or fellowships
- Appointment to local, state, or national posts
- Election or appointment to offices or committees in professional organizations
- Serving as chair at conferences and workshops
- Serving as the editor of a professional journal
- Serving as a manuscript reviewer/referee
- Serving on an editorial board of a journal
- Attendance at conferences/workshops
- Attendance at seminars and webinars
- Other active participation in professional organizations
- Continuing professional education
- Involvement in community engagement related to field of expertise

Evaluation: The tenured library faculty members will evaluate candidates for tenure and/or promotion according to evaluative criteria for scholarly activity as published in the Stetson University *Tenure and Promotion Policy* (<https://www.stetson.edu/administration/provost/policies-and-guidelines/tenure-and-promotion.php>) and in the library's articulations of the standards for scholarship.

Annual responses to librarian self-evaluations should make clear whether or not sufficient progress is being made in meeting all standards for scholarly activity.

Standards for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

Candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor must meet the standards of **rigor, engagement, evolution, and consistency** set forth in the University Tenure and Promotion guidelines (in bold text below).

Rigor: To reach its potential, scholarship/creative activity must be shared and tested publicly. Thus, across the University, peer review is considered the hallmark of academic rigor and the primary indicator of high quality academic and creative pursuits. Thus, the candidate must provide evidence that scholarly and/or creative activities have been subjected to the peer review process in a manner appropriate to the discipline and form of scholarship/creative activity.

Articulation of Rigor: Peer reviewed work is considered essential for librarian candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. To judge adequately a candidate's scholarship potential, librarian candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor are expected to have at least two peer-reviewed works, one of which must be an article in a peer-reviewed journal. Other peer-reviewed works may include conference presentations, conference poster sessions, or conference proceedings. Ideally, a candidate will have a variety of scholarly and professional activities that will, taken together, begin to form a record of expertise in a particular area of librarianship. No specific amount of scholarship, however, is a guarantee of tenure and promotion, as the quality of the research (such as reputation/ranking of a journal or the acceptance rates of conference presentations/poster sessions) will be considered, and a candidate will be evaluated in the areas of librarianship and service as well.

Engagement: The candidate must demonstrate active participation with and contribution to her/his discipline, and/or interdisciplinary activities that emphasize the candidate's disciplinary strengths. As a teacher-scholar, the candidate must demonstrate the influence of scholarship on classroom instruction/curriculum development/librarianship and/or the involvement of students in research/creative activities.

Articulation of Engagement: Librarians should be active in scholarly and professional activities that support and enhance their primary and secondary position responsibilities. (Librarians generally have a specific job title such as Instruction Coordinator, Government Documents Librarian, or Cataloger that describes their primary area of responsibility, but librarians will also have a host of secondary responsibilities such as collection development, research assistance, etc.). Librarian candidates should demonstrate, therefore, that their scholarly work informs and benefits their daily work. Likewise, professional activities should relate to the candidate's field of expertise. Due to the central role of emerging technologies in libraries, continuing education, often in the form of workshops or webinars, is essential to a librarian's engagement in the profession. The non-exhaustive list of professional activities listed above may serve as a guide to interpreting professional engagement common to the field of librarianship.

Evolution: Scholarly and creative activities must reflect the incorporation of current practices within the discipline and demonstrate that the candidate is developing his or her own line of scholarship since arriving at Stetson.

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Articulation of Evolution: Evolution is interpreted here as change over time. Although graduate education in library and information science trains a librarian in the principles, standards, and best practices of the profession, just as essential to success is the librarian's knowledge of a specific library's collections, resources, and computer systems. The librarian candidate must therefore show over time an increased understanding and expertise in the use of the Stetson library's collections, databases, hardware, and software. A librarian engaged in practitioner scholarship, therefore, will likely use locally- developed expertise in his/her publications or other scholarly work.

It is essential that the librarian candidate demonstrate that he/she is maintaining currency in the field through professional engagement and continuing professional education, and that this engagement be reflected in the librarian's scholarly work. Since the field of librarianship evolves rapidly in response to technological innovations, it is imperative that the librarian candidate remain current in emerging technologies which may be used to inform and enhance his/her scholarship and daily responsibilities.

Consistency: The candidate must demonstrate commitment to the discipline by providing evidence of continued participation in scholarly/creative activities. Though quality of scholarship/creative activity is more significant than quantity, candidates must demonstrate an involvement in ongoing scholarly and/or creative activity work and the ability to complete and communicate high quality work. Generally speaking, consistency is demonstrated by some form of scholarly contribution/creative expression every year.

Articulation of Consistency: Librarian candidates are expected to demonstrate a pattern of continuing achievement in their scholarship. Consistency may be demonstrated not only by direct tangible scholarly production, but also by conference and workshop attendance and other professional development activities that support the candidate's line of scholarship.

Standards for Promotion to Professor

Candidates for promotion to Professor must meet the standards of **rigor, engagement, maturity, development of expertise, recognition,** and **consistency** set forth in the University Tenure and Promotion guidelines (in bold text below).

Rigor: To reach its potential, scholarship/creative activity must be shared and tested publicly. Thus, across the University, peer review is considered the hallmark of academic rigor and the primary indicator of high quality academic and creative pursuits. Thus, the candidate must provide evidence that scholarly and/or creative activities have been subjected to the peer review process in a manner appropriate to the discipline and form of scholarship/creative activity.

Articulation of Rigor: Peer reviewed work is considered essential for librarian candidates for promotion to Professor. In order to judge adequately a candidate's success in the area of scholarship, librarian candidates for promotion to professor are expected to have a body of work that demonstrates that they have achieved a level of expertise in some area of librarianship. Peer reviewed publications are considered an

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essential component of that body of work, although the successful candidate should have a variety of scholarly and professional activities that indicate rigor in his/her scholarship. No specific amount of scholarship, however, is a guarantee of tenure and promotion, as the quality of the research will be considered, and a candidate will be evaluated in the areas of librarianship and service as well.

Engagement: The candidate must demonstrate active participation with and contribution to her/his discipline, and/or interdisciplinary activities that emphasize the candidate's disciplinary strengths. As a teacher-scholar, the candidate must demonstrate the influence of scholarship on classroom instruction/curriculum development/librarianship and/or the involvement of students in research/creative activities.

Articulation of Engagement: Librarians should be active in scholarly and professional activities that support and enhance their primary and secondary position responsibilities. (Librarians generally have a specific job title such as Instruction Coordinator, Government Documents Librarian, or Cataloger that describes their primary area of responsibility, but librarians will also have a host of secondary responsibilities such as collection development, research assistance, etc.). Librarian candidates should demonstrate, therefore, that their scholarly work informs and benefits their daily work. Likewise, professional activities should relate to the candidate's field of expertise. Due to the central role of emerging technologies in libraries, continuing education, often in the form of workshops or webinars, is essential to a librarian's engagement in the profession.

Maturity: The candidate must demonstrate intellectual growth in scholarly and creative activities since tenure/promotion to Associate Professor and over time.

Articulation of Maturity: Maturity is demonstrated by continued evolution as a scholar and expert in a field of librarianship (see articulation of **evolution** under the standards for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor). It is expected that librarian candidates for professor will demonstrate increased levels of scholarly and professional activities since their last promotion as their knowledge base in a particular area of librarianship is expected to have developed. Maturity can be demonstrated by such activities as publishing in journals of high quality, receiving invitations to speak at professional gatherings, election or appointment to offices in professional associations, selection as an editorial board member or referee, etc.

Development of Expertise: Scholarly and creative activities must have sufficient focus that demonstrates that the candidate has distinguished herself/himself by becoming an expert in some aspect(s) of her/his field and making meaningful contributions to the field.

Articulation of Development of Expertise: Development of expertise should coincide with the intellectual growth noted in the standard of **maturity**. It is expected that librarian candidates for professor will demonstrate increased levels of scholarly and professional activities since their last promotion as their expertise in a particular area of librarianship is expected to have developed. Development of expertise can be demonstrated by such activities as publishing in journals of high quality, receiving invitations to speak at professional gatherings, election or appointment to offices in professional associations, selection as an editorial board member or referee, etc.

Recognition: The candidate must demonstrate that her/his contributions to the discipline have been acknowledged as significant by peers/peer review and/or prestigious organizations.

Articulation of Recognition: Recognition should come as a result of meeting the standard of **development of expertise**. While it is unrealistic to expect every librarian to achieve a national reputation, recognition for the librarian's scholarly contributions can be evidenced by such activities as publishing in journals of high quality, receiving invitations to speak at professional gatherings, election or appointment to offices in professional associations, selection as an editorial board member or referee, etc.

Consistency: While it is recognized that there are often legitimate reasons for periods of inactivity with regards to scholarship or creative activities, the ability to meet other standards (e.g., maturity and development of expertise) requires consistent scholarly or creative output. Thus, significant gaps in productivity should be addressed in the narrative, and the candidate must demonstrate that she/he has a lifetime record of scholarly or creative achievement that is highly likely to continue. Thus, sufficient time must elapse following periods of inactivity to demonstrate a solid resumption of activity that is highly likely to continue beyond promotion.

Articulation of Consistency: Librarian candidates are expected to demonstrate a pattern of continuing achievement in their scholarship. Consistency may be demonstrated not only by direct tangible scholarly production, but also by conference and workshop attendance and other professional development activities that support the candidate's line of scholarship.