Career Progression for Librarians and Archivists Without Faculty Status: A New Model

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Abstract

In 2013, the dean of Libraries at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) Libraries formed a task force composed of six librarians and charged them with completely overhauling the career progression policy for librarians and archivists that had been in place since 1995. The task force devised a new policy and a scoring rubric to assist the committee members who make recommendations regarding promotions in their evaluation process. This article describes the process of developing the policy and its accompanying rubric, as well as their contents, and recounts lessons learned during the first round of evaluations of candidates for promotion.

Introduction

In 2013, the dean of Libraries at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) Libraries formed a task force composed of six librarians and charged them with completely overhauling the career progression policy for librarians and archivists that had been in place since 1995. The task force devised a new policy and a scoring rubric to assist the committee that makes recommendations regarding promotions in their evaluation process. This article includes a description of the research the task force performed when starting the assignment (including

results from informal interviews with personnel from four academic libraries: one peer, two aspirational peers, and one small private college); the development of the policy and its reception by UTA librarians and archivists; descriptions of the policy and its accompanying rubric; and lessons learned during the first round of evaluations of candidates for promotion who used the new policy.

Literature Review

Although this article focuses on non-tenure-track career progression and promotion for librarians and archivists, the broader issue of faculty status for librarians has been spotlighted in the literature. The literature reflects the lack of consistency for a definition of faculty status. Walters analyzed the many different interpretations of what faculty status includes, and presented key findings of 30 peer-reviewed studies ranging from 1980 to 2015 that evaluated the prevalence of faculty status of librarians at colleges and universities in the United States.[1] In his article, he reported his survey results of 124 library directors at U.S. research universities from which he was able to identify 12 distinct characteristics of faculty status: nominal faculty status, tenure, professor ranks, peer review of candidates for tenure/promotion, scholarship, service on faculty senate or other committees, sabbaticals, flexible work, 9-month year, qualifying for research funding, and equivalent salaries.[2] He found that at research institutions, seven characteristics of faculty status are actually more common than faculty status itself and that those can also be found at institutions where librarians are counted as administrators or staff.[3] Walters also noted that even among librarians with nominal faculty status at responding institutions, only 5% of librarians have 9-month contracts and only 13% reported that librarians have the same scholarship/research requirements as nonlibrarian faculty.[4]

Several researchers have addressed various aspects of the promotion and tenure policies of academic librarians in general and the variations among different types of academic libraries in particular. Park and Riggs conducted a national survey in 1989 and addressed some

concerns regarding whether the standards used to judge librarians with faculty status were the same as those for the teaching faculty.[5] These researchers also examined the various criteria on which librarians were judged in the promotion and tenure process. In further analysis of the data they had collected in 1989, Park and Riggs examined the influence of institutional type on tenure and promotion criteria for academic librarians and asserted that an institution's mission and goal "reflected . . . the expectations and requirements" of its academic librarians.[6]

Hecker and Smith compared the tenure and promotion guidelines for tenure-track academic librarians in the University of Louisiana System; even within the same university system, they reported "wide procedural differences" in their promotion and tenure policies.[7] Shropshire, Semenza, and Kearns described how and why Idaho State University had to develop its own standard to assess its library faculty because of a reclassification in the school's status within the Carnegie Classification System.[8] Among other things, the article references Parks and Riggs's 1993 study, examining the influence of institutional type on tenure and promotion criteria for academic librarians, and also an article by Weaver-Meyers, where she described a period during which librarians at the University of Oklahoma had been given the option of two types of appointments (tenure or non-tenure-track), but where this system was eventually ended after a prolonged conflict.[9]

As part of the conclusion in their survey titled "Status of the Profession," Parks and Riggs urged the development of guidelines to be used in the promotion and tenure process.[10] Subsequent articles support a similar position for varied reasons, but particularly because such guidelines bring clarity and better understanding to the process and lay out clear expectations for all, especially the employee or prospective employee.[11]

As the literature makes note of studies comparing the criteria used to evaluate teaching faculty and librarians, it also highlights the dilemma library administrators sometimes face when developing their own promotion and tenure policies—the need to develop policies that are equitable to those of the teaching faculty and the need to craft policies that would clearly reflect

the diverse jobs that librarians do. There is widespread consensus on the necessity for academic library administrators to develop promotion and tenure policies—particularly in institutions that confer faculty status to librarians—that do not just copy the promotion and tenure policies of the regular teaching faculty. Rather, these administrators should develop criteria that would be broad enough for all, but the standards should differ enough to accommodate all the various roles that librarians have been known to fill.[12]

In discussing the results of a 2009 informal survey that was conducted at law libraries where academic law librarians had tenure, Parker addressed the lack of "uniform tenure requirements for law librarians," and advocated for the creation of "model policy recommendations or guidelines" for tenure, similar to ones developed by the preeminent professional organization for academic librarians, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL).[13] In many ways, she echoed what others have written about the variability that exists in promotion and tenure policies of academic libraries and urged for more uniformity and "rigorous standards" to be applied in the promotion and tenure policies of law librarians.[14]

In 2011 ACRL published the "Guidelines for Academic Librarians Without Faculty Status," which included brief statements that such academic librarians have "rights, privileges, and responsibilities" that reflect their integral role in the mission of their institutions, while at the same time acknowledging that how academic librarians should be classified and promoted fall within an institution's discretion.[15] Earlier, in 2010, the ACRL Board of Directors had approved "A Guideline for the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Academic Librarians," which is intended for use in institutions where librarians do have faculty status.[16]

Walters stated that a widely acknowledged goal for granting faculty status is to ensure that librarians remain active as both consumers and producers of scholarly work. Active involvement in scholarship can help improve librarians' subject knowledge, keep them engaged with the research literature, give them a better understanding of empirical research methods, and build professional affinity between librarians and nonlibrarian faculty.[17]

Rather than call for more debate of the pros and cons of faculty status or call for one status solution for all, this article adds to the literature by presenting an option for academic librarians and archivists who want to be recognized for their librarianship, scholarship, and service but are employed by an institution that does not offer faculty status to them. With an internal recognition process, the librarians and archivists at UTA Libraries have a new framework to build upon that will serve that purpose. In the framework, there are varied options within a prescribed rubric by which librarians and archivists can achieve promotion using a weighted point system, with explicit criteria by which they can be assessed. Candidates for promotion can determine in advance when they have met the criteria, so that by the time they submit their dossiers, they would have used the rubric as guidance for the best possible outcome. The resulting policy and accompanying rubric provide an objective and transparent structure through which librarians and archivists without faculty status can be promoted to a higher rank.

History of Career Status at UTA

At UTA, librarians and archivists are classified as *associates of the faculty,* a hybrid status between faculty and academic and professional staff classifications. For example, associates of the faculty work a 40-hour week and accrue vacation time just as academic and professional staff do; however, the university's rules concerning intellectual property apply equally to both associates of the faculty and to nonlibrary faculty. From 1967 through the mid-1990s, no career ladder existed for librarians and archivists at UTA Libraries. In 1988, a committee was formed to craft an "Academic Status Plan" that would provide a structure for promotion for associates of the faculty, but the plan was never approved.[18] In 1994, a new committee revised that plan and put it before a vote of the UTA Library Advisory Forum (later known as the Professional Forum) composed of the associates of the faculty, which approved it.[19] After an additional approval process at the university level, the Professional Forum instituted

a new *Career Status Recognition Policy for Librarians and Archivists in the UT Arlington Library* in 1995.[20] This policy was in place from that time through 2016—more than 20 years—and though it was slightly amended several times throughout those two decades, the core of the policy remained unchanged.[21]

When work began to revamp the legacy policy in 2013, it addressed titles, equal opportunity employment and affirmative action, eligibility requirements, application to new hires, roles and responsibilities, and composition of the Career Status Committee. The policy also included the following:[22]

- Description of professional levels (i.e., assistant, associate, and senior), which included a list of knowledge and skills that one should possess at each rank. Almost all items in this list could be judged only subjectively; few objective criteria were in place that would assist those serving on the Career Status Committee in making a recommendation that was not based on opinion. Additionally, not much detail was included; the entire section that listed this knowledge and these skills comprised only 920 words. Examples include the following:
  - For assistant librarian: "Awareness of changing areas of knowledge, new fields of study, and research interest in the individual's area of responsibility."
  - For associate librarian: "Understanding of the philosophies, theories, and principles of librarianship or archives as well as the practices associated with the particular specialty."
  - At the level of senior librarian, objective criteria start to be defined: "The librarian should have a substantial record of contributing original ideas, research, or philosophy to the library or archival profession through research, bibliography, or publication."

- The process of documentation for career status for internal and external applicants: This section described the application process and the documentation that each applicant must compile; it comprised the bulk of the document.

As noted earlier, the policy served the libraries for more than two decades. However, over time the career status process came to be perceived by many associates of the faculty as flawed for several reasons. First, the criteria used by the members of the Career Status Committee to make a recommendation to the dean of Libraries regarding whether an applicant should be promoted were seen by many as too subjective (i.e., prone to individual or personal biases) and not transparent. Because of these perceptions, some associates of the faculty did not completely trust that the process was fair and impartial and thus did not participate in it. Second, there was an additional perception from some associates of the faculty on the technical services side of the Libraries that the policy was weighted in favor of those in public services. Third, because the policy did not specify that the Career Status Committee had to make their recommendations in writing, no written record existed of their decisions and the reasons for them. Consequently, an applicant who was denied a promotion could not request any documentation as to why that recommendation was made.

Formation of a New Task Force and the Dean's Charge

On March 13, 2013, the dean of UTA Libraries convened a new task force to completely revamp the *Career Status Recognition Policy for Librarians and Archivists in the UT Arlington Library*. The initial team consisted of the existing Career Status Committee plus two more individuals whom the dean appointed, and it had both management and nonmanagement members. It was dubbed Associates of the Faculty Promotion Policy Task Force (AFP2TF). The composition of the team changed slightly in the first year but soon was finalized with six members (the authors of this article). At the initial meeting in March 2013, the dean verbally laid out the following charge for the AFP2TF:

- Coaching process: Supervisors should communicate to librarians and archivists on an annual basis regarding the progress they are making toward promotion regardless of their expressed intent to actually apply. To this end, supervisors should be writing an annual letter to their librarians and archivists that outlines where they are in the process. This letter should include a description of the promotion criteria that associates of the faculty are meeting and action items for criteria that are not being met. Supervisors must be held accountable that the letter they write is accurate.

- Recommendation committee: This group of peers should evaluate applicants' dossiers and make a recommendation to the dean. The new promotion policy should be structured in such a way that this committee has clear and objective guidelines. After evaluation of candidates' dossiers, the committee should send a formal letter to the dean that includes their recommendation, after which the dean will write a letter stating agreement or disagreement with the recommendation so that the process is clearly explained and transparent throughout.

- Mentoring: The policy should include a mentoring process with a group of mentors whom supervisors could call on. Recommendation committee members and mentors should be doing everything possible to help applicants be successful but not recommending them for promotion just because of personal relationships or out of a sense of camaraderie.

- Opting in or out: This process should not be optional, and job descriptions will need to be amended to add this expectation. The eventual goal would be for librarians and archivists to have full faculty status and a tenure process similar to teaching faculty.

- Promotion criteria: Per the dean, the criteria for both associate and senior librarian/archivist were too "discrete" in the legacy policy; she wanted to see more of a "ladder up." In other words, both levels should reflect a record of internal and external service, a mastery of subject and job functions, leadership, etc. Furthermore, a progressive process with language that relates to true mastery at the senior level should

be developed. The policy should address skills, knowledge, and expertise at job

functions; professional engagement, including scholarship/publishing and national plus

local (i.e., library/university) service; and successful collaboration and collegiality within

the organization. The policy should strike a balance between internal and external

service and scholarship. Professional engagement should be strongly stressed along

with an atmosphere of accountability to each other and the Libraries' users. New models

of publishing should be encouraged; that is, a candidate could be promoted to the

associate or senior level without ever having published in a peer-reviewed journal as

long as that person is highly engaged in other ways (e.g., candidates could regularly

post to a blog that is nationally recognized or they could develop widely adopted mobile

applications). Associates of the faculty should be contributing to professional

conversations in a substantive but not necessarily (or exclusively) traditional way.

The task force had varying levels of success in meeting each of these charges; the Results

section of this article reports on the final product.

Methodology

The Research Process

After receiving the dean's charge, the first step was an environmental scan of current

practices at other universities. To begin this research, task force members read "A Guide to the

Professional Status of Academic Librarians in the United States (and Other Places)"

(https://academic-librarian-status.wikispaces.com/). The task force also studied both tenure-

track and non-tenure-track faculty promotion policies from other departments at UTA and from

libraries at four other institutions: one peer, two aspirational peers, and one small private

college. The policy from the private college impressed the task force members, who obtained

permission to use it as a foundation document.[23]

The AFP2TF prepared thirteen questions that were used to interview these institutions about their promotion policies (see Appendix). Responses identified several relevant themes that would be applicable to the task at hand. Of the thirteen questions the first one was the most relevant to the committee's exploration of the idea that faculty (i.e., standard tenure), some sort of faculty-in-practice, or clinical faculty status could be adopted at this institution. The following themes were the most relevant or applicable:

1. As was noted in the literature review above, institutions had various types of status for their librarians, and policies and procedures varied widely. Three libraries had tenure or tenure-like systems. Of these three, one had both non-tenure-track and tenure-track systems, where entry-level librarians were hired as non-tenure-track and could possibly transition to tenure track, but it was not mandated that they make that transition. However, tenure-track librarians could not revert to non-tenure-track. One institution had what they termed *career track* instead that included similar requirements as the other three institutions. Most had three ranks or levels: assistant librarian, associate librarian, and librarian; one had four levels: Librarian I, II, III, or IV.

2. All institutions had processes that were transparent, in that applicants understood why the decision was made to recommend or not to recommend promotion and by whom. All recommendation letters written by supervisors, review committees, and the university librarian or dean were available for the candidate to review after the process.

3. Regarding whether librarians and archivists were required to advance to higher levels, three of four institutions required their staff to apply to advance one level but did not require further advancement.

4. If librarians or archivists could not succeed in the promotion process, employment was terminated at all three institutions where advancement was required.

5. Librarians and archivists were hired for a three-year fixed term with renewal possible but no tenure work required.

In addition to the interviews, the task force members invited an executive administrator from the provost's office to discuss the development of the new policy, in particular the possibility of tenure-track, faculty status for UTA librarians and archivists since the dean had expressed a desire for this status. He consulted others within the University of Texas System and found that this change was highly unlikely to happen. The Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents for the UT System do not allow for tenure-track, faculty status for librarians and archivists. Therefore, a non-tenure-track system was selected and the decision was made to have the policy parallel as much as possible the criteria for promotion of the clinical and in-practice (i.e., non-tenure-stream) faculty at UTA. Because traditional tenure status was not possible, it became clear that mandatory participation in the promotion process for librarians and archivists would also not be possible. Nevertheless, in the creation of the policy, the task force reviewed the University's Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) to ensure that the new policy would be aligned with non-tenure-stream faculty guidelines for promotion.

Writing the Policy, Introducing It to Colleagues, and the Voting Process

Building on the environmental scan, literature review, and the decision to use Trinity University Library's promotion policy as a framework, the committee met weekly to write and edit the policy as a group rather than working independently. Great care was taken in trying to honor the dean's original charge while focusing on the need to do what was best for the associates of the faculty in the UTA Libraries. At the request of task force members, the associates of the faculty occasionally contributed to the policy by commenting or making suggestions for improvements (e.g., they suggested additions to the list of scholarly materials). While inclusion of suggestions was not guaranteed, it was of critical importance that the policy reflect the great variety of work done by the associates of the faculty. Throughout this process, the AFP2TF sent out progress reports to the associates of the faculty. Following is a general description of the process:

- Although the Trinity University document was a starting point, the policy organically diverged from it during creation of the first draft.
- The dean of Libraries reviewed this draft and recommended some changes and additions, including the following:
  - All applicants should be required to deposit their scholarly work into the university's institutional repository (as long as copyright agreements would allow it).
  - For librarians or archivists to be promoted to senior status, they should have documented a record not just of mastery in their area of expertise but also of giving back to the profession through mentoring, coaching, and training early-career librarians and archivists.
  - Examples of evidence of excellence should be broadened by adding areas such as grants development and information technology systems librarianship.
  - Applicants must have current scholarship and service (i.e., within the past 5 years).
- The task force members made decisions about the dean's recommendations and incorporated them into the policy with some minor modifications.
- As a means of increasing objectivity in the promotion recommendation process, a rubric was developed for evaluation purposes.
- The policy and rubric went back to the dean for review, which entailed another round of revisions.
- The policy went to the provost's office for review. Because of leadership transitions in that office, it remained unreviewed for several months.
- Because of the delays in the provost's office, the AFP2TF and the dean decided to move forward with a review of the policy by all associates of the faculty. A meeting was called for these individuals at which the task force chair introduced the policy in general terms,

the dean spoke about her goals for it, and both answered questions. Immediately after the meeting, the AFP2TF chair distributed the draft to the associates of the faculty for their review, comments, and questions (either via email or anonymously). This was the first time the associates of the faculty had seen the entire policy.

- After many questions, revisions, and feedback and before the official vote, the policy (V.1.0) was sent again to the associates of the faculty for their comments, which entailed more revisions. A FAQ was created to answer common questions and added to a private LibGuide that all associates of the faculty were invited to view.

- The final draft of the policy was distributed to all associates of the faculty, who voted on it in February 2016. The voting process was administered by the chair of the AFP2TF, and the policy was approved by 65% of the associates of the faculty. Thus, from inception to voting, the entire process took almost three years. The newly approved and adopted promotion policy was added to the ResearchCommons, which is the university's institutional repository.[24]

- In May 2016, two members of the legacy Career Status Committee worked together to put out a call for nominations for the new committee whose creation and composition was dictated by the new policy: the Associates of the Faculty Promotion Recommendation Committee (AFPRC). This committee is responsible for recommendations for future promotions. The promotion policy task force members agreed to be nominated for the new committee so that if elected they could help implement the policy and ensure that the task force's intent was carried through. Eight Associates of the faculty were elected by their peers and one was appointed by the dean, per the policy; two members of the original task force were among the eight elected.

- The policy went again to the Office of the Provost. Because other campus units were revising promotion policies for non-tenure-track faculty, the new provost and University

Dean's Council decided that these policies (including the Libraries') did not need review at the provost level. The only stipulation from the provost was that the dean of Libraries should have the final say in the promotion decision, which the new policy already stipulated, and that the timeline for applying for promotion should mirror the timeline for the application process for tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty across campus.

Descriptions of the Policy's Sections

The decision to mirror the non-tenure-track faculty promotion policy for the university meant that application for promotion could not be mandated; therefore, the policy was modified from a single-track system to a dual-track system. In this latter system, Track 1 is for associates of the faculty who want to apply for associate or senior status, and Track 2 is for those who do not wish to apply for promotion. In the final version of the policy, individuals must choose and state in writing (to their supervisor and to the chair of the AFPRC) which track they have chosen in January of each year. Although individuals can choose either track, they are strongly encouraged to choose Track 1. The policy establishes time limits for associates of the faculty to apply for a given rank; if they do not apply within those limits, their incentives are suspended (see next paragraph), and they are moved to Track 2.

As stated above, Track 1 is the promotion track and consists of three ranks (assistant, associate, and senior) with the following incentives: a guaranteed base of travel and training funds (with additional incentive funding possible for those who are presenting at conferences or traveling because of professional committee service) and salary advancement as part of the promotion process. For those on this track, application for the first promotion level (to associate) is required; however, if individuals do not achieve associate rank on their first attempt, they can reapply as many times as they wish. Furthermore, the policy does not require that associates of the faculty apply for senior rank. Track 2 is the nonpromotion track, and individuals on this track do not receive guaranteed travel and training funding (i.e., they may apply for travel funds but

approval is not assured), nor are they eligible for salary advancement that comes with promotion, although they can receive raises based on merit, which are available to all university employees.

Associates of the faculty are evaluated on three broad categories outlined and described in the policy itself and then detailed and itemized in the evaluation rubric with specific examples for scoring purposes.[25] Following are the three main categories (referred to as *sections* in the Rubric document):

1. Librarianship: This section encompasses a candidate's performance in their primary role. It is evaluated and scored using two metrics: average score on a minimum of two performance evaluations at UTA and the supervisor's recommendation for promotion, which is a pass/fail requirement. In other words, if the supervisor does not recommend promotion, no further evaluation is conducted, and the candidate does not move forward.

2. Scholarly materials or activities: While this section is comprehensive, it is also not all encompassing. The language used in the rubric to evaluate the evidence presented in the candidate's dossier is intentionally broad so that additional types of scholarly activity that the committee may not have included can be accounted for without a required change to the evaluation tool. It is intended to include all types of intellectual work that librarians or archivists might perform outside their standard job duties, which make a contribution to the overall profession of librarianship or archival work. It is divided into three subsections.

    a. Formal scholarly publications: This subsection addresses traditional full-length books, book reviews, and bibliographies as well as all forms of peer-reviewed publications, including journal articles and book chapters.

    b. Informal publications: Scholarly work outside traditional publication avenues is growing in importance in librarianship and archival work. Some examples include working papers, technical standards and guidelines, policies or procedures, grant

proposals, development of mobile software applications, and many others. This section is designed to recognize those contributions and to provide value in terms of an individual's contributions to the profession.

c. Scholarly materials or activities: Evidence in this section includes conference presentations (at local, state, multistate regional, national, or international levels), development of digital or physical learning objects, datasets or artifacts, and additional formal education such as degrees or certificate programs.

3. Service: This section includes service to the profession in the form of committee work at local, state, multistate regional, national, or international levels. Service at the state or higher levels is required for promotion. This section also includes teaching outside of core job requirements, mentoring, and supervision.

Each section is weighted as a percentage of the total, with a minimum score needed in order for a candidate to advance in the process. The weighting values are different for candidates applying for associate librarian/archivist and those applying for senior librarian/archivist. Librarianship or archival work is weighted more heavily for associate candidates, while scholarly activity and service are weighted more heavily for candidates for senior status, reflecting the desire to reward mastery in their area of expertise. As mentioned earlier, per the dean's request, the policy requires scholarship and service to be ongoing with some activity in each category within the five years prior to application.

Accomplishments from the Original Charge to the Task Force

Mentoring and Coaching

Mentoring is addressed in several ways. First, the promotion committee assigns a member of the AFPRC as a mentor to each newly hired associate of the faculty for the first six months in order to explain the process and familiarize them with the Libraries in general. Second, for the initial round of the new evaluation process, the AFPRC assigned one member

of the group to shepherd candidates through the process. This AFPRC member served as a resource for questions and was also available to assist the candidate to test score their dossier using the rubric. After the first 6 months the associate of the faculty may choose another mentor or mentors inside or outside of UTA Libraries who is willing to serve in this capacity. A separate library task force created draft guidelines for mentoring to provide a structure for selection of a more permanent mentor by the new associate of the faculty after the initial six-month period. An additional Mentoring Program Committee has been established to create a pool of mentors within the Libraries and will define some of the expectations for mentors and mentees. However, at this time the AFPRC provides most of the support for mentorship of a new associate of the faculty after the first six months. The AFPRC also wishes to add more individuals to the mentor pool as soon as possible but recognizes that mentor/mentee relationships may take place outside of the workplace and with other professionals at other institutions.

As part of the supervisory coaching process, it is highly recommended in the policy that the candidate's supervisor score the dossier annually and have candid conversations with the associate of the faculty about their progress, providing annual feedback during the formal annual performance evaluation process. It is critical that supervisors perform this task in years 2 and 4 for those candidates on Track 1, when the dossier is reviewed by the AFPRC.

Faculty Status and Options For Participation

As noted above (see Methodology) the Rules and Regulations of the UT System do not permit faculty status for librarians and archivists. Additionally, participation in the promotion process is not mandatory; therefore, associates of the faculty can choose between two tracks.

Results of the Outcomes of the First Rounds of Candidate Reviews

As of this writing, the committee has completed two rounds of candidate evaluations using the new policy and rubric. With this experience, several items for further training or policy

modification have been identified. First, as mentioned above, it is critically important that both the candidate and the candidate's supervisor conduct a preliminary scoring of the dossier using the rubric prior to the promotion application process. This review is described in the policy and should happen at multiple points during the career path of the candidate, specifically for those moving from assistant to associate status, every two years at a minimum until they apply for promotion. However, since this document is new, supervisors seem unsure of how this process connects to the broader scope of the annual performance evaluation. Thus, the AFPRC needs to stress to all supervisors that this promotion policy is an opportunity to focus not just on librarians' and archivists' performance over the past year but also on how associates of the faculty can work toward future promotion and professional development. The AFPRC will be reminding supervisors to conduct this preliminary scoring so that they can accomplish the following two goals: (a) to identify strengths and weaknesses to ensure that librarians and archivists will be able to gain and demonstrate expertise in each section of the rubric and (b) to assist staff in overall improvement. For example, if a librarian or archivist does not have professional service at the state level or above, the supervisor could help him or her find that opportunity for service. It may take quite some time to find a committee at either level, so examining the rubric early provides coaching and mentoring opportunities in the supervisor–employee relationship. The AFPRC has discussed leading a workshop on this process for all supervisors of associates of the faculty, which would encourage them to complete this presubmission evaluation. This workshop would help supervisors better understand the nuances of the rubric and how they can effectively coach their individual librarians/archivists to ensure success.

Second, in its training for applicants, the AFPRC should emphasize that the policy requires supporting documentation for all professional experience and that a statement on the curriculum vitae (CV) alone is not sufficient evidence. Furthermore, the written descriptions in the policy itself outline how applicants should organize the evidence and also state that their CV

should reflect that evidence. For example, it is problematic if candidates state that they served as chair of a committee but do not include supporting documentation of that role. One of the primary goals in completely redesigning the promotion policy was to have a highly objective and transparent process. While opinion and impression may support subjective evaluation, objectivity requires data. This data or supporting documentation may take a variety of forms. For instance, in the case of committee service, any of the following items would constitute sufficient documentation:

- an email invitation from the committee's governing body requesting that the candidate serve as chair,
- a letter from a peer also serving on the committee,
- formal (or informal) minutes that denote that information,
- committee recommendations or reports,
- other documentation to prove the person served on the committee or as chair.

For the AFPRC to effectively and efficiently evaluate the dossier, the policy requires applicants to arrange items in their CVs in the same order as items in the rubric. This requirement needs to be stressed in future training with applicants because the committee has already had issues with lack of consistency in this regard, and it impedes the evaluation process. The addition of a structural CV template aligned with the policy would be helpful for the committee and candidates.

Another point of importance is that all librarians and archivists interested in promotion or service on this committee should be highly familiar with the policy and understand how the rubric works. For example, the second round of promotion included a librarian who understood the rubric extremely well, which was evident in the structure of the dossier submitted to the committee. Additionally, as the committee learns the rubric, the time-on-task for reviewing dossiers will progress more quickly. For example, when the committee convened to evaluate the first round of applications, each dossier required an average of 2.5 hours to review. However,

during the second round of evaluation, the committee needed only an average of 1.25 hours to evaluate one dossier. The difference in the second round was two-fold: (a) half the committee had used the rubric in the previous round, and (b) the second-round candidate had extensive experience with the rubric.

These lessons have clarified that the committee should hold annual workshops to walk prospective candidates through the details of what constitutes the creation of a dossier. These workshops would best be taught by successful applicants from prior years, who can relate their personal experiences in working with the rubric and the policy. While it is much more comprehensive in its description, this policy's requirement for substantiating documentation is not significantly different than the previous policy. Additionally, a sample dossier created from a fictional persona rather than one from a colleague would be helpful to both applicants and supervisors. The policy task force discussed this idea as has the current promotion committee, and the latter will soon be implementing it.

Additionally, supervisors and new AFPRC members should be trained on using the rubric. A more extensive training session should be provided for supervisors to explain how the new policy and rubric identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, which would be beneficial to the performance review process.

The committee has identified some areas of confusion, specifically in the rubric, and has addressed them without changing the content of the document. For example, there are sections that give credit in more than one column, such as "Grant Writing."[26] A candidate who is a principal investigator (PI) for an awarded grant receives 3 points, but if they drafted a grant as a PI or co-PI that was not awarded they also can get points; in that row they could get 6 points total. However, other sections use the phrase *or more,* meaning there is a cap on the number of points applicants can obtain in these columns.[27] In this case, if an applicant has "3 or more peer-reviewed conference presentations" they will garner 3 points, but the applicant cannot also select the column next to it that says "2 peer-reviewed conference presentations." This *or more*

language was very confusing to the new promotion committee, so the members decided to color-code the sections that allowed for points to be scored in more than one column. This change did not change the rubric's purpose or essential meaning; thus it did not require a vote by all associates of the faculty in the organization. Other areas that confused the committee have been flagged for revision at a future date, and a vote of the associates of the faculty will be required in order to change that language.

Conclusion

The ongoing debate about tenure and/or faculty status for librarians and archivists is not addressed in this article. However, the promotion policy and rubric described here are designed to mirror many of the elements identified as important in the promotion of an academic professional of any discipline. This policy and rubric bridge the gap between what is a nontenured role in many academic libraries and the more stringent requirements of the professorate. The creation of standards that directly relate to the wide-ranging duties of academic librarians will be of benefit to many. With few existing models that reflect both professional development standards and accomplishments, academic librarians are often left with no options if their institution does not offer faculty status as a way of career advancement. This model provides a way to recognize librarians' and archivists' significant achievements and contributions made to the clients most directly affected by their services and to the academy itself. Administrators at university libraries of all sizes could use the policy and rubric presented here to both promote and incentivize success.

In retrospect, the work performed on these documents is truly a work-in-progress, in keeping with this organization's favorable view of perpetual beta. The AFPRC has found areas where revisions are necessary, mostly for clarity in applying the rubric, and will be working on refining the tool. One member of the team stated early on, "Complexity is the price of transparency." This statement sums up the spirit of the team's work as well as serving as a

motto for the current AFPRC, and it can be stated with confidence that the new promotion policy reflects the contributions of librarians and archivists as this University pursues a path to Tier 1 status.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

1. What status do librarians and archivists have at your institution? Is there more than one track people can choose from? For example, tenure-track vs. non-tenure-track vs. staff vs. something else? Are your library staff unionized?

2. What are the major expectations of your librarians and archivists? For example, instruction, professional and/or scholarly activities, and service? Are there others?

3. Are other positions eligible to go through the promotion process?

4. What is your overall promotion process? Do you have a promotion review committee? If so, who serves on it? For example, people who already hold the aspirational status or higher? Do you have reviewers from outside the library? How many total reviewers (e.g., both inside & outside the library) are on your committee?

5. Do you mandate participation in the promotion process or can people opt out? If participation is mandatory, what is the consequence if individuals do not participate? Also, is participation mandatory up to the most senior position?

6. What is your initial appointment period? Is there a time within that period at which the individual has a review to see how well s/he is progressing toward promotion? If so, what are the intervals for this review (or reviews)? Who performs this review (or reviews)?

7. What steps does the individual have to go through to apply for promotion? Could you give us an overview of the documentation that's required? Or if you have a list, could you send it to us or provide us with a link?

8. How did you implement your policies? How did you account for librarians and archivists that were in place during implementation? Did you grandfather people in? If so, what was the process? What worked well when you implemented the promotion process? What could be improved about implementation?

9. Have your supervisors built the promotion process into their annual review process, and if so, how?

10. What happens if someone is unsuccessful?

11. How do you handle grievances and/or appeals that result from the process?

12. How do you handle terminations that result from the process?

[1]William H. Walters, "Faculty Status of Librarians at U.S. Research Universities," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 42, no. 2 (2016): 161, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2015.11.002.

[2]Ibid., 162.

[3]Ibid., 163.

[4]Ibid., 165.

[5]Betsy Park and Robert Riggs, "Status of the Profession: A 1989 National Survey of Tenure and Promotion Policies for Academic Librarians," *College & Research Libraries* 52 (1991).

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[9]Pat Weaver-Meyers, "Conflict Resolution: A Case Study about Academic Librarians and Faculty Status," *College & Research Libraries* 63, no. 1 (2012).

[10]Park and Riggs, "Status of the Profession."

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[13]Parker, 7-8.

[14]Ibid, 9.

[15]Association of College and Research Libraries, "Guidelines for Academic Librarians without Faculty Status," last modified October 21, 2011, http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/guidelinesacademic.

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[17]William H. Walters, "The Faculty Subculture, the Librarian Subculture and Librarians' Scholarly Productivity," *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* 16, no. 4 (2016): 817.

[18]Sally Gross, "Career Status a Reality for Librarians and Archivists," *Shelf Life: The Newsletter of the University of Texas at Arlington Libraries* 18, no. 4 (1996), 1. Copy in possession of authors.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid.; Sally Gross, *Career Status Committee Annual Report, 1995/1996* (Arlington, TX: The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, 1995). Copy in possession of authors.

[21]Note that the version cited here is the most recent one. *Career Status Recognition Policy for Librarians and Archivists in the UT Arlington Library.* (Arlington, TX: The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, 2010). Copy in possession of authors.

[22]Note that all information in the following bulleted list comes from the *Career Status Recognition Policy for Librarians and Archivists in the UT Arlington Library.*

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[25]Ibid.

[26]Associates of the Faculty Promotion Policy Task Force, *Promotion Policy Rubric*.

[27]The task force limited the number of points possible so that applicants would be required to diversify their scholarship and service. In other words, it should not be the case that an applicant could achieve promotion only by presenting 25 conference posters.