University of Virginia Library
Policy on Promotion in Rank

( July 1994, Revised September 2000, Spring 2004)

Table of Contents

Introduction
I. Definitions of Ranks
II. Criteria for Promotion or Appointment
III. Promotion Review Board
IV. Promotion Process
V. Appeals
VI. Document Retention
VII. Schedule for Promotion Review
Appendix: Promotion in Academic Rank for Librarians

Introduction

The policies that follow are founded on three basic assumptions.

First, promotion in ranks should be based on the factors outlined below rather than on administrative position and level of professional responsibility.

Second, promotion should occur as a result of scheduled consideration by supervisors at appropriate levels, the Promotion Review Board, the University Librarian, and the Provost. The decision should be based upon a wide range of knowledge and opinion because promotion is so important to a library faculty member's career. Promotions will be granted through the use of a promotion review procedure. The Promotion Review Board's authority will be limited, however, to making recommendations for action by the University Librarian.

Third, this policy supplements the University's Policy on the General Faculty (http://www.virginia.edu/provost/genfac.htm). As General Faculty, no aspect of tenure is considered. Further, rank and promotion policies do not refer to matters of reappointment. Reappointment is governed by the policies stated in the Policy on the General Faculty and in Procedures for Annual Performance Review for Library Faculty (http://staff.lib.virginia.edu/HR/).

Promotion in ranks will be an annual process following the schedule outlined in Section VII.
Promotion in rank will normally be accompanied by an increase in base salary as recommended each year by the Promotion Review Board, working with the Library Administration. The increase will take effect as soon as possible after notification of the promotion by the Board of Visitors. An additional amount of travel and/or research funding may also be considered in order to foster professional development.

I. Definitions of Ranks

A. Affiliate Librarian

1. The rank of Affiliate Librarian is the beginning professional rank, which requires little or no prior library experience. Affiliate Librarian is not a career rank. An individual must achieve the Assistant rank or his/her appointment with the University of Virginia Library will not be renewed.

2. To be appointed to the rank of Affiliate Librarian, an individual will ordinarily possess a master's degree in library and information science from a program accredited by the American Library Association or equivalent professional credentials at the master's degree level.

3. Affiliate Librarians typically work in close consultation with their supervisors.

B. Assistant Librarian

1. The rank of Assistant Librarian is a career rank; that is, an individual may remain at this rank indefinitely. Duties at this rank are performed with more independence and initiative than at the Affiliate Librarian level. The librarian at this rank should display a continuing interest in improving knowledge and skills and may hold either administrative or non-administrative positions.

C. Associate Librarian

1. The rank of Associate Librarian is a career rank; that is, an individual may remain at this rank indefinitely. Duties at this rank are generally performed independently and with initiative. The librarian at this rank should have recognized knowledge and skills and may hold either administrative or non-administrative positions.

D. Librarian

1. The rank of Librarian is the highest career rank. This rank is awarded to individuals with outstanding leadership qualities and a high level of expertise in their assigned areas of responsibility in the library and who exhibit outstanding achievement in their professional endeavors. These librarians may hold either administrative or non-administrative positions. They have made outstanding contributions to the library and to the profession, which are recognized at regional, national, or international levels.

II. Criteria for Promotion or Appointment

A. Ranks for Newly Hired Faculty

Members of the Board will meet with all faculty candidates who interview for positions at the University Library. They will recommend an appropriate rank for each to the University Librarian, who will take the recommendation into consideration when determining the rank for new faculty appointments.
B. Assistant Librarian

1. Promotion or appointment to the rank of Assistant Librarian is contingent upon maintaining a level of performance which meets expectations in carrying out job-related duties and responsibilities as an Affiliate Librarian or an equivalent rank.

2. In addition, to be appointed or promoted to the rank of Assistant Librarian, an individual will ordinarily meet the following criteria:
   
a. A minimum of three years of professional library experience. An incumbent is required to apply for promotion to the rank of Assistant Librarian during the first promotion cycle after the third anniversary of his/her appointment. Professional experience at another institution may count toward the three-year total. A one-year extension beyond the normal three-year term may be given by the University Librarian in unusual situations, such as an extended illness, approved leave without pay, a significant change in job responsibilities, or other special circumstances leading the University Librarian to decide that additional time is necessary before the candidate is reviewed for promotion. In exceptional cases, promotion or appointment to this rank may be made earlier.

   b. Contributions to the Library or the University beyond the requirements of the position description.

   c. Evidence of beginning contributions to the profession.

C. Associate Librarian

1. Promotion or appointment to the rank of Associate Librarian is contingent upon maintaining a high level of performance in carrying out job-related duties and responsibilities as an Assistant Librarian or an equivalent rank.

2. In addition, to be appointed or promoted to the rank of Associate Librarian, an individual will ordinarily meet the following criteria:

   a. Have a minimum of six years of professional library experience at the rank of Assistant Librarian or its equivalent. Professional experience at another institution may count toward the six-year total. In exceptional cases, promotion or appointment to this rank may be made earlier.

   b. A successful candidate will be expected to have significant accomplishments in at least three of the following areas. "Significant accomplishment" means more than activity, participation, or membership. The accomplishments will be judged in terms of outcomes, results, and impact.

      (1) **Innovative contributions to library operations, procedures, and functions that transcend specific job-related work assignments.** Contributions in this area should result in significantly increased efficiency of operations, or enhanced service to clients. Examples might include developing innovative cataloging policies and procedures; devising innovative approaches to user education; initiating cooperative efforts between departments which improve workflow or communications; creating web or other electronic services; or active participation on Library committees.

      (2) **Demonstrated leadership ability.** This ability should be evidenced by successful managing of projects, task forces, and committees that produce tangible results within the
Library, the University, or the profession. This assumes accomplishments based on personal skills or efforts, rather than position authority or responsibility. Examples might include developing a new electronic service or starting an organization.

(3) **Service to the profession and/or the University.** Service might take the form of teaching or participation on committees, councils or associations such as the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Committee, Digital Library Federation, General Faculty Council, American Library Association, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference or other professional organizations. Supporting documentation must be explicit in describing what resulted from the committee's work and the impact this work had.

(4) **Research and publications.** Publications will be judged on the excellence of scholarly work. Monographs should be published by reputable publishers or have received positive professional appraisal in reviews or evidence of citation in other literature. Articles should appear in refereed scholarly or professional paper or electronic journals rather than internal publications and newsletters alone. Presentations at forums should have a substantial impact on the profession such as a program session at a national, regional, or state conference.

(5) **Professional and educational development through formal courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences.** These activities should go beyond training necessary to stay current for one's job and should have a demonstrable impact on the Library, the University or the profession. If an educational program allows a candidate to become generally recognized as an expert in some important aspect of the Library's work, it could qualify as significant. Examples of such skills might include current management theory, oral history, copyright, or fundraising. Completion of an advanced degree, such as a master's or a doctorate in a relevant field would also qualify.

D. Librarian

1. Promotion or appointment to the rank of Librarian is contingent upon maintaining a high level of performance in carrying out job-related duties and responsibilities as an Associate Librarian or an equivalent rank.

2. In addition, to be appointed or promoted to the rank of Librarian, an individual will ordinarily meet the following criteria:

   a. Have a minimum of six years of professional library experience at the rank of Associate Librarian or its equivalent. Professional experience at another institution may count toward the six-year total. In exceptional cases, promotion or appointment may be made earlier.

   b. A successful candidate will be expected to have significant new accomplishments reflecting greater professional growth or contributions at the rank of Associate Librarian in at least three of the areas in II.C.2.b above, or sustained accomplishments in three areas and significant new achievements in a fourth area. The accomplishments will be judged in terms of outcomes, results, and impact. (For examples, see II.C.2.b above) Also, significant evidence of national recognition is expected at this rank. Examples of such evidence may include:

      (1) Refereed publications.

      (2) Demonstrated contributions in a national or regional professional organization. This documentation need not be separate and distinct from other documentation furnished under IV.B.4 below.

      (3) Awards or other honors.
III. Promotion Review Board

A. The Promotion Review Board will consider all nominations for promotion in the Librarian and Professorial ranks.

B. The Library Administration will appoint the members of the Promotion Review Board each year, after calling for volunteers and nominations of faculty who meet the Board criteria. The Board will be composed of a total of six persons, of which a minimum of two and a maximum of four persons are drawn from the rank of Assistant Librarian or Assistant Professor. The Associate University Librarian for Organizational Development or designate will be an ex-officio, non-voting, member of the Board, advising the Board on organizational and procedural matters.

C. To be eligible for appointment to the Board, one must have been a member of the library faculty for three or more years, be at the rank of Assistant Librarian/Assistant Professor, or higher, and must agree not to be a candidate for promotion during his/her term. No more than two persons from a single department may serve on the Board at the same time. The University Librarian and the Associate University Librarians shall not serve on the Board. If in exceptional circumstances it is impossible to appoint a Promotion Review Board fitting the above criteria, it shall be possible to have more than two persons from the same department on the Board.

D. The Board's membership follows a pattern of staggered terms to provide continuity. Three members will be appointed every year and all appointments last for two years. No one may serve for more than two consecutive terms.

E. If a vacancy occurs, the Library Administration will appoint a replacement, and the person appointed will serve out the unexpired term. He or she may continue to serve for an additional full two-year term.

F. The Board will select its own Chairperson.

G. A quorum of the Board will consist of four appointed members.

H. Board members are expected to serve as mentors to candidates in preparing their files once their terms on the Board are completed.

IV. Promotion Process

A. Supervisor’s Responsibilities

1. Supervisors are responsible for mentoring their faculty for promotion and professional development. Suggestions for facilitating this process can be found at http://staff.lib.virginia.edu/HR/policy/mentoring.doc.

2. At a minimum, the supervisor is expected to discuss promotion and professional development with the faculty member during each annual evaluation. Library Human Resources will remind supervisors of this during the annual performance review process.

3. Supervisors will be notified by Library Human Resources when their faculty are eligible for promotion. Affiliate Librarians will automatically be considered for promotion to Assistant Librarian during the promotion cycle after their third year of service.
4. Supervisors will be asked to submit a letter that documents the candidate's suitability for promotion. Letters should address the criteria for promotion and, in addition, address the candidate's job performance, giving evidence from recent performance evaluations. Letters supporting early promotion should specifically justify why the candidate is qualified for early consideration.

B. Candidate’s responsibilities

1. Each candidate for promotion will inform the Chair of the Board of his/her intention to apply at least one month before the application deadline so that a mentor may be assigned to advise on the preparation of his/her file. Library Human Resources will notify Affiliate Librarians when they are required to apply and will notify the Board as well so that a mentor can be assigned.

2. Candidates’ files are considered to be complete and final as submitted.

3. Each candidate for promotion to Assistant Librarian shall submit:
   - a cover letter
   - a position description
   - a resume
   - a statement relating the candidate's accomplishments and areas of professional activity
   - a letter from the supervisor (see IV.A.4)
   - relevant supporting documentation, such as copies of committee charges or reports, print-outs of Websites, etc.
   - a list of a minimum of 3 references.

4. Each candidate for promotion to Associate Librarian and Librarian shall submit:
   - a cover letter
   - a position description
   - a resume
   - a specific statement relating the candidate's accomplishments to the criteria listed in the appropriate library rank description. The statement should stress the impact of an individual's contribution in a particular area rather than just present a list of activities.
   - a letter from the supervisor (see IV.A.4)
   - relevant supporting documentation, such as copies of published articles, committee reports, print-outs of Websites, etc. should also be submitted. Reviews of books published by the candidate should be cited.
   - a list of a minimum of 3 references. Candidates for promotion to Associate Librarian or Librarian are expected to have at least one reference from outside the University of Virginia. These references should be from people in a position to assess the candidate's performance in the areas in which the candidate qualifies for promotion. (For instance, if one of the activities that qualify a candidate for promotion is active service on an ALA committee, one of the references should be from someone who knows exactly what role the candidate played on the committee, and should speak about the individual contributions made, and the impact of the activity of the committee.)

4. The University Librarian and Associate University Librarians should not normally be asked to write letters of reference, unless the University Librarian or one of the Associate University Librarians is the candidate's immediate supervisor. The Board will not solicit additional references without the candidate's permission.
C. Board and Library Responsibilities

1. Candidates for faculty positions should meet with members of the Board during the interview process so that the Board can discuss the promotion process with them and recommend an appropriate rank for them to the University Librarian.

2. Library Human Resources will notify supervisors and faculty at the beginning of the promotion cycle when faculty are eligible for promotion and for which rank.

3. Library Human Resources will remind supervisors to discuss promotion and professional development with faculty during each annual performance review cycle.

4. Library Human Resources will issue a call for promotion applications to all faculty at the beginning of the promotion cycle.

5. Upon being notified by Library Human Resources that a faculty member wishes to apply for promotion, the Board will assign a mentor who has previously served on the Board to advise that person on preparing his/her file.

6. Candidate's files and list of references should be sent to Library Human Resources. A checklist will be maintained to assure that each file is complete, and all candidates will be notified when the file is completed.

7. The Associate University Librarian for Organizational Development will solicit letters of recommendation from all references listed for each candidate.

8. Library Human Resources will forward all documentation to the Promotion Review Board.

9. The Board will review the files in accordance with the criteria and determine whether or not to recommend promotion.

10. By January 15th, the Board will submit individual written recommendations for each candidate to the University Librarian. Each recommendation will include a justification statement together with all supporting material.

11. The Board will submit reports and evaluations of its activities to the University Librarian as requested.

12. The University Librarian will notify the Board, the candidate, and the candidate's department head and appropriate supervisor of his or her decision by February 1st.

13. The University Librarian will forward recommendations to the Provost by February 1st.

14. All deliberations of the Board and Appeal Committees (and supporting documents) will be strictly confidential, and no person shall serve on the Board without agreeing in advance to keep the committee's deliberations confidential. Candidates shall not have access to their letters of recommendation. Unsolicited letters shall not be considered. It shall not be a breach of confidentiality for the Board or the University Librarian to consult with the Associate University Librarians.

15. The University Librarian will notify the candidates, the candidates' supervisors, and the Promotion Review Board after the Provost has approved the promotions.
16. The University Librarian will notify the Library staff, e.g., via email and/or a town meeting, of the promotion after it has been approved by the Board of Visitors.

V. Appeals

A. Appeal Procedure

1. When denied a promotion, a candidate may initiate appeal procedures by submitting a written request for reconsideration to the Board. The appeal must be made within fifteen calendar days of the candidate’s notification of a negative decision by the University Librarian. The candidate's request must be accompanied by new supporting evidence or information to justify the appeal. All pertinent materials relating to the candidate’s review and job performance will be made available to the Board by the candidate and his or her supervisor(s).

2. The Board will receive all appeals, and for those meeting the guidelines in V.A.1. above, will appoint an Appeal Committee following the guidelines as detailed in Section V.B. All materials received by the Board under V.A.1. will be made available to the Appeal Committee. Additional information may be solicited when appropriate.

B. Procedure for Forming Appeal Committees

1. An Appeal Committee will consist of three library faculty members. One member will be selected by the University Librarian, one by the Board, and one by the candidate. All members of the Appeal Committee will be approved and appointed by the Board within fifteen days. The member selected by the Board will serve as Chairperson.

2. Persons serving on the Appeal Committee should not be of lower rank than the candidate. All members should have three or more years of service in the University of Virginia Library. The committee will not include anyone serving in direct line of supervision over the candidate or anyone supervised by the candidate. No more than one person from any one department may serve on an Appeal Committee.

3. When it is impossible to choose an Appeal Committee that fits the preceding criteria, the Board shall have the authority to appoint a Committee that fits the criteria as nearly as possible.

C. Functions of Appeal Committees

1. An Appeal Committee will reconsider a denial of promotion for a library faculty member whose appeal has been received by the Board.

2. The Appeal Committee will reconsider the candidate’s qualifications and accomplishments, and review the statements and all documents related to the case. Within 6 weeks of receipt of the appeal by the Committee, the Committee will submit a written recommendation to the University Librarian, together with all relevant material collected in forming the recommendation.

D. Notification

1. The University Librarian will notify the Board, the Appeal Committee, the candidate, and the candidate’s department head and appropriate supervisor of his or her decision within two weeks of receipt of the Appeal Committee's recommendation. The University Librarian's decision will be considered final unless the candidate elects to initiate mediation procedures as described in
the document University of Virginia Grievance Procedure for Administrative General Faculty (http://www.virginia.edu/provost/grievance.html).

E. Confidentiality

1. All deliberations of the Board and Appeal Committees will be strictly confidential, according to IV.C.13.

VI. Document Retention

The letter of nomination from the department head or appropriate supervisor, the statements from the Board and/or Appeal Committees, and the University Librarian's letter will be placed in the candidate's personnel file. One copy of all materials generated by the procedure will be kept in the University Librarian's office for five years after the Librarian's decision or five years after all deliberations are concluded at which point they will be destroyed per General Records Schedule No.103 - Series No. 1000499 (Promotion/Demotion, Layoff, Termination or Tenure Records). Access to these materials will be available only to the University Librarian. The Chair of the Board will remind Board members to destroy all working documents at the end of the promotion cycle.

VII. Schedule for Promotion Review

(This schedule may be modified as needed.)

April/May

The Promotion Review Board holds an annual promotion workshop for Library faculty to coincide with the faculty performance review process.

Library Human Resources sends to supervisors and faculty the names and ranks of faculty who are, or have previously been, eligible for promotion.

Supervisors discuss professional development with faculty members during the performance review process.

June 1

The Associate University Librarian for Organizational Development calls for written applications for promotion as well as all supporting documentation from candidates (resumes, written statements, list of references, etc.).

Candidates notify the Board of their intention to apply for promotion so that a mentor can be assigned to advise on file preparation.

July

The Library Administration appoints members of the Promotion Review Board during July; term begins August 1.

The University Librarian announces those candidates from the previous year who were promoted by the Board of Visitors at their June meeting.
The Associate University Librarian for Organizational Development sends a reminder for written applications for promotion.

Candidates notify the Board of their intention to apply for promotion so that a mentor can be assigned to advise on file preparation.

August 1

The Associate University Librarian for Organizational Development sends a reminder for written applications for promotion.

The new Board begins meeting to train new members.

August 15

All applications for promotion as well as supporting documentation from candidates (resumes, written statements, list of references, etc.) are due to the Associate University Librarian for Organizational Development.

The Associate University Librarian for Organizational Development requests letters from references.

September 15

Letters of reference are due to the Associate University Librarian for Organizational Development. The Associate University Librarian for Organizational Development forwards all promotion materials to the Promotion Review Board shortly after the files are completed.

October 1

The Board begins deliberations.

January 15

The Promotion Review Board makes recommendations to the University Librarian.

February 1

The University Librarian notifies the Board, candidate, candidate's department head, and immediate supervisor of the decision and sends the recommendation to the Provost's Office.

VIII. Revisions

This document should be revised by the Promotion Review Board as necessary. To be approved, the revisions must receive the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members of the Board. The revisions shall then be reported to the University Librarian with the recommendation that they be submitted to the Library Faculty for consideration. They shall be adopted upon an affirmative vote by email ballot of two-thirds of those Library Faculty who return ballots.
Appendix

Promotion In Academic Rank For Librarians

1. Procedures for promotion in academic rank are based on the current guidelines from the College of Arts and Sciences. See the Dean’s website at http://artsandsciences.virginia.edu/dean/policies-procedures/tenure.html.

2. Librarians who chose to retain their professorial titles in 1993 are eligible for promotion in General Faculty academic rank following the same schedule and procedures as described above for promotion in library ranks. Those people who chose librarian ranks in 1993 are not eligible to revert to academic ranks or for promotion to a General Faculty academic rank.

3. As members of the General Faculty, librarians are not eligible for tenure, and promotion in academic rank for librarians does not involve consideration of tenure. See the Provost’s website at http://www.virginia.edu/provost/genfac.html

4. Nominations for promotion in academic rank will be considered by the Promotion Review Board concurrently with nominations for promotion in library rank.

5. A successful candidate for promotion to Associate Professor will be expected to meet all the requirements for promotion to Associate Librarian (II.C.1-2), with the understanding that one of the areas chosen must be "Research and Publication."

6. A successful candidate for promotion to Professor will be expected to meet all the requirements for promotion to Librarian (II.D.1-2), with the understanding that one of the areas chosen must be "Research and Publication."

7. Candidates for promotion to Associate Professor or Professor must submit the same supporting documentation as that required for promotion to Associate Librarian or Librarian (IV.B)

8. The University Librarian will forward recommendations for promotion in academic rank to the College of Arts and Sciences for review by their committee.

9. When denied promotion a candidate may initiate an appeal following the procedures for promotion in library ranks (V).