



Criteria for Faculty Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, and Awarding of Continuing Appointment

December 9, 2019

Section 1: Preamble

The faculty of the USC Libraries (referred to as “Library faculty” throughout this document) are expected to demonstrate leadership and positive impact through excellent professional performance. This is achieved by building distinguished collections, developing and maintaining accurate and reliable information systems, and providing research consultation and instructional services that facilitate knowledge discovery, critical and interdisciplinary thinking, and transformative understanding of societal and global issues. Library faculty collectively identify, acquire, describe, organize, preserve, promote, and provide access to a unique record of human thought and creativity that supports the current and anticipated needs of the University of Southern California (USC) community and through this work, responds to the needs of regional, national, and international communities. In order to accomplish this, some Library faculty may be assigned responsibilities that include research administration, fundraising and development, and/or leadership and management roles, among others. Individual responsibilities of each Library faculty member are assigned by the Dean of the USC Libraries and are articulated in the individual’s Statement of Responsibilities and executed in support of the University’s and Libraries’ missions and strategic plans.

It is the responsibility of Library faculty to develop and manage library services and resources that meet the needs of constituents and which support the creative, educational, research, and patient care missions of the University. Library faculty have an overarching obligation to advocate for and develop models that support the creation, evaluation, distribution, and preservation of communicated knowledge. Library faculty are expected to participate in ongoing professional development and make contributions to the field of librarianship; for example, by engaging in scholarship and other creative pursuits. The primary indicator of excellence in carrying out these responsibilities is positive, demonstrable, innovative impact on the USC Libraries, the University, and relevant communities of practice.

The status and rights of Library faculty with continuing appointment and on the continuing appointment track correspond to those of tenured and tenure-track faculty as described in the *USC Faculty Handbook*. This document sets forth the principles, procedures, and criteria used for

both peer and administrative evaluation for appointment, reappointment, promotion, and the awarding of continuing appointment outlined in the *USC Faculty Handbook* and the *Manual of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure*. Review or revision of the *Criteria for Faculty Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, and Awarding of Continuing Appointment* document to maintain compliance with University requirements or to reflect the changing environment of academic librarianship shall be undertaken by the President of the University after joint review and consultation with the USC Libraries Faculty Council, the Dean of the USC Libraries, the Provost, and other relevant University administrators.

Section 2: Rights and Responsibilities

In addition to the general rights and responsibilities of faculty enumerated in the *USC Faculty Handbook*, particular rights and responsibilities apply to continuing appointment track Library faculty and are described below. Rights and conditions of continuing appointment for Library faculty are enumerated in the *USC Faculty Handbook*.

Library faculty have a unique role in relation to academic freedom because of their responsibilities in the acquisition, maintenance, preservation, and dissemination of scholarly information. Academic freedom in this context is a means of protecting Library faculty members and consequently the University itself from threats of censorship and similar pressures directed against scholarly integrity and the Libraries' collections. Library faculty are entitled to freedom in making information available to scholars and students, in developing interpretation based upon research expertise, and in research and teaching. This freedom bears a corollary responsibility to exercise critical professional judgement in collecting, preserving, extending, transmitting, and using knowledge. This responsibility extends as well to the standards of the discipline (as expressed, for example, in the [American Library Association Code of Ethics](#)), professional and faculty colleagues, students, the educational institution, and to the community at large.

Library faculty serve their communities with integrity and ethics. They approach library constituents with respect and inclusiveness and recognize the diversity of peoples, ideas, and ways of knowing. They provide the highest level of service and equitable access to the Libraries' community of users through inclusive services and resources. They adhere to USC's [Code of Ethics](#) and relevant professional codes of ethics and commit to USC's and USC Libraries' values, maintain confidentiality, and hold themselves and colleagues to the highest standards.

To ensure that Library faculty are providing the Libraries' community of users with the highest level of service, they must seek knowledge through professional engagement and keep abreast of innovations in the field, in order to implement findings that benefit the USC community. Library faculty are responsible for engaging in mentoring relationships in order to strengthen the profession, foster learning and sharing of ideas among colleagues, and provide guidance to retain and promote excellent faculty. Library faculty are responsible for participating in the

management of the academic enterprise through governance and other service in the Libraries and at USC.

Section 3: Excellence in Librarianship

Library faculty play a transformational and integral role in the growth and development of Library collections and innovative information services, thereby advancing USC's creative, teaching, learning, research, and patient care missions. Library faculty must possess a strong service commitment along with a broad-based understanding of how information is created, organized, disseminated, accessed, preserved, and recast to encourage new discoveries, scholarship, and creative endeavors. This knowledge and commitment facilitate problem-solving and encourage the identification of new opportunities aligned with the University's and the Libraries' strategic plans.

In making decisions on probationary renewal, promotion in rank, and granting continuing appointment, the primary emphasis is given to excellent professional performance of the faculty member's responsibilities as set out in the individual faculty member's written Statement of Responsibilities mutually agreed upon by the faculty member and the Dean of the USC Libraries. Library faculty at every rank are expected to realize the Libraries' vision in order to achieve results and be of the highest effectiveness in their areas of responsibility. Continuing appointment is granted based on excellent performance and the expectation of continued excellence and growth in professional expertise. Each new grant of continuing appointment must enhance the quality of the work of the Libraries and the University.

Library faculty members achieve excellence through positive impact on the USC Libraries, the University community, and relevant communities of practice. Each faculty member's Statement of Responsibilities sets forth the fundamental areas in which they are expected to achieve positive impact. Excellence can be demonstrated in a variety of ways and is dependent on the faculty member's responsibilities, but it should be strategic and transformative.

Library faculty demonstrate excellence through leadership, ingenuity, informed risk-taking, and strategic collaboration. They anticipate, recognize, and respond to emerging needs and areas of growth in creative ways. Library faculty lead the production and sharing of new knowledge through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and research support. They integrate a multiplicity of perspectives, by exhibiting cultural humility with the communities they work with and serve. Based on their individual responsibilities, they create or transform programs, services, systems, and/or collections in order to make them inclusive.

Library faculty are committed to free inquiry and academic freedom. They engage in the creation, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge in collaboration with faculty colleagues within and beyond the Libraries. They provide equitable access to information sources in a non-judgmental

manner while respecting privacy of researchers. They exhibit professional growth and a commitment to lifelong learning, and they contribute new knowledge to their areas of expertise in order to improve practice at the USC Libraries. They advocate for the widest possible access to research resources. They support evidence-based practice and foster the development of critical thinking skills.

Section 4-A: Academic Titles and Ranks

Library faculty are appointed on a full-time basis and are either on probationary status or hold the right of continuing appointment. They are appointed with ranks and titles corresponding to tenured and tenure-track faculty holding the titles of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor as specified in the *Faculty Handbook*.

Librarian

This is a rank intended for a Library faculty member who has yet to finish their library degree or has under a year of experience.

Assistant University Librarian

This is a probationary rank with annual reappointment.

Associate University Librarian

This is a rank that can be held with or without continuing appointment. Candidates must have served at least four years as an Assistant University Librarian (or equivalent experience), demonstrated Excellence in Librarianship, and met the qualifications for appointment or promotion as described in this document.

A decision to promote from Assistant University Librarian to Associate University Librarian or terminate must be made by the end of the sixth year or by the continuing appointment decision date, whichever is earlier. If promotion to Associate University Librarian is not approved, the appointment will be extended for one final year.

University Librarian

This is a rank that is typically held with continuing appointment. Candidates must have served at least five years as an Associate University Librarian (or equivalent experience), continued to demonstrate Excellence in Librarianship, and met the qualifications for appointment or promotion as described in this document.

Section 4-B: Special Designations

The following special designations that modify faculty titles are awarded based on policies described in the current *Faculty Handbook*, and require approval from the Provost.

DISTINGUISHED LIBRARIAN

This title may be awarded to Library faculty who have brought special renown to the University through their accomplishments.

EMERITUS OR EMERITA LIBRARIAN

A faculty member after ten years of full-time service may be nominated for emeritus or emerita status by the faculty and the dean. This nomination will be forwarded to the Provost for final decision.

Section 5: Qualifications for Appointment

All USC librarians must possess a theoretical, broad-based understanding of how information is selected, organized, disseminated, accessed, preserved, and recast as appropriate for a large academic research library. A Master's degree in librarianship from an American Library Association-accredited library program or its non-U.S. equivalent is typically required for USC librarian appointments. Candidates for academic library positions must also meet the specific qualifications for the position, which may require additional experience, advanced degrees or other professional training. The assessment of a candidate's qualifications for appointment and assignment of rank will be based on documentation submitted by the candidate and requested by the USC Libraries.

Qualifications for appointment to Assistant University Librarian, Associate University Librarian, and University Librarian are equivalent to those required for promotion to the same rank by those at USC as indicated under Qualifications for Continuing Appointment and Promotion below.

Final decisions for appointment to the rank of Associate University Librarian reside with the Dean of the USC Libraries after advisement from the panel of the Libraries' Personnel Committee responsible for appointment, promotion, and continuing appointment. Final decisions for appointments to the ranks of Associate University Librarian and University Librarian require a recommendation from the Dean after advisement from the Personnel Committee panel, and approval of the Provost after consultation with University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure.

All Library faculty on the continuing appointment track, appointed without continuing appointment, are deemed probationary by the University for a maximum of seven years. Probationary Library faculty must receive a notice of decision to retain or terminate by the continuing appointment decision date. The date is established on the same basis as used for other faculty's tenure decision date, as set out in the current *Faculty Handbook*, Section 4. (See also the *Manual of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure*, Section 3.)

Section 6: Qualifications for Continuing Appointment and Promotion

Decisions on continuing appointment and senior appointments and promotions are made only by the Provost, under delegation of the authority vested in the President of the University. Continuing appointment is not granted lightly nor automatically upon completion of a probationary period but is based on excellence and the expectation of continued excellence and increasing professional expertise. The decisions are made after a process of review that includes faculty committee recommendations at the Libraries and University level, as well as external referees familiar with national and international standards.

Regardless of the appointment rank, a Library faculty member who has not been appointed with continuing appointment must go through a continuing appointment review. The granting of promotion to Associate University Librarian is concurrent with the granting of continuing appointment. Candidates must demonstrate **Excellence in Librarianship** as described above.

The University grants continuing appointment to Library faculty who attain the rank of Associate University Librarian or University Librarian and whose record of achievement has been reviewed and judged to have clearly demonstrated significant positive impact on the USC community in the Library faculty member's areas of responsibility. This review and assessment is conducted by the Panel of the Libraries' Personnel Committee responsible for appointment, promotion, and continuing appointment; the Dean of the USC Libraries; the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Continuing Appointment; and the Provost who makes the final decision.

A decision to grant continuing appointment or terminate must be made by the continuing appointment decision date. If continuing appointment is not approved, the appointment time will be extended one final year, as called for in the *Faculty Handbook*.

Section 7: Promotional Evaluation

Promotion and continuing appointment recommendations shall refer to the standards set out above. Conforming to minimum performance standards does not assure an individual's promotion or grant of continuing appointment. Candidates for promotion to all ranks are reviewed by the panel of the Libraries' Faculty Personnel Committee responsible for appointment, promotion, and continuing appointment, which forwards its recommendations to the Dean of the USC Libraries.

Each Library faculty member shall receive regular performance reviews. Annual performance reviews of probationary Library faculty members assess progress toward meeting the standards described in this document. Librarians with continuing appointment submit Annual Activities Reports every calendar year. They have the option to waive a full performance review for up to three calendar years. A full performance review is required for the calendar year that continuing appointment is awarded.

In addition, at the midpoint of the probationary period, the Panel shall review probationary Library faculty members' progress towards achieving continuing appointment and advise them accordingly through the midcycle review process.

The evaluation of the Library faculty candidate's performance (as stated above in the standards for **Excellence in Librarianship**) will include the following:

- Curriculum Vitae, personal statement, and supplemental documentation submitted by the candidate
- Written evaluation(s) of professional excellence by the candidate's Reviewing Officer(s) and by others in the USC Libraries as relevant
- Formal references from librarians and others, internal and external, who can assess the candidate's professional excellence
- Evaluation and recommendation of the Panel of the Libraries' Personnel Committee responsible for appointment, promotion, and continuing appointment of the Library's Personnel Committee (a majority is required for an affirmative recommendation)
- Evaluation and recommendation of the Dean of the USC Libraries

Recommendations for continuing appointment and promotion are forwarded to the Provost's office for review by the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Continuing Appointment Panel. Final decisions are made by the Provost.

Neither advice about continuing appointment, nor interpretations of University policy, by any USC official except the Provost are definitive. A candidate for promotion who believes that there have been errors in the process should promptly bring them to the Provost's attention as it is the Provost's responsibility to decide what, if any, remedy is appropriate for procedural defects. The Provost may authorize exceptions or waivers to this or other policies. (See the *Manual of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure*, Section 1.7.)

The "Criteria for Faculty Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, and Awarding of Continuing Appointment" approved in 2020 will be applied to all Library faculty members in USC Libraries who have not yet completed a Mid-Cycle Review. All librarians who have undergone a Mid-Cycle Review in 2019 or earlier will be evaluated using the "Guidelines on Criteria and Qualifications for the Appointment, Promotion and Continuing Appointment of Librarians on the Continuing Appointment Track" dated 6/27/2008 or "Status of Librarians in the Health Sciences Libraries of the USC Libraries" dated March 23, 2009.

Approved by Executive Vice Provost Elizabeth Graddy on January 31, 2020.