



**MEMORANDUM**

**Office of the Provost** TO: Catherine Quinlan  
**C. L. Max Nikias** FROM: C. L. Max Nikias *C. L. Nikias*  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
**Malcolm R. Currie Chair** DATE: July 16, 2008  
in Technology and the Humanities  
SUBJECT: USC Libraries Promotion Guidelines

I have approved, effective today, the proposed Guidelines on Criteria and Qualifications for the Appointment, Promotion and Continuing Appointment of Librarians on the Continuing Appointment Track, June 27, 2008 draft.

University of Southern California  
University Libraries

OK  
CEN 7/16/08

**Guidelines on Criteria and Qualifications for the Appointment, Promotion and Continuing Appointment of Librarians on the Continuing Appointment Track**

6/27/2008

Full-time regular library faculty in the USC Libraries shall be subject to evaluation for appointment, promotion, and continuing appointment following the guidelines discussed below. This document clarifies the directions in the current editions of the *University of Southern California Faculty Handbook* and the *Manual of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure*. If there is any contradiction, the University policies govern.

**I Excellence in Librarianship**

Librarians play a transformational role in the growth and development of library collections and informational services, thereby advancing USC's teaching, learning, and research mission. Librarians must possess a strong service commitment along with a theoretical, broad-based understanding of how information is created, organized, disseminated, accessed, preserved, and recast to encourage new discoveries. This knowledge and commitment provide the foundation for solving problems and identifying new opportunities for furthering University goals.

In making decisions on probationary renewal, promotion in rank, and granting continuing appointment, the primary emphasis is given to excellent professional performance in discharging the librarian's responsibilities as set out in the individual librarian's written "Statement of Responsibilities" approved by the Dean. Librarians at every rank are expected to use the full range of their abilities to achieve tangible 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 improve the quality of the USC Libraries.

Librarians achieve excellence by having a significant impact on the development and/or implementation of high quality collections and/or services. In this manner they enhance the scholarly endeavors of USC faculty, students and/or staff. Examples of excellence in librarianship must benefit either the USC community as a whole or a targeted population or subject specialty within the USC community. This may involve, but is not limited to, any one (or a combination of) the following:

- Making tangible enhancements to the quality, relevance, or availability of collections or services;
- Providing reliable, responsive, measurable service that actively anticipates student/faculty needs;
- Ensuring access to, or preservation of, relevant information resources;

- Cultivating critical-thinking abilities that enable students to effectively find, evaluate, and make effective use of information resources;
- Transforming existing representations of knowledge into more accessible and/or preservable formats or configurations;
- Developing innovative and practical solutions to problems or to expanding successful access to information;
- Partnering with faculty, students and colleagues in the development and provision of user-focused interdisciplinary collections, innovative tools, or services;
- Actively engaging students, scholars and faculty in identifying elements of the library of the future for USC;
- Developing and supporting dynamic physical or virtual library environments that encourage individual study or collaboration and the social aspects of learning;
- Providing an intuitive, robust, and flexible library-technology environment that supports learning, research, and the provision of excellent services.

In pursuit of the above, librarians further the advancement of library practices in academic research libraries collectively, thereby bringing distinction to the University. New knowledge may be created or techniques developed that impact the field of librarianship. USC in turn draws ideas for furthering library and University endeavors from this wider pool of knowledge in librarianship. The most effective achievements are usually closely integrated with, or logical extensions of, the librarian's area(s) of responsibility. Ultimately, it is up to each librarian to demonstrate the impact and significance of his/her accomplishments in contributing to the fulfillment of USC's mission.

## II Librarian Ranks and Titles

### LIBRARIAN

This is an entry level, probationary rank. Appointments to this rank are normally for one year subject to renewal. Librarians are expected to serve no more than two years in this rank.

### ASSISTANT UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN

This is a probationary rank with annual reappointment. Candidates must have served at least one or two years as a Librarian and must have demonstrated satisfactory progress in meeting the standards for **Excellence in Librarianship** as described above and met the qualifications for appointment or promotion as described below.

### ASSOCIATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN

Associate University Librarian is a rank that can be held with or without continuing appointment. Candidates must have served at least four years as a Librarian and/or

Assistant University Librarian (or the equivalent at a comparable library), demonstrated **Excellence in Librarianship** as described above and met the qualifications for appointment or promotion as described below.

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 time will be extended for one final year.

#### UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN

University Librarian is a rank that can be held with or without continuing appointment. Candidates must have served at least five years as an Associate University Librarian (or the equivalent at a comparable library), continued to demonstrate **Excellence in Librarianship** as described above and met the qualifications for appointment or promotion as described below.

#### DISTINGUISHED LIBRARIAN

The title Distinguished Librarian may be awarded to librarians on the same basis used for other faculty as set out in the most current Faculty Handbook.

#### EMERITUS LIBRARIAN

The title Emeritus Librarian may be awarded to librarians on the same basis used for other faculty as set out in the most current Faculty Handbook.

### III 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. The foundation for this knowledge is normally indicated by completion of professional training marked by the Master's degree in librarianship from an American Library Association accredited library program or its non-U.S. equivalent. For this reason, the Master's degree in librarianship 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 or University Librarian are equivalent to those required for promotion to the same rank by those at USC.

Final decisions for appointment to the ranks of Librarian or Assistant University Librarian reside with the Dean of the USC Libraries. Appointments to the ranks of Associate

University Librarian or University Librarian require a recommendation from the Dean and approval of the Provost.

All librarians on the continuing appointment track, appointed without continuing appointment, are deemed probationary by the University for a maximum of seven years. Probationary librarians 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*. (See also the *Manual of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure*, Section 3.3.)

#### **IV Qualifications for Granting Continuing Appointment or 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 typically includes faculty committee recommendations at the department, school, and University level, as well as external referees familiar with national and international standards. (The date is established on the same basis used for other faculty's tenure decision date, as set out in the current *Faculty Handbook*. See also the *Manual of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure*, Section 3.3.)

Regardless of the Appointment Rank (Librarian through University Librarian) a librarian 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 librarians 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 librarians' areas of responsibility. This review and assessment is conducted by the Appointments, Promotions and Continuing Appointments/Tenure Panel of the Library's Personnel Committee; the Dean of the USC Libraries; the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Continuing Appointments of Librarians; and the President.

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*.

## V Promotional Evaluation

In order to determine whether the candidate's performance ranks among the top of a cohort of colleagues within the same area(s) of expertise, the evaluation process includes the gathering and consideration of both internal and external assessments of the candidate's work.

The evaluation of the candidate Librarian'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 have personal knowledge of the candidate's professional excellence.
- Relevant evaluative comments from the USC Library Faculty at large who have direct knowledge of the candidate's work.
- Onsite evaluation of the Librarian's professional excellence may be obtained from a person with appropriate expertise at another leading institution if it is deemed to add value.
- Evaluation and recommendation of the Appointments, Promotions and Continuing Appointments/Tenure Panel of the Library's Personnel Committee. (A majority is required for an affirmative recommendation.)
- Evaluation and recommendation of the Dean of the USC Libraries.

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 1.4.)

Approved on behalf of the  
President of the University

C.L. Max Nikias  
July 15, 2008