Promotion and Tenure Procedures for the Faculty of The University of Kansas Libraries

Adopted by a Faculty Vote on December 19, 2016

Approved by the Faculty Senate Committee on
Standards and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure

General Provisions

Scope and Purpose. The award of tenure and/or promotion in rank are among the most important and far-reaching decisions made by the Libraries because an excellent faculty is an essential component of any outstanding institution of higher learning. Promotion and tenure decisions also have a profound effect on the lives and careers of faculty. Recommendations concerning promotion and tenure must be made carefully, based upon a thorough examination of the candidate’s record and the impartial application of these criteria and procedures, established in compliance with the Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations (FSRR) Article VI.

It is the purpose of this document to promote the rigorous and fair evaluation of faculty performance during the promotion and tenure process by (a) establishing criteria that express the Libraries’ expectations for meeting University standards in terms of disciplinary practices; (b) providing procedures for evaluation of professional performance, scholarship, and service; (c) preserving and enhancing the participatory rights of candidates, including the basic right to be informed about critical stages of the process and to have an opportunity to respond to negative evaluations; and (d) clarifying the responsibilities, roles, and relationships of the participants in the promotion and tenure review process.

Each review, including the Libraries’ review and the University level review, is an independent evaluation of a candidate’s record of performance and makes independent recommendations to the next review level. The University’s review neither affirms nor reverses the Libraries’ recommendation, which remain part of the record for consideration by the Chancellor. It is the responsibility of each person involved in the review process to exercise their own judgment to evaluate a faculty member’s professional performance, scholarship, and service based upon the entirety of the data and information in the record. No single source of information, such as peer review letters, shall be considered a conclusive indicator of quality.

Academic Freedom. All faculty members, regardless of rank, are entitled to academic freedom in relation to teaching (professional performance) and scholarship, and the right as citizens to speak on matters of public concern. Likewise, all faculty members, regardless of rank, bear the obligation to exercise their academic freedom responsibly and in accordance with the accepted standards of their academic disciplines.

Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest. Consideration and evaluation of a faculty member’s record is a confidential personnel matter. Only those persons eligible to vote on promotion and tenure may participate in or observe deliberations or have access to the personnel file (except that administrative staff may assist in the preparation of documents under conditions that assure confidentiality).

No person shall participate in any aspect of the promotion and tenure process concerning a candidate when participation would create a clear conflict of interest or compromise the impartiality of an evaluation or recommendation.
If a candidate believes that there is a conflict of interest, the candidate may petition to have that person recuse themselves. If a committee member does not recuse themselves, a decision about whether that person has a conflict of interest shall be made by a majority of the other committee members.

Promotion and Tenure Standards

General Principles. The University strives for a consistent standard of quality against which the performance of all faculty members is measured. Nonetheless, the nature of faculty activities varies across the University and a faculty member’s record must be evaluated in light of their particular responsibilities and the expectations of the discipline. These criteria state the Libraries’ expectations in the areas of professional performance, scholarship, and service necessary to satisfy the University standards for promotion for the award of tenure and/or promotion to associate librarian or specialist and for promotion to full librarian or specialist. In the rest of this document, “librarian” refers to both librarians and library specialists, both classifications which fall under the category of library faculty.

The focus of promotion and tenure review is on professional growth and achievement. The award of promotion in rank and tenure for librarians represents a prediction that the individual will continue to make substantive contributions to the University and the profession. The University of Kansas, along with most other research universities in the United States, evaluates librarians primarily on the quality of their performance in their professional assignments. For librarians the emphasis, as practitioners, is reflected in the standard annual assignment of between 70 and 90 percent of effort to their primary professional assignment. Librarians are also expected to participate in service activities and to develop a program of research, scholarship, or creative artistic professional activities, with 10 to 30 percent of their annual effort applied collectively to these areas.

In the case of unclassified academic staff, comparable professional responsibilities, as defined by the Libraries and the standards of the discipline, will be evaluated. Under the University standards for unclassified academic staff, those standards must be commensurate with the standards for tenure-track faculty members. These responsibilities include: professional performance, scholarship, and service. Expectations and allocations of effort for these three areas are dependent on the individual assignment.

Professional Performance. Librarians hold 12-month appointments. The standard annual assignment for professional performance typically comprises 70 to 90 percent of a librarian’s assignment. It is expected that librarians will fulfill their professional duties at a high level of effectiveness resulting in significant accomplishments. Librarians’ duties can be varied, and can change frequently, due to the changing nature of the environment in which they work. As information specialists, library faculty are involved in the development and design of library resources, collections, and information systems; information management and organization; instructional and research consultation and support services; and administration and planning. While no single definition or standard of excellence can adequately address all aspects of librarianship, effective librarians will need to demonstrate competence, currency in one’s area, creativity, and initiative. The quality of professional performance and competence in carrying out one’s assigned responsibilities, coupled with the candidate’s strengths, are the focal points for evaluation of professional performance.
For the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of Associate Librarian/Associate Specialist: The candidate’s record shall demonstrate effective library practice as reflected in such factors as command of responsibilities, the ability to communicate effectively, and a demonstrated commitment to the mission of the Libraries, the University, and the profession.

For the award of promotion to the rank of Librarian/Specialist: The candidate’s record shall demonstrate achievement in, and document evidence of, distinguished professional performance in a successfully developing career, with evidence of sustained productivity. The candidate shall have achieved a measure of national recognition in librarianship, an area of specialization, or a related area, and demonstrate continued effectiveness and growth as a librarian. Such effectiveness and growth will be reflected in such factors as mastery of library practice and professional skills, and a demonstrated and ongoing commitment to the mission of the Libraries, the University and the profession.

Scholarship. The concept of “scholarship” encompasses not only traditional academic research and publication, but also the creation of artistic works or performances and any other products or activities accepted by the academic discipline as reflecting scholarly effort and achievement for purposes of promotion and tenure. While the nature of scholarship varies among disciplines, the University adheres to a consistently high standard of quality in its scholarly activities to which all faculty members, regardless of discipline, are held. Librarians are expected to engage in research and scholarly activity. The standard annual assignment for research and scholarly activities typically comprises 5 to 20 percent of a librarian’s assignment. This percentage may be adjusted upward only upon full agreement between the candidate and the Dean of Libraries. The wide range of librarians’ assignments at KU and the demands of 12-month appointments lead to variation in the type and amount of scholarly or creative activities in which they engage. It is expected that the outcomes of these activities will be disseminated and subject to critical peer evaluation. In this way, library faculty will contribute to enhancing the profession of librarianship or a related area, or a specialized subject area, in which they conduct research.

Librarians are encouraged to develop a research program that is sustained and strengthened over time; however, the rapidly changing nature of librarianship may lead to new areas of research that may be reflected in the librarian’s research program.

The research program should contribute, at least initially, to the field of librarianship or a related area, and be consistent with the mission of the Libraries. However, because librarianship does not exist in isolation from the community it serves, but rather co-exists with and contributes to all disciplines, scholarly endeavors of librarians may reflect this symbiosis and cross disciplinary boundaries.

Much of the advancement of librarianship depends on formal collaborative efforts. In librarianship, participation in collaborative scholarship is acknowledged as requiring application of knowledge and expertise equivalent to that demonstrated in individual research and publication. However, the processes and rewards of tenure and promotion pertain to the accomplishments of the individual, not the group. Therefore, when work that is the outcome of joint effort is presented as evidence of scholarship, clarification of the candidate’s role and extent of contribution in the joint effort must be provided.

Assistant librarians/specialists should begin their research program early and establish a sustained program of scholarly activity. Documented activities should demonstrate that the candidate’s experience has led to a broad understanding of the field, that the candidate has
mastered a part of it, and that there has been intellectual development and contributions beyond
those called forth by routine daily assignments.

Criteria for evaluation will include originality, breadth of dissemination, and impact on
scholarship and/or practice in the candidate’s field of research. Particularly important are works
that have been reviewed by peers as worthy of merit. It should be emphasized that quality of
scholarship is not measured in numbers; however, quantity of contributions is useful in
demonstrating the candidate's growth as a scholar, ongoing dissemination of research findings,
and continuing commitment to scholarship.

During the promotion and tenure process, librarians submit research for consideration as major
or minor works based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the reputation of the
venue of publication/presentation, the depth and rigor of the research, and the impact of the
research on the discipline. Determination of which category to use is made by the individual
librarian. (See Appendix on Examples of Major and Minor Scholarly Contributions for additional
information.)

For the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of Associate Librarian/Associate
Specialist: The candidate must present at least three scholarly contributions demonstrating a
coherent, consistently strengthening program of research and scholarly activities as evidence of
commitment to and accomplishment in librarianship or a related area. The candidate may
conduct research in subject areas outside those normally considered librarianship or a related
area; however, at least one (1) contribution must reflect how their research relates to or informs
their practice of librarianship or a related area. It is required that candidates have at least one
(1) major work in their dossier. Beyond the one (1) required major work, the contribution of
minor works is fully consistent with a successful promotion and tenure review decision for
librarians. Evidence of research and scholarly activities may manifest itself in both print and
electronic form and these creative and scholarly contributions may include, but are not limited
to: books, book chapters, peer-reviewed journal articles, reports, position papers, annotated
bibliographies; presentations at professional meetings, poster sessions, exhibitions; editorial
board service; fellowships or grants.

For the award of promotion to the rank of Librarian/Specialist: The research record must
demonstrate an established scholarly career as reflected in such factors as a substantial and
ongoing pattern of publication or creative activity, external reviews of the candidate’s work by
eminent scholars or practitioners in the field, the candidate’s national or international
recognition, and other evidence of an active and productive scholarly career. The candidate
must present at least four (4) scholarly contributions completed since promotion to Associate
Librarian. Candidates, having demonstrated mastery in an area of practice in librarianship or a
related area, may conduct research in subject areas outside those normally considered
librarianship or a related area. It is required that at least two (2) of these contributions be major
works. Beyond the two (2) required major works, the contribution of minor works is fully
consistent with a successful promotion and tenure review decision for librarians. Promotion to
Librarian carries with it the expectation of command of a subject, and active and continuous
involvement in the profession.

Service. Service is an important responsibility of all librarians that contributes to the University’s
performance of its larger mission. Although the nature of service activities will depend on a
candidate’s particular interests and abilities, service contributions are an essential part of being
a good citizen of the University. The University of Kansas Libraries accepts and values
scholarly service to the discipline or profession, service within the University, and public service at the local, state, national, or international level.

Librarians’ service is evaluated on the basis of quality, the candidate’s demonstrated level of contributions, and significance or impact of the service. Contributions that require a substantial effort, and that produce significant results, will be rated more highly. The librarian’s dossier should reflect continued growth and leadership in service over time. Evidence of service may include, but is not limited to: active participation in library, university, state, regional, national, or international professional committees and task forces; service as a chair of a committee or task force, or as an officer of a local, state, regional, national, or international professional organization; consulting services, program or conference planning for professional organizations; mentorship of new faculty or within the profession; or presentations to community groups or civic organizations.

For promotion and tenure to Associate Librarian/Specialist: The candidate must minimally demonstrate a solid and high quality record of service at the library and/or university level with some service at the state or regional level.

For promotion to Librarian/Specialist: The candidate must demonstrate an increasingly broader service record resulting in national or international recognition, with evidence of leadership roles at the library, university, and any of the following: state, regional, national, or international levels.

Rating for Performance. Using the criteria described above, the candidate’s performance in the areas of professional performance, scholarship, and service will be rated using the terms “excellent,” “very good,” “good,” “marginal,” or “poor,” defined as follows:

(a) “Excellent” means that the candidate substantially exceeds expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
(b) “Very Good” means the candidate exceeds expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
(c) “Good” means the candidate meets expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
(d) “Marginal” means the candidate falls below expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
(e) “Poor” means the candidate falls significantly below expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.

Absent exceptional circumstances, no candidate may be recommended for promotion or tenure without meeting standards in all applicable areas of performance.

Promotion and Tenure Procedures

The Libraries conduct the review of the candidate pursuant to the procedures and requirements of section 5 of Article VI of the FSRR in connection with the candidate’s responsibility in the Libraries.

Promotion and Tenure Committee. The Libraries review committee shall evaluate the candidate’s professional performance, research, and service. In the Libraries, the review is conducted by the members of the Library Committee on Promotion & Tenure (LCPT). LCPT is elected by members of the library faculty consisting of five library faculty, either tenured or having completed their probationary period, with a minimum of three library faculty with the rank
of librarian or unclassified academic staff of equivalent rank. A candidate may invoke FSRR
6.1.4.4 if they believe there to be a conflict of interest by any member of LCPT.

Members of LCPT shall ordinarily serve three years with overlapping terms to provide continuity. Members may not ordinarily succeed themselves without one-year intervening. No students or untenured faculty members, except unclassified academic staff with the rank equivalent to or higher than associate librarian, shall serve on LCPT or vote on any recommendation concerning promotion and/or tenure. No librarian who is scheduled for promotion may stand for election or serve on the committee during the year in which he or she will be reviewed for promotion or non-reappointment; anyone who has a domestic or familial relationship to the librarian being considered for tenure or promotion may not serve on the committee during that year; a unit head or supervisor of a librarian being considered for promotion or tenure may not serve on the committee during that year; no librarian may serve simultaneously on LCPT and University Committee on Promotion and Tenure (UCPT).

Prior to the beginning of the spring semester, the Provost notifies all faculty whose mandatory review year will be the following academic year, with copies provided to the unit administrators. Upon receipt of this notice or if a faculty member requests it prior to the mandatory review year, the Libraries shall initiate procedures for evaluating the candidate for the award of promotion and/or tenure.

As part of the annual faculty evaluation process, the Libraries shall consider the qualifications of all tenured librarians and associate specialist faculty members below the rank of full librarian/specialist, with a view toward possible promotion in rank during the following academic year. After considering a faculty member’s qualifications, if the Libraries determine that those qualifications may warrant promotion in rank, it shall initiate procedures for reviewing the faculty member for promotion. Although there may be some variation, continuing productivity should prepare most librarians for promotion to full librarian within six years of their promotion to the rank of associate librarian.

Preparation of the Promotion and/or Tenure File. It is the responsibility of the candidate to complete the appropriate portions of the form and provide necessary documents and information in accordance with the Provost’s guidelines.

LCPT shall receive the form and accompanying materials from the candidate and finish compiling the record of the candidate’s professional performance, scholarship, and service in accordance with the Provost’s guidelines.

The candidate and their supervisor recommend separately names of reviewers who are qualified to provide external evaluations of scholarly activity. Recommended names are submitted to the Libraries’ administrative office and the Dean of Libraries is responsible for using their judgment in the final selection of reviewers. Emphasis shall be placed on selecting independent reviewers in the same or related discipline who hold academic rank or a professional position equal to or greater than the rank for which the candidate is being considered. The candidate shall have the opportunity to suggest individuals to be excluded from the list of reviewers.

When soliciting external reviews of a candidate’s scholarship, the Libraries shall inform prospective reviewers of the extent to which the candidate will have access to the review. The
Libraries’ confidentiality policy regarding soliciting external reviewers for the promotion and tenure review process is as follows:

The promotion process requires that we solicit assessments of (Librarian’s) research contributions from academic colleagues and distinguished professionals. These letters will become part of the candidate’s promotion dossier and are treated as confidential by the University to the extent we are permitted to do so by law.

The Libraries’ administrative office sends requests for review of service and professional performance to individuals identified by the candidate and places an open call to all members of the Libraries’ faculty and staff to provide input to the file. All submissions are treated confidentially.

Recommendations. Upon completion of the record, LCPT evaluates the candidate’s record of professional performance, scholarship, and service in light of the applicable standards and criteria and makes recommendations in accordance with the voting procedures detailed below.

After extensive discussion, LCPT completes the evaluative sections for professional performance, research, and service including ratings in all three areas as defined in FSRR 6.3.2.2, a statement of reasons for those ratings, and a final recommendation. Voting is conducted by secret, paper ballot for each area. The rating assigned is determined by a majority vote.

The forms and recommendations shall be forwarded to the Dean of Libraries who shall indicate separately, in writing, whether they concur or disagree with the recommendations of the review committee. The Dean of Libraries shall communicate the recommendations of the review, and their concurrence or disagreement with the recommendation to the candidate and provide the candidate with a copy of the summary evaluation section of the promotion and tenure form. Negative recommendations shall be communicated in writing and, if the review will not be forwarded automatically, the Dean of Libraries shall inform the candidate that they may request that the record be forwarded for further review.

The candidate may submit a written response to a negative recommendation resulting from the review to a final rating of professional performance, research, or service below the level of “good” included in the summary evaluation section. The written response is sent separately to UCPT.

Favorable recommendations shall be forwarded to UCPT. Negative recommendations shall go forward only if it is the candidate’s mandatory review year. If there is an unfavorable recommendation for a librarian who is not in the mandatory review year, the Dean shall forward the file to the UCPT only if the candidate requests.

A request for information by UCPT shall be sent to the Dean of Libraries who shall immediately provide a copy to the candidate and inform LCPT. The Dean of Libraries and/or LCPT shall prepare the Libraries’ response. The candidate shall be afforded an opportunity to participate in the preparation of the Libraries’ response and/or to submit their own documentation or comment to UCPT as applicable.
**Examples of Major and Minor publications or scholarly work.**

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<tr>
<th>This is not intended to be a comprehensive list. Major</th>
<th>Minor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Peer-reviewed journal article.*</td>
<td>Non-peer reviewed journal article.*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book or scholarly journal editor or co-editor.</td>
<td>Editorial board service.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book chapters.*</td>
<td>Poster sessions at conferences, symposium, professional meetings.*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Software development.*2</td>
<td>Software development.*2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fellowships or grants.†</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reports, white papers or position papers.μ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curating.‡</td>
<td>Curating.‡</td>
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<tr>
<td>Papers given at national or international meetings.*</td>
<td>Papers given at local/regional meetings.*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer reviewed conference proceedings.*</td>
<td>Presentations at local or regional professional meetings.‡</td>
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<tr>
<td>A peer reviewed paper based on a presentation w/conference proceedings published.*</td>
<td>Encyclopedia articles.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invited and peer reviewed papers presented to national/international peer reviewed journal.</td>
<td>Book reviews.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly monograph in the field of librarianship or in a related discipline.*</td>
<td>Annotated bibliography.*1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book-length edited bibliographies or reference works.*</td>
<td>A compilation or indexing of specific collections.*</td>
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* Single or co-authored. † Depending on the depth, length and rigor of the scholarly contribution, the work might be considered major or minor. ‡ Depending on the size of the project and impact in the field and/or university, with evidence of widespread use (e.g. number of downloads or outside letters, for example). ‡ Depending on the depth, length and rigor of the scholarly contribution, the book review may be considered a minor scholarly work. Otherwise consider it to be service. ‡ The work represents an important contribution to the discipline and brings documented positive reviews or impacts the practice of librarianship, it would be considered major; otherwise a minor work. † Depending on the award amount and number of coapplicants, it might be a major or minor work. ‡ The importance of a presentation is assessed by the content, preparation, and research required and the forum to which it is delivered.