

TENURE POLICY AND CRITERIA
University of South Carolina
Library Faculty, Columbia Campus

INTRODUCTION

The University of South Carolina is a comprehensive research institution offering academic programs in diverse fields. University faculty exercise pivotal responsibility in the development, delivery, and evaluation of these programs. The library faculty is primarily a service rather than a teaching or research faculty. Its members are partners with the teaching faculty and administration in maintaining and enhancing the quality of instruction, research, and service at the University. In keeping with University policies, the tenure policy of the Libraries is designed to contribute to the academic and scholarly excellence of the University by fostering high standards of librarianship.

The Libraries are under the overall supervision of the Vice Provost and Dean of the Division of Libraries and Instructional Services, hereinafter referred to as the Vice Provost and Dean. The library faculty, Columbia Campus, hereinafter referred to as the library faculty, consists of the faculty in the following units: Administrative Services, Public Services, Processing Services, and Special Collections. The role of these units is to acquire and access materials in support of the University's programs, to organize them physically and bibliographically, to facilitate access to them through the appropriate technologies, to preserve them, and to provide assistance to faculty, students, and others in using these materials and services for the retrieval of information. This complex mission requires an awareness of technological advances, database files and services, research collections, and other means by which the librarian connects users and information. Successful performance of this role requires that librarians be involved in, aware of, and responsive to the information needs of academic programs while working within generally accepted standards and established policies.

APPOINTMENT

Terms of appointment shall follow institutional procedures for all faculty as outlined in the University's Policies and Procedures Manual. At the time of appointment, all faculty members are to be advised of the University's renewal and tenure procedures and provided a copy of the Libraries' Tenure Policy and Criteria. Candidates for appointment are normally expected to hold the master's degree in library science from an institution accredited by the American Library Association or in another professionally appropriate discipline.

TENURE POLICY

This document outlines the procedures followed by the Libraries in implementing University tenure guidelines as specified in the University's Faculty Manual. Any issues not specifically referred to in this document are governed by those guidelines. The policy statement will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Libraries Select Tenure Committee. Any recommended changes will be forwarded to the library faculty for approval.

SUMMARY FOR THE CANDIDATE

The Provost's office annually issues a University-wide tenure application packet. Each candidate is expected to follow the format of the packet and is responsible for the preparation of the file. Relevant data for a tenure file include information from the candidate's vita, a statement by the candidate, letters of recommendation and other evaluations of the candidate's work submitted by colleagues, members of the USC – Columbia teaching faculty and outside reviewers, and material written or prepared by the candidate. Evidence of the following must be provided:

Librarianship in the candidate's area(s) of expertise
Service activities
Research and scholarship (not mandatory)
Experience at the University of South Carolina and elsewhere
Effective oral and written communication skills

The candidate will also supply the Libraries Select Tenure Committee with a copy of his or her vita and a list of names of individuals from outside USC – Columbia campus who are qualified to evaluate the candidate's Librarianship, Service, and Research and Scholarship. This list should not include the candidate's thesis advisers, co-authors, or colleagues with whom the candidate served at other institutions.

TENURE CRITERIA

All candidates for tenure must demonstrate a consistently high standard of performance in Librarianship and Service. A consistently high standard of performance for Librarianship and Service equates to Excellent or Outstanding, as defined in this document. Librarianship, because it contributes most directly to the academic community, is the most important consideration for the granting of tenure. A record of Research and Scholarship is not required but would add strength to a candidate's file. Tenure shall be granted upon demonstration of the following:

Librarianship refers to competence, creativity and initiative in the performance of professional responsibilities, effectiveness in applying subject knowledge and bibliographic techniques in managing library collections, skills in meeting user needs and in stimulating wider use of resources, and development of administrative skills necessary for the operation of the library, i.e., the duties and activities which constitute the librarian's primary responsibilities. The following list is not exhaustive; candidacy need not be supported by all items listed:

1. Developing library resources through the selection and acquisition of library materials.
2. Instructing and advising library users and colleagues, both formally and informally, in the efficient and effective use of library resources.
3. Extending access to library resources through bibliographic control.
4. Demonstrating effective communication skills.
5. Using appropriate bibliographic tools to assist library users in information acquisition.
6. Organizing bibliographic and other information files.
7. Developing innovative programs that facilitate the delivery of library or informational services.
8. Improving departmental performance through creative problem solving.
9. Pursuing continuing education or professional development in library science or other relevant fields through formal coursework, workshops, seminars, etc.
10. Extending access to library resources or developing additional resources through the creation of web pages or by other technological means.
11. Ensuring continuing access to library collections through implementation of preservation and conservation policies, training, and treatments.
12. Providing efficient access to materials through document delivery, interlibrary loan, or other means.

13. Implementing or developing automated systems designed to enhance access to library resources or to improve overall or departmental performance.
14. Understanding the operations and services of the Library units and their inter-relationships and one's position within the Library organization.
15. Communicating and cooperating with faculty, students, and library staff in furthering the objectives and priorities of the Library and the University.

Descriptive terms used for tenure in the area of Librarianship

Outstanding	<p>Examples of outstanding performance may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creative problem solving that improves or enhances departmental performance, • demonstrating initiative in the development of new projects and/or innovative programs, • taking a leadership role in the provision or development of services, • cooperating with other libraries and institutions to facilitate research and to develop regional and national library services, • development of administrative skills necessary to provide leadership.
Excellent	<p>Examples of excellent performance may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrating subject knowledge and professional expertise used to build, organize, and preserve collections, • demonstrating subject knowledge and professional expertise necessary to meet user needs and stimulate wider use of resources, • employing knowledge of foreign languages, • translating knowledge of the curriculum and University policies into effective Library services and collections, • assessing and monitoring changing research patterns and trends in order to anticipate user needs, • skillfully using teaching and training techniques, • Encouraging others to reach their highest potential by fostering an atmosphere of open communication and receptiveness to suggestions and criticism, • teaching University courses.
Effective	<p>Examples of effective performance may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated ability in the performance of the primary job assignment, • development of skills necessary to meet user needs and stimulate wider use of resources, • demonstrated oral and written communication skills, • demonstrating an awareness of community and University issues and concerns as they affect the Library, • sustained professional development through participation in continuing education activities, reading of professional literature, or monitoring relevant electronic discussion lists, • strong potential for further development.
Unsatisfactory	<p>Candidate's job performance is consistently assessed as ineffective.</p>

Assessment of Librarianship is supported through administrative review, internal and external peer review, and letters from colleagues.

Service refers to participation in institutional governance, successful service on committees, contributions to the educational component of the Division, and sharing professional knowledge with the University and the community. The following list is not exhaustive; candidacy need not be supported by all items listed:

1. Participating actively, or assuming a leadership role, in Library or Division committees, task forces, and other in-house forums.
2. Participating in University governance and/or committee work.
3. Participating substantially in the management of community projects under the auspices of the University, the Division, or the Library.
4. Participating in community organizations or activities.
5. Serving as chair or member of a committee, or as an officer of a local, state, regional, national, or international professional organization,
6. Actively participating in the regular meetings of professional organizations.
7. Receiving recognition for professional activities, awards, honors, etc.
8. Organizing and programming workshops, professional meetings or conferences, etc.
9. Consulting or assisting in a professional capacity.

Descriptive terms used for tenure in the area of Service

Outstanding	Examples of outstanding performance may include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• University level committee assignments,• consulting in a professional capacity,• serving a professional organization as an officer or as a committee chair,• recognition for professional activities such as the receipt of awards or honors,• planning workshops, professional meetings, or conferences.
Excellent	Examples of excellent performance may include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• University governance,• serving a professional organization on a committee,• leadership roles in community organizations or activities,• active participation in Library committees or task forces,• participation on search committees,• active participation in Division committees or task forces,• supervising internships,• sharing of professional knowledge as a guest presenter to a class.
Effective	Examples of effective performance may include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• active participation in community organizations or activities,• active participation in regular meetings of professional organizations,• holding memberships in appropriate professional organizations.
Unsatisfactory	Candidate's service record in quality and quantity is consistently assessed as ineffective.

Assessment of service is supported through administrative review, internal and external peer review, and letters from colleagues.

RESEARCH and SCHOLARSHIP refers to activities related to inquiry and research, for example, publication in professional and scholarly journals, presentation of papers, and reviews of books or other resources. The following list is not exhaustive; candidacy need not be supported by all items listed:

1. Presenting papers, moderating or participating in panel discussions, etc.
2. Publishing professional or scholarly articles, book chapters, or monographs.
3. Contributing as author, editor, indexer, or translator to publications in any format.
4. Preparing research reports.
5. Reviewing books, databases, software, etc.
6. Preparing bibliographies, guides, or web pages, which significantly enhance access to and use of information resources.
7. Submitting grant proposals and serving as principal investigator.
8. Preparing and mounting exhibits.
9. Preparing and presenting poster sessions.

Descriptive terms used for tenure in the area of Research and Scholarship

Outstanding	Examples of outstanding performance may include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• contributing as author, editor, indexer, or translator to state, regional, or national publications in any format,• publishing professional or scholarly articles, book chapters, or monographs.
Excellent	Examples of excellent performance may include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• presenting papers at professional conferences,• submitting grant proposals and serving as principal investigator,• moderating or participating in panel discussions at a regional, national, or international level,• preparing and mounting in-depth exhibitions.
Effective	Examples of effective performance may include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• moderating or participating in panel discussions at local or state level,• publishing reviews,• preparing and mounting exhibits or poster sessions,• contributing as an author, editor, indexer, or translator to local publications and newsletters in any format.
Not applicable	A rating of “not applicable” may be used for Research and Scholarship since performance in this area is encouraged but not required for tenure. No candidate’s scholarly activity will be considered “unsatisfactory.”

Assessment of scholarly performance is supported through administrative review, external peer review, and letters from colleagues.

CONSIDERATION FOR TENURE

Each year all non-tenured, tenure-track faculty may be considered for tenure. The Vice Provost and Dean will write the eligible faculty member in April of each year asking if they wish to be considered for tenure. Normally, untenured faculty seek tenure during their sixth year in the tenure track; candidates who apply earlier should demonstrate performance equivalent to that which is expected of a sixth-year candidate. The tenured library faculty will consider and vote on all eligible persons except those who waive, in writing, consideration until the following year. The tenured library faculty will consider for tenure each faculty member in the penultimate year of a probationary appointment, as defined in the member's letter of appointment. To coincide with the University's promotion and tenure schedule, library faculty enter the tenure track on August 16 or January 1, whichever date is closest to the first day of employment.

PROCEDURES – LIBRARIES SELECT TENURE COMMITTEE

The primary responsibility for the application of all tenure procedures shall rest with the tenured members of the library faculty, who will be represented by a select committee called the Libraries Select Tenure Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Committee. The primary purpose of the Committee is to evaluate the progress toward tenure of tenure-track faculty and make recommendations to the tenured library faculty regarding tenure decisions. The Committee shall consist of seven members of the tenured library faculty. Committee members will serve staggered three-year terms. No person shall serve more than three years consecutively as a member of the Committee. Elections will take place each spring, with balloting restricted to the tenured library faculty. Voting will be by secret ballot. Each year the Committee shall elect a chair from among its seven members.

The Committee shall ensure that all tenure files are complete and ready for inspection by the tenured faculty. The Committee will include reviews of each candidate from at least six outside individuals. These reviewers will normally share the candidate's area of professional specialization. At least one, and not more than three reviewers, will be selected from the candidate's list. Outside reviewers should not be solicited from the candidate's thesis advisers, co-authors, or colleagues with whom the candidate served at other institutions. Each reviewer will be provided a copy of the candidate's vita, personal statement, samples of scholarship, a copy of the Tenure Policy and Criteria, and a cover letter from the Committee specifying parameters for the review. All reviews received by the Committee will become a part of the candidate's file.

In addition to external peer reviews, statements by the immediate supervisor, annual and third year tenure review letters, and internal peer reviews will be placed in the tenure file, as appropriate. The Committee will also ensure that all letters of recommendation and other evaluations of the candidate's work submitted by colleagues, members of the USC – Columbia teaching faculty, and others, are included in the file prior to the tenured library faculty's inspection. The results of all votes of the Committee and the tenured library faculty will be included before the file is forwarded.

CONFIDENTIALLY

The University's policy is to provide the candidate with the fullest possible access to their files subject to established rules of confidentiality. The proceedings of the Committee regarding tenure cases shall be confidential with respect to all written materials received and all discussions of individual cases. Letters from colleagues, administrators, outside evaluators, and others will be treated as confidential unless explicitly collected with a different understanding.

VOTING

The Committee will vote on all applications for tenure. The Committee will note its recommendation in each file, append its vote justification to each file, and inform the faculty when the files are ready for their inspection. In addition to external peer reviews, statements by the immediate supervisor, annual and third year tenure review letters, and internal peer reviews will be placed in the tenure file, as appropriate.

Only tenured library faculty may vote on an application for tenure. Faculty members on leave may vote if they notify the Vice-Provost and Dean in writing before beginning leave, but they must review the file before casting a ballot. Each voting library faculty member will be given a secret ballot, even if the Committee does not recommend tenure. Each voting faculty member will vote “yes,” “no,” or “abstain.” The results of all votes of the Committee and the tenured library faculty will be included in the file. Ballots are provided by the Provost’s Office and are official University forms.

Each vote must provide for the file a written justification either on the ballot itself, on a separate form, or in a letter addressed to the Vice Provost and Dean. Justification need not be signed, but must be clearly identified as such and must state how the author voted.

A majority vote of the tenured faculty will determine if the recommendation is positive or negative. Abstentions will not be counted towards the total votes for candidates in determining any appropriate majority. If the candidate received a favorable vote, the unit administrator (i.e., University Librarian for Processing Services, Public Services, or Special Collections) shall write a letter assessing the candidate’s qualifications and make a recommendation. If the unit administrator is a candidate, there will be no such statement. The file, including the ballots, justifications, and the unit administrator’s letter, if any, will be forwarded to the Vice Provost and Dean. The Vice Provost and Dean will review the file, add an assessment, and forward the file to the Provost.

APPEALS AND GRIEVANCES

Candidates receiving a negative vote from the tenured library faculty will be notified by the Vice Provost and Dean within ten days of the vote. A candidate receiving such a negative decision may request in writing to the Committee that the tenure file be forwarded through all appropriate channels to the President for action. If the candidate appeals the library vote, the Vice Provost and Dean will invite further written comments from all Library faculty before the file is forwarded through appropriate channels to the President. If a candidate for tenure receives a negative vote in the penultimate year and does not appeal, the Vice Provost and Dean will inform the candidate of non-reappointment.

Candidates receiving a negative decision from the President may also appeal. Upon request by the candidate, the Vice Provost and Dean will provide an immediate oral explanation for a negative decision. If the faculty member believes the oral explanation is unsatisfactory, a written summary of the reasons for the denial and an indication of the strength of the vote of the faculty may be requested. The Vice Provost and Dean will have access to the files of the candidate for the purpose of providing a summary of the total file. The written summary may include appropriate quotations without attribution. The Provost must approve the written summary before the Vice Provost and Dean gives it to the candidate. If the candidate believes there are grounds for reconsideration, the faculty member may state these grounds in writing to the President. If the outcome of the Presidential appeal is negative, the candidate may follow the academic grievance procedure as outlined in the [Faculty Manual](#) and, thus, may petition the Faculty Grievance Committee for consideration of the grievance. The Faculty Grievance Committee will make a recommendation to the President concerning the outcome of the grievance. The President shall be the final authority within the University to whom a grievance may be submitted. The timetable for the appeal and grievance process is outlined in the [Faculty Manual](#).

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