

Standards for faculty status for college and university librarians

The most pervasive characteristic of academic libraries is change. Publication continues to increase at an exponential rate and the variety of formats in which information appears is proliferating. The bibliographical apparatus of many disciplines and subdisciplines has become increasingly difficult to use as library and information technology has grown more sophisticated. For librarians to function effectively in such an environment requires flexibility, ingenuity, commitment, and a special combination of education, expertise, and experience.

The academic librarian makes unique contributions to the university community and to higher education itself. These contributions range from developing collections to providing bibliographic access to all library materials and interpreting these materials to all members of the college and university community. Specific services include instruction in the use of print and online library resources and the creation of new tools to enhance access to information available locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally. Librarians add to the sum of knowledge through their research into the information process and other areas of study. Service improvements and other ad-

vances in the field result from their participation in library and other scholarly organizations.

The intellectual contribution of the librarian who has completed formal graduate training enhances the quality of teaching, research, and public service in our colleges and universities. College and university librarians are partners with other faculty in the academic experience. A true partnership based on equivalent contributions translates to equal rights and privileges for all faculty members.

In order to recognize formally the importance of faculty status for academic librarians, the Association of College and Research Librar-

How the standards were developed

Approximately three years ago, the ACRL Academic Status Committee began its review and revision of the *Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians*—a document that had not been revised since it was first promulgated in 1971. In order to inform ASC members of the value of the document for today's academic librarians as well as the changes that the membership might wish to see made, two well attended public hearings were held at the 1990 Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference. Additional member opinion was solicited through announcements of the Committee's intentions in *C&R News*, surveying a random sample of librarians on the "status of status" and holding a think tank to develop an agenda for faculty status. The Committee believes that the revised *Standards* document addresses the needs and reflects the position of the majority of academic librarians.

The responses to these initiatives have been strong and convinced the Committee that a substantial majority of the ACRL membership continue to support faculty status as the desired condition of all academic librarians. The survey results indicate that 67% of all academic libraries nationally offer faculty status to the librarians in their employ and that there has been no erosion in the number of institutions electing faculty status over the past years.

The chair of the Academic Status Committee wishes to acknowledge the contribution to this revision made by Irene B. Hoadley and other current and past members of the ASC who have participated in the long revision process. They include Denise E. Botto, Janice C. Fennell, Rena Fowler, Tina C. Fu, William M. Gargan, Caroline D. Harnly, Douglas B. Highsmith, George R. Jaramillo, Susan M. Kroll, Douglas K. Lehman, Thomas H. Patterson, Anne H. Rimmer, Pat Rom, and Larry J. M. Wilt.

ies, American Library Association, endorses these standards. Institutions of higher education and their governing bodies are urged to adopt these standards.

1. Professional responsibilities. Librarians must be able to exercise independent judgment in the performance of professional duties. While librarians must have considerable latitude in fulfilling their assigned responsibilities, there must also be a regular and rigorous review of their performance. A necessary element of this review must be appraisal by a committee of peers who have access to the evidence pertaining to job performance, service, and scholarship, subject to appropriate institution policy.

2. Library governance. College and university librarians should adopt an academic form of governance similar in manner and structure to other faculties on the campus.

3. College and university governance. Librarians should be eligible for membership in the faculty senate or equivalent governing body on the same basis as other faculty. They should have the same degree of representation as other academic units on all college or university governing bodies.

4. Compensation. Salaries should be comparable to and within the range of salaries paid to other faculty of equivalent rank. The appointment period for librarians should be the same as it is for equivalent faculty. Salary scales should be adjusted in an equitable manner for any additional periods of appointment. Fringe benefits should be equivalent to those for faculty in general.

5. Tenure. Librarians should be covered by tenure policies equivalent to those of other faculties. During the probationary period, librarians should have annual written contracts or agreements the same as those of other faculty.

6. Promotion. Librarians should be promoted in rank on the basis of their academic proficiency and professional effectiveness (job performance, service, and scholarship). A peer review system is the primary basis of judgment in the promotion process for academic librarians. The standards used by the library should be consistent with the campus standards for faculty.

7. Leaves. Sabbatical and other research leaves should be available to librarians on the same basis, and with the same requirements, as they are available to other faculty.

8. Research and development funds. Librarians should have access to funding for research projects and professional development on the same basis as other faculty.

9. Academic freedom. Librarians must have the same protection of academic freedom as all other faculty. Censorship of any type is unacceptable whether individual or organizational. All librarians must be free to provide access to information regardless of content.

Implementation

To implement these standards, the Association of College and Research Libraries, American Library Association, will:

1. Publicize these standards to college and university presidents and governing bodies, academic libraries, library education programs, library organizations and agencies which accredit institutions.

2. Seek to have these standards formally adopted or endorsed by the appropriate groups listed above.

3. Refer reported allegations of violations of these standards to SCRIM (Standing Committee on Review, Inquiry, and Mediation) for deliberation and consideration.

These standards become effective on the date of approval by the ACRL Board of Directors. Any library that seeks to withdraw the privileges outlined in these standards may be subject to review by the American Library Association.

[Revised version passed by ACRL Board of Directors on July 3, 1991, and approved by the ALA Standards Committee in January 1992.] ■

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