

Development of Faculty Status for Librarians at Indiana University

Working Paper on the Application of the Criteria for Faculty Rank to Librarians

Prepared for the Committee on Academic Status
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Because members of the University Library Committee raised questions concerning implementation of faculty rank for librarians during informal discussions with the Committee on Academic Status the Committee felt that it would be useful to prepare some material on this subject. As such, this report should be viewed as suggestive, and not as a total program. The Committee has requested a list of those institutions reported as granting full faculty status from the authors of an article which appeared in the September, 1968 issue of *College and Research Libraries*. Once this list is obtained, a specific study on implementation in other institutions may be made either by the Committee or by the University Library Committee with relative ease. This survey shows the mid-west as the area of the country with the highest percentage of institutions granting faculty status to librarians. Significantly, the reason more institutions are not included as having faculty status for librarians is that they did not grant "equal" salary and "equal" vacation time. Table 2 in the article shows a much higher percentage of libraries surveyed granting librarians equal privileges in the other categories (academic titles, promotion policies, tenure criteria, sabbatical leave, participation in faculty government, fringe benefits.) A copy of this article and the questionnaire used in its formulation is attached to this report.

PROMOTION

The following discussion attempts to apply in a more general way those activities reported in the Profile of the Librarians at Indiana University which could be used by a committee evaluating performance.

"The criteria for promotion includes teaching, research, or other creative work, and other services, administrative, professional or academic in nature. The candidate for promotion should normally excel in at least one of the above categories and be satisfactory in all others." Faculty Handbook, P. 35.

A. Services to the Department and University, Administrative and Professional

Librarians are engaged in a vital service function. Their services are professional, academic, creative, and sometimes administrative. It is on these grounds that librarians should primarily be evaluated. There are many different academic roles to play in the university, and each individual or group should be judged on their performance in their respective roles. While librarians should be evaluated on the basis of their performance in the various positions within the library, they may also meet other criteria in teaching and research.

In order for librarians to be evaluated in terms of the excellence of their academic performance in their respective positions, both general and specific criteria will need to be outlined for each type of library position. Such criteria and standards for excellence of performance are not published now and if they do exist would have to be revised in light of faculty status. The Committee on Academic Status suggests that the library administration, department heads, and all other librarians become involved in a dialogue whose aim would be to develop position criteria and standards of excellence. The product of this discussion would be an in-depth picture of the various jobs of librarians and what might be judged superior work. The Committee feels this would be an appropriate vehicle for justifying faculty status to the academic community.

It is the expressed interest of the librarians to become more deeply involved in policy-making within the library. It is assumed that if faculty status were granted, that various committees would be formed within the library which would consider coordination of systems, general policies, ways to make the library operations more efficient, promotions, tenure and similar areas of importance to the entire system. As in other academic departments, these committees would make recommendations to the library administration and in this case, to the University Library Committee.

Librarians should also be included in administrative committees outside the framework of the library itself. They wish to be directly involved in discussion of program planning, curriculum change and area studies, for example, since they will ultimately be involved in the implementation of such programs. Librarians can offer valuable advice to committees on the feasibility of providing resources to support such programs. On the other hand, participation would undoubtedly make librarians more acutely aware of the needs of the academic community they serve.

Professional activity for librarians parallels that of the teaching faculty. Librarians not only belong to library associations such as Special Libraries, American Library Association, British Library Association, and American Association of Law Librarians, but also participate actively in organizations which are connected with their subject specialty (Modern Language Association, College Art Association, Western Historical Association, African Studies Association.) Librarians, like teachers, are asked to present papers and submit articles for publication in the associations' journals. The Profile amply supplies information regarding how much of this activity already goes on. It should be pointed out that the AAUP includes librarians in its membership.

One aspect of professional activity which is as prevalent for librarians as for teaching faculty is the large amount of consulting work which librarians are asked to engage in. They are asked to advise individuals and groups on such diverse subjects as how to classify a particular kind of special collection to had an experimental process of Xeroxing catalog cards operates. Librarians are often asked to evaluate collections for other institutions. Clearly this kind of work falls within the range of professional activity which should be recognized.

B. Research

The Profile on Indiana University's librarians indicates that many librarians are now actively engaged in research and have done research in the past. Some have written books, others have written articles and book reviews for professional journals. The Profile also shows, however, that many librarians are now doing or have done work of a scholarly nature which may not have reached published form. Examples of this include unpublished bibliographies and bibliographical research done in support of research activity of others. In addition it should be pointed out that many librarians are given virtually sole responsibility for building scholarly collections of books. This means that instead of simply collecting material at random or by acquiring books by occasional faculty request, that the librarians take the responsibility for assuring that library resources will be a collection of materials which have both breadth and depth in any discipline. This responsibility alone demands a bibliographical sophistication on a par with any teaching faculty member's knowledge.

Librarians, like members of the faculty and the university administration, have differing opportunities to engage in research. Librarians involved in public services (eg. branch librarians, subject specialists, reference) have greater opportunities for research than do technical services librarians (eg. catalog, serials, order) since they are in close contact with faculty and student research needs and provide bibliographic research for their clientele. Public service librarians operate in a more independent atmosphere and engage in research as part of their daily responsibility. Technical service librarians on the other hand, are more limited in their ability to do research on the job since their hours are more rigid and their positions have greater supervision. This supervision is necessary so that large backlogs of work are not created. Certainly, many technical service librarians do perform ongoing research as may be seen in an entire journal, *Library Resources and Technical Services*. Research is also being done by technical services librarians in computer technology and other kinds of machine-controlled information storage. Even without the inducement of recognition of their efforts by promotion and other emoluments within the library and the university, many librarians are giving their attention to such research. However, it is the position of the Committee on Academic Status, that even more effort in this direction would be forthcoming with faculty status and the development of criteria for advancement.

It should be mentioned at this point that because a librarian is expected to be a generalist in his knowledge even though his area might be quite narrow, that librarians have a desire to deepen their subject knowledge in the areas which pertain most directly to the work they are currently engaged in. While it is obviously not work, which could be used as the sole criteria for promotion, the Committee feels that course work after the Master's degree in Library Science either in pursuit of a higher degree (for example a second Master's degree) or on a non-degree basis should be encouraged. Examples of such course work might be business administration, computer technology subject course work or even more specialized course in library science. The Graduate School of Library Science at Indiana now offers a Ph.D. in Library Science.

The Profile of Indiana University librarians, however, clearly indicates that librarians have an interest in research both in the present and future, and that if incentive were given, they would be even more productive in this area.

C. Teaching

Most librarians at Indiana University are engaged in teaching either on a formal or informal basis. This is easy to demonstrate at points of public service (branches, reference, documents, subject specialists, circulation.) The librarians are specialists in research methods and procedures, who are readily available, without appointment, throughout the day, for advice and consultation. The trend towards hiring subject specialists for areas such as history, English and African Studies as well as hiring branch librarians with specific subject training is evidence of that fact that the library takes very seriously the notion that librarians should serve to teach students not only how to find materials, but to delve into specific subjects bibliographically. It should be noted, too, that librarians are increasingly being called upon to teach formal courses of a bibliographical nature. Perhaps this is a reflection of the realization by departments that in order to expect scholarly research from their students that these students must be given formal training in bibliography rather than leave it up to their own initiative to come to the librarian for assistance. It seems perfectly logical that librarians should be asked to give students an introduction in research methodology and specific bibliography of a given subject area. At present, there are at least seven such courses being taught, by librarians at Indiana University.

Question might be raised as to how the teaching aspect of librarianship might be evaluated for any individual. Even if a librarian teaches a formal course, evidence of superior teaching is not easy to compile. However, Dean Carter's memo (October 7, 1968) to the chairmen of academic departments in which he poses a number of questions regarding evaluation of teaching indicates that it is not easy for teaching faculty's performance to be evaluated. Since few librarians work in isolation it might be easier to gain information of this kind from the head of the department in which he works. In the case of branch librarians and area specialists, the chairmen of the academic department with which he works might provide similar information. In cases when a librarian gives introductory lectures on library resources or when a librarian gives a course for credit, the students might be used as one source of information regarding excellence.

TENURE

The criteria for granting tenure as stated in the Faculty Handbook should be applied to librarians with the same amount of qualitative judgment as is used in evaluating teaching faculty. If librarians are given the same criteria for promotion as faculty members, there seems to be little difficulty in making the tenure recommendation equivalent. In the case when an individual is being considered for the rank of professor, the same procedure of outside consultation would be applicable for librarians. In other words, if librarians assume the responsibilities implied and stated in the criteria for promotion, there would be no difficulty giving tenure recommendation. This would assure that the library maintained a high standard of performance and that no person would be retained who did not meet the expected standards. However, serious discussions should take place at the outset to assure that no member of the library staff currently employed for longer than a given number of years (perhaps seven would be the most likely) would be penalized by the new system.

SABBATICALS

Librarians would apply for sabbatical leave on the same basis as teaching faculty now do. Since it is a definite trend to grant librarians the privilege of faculty rank, many more librarians are presumably mobile and might be utilized as replacements in much the same way as visiting faculty members are now used. A study of those schools granting bona fide faculty rank to librarians might make this possibility more concrete. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that some work could be absorbed by other librarians during such a period (an excellent example of this is that both directors of the library have gone away for extended periods of time in the past and one has absorbed the work of the other). We feel certain that since the academic departments have found ways to handle these problems, the library will be able to. Librarians would expect that their project proposals would receive the same kind of scrutiny which teaching faculty proposals now receive.

TITLES

There was some question by the University Library Committee as to what librarians' titles would be if they were given faculty rank. The title most consistent with the system which is in partial effect at Indiana University already would be the descriptive title of position within the library followed by the academic rank (ie. Associate Director of Libraries and Professor, Business Librarian and Assistant Professor). It seems desirable to create a title which would be most homogeneous with present titles so that there is some standardization.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

At the present time, members of the Indiana University library staff are concerned about qualitative changes in their status with respect to their involvement and participation in the academic community. We therefore do not wish presently to raise questions concerning whether a nine month or a twelve month contract is preferable or whether additional salary should be given for employment in the summer months. Such questions would inevitably raise budgetary problems which would obscure the major questions. However, many institutions which have granted rank to their professional librarians have either granted an additional percentage of salary for summer work or have made adjustment on an annual basis. Obviously the library must operate on a twelve month basis since the university is open during most of that time. However, in the future it might be argued that librarians be given the option of summer leave occasionally. This would not be considered sabbatical leave however.

We would encourage consideration at this time of two minor adjustments in the condition of employment which involve no major budget increases. There are some vacation benefits which teaching faculty now enjoy that might be given to librarians. Librarians at the minimum might be granted the Christmas and spring vacations which teaching faculty have for their own research. Possible consideration might be given to a reduction of work hours during the summer hours to thirty hours per week for example. Both of these benefits would encourage librarians to pursue professional problems which will be expected of them in acquiring promotion.

It seems clear from the Committee's investigation of Indiana University's librarians and comparisons with other institutions that librarians can and should be involved in the academic community of a university as faculty members. Not only does such a privilege increase the

incentive for quality work by librarians, but it also makes it possible for that institution to attract the best and most qualified librarians in the field. Not only are librarians attracted by the prestige of faculty rank, but also are encouraged to believe that an institution granting librarians rank would provide a dynamic and creative situation in which high standards were maintained and in which they could feel truly part of the academic community. The librarians at Indiana University wish to help create that kind of climate.

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Committee on Academic Status

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