

University Library Faculty Evaluation Criteria

Sonoma State University

Revised and Approved by Library Faculty, 3 March 2026

Approved by FSAC,

This document has been developed in accordance with the Sonoma State University Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) Policy and the CSU/California Faculty Association Collective Bargaining Agreement for Unit 3; those documents prevail.

Introduction

This document outlines the areas of evaluation and criteria for reappointment, tenure, and promotion for the University Library. The types of work librarians perform varies depending on their specialization and position within the library. Because librarians' roles differ from instructional faculty, evaluation for reappointment, tenure, and promotion must reflect those differences. Therefore, "Effectiveness as a Librarian" shall serve as equivalent to "Teaching Effectiveness" in the Library's RTP criteria.

The criteria listed under Effectiveness as a Librarian are most important. However, meeting the criteria in all areas of evaluation is necessary for reappointment, tenure, and promotion. Throughout the probationary period, the candidate should demonstrate progressive and ongoing involvement in each area of evaluation.

Activities

Librarians are dedicated to furthering Sonoma State University's mission of educational access and excellence through the provision of resources, programs, and services that enrich teaching, learning, and research. Librarians promote discovery of and access to information, support students in finding, accessing, evaluating, and attributing information, and provide guidance for research, publication, and scholarly communication. The Library's curriculum encompasses not only classroom instruction, but also collection development; preservation, archiving, and use of rare and unique materials; advocacy and outreach; instruction; administration of systems through which research and other scholarly materials are created, evaluated, disseminated, and preserved; and the provision of services, technology, and study spaces.

Effectiveness as a Librarian

Each librarian's job duties will vary according to their position description and job title. This list is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the duties and responsibilities of librarians; librarian roles continue to evolve to support the changing needs of researchers and students. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- Managing, coordinating, planning, and assessing programs, units, and services.
- Providing research assistance through multiple modalities.

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- Teaching in the library, which includes: curriculum-integrated (one-shot) instruction, credit-bearing or co-curricular courses, workshops, orientations, research consultations, digital learning object creation (tutorials, videos, and guides), and the training of library employees, including student assistants.
- Developing information literacy assignments, instructional materials, and curriculum in collaboration with individual faculty, committees, programs, and departments.
- Evaluating, selecting, and deselecting resources to support teaching, learning, and scholarship.
- Planning, implementing, managing, and evaluating technology and systems to support research, provide access to library resources and services, and foster scholarly communication.
- Collecting, describing, digitizing, preserving, displaying, promoting, and making accessible materials that have historical, artistic, or scholarly value to the campus and community.
- Managing and facilitating access to library spaces, physical collections, and facilities.
- Designing, promoting, and marketing library services and programs to faculty, students, and other constituents.

In addition, librarians may be responsible for administrative responsibilities in a unit or department and/or coordination between a number of units or departments. This may include:

- Establishing and demonstrating progress toward unit goals and objectives.
- Maintaining a constructive and productive work environment for unit employees.
- Planning and coordinating unit resources including staff, student employees, supplies, and equipment.
- Leading, motivating, training, and developing staff of varying backgrounds and abilities.
- Monitoring, scheduling, and directing unit employees.
- Communicating effectively with colleagues about the activities of the unit.

Participation in the management of the Library is a key part of what Librarians do; therefore, the Library defines participation in library department meetings and other operational entities as part of Effectiveness as a Librarian rather than University Service.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

Scholarship by academic librarians advances the fields of library and information science, influences the practices of professionals aligned with those fields, and informs effective advocacy for library users. Librarians' contributions to scholarship can take many forms including but not limited to the application of theory to practice, the development of professional standards and practices, and the development of theory and professional frameworks. All such contributions are equally valuable to increasing knowledge in the profession of librarianship.

The following activities are common forms of scholarship, research, creative achievement, and professional development for librarians. Other types of professional contributions may be presented if the candidate can demonstrate professional currency and relevance.

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- Authoring or co-authoring scholarly publications such as books, peer-reviewed journals, trade publications, and conference proceedings.
- Presenting research findings at conferences, workshops, and professional meetings.
- Developing creative work such as curated exhibitions, performances, creative writing, organized lecture series, and digital objects.
- Service to national or regional library associations may be included in this category if the work in the association includes contributions to the knowledge of the profession (development of standards, toolkits, etc.).
- Grant proposals

Service to the University, the Profession, and the Community

Library faculty are expected to participate in activities that benefit the Library, the campus, the CSU system, and the profession. Active participation and leadership in the life and governance of the University is expected of permanent library faculty.

Service outside the campus community, including service to the profession, can take many forms. It is important to disclose any financial interest or remuneration. Candidates are encouraged to work with their library colleagues to identify potential areas for service.

The following are common forms of service to the university, the profession, and the community:

- Library search committees
- University senate committees
- University-wide working groups
- CSU Library groups
- Statewide academic senate
- Advising a student organization
- Participating in a professional or community organization
- Consulting for a professional or community organization
- Volunteering for a professional or community event or program

Evaluation

Criteria

Effectiveness as a Librarian

To demonstrate effectiveness as a librarian, the candidate should address the following, as appropriate to their position description:

- A commitment to a diverse and inclusive student-centered learning environment.
- Awareness of student, faculty, and community research needs.
- Leadership within their functional area, including managing, coordinating, planning, and assessing programs, units, and services.
- Active participation in planning and management of the University Library.
- Awareness of ongoing changes in higher education and librarianship and the creativity and flexibility to respond to change effectively.

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- Collaborative, respectful, and consultative relationships with colleagues, the campus community, and library users.
- Excellence in teaching, which includes: inclusive, learner-centered pedagogies, use of active learning strategies appropriate to discipline and session type, and evidence-based instructional design drawing on information literacy scholarship.
- Comprehensive knowledge of information resources available to the Sonoma State University community.
- Understanding of library and information studies concepts, trends, and issues, particularly in terms of how they affect the candidate's position description.
- Participation in Library outreach, actively representing the Library on campus.
- Development of assessment plans to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and initiatives in order to make evidence-based decisions about services, instructional methods, collections, and technology systems and structures.
- Awareness of CSU system-wide initiatives and their impact on areas of assigned responsibility as well as on student experience.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

Candidates are encouraged to pursue activities that support the Library's strategic goals, relate to their unique responsibilities, and contribute to the field of academic librarianship.

The candidate's record in this area must demonstrate professional currency and growth. In their self-assessment, it is the candidate's responsibility to explain how the record presented demonstrates significant, relevant, and current professional contribution. Scholarship must be in a form that can be shared with peers and must be capable of being evaluated. It should be clearly stated if a work is in progress, has been submitted, has been accepted, or has been published or issued.

- Scholarly publications are strong accomplishments, but other publications that make a substantive contribution to the library or intellectual community are acceptable.
- Presentations are assessed by the content, preparation, the forum to which they are delivered, and the impact on the profession.
- Service work is assessed by the output of the committee or organization and its impact on the profession.
- Grant proposals are assessed by the content, research required, and the impact on the profession and/or the Library's mission.
- Creative work is assessed by the content, preparation, the forum to which it is delivered, and the impact on the profession and/or the community.
- Continuing education is assessed for its impact on the candidate's ability to implement significant programs, advocate for students, and assess and plan for program development

Service to the University, the Profession, and the Community

Per the university's RTP policy, it is expected that candidates perform service to the university, the profession, and the community. The Library expects all tenure-track faculty to serve on senate governance committees within the university. Additional university service such as search committees or working groups are valued but are not substitutes. In addition, candidates should engage with the profession and the community. In their

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self-assessment, candidates should describe progressive growth in service to the university, profession, and community.

Librarian Ranks

The terminology in effect for academic ranks of classroom faculty applies to library faculty as follows:

Instructional faculty:

Instructor
Assistant Professor
Associate Professor
Professor

Librarian faculty:

Assistant Librarian
Senior Assistant Librarian
Associate Librarian
Librarian

Reappointment

Effectiveness as a Librarian

During the first year of employment, the candidate should focus documentation and activities on Effectiveness as a Librarian. This more limited focus allows librarians time to become familiar with the campus and with library programs and operations, to evaluate needs and form plans for their areas of responsibilities, and to develop a research agenda.

Candidates' self-assessments should highlight the context and relevance of their activities and achievements, and not simply reiterate what is listed in the vitae. The self-assessment should reflect a narrative of professional growth, including examples of plans and progress made toward them. While each professional story will vary based on the position, the candidate should describe, analyze, and reflect on their work, including a plan for improvement and documentation of learning and growth over time with a clear path and evolution from early probationary years to later years. Each successive year the candidate should indicate how strategies changed, what they learned, what new goals were set, or what was done in response to new information, data, and results.

Research, Scholarship, Professional Development, and Creative Activity

During the first year, candidates should be focused on developing a research agenda (determining an area of focus, identifying potential research projects and venues for sharing research, etc.). Each subsequent year, candidates should demonstrate continued growth, even if publications, presentations, or other output were not completed in that year. It's not necessary that candidates produce scholarly output annually, but candidates should describe whatever work is being undertaken to further their research projects.

Service to the University, the Profession, and the Community

Candidates should demonstrate ongoing participation in at least one governance committee, and a commitment to understanding and engaging in the life of the university. Candidates should also demonstrate a developing commitment to service in the community.

Tenure

Tenure is usually awarded to a candidate whose professional narrative, as described above, shows growth and excellence throughout all probationary years. The narrative

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should demonstrate clearly that they have achieved a level of outstanding performance in all areas of evaluation.

Effectiveness as a Librarian

Outstanding performance is demonstrated through the candidate's ability to plan and implement successful projects and initiatives within their area of expertise, and through a mature understanding of the University and its community. It is also reflected in the candidate's flexibility and use of data to make evidence-based decisions and to respond effectively to the changing information landscape and to the needs of campus constituencies. The award of tenure indicates that progress has been clearly demonstrated, that a librarian has achieved significant accomplishments, and that their contributions have been recognized by faculty peers. Tenure also indicates that the University and the Library are undertaking a long-term relationship with, and investment in, the successful candidate.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

Tenure is awarded to candidates who can demonstrate progressive learning, a mature and focused research agenda, and meaningful contributions to the profession. The candidate should address the impact or potential impact of their research in their self-assessment.

Service to the University, the Profession, and the Community

Candidates should demonstrate leadership in university governance and engagement in the life of the university, and the ability to make connections between the work of the library and of university governance. Candidates should also demonstrate meaningful contributions to the community.

Promotion

Effectiveness as a Librarian

Promotion is based on the candidate's record of achievement and potential for continuing growth in, as well as a demonstrated commitment to the mission of the University and the Library. Consideration for promotion must take into account the candidate's record of performance during all years since appointment or promotion to the present rank at Sonoma State University.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

Promotion is based on a candidate's record of achievement, demonstration of continued learning and ongoing effort toward furthering the knowledge of the profession. Ideally, candidates will have produced work that demonstrates a richer and more developed understanding of key ideas, research methods, and developing approaches in the field. Candidates should address how their scholarship has developed over time.

Service to the University, the Profession, and the Community

Candidates should demonstrate ongoing engagement with university governance and a willingness to take on leadership roles.

Senior Assistant Librarian to Associate Librarian

The candidate should demonstrate increasingly active involvement in all areas of evaluation over the evaluation period. Promotion to this rank requires evidence of

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substantial contributions in all categories of evaluation. While not necessarily linked to the application for tenure, evaluation for promotion at this level is usually concurrent with evaluation for the award of tenure, and candidates should keep in mind the above description of significant progress at this level of promotion.

Associate Librarian to Librarian

In order to be promoted to full Librarian, a candidate must have an outstanding record of leadership in the Library and on campus. At this level it is understood that the candidate already has achieved distinction in all categories of evaluation, including a strong record of scholarship or creative achievement. To demonstrate achievement beyond the level required for the rank of Associate Librarian, the candidate should show continued leadership in campus life. A candidate should be able to highlight examples of their impact on the campus community and as an influential professional in the field of librarianship. Librarians at this level will be recognized for showing leadership in various ways: mentoring new faculty, infusing the perspective of our profession into the culture of our campus, taking responsibility for resolving crucial issues in the Library, making significant contributions to CSU system-wide initiatives, and above all by going beyond merely supporting our University mission into actively influencing its direction.

Evidence

Consult Academic Affairs website for current policy, procedures and timelines.¹ Evidence for the WPAF differs from instructional faculty; student evaluations of teaching are not included in librarian files. Peer evaluative letters of effectiveness as a librarian are substituted for student evaluations. The candidate’s documentation for evaluation will include:

1st TT Year at SSU - Periodic Review	2nd PY/2nd TT - Performance Review	3rd & 5th PY - Periodic Review	4th PY, 6th PY Tenure & Promotion - Performance Review
Position description	Position description	Position description	Position description
CV	CV (with changes since previous review highlighted)	CV (with changes since previous review highlighted)	CV (with changes since previous review highlighted)
Self-assessment (typically no more than two pages)	Self-assessment (typically no more than seven pages)	Self-assessment (typically no more than two pages)	Self-assessment (typically no more than seven pages)
1 peer observation	2 peer observations	1 peer observation	2 peer observations

¹<http://academicaffairs.sonoma.edu/faculty-affairs/tenured-faculty/re-appointment-tenure-promotion>

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At least 2 evaluative letters that address effectiveness as a librarian OR 1 evaluative letter and reflections on student experience (ROSE)	At least 3 evaluative letters OR 2 evaluative letters and reflections on student experience (ROSE)	At least 2 evaluative letters OR 1 evaluative letter and reflections on student experience (ROSE)	At least 3 evaluative letters OR 2 evaluative letters and reflections on student experience (ROSE)
Index of appropriate evidence	Index of appropriate evidence	Index of appropriate evidence	Index of appropriate evidence

Self-assessments should detail the candidate’s mission, vision, or goals for leading their program area, and reflect on progress made, and areas for future growth. If applicable, the candidate should describe how they adapted to changing operational conditions, professional standards, or barriers. The self-assessment in a periodic review year should cover exemplary highlights, while a performance review self-assessment should be more comprehensive.

Peer observations are provided as supplementary evidence of a librarian’s effectiveness. These observations must be written by faculty members and at least one observation must be written by a tenured faculty member.

For librarians whose primary work assignment is student instruction, peer observations must be drawn from the teaching of students, and at least one observation must be from the instruction coordinator or a designee. If the instruction coordinator is not tenured, a tenured designee must be selected in years when the candidate is submitting only one peer observation.

For librarians whose work assignment does not include instruction of students, the peer observation(s) should be an observation of an activity representative of their primary area of responsibility. For librarians whose primary work assignment is not instruction but who regularly provide instruction to students as a liaison, in performance review years, one observation must be drawn from the teaching of students. Guidelines for peer observation developed by the library faculty should be followed.

Evaluative letters are intended to provide primary evidence for effectiveness as a librarian. Letters should be solicited from people who work with the candidate in different capacities, faculty or staff, and an effort should be made to receive evaluative letters from different people in each probationary year. Evaluative letters may be provided by someone outside of the library; the letter writer must be able to address the criteria in this document and speak to effectiveness as a librarian. At least one evaluative letter must be from another member of the library faculty. Librarians that have taught credit-bearing courses since their last review are required to include Reflections on Student Experience (ROSE). ROSE data can take the place of one evaluative letter.

In addition to the aforementioned documents, candidates should collect and make available supplementary evidence; an index of supplementary materials is required in the WPAF. These items may include but are not limited to:

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- Documented examples of outstanding solutions to Library problems: specific reports for which the individual had significant responsibility; plans originated by the candidate involving significant projects which reflect initiative, originality, and organizational ability.
- Course syllabi, assignment prompts, lesson plans, or instructional materials that demonstrate excellence in teaching.
- Written observations by faculty, staff or students of presentations, seminars and workshops.
- Communications of exceptional research help or consultation services provided.
- Samples of exemplary or innovative materials the candidate has developed, including research guides, web-based materials, procedure or training manuals, tools to facilitate communication of complex processes, grant proposals, images of displays created, ephemera representing events planned by the candidate, reports, and curriculum materials.
- Copies of or links to published materials.
- Documented examples of contributions outside of the profession.
- Letters of appointment or appreciation, or letters of recommendation.
- Recognition of outstanding achievement or promise in the field as evidenced by award of fellowships, honorary appointments, prizes, or grants.
- Evidence of community service: letters of appreciation, civic honors, and awards.
- Evidence of continuing education: transcripts, certificates, and diplomas.

Committee Reviews of Candidate Files

RTP Committee reviews should evaluate the librarian's progress towards tenure and promotion and identify any areas that need further work. If requirements for tenure are not being met during the probationary period, a plan to remedy identified deficiencies should be discussed between the Dean, the Library RTP committee, and the candidate. If such a plan has been established, progress should be outlined in the self-assessment.