University Policy on Academic Professionals

"Academic Professional" is a special library faculty designation for those with terminal academic or professional degrees whose primary responsibilities lie outside of classroom instruction or research but whose work assignment provides necessary support within and for the academic program. Academic professionals have the requisite preparation, specialized knowledge, and academic preparation characteristic of teaching faculty. Though not expected to be research scholars, academic professionals are expected to maintain their engagement in the scholarly dimension of their work, in the educational and academic life of the university, and in the academic and professional organizations relevant to their work responsibilities. They are expected to demonstrate their service to the university community, to a religious community by active participation in a local congregation or parish, and to the larger community beyond the university.

Academic Professionals are eligible for assignment to university, college and school, and departmental faculty committees, with the exception of committees that evaluate and make recommendations regarding the appointments of candidates for tenure and tenure-track positions and committees that make recommendations regarding the dismissal of tenured and tenure-track faculty members.

Probationary Term for Academic Professionals

Each newly-appointed academic professional will serve a four-year probationary period. If at any of the academic professional's annual reviews during the probationary period a decision is made that the individual's performance does not meet expectations, the dean or dean's designee may recommend that the academic professional be given a terminal letter of appointment. Notice of the intention not to reappoint an academic professional shall be given in writing in accord with the following calendar:

a. First probationary year

   1. If the term of the appointment corresponds to the normal academic year calendar, no later than March 1 of the first year of probationary service.

   2. If the term of the appointment does not correspond to the normal academic year calendar, at least three months in advance of the scheduled end of the appointment.

b. Second and third probationary years

   1. If the term of the appointment corresponds to the normal academic year calendar, no later than December 15 of the second or third year of probationary service.

2. If the term of the appointment does not correspond to the normal academic year calendar, at least six months in advance of the scheduled end of the second or third year appointment.

c. Review (fourth) year

1. During the fourth year of consecutive full-time service at Baylor, the performance of and need for the academic professional will be formally reviewed. The review will be initiated by a designee of the dean of the academic unit, in consultation with that dean. The academic professional will submit to the dean's designee a letter explaining why he or she should be awarded a continuing appointment, along with a notebook containing relevant supporting documentation. The administrator will solicit and receive comments from those individuals who are in a position to assess the academic professional's performance.

2. By November 15, the dean's designee will submit a recommendation to the Dean either that the academic professional be given notice that his or her appointment will terminate at the end of the current appointment or that he or she has successfully completed the probationary period and will be awarded a continuing appointment. The Dean will then promptly submit a recommendation to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will, in turn, communicate a recommendation to the President.

3. Following consultation with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and the relevant dean, the President shall make the decision regarding whether the academic professional will be given notice that his or her appointment will not be renewed or that he or she will be awarded a three-year continuing appointment beginning with the academic professional's fifth year of service. The President will communicate this decision in writing to the academic professional by December 15 of the fourth probationary year.

Continuing Appointments for Academic Professionals

Academic Professionals who are retained following the four-year probationary period will be awarded a three-year continuing appointment, and may be reappointed to additional three-year terms. Thereafter if the decision is made not to reappoint an academic professional, he or she will be notified in writing by December 15 of the third year of the academic professional's three-year continuing appointment. In that case, the academic professional's continuing appointment will end with the completion of the third year and will not be renewed.

Annual Performance Review of Academic Professionals on Continuing Appointments

Each academic professional will review with the dean's designee, at the time of employment and each year thereafter, the expectations for his or her specific position. Following the four-year probationary period, if the academic professional is awarded a three-year continuing appointment, the calendar for the appointment will be extended to reflect the immediate up-coming 10 month/ 2 month academic calendar in order for the timing of the annual performance review to be consistent with other annual reviews in the Academic Division.

Thereafter, by February 15, annually, each academic professional will be evaluated according to the established performance criteria for his or her specific position and rank. The dean's designee will review the performance assessment personally with the individual being evaluated. The conference will center upon the specific strengths and weaknesses of the individual's performance in the appropriate areas over the preceding year and expectations for his or her performance in the appropriate areas for the coming year. If an individual's performance is deemed marginal or unsatisfactory, the dean's designee and/or the dean should encourage and support the individual who seeks to overcome these deficiencies, should make specific recommendations for improvement, and should outline specific ways in which the academic unit can support the academic professional to make the necessary improvements. By March 1 the dean will submit to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs specific recommendations for merit increases based on the results of the annual performance reviews.

Dismissal of Academic Professional

Refer to the "Faculty Dismissal Policy" in the Baylor University Faculty Handbook. The same policies and procedures apply to academic professionals as to any other faculty member without tenure.

Criteria for Promotion for Academic Professionals: Library

Baylor University recognizes the value of a ranking system and operates on the principle that promotion from one rank to a higher one should never be considered automatic but rather should be based upon merit. The University also recognizes that academic professionals should be distributed through the various ranks and that rank should be reflected in compensation, although academic professionals at every rank deserve respect for the contribution they make to the University. The purpose of the University's promotion policy is to ensure that, after a fully documented review, the University recognizes by title – Interim Librarian, Assistant Librarian, Associate Librarian, Librarian – the contributions of Baylor academic professionals to constituencies of the University and the larger society

which they serve. To qualify for promotion to these designated ranks, successful applicants normally must demonstrate the following characteristics and minimum qualifications.

Interim Librarian: An Interim Librarian is an academic professional hired to fill temporary positions within the University Libraries. The Interim Librarian must hold a professional degree from an ALA-accredited school of library and/or information science.

Assistant Librarian: An Assistant Librarian must hold a professional degree from an ALA-accredited school of library and/or information science and should show promise of contributing in significant ways to the work of the University Libraries and to the mission of the University. An Assistant Librarian is expected to contribute to the advancement of librarianship through visible professional activities, particularly as these contribute to the achievement of library objectives in the context of his or her workload and assigned responsibilities. In addition, as with all academic professionals, Assistant Librarians are expected to maintain engagement in the scholarly dimension of their work, in the educational and academic life of the university, and in the academic and professional organizations relevant to their work responsibilities. They are also expected to demonstrate their service to the university community, to a religious community by active participation in a local congregation or parish, and to the larger community beyond the university.

Associate Librarian: An Associate Librarian must hold a professional degree from an ALA-accredited school of library and/or information science and have at least six years of successful experience as a librarian. An Associate Librarian must demonstrate a substantial command of assigned areas of professional responsibility and show evidence of growth and development within the scope of these responsibilities. An Associate Librarian must have established and maintained a record of visible, active contribution to the progress of services and operations of the University Libraries. In addition, as with all academic professionals, Associate Librarians are expected to maintain their engagement in the scholarly dimension of their work, in the educational and academic life of the university, and in the academic and professional organizations relevant to their work responsibilities. They are also expected to demonstrate their service to the university community, to a religious community by active participation in a local congregation or parish, and to the larger community beyond the university.

Librarian: A Librarian must hold a professional degree from an ALA-accredited school of library and/or information science and have at least 15 years of successful experience as a librarian. A Librarian must demonstrate a high

level of professional expertise in assigned areas of professional responsibility and show evidence of exceptional growth and development within the scope of these responsibilities over a period of years. A Librarian must have established and maintained a record of visible, active contribution that goes beyond what might normally be expected within the scope of assigned responsibilities and that has had a significant impact on the progress of services and operations of the University Libraries. In addition, as with all academic professionals, Associate Librarians are expected to maintain their engagement in the scholarly dimension of their work, in the educational and academic life of the university, and in the academic and professional organizations relevant to their work responsibilities. They are also expected to demonstrate their service to the university community, to a religious community by active participation in a local congregation or parish, and to the larger community beyond the university.

Salary Increases

The academic professional earning a promotion should also receive an appropriate salary increase reflecting the promotion in rank. Whenever budgetary constraints make such an increase impracticable in any particular year, the academic professional should receive an increase at the next budget period when funds are available. Promotions should not be delayed because of financial constraints. Conversely, promotions must be earned through these promotion policy guidelines and not be used as substitutes for salary increases.

Compensation and Benefits

Regular academic year letters of appointment for full-time academic professionals specify a level of compensation for the full term of the appointment in 12 equal installments over the full calendar year.

Academic professionals will receive the same financial and fringe benefits and academic resources provided to tenured and tenure-track faculty. These can be found in the Faculty Handbook under "Faculty Benefits" and "Academic Resources." The only exceptions are Research Leaves and summer sabbaticals. Academic professionals are eligible to apply for "professional leaves" rather than Research Leaves or summer sabbaticals. At the discretion of the dean, professional leaves will be granted contingent upon approval of an acceptable professional development proposal and available funding.

Academic Freedom

Academic professionals in the library are entitled to the protection of academic freedom as set forth in the American Association of University Professors' 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. As faculty,

academic professionals in the library participate in the peer relationships that characterize the academic community (i.e. classroom teaching, one-on-one instruction, committee participation), and they are covered equally by academic freedom safeguards.

A fundamental tenet of the library profession is the protection of intellectual freedom. Therefore censorship and confidentiality are areas of academic freedom that are of particular concern for librarians. Academic professionals in the library must be allowed to exercise their professional judgment when making decisions regarding collection development and access to information. Furthermore, academic professionals in the library need to have the ability to protect user privacy and the confidentiality of user interactions with the library, such as library records and reference interviews.

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