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### Library Criteria for the Promotion and Tenure of Faculty Librarians

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**Library Criteria for the  
Promotion and Tenure of Faculty Librarians**

**Revised March 2022**

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# Library Criteria for Promotion and Tenure

## Librarianship

Within the context of a librarian's evaluation, librarianship shall be considered that body of work which constitutes the primary roles for which the individual was hired. Typically, the elements comprising librarianship for an individual will differ based on the particular position and its library department. For an instruction/liaison librarian, for instance, librarianship would normally encompass activities in instruction, collection development, reference, outreach, and other liaison support to certain academic departments. **In terms of the usual tenure evaluation criteria of teaching, scholarship, and service, librarianship takes the place of teaching in librarians' evaluations.**

The library's primary role is to support the teaching, learning, and research mission of the university and its faculty. Librarians will be evaluated in this category most strongly on how their performance in particular roles—collection development, organization of knowledge, reference, instruction, systems, or management—contributes to effective teaching and to faculty research. While some librarians hold positions in which contact with our users is frequent and easily seen as teaching-oriented, this does not imply that other positions cannot be evaluated for the same values nor that they are any less “faculty” in nature. In other words, librarianship will be considered as a related but different category of activity from teaching. Librarians will be evaluated on the quality of their librarianship in all of its appropriate facets, not on whether librarians model the teaching activities of other faculty. Implementation of computer systems and original cataloging of materials, for example, should both be based on priorities that consider the effects on our users and their academic success. Additionally, it is expected that librarians will demonstrate strong abilities as generalists, performing effectively in various departmental disciplines as selectors, reference experts, and information literacy instructors. Strong generalist skills will be preferred over narrow specialization, particularly among instruction librarians.

### Expectations of the department

Based on the library's mission within this university, librarianship will receive the majority of weight when a candidate for promotion or tenure is evaluated.

Evidence of effective librarianship may be demonstrated by (but not limited to) the following:

- Development of productive liaison relationships with the faculty and students of designated departments;
- Effective teaching of information literacy content within other faculty members' classes and in co-curricular activities;

- Development, implementation, and assessment of programs that encourage information literacy in our users;
- Effective teaching of full-length courses, such as First Year Experience, when information literacy is a key learning outcome;
- Effective point-of-use instruction with library users through individual consultations, electronic assistance, and so on;
- Creation of user assistance materials that serve curricular objectives, such as tutorials, subject guides, digital learning objects, and other tangible information products;
- Development and implementation of effective methods and systems for organizing, classifying, cataloging, or otherwise making information resources easily discoverable by users;
- Development and implementation of effective methods of acquiring materials through purchase, licensing, resource sharing, or donation;
- Development and implementation of effective methods of soliciting, ingesting, curating, disseminating, and promoting university-produced scholarship, documents, and records;
- Effective management of library collections through: budgeting; assessment of collection strengths, weaknesses, and use; selection and deselection in assigned areas; communication and negotiation with vendors; and preservation or curation in all formats;
- Effective management of library staff in the pursuit of work that supports university teaching and research;
- Design and implementation of systems that enhance staff work productivity, analysis and assessment of resources and user needs, etc.;
- Outreach programs which inform and involve those on campus who may not be aware of what the library offers, as well as improving relationships with Trinity alumni, donors, and other people with connections to the university.

As exemplified by the previous list, librarianship at an academic library is characterized by team processes and frequent communication within a complex organization. Librarians cannot be effective unless they are effective in a collegial environment. Candidates will be evaluated in librarianship on their competence in communication and other interpersonal skills that relate to their roles.

When candidates are evaluated during formal reviews, all relevant areas of librarianship will be considered. However, certain areas which are core to a particular position will receive the greatest weight, and failure to perform commendably in these core areas will be considered especially problematic for continued appointment during the probationary period, as well as for promotion and tenure. These core areas will be defined clearly for each librarian at the beginning of the probationary period and whenever these core areas are substantially changed.

## Scholarship, Research, or Professional or Artistic Achievements

The university “Criteria for Reappointment and Tenure,” (*Faculty Handbook*) states that scholarship should be considered important, though nothing supersedes the importance of teaching or librarianship. Scholarship encompasses activities which engage the individual in additional learning related to an appropriate area of inquiry, which is then made available to other professionals through publication or other tangible means. Professional achievement is often a significant factor for librarians, who do considerable collaborative work in professional organizations. Professional achievement includes those activities in which a librarian is distinguished in terms of professional recognition or responsibilities, such as election to an office, appointment to an editorial board, or involvement in the creation of professional standards, guidelines, etc. General participation in professional organizations, including service as a committee member or chair, should be considered professional service and not professional achievement.

### Expectations of the department

Librarians should demonstrate steady involvement in scholarship throughout their careers. This will sometimes result in traditional publications, such as journal articles or monographs. Librarians’ involvement in the evaluation of materials also may result in the writing of book and other media reviews. However, other demonstrations of scholarship and professional achievement are also valued. While scholarship published in national, peer-reviewed sources has significant value, alternatives at the regional level and even within the campus may also receive favorable consideration. Librarians are encouraged to explore issues and problems concerning the library’s services to our users, develop informed programs, and communicate the results to other educators or professionals to improve these services. Additional education that supports the changing needs of the campus is another form of scholarship that suits the library’s mission. In all cases, scholarly activity should be documented in some tangible form that allows for disseminating this information to other educators or professionals.

Since librarianship is a highly collaborative profession, it should be expected that many scholarly activities will result in co-authored projects and publications. In fact, the nature of this collaborative scholarship—the integration of the perspectives of different library units, campus departments, or academic disciplines—may often add to the value of the work. When this work is reviewed for its merit in the promotion and tenure process, candidates for promotion should indicate the degree of their contributions to the work.

Alternatives to traditional peer-reviewed printed publications will receive full consideration. Shorter and practical presentations of scholarship, such as poster sessions and presentations at conferences, may sufficiently demonstrate effective scholarly learning and publication to peers. Working papers that are disseminated beyond the library, via Trinity’s digital repository, may frequently be more useful to other professionals than traditional journal articles. These materials should be evaluated on their cogency and contribution to the profession, as evidenced by the

evaluation of qualified reviewers and, when available, metrics such as citations and number of downloads from a repository. The quality of an instance of scholarship will be evaluated principally by the department and external reviewers, rather than outsourced to publishers or based on metrics such as impact factor.

Some types of publication may seem similar to activities considered under the categories of librarianship or service. This is also an issue for teaching faculty, who may offer one lecture as a part of his or her teaching, another as a conference presentation considered scholarship, and a third for a local organization as a form of service. Assigning an appropriate category will depend on characteristics such as the audience of the work, its long-term value vs. immediacy of purpose, and its depth of intellectual content.

It is normal and acceptable for a new librarian with probationary status to come to Trinity without an established research agenda. The department expects that librarians will show initiative in scholarship by the second-year formal review and show evidence of continued progress at subsequent reviews. To receive tenure, the candidate must have demonstrated evidence of successful scholarly achievements and the ability to continue this work in the future.

Evidence of effective scholarship, research, or other professional or artistic achievements may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Publications, including but not limited to journal articles, books, book chapters, and web-based publications; or work as editor for any of these types of sources. Peer-review provides additional evidence of quality, but its absence does not invalidate the value of the work.
- Reviews of books or other media
- Activity as a publication referee or on editorial boards
- Presentations at scholarly or professional conferences
- Poster sessions at conferences
- Original cataloging of library materials
- Bibliographies or other substantial user guides
- Curation of significant library exhibits
- Grants received
- user training materials or other instructional media that teach users how to do research or use a library
- Professional guidelines or training materials
- Contributions to professional clearinghouses, such as LOEX and ERIC
- Awards and honors
- Additional education that results in tangible dissemination of related scholarship
- Significant analysis of library collections or services, disseminated internally or externally, that clearly relates current problems and solutions to other scholarship informing those issues.

## **Service**

Librarians have a unique role on campus, as much of our activity as faculty is directly in service to other departments. Because service is integral to our work as librarians, many activities that serve others on campus will therefore be classified as librarianship rather than service.

### Expectations of the department

Our department values traditional university service (such as university committees, the Senate, UCC, and Commission on Promotion and Tenure), because this participation enhances communication and relationships between the library and teaching faculty. Service, especially to the university, is weighted heavily by our department. Types of service for which librarians will be evaluated may include the following:

1. University service: This includes service outside of one's normal librarian role, such as participation on university committees, other forms of campus governance, student advising, student recruitment activities, and similar contributions to the mission of the university.
2. Departmental service: This includes contributions to the mission of the library outside of one's normal responsibilities, such as participation in interdepartmental committees, personnel searches, special projects, events, and so on.
3. Professional service: This includes participation in and contributions to the profession of librarianship principally through activities with professional and scholarly organizations. When those contributions to the profession result in tangible outcomes, including but not limited to published guidelines, training materials, best practices, and conferences, they should be considered under the category of scholarship and professional achievements rather than service.
4. Community service: Librarians are encouraged to use their knowledge and skills to contribute to the community in which our university operates through consultation, volunteer activities, and other forms of assistance.

### **Differences in Expectations of Performance:**

#### **Promotion to Associate Professor and to Professor**

Promotion to associate professor with tenure at Trinity University is based on a candidate's demonstration of effectiveness in the three major areas of review, as well as the candidate's demonstration of promise for the future. Considerable weight will be given to evidence that the candidate has progressed in effectiveness from the time of hire through the tenure review.

To achieve promotion from associate professor to professor, the candidate must demonstrate a record of outstanding performance of required responsibilities and additional activities that suggest the candidate's initiative and innovation as a professional and faculty member. An outstanding record is one in which the candidate can establish evidence for his or her continued development after promotion to associate professor that exhibits a level of mastery, distinction, and/or professional reputation. This should not suggest that the candidate's activity must be of national character or scope. The activity may well be regional or local, but the quality of the work should be sufficient to merit significant recognition.

The department's weighting of the criteria does not change between ranks; librarianship continues to be weighted most heavily for the promotion to professor, followed by scholarship and service. The successful candidate will have established a record of excellence in these areas and will have demonstrated his or her abilities as a leader and mentor in the profession. Such leadership can be managerial, communicative, or intellectual in nature, and can manifest itself in any aspect of professional activity.

The tenured members of the library faculty will follow all normal university procedures for the promotion-to-professor process as noted in the Faculty Handbook.

### Evidence expected for promotion:

	Examples of Evidence	To Associate Professor with tenure	To Professor
Librarianship	Liaison activities; information literacy programs; research consultations; curricular support materials; organizing, classifying, or managing resources; managing staff effectively.	Commendable performance in core areas; competence or demonstrated promise in other areas of responsibility.	Consistent pattern of growth and professional development that is considered by peers to exhibit mastery and distinction in librarianship; innovations with long-lasting influence; positive impact on the university's mission.
Scholarship/Professional Achievements	Journal articles; monographs; reviews; professional presentations and poster sessions; original cataloging; working papers; substantial research guides; major library exhibits; grants; significant website content.	Demonstrated ability to produce useful scholarship or professional achievements and to continue this achievement throughout the career; quantity of this work is secondary to quality.	Contribution of scholarly and creative products and activities to the professional or academic discourse that demonstrates maturity and depth of thought as well as usefulness to the university or the profession.
Service	University committees or other governance activities; student recruitment efforts; professional and scholarly organization activities; community volunteer work.	Effective departmental and university service.	Significant departmental, university, and professional or community service with an emphasis on activities that support library and university goals; engagement in leadership activities at the library, university, and professional levels that lead to improvements in the activities and functions of those entities.

## Documentation for Candidates for Promotion and Tenure

[This document is a departmental revision of text found in the *Faculty Handbook*, Chapter 2B. Changes concern examples of activities that are more appropriate for librarianship than for teaching and in procedures for selecting external reviewers.]

*The Constitution of the Faculty Organization at Trinity University, Article V.A.1* instructs members of the Commission on Promotion and Tenure to “review every departmental recommendation to grant or deny tenure, or to grant or deny promotion, to a member of the faculty. In making its review and formulating its recommendations, the Commission shall have as its primary concern the maintenance of fair and objective standards for peer-review decisions across the University.” Evaluations of each candidate are to be based on the criteria stated in *Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Employment of Faculty (Policy Statement) Article IV.G*:

- “1. Quality of librarianship,
2. Quality of scholarship, research, or professional or artistic achievements, and
3. Service to the department, the University, the profession, and the community.”

In preparing documentation addressing the above criteria, candidates and departments should follow guidelines below in order to provide the most complete and informative presentations to the Commission.

In particular, candidates and departments are encouraged to submit materials in a common format, not only in the documentation but in addressing each of the criteria. The experience of the Commission indicates that the inclusion of certain critical items in a uniform way facilitates fairness and more informed decisions. Of particular importance to the Commission is the review by each tenured member of the department, including the Chair, and the Chair’s written statement of the departmental recommendation including a summary of the reasons for this recommendation (see *Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Employment of Faculty (Policy Statement), Article IV.E*). Because the documentation will, under normal circumstances, include outside evaluations of the candidate’s scholarship, research, and professional or artistic achievements, each department shall devise a clearly stated policy for selecting outside evaluators and shall clearly describe the task which outside evaluators should perform.

To assist the candidate and the department, the Commission on Promotion and Tenure recommends the following format, which has been modified by the library faculty:

- I. A brief guide to the submitted material (i.e., a Table of Contents).
- II. A written explanation of:
  - a. The procedures of the department.

- b. The relative weight of the criteria stated in: *Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Employment of Faculty (Policy Statement) Article IV.G.*
- III. A description of any agreement between the University and the applicant concerning specific duties during the evaluation period, and an explanation of how this agreement should affect the relative weight of the three general criteria.
- IV. A current expanded curriculum vitae.
  - a. Include standard entries pertaining to:
    - i. Education;
    - ii. Current and previous professional experience;
    - iii. Library responsibilities;
    - iv. Scholarly and professional or artistic achievements;
    - v. Service to department, University, profession and community;
    - vi. Honors and awards.
  - b. Identify bibliographical items carefully, using standardized citations and complete information on each entry. Indicate refereed articles or presentations, primary author and approximate percentage of contribution in multi-authored works, specific information about grants or fellowships, status of works-in-progress or works submitted for publication.
- V. A self-evaluation based on the three general criteria identified in *Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Employment of Faculty (Policy Statement) Article IV.G.* The Commission emphasizes the importance of this document and urges the candidate to take great care in its preparation and to address each of the criteria: librarianship, research/professional/artistic achievement, and service.
  - a. Librarianship. Describe your major areas of responsibility and the activities that they have required. Describe goals, philosophy, expectations. Indicate how you have contributed to the department's and University's expectations on librarianship.
  - b. Scholarship, research and/or professional or artistic achievement. Describe goals, philosophy, expectations. Indicate your areas of interest and achievements in terms of publications, presentations, performances, exhibitions, and other forms of intellectual expression. Discuss the quality of the journals or conferences where your work appeared, the refereed nature of your publications or presentations, or whether your contributions were invited. Include data on citations, downloads, and links. Provide information on future research goals.
  - c. Service. Describe your University, professional, and community activities. Discuss their impact on your self-development and on the other criteria.
- VI. Information concerning librarianship. Under normal circumstances this may include:
  - a. Campus user evaluations: feedback from students, faculty, and staff on the effectiveness of services provided for them by the librarian. (It is suggested that

persons submitting materials for promotion to professor should only include evaluations since their promotion to associate professor.)

- b. Instructional or other course-related materials, such as research guides and tutorials.
  - c. Descriptions of participation in the development/assessment of curricular objectives with teaching faculty.
  - d. Implementation of programs that encourage information literacy among our users.
  - e. Implementation of effective methods of making information resources easily discoverable, including creating metadata and finding aids, managing third-party applications that integrate with local data, and so on.
  - f. Implementation of effective methods of acquiring materials through purchase, licensing, resource sharing, or donation.
  - g. Implementation of effective methods of soliciting, ingesting, and curating university-produced scholarship and official documents and records.
  - h. Implementation of effective management of library collections through budgeting, qualitative and quantitative assessment of collection strengths and weaknesses, selection and deselection, and preservation.
  - i. Documentation of effective management of library staff in their pursuit of work that supports university teaching and research.
- VII. Evidence of scholarship, professional achievement, and artistic achievement. Under normal circumstances this will include:
- a. Lists of publications, including journal articles, proceedings, presentations, exhibits, and creative works.
  - b. Copies of publications. If publication is a portion of a collective work or a reference work, a photocopy of the candidate's contribution is sufficient.
  - c. Links to web-based publications or websites.
  - d. Reviews of books, plays, performances, exhibitions, findings.
  - e. Examples of original cataloging and other high-level metadata creation activities.
  - f. Reports of significant activities and analyses that required research and professional application to issues and problems in librarianship.
  - g. Evaluations by peers internal and external to the University. Inclusion of the following is required:
    - i. Procedures of the department in selecting external reviewers,
    - ii. Information solicited and materials provided to the reviewer, and
    - iii. Biographical information on the external reviewer.
  - h. Descriptions and examples of written research proposals.
  - i. Descriptions of grants received.

- j. Descriptions of honors and awards.
- VIII. Evidence of service to the department, the University, the profession, and community. Under normal circumstances this will include:
  - a. Lists and descriptions of activities.
  - b. Copies of reports completed.
  - c. Descriptions of results achieved.
- IX. Peer evaluations by each tenured member of the applicant's department.
  - a. An evaluation from each member, including the Chair's individual evaluation. University policy requires that each tenured member evaluate the candidate in respect to all three criteria: librarianship, research/professional/artistic achievement, and service.
  - b. Even if a tenured member is on academic or administrative leave, his or her contribution is highly desirable.
- X. The Chairperson's summary of the tenured members' evaluations and the departmental recommendation pertaining to the granting of tenure and/or promotion.

## **Procedures for External Reviewers**

Letters evaluating the candidate's scholarship/professional achievements and service will be solicited from four members of the library profession who are employed in academic institutions or have a strong background in academic librarianship. The list of names will be compiled as a joint effort of the candidate and the department. Each will create a list of at least four names deemed appropriate for the review. The University Librarian will select two names from each list in consultation with the candidate's department head. In the case of the review of a department head or the Assistant University Librarian, the University Librarian will consult with the other librarians to choose the latter two names. If any of these potential reviewers declines to participate, the University Librarian will select another name from the appropriate list.

Every effort shall be made to avoid choosing reviewers with possible conflicts of interest with the candidate. In most cases, those with direct ties to the candidate, such as former colleagues, mentors, graduate school advisors, co-authors, and editors of the candidate's works, would be inappropriate choices. The University Librarian should provide a written explanation for the choice of any reviewer who has such an apparent conflict of interest.

The external reviewers will be contacted by the University Librarian, who will request their participation, describe the expectations for their letters, indicate their confidential status, and instruct them on the deadline. Should a reviewer not be able to complete the evaluation by the deadline, the University Librarian may elect to replace that reviewer with another name from the lists. The University Librarian may decide to offer an honorarium to the reviewers; if this is done, the honorarium must be the same for all of the reviewers.

Reviewers will be instructed to review copies of publications and other documentation submitted by the candidate as evidence of scholarly or professional achievement and of service. The candidate's full curriculum vitae will be submitted for the reviewers' information. Reviewers will be asked to review the quality of the work presented and the contribution of the candidate to the profession of librarianship. The reviewers will not be asked to give an opinion on the candidate's suitability for tenure or promotion.

Infrequently, a reviewer will not follow the provided instructions for the review, such as by providing no useful opinion about the submitted work or by offering opinions on elements outside of the quality of scholarship, professional achievement, and service. In these cases, one of the tenured librarians may request that an additional reviewer be invited to respond to the candidate's submissions. If a majority of the tenured librarians agree, the University Librarian will select one additional reviewer from either the candidate's or the University Librarian's list and add that reviewer's response to the tenure documentation. The letter considered less useful will remain in the documentation. The University Librarian will explain the presence of the additional review in his or her summary letter.

Letters received from external reviewers will be added to the candidate's portfolio subsequent to its submission to the University Librarian. These letters will be made available for review by the tenured librarians, the University Librarian, the Commission on Promotion and Tenure, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President. They will not be made available to the candidate.

## Assumptions

1. Librarians serve as productive, committed faculty at Trinity University. This successful organizational model was reaffirmed during campus discussions of librarian status in 2001.

2. It is in the best interests of both librarians and the entire campus that appropriate criteria for the promotion and tenure of librarians be maintained, in order that excellence be encouraged and retained within the library faculty. Criteria which work against the retention and promotion of excellent librarians do not advance the university's mission.

3. Trinity University believes teaching and the development of student learning are paramount for its faculty. Librarians similarly hold librarianship and the development of student learning to be paramount in their work. Scholarship and service, while also important, do not exceed the importance of librarianship.

4. Some educational activities of librarians are very similar to those of other faculty: some librarians teach both occasional sessions in other faculty courses and also their own full-semester classes (such as First Year Experience); some design or help design assignments that encourage information literacy; and some work with students individually during office hours. Many other librarian activities, such as analyzing user behavior and acquiring access to appropriate books, journals and other resources; making information resources more discoverable; and managing staff, may not be things in which most faculty engage. However, all of these activities at their core are undertaken with an understanding that they support student learning and faculty research.

5. Librarians currently work twelve-month contracts with twenty days of vacation. They are expected to work the same full schedule during the summer and the break between the fall and spring semesters. Consequently, significant periods of time for personal research and other creative activities are limited.

6. Present circumstances (e.g., the increasingly rapid change in information technologies that we implement and manage, an increased emphasis on information literacy as it enhances student learning, the constraints imposed by our twelve-month contracts, etc.) suggest that librarians will often produce scholarship at a lesser rate than non-library faculty. If we do not want to diminish the benefits that librarians can bring to student learning, scholarship must be integrated appropriately into the contributions that librarians make to the campus and their profession.

7. Many activities which librarians perform on a regular basis have a substantial scholarly component. (Ernest Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* and the Association of College and Research Libraries' "Redefining Scholarship Project," for example, support this view.) [1] For example:

- Ordering a book is not a scholarly activity, but selecting books based on evaluations of their academic merit and their appropriateness for our users' needs is scholarly;

- Editing a catalog record before adding it to our catalog is not a scholarly activity, but analyzing the content of an item and assigning appropriate subject terms so that our users may find the item when needed is a scholarly activity;
- Giving a tour of the library building is not a scholarly activity, but discovering and implementing effective methods to teach students when to use certain types of resources and how to evaluate them is a scholarly activity;
- Solving specific hardware problems with a user's computer is not a scholarly activity, but designing, selecting, and configuring sophisticated online discovery systems to meet university needs is a scholarly activity;
- Reconciling budget reports is not a scholarly activity, but analyzing publication and pricing patterns and applying that knowledge to the setting of budget priorities for the different disciplines for which we buy materials is a scholarly activity;
- Using the interlibrary loan system to provide materials to users is not a scholarly activity, but analyzing borrowing patterns to inform collection development decisions is a scholarly activity.

The scholarly importance of information analysis and classification should not be underestimated. These activities may be compared to those in other disciplines that require similar organization of knowledge, such as botanical taxonomy and the astronomical classification of galaxy types.

8. Trinity University is a primarily undergraduate institution. Librarians have particular specialties, but they operate as generalists in the liberal arts and sciences tradition. Librarians at Trinity work with numerous departments and subjects and must demonstrate strong generalist skills. Excellence as a generalist is therefore highly valued.

9. The library is a complex organization in which units depend on the quality and efficiency of work done in other units in order to complete their tasks. Additionally, collaborative work with other campus faculty and staff is a necessary occurrence and requires considerable time, energy, and expertise. For these reasons, librarians must work effectively in a collegial environment and possess strong communication and other interpersonal skills.

10. The effectiveness of our current promotion and tenure criteria in encouraging the development and retention of talented and productive librarians has been demonstrated in many different ways, including but not limited to: recognition by the Association of College & Research Libraries through its Excellence in Academic Libraries Award (2007); the library's proposal of and leadership in an earlier campus-wide Quality Enhancement Plan on information literacy; strong support from Academic Affairs for our contributions to first-year student courses; major contributions to faculty governance through participation and leadership in the Faculty Senate and many other committees; a considerable number of well-reviewed librarian publications; and leadership positions in several professional organizations at the local, state, and national level.

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[1] Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Princeton, N.J.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990; *Academic Librarianship and the Redefining Scholarship Project: A Report from the Association of College and Research Libraries Task Force on Institutional Priorities and Faculty Rewards*, March 1998. Available: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/whitepapers/academiclibrarianship>