

Promotion & Tenure Procedures: A Study of U.S. Academic Libraries

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Abstract

This article reports on the results of a study of tenure and promotion procedures at U.S. institutions where academic librarians are faculty. The author surveyed librarians from 200 institutions of higher education on promotion and tenure issues, and received 104 responses. Topics covered include: who performs reviews, whether organizations use library committees and/or university-wide ones, how many external reviewers are used and what they are asked to review, and what documentation guides these processes. The results were compared for (1) institutional control (public/private), (2) small, medium, and large institutions, and (3) simplified basic Carnegie classification. The statistical results are presented.

Introduction

Participating in the promotion and tenure (P&T) process is standard operating procedure in the lives of about half of academic librarians (Walters 2016; Vesper and Kelley 1997). Although operating procedures might seem to be standard, they are anything but. Procedures vary greatly among different institutions.

This study was conceived to address some of the procedural questions the author, her library, and institutional colleagues have considered over the years. These include:

- Should we consider tenure and promotion to associate professor together, or separately?
- Who should serve on the library's promotion and tenure committees? How should these members be selected?
- How should external reviewers be chosen? What information should they evaluate?
- Should the institution adopt the practice of having successful applicants for full professor deliver professorial lectures?
- How common are P&T procedural practices within academic libraries across the United States?
- Do most libraries with faculty librarians have internal promotion and tenure committees or use university committees?
- Do faculty librarians have professorial ranks and titles, or something else?

- Who authors the documentation that guides promotion and tenure for academic librarians; the library, the institution, or both?

This article will not address criteria and standards for P&T, but rather focus on procedures.

Review of the Literature

While most of the library science literature that has addressed tenure and promotion for academic librarians focuses on criteria/standards, the following articles also address procedural issues.

Academic Librarian Titles

Virginia Vesper and Gloria Kelley reported on a survey of 185 academic libraries, of which about half of the respondents indicated that librarians were faculty ranked (1997). The study also found that conventional professorial rankings (e.g., associate professor) were used 39% of the time. The next most common response (12%) was a modified professorial naming (e.g., associate librarian), followed by 6% that used a numbered ranking (e.g., librarian II) (1997, 19).

In 1979, Karen Smith et al. conducted a survey of librarians at 33 academic institutions where faculty librarians were eligible for tenure. They found that at 61% of the institutions, librarians had professorial titles. Eighteen percent (18%) of the institutions indicated they used modified professional ranking and another 18% used numbered ranking (1984, 93).

At a 2008 North American Serials Interest Group conference, two librarians, June Garner and Karen Davidson, gave a presentation on an otherwise unpublished survey of promotion and tenure requirements at research/ doctoral institutions; the presentation was recorded in the conference proceedings by a third librarian not involved in the study, Becky Schwartzkopf. The researchers found that professorial rankings were most common, with numbered rankings coming in second (Garner, Davidson, and Schwartzkopf 2009, 204).

Simultaneous Promotion and Tenure

Smith et al. asked respondents to indicate how much time passed between the granting of tenure and promotion in rank. Their results showed that 30% of librarians said they were promoted after tenure (1984, 93), or conversely, 70% earned simultaneous tenure and promotion. The study did not address whether a policy regulated the timing.

In the Vesper and Kelley study, the authors asked respondents if there was a separate track for tenure and promotion at their institution. Out of 157 respondents to this question, 32 (20%) said yes, and 122 (78%) said no (1997, 18). However, if this is contextualized by considering that only 66 respondents indicated librarians were eligible for tenure, a more accurate number for those having a separate track would be 48% (32/66); leaving 52% with simultaneous tenure and promotion.

Librarian P&T Decision-Makers and Peer Review

Smith et al. investigated review procedures for librarian P&T over time and found that peer review conducted by librarians had increased. At the time of their survey in 1979, the following groups were involved: a library director (92%), a library committee (75%), a university president or academic vice-president (65%), a university-wide committee (62%), and tenured library faculty (62%) (1984, 95).

Vesper and Kelley studied who was involved in decision-making for library faculty P&T and found that the five most commonly listed entities were an academic vice-president (82%), a dean/library director (65%), a president (62%), a campus-wide committee (56%), and a library promotion/tenure committee (33%) (1997, 7,22). A separate question asked whether libraries had their own tenure and promotion committees and 39% of tenure-offering academic libraries said yes. The findings indicated public institutions and larger institutions were more likely to have their own library P&T committee than private and smaller institutions (1997, 7). Regarding campus-wide P&T committees, Vesper and Kelley found that library faculty had representation on (or the possibility of election to) these committees in 55% of institutions with tenure for librarians (1997, 7).

In 1996, Joan Leysen and William Black conducted a study of Carnegie research institutions to learn more about peer review structure and process. Although they did not report specific numbers, they found that “almost all” respondents noted involvement “by the library director, a library committee, and a university official—most often the chief academic officer and frequently the president” (1998, 513). They found adoption of library promotion and tenure committees in 98% of libraries with faculty librarians and that these committees were usually elected, not appointed. Most (83%) limited committee membership to those at a certain rank (i.e., level equivalent to applicant’s aspired rank). The researchers also asked about university committees, and found a large difference between institutions with faculty librarians and those without. Those with faculty status involved university decision-making committees 72% of the time, while those without only used these committees in 17% of cases (Leysen and Black 1998, 513). Garner and Davidson found that most library P&T processes include elected committees of tenured librarians (Garner, Davidson, and Schwartzkopf 2009, 205).

The Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) division has authored several documents concerning librarian P&T criteria and procedures. The *Standards for Faculty Status for Academic Librarians* outlines guidelines institutions of higher education should adopt for

faculty librarians (Association of College & Research Libraries 2007). The element most relevant to this study is the mandate that institutions should adopt a peer review system for reviews and promotions. ACRL's *A Guideline for the Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Academic Librarians* (2006a, II.C.1.) provides more detail, stating "Candidates for promotion in academic rank shall be considered by a peer review committee formed in accordance with appropriate institutional regulations."

External Review

Three studies addressed the use of external reviews for library faculty tenure and promotion. The oldest approached the topic from an administrator perspective (Bicknell-Holmes and Logan-Peters 2006). The study's authors solicited documentation and conducted a survey among libraries that were members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). Forty-five percent of respondents had faculty status, and 57% said their institutions offered tenure or continuing appointment. About half (49%) of the institutions required external review for librarian tenure and promotion, and 27 of those that did not were non-tenure/non-faculty status for librarians at those institutions. With this latter group excluded, the percentage of those that used external reviews rose to 78% (39/50). The institutions that incorporated external review most commonly did so for promotion (95%), then tenure (71%), and lastly continuing appointment (18%) (2006, 12). Respondents were asked to supply the number of reviews sought for each candidate, and the range of responses was one to ten, with a median of five (2006, 14).

Bicknell-Holmes and Logan-Peters, in examining documentation provided by respondents, determined that many institutions classified external reviews as different than solicited letters of support. They found that "In no case does the candidate contact the reviewer directly" (2006, 14). Respondents were asked which categories they instruct reviewers to evaluate, and frequencies mentioned were scholarship (89%), creative work (66%), service (66%), and job performance (34%) (2006, 28).

A particularly relevant study concerning external reviews was authored by Angel Clemons and Tyler Goldberg (2013), which approached the topic from the perspective of reviewers. They targeted institutions where librarians were both tenure and promotion-eligible, although respondents indicated that only 78% had faculty status and 52% were tenure-eligible. Another 15% had continuing appointment. Most institutions (80%) required external reviews for tenure and promotion, although based on the information provided, it was not clear if this was for faculty in general, or librarians specifically (2013, 7). Unlike the Bicknell-Holmes and Logan-Peters study, it appeared that Clemons and Goldberg did not exclude candidate-solicited letters from their study of external review. "While a smaller percentage of respondents to the authors' survey took the role of advocate, they tended to know the candidate, and/or had been asked by the candidate" (Clemons and Goldberg 2013, 14).

Garner and Davidson touched briefly on the issue of external reviews within their survey. They found that 180 respondents (out of 252, or 71%) work at institutions where external reviews are required (*Garner, Davidson, and Schwartzkopf 2009, 205*).

Guiding Documentation

A version of the ACRL *Joint Statement on Faculty Status of College and University Librarians* has existed since 1972. The current version specifies that “As with faculty members in other academic departments on campus, librarians should be responsible for the development of their promotion and tenure criteria” (Association of College & Research Libraries 2006b). However, this practice has not always been followed. Vesper and Kelley found that only 41% of libraries offering tenure or promotion had their own P&T documentation. Campus-wide documents covering all faculty, including librarians, were more common, used at 74% of institutions (1997, 8).

Best and Kneip conducted a survey of deans and directors at academic libraries where librarians had published in two top library science journals. The respondents represented institutions with a mix of faculty, professional, and other statuses. The researchers asked about written policies for P&T, and found that 85% (76/89) had such policies (2010, 103). It is not clear whether this question referred to library-specific policies or campus-wide ones, but library policies were implied.

Methodology

Because the study of library faculty promotion and tenure practices was only relevant to institutions where librarians are faculty ranked, those institutions in the United States were specifically targeted for survey distribution.

In order to identify academic libraries with faculty librarians, the author began with the Academic Librarian Status wiki (Lewis n.d.), and specifically its *Librarians with Faculty Status and Tenure* list. Other institutions were added based on posts to library listservs and a review of the literature. Whenever the author encountered a mention of faculty librarians, those institutions were subsequently included.

Some institutions were eliminated because they were outside the United States. Others were expanded because they had multiple branch campuses; in these instances, all branch campuses received an invitation to participate in the survey. In all, 200 institutions were identified.

The author then searched each identified institution’s library website to determine the name, position, and email address of a person who would likely be knowledgeable and interested in faculty librarian promotion and tenure issues. Criteria for selection included title, position description, and any other information provided. When such information was lacking on

the library web site, the author searched other sources, starting with Marshall Breeding's Library Technology Guides (n.d.), to determine the library's director/dean. Contact information was added to the distribution spreadsheet. Once this spreadsheet was complete, it was merged with a spreadsheet of demographic data from the Carnegie Classification list (Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research 2015).

After the research study received Institutional Review Board approval, the author uploaded the survey onto an online survey platform and tested it extensively to ensure that the question logic worked as expected. Two colleagues from different institutions were asked to further test the survey and respond with any concerns, including comprehension and functionality.

On June 19, 2017, the first participation request email was sent to the 200 identified contacts. Recipients were given background information on the study, why they were selected, and told the survey would remain open for one month. When the author received out-of-office replies indicating someone would be gone for the duration of the study, a new contact from that institution was identified and sent the request. Two weeks into the survey, 78 people had responded. In most cases, respondents provided identifying information such as their email addresses and/or institution names. A reminder email was sent to all contacts that could not be identified as having already responded. By the close of the survey, 104 responses were received with a 52% response rate.

Of the 104 responses, one campus had four and two campuses had two each, likely due to email forwarding. Unfortunately, the responses from the same campuses often looked quite different, so instead of making a value judgement on which were best, all were retained and included in the results.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

All respondents were required to provide demographic information to complete the survey. Respondents could either supply the name of their institution and bypass all demographic questions or choose to remain anonymous and provide three elements of their Carnegie classification: basic classification, size & setting, and institutional control.

In order to have large enough groups to analyze, two categories, basic classification and size & setting, were simplified. For example, under basic classification there are three doctoral university subcategories: highest, higher, and moderate research activity. These were combined into one doctoral universities category. For the basic classification variable, the consolidation resulted in six simplified groupings: master's colleges & universities (45, or 43.3%), doctoral universities (42, or 40.4%), baccalaureate colleges (11, or 10.6%), associate's colleges (4, or 3.8%), baccalaureate/associate's colleges (1, or 1%), and special focus institutions (1, or 1%). Statistical analysis for the three smallest groups was not possible due to small sample sizes, but their data are still included in aggregate results.

The Carnegie size & setting classification of the responding institutions was consolidated into three categories using Carnegie four-year size definitions: small (fewer than 2,999 degree-seeking students), medium (3,000 - 9,999 degree-seeking students), and large (at least 10,000 degree-seeking students). One exclusively graduate/professional institution and five two-year institutions were removed from simplified size statistical analysis because the size definitions for these groups differed from those of four-year institutions, but again, their responses were included in the aggregate data. Once the four-year size categories were consolidated, 98 responses remained. There were 58 large (59%), 27 medium (28%), and 13 small (13%) institutions.

Institutional control was the last demographic variable examined, with the largest group (83, or 80%) public and the remainder (21, or 20%) private.

Results

Although there were 104 responses, only demographic questions required a response, and some respondents chose not to answer all questions. In addition, skip logic was used, which means that most respondents did not see all survey questions, but only those relevant to them based on their prior responses. Because of these factors, many questions had fewer than 104 responses. In some cases, respondents were directed to select all answers that applied to them, resulting in higher total numbers than respondents answering a question. Within the results, the number of respondents for each question is noted.

This section includes both descriptive and inferential statistics, with statistically significant results denoted as such. Pearson's chi-square or Fisher's exact tests were run with demographic categorical variables as independent variables and question responses as dependent variables.

Faculty Status and Tenure Eligibility

This study targeted academic libraries where librarians have faculty status, but to ensure this condition was met, respondents were asked whether librarians have faculty status at their institution and could respond *no*, *yes-some*, or *yes-all*. As expected, there were no negative responses. Most responses (81/104, or 78%) were from institutions where all librarians are faculty, but a sizable minority (23, or 22%) indicated that only some librarians are faculty. The results of the Fisher's exact test indicated that within academic libraries, it is more common for all librarians to have faculty status at public institutions and to have a mix of statuses at private institutions. This is statistically significant at the $p=.017$ level. [Table 1]

		Private	Public	Total
Yes, some	Count	9	14	23
	Expected count	4.6	18.4	23
	% within Control	42.9%	16.9%	22.1%
Yes, all	Count	12	69	81
	Expected count	16.4	64.6	81
	% within Control	57.1	83.1%	77.9%
Total	Count	21	83	104
Fisher's Exact Test, Exact Sig. (2-sided), p=.017				

When asked whether faculty librarians are eligible for tenure or continuing appointment, most respondents (89/104, or 86%) indicated that their librarians are tenure-eligible. Three (3%) said librarians are not eligible for either, and two (2%) said librarians are eligible for continuing appointment. Ten people responded *other*, with eight of those ten indicating that there is a mix of tenure/ continuing appointment/ non-tenure at their institutions.

Academic Librarian Titles

Most institutions (69/104, or 66%) used conventional professorial titles for faculty librarians. The next largest group (21, or 20%) used a modified professorial ranking, followed by a numbered schema (5, or 5%). Nine (9%) indicated they had different nomenclature than the three options provided. For example, one respondent replied, "For tenure track/tenured faculty we use Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor. For our Academic Professional Track (continuing appointment) we use the term 'Clinical' or 'Instructional' in front of the academic rank as a modifier."

Simultaneous Promotion and Tenure

Most academic libraries, or their parent institutions, specify that when faculty librarians at the assistant level (or equivalent) apply for tenure, they automatically apply for simultaneous promotion to the associate rank (66/101, or 65%). Others allow for a choice. Twenty-four (24%) indicated that assistant level librarians sometimes apply for associate with tenure, but not always. Six (6%) indicated that the promotion is never applied for simultaneously, and the remaining five (5%) replied "not applicable."

Librarian P&T Decision-Makers

In order to ascertain the stages and chains of command for library faculty promotion and tenure decisions, respondents were asked to indicate, in a numbered order of review, the decision-makers. The 98 responses noted anywhere from two to eight levels of review, with a mean of 4.7 and a mode of 5. Responses illustrating the two extremes include:

- 1. Committee of library faculty 2. University-wide promotion and review committee
- 1. Library dean 2. Committee of library faculty (from multiple campuses) 3. Campus committee 4. Vice chancellor for academic affairs 5. Chancellor 6. Executive vice president for university academic affairs 7. Board 8. University board of trustees.

Generally, the first stage of review is a library committee, although sometimes the first reviewer is a supervisor, library dean, or department head. The last stage of the review and final decision usually falls to the provost, president, or a board, although many respondents noted that when a board is involved, it is generally in a pro forma capacity. Following is a selected list of reviewers mentioned: director or dean: 93 (95%), library committee: 88 (90%), provost: 81 (83%), president: 41 (42%), board of trustees/ governors/ regents: 37 (38%), and chancellor: 19 (19%).

Respondents were asked which positions are represented on their library-managed P&T committee, with an option to indicate that their institution does not have such a committee. Fourteen percent (14/100) said they do not have a library-managed P&T committee. A Fisher's exact test rejects the null hypothesis that the existence of a library-managed P&T committee/task force is independent of institutional control (private/public). Library-managed P&T committees are more common at public institutions than private. [Table 2] The respondents who stated there is not a library P&T committee usually indicated that the first level of review is the supervisor, library dean, library director, or a campus-wide committee.

		Private	Public	Total
Library committee exists	Count	11	75	86
	Expected count	16.3	69.7	86
	% within Control	57.9%	92.6%	86.0%
Library committee does not exist	Count	8	6	14
	Expected count	2.7	11.3	14
	% within Control	42.1%	7.4%	14.0%
Total	Count	19	81	100
Fisher's Exact Test, Exact Sig. (2-sided), p=.001				

Of the 86 respondents with library-managed P&T committees, all indicated, either through selecting the faculty librarian option or in their narrative response, that some faculty librarians are on this committee. Using faculty from outside the library was relatively uncommon at 15% (13), although some respondents indicated outside faculty are pulled in if there are not enough librarians at rank to populate the committee. It is also unusual to have a library dean/director (or equivalent) serve on library P&T committees (12, or 14%); however, some

comments from those who said the dean/director did not serve indicated administrative involvement:

- “Library Dean may be an ex-officio member”
- “Elected faculty from upper ranks and Associate Dean for Administrative & Faculty Services is Ex Officio”

Some narrative responses clarified committee composition:

- “When there are not at least 3 tenured faculty librarians with a rank higher than the candidate available to serve on the committee, the library director (in consultation with the candidate) selects additional members from outside the library.”
- “The [Institution Name] Libraries P&T Committee is a ‘committee of the whole’ meaning that all TENURED library faculty serve on this committee. No library faculty administrators serve (no Dean or Associate Deans). If someone applies for Full Professor, a separate ‘committee of the whole’ is established of only Library faculty who are FULL Professors. There must be at least 3 members - if there are not 3 library faculty who are full professors, then there are nominations and members from other departments on campus are elected to serve on this committee.”

The next question addressed how library P&T committee members are chosen, and respondents could select more than one answer. There were 87 responses, with the most common response (50, or 57%) that members are elected. Library-managed P&T committees are statistically more likely to be elected at public institutions than private. [Table 3]

		Private	Public	Total
Not elected	Count	8	29	37
	Expected count	4.7	32.3	37
	% within Control	72.7%	38.2%	42.5%
Elected	Count	3	47	50
	Expected count	6.3	43.7	50
	% within Control	27.3%	61.8%	57.5%
Total	Count	11	76	87

Fisher’s Exact Test, Exact Sig. (2-sided), p=.048

The second most popular option for library P&T committee selection was all eligible faculty librarians, by rank and position, serve (36, or 41%). This is more common at private institutions than public. [Table 4]

Table 4. All eligible librarians serve on library promotion and tenure committees by institutional control				
		Private	Public	Total
Not all eligible librarians serve	Count	3	48	51
	Expected count	6.4	44.6	51
	% within Control	27.3%	63.2%	58.6%
All eligible librarians serve	Count	8	28	36
	Expected count	4.6	31.4	36
	% within Control	72.7%	36.8%	41.4%
Total	Count	11	76	87
Fisher's Exact Test, Exact Sig. (2-sided), p=.045				

Appointing committee members is the least popular method of committee selection (10, or 11%). Some respondents provided clarification:

- “Elected pool from which the Dean chooses to appoint members”
- “For promotion to Associate, committee members are elected; for promotion to Professor, committee consists of all faculty at Professor rank”

When asked whether faculty members on their library P&T committee need to have a rank equal or higher than the one for which the applicant is applying, slightly more than half responded affirmatively (46/87, or 53%). The remaining 41 (47%) said that equal rank is not a requirement for committee members.

Respondents were asked about institutional P&T committees. Seventy respondents (out of 101) indicated their institution has an institutional P&T committee and 86 indicated a library-managed one; which means that many institutions have both types of P&T committees. When asked about composition of the institutional committee, with multiple responses allowed, 65/70 (93%) indicated the inclusion of non-library faculty, either through selecting that option or within their narrative response. It seems unlikely that there would be institutional P&T committees without university faculty, but there is not enough information to determine if there was a misunderstanding with the question, or whether there really are institutional P&T committees without faculty members. Seventy percent (49/70) of respondents indicated faculty librarians are included. However, under *other*, 12 respondents indicated that faculty librarians sometimes or often serve on this committee, but only three of these selected that faculty librarians are included, likely because their inclusion is not a constant.

- “It's a faculty elected committee composed of other faculty members. Library faculty members can and have been elected to the committee. (One of our faculty members even chaired the committee a few times.)”
- “This committee is only used for appeals. There is one faculty librarian on this committee, along with several faculty from across the campus.”
- “There is an institutional *Promotions* committee, made up of representatives of all schools and the library, but this is active only in promotion-alone decisions, not reappointment/tenure decisions.”

When asked how the institutional P&T committee members are chosen, 71 responded, with more than one response allowed. The most common response was that members are elected (45, or 63%), while 31 (44%) said they are appointed.

Regarding requiring a rank equal to or above a candidate for members of institutional P&T committees, the percentages were identical to the library P&T committee. Slightly more than half (37/70, or 53%) require rank equal or greater to an applied rank, while slightly under half (33, or 47%) do not have such a requirement. A Chi-square test rejects the null hypothesis that requiring equal rank is independent from institution size. Table 5 shows that larger schools are more likely to require committee members to have a specific rank.

		Large	Medium	Small	Total
No rank requirement exists	Count	10	12	8	30
	Expected count	15.0	9.4	5.6	30
	% within Control	31.3%	60.0%	66.7%	46.9%
Rank requirement exists	Count	22	8	4	34
	Expected count	17.0	10.6	6.4	34
	% within Control	68.8%	40.0%	33.3%	53.1%
Total	Count	32	20	12	64

$\chi^2 = 6.408$; $df = 2$; $p = .041$
 *Associate's and special focus institutions were removed from analysis

External Review

External reviews are an important part of some institutions' P&T decisions, so the next set of questions addressed this topic. First, respondents were asked whether their institution solicits external reviews for P&T decisions for library faculty, and could select all that apply from the following: *No*, *Yes-for tenure*, *Yes- for all promotions*, and *Yes- for some promotions (please specify)*. There were 101 responses to this question with 59% (60) answering that external reviews are used. Of the libraries incorporating external review, those soliciting for tenure and all promotions tied for the most responses (44/60, or 73%). The smallest group (16, or 27%) said they are used for some promotions. Half of those who specified for some promotions stated that external reviews are only required for promotion to full. Six indicated it is up to the individual to solicit letters of support, but the committee does not require a formal external review.

The next two questions regarding external reviewers were not asked of those who indicated their campus does not solicit external reviews. When asked how many external reviews are solicited for associate and full promotion cases, there were 51 responses. For promotion to associate professor, three external reviews (20, or 39%) were most common, followed by four or more (16, or 32%), then one and two were tied (6, or 12% each), followed by zero (3, or 6%). For promotion to full professor, four or more reviews were most common (19, or 37%), followed by three (16, or 31%), then two (8, or 16%), then one (7, or 14%) and one

respondent (2%) indicated zero reviews are required (this respondent stated that external reviews are only required for tenure).

Respondents were then asked what external reviewers are asked to review, with options being *scholarship only*, *scholarship and librarianship*, *whole portfolio*, and *other (please specify)*. *Whole portfolio* was the most popular response (25/59, or 42%), followed by equal numbers for *scholarship only* and *other* (12, or 20%), and then the combination of *scholarship and librarianship* last (10, or 17%). Four out of the 12 *other* responses specified that scholarship and service are reviewed, while another four indicated that it depends on the case and the committee.

Differences between Procedures for Libraries and the Rest of their Campuses

Respondents were asked to consider whether there are any differences in institutional P&T procedures and committee structure for faculty librarians and those for other faculty, and to describe those differences. Fifty-five responses were received, and almost universally there is no difference, or at least no substantial difference. Examples of minor differences often addressed accommodations made due to the smaller size of library faculty or due to each college/ department creating its own procedures.

- “Based on the same overall structure. However, since the Library does not have ‘departments’ there is no departmental committee. The library faculty serve as the committee, then the recommendation goes to the Dean.”
- “Our library faculty is so small that we must partner with three other small, regional campus libraries for our primary peer review (library) committee. If one of our librarians seeks promotion to full, we might pull in librarians from the other four campuses, as well. Every school on campus has their own procedures for the primary peer review, but I believe all, except the library, keep that review in-house.”
- “Every university department and college has its own standards and procedures that are approved by the Provost to insure equitability across campus, but allow for disciplinary differences. Our standards and procedures are so approved, and therefore equal.”

Guiding Documentation

Respondents were asked which documents their library uses to determine P&T committee procedures and practices for faculty librarians. Faculty handbooks and library-specific documentation tied for frequency of use (47/59, or 80%). Thirty-eight respondents (64%) indicated their institutions use both the faculty handbook and library-specific documentation together. Nine (15%) use solely the faculty handbook, and another nine (15%) use library documentation without the faculty handbook. Twenty respondents mentioned other

documentation: university P&T documentation (13), union contracts (4), and Board of Regents documentation (1), individual contract (1), and state code (1).

Professorial Lectures

At some institutions, the newly promoted full professor gives a professorial lecture on a scholarly topic of the speaker's choosing. Respondents were then asked whether non-library faculty at their institution deliver professorial lectures upon promotion to full professor. An overwhelming majority (87/97, or 90%) said no. Some responded that it is up to individual departments and colleges (6, or 6%), only three (3, or 3%) said yes, and one respondent (1%) stated that it is up to the newly promoted individual.

The numbers of faculty librarians giving professorial lectures upon promotion to full professor (or equivalent rank) were similar to other faculty, but slightly lower. Ninety-five percent (93/98) of respondents represent institutions where faculty librarians do not give lectures. Three (3%) said the decision is left to the newly promoted individual, and only 2 (2%) said that professorial lectures are given.

Discussion and Conclusion

Six of the studies discussed in the literature review targeted different populations than this study (i.e., ARL libraries in Bicknell-Holmes and Logan-Peters; Carnegie research libraries in Leysen and Black and Garner, Davidson, and Schwartzkopf; ARL libraries with faculty librarians in Smith et al.; librarians who have published in two top-tier journals in Best and Kneip; and both libraries with faculty librarians and those without in Vesper and Kelley). Dissimilarities in these populations and the time periods in which they were studied make direct comparisons difficult, but the studies still have consistencies. The percentages may vary, but there is agreement in the overall findings:

- Conventional professorial titles for faculty librarians are the norm (Vesper and Kelley 1997; Smith et al. 1984; Garner, Davidson, and Schwartzkopf 2009; this study)
- Simultaneous tenure and promotion to associate professor is most common (Smith et al. 1984; Vesper and Kelley 1997; this study)
- Library P&T committees are more common at public institutions (Vesper and Kelley 1997; this study)
- P&T committee members are usually elected (Leysen and Black 1998; this study)
- Requiring P&T committee members to hold a certain rank is the norm (Leysen and Black 1998; this study)
- Most academic libraries use external reviews (Clemons and Goldberg 2013; Bicknell-Holmes and Logan-Peters 2006; Garner, Davidson, and Schwartzkopf 2009; this study)

Two ACRL documents (2006a; 2011) stipulate that librarians should be reviewed by a committee of peers, but neither document defines the peer group for faculty librarians. Certainly a library faculty committee would be considered a peer group, but what about a campus-wide P&T committee with library faculty representation or a campus-wide committee without any faculty librarian members? It can be argued that a campus-wide P&T committee of faculty is a committee of peers, although without librarians serving on such a committee, that argument is tenuous. This study showed that at some institutions, the only level of departmental review is an individual with an administrative role within the library. Clearly, a supervisor, library dean, or library director is not a committee, or a peer. One recommendation arising from this study is that ACRL consider defining which groups constitute library faculty peers for the purpose of peer review.

Similarly, ACRL has stated that academic libraries should have their own promotion and tenure documentation (2006b). Fifteen percent of this study's respondents indicated their library relies solely on university documentation for P&T. Academic libraries without their own P&T documentation should add the creation of such documents to their work plans in order to align with ACRL recommendations.

Within the survey instrument, external reviewers were defined as faculty from other institutions who have disciplinary expertise in the same/similar area as the applicant and who provide insight into the applicant's suitability for tenure and/or promotion. A fault with this definition is that it did not specify that external reviews should be solicited by someone other than the candidate. Some respondents answered an external review question by stating that it is up to candidates to solicit letters of support, which indicates that some respondents may have had a different understanding of external review. In future research, a definition of external reviewers should include that they be solicited by a committee representative in order to ensure the validity of responses.

The absence of information in the literature review section regarding professorial lectures reflects a lack of scholarship on this practice. This study found that professorial lectures are relatively rare, both among faculty librarians and non-library faculty, which helps explain their absence from the scholarly conversation. The author, having given a professorial lecture at her comprehensive private university, and having attended one for a librarian at a large public university, found this rarity surprising.

Tables 1 – 5 reveal five statistically significant differences related to demographic factors. Four of these differences were related to institutional control, one was related to institution size, and no differences were found for simplified basic Carnegie classification. With all three demographic characteristics, but especially the last two because they had three categories each (e.g., large, medium, small), some results were not statistically significant due to small expected counts, not because of p values. If a larger population were studied, more statistically significant relationships might be found.

The author hopes that this study will provide guidance to academic library leaders looking to create or modify P&T procedures for library faculty. Especially for those libraries without written P&T procedures, having these benchmarks can help identify topics that should

be addressed in their documentation. In libraries where practices differ from the norm and change is desired, this study can support the argument for change.

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Appendix: Survey Instrument

The original survey instrument included questions related to both procedures and criteria. This paper reports only on issues of procedure, so the questions included here are limited to those covered within this paper. Content related to criteria (questions 21-39) will be published separately.

Each heading signifies a separate page within the survey. When duplicate headings exist, it is because survey logic resulted in more than one page of questions on a given topic.

Institution Name

1. What is the name of your institution? If you're on a branch campus, please include the campus location. This information will be used to pull Carnegie Classification information and will NOT be used to identify you or your institution in the published results- aggregate data are all that will be reported.
 - If you prefer not to answer this question, please select this option and you will be taken to three questions regarding your Carnegie Classification.
 - Institution (including branch) name:

Carnegie Classification Information

In the questions below, please provide your institution's Carnegie Classification information, [found here](#).

2. Basic Classification:

3. Size & Setting Classification:

4. Control:
 - Public
 - Private not-for-profit
 - Private for-profit

Faculty Status

5. Do librarians have faculty status at your institution?
 - No
 - Yes- some
 - Yes- all

Faculty Librarian Questions

If some librarians have faculty status and others do not, please answer all following questions for librarians that have faculty status.

6. Are faculty librarians eligible for tenure or continuing appointment at your institution?
 - No

- Yes- tenure eligible
- Yes- continuing appointment eligible
- Other (please specify)

7. What titles are used to designate ranks for faculty librarians?
- Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Full Professor, etc.
 - Assistant Librarian, Associate Librarian, Full Librarian, etc.
 - Librarian I,II, etc.
 - Other (please specify)

Throughout the rest of the survey, Assistant/ Associate/ Full Professor titles will be used. Please answer for your institution's equivalent titles.

P & T Procedure and Committees

8. When faculty librarians at the Assistant level (or equivalent) apply for tenure, do they automatically apply for promotion to Associate rank?
- Always
 - Sometimes
 - Never
 - Not applicable

9. Promotion and tenure decisions often go through multiple parties/individuals before final approval. Please indicate, in order of review (1= first review, 2= second, etc.), the hierarchy for library faculty promotion and tenure decisions at your institution (e.g., 1. committee of library faculty, 2. library dean, 3. provost).

10. If there is a library managed promotion and tenure committee/task force, which positions are represented on this committee? (select all that apply)
- Faculty librarians
 - Library dean/director or equivalent
 - Faculty from outside the library
 - There is not a library promotion and tenure committee/task force
 - Other (please specify)

Library Promotion and Tenure Committee

11. How are the library promotion and tenure committee members chosen? (select all that apply)
- Elected
 - Appointed
 - All eligible faculty librarians by rank/position
 - Other (please specify)

12. For library promotion and tenure committees, do the faculty on promotion and tenure committees need to have a rank equal or higher than the one for which the applicant is applying? (e.g., the applicant is applying for promotion to full, so all committee members are at full rank)

- No
- Yes

Institutional Promotion and Tenure Committee

13. If there is an institutional promotion and tenure committee/task force, which positions are represented on this committee? (select all that apply)

- Faculty librarians
- Faculty from outside the library
- There is not an institutional promotion and tenure committee/task force
- Other (please specify)

Institutional Promotion and Tenure Committee Questions

14. How are the institutional promotion and tenure committee members chosen? (select all that apply)

- Elected
- Appointed
- Other (please specify)

15. For institutional promotion and tenure committees, do the faculty on promotion and tenure committees need to have a rank equal or higher than the one for which the applicant is applying? (e.g., the applicant is applying for promotion to full, so all committee members are at full rank)

- No
- Yes

External Reviewers

For this survey, external reviewers are defined as faculty from other institutions who have disciplinary expertise in the same/similar area as the applicant and who provide insight into the applicant's suitability for tenure and/or promotion.

16. Does your institution solicit external reviews for promotion and tenure decisions for faculty librarians? (select all that apply)

- No
- Yes- for tenure
- Yes- for all promotions
- Yes- for some promotions (please specify)

External Reviewers

17. How many external reviews are used per promotion case?

	Zero	One	Two	Three	Four or more
Associate Professor/Equivalent	<input type="radio"/>				
Full Professor/Equivalent	<input type="radio"/>				
Other	<input type="radio"/>				

If you filled out other, please specify the position.

18. What are external reviewers asked to review?

- Scholarship only
- Scholarship and librarianship
- Whole portfolio
- Other (please specify)

Institutional Promotion and Tenure Committee

19. How (if at all) do institutional promotion and tenure **procedures and committee structure** differ for faculty librarians and faculty in other departments?

P & T Documentation

20. Which documents does your library use to determine the promotion and tenure committee **procedures and practices** for faculty librarians? (select all that apply)

- Faculty Handbook (or equivalent institutional document)
- Library specific documentation
- Other institutional documentation (please specify)

Professorial Lectures

40. Do non-library faculty at your institution deliver a professorial lecture after being promoted to full professor (or your institution's equivalent)?

- No
- Up to individual departments/colleges
- Up to newly promoted individual
- Yes

41. Do faculty librarians at your institution deliver a professorial lecture after being promoted to full professor (or your institution's equivalent)?

- No
- Up to newly promoted individual
- Yes

Closing

42. If you have any other comments regarding any of the topics covered in this survey, please share them here:

43. If you would like to receive the results of this survey (with identifying information removed), please provide your email address.