

Faculty status: 2001

Results of an ACRL-sponsored think tank

Looking to the decade of the 1990s as one of change, ACRL's Academic Status Committee has prepared an agenda for strengthening faculty status for those institutions that have chosen that model for their librarians.

This document resulted from a think tank sponsored by the Academic Status Committee in January 1992. Twelve librarians were selected to spend a day discussing the issues evolving from faculty status for academic librarians and developing an agenda to strengthen the concept during this decade.

Participants were: Mignon Adams, director of library services, Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science; Joan Giesecke, associate dean for collections and services, University of Nebraska, Lincoln; Kathy Jackson, head, library systems, Texas A&M University; Beverly P. Lynch, dean, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of California, Los Angeles; Olivia Madison, head, Cataloging Department, Iowa State University; W. Bede Mitchell, associate librarian for public services, Appalachian State University; Barbara Moran, dean, School of Information and Library Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Jim Murphy, head, monographic cataloging, Ohio State University; Lester J. Pourciau, associate vice-president for academic affairs and director of libraries, Memphis State University; Gloriana St. Clair, assistant dean for information access services, Pennsylvania State University; Janet L. Steins, head, Chemistry Library, State University of New York, Stony Brook; and Rebecca Watson-Boone, Mequon, Wisconsin.

The meeting was facilitated by Maureen Sullivan. The bulk of the document which evolved delineates strategies that can be used by the several groups that are involved in fac-

ulty status. The preservation and strengthening of faculty status is not the responsibility of one group, but of several including the profession as a whole, library administrators, librarians as individuals, university/college administration, other faculty members, and library educators. The document is to serve as a guideline in providing direction for these groups as faculty status for librarians evolves.

Vision

Faculty status is a means of achieving parity with other faculty on all campuses in all academic institutions. Faculty status is not an individual issue but a professional issue which will require action on the part of ACRL, academic librarians, directors, other faculty, university/college administrators, and library educators. Parity in this context means access to tenure, sabbatical leaves, research leaves and funding, and any other institutional benefits that are accorded disciplinary faculty.

The library is not a stand-alone organization but integral to the larger institution. Faculty have a central role in the institution's academic decision-making process, and it is important that librarians have an equivalent role in that process. Faculty status for librarians benefits the institution as much or more than it benefits the library by providing recognition and developing a faculty with a broader perspective and higher visibility.

The ACRL *Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians* is the basic document which supports and defines the concept of faculty status for librarians. The *Standards* are based on the premise that there should be equitable treatment and opportunity within each individual institution. Faculty status is not the only model for academic librarians, but it is the preferred one.

Background

With each succeeding generation of librarians, there is a concern that the values of faculty

This document, prepared by Irene Hoadley, member of ACRL's Academic Status Committee, summarizes the ideas generated during the think tank

status are being forgotten. Faculty status rose and flourished in the 1960s and 1970s, but the 1980s saw some diminution of that role for librarians. At the same time it is obvious that faculty status is the preferred model for some segments of the profession.

The basic reasons for faculty status to endure and to flourish include:

- Guarantees of academic freedom.
- Provision of collegial governance.
- Fair compensation.
- Identification with one's institution.
- Greater involvement in and support for the educational process.
- Professional autonomy and experimentation.
- Higher standards of achievement for librarians.
- Recognition of librarians' teaching role.
- Assumption of increased responsibility for the quality of works associated with academic librarianship.

Assumptions

There are some basic assumptions which underlie the vision statement and the future of faculty status for librarians. These include:

- Faculty status is appropriate to the role of librarians.
- Protection of faculty status is important for academic librarians.
- Faculty status benefits the academy, not just librarians.
- Faculty status provides a position of influence for the profession.
- Faculty status has proven to be a benefit to academic librarians.

Strategies

To maintain and strengthen faculty status for academic librarians, a series of strategies is proposed. It is incumbent on ACRL to lead the way in promoting and implementing these strategies. This is not an all-inclusive agenda, but one that can be adapted and shaped to respond to local situations and to forge new agendas that will enhance faculty status for all those who choose to pursue this model.

The profession as a whole

- Define the expectations of academic librarians and the development path to achieve those expectations.
- Describe basic steps for each academic library as librarians work to achieve goals of

parity with other faculty on campus.

- Educate library administrators about the key role they play on campus and in the profession.
- Encourage collaboration between library administrators and librarians.
- Encourage ACRL chapters to sponsor Research Days as an integral part of chapter meetings.
- Encourage ACRL chapters to work with library education programs to develop workshops for library students who want to learn more about academic library research.
- Promote research/scholarship activities and opportunities in chapter publications.
- Produce a *Clip Note* with documents about current effective systems with a description of implementation.
- Encourage research that will determine the success of librarians in obtaining tenure in relation to their peers and the reasons for librarians leaving positions prior to a tenure decision.
- Provide opportunities for peer-reviewed papers at both ACRL and ALA conferences.

Library administrators

- Adhere to ACRL standards.
- Define the role and contributions of librarians and how they are changing.
- Articulate the distinctive role and contribution of librarians to the academic process.
- Educate senior administrators on campus to the values and contributions of librarians to the educational process.
- Act as positive role models.
- Create a climate that fosters development and support of faculty status.
- Participate in campus affairs beyond *ex officio* involvement.
- Encourage faculty development by creating a culture that has the necessary conditions for faculty status.
- Identify models from other disciplines that librarians could appropriately emulate.
- Attract the best librarians to academic libraries.
- Educate librarians about the critical role academic librarians fulfill.
- Provide careful attention to the appointment, development, and assessment of individual librarians.
- Develop an effective promotion and tenure review process.

- Provide assistance for library faculty in preparing packets for promotion and tenure.

Librarians as individuals

- Develop and carry out personal research agendas.
 - Advance knowledge in one's area of expertise.
 - Work to develop a national reputation in one's area of expertise.
 - Serve as positive role models for new professionals.
 - Identify models from other disciplines that librarians could appropriately emulate.
 - Educate other faculty about the role academic librarians fulfill.
 - Help new library directors understand the value of faculty status.
 - Research and publish articles on how librarians achieve faculty status.

University/college administrators

- Adopt, enact, and support the *ACRL Standards for Faculty Status*.
 - Enlarge one's knowledge and understanding of academic librarianship.
 - Identify models from other disciplines that librarians could appropriately emulate.

- Develop information material for the promotion/tenure review process.
 - Organize a workshop to train and develop skills for the evaluation process.

Other faculty members

- Integrate librarians into academic planning committees and discussions at the college and university levels.
 - Include librarians on collaborative research teams.

Library educators

- Create a summer institute for academic librarians on research methodologies.
 - Explore ways for ACRL and ALISE to work together on common issues.
 - Recruit individuals who have the capability of enhancing any library that employs them.
 - Educate librarians to be scholars.
 - Carry out research to identify models from other academic disciplines that librarians could appropriately emulate.
 - Establish core competencies.
 - Require one or more basic research courses in the curriculum.
 - Consider establishing periods of practice as part of the library education curriculum. ■

Rescinding ACRL standards and guidelines

When a Section or Committee of ACRL determines that the useful life of an ACRL standard or guideline has ended, the following procedures are used to officially rescind the document or statement. These procedures apply only to rescinding a standard or guideline when no revision of the existing document is planned. Updating and revising standards and guidelines follow existing procedures.

1. The Committee or Section which promulgated the standard or guideline forwards a request to rescind the document to the Chair of the Standards and Accreditation Committee.

a. The Committee or Section Executive Committee will schedule a discussion period at its meeting at the next ALA Conference.

b. The Standards and Accreditation Committee will assign a Committee member as liaison.

2. To ensure wide and timely notice to the membership, the Committee or Section seeking rescission will publish an announcement

of its intent in *C&RL News* including: [1] the reasons for the decision to rescind, [2] an invitation for comment at the Committee or Section Executive Committee meeting during the next ALA conference and [3] a contact person to receive comment in advance.

3. At the next ALA conference the Committee or Section schedules a time certain to receive comment from the membership. The liaison from the Standards and Accreditation Committee attends this meeting.

4. Following the meeting, the Committee or Section will forward a report of the discussion with a final recommendation to the Chair and liaison member of the Standards and Accreditation Committee.

5. The Standards and Accreditation Committee will act on the request for rescission at the next ALA conference. If rescission is approved, this recommendation is forwarded to the ACRL Board of Directors for final approval.