

March 1, 2007

GUIDELINES FOR ADVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN ON PRIORITIES FOR FACULTY PERSONNEL LINE ASSIGNMENTS AND RECRUITMENT

This process is in response to a charge from the University Librarian requesting guidelines to advise the University Librarian and Cabinet on priorities for faculty recruitment and line assignments. While units may determine that discussion of personnel needs in general (staff and faculty lines) is appropriate, these guidelines and process are intended to assure the most informed level of advice to the University Librarian on faculty lines as is required by University Regulations in the Section titled Organization of Legislative Bodies.

http://policies.rutgers.edu/PDF/Section50/50_1/50.1.9.pdf

These guidelines relate to both short term personnel decisions and long term personnel needs. They attempt to balance and coordinate both the needs of the library system as a whole, and needs at the local level. The document incorporates references to the currently posted "Procedures for Filling Open or Newly Created Library Faculty Positions," which includes a section on "Initiating a Search," and, in Appendix E, a "Library Faculty Position Review Form."

http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/staff/lib_fac/pdfs/filling_fac_pos.pdf

I. THE PROCESS

Summary overview:

Unit Director/AUL consults unit faculty with the assistance of a unit Exploratory Committee (explained below)

Unit Director/AUL drafts "Position Review Form" and delivers to University Librarian.

UL distributes the form and receives recommendation from the Planning and Coordinating Committee.

UL distributes the form in Cabinet and final decision is made.

Details of process:

Currently, as positions are vacated, "the Libraries . . . initiate a review of the open position." Aside from this immediate concern, continual planning for potential vacancies and changing needs is advised. In both cases, the units will recommend how position(s) should be filled using the principles below established by the Planning and Coordinating Committee.

We recommend faculty exploratory committees be established in each unit for the purpose of informing faculty discussion and contributing to the Director/AUL's written review as outlined in the "Library Faculty Position Review Form." These exploratory committees would consider unit needs in the immediate but also in the most broad way,

incorporating ideas of how the unit wants to develop and change. Factors to consider include the kinds of system-wide policies and initiatives that would help the unit assure an environment of success and better prepare for changing duties and responsibilities, an assessment of the effectiveness of the unit in mentoring and supporting professionals who embrace new methods and initiatives, and the extent to which the unit is dependent on library faculty in other units, especially the “system-wide” units. This last might include comments on faculty line needs in other units, particularly as they impact on the success of new hires. In establishing these exploratory committees, it is important for the unit Director/AUL to look appoint (or the faculty to elect) unit faculty focused on emerging and future technologies and as well as those engaged with accompanying administrative challenges.

Commentary from the exploratory committee begins the process of discussion in the unit, which results in a “Library Faculty Position Review Form” drafted by the unit Director/AUL. The form is then forwarded to the University Librarian.

Each month, the University Librarian distributes the Position Review Forms, thereby informing the Planning and Coordinating Committee of the number of vacant positions to be filled and the recommendations from the units.

The Planning and Coordinating Committee reviews the number of potential hires and provides general recommendations to the University Librarian. Cabinet reviews recommendations and gives final approval for recruitment.

II. CRITERIA

A. Short term. This can be due to a recruitment period anomaly or to a budgetary delay. In either case, the following are considerations:

A1. Choice of an annual appointment rather than a tenure-track position

In general, the Libraries should hire faculty librarians in a tenure-track position. This contributes to the long term stability of the faculty, helps to distribute the load of faculty service and governance, promotes individual responsibility and professional development on the part of the library faculty, and attracts candidates with richer experience and greater potential, in general, than annual appointments.

All librarians appointed at the Librarian V level will be clearly informed that this is a one year terminal appointment. Only when there is very good cause, and unit faculty have been duly consulted regarding the specific personnel decision, should this type of appointment be extended. Librarian Vs are encouraged and advised to seek regular positions either within RUL or elsewhere.

Definition of temporary librarians: those professional librarians whose appointments are on non-tenure track lines for limited periods. Normally they replace a librarian who has retired, resigned, or gone on leave, etc. The temporary

appointment is made to bridge the recruitment period between the departure of one librarian and the arrival of his/her successor or to fill the gap while a librarian on leave. Because of a temporary librarian's limited time with the RUL, it is very important that clearly defined responsibilities, expectations and guidelines be provided. Because of the limited duration of these appointments, expectations for temporary librarians are quite different from those for tenure-track librarians and annually renewable positions. Due to the limited scope of their responsibilities, it is not the normal practice to assign temporary librarians to committees or task forces (or to extended projects). They may, however, be invited to attend committee or faculty meetings when appropriate for their professional responsibilities.

Exceptions to this practice must be carefully negotiated by the unit administrator, after being duly processed by unit faculty. Existing long term annually renewable arrangements are a reflection of RUL's flexibility towards individual personnel, and do not provide a model for recruitment or hiring.

A.2. A closing of ranks among faculty

This decision is a matter of negotiation between individual faculty and the unit administrator. It should be combined with a recommendation indicating for what the line will be used.

B. Long term. While the recommended unit exploratory committees may comment on any aspect of hiring and recruitment, their primary role is in articulating the relationship of the position to the unit's long term needs and the RUL strategic plan. Some factors they may address are:

B.1. Choice of a generalist or a specialist

Traditionally, this is a question of special subject knowledge, but librarian "specialties" increasingly involve other areas of knowledge, such as communities (e.g., undergraduate), formats (e.g. multimedia, serials) technical areas (e.g. acquisitions, digital architecture), and professional skills (e.g. pedagogy). A list of specific specialties that we believe represent baseline needs at RUL and the dedication of a full-time faculty line would be helpful. But the impact of these factors in hiring is also a matter of the individual candidate's perspective, and ability to see others' perspective. There are "generalist" traits we might demand from all new hires, regardless of their "specialty," such as personal flexibility, willingness to learn new things, and ability to evaluate technological effort, all of which affect the person's ability to collaborate. Given this broad definition of "specialist," and the need for "generalist" perspective, we recommend that each position be weighed primarily in light of its potential for a candidate's tenurability.

We recommend that any available lists of "core competencies," such as those below, be considered and used throughout the recruitment, hiring, and promotion

process.

http://www.ala.org/ala/accreditationb/Draft_Core_Compencies_07_05.pdf

B.2. Filling a position similarly to the vacancy or creating a new position

Factors here might include an assessment of the success of the previous occupant of the line. Was the person's success (or failure?) with the whole or just part of the original position description? Was the course of success (or failure?) appropriate to other RUL needs described in these guidelines? Are there new academic programs or altered needs within the unit or within RUL that take precedence? The planning process, in each unit and across the Libraries, should identify program or service needs that are not being met with the current configuration of positions. Ideally, each unit and the Libraries should attempt to meet those needs with the personnel who are in place instead of relying on strategic departures of library faculty. Inevitably, those departures do not neatly stack up against the unmet needs. However, there are often good reasons why reorganization cannot occur with extant faculty, and when a position is vacated we seize upon it as our opportunity to finally create a newly defined position. We do not mean to discourage nimbleness, or forward movement. However, the need for the new position must first — and continually — be articulated widely when considering a newly defined position that is not similar to the vacancy. At the very least, there must be a clear statement of how the existing work will be coordinated: discontinued, continued in a scaled-down program, continued by another unit or another position, distributed among other positions, or some other arrangement.

B.3. New position types

It is impossible for this report to list what position types are now needed, or will be needed in the future. However, we strongly recommend that as part of each unit's and RUL's annual planning and goal-setting, one component should always be the articulation of new position types that are necessary to accomplish the unit's goals. The exploratory committees, the unit director, and the Planning and Coordinating Committee should look to the annual goals, and the RUL Strategic Plan, to consider if new position types are needed.

B. 4. An experienced faculty member or less experienced faculty member

This refers to hiring a person with tenure. Years and type of experience as it relates to hiring will take many factors into consideration, e.g. the pool of available candidates. While it will be rare that a candidate is offered tenure upon acceptance of a position, this remains a valuable recruitment tool. In most instances, a one-year period should be established before allowing a senior candidate to apply for tenure. Unlike faculty line appointments, administrative appointments at the level of Director or Associate University Librarian require this kind of consideration on a routine basis.

Approved March 2, 2007 RUL Faculty Meeting