

Library
The College of New Jersey
Disciplinary Standards for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion

The attached disciplinary standards have been reviewed and approved by the Committee on Faculty Affairs, the Council of Deans, and the Provost.

To avoid creating a moving target for candidates for reappointment, the disciplinary standards in effect during a faculty member's first year of employment will be used for reappointment and tenure applications. Candidates for promotion will use the disciplinary standards in effect in the year in which they apply for promotion.

Amanda Cowell

Department Chair

November 11, 2024

Date

Erin Ackerman (Interim Director of the Library)

Dean

11 November 2024

Date

Suzanne S. McCotter

Provost

March 27, 2025

Date

The Library will next review its disciplinary standards in Academic Year 2031-2032.

Disciplinary Standards for Faculty Scholarship
R. Barbara Gitenstein Library
The College of New Jersey

This document establishes standards for scholarly/creative/professional activity for TCNJ Library faculty scholarship consistent with the mission of the college, and the mission of the library to “provide high quality information resources, expertise, and a learning environment that enhance the search for knowledge and understanding.” These standards acknowledge the expectation that librarians are to be accomplished and engaged librarian-scholars as set forth in the Guiding Principles for Academic Work and the college Reappointment and Promotions Document (RPD). In particular, this document serves as a guide for librarians to plan, carry out, and disseminate their scholarly/creative/professional work, and as a guide to those who evaluate librarian progress toward tenure, reappointment, and promotion.

The following guidelines provide categories of acceptable scholarly work; criteria to evaluate different types of scholarly work; and indicators of quality, scope, importance, coherence and authorship.

I. CATEGORIES OF SCHOLARLY WORK

A. Librarian scholarly/creative projects may include disciplinary research, applied research, pedagogical research, or artistic expression. Professional activities are considered scholarly when they involve the creation rather than the application of knowledge.

i. Disciplinary research for librarians encompasses a wide range of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in advancing the discipline’s knowledge base.

Examples of such activity may include but are not limited to:

- analyzing how people seek and use information;
- constructing means for organizing bodies of data and information;
- establishing methods for evaluating the effectiveness of library services and processes;
- preparing analytical bibliographies;
- investigating the history of the book and recorded knowledge.

ii. Applied research for librarians involves applying the theory and knowledge gained through inquiry, integration, and experimentation to meet the research and learning needs of the academic community. As with other professional fields, research in librarianship is often oriented toward improvement of practice in the profession. Through applied research, TCNJ librarians share their efforts to improve and refine their processes and programs with the wider community of librarians.

Examples of applied research include but are not limited to:

- designing a search interface based on observation of user behavior;
- creating new services based on studies of user needs;

- developing or customizing software that improves library workflows or processes.

iii. Pedagogical research for librarians involves developing, testing, and improving pedagogical techniques for meeting library instruction objectives—within the wider context of teaching and learning—and communicating to peers the results of testing these techniques. Examples of pedagogical research include but are not limited to:

- examining whether particular teaching methods and materials maximize student learning outcomes and how they do so;
- researching how the introduction of instructional technologies impacts librarian goals, teaching materials, and methods;
- investigating strategies for promoting student learning.

iv. Creative activity for librarians will most likely involve a music or art librarian being involved in a performance or juried show. Examples of creative activity include but are not limited to:

- a music librarian performing in concert at professionally recognized venues or recording on commercially available recordings on professionally recognized labels;
- a music librarian composing newly commissioned work that is performed, published, or recorded via peer-reviewed mechanisms;
- an art librarian participating in professional exhibitions/competitions, preparing invited lectures or other presentations of creative work, serving on panels or juries, or contributing curatorial expertise.

v. Professional activities as a consultant or practitioner are considered scholarly (per TCNJ RPD) “when they involve the creation rather than the application of knowledge and impact significantly on one’s discipline.” Examples of professional activity may include but are not limited to:

- creating national standards for a professional organization;
- creating authority records for national use.

B. There is considerable variation in professional focus and expertise among librarians. As with other disciplines at TCNJ, librarianship is a multifaceted field of academic inquiry. The topics investigated and the methodologies used by a reference librarian or a subject specialist, for example, may be different from that of a cataloging librarian or a systems librarian.

C. Librarian scholarship is evaluated in the context of the college’s current structure and longstanding teaching-focused identity. In alignment with the college’s identity as a primarily undergraduate institution with a select number of graduate programs—and in recognition of TCNJ’s student-centered mission and strong focus on teaching and librarianship—applied and pedagogical lines of inquiry that result in an enhanced information-seeking experience for undergraduate learners may naturally emerge more frequently than pure disciplinary research. This also reflects common practice within the broader discipline of academic librarianship, where scholarship that impacts a library’s service-oriented mission is highly valued by practitioners in the field.

D. Scholarly activity for librarians may extend beyond the field of library science. Academic librarians are likely to have earned or be working toward a relevant second master's degree or a doctorate. In order to achieve and maintain excellence as a departmental liaison, subject librarians may wish to pursue scholarly/creative/professional activities, including matriculation in an advanced degree program, in one of their fields of subject responsibility. Such pursuits may also be appropriate for librarians who do not serve as subject specialists. For example, a systems librarian may pursue scholarly activity in computer science; or a cataloging librarian may focus on research in the field of human-computer interaction. Moreover, as most librarians have backgrounds that include more than one discipline, interdisciplinary work is often a natural outgrowth of their academic and professional interests. Candidates for reappointment, tenure, and promotion must be able to demonstrate how subject area scholarly/creative/professional activity contributes to librarianship or enhances their knowledge relevant to their professional position at TCNJ. Candidates are expected to make some scholarly contributions related to the discipline of librarianship.

E. Librarians recognize the value of both peer-reviewed and non peer-reviewed professional publications. In the pursuit of exemplary standards for librarian-scholars at TCNJ, librarians fully recognize the importance of peer review as the highest mark of prestige and significance. In addition, there are respected non peer-reviewed professional publications in librarianship that have high impact and are worthy venues for promoting research and scholarship of the first order.

II. CONTEXT FOR LIBRARIAN-SCHOLAR WORK

Librarian-scholars work within the following context:

- ***TCNJ librarians have a twelve-month contract.*** The structure of a librarian's workday and the expectation that librarians will be on campus year-round may curtail the librarians' unstructured time. This necessitates a different approach to planning for scholarly activities.
- ***An American Library Association accredited masters is the terminal degree for librarians.*** In accordance with the American Library Association Statement on the Terminal Professional Degree for Academic Librarians, the requirement for librarian positions at TCNJ is a master's degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association (ALA) or from a country with a formal accreditation process as identified by the ALA. Library graduate programs recognize the importance of research to the advancement of the field; however, masters programs typically do not require a thesis or have a research component.
- ***Concurrent academic ranks for librarians are as follows: for Assistant Director in the Library it is Professor in the Library, for Librarian I it is Associate Professor in the Library, Librarian II it is Assistant Professor in the Library, and for Librarian III it is Instructor in the Library.*** Requirements for librarian ranks are based on criteria outlined in the College Reappointment and Promotions Document. Librarians can be promoted from the rank of Librarian III to Librarian II on the basis of three years professional experience and evidence of satisfactory progress toward completion of tenure

requirements. As stated in the RPD, librarians who “hold the rank of Librarian III at the time of application for reappointment to a seventh year with tenure are required to simultaneously apply for promotion to Librarian II.” In addition, the RPD also notes that, “nothing herein shall prohibit a Librarian III from applying for promotion to Librarian II prior to obtaining tenure.”

State College/University Payroll Title	Concurrent Academic Rank
Assistant Director of the Library	Professor in the Library
Librarian I	Associate Professor in the Library
Librarian II	Assistant Professor in the Library
Librarian III	Instructor in the Library

III. CRITERIA TO EVALUATE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SCHOLARLY WORK

For reappointment, tenure, and promotion (at all levels), the Library expects that a candidate will produce a sustained and respectable body of scholarship. Scholarly/creative/professional excellence will be demonstrated most clearly by publication of the candidate’s work in peer-reviewed scholarly journals; presentations at professional or academic conferences; invitations to present or perform at academic or non-academic venues; service as a referee or editor for a journal or other publication; contributions to an index or other reference source; publication of resource reviews; substantial contribution to writing or revising national professional standards; production of edited collections; or significant progress towards an advanced degree in a relevant area of study. As candidates advance in seniority, we expect that their work will have an ongoing impact on the field of librarianship and secure them greater scope of recognition at the local, national, and international levels.

Tangible indicators that will be used to evaluate the quality of librarian scholarship may include, but are not limited to, the following:

For journal articles:

- Peer review
- Acceptance/rejection rates for the journal
- Professional sponsorship or other affiliation status of the journal
- Status of the journal editors within the subfield
- Inclusion of the journal in *Library Literature & Information Science* or another appropriate disciplinary index
- Total circulation of the journal
- Article citations
- Rankings for the journal (e.g., *JCR* impact factor)

For books or chapters (authored or edited):

- The academic or professional standing of the publisher (e.g., university press, national recognition as an academic or professional publisher)
- Published reviews of the work
- Evidence of readership (size of the press run, sales, course adoptions, etc.)

d. Citation frequency

For conference presentations (e.g., symposia, papers, posters):

- a. The stature of the sponsoring organization
- b. Selection process used for the conference (peer review evaluated most highly)
- c. The acceptance/rejection rates for comparable submissions
- d. The stature of other contributors to the conference
- e. The scope of the professional organization sponsoring the conference (i.e., international, national, regional, or local)

For invited publications and presentations (e.g., invited contributions to special issues of a journal, invited chapters in books, and invited addresses to meetings of professional organizations):

- a. The stature of the editor of the special issue or book
- b. The academic or professional standing of the publisher or stature of the sponsoring organization
- c. The readership of the journal or book (circulation, number printed, etc.)
- d. The stature of other contributors to the publication or meetings of professional organizations
- e. The scope of the professional organization extending the invitation (i.e., international, national, regional, or local)

For electronic products, software, etc.:

- a. Adoption by other institutions
- b. Published reviews of the work
- c. Inclusion in selective repositories

For editorial roles:

- a. Activities in the capacity of Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editor, or Assistant Editor
- b. Guest Editor for a special issue of a journal

The library recognizes both larger and smaller scale projects and evaluates them in accordance with the tangible indicators described above. Candidates who disseminate their scholarship through emerging venues and genres should include indicators comparable to those listed above to assist with the evaluation of their scholarship quality.

First- or sole-authored works are highly valued but the nature of work in librarianship is often collaborative. Collaborative scholarship between librarians within the field of librarianship and interdisciplinary collaboration between librarians and scholars in other fields is common, encouraged, and highly valued. The sole-authored work is not necessarily the benchmark for excellence, but multi-authored works require the candidate to document the extent of their contribution and the nature of the collaboration. Students are involved in many aspects of library work and librarian-student collaboration in scholarship is welcome and encouraged, although not a general expectation.

Candidates are expected to pursue an active program of scholarship while at TCNJ. While scholarly activity should demonstrate a continuous and carefully planned program of scholarship, it is recognized that scholarship in librarianship grows out of practice. Scholarly output may not necessarily build upon previous work in a linear fashion, but may reflect the dynamic nature of the discipline. Therefore, these scholarship guidelines are not intended to be inflexible or so unrealistic as to preclude an acknowledgment of the unique talents and scholarly focus of each individual librarian—or fail to recognize the dynamic shifts in emphasis that characterize the widely diverse and interdisciplinary field of librarianship.

Regarding the sustained nature of scholarship, it is expected that scholarly activity will be continuous throughout a librarian's career. However, periods of lower productivity due to major librarianship or service obligations (e.g., service as department chair) do not preclude promotion or reappointment; such periods should be explained in the promotion or reappointment materials.

IV. SCENARIOS FOR MINIMUM STANDARDS OF SCHOLARLY, CREATIVE, AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Candidates for reappointment, tenure, and promotion may demonstrate scholarly excellence in a number of different ways, which will be evaluated according to the tangible indicators described above. The aim of the scenarios outlined below is to indicate possible (but non-exclusive) ways in which a candidate might satisfy the library's expectations for scholarly/creative/professional activities. Each scenario indicates minimum expectations for scholarly/creative/professional activity for reappointment during the probationary period, for tenure and for promotion to each rank.

Pre-tenure Reappointments

The candidate will show evidence of satisfactory progress toward completion of tenure requirements. Also, the candidate will articulate a plan for ongoing and sustained scholarly/creative/professional activities.

Possible Scenarios for Promotion to Librarian II (Assistant Professor in the Library)

Librarians can be promoted from the rank of Librarian III to Librarian II on the basis of evidence of satisfactory progress toward completion of tenure requirements and three (3) years' experience in role(s) relevant to the responsibilities of the position. Relevant experience and/or roles may include but are not limited to advanced study, work experience in relevant non-library settings, and/or pre-MLS work in a library, and they may be considered in substitution for post-MLS work experience.

- A. One peer-reviewed article accepted.
- B. One substantive article in a high-impact, respected professional publication accepted and a beginning record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.
- C. One substantive article in a high-impact, respected professional publication accepted and enrollment in a program leading to an advanced degree in a relevant area of study.

- D. A collection of miscellaneous writings such as non-refereed articles, book chapters, resource reviews, standards for a national organization or edited books, and a beginning record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.
- E. A record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.

Possible Scenarios for Tenure

All of these scenarios assume that the candidate will articulate a plan for ongoing and sustained scholarly/creative/professional activities. Multi-authored works require articulation of the significance and value of the candidate's contribution.

- A. One published peer-reviewed article, another accepted, and a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.
- B. One published peer-reviewed article, significant progress towards completion of an advanced degree in a relevant area of study, and a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.
- C. One published peer-reviewed article and a collection of miscellaneous writings such as non-refereed articles, book chapters, resource reviews, standards for a national organization, or edited books.
- D. One peer-reviewed article accepted, a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters, and other miscellaneous writings such as non-refereed articles, book chapters, resource reviews, standards for a national organization, or edited books.
- E. Two or more substantive articles in high impact, respected professional publications, a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters, and other miscellaneous writings such as non-refereed articles, book chapters, resource reviews, standards for a national organization, or edited books.
- F. An individually authored or co-authored book published by a respected press, and either a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters, or a peer-reviewed article accepted.

Possible Scenarios for Promotion to Librarian I (Associate Professor in the Library)

Per the RPD, librarians can be promoted to Librarian I on the basis of five years professional experience and continued achievement since attaining the rank of Librarian II. The scenarios are meant to reflect a candidate's cumulative scholarly/ creative/professional activity at TCNJ. Multi-authored works require articulation of the significance and value of the candidate's contribution.

- A. Two published peer-reviewed articles, another accepted, and a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.

- B. Two published peer-reviewed articles, ongoing work toward completion or near completion of an advanced degree in a relevant area of study, and a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.
- C. Two published peer-reviewed articles and a collection of miscellaneous writings such as non-refereed articles, book chapters, resource reviews, standards for a national organization, or edited books.
- D. One published peer-reviewed article, another peer-reviewed article accepted, a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters, and other miscellaneous writings such as non-refereed articles, book chapters, resource reviews, standards for a national organization, or edited books.
- E. Four or more substantive articles in high-impact, respected professional publications, a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters, and other miscellaneous writings such as non-refereed articles, book chapters, resource reviews, standards for a national organization, or edited books.
- F. An individually authored or co-authored book published by a respected press, and a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters, and a peer-reviewed article accepted.

Possible scenarios for Promotion to Assistant Director in the Library (Professor in the Library)

Per the RPD, librarians can be promoted to Assistant Director in the Library on the basis of ten years professional experience, at least two of which must have been at the rank of Librarian I (Associate Professor in the Library) at TCNJ, and a sustained level of achievement since attaining the rank of Librarian I, reflecting a maturation of scholarship. The scenarios illustrate minimum standards of scholarly/creative/professional activity since the candidate's last promotion at TCNJ. Multi-authored works require articulation of the significance and value of the candidate's contribution.

- A. Two published peer-reviewed articles, another accepted, and a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.
- B. One published peer-reviewed article, completion of an advanced degree in a relevant area of study, and a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.
- C. Two published peer-reviewed articles and a collection of miscellaneous writings such as non-refereed articles, book chapters, resource reviews, standards for a national organization, or edited books.
- D. Four or more substantive articles in high-impact, respected professional publications, and a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on panels, or presenting posters.
- E. An individually authored or co-authored book published by a respected press; and a record of scholarly or professional presentations, such as delivering papers at conferences, speaking on

panels, or presenting posters, or other miscellaneous writings such as non-refereed articles, book chapters, standards for a national organization, or edited books.