University of Maryland Policy on Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion of Professional Track Faculty in the University Libraries

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The University of Maryland (UM) has established a series of professional track faculty titles to be used for non-tenure track appointments (II-100A – Titles). The titles applicable to professional track faculty in the University Libraries include those in the Faculty Specialist series.

University of Maryland professional track faculty with duties primarily in librarianship apply professional, scholarly, and disciplinary knowledge in a series of related functions: selecting, acquiring, and organizing scholarly information; teaching in both formal and informal settings; and providing organization and management of the staff and resources that facilitate access to scholarly information and library services for our users within the mission of the University Libraries.

The Policy on Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion of Professional Track Faculty in the University Libraries exists to set the standards and procedures for appointment and promotion to the three PTK faculty ranks and to recognize the achievement of excellence on the part of the PTK faculty members through promotion within the PTK ranks. These policies are adapted from the “University of Maryland Policy on Appointment, Promotion, and Permanent Status of Library Faculty” (BOR Policy II-1.00(B)). The Guidelines for Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion of Professional Track Faculty in the University Libraries contain the procedures governing the preparation of dossiers for promotion and specific details of the review process.

SECTION I: PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY RANKS FOR LIBRARIANS

Each PTK librarian within the UM Libraries’ organizational structure holds a functional position title based on his or her core assignment. In addition, each PTK librarian holds a professional track faculty rank commensurate with his or her level of professional experience and achievement. Appointments to these ranks are provided as contracts of at least 12 months with leave and other benefits afforded to PTK faculty members. All appointments in the following titles are renewable, unless otherwise specified in the incumbent’s contract. Appointments with these faculty titles do not carry permanent status.

The following shall be the minimum qualifications for appointment or promotion to the professional track faculty ranks in use by the UM Libraries.

Faculty Specialist

The title Faculty Specialist will ordinarily be used to designate appointments of persons who are serving in a library capacity with less than 3 years of professional experience. The minimum requirement is a master’s degree or a bachelor’s degree with equivalent professional experience in the area of focus. Individuals in this category who wish to pursue eventual promotion to Senior Faculty Specialist shall exhibit a strong grasp of job requirements listed in
the incumbent’s contract and annual work plans. Individuals in this category are eligible for University Senate and some Library Assembly committee roles. Appointments to this rank are typically one to three years and are renewable.

**Senior Faculty Specialist**

The title Senior Faculty Specialist will ordinarily be used to designate appointments for individuals who have at least three years of experience in libraries or a field related to the assigned work. The appointee shall hold a master’s degree or have at least 3 years full-time experience as a Faculty Specialist (or similar appointment at another institution), or its equivalent. Individuals in this category who wish to pursue eventual promotion to Principal Faculty Specialist shall demonstrate some achievement in developing additional skills in the areas of research, service, mentoring, or program development. Individuals in this category are eligible for University Senate and some Library Assembly Committee roles. Appointments to this rank are typically one to five years and are renewable.

**Principal Faculty Specialist**

The title Principal Faculty Specialist will ordinarily be used to designate appointments for individuals who have at least five years of experience in libraries or a field related to the assigned work. The minimum requirement is a master’s degree or at least 5 years of full-time experience as a Senior Faculty Specialist (or similar appointment at another institution) or its equivalent. Appointees to this rank shall have an exemplary record in librarianship over the course of their previous professional experience as well as demonstrated excellence in the areas of research, service, mentoring, or program development. Individuals in this category are eligible for University Senate and some Library Assembly Committee roles. Appointments are typically made as five-year contracts. Appointments for additional five-year terms can be renewed as early as the third year of any given five-year contract.

**SECTION III: PROCEDURES FOR APPOINTMENT & REAPPOINTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY**

1) The individual seeking appointment applies via the University’s recruitment system. Materials required include the online application, current CV, and other appropriate supporting materials (such as evidence of experience and competency) as described in the advertisement.

2) The Hiring Official in consultation with Library Human Resources will form a search committee to review candidates and make recommendations to the hiring official.

3) PTK Oversight Committee will recommend the rank for the finalists based on the criteria specified for each position as outlined in Sections I-II above. The specific faculty rank
shall correspond to the majority of the appointee’s effort, as indicated by the assignments and expectations.

4) Specific assignments, i.e., percentages of effort, should be specified in individual contracts so that there is no ambiguity at the time of review for reappointment or promotion.

5) Reappointment is dependent on performance and funding. The appropriate Division Head, in consultation with the direct supervisor(s), will determine if performance meets expectations based on annual reviews, will verify funding for the position, and make a reappointment recommendation to the Dean. Whenever possible, PTK faculty should be given progressively longer contracts, in accordance with University policy governing PTK faculty.

6) Length of the initial appointment and the reappointment period will depend upon the job description, the rank on hire, and/or the expected term of the project. Application for promotion is at the discretion of the PTK faculty member.

SECTION IV: PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTION OF PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY

1. The application process follows the same timeline as the reappointment process for permanent status track faculty.

   a. Applications for promotion are due to the Division Head by January 31.

   b. The final decision on the promotion is communicated to the candidate by April 15.

   c. The Dean notifies Libraries Human Resources of the decision by April 30 of that fiscal year, in order to allow ample time for that office to prepare new contracts.

2. The individual seeking promotion writes a formal request letter to her/his supervisor and Division Head. The letter should address the requirements specified in the contract and the expectations listed in the candidate’s annual work plan.

In the event a faculty member holds multiple appointments in different units or departments in the same PTK title series, generally, the PTK faculty member should apply for promotion in the unit in which he or she has the greatest % FTE appointment, e.g., the primary unit. Any decision to grant promotion by the primary unit must consider evaluative input from the other units in which the faculty member holds an appointment, however, the decision to grant promotion lies with the primary unit. Once promoted, the faculty member is entitled to be compensated at the rate of the higher PTK faculty rank in all of the units or departments in which he/she holds an appointment.
a. The candidate will include:

i. An up-to-date and signed CV (in the campus standard format for CVs)

ii. A personal statement that outlines the candidate’s portfolio, goals and professional development (using the same guidelines for a personal statement as outlined in the instructions to permanent-status track faculty).

iii. Promotion to the rank of Principal Faculty Specialist (see Sections I-II) will require 3 external review letters (1 reviewer chosen by the candidate and 2 by the PTK Committee) and examples of contributions to the profession beyond librarianship.

3. The Division Head will forward the request to the PTK Oversight Committee to begin the promotion evaluation process.

4. The PTK Oversight Committee chair will notify the committee of a pending promotion case and the committee will meet and conduct the first level review of the candidate’s qualifications for promotion against the duties specified in the individual’s contract and the specific criteria established by the Libraries (See Recommendations 1-2). PTK members at the same or higher rank than the person seeking promotion are included with voting representation on the committee.

5. The PTK Oversight Committee chair will submit a report to the Division Head within two weeks of the PTK Oversight Committee vote.

6. The Division Head reviews the candidate’s submission and the evaluative report from the PTK Committee. If, upon reviewing the candidate’s materials and committee report, the Division Head has questions or concerns, he/she may ask the committee chair for clarification and/or additional information.

7. The Division Head will write a separate assessment letter to the Dean of Libraries indicating his/her recommendation on the application for promotion and forward the package to the Dean of Libraries.

8. The Dean of Libraries will review the entire application, comprised of the candidate’s submission, the PTK committee’s evaluative report, and the Division Head’s assessment letter, and make a decision on whether the individual has earned a promotion. The Dean of Libraries will write a letter to the applicant announcing his/her final decision.

9. Appointments and promotions to Senior Faculty Specialist level will be reviewed and approved by the Dean. Appointments to the Principal Faculty Specialist level will be reviewed and approved by the Provost, and the Provost may choose to institute additional university-level review for these PTK faculty promotions as deemed necessary to ensure that fair and equitable processes and procedures are being successfully
implemented. In either case, if the outcome is positive, the letter from the Dean will include the amount of the associated increase in compensation. The increase in compensation is subject to State budget constraints and directives from USM. Minimum increases in compensation shall be set annually by the Libraries in accordance with University policy governing PTK faculty, as is done for permanent status and permanent status track promotions. Every effort shall be made to make salaries professionally appropriate and competitive to the extent allowed by available fiscal resources.

10. Promotions may not be rescinded, and future appointments shall be to the faculty rank granted through the promotion process.

11. A negative decision will be communicated in writing to the applicant by the Dean of Libraries. In the case of a negative decision, the unsuccessful candidate for promotion can reapply, beginning with the next promotion cycle. A negative decision regarding an application for promotion does not automatically preclude renewal of the existing PTK appointment.

SECTION V: APPEALS, GROUNDS, AND PROCESS

The faculty member may appeal a negative decision based on alleged violations of procedural due process that would have had a material effect on the decision. All appeals shall be handled according to the procedures established by the Provost’s Office of Faculty Affairs and shall be initiated within the period defined in those procedures.