

A Comparison of Academic Librarians with and without Faculty Status in the Southeast

Becky Bolte Gray and Rosalee McReynolds

The goal of academic librarians for many years has been to achieve faculty status, but studies on the subject indicate that the majority of librarians who have reached this goal have done so in name only. Many surveys have been conducted demonstrating that librarians with faculty status do not share all of the responsibilities or benefits of regular faculty, particularly in the areas of publishing and length of contract year.¹ Despite these well-known discrepancies, the professional literature generally concludes that faculty status is still desirable for librarians. In an effort to determine if faculty status is more advantageous, we conducted a survey to compare responsibilities and benefits of librarians in the Southeast who have faculty status to those who do not.

METHODOLOGY

In January of 1982 questionnaires regarding benefits and responsibilities of librarians were sent to the directors of 140 academic libraries in the Southeast. Private and publicly supported institutions were surveyed in the states of Louisiana, eastern Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. Recipients of the questionnaire were chosen from *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges* based upon the number of volumes held in their main libraries (law, medical, and branch libraries were not included). Only institutions with 100,000 volumes or more were chosen for the survey.²

The benefits compared were tenure, paid professional development leaves and travel, the opportunity to take academic courses during regularly scheduled work

hours, tuition waiver, vacation time, and sick time. The responsibilities compared included the number of hours worked per week, contract year, weekend and evening reference coverage, publishing, and teaching.

Of the 140 library directors contacted, 103 (74 percent) responded. Out of those 103 respondents, 75 indicated that they had faculty status while 25 indicated that they did not. Three failed to specify the status held by their librarians. Those three questionnaires were eliminated from consideration, leaving a convenient 100 surveys for comparison of benefits and responsibilities.

RESULTS

The first conclusion that we reached from our survey is that there is confusion and variation as to how faculty status is defined. Of those respondents indicating that they had faculty status, one-third did not have academic rank titles (i.e., instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, etc.). They were, instead, ranked by librarian titles (i.e., librarian I, II, III, IV or assistant librarian, associate librarian, etc.), had no titles, or else did not respond to the question of rank at all. Two institutions with faculty status reported that it was only implicit or informal. One had recently rescinded faculty rank, tenure, and titles, but the director there apparently still considered librarians to have faculty status, as she replied affirmatively to the question.³ In two instances, the director did not have faculty status, but the other librarians did. In one other, the reverse was true.

Becky Bolte Gray is former cataloger, Loyola University, and Rosalee McReynolds is serials librarian, Loyola University, New Orleans, Louisiana.

The vagueness of faculty status was also found among those who said they *did not* have it. Two directors referred to their situation as that of "academic recognition" or "academic status." Another reported that faculty status was currently at issue and that a resolution would come following an opinion from the state attorney general's office. Similarly, other respondents stated that faculty status for librarians was under consideration at their institutions, but not yet a reality.

The frustration that this can cause was evident in remarks like "the question of faculty status, tenure, etc., is completely up in the air. I can't begin to provide an answer in the absence of any faculty governance structure"; and "a handbook defining the status of librarians is currently in preparation. They will be neither administrative nor faculty."

The area in which there was an apparent advantage to having faculty status was that of paid professional development leaves (see table 1). Fifty-six (75 percent) of those with faculty status received professional development leaves of some kind compared to thirteen (52 percent) of those without faculty status. The purpose of these leaves included professional meetings, research, and sabbaticals. Librarians in both groups were assisted in attendance of professional meetings, but the traditional sabbatical was most often available to those librarians with faculty status. Remarks from those without faculty status included "it may be possible, but no one has ever received such a leave," and that leaves may be taken "when funds are available."

The advantage of faculty status was not evident in the other benefits listed in the questionnaire. In the case of paid professionally related travel, those without faculty status seemed to enjoy a slight advantage. For that group, comments ranged from "as funds are available" to "funds are generous." For both groups, however, the following remarks were common: "depends on budget," "depends on nature and cost of meeting," and "within state guidelines."

In the majority of cases of those with or without faculty status, librarians had the

opportunity to take academic courses during the regularly scheduled work day. This benefit extended most often to those with faculty status. Those without faculty status, however, were more frequently granted tuition waivers.

The policies for sick time varied broadly among the libraries surveyed, but on the whole, the amount of sick days granted for those with and without faculty status was similar. Approximately one-third in each category ranged from more than five weeks to an unlimited amount of sick leave. Half of the respondents in both categories had from six to fifteen sick days. The remaining one-sixth had from sixteen to twenty-five sick days or had sick time dependent upon length of service.

Of the libraries surveyed without faculty status, all had twelve-month contracts with the exception of one, which had a ten-month contract year (see table 2). The twelve-month contract was also the norm for librarians with faculty status. Only 10 percent of the latter had a nine-month contract or the option of a nine-month or twelve-month contract. This is an obvious contradiction of the "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Libraries" adopted by the Association of College and Research Libraries in 1971. These standards, endorsed by the AAUP and library associations across the country, specify that librarians should be appointed for the academic year.⁴ None of the respondents with faculty status who did not currently enjoy this benefit indicated that they anticipated receiving it.

Because of the frequent occurrence of the twelve-month contract year, librarians in both categories had designated amounts of vacation time. As with sick time, the number of vacation days varied widely from institution to institution. Some 40 percent of those with faculty status enjoyed twenty-two or more vacation days, but nearly 50 percent of those without faculty status also had this benefit. Less-liberal vacation policies were extended to 11 percent of those with faculty status and 16 percent of those without faculty status who had fewer than fifteen vacation days a year. The remainder in both

TABLE 1
BENEFITS OF LIBRARIANS

	With Faculty Status	Without Faculty Status
1. Do librarians receive paid professional development leaves?		
Yes	75% (56)	52% (13)
No	25 (19)	48 (12)
If so, please explain for what purpose (research, sabbaticals, professional meetings, etc.) such leave is received:		
Meetings	100% (56)	69% (9)
Research	21 (15)	31 (4)
Sabbatical	48 (27)	not significant
2. Are professionally related travel expenses paid for librarians?		
All paid	31% (23)	44% (11)
partially paid	53 (40)	40 (10)
none paid	4 (3)	0
all/partial	11 (8)	16 (4)
3. Can librarians take academic courses during normal working hours?		
Yes	88% (56)	75% (19)
No	12 (9)	20 (5)
No Response		4 (1)
4. Do librarians have a tuition waiver?		
Total	56% (42)	68% (17)
Partial	16 (12)	24 (6)
None	28 (21)	8 (2)
5. How many sick days do librarians receive?		
6-10 days	9% (7)	20% (5)
11-15 days	43 (32)	32 (8)
16-20 days	0	1 (1)
21-25 days	4 (3)	0
26- days	7 (5)	12 (3)
unlimited	24 (18)	20 (5)
length of service		
or varies	7 (5)	8 (2)
no response		4 (1)

TABLE 2
WORK SCHEDULES OF LIBRARIANS

Length	With Faculty Status	Without Faculty Status
Contract Year		
9 months	7% (5)	0
10 months	3 (2)	4% (1)
10.5 months	3 (2)	0
12 months	85 (64)	96 (24)
9- or 12-month option	3 (2)	0
Vacation Days		
The total population for those with faculty status ($N = 64$) represents those with 12-month contracts only. The remaining 11 institutions had no formal vacation since contract years range from 9 to 10.5 months.		
1-15 vacation days	11% (7)	16% (4)
16-21	30 (19)	21 (5)
22 or more	37.5 (24)	46 (11)
varies with length		
of service	22 (14)	16 (4)
No response	0	4 (1)
Workweek		
Number of Hours Worked Per Week		
35 hours or fewer	16% (12)	28% (7)
36-39.5 hours	33 (25)	24 (6)
40 or more hours	48 (36)	40 (10)
no designated hours	3 (2)	8 (2)

categories had between sixteen to twenty-one days, or accrued time depending upon their length of service.

Unlike teaching faculty, most librarians have a regular work week, ranging from thirty-five to forty hours. Generally, we found that those without faculty status were assigned fewer hours than those with faculty status. Of those without faculty status, 28 percent worked thirty-five hours per week, compared with 16 percent of those with faculty status. At the higher end of the scale, 48 percent of those librarians with faculty status worked forty hours a week, compared with 40 percent of those without faculty status.

A majority of institutions surveyed required librarians from outside the reference department to have weekend and evening reference duty (see table 3). This was true for librarians with and without faculty status and may depend primarily upon the size of the professional staff. Scheduling of hours outside of the regular work week is not a topic of the "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Libraries," and it has been suggested that evening and weekend work is an administrative matter, unrelated to faculty status.⁵

One of the basic arguments for faculty status for librarians is that they serve in a

unique teaching capacity within the academic community. This may take place in the classroom, but generally occurs in the library through reference work and bibliographic instruction, as well as through the development, organization, and control of the collection. Most library directors responding to the survey interpreted "teaching" in the traditional sense. According to the survey, 52 percent of those with faculty status are required to teach or do bibliographic instruction, compared with 40 percent of those without faculty status. It is interesting to note that some librarians considered bibliographic instruction to be teaching, but others did not. Of those directors whose institutions gave faculty status, and who made written comments in this area, only three stated that their librarians had ever taught in academic departments outside of the library.

Just as librarians do comparatively little teaching, they also do comparatively little publishing. Of those with faculty status, 28 percent are required to publish compared to 8 percent of those without faculty status. A majority in both categories were not required to publish, although they were encouraged to do so. In both categories (8 percent of those with faculty status, 4 percent of those without faculty status), the comment was made that publishing

TABLE 3
RESPONSIBILITIES OF LIBRARIANS

	With Faculty Status	Without Faculty Status
1. Is evening and weekend reference coverage shared by librarians from outside the reference department?		
Yes	69% (52)	64% (16)
No	28 (21)	32 (8)
No Response	3 (2)	4 (1)
2. Do librarians have teaching responsibilities?		
Yes	37% (28)	16% (4)
No	37 (28)	48 (12)
Bibliographic Instruction Necessary for Promotion	15 (11)	24 (6)
No Response	4 (3)	4 (1)
	9 (7)	8 (2)
3. Do librarians have publishing responsibilities?		
Yes	20% (15)	4% (1)
No	63 (47)	84 (21)
Necessary for Promotion	8 (6)	4 (1)
No Response	9 (7)	8 (2)

was a factor in promotion decisions. One institution with faculty status allowed librarians to substitute publishing for a second master's degree in applying for rank beyond assistant professor.

CONCLUSIONS

The "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Libraries" have not yet been met by many institutions that state that they have faculty status for librarians. Appointments for the academic year, extended paid research leaves, and tenure are still unavailable to a number of librarians who seem to be faculty in title only. At the same time, classroom teaching and publishing—the traditional provinces of faculty—are not widely demanded of librarians with or without faculty status.

The intent of this study was to compare

and quantify tangible benefits and responsibilities of librarians in the Southeast, with or without faculty status. Such a study cannot measure the personal esteem or prestige that accompanies faculty status, but our results lead us to conclude that the continual effort by librarians over the past several decades to be likened to teaching faculty has had nominal results.

Librarians in the southeastern region who have faculty status seem to be much more akin to their counterparts without faculty status. Ironically, with the exception of paid research leaves, those without faculty status may even enjoy better fringe benefits and fewer pressures. As faculty nationwide face crises of reduced enrollment and an unstable future for the tenure system, librarians may want to rethink the advantages and disadvantages of sharing their status.

REFERENCES

1. Lewis C. Branscomb, ed., *The Case for Faculty Status for Academic Librarians* (Chicago: American Library Assn., 1970); Greg Byerly, "The Faculty Status of Academic Librarians in Ohio," *College & Research Libraries* 41:422-29 (Sept. 1980); Russ Davidson, Connie Capers Thorson, and Margo C. Trumpeter, "Faculty Status for Librarians in the Rocky Mountain Region: A Review and Analysis," *College & Research Libraries* 42:203-13 (May 1981); Nancy Davey and Theodora Andrews, "Implications of Faculty Status for University Librarians, with Special Attention to Tenure," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 4, no.2:71-74 (May 1978); Ronald F. Dow, "Academic Librarians: A Survey of Benefits and Responsibilities," *College & Research Libraries* 38:218-20 (May 1977); Bonnie Jean Jackson, "Status of Academic Librarians in Louisiana," *LLA Bulletin* 39:99-104 (Winter 1977); Alice Manchikes and George Crabb, "A Survey of Faculty Status Policies for Librarians in Kentucky and Surrounding States," *Southeastern Librarian* 26:219-25 (Winter 1976); J. Carlyle Parker, "Faculty Status and the Academic Work Year," *California Librarian* 33:143-49 (July 1972); Prabha Sharma, "A Survey of Academic Librarians and Their Opinions Related to Nine-Month Contracts and Academic Status Configurations in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi," *College & Research Libraries* 42:561-70 (Nov. 1981).
2. *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges, V. 1: Description of the Colleges* (12th ed.; Woodbury, N.Y.: Barron's Educational series, 1980).
3. The loss of faculty status by librarians is also mentioned in the 1981 study by Sharma in which it was found that of librarians without faculty status in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi, 47 percent had had their faculty status rescinded within the previous ten years. Sharma, "A Survey of Academic Librarians," p. 566.
4. Association of College and University Librarians, "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians," *College & Research Libraries News* 33:211 (Sept. 1972).
5. Dow, "Academic Librarians," p.219.

Announcing
two important new guides from **harfax**

harfax Coming in August
**GUIDE TO INDUSTRY
SPECIAL ISSUES**

This new index to the special issues of 1,800 industry and trade journals contains 5,000 citations in all. Part I is arranged alphabetically, first by journal title, then by year, and within each year, by article title. References from former journal names to current names are included. Part II, the Publisher Index, includes the full name, address, and telephone/telex number of each publisher. Part III is a Subject Index arranged alphabetically by product. Part IV is a Title Index organized by title of article.

August ca 500 pages *944-5
Price to be announced.

harfax Coming in the Fall
**GUIDE TO FINANCIAL
INDUSTRIES**

This guide contains 3,000 citations on four primary financial industries: Commercial Banking, Investment Banking and Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate. This four-part volume contains a Finance Guide arranged first by industry and then by geographic region and document type, and a Publisher Index which provides an alphabetical index to the Financial Guide and contains the full name, address, and telephone/telex number of each Publisher. Parts III and IV provide a Subject and a Title Index.

September ca 325 pages \$65.00†

Also from **harfax**

"Far more detailed and much narrower in scope than other business guides, this highly specialized new annual will be most useful in corporate and graduate business school libraries." — *Wilson Library Bulletin*

harfax DIRECTORY OF INDUSTRY DATA SOURCES

**UNITED STATES AND CANADA
Volumes 1-3**

1982 *883-X 2,202 pages three volumes \$225.00

**WESTERN EUROPE
Volumes 4-5**

1983 *937-2 1,006 pages 2 volumes \$125.00

The first comprehensive guides to marketing
and financial data on major energy and
high technology industries throughout the world.

harfax GUIDE TO THE
ENERGY INDUSTRIES

1983 *919-4 328 pages \$60.00

harfax GUIDE TO THE HIGH
TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIES

1983 *619-5 ca 400 pages \$65.00†

* — 0-88410-

† — denotes tentative price

Ballinger

PUBLISHING COMPANY

54 Church Street, Cambridge, MA 02138