

College & Research Libraries *NEWS*

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The Proposed Standards for Faculty Status: A Dissenting Opinion

Editor's note: The following dissenting opinion to the "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians," published in the October 1970 issue of *CRL News*, was submitted by Robert M. Pierson, Assistant Director of Libraries for Administration, University of Maryland, College Park and Baltimore. While it is not generally the practice of the *News* to publish items of this length, it was felt that this is the type of response that the ACRL Status Committee had in mind when they asked for "opinions from the profession . . . for [their] future guidance. . . ." in their preface to the "Standards."

My occasion for writing is the publication in the October 1970 *CRL News* of the "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians" drawn up by ACRL's Academic Status Committee, and their subsequent distribution (somewhat premature) in the Autumn 1970 *College Library Notes for the College President*. I urge that ACRL reject the proposed standards. Our choice is not between them and nothing; we should at least send them back for revision. Standards (in following paragraphs) drawn up last year by the College and Research Libraries Division of the

Maryland Library Association constitute a possible model. I should like, first, to set forth some specific objections to the ACRL proposal; second, to offer some general comments; and third, to present the Maryland Library Association standards.

First, a review of specific parts of the ACRL statement:

The paragraphs headed "Proposed Standards": I wish these paragraphs claimed less. I doubt whether all presidents and deans will favor all of their ideas. The first paragraph (beginning—"With publication increasing at an exponential rate") may be true of librarianship as a whole, but it hardly describes the work of individuals. The second paragraph (beginning—"Consequently the academic librarian") carries us yet farther from reality. Collection-building is often a responsibility shared by faculty and by library staff. Not all librarians instruct; not all advise the faculty; not all compile bibliographies, let alone "extensive" ones, nor is all their compiling at the faculty level of intellectuality; not all librarians serve the community at large; and relatively few do research. These paragraphs seem rather to describe what one might wish librarians did than to tell what they generally do.

Title ("Standards for Faculty Status . . . A Proposal of the Academic Status Committee . . ."): I object to *faculty* and *academic*. They beg the question. Would that ACRL had appointed a committee concerned simply

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with status and had asked it to come up with appropriate standards. Whether *faculty* status would have been recommended could have remained to be seen.

Preamble: I fail to see the sense in *therefore* ("Therefore college and university librarians must be recognized as equal partners. . ."). We may accept the two preceding sentences: librarians are important, and their professional training is at the graduate level. But these facts do not add up to "equal partners." You can participate in, help with, lend support to, etc., without being equal. Equality may be appropriate—but not on account of the line of reasoning presented.

Standard 1 ("Self-determination on the job"): Performance review "by a committee of peers" is specified. It is not clear to me why evaluation by one's peers is preferable to evaluation by one's superiors. The picture which emerges is of a work situation in which "line of command" plays a relatively weak role. If one's superior does not evaluate, he would seem to lack authority: does he remain responsible?

Standard 2 ("Compensation"): In justification of matching salary scales for teachers and librarians, the equivalence to a doctorate of two master's plus two years of experience is specified. This is something which I should not

expect most Ph.D.'s to accept. Doctorates have long been said to indicate learning experience of a special kind, not just more. And is there not, by implication, a premium upon evidence of one's having gone to school? Many librarians with only their fifth-year professional degrees are, because of their ability, their familiarity with reality, and their current level of contribution more valuable than librarians with strings of degrees in who knows what. We seem to be slipping into credit-counting patterns similar to those that plague secondary school teaching. It is as if, desperate to join the club, we were accepting the rules, foolish or otherwise, which govern its present members and then asking for modifications to allow for our cultural and other disadvantages.

Standard 3 ("Tenure"): "Librarians," we are told, "should be covered by tenure provisions the same as those of the faculty." Is this what we really want? I foresee recruiting difficulties. There are, after all, schools in which instructors never achieve tenure and in which assistant professors seldom do so; and there are those in which it takes at least six years to achieve job security.

Standard 4 ("Promotion"): The specified bases for promotion are "academic proficiency and professional effectiveness." How is the former to be measured? By degrees and by pub-

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lications? "Professional effectiveness" is better; but why is no mention made of likelihood of success in new assignments? Promotion, we are told, must involve a peer review system. Is this practicable? Peer review can certainly contribute a great deal; but committees can be slow, and there are instances in which decisions have to be made rapidly, lest good people be lost to other libraries, including libraries outside *acadème*. "The librarians' promotional ladder should have the same titles, ranks, and steps as those of the faculty." I object to this. Some large libraries have (and, until it is otherwise proved, may be assumed to need) a greater number of ranks. I see no value in professional titles: I am employed by my university neither as a teacher nor as a researcher, and I see no need to pretend to be either. (Were I a teacher, I should not want to be called a "reference librarian!") I suspect too that most university librarians who achieve faculty titles may find themselves stuck in low ranks, acceptable as instructors and assistant professors, but not as anything more. Participation in faculty rank patterns might, I grant, lead to fewer injustices in junior colleges than in universities: in four-year colleges, all might depend on how heavy the emphasis upon advanced degrees and research happened to be.

Closing paragraphs: These deal with implementation: publicity, investigation, and invocation of sanctions. Provision 4b (forbidding advertising "in any ALA publication" of vacancies at censured institutions) seems to go beyond the province of ACRL. Otherwise the closing paragraphs make sense—if we accept the standards. Moreover, even if we accept particular provisions as *desiderata* must we consider them necessities? Even if we grant the desirability of faculty titles, are we to condemn libraries which provide good career opportunities, which allow for participation in academic deliberations, etc., etc., but which do not call their librarians by academic names? Either the standards are to be implemented or they are not. If they are, they can be unjust to individual libraries and/or embarrassing to ACRL; if standards are not to be implemented, why proclaim them?

Not that I object to everything: Standards 5-9 I accept, even if Standards 5 and 6 suggest situations somewhat visionary.

Now for some very general questions: (1) *Do the proposed standards stem less from efforts to determine what status should be accorded "typical" college and university librarians than from efforts to determine what status should be accorded those whose activities conform to a particular ideal?* The image I infer is of libraries organized somewhat along the lines of teaching departments or (if libraries are large and/or complex) colleges within uni-

versities. Directors are like chairmen (and, like some chairmen, may be elected or may at least rotate). The various department heads (reference, acquisitions, etc.) are less line officers than "coordinators." Authority (hence hierarchies) may exist, but less as a day-to-day reality than as power to be invoked when all else fails. Librarians are by implication distinguished from library administrators, the latter being a service group charged with the task of facilitating the work of librarians. Logistics, preservation, etc., are carried on silently and superbly by non- /para- /subprofessionals—with librarians left free to devote themselves to the higher bibliography ("research"?) and to something closer to "teaching" than is typical today. On the whole, a delightful possibility! But surely just that—a possibility, an ideal, not a present reality—not something typical of existing libraries, including those generally accepted as "good enough." And is it an ideal toward which an overwhelming majority of academic librarians could aspire with any assurance of success? And does it, in the long run, meet service needs with anything like the success—undeniable—with which it meets ego needs?

Now it could be argued that, yes, the standards *do* evoke an ideal, one not readily attained, and that just for that reason they should be accepted—not for their relationship to the familiar but because their adoption can speed the day when the ideal they evoke can become a reality. In the meantime, let's blacklist all backsliders! Now surely this is a sneaky way to bring about acceptance of new dogma, regardless of how correct the new dogma may prove to be. Conversion should precede baptism! Nor should baptism be accomplished by force. Sell me first on new ways of running libraries (I might, after all, buy—and keep up my payments!); then, but not before, show me the standards (maybe I'll buy them too). But don't (to change the figure yet again) push the service contract before I've signed up for the equipment itself—which I am far from sure I need.

(2) *Is the committee too concerned with academic life as a special world?* It seems to me too often assumed that our salvation lies in kissing the world good-bye and asking to be reborn as instructors, assistant professors, and what have you. This assumption may be correct. But it seems to me that we must test its correctness: first, by establishing goals; second, by organizing work so as to achieve goals; third, by finding ways to interact with other campus groups so as to facilitate goal-achievement; fourth—and not a moment sooner—by recognizing, through salaries, titles, etc., individual responsibilities and achievements in the general goal-achievement process.

It may be that recognition of individual roles is most successfully achieved by our pretending to be what we are not. I see analogies in the aspirations and dilemmas of religious and ethnic minorities. What are our options? We can try to assume the life styles of more favored groups. We can change the whole fabric, achieving a blend, a kind of Brazil. Or we can opt for separatism, with a federation of components in the academic community. Personally, I lean toward separatism—with cooperation, not antagonism—though I would settle for Brazil. It may be after all that we would not so much long for identification with other groups were we more certain of our own identity—and of our worth.

Perhaps, too, we are overdoing the type-of-library approach. It seems to me that academic librarians tend to separate themselves from other librarians, learning from them, yes, as man learns from wasps and porpoises, but not, as it were, living among them. This may be a natural reaction against the long domination of American librarianship and its professional conclaves by the concerns of public librarianship. It is easy to think of librarianship as a group of professions or as a unity inevitably dominated by one part. We must do otherwise if we are to achieve appropriate status. We must see ourselves as *librarians*—individually more accustomed to or suited to this or that type of library or type of activity but prepared to function, effectively or otherwise, in any. One way to achieve this reorientation to our own identity is to concentrate less upon what divides us than upon what unites us, i.e., on the basic truths of information and media and the ways in which information and other gifts of media interact, and act upon and are acted upon by users—the latter with all their individual skills, motives, and needs. We tend to see librarians as groups with some common interests; let us rather see them as a single group the members of which individually apply their common stock of skills to a variety of situations.

(3) *Can the proposed standards be justified simply as a means of bringing about immediate benefits?* Yes and no. Politics may justify façades. But façades may require more maintenance than they are worth. Practically, we may find it to our advantage to “join the faculty.” After all, despite our ideals and despite such spiritual associations as we may enjoy (or wish to enjoy) with librarians “off campus,” our salaries and fringe benefits are probably determined “on campus.” For various reasons, our voices may not be heard unless we raise them in unison, or at least in harmony, with those of a larger and more powerful group. Even where faculty status is imperfect, are we better off joining a larger fight

than struggling along alone? Moreover, there is the undeniable fact that in the “content” of our work we are generally more allied to teachers than to most other campus groups; certainly our contribution to learning and to research is on the whole more direct than is that of the buildings and grounds people. An *alliance* of faculty members and librarians thus makes sense; and it can be advantageous to both and therefore to the whole academic community, specifically, the students. To firm such an alliance and to insure that our place in it is not that of satellite to a major power, we may seek and/or accept union. Now union may be a good thing if the result is an Austria-Hungary with us allowed to converse in our own quaint language, observe our own holidays, etc.—but not if it is a Prussian Empire or a People’s Republic, with our street names changed to hideous Teutonisms, our family structure altered beyond recognition, and/or us allowed to be ourselves but assigned low status (across the tracks?) as eternal instructors and assistant professors while all sorts of bright young persons pass us by. When faced with the prospect of union, we must ask what is asked of us and then coolly, dispassionately, and self-confidently consider whether we can join in without sacrificing too much. If we do join in, it may have to be with mental reservations. There is also the possibility that we will not be *asked* to join in, as some of our stipulations the faculty simply may not tolerate.

Having been so severe, I feel obliged to make a positive contribution. The standards accepted by the College and Research Libraries Division of the Maryland Library Association are presented in a position statement (quoted below) drawn up by an ad hoc committee (Robert Bailey, Edith Waterman, John Zimmerman (chairman), and myself) and approved by the division at its May 1, 1970, meeting:

POSITION PAPER ON THE STATUS OF LIBRARIANS IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Academic librarians are responsible for the development of college and university libraries, which are essential elements in the implementation of higher education policies and programs. In order to fulfill their responsibilities and achieve their objectives, librarians must be accorded recognition comparable to that accorded the teaching faculties of academic institutions. The College and Research Libraries Division of the Maryland Library Association upholds the following principles concerning the status of professional librarians in institutions of higher education

1. College and university librarians should be full members of college and university

faculties. Full participation in faculty meetings, academic senates, graduate councils, faculty clubs, and similar bodies should be available to librarians on the same basis as to members of teaching faculties. Participation of librarians in such bodies should not be conditional upon the extent of the instructional element in their particular assignments.

2. New appointments of librarians should be initiated by head librarians after appropriate consultation. Nothing should prohibit joint appointments with other departments of institutions.
3. After appropriate initial appointments, librarians should achieve tenure. Permanent appointments should be initiated by head librarians after appropriate consultation. Upon achieving tenure, librarians should have job security rights the same as those of the teaching faculty. Librarians should have access to the grievance, appeal, and review procedures available to the teaching faculty.
4. Duties regularly assigned to librarians and the levels of performance expected of them should be professional in character. In proportion to the sizes and degrees of complexity of libraries, distinctions should be made among librarians therein employed in titles and salaries in accordance with levels of responsibilities assigned. Supporting staffs of sufficient size and competence should be retained to perform tasks which do not require professional training.
5. Work schedules of librarians should be as flexible as the requirements of their assignments permit, i.e., with due regard to such factors as supervisory responsibility, availability for consultation, maintenance of service and work flow, etc. Work loads should allow time for consultation, planning, research, experimentation, attendance at professional meetings, participation in academic committees and councils, etc., as appropriate.
6. Salary scales for librarians and ranks within libraries ought to correspond to those of teaching faculty, with the lowest and highest salaries assignable to librarians in each rank equalling the lowest and highest salaries assignable to members of the teaching departments and with adjustments for length of work year. Salaries paid to head librarians should be no less than salaries paid to heads of teaching departments. Faculty titles should be granted where they do not entail inappropriate requirements in, for example, promotional criteria.
7. Promotions of librarians should be ini-

tiated by head librarians after appropriate consultation. Promotion should be based upon likelihood of success in positions to which promotion is being considered. Furthermore, opportunities to recognize quality of performance and level of responsibility within ranks should be provided through merit salary increases.

8. Leaves granted to librarians—for illness, for vacation, for self-improvement, etc., including sabbatical leaves—should be the same as leaves granted teaching faculty.

The College and Research Libraries Division of the Maryland Library Association urges college and university libraries in Maryland to take steps to implement these principles.

NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

- A. *Professional librarian* in the statement of principles normally means a librarian holding a fifth-year professional library degree.
- B. *Appropriate consultation* refers to discussion with appropriate persons in line positions above and/or below the position in question.
- C. Implementation of these principles should proceed with due recognition of existing situations which it would be difficult, inappropriate, or unjust to alter.

It seems to me that the above statement, less strong in tone than some might wish, is, like Pascal's reed, something that just might hold up in a storm. It involves compromise, specifically, among the needs and desires of librarians in several kinds of institutions (and satisfying all led to some loss of punch, nor do I personally agree with everything it says). I cite it, then, not as perfection, but as something nearer thereto than the proposed ACRL standards—as something more appropriate to existing and apparently developing situations; and not as an attempt, veiled or otherwise, to *change* college and university librarianship, however much authors may have, individually, longed for change.

ACADEMIC STATUS

The library faculty of the University of Louisville wishes to make known its unanimous endorsement of the Proposed Standards recommended by the Academic Status Committee of ACRL. The Proposed Standards express clearly and succinctly the rights and privileges that all academic librarians should have. This faculty strongly advocates their prompt adoption and support by ACRL and ALA. It also urges the swift implementation of the standards by college and university libraries.

• • •

The University of Missouri has formally granted academic status to all librarians on all



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four campuses of the university. The directors of libraries, under the chairmanship of Dr. C. Edward Carroll of the Columbia campus, worked for several months formulating a policy statement on academic status which was approved February 22, 1971. Other members of the committee were Dr. Kenneth J. LaBudde of the Kansas City campus, Miss Susan B. Freegard of the St. Louis campus, and Mr. Earl J. Randolph of the Rolla campus. Details for implementing the new policy are being worked out by the directors of libraries and the deans of faculties on the various campuses.

IN REPLY TO NORMAN STEVENS

Dear Sir:

I would like to make the following comments prompted by the statement on the work week by Norman Stevens in *CRL News*, February 1971. Personally, the idea of a flexible work week in the academic library with opportunities to do personal reading and research, attend committee meetings and seminars, etc., without feeling guilty of neglecting one's immediate duties or putting in less than the traditional scheduled hours on the assigned job appeals to me. Practically, as head of a catalog department and as a practicing cataloger with many years of experience, I question whether such flexibility and freedom are really feasible and will necessarily contribute to the librarian's and library's growth.

I feel the question of work week in terms of actual physical attendance in the library is an important consideration. As the UCLA Librarians Association has stated in its pamphlet, *Goals for UCLA librarians*, "Freed time could never approach that of the faculty without interfering with the basic service function of the library." The library is a service institution. The library deals with materials, book and non-book, which must be made readily available in form and content, as quickly as possible, to the patrons it serves. There are statistics to be kept up; there are supervisory responsibilities. The nature of cataloging is such that subject catalogers must be on hand for consultation. Even automatic cataloging with proof slips presents many classification problems. A truly conscientious cataloger will not find it easy to disregard the many items awaiting her attention and instead pursue some line of research.

Yet library administrators are urging that more time be given to research, especially if librarians with faculty status are to be promoted. I am sure there will be professional jealousy if some staff members are released to do personal research while others may not be able to be released to the same extent because of the nature of their library commitments. It is just conceivable that some librarians are not research people anyway but are

good, honest, practicing librarians. Should they be penalized for keeping their noses to the grindstone? Are library skills of lesser importance? Are we librarians about to become victims of the "publish or perish" syndrome? How are we to keep track of and judge whether a librarian is making effective use of his time, especially if he is doing research in an area about which others know nothing?

At Eastern Michigan University Library we have faculty status: a ten-month contract, option of summer work, sabbaticals, etc. We try to think of ourselves as faculty. Yet when it comes to special campus emergencies, vacation periods, or holidays we find ourselves not able to close up shop completely as many of the faculty departments do when classes are not in session. The library is a facility which cuts across the whole educational area. We must be on duty if only on a staggered schedule or on compensatory time. We do participate in campus committees and meetings as well as in intralibrary affairs. The catalogers are also assigned to reference desks almost every week of the school year. Even now it is becoming increasingly difficult to find a time when all professional members of the catalog department can be present for a staff meeting. If hours are to become even more flexible there will be many more scheduling problems.

If adequate supplementary help were to be given to compensate for released time, the library perhaps would not suffer, but with tight finances already and further budget cuts looming up in many academic libraries, the prospects for extra help seem slim. If we must become more permissive regarding hours (and I am not completely convinced this is necessary), it may be fairer to everyone and easier to supervise if each librarian were to be scheduled for a minimum number of hours, say thirty hours per week, at his particular library assignment. Then the rest of the hours of the work week might be left free for the librarian to do with as he wishes. In this way there might be less chance of professional jealousy, misuse of time, or inadequate library service.

Very truly yours,
 (Mrs.) Grace K. Maxfield
 Catalog Librarian
 Eastern Michigan University
 Ypsilanti, Michigan

ACRL MEMBERSHIP

| | |
|----------------------|--------|
| March 31, 1971 | 10,101 |
| March 31, 1970 | 9,892 |
| March 31, 1969 | 11,776 |

Dear Sir:

Congratulations to Norman D. Stevens and his colleagues at the Wilbur Cross Library, University of Connecticut, for their excellent approach to a sensible professional work week. Their example should be followed by all college and university librarians. I assume that Dr. Stevens and his colleagues are expected to devote a considerable amount of additional time beyond thirty-five hours to activities that

provide professional growth and development. They should consider it a part of their responsibility as members of an academic community.

Sincerely,
J. Carlyle Parker
Head of Public Services and
Assistant Librarian
Stanislaus State College
Turlock, California

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Annual Conference Meetings

Annual Conference
Dallas, Texas
June 20-26, 1971

The following schedules are tentative. A final schedule, with locations, will be mailed by Mary Cilluffo, Assistant for Conference Arrangements, to officers and chairmen of all ALA groups. Each chairman should notify his committee.

ACRL PRECONFERENCES

RARE BOOKS SECTION
June 17-19, 1971, University of Texas, Austin
"The Interdependence of Rare Books and Manuscripts."

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES SECTION
June 18-19, 1971, Dallas, Texas
"Librarians Confront the New Undergraduate Environment."

CONFERENCE PROGRAMS

LED/ACRL Program

Wednesday, June 23, 2:00-4:00 p.m.
Chairman: Sister M. Laurette McCusker, Rosary College, River Forest, Ill.

"Implications of Government Legislation for Libraries."

Committee on Cooperation with Educational and Professional Organizations

Tuesday, June 22, 12:30 p.m.—Luncheon
Chairman: James F. Govan, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Penn.

COLLEGE LIBRARY SECTION
Tuesday, June 22, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Panel discussion on Proposed Guidelines for College Libraries.

Moderator: Norman E. Tanis, San Fernando Valley State College, Northridge, Calif.

Panelists: Stanley McElderry, Graduate School of Library Science, University of Texas, Austin. (Additional panelists to be announced.)

JUNIOR COLLEGE LIBRARY SECTION
June 22, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

"Accountability for Learning Resource Centers."

Speakers: Dr. Tom Hatfield, Texas College and University System, Austin; Dr. Richard Banister, San Diego Community Colleges, San Diego, Calif.

RARE BOOKS SECTION, ACRL
Monday, June 21, 9:00-10:30 a.m., Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas.

"The Present Status of Training Special Collections Librarians in Library Schools and Recommendations for the Future."

Moderator: Leslie W. Dunlap, University of Iowa Library School, Iowa City.

Speakers: Richard Ploch, University of Arizona, Tucson; and John Swingle, Alta California Bookshop, Albany.

11:00-12:00 noon, tour of DeGolyer Collection, Southern Methodist University campus

SUBJECT SPECIALISTS SECTION AND AGRICULTURAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES SUBSECTION
Wednesday, June 23, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

"Subject Specialists in Academic Libraries."
"The Impact of the Subject Specialist on Academic Library Organization."

Speaker: Eldred Smith, University of California, Berkeley.

"Academic Library Services and the Subject Specialist."

Speaker: Alan Taylor, Indiana University, Bloomington.

"The Role of Subject Specialists in Undergraduate Colleges."

Speaker: Thomas Kirk, Earlham College, Richmond, Ind.

Panel discussion: Joseph C. Shipman, moderator.

SSS/AGRICULTURAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES SUBSECTION. (See Subject Specialists Section)

SSS/ART SUBSECTION
Monday, June 21, 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Tour: "Art Library Collection Building for Community Education." (For details and res-