

# Dossier Guidelines for Specialized Library Faculty

## Guidelines on dossier style and Incorporating Substitute Section III for Librarians

Updated September 2024

**NOTE:** Always refer to the latest update of the [Provost's Communication 26](#). This document supplies *supplementary guidance* and must be used in context of Communication 26.

*Candidates should review the library's statement on promotion and tenure relative to excellence in each area you are writing statements for:*

[http://wordpress.library.illinois.edu/committees/wp-content/uploads/sites/89/2023/05/SF\\_Statement\\_on\\_Promotion.pdf](http://wordpress.library.illinois.edu/committees/wp-content/uploads/sites/89/2023/05/SF_Statement_on_Promotion.pdf)

*Following the guidelines set for by the University of Illinois in [Best Practices: Transparency in AI Use](#), the University Library requires that candidates declare their use of AI in the writing of all narrative statements within their promotional dossier, and assume that any use of AI in publications are declared at an article-level as required by publishers. If AI is utilized in the candidate's preparation or writing of their statements, the candidate must add a declaration (suggested language, below) as a footnote to each statement in which AI was used.*

*"I acknowledge the use of [specific AI tool used, URL] to generate the outline (and/or) drafting stage (and/or) writing for the creation of this narrative statement."*

Promotional paths for specialized faculty provide opportunities for the development of long-term careers at Illinois and ensure that these valuable employees can contribute to the exceptional quality of teaching and research that is required on campus. Although these promotions do not include tenure, departments are encouraged to provide multi-year contracts with appointments to the ranks of associate and full teaching, research and clinical professors. Given that these appointments carry with them the title of *professor*, the University uses a rigorous multi-stage process of review that involves external evaluation for promotion of specialized faculty in these tracks.

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## General Tips

Communication 26 currently references a “MSWord fillable outline form”, which should not be used since our outline varies due to the unique nature of Librarianship. Use the Library [Dossier Outline instead](#).

## 1. BE BRIEF

- Campus is only interested in a candidate’s professional accomplishments after joining the University of Illinois faculty, or after their last promotion at the University. Be aware of subsections only asking for items since last promotion.
- Avoid unnecessary explanatory comments and/or the listing of relatively minor and repetitious activities that might be construed as “padding” by critical readers.
- Summarize rather than list.
- Avoid redundancy by placing text only under the most appropriate headings.
- Communication 26 does not include a page limit for the entire dossier. However, certain sections do have a page limit (see below), and tightly written statements reflect well on candidates.

## 2. BE CLEAR

- Remember that non-librarians may read promotion papers; one should never assume that concepts, terminology, and acronyms in common use among librarians will be understood by those at higher campus levels.
- Strive at all times to avoid discipline-specific jargon.
- Except for clearly recognizable terms (e.g., USA, U of I), avoid using an acronym without ensuring that the full name (of organization, agency, etc.) has been first used, followed by the acronym within parentheses, e.g., “...the American Library Association (ALA).”

## 3. BE CONSISTENT

- Choose a standard font (Times New Roman is always a good choice), no less than 11pt.
- Insert page numbers in the upper right-hand corner of each page.
- Use the same wording and numbering system for section headers as provided in Communication 26 outline.
- Where there is no information for a specific section, please note “None.” When a section is not relevant to Librarianship, please note “Not Applicable.” The latter should be used sparingly, e.g., in the case of patents. See Library [Dossier Outline](#).
- List items in chronological order from past to present within each section, i.e., most recent items at bottom of the list.
- The Library does not mandate a particular citation style, but whatever style you choose, follow it precisely, and if you use a citation manager to generate your publication list, be certain to proofread the results carefully, as errors in capitalization and punctuation often occur. Use consistent spacing, punctuation, and capitalization throughout the document.

- Spell out months in full, e.g., “February 28, 1999” instead of “Feb. 28, 1999.”
- The designation of two specific years separated by a hyphen should be indicated in full, e.g.: “1997-1998” or “1999-2001” rather than “1997-98” or “1999-01.” Use hyphens rather than long dashes between years.
- Capitalize “University” and “Library” when applied specifically to the University of Illinois and to the University’s Library system.
- Capitalize names of departmental units, committees, and University divisions, e.g.: “The Music and Performing Arts Library provides an intensive bibliographic instruction program for graduate students of the School of Music...” – “Shortly after assuming my present position at the University in 2002...” – “My research interests on interface design have been developed in conjunction with my activities as a member of the Library’s Public Access Catalog Team...”.
- Do not add headers (except page numbers as noted below), footers, borders, colors, or other ‘creative’ elements to the dossier.

## Section-by-section guidelines

### I. Personal History and Professional Experience

#### A. Educational Background

- [Refer to Communication 26.](#)

#### B. List of Academic Positions since Final Degree

- Do not list graduate assistantships or other pre-professional appointments.

#### C. Other Professional Employment

- [Refer to Communication 26.](#)

#### D. Honors, Recognitions, and Outstanding Achievements

- List Fellowships, prizes, etc. that indicate national and international stature in scholarship and engagement, as appropriate to the rank sought; do not include student awards.

#### E. Invited Lectures and Invited Conference Presentations Since Last Promotion

- This section should be formatted as a numbered list.
- This section is reserved for invitations to give **lectures, keynote speeches, plenary sessions** and so on, where you were invited by the conference organizer, without any prior involvement on your part, including formal or informal submission or any other prompting. It is critical to avoid padding this section with items such as those listed below, and there is no expectation or requirement that anything be

listed here, particularly in the case of candidates for promotion to Associate Professor.

- For promotion to Associate, this should be a full (career) list, however, for candidates for promotion to Professor, a full list of events may be provided or, in the interest of brevity, a list of only those events since the last promotion may be provided.
- Items listed here should not be repeated in service.
- Invitations to moderate a panel should not be listed here.
- Invitations to present a conference paper should **not** be listed here, when the invitation originates with the panel or session organizer, as opposed to the conference organizer or program committee.
- If you are asked to give a presentation because of your job title or position, rather than your reputation as a scholar, do not list it here. List in Service (IV).
- If your paper or presentation goes through a peer review process and is accepted after an invitation to submit it for review, it is not considered an invited lecture.
- Lectures, conference presentations, and other presentations that do not meet the criteria for “invited” should be listed in the Service (IV).

#### **F. Offices Held in Professional Societies**

- Include major elected offices in ALA and similar groups, but not appointed committee chairships. List appointed positions under Service (IV.A.2).

#### **G. Editorships of Journals or Other Learned Publications**

- Do not include newsletter editorships here, list under Service (IV.A.2.).

#### **H. Grants Received since Last Promotion at UIUC**

- Round grant award amounts to nearest dollar (no cents) and only include awards > \$100.
- Grants that have the Library as primary beneficiary, e.g., CARLI collection grants, should be listed under Service (IV).
- Grants to support your research, including RPC and Campus Research Board grants, may be listed here, but should be separated from external grants.
- Travel grants awarded to conduct or present research, e.g., Scholar’s Travel Fund should also be grouped separately from external grants and summarized e.g., “Six scholars travel funds, totaling \$x,xxx.” Do not include travel grants exclusively for conference attendance.
- For candidates for promotion to Professor, a full (career) list of grants may be provided or, in the interest of brevity, a list of only those grants received since the last promotion may be provided.
- Per the newest Communication 9 guidelines, “For grants with multiple investigators, list amount of effort and award for the candidate, as well as the candidate’s role.” For example, “Ward received a subaward of \$17,567 and devoted 10% effort towards project administration, analysis, and dissemination.”

## I. Review Panels

- e.g., Grant proposal review panels for federal agencies such as the IMLS, NEH or NSF, or accrediting team for ALA.

## II. Publications and Creative Works

- Within each category, number each publication.
- Do not annotate citations. Instead, describe your most important publications in the Research (V).
- The phrase “Accepted for Publication” should be used only where a written commitment to publish has been received from a publisher, subject only to final technical editing. The term should not be used to describe works still in initial development, even if a contract or invitation to publish has been offered. Works in the latter category should be described with the phrase “Incomplete work under contract to...” or comparable wording.
- Provide inclusive page numbers for publications in journals; for unnumbered publications or publications accepted but not yet published, include approximate pages in typescript or (more rarely) word count for short online pieces.
- List all publications and creative works over the course of the candidate’s career. For candidates for promotion to Professor, list only publications and creative works that have occurred since the most recent promotion at Illinois.
- Use the following publication-type indicators from Communication 9:
  - Place a single pound sign (#) before any publication derived from the candidate’s thesis.
  - Place a single asterisk (\*) before any publication that has undergone stringent editorial review by peers.
  - Place a plus sign (+) before any publication that was invited and carries special prestige and recognition.

### A. Doctoral Thesis Title

- [Refer to Communication 26.](#)
- If there is no doctoral thesis, note “Not Applicable.”

### B. Books Authored or Co-Authored (in print or accepted)

- [Refer to Communication 26.](#)

### C. Books Edited or Co-Edited (in print or accepted)

- [Refer to Communication 26.](#)

### D. Chapters in Books (in print or accepted)

- Some publishers (e.g., Taylor & Francis, formerly Haworth Press) reprint journal issues as books or publish them simultaneously in both formats. List such dual publications in one section only, with a parenthetical reference to the other format,

e.g., Searing, Susan E. (2007). Integrating assessment into recurring information literacy instruction: a case study from LIS education. In *The teaching library: approaches to assessing information literacy instruction*, pp. 191-218. Ed. by Scott Walter. New York: Haworth Press, 2007. (Published simultaneously in *Public Services Quarterly* 3, no. 1/2 (2007), 191-218.)

#### **E. Monographs (in print or accepted)**

- “Monograph” is not used here in the traditional library sense as a synonym for any non-serial book. List items longer than an article but shorter than a book.

#### **F. Articles in Journals (in print or accepted)**

- See note about double publication under “Chapters in Books” above.

#### **G. Creative Works (Exhibitions, Commissions, Competitions, Performances, Designs, Art or Architecture Executed)**

- Includes exhibitions, commissions, competitions, performances, designs, art, and architecture executed. Please specify type in parentheses, e.g., exhibit.
- Only list library exhibits if they involve significant scholarly research and interpretation.
- For less rigorous exhibits, if they are an important component of your librarianship or service, discuss them in those sections (V.B. and/or IV.A.3).

#### **H. Patents**

- If you have none, it is appropriate to write “Not Applicable.” as they are not an expectation of the discipline.

#### **I. Bulletins, Reports, or Conference Proceedings (in print or accepted)**

- Include only if these items are normally considered an important part of the publication record of a scholar or artist in this field. Provide inclusive page numbers for bulletins, reports or conference proceedings. Write out names followed by acronyms in parentheses the first time they appear.
- Include newsletter articles here if they are substantive. Do not list blog posts or other social media content.

#### **J. Abstracts (in print or accepted)**

- Include only if these items are normally considered an important part of the publication record of a scholar or artist in this field. Provide inclusive page numbers for abstracts.
- Include only standalone abstracts that represent intellectual work not represented elsewhere in publications or presentations.

#### **K. Book Reviews (in print or accepted)**

- Include only if these items are normally considered an important part of the publication record of a scholar or artist in this field.
- List only substantial reviews and review essays. Single-paragraph reviews, such as those in *Choice*, should be summarized under Service (IV.A.2).

#### **L. Refereed Conference Papers and Presentations**

- All should be peer-reviewed, requiring the submission of a substantive abstract or actual paper. Include the “\*” to denote. List non-peer-reviewed presentations under service. If an item could go under Section I above or here, this is the preferred category.
- If you had a presentation formally accepted but did not present due to COVID-19, use “@” to denote.
- Only include items for which there was a written abstract or full paper that underwent rigorous peer review prior to acceptance.
- List full day and date for all presentations, e.g., “May 28, 2016.”

#### **M. Other**

- You can use this section to list encyclopedia articles, substantial scholarly websites, or other publications that do not fit in the above categories.
- Do not pad this section with inconsequential items.

### **III. CONTRIBUTIONS TO LIBRARIANSHIP AND INSTRUCTION (SUBSTITUTE SECTION III FOR LIBRARY FACULTY)**

#### **A. Summary of Librarianship and Instruction.**

- In a narrative of 1-3 paragraphs (no more than a half page), describe your position and its responsibilities. For example, “As the English Librarian, I am responsible for the management, collection development, and the instruction and reference services within the Literatures and Languages Library.”
- Use this section to discuss the impact of your librarianship and major accomplishments in 1-3 paragraphs (no more than a half page). Additional content will appear in your Librarianship Statement, Section V.B.

##### **1. Descriptive Data: Instruction.**

- [Refer to Communication 26.](#)
- Typically, you will complete this section only if you have taught credit courses at UIUC and provide it in the format specified in Communication 9.

##### **2. Supervision of Graduate Students.**

- [Refer to Communication 26.](#)
- Use this category only if you have officially served as faculty adviser for a doctoral dissertation or master’s thesis or have served on an examining committee. You must be expressly designated a member of the Graduate Faculty by the Graduate College

to serve in this capacity. This designation is not automatically extended to members of the Library faculty.

- Do not include supervision of graduate assistants in this section. Rather, include your supervision of pre-professional employees in your Librarianship Statement Section (V.B.).

### 3. Supervision of Undergraduate Students.

- [Refer to Communication 26.](#)

### 4. Other Contributions to Teaching and Learning.

- [Refer to Communication 26.](#)
- For each activity in the list below that is relevant, list the extent of your work in that area by year, and explain in a sentence or two the overall impact of your work. If you have not done an activity, leave it blank. Detailed examples of each category are in the instructions in Communication 26.
- List significant instructional contributions of other sorts when they are provided to graduate or undergraduate students, e.g., through development of course materials used by other instructors and through extensive independent study or informal interactions with students.
- List practicum supervision here. Identify practicums by content, not by the student's name. Include institution, program and course number.
- If you are the instructor of record for an independent study course, list it here.
- If you've contributed in a major way to another person's teaching (e.g., designing the syllabus, shaping assignments, creating resource guides), you may include it in this section, but do not overstate your role.
- Do not list continuing education workshops, instructional sessions at conferences, or similar contributions. These should be listed under Service (IV.A.3).
- Do not list guest lectures or one-shot workshops here. Instead, put them under University/Campus Service (IV.A.3).
- The sub sections below are not required in your dossier if they are not relevant, but are suggestions brought over from Communication 9 that may be relevant to some specialized faculty.
  - Curriculum research and development *Include contributions to courses here, including those you designed and major contributions to another person's teaching e.g., designing the syllabus, shaping assignments, creating resource guides. Items listed here should fall in the category of curricular or course development that has an impact on academic programs. Library instruction sessions will be discussed in librarianship with sessions NOT listed individually. Other workshops and presentations to students should be listed under service.*
  - Educational service *Include practicum and independent study supervision here.*
  - Personal development *Briefly highlight significant activities, such as instructional or information science certifications and training completed. Note that items should only be included if there has been impact, which must be explained in 1-2 sentences. For example, listing certification after extensive training that now allows you to provide instruction or consultations based on a new methodology, etc.*



- Informal student mentoring and support *Mentoring of undergraduates or GAs that occurs through your unit responsibilities should be included in your librarianship statements. While other circumstances may apply, they are likely rare and should only be included if there is has been impact that can be described in 1-2 sentences.*
- Other

## Evaluation of Instruction

- A. Student ICES Course Evaluation Results (if relevant, request [ICES Longitudinal Profile](#) and insert into this section)
- B. Candidate Librarianship/Instruction Statement *The statement should be three or fewer pages. We encourage brevity.*
  - What is the impact of your work and how does it contribute to the University's and Library's missions?
    1. UIUC Mission (from campus website as of 9/21/22): "The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is charged by our state to enhance the lives of citizens in Illinois, across the nation and around the world through our leadership in learning, discovery, engagement and economic development."
    2. Library Mission (from Library website as of 9/21/22): "The University Library is central to the intellectual life of the university. By providing and stewarding collections and content that comprise a record of human knowledge and by offering a wide array of services, it enhances the university's activities in creating knowledge, preparing students for lives of impact, and addressing critical societal needs. The Library advances the university's goals by striving to ensure unfettered access to information and by providing a network of expertise that ensures value, quality, and authenticity of information resources. The Library integrates and manages knowledge to enable learning and the creation of new knowledge."
  - Very important: Focus on overarching themes and goals. What is your philosophy of librarianship and how does it inform your work? What is your passion? How have you achieved your goals and how have they informed future plans?
  - Instead of focusing too much on what you do, indicate WHY what you have been doing is important and its IMPACT. This section will require frequent editing and a persuasive (but not heavy-handed) style.
  - Distinguish between yourself and the job or unit. Emphasize your own accomplishments and avoid passive voice.
  - Show growth and development over time to indicate your areas of greatest improvement (professionally or programmatically).

What challenges have you faced in your librarianship and how did you work to overcome those challenges?

### C. Unit Evaluation of Librarianship, Instruction, and Student Mentoring: [name]

Provide a narrative statement evaluating the candidate's librarianship. Provide original evaluation as well as integrate meaningful quotes from interviews and/or 3Y external letters. NOTE: for paper preparers, this practice is not followed, paper preparers should not quote from referee letters which are included in the campus packet.

Be evaluative rather than descriptive. Focus is on HOW WELL the person is doing the job.

- Avoid merely repeating facts from the candidates' sections.
- When you relate what the candidate has accomplished, explain why it matters and how well it was, or was not, done.
- Specify areas where the candidate needs improvement and strengthening.
- Include strategies for improving performance and building relationships.
- Consult colleagues within and outside the Library, as explained in "[Procedures for Peer Review Committees for NONTENURED tenure-track Library Faculty](#)."
- Very important: maintain the confidentiality of persons consulted. Use "a faculty member stated ..." not, "Professor Perfect stated..." The list of the people consulted needs to be maintained in a separate cover sheet, not shared with the candidate, which will accompany the report when it is sent to the Faculty Review Committee.
- Note: in the final promotion dossier package that goes forward to campus, which the candidate does not see, individual reviewers **are** listed and named.

For models, see "[Sample Evaluative Statements](#)."

## IV. Service (Public Engagement, Professional/Disciplinary, and University)

### A. Summary of Service

- Insert a brief statement here (no more than a half page) characterizing your service.
- Use this section to discuss the impact of your service, and major accomplishments.
- Do not simply list committees – the majority of that type of information should be included in the sections below.

#### 1. Public Engagement

- Use bullet points to provide a list of activities for which the audience was outside academia.
- Do not feel that you need to pad this section; it is expected that many Library faculty will have nothing listed if this is not a major assigned duty of their position.
- Do not include ordinary community service or volunteer work.
- Contributions to the work of public libraries may go here.

- Service done in collaboration with the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs should not be included here. Put it under University/Campus Service (IV.A.3).
- For more guidance, see [A Faculty Guide for Relating Public Service to the Promotion and Tenure Review Process](#) (2000).
- If necessary, mark this section as “Not Applicable.” Our jobs do not generally involve very much public service, and it is not expected that all librarians will have something to report in this category. You will not be penalized for not reporting public engagement activities.

## 2. Service to Disciplinary and Professional Societies or Associations

- Separate this section into a “Committees” header and a “Workshops/Presentations” header.
- Do not list organizations for which you are a member only. You must have provided some service to the organization by serving on a committee, holding an office, etc.

### COMMITTEES

- Do not annotate entries.
- “Committees” should be bulleted and nested under the name of the parent organization e.g., list ALA as a sub-header, then ACRL as a bullet, with ACRL committees as nested bullets under it.
- State the name of the committee, your role (member, vice chair, etc.) and years of service, (2018-2020, 2020-present, etc.).
- Although offices in societies should be listed in Section I, lesser but still important contributions may be listed here such as committee memberships.

### WORKSHOPS/PRESENTATIONS

- Do not annotate entries.
- “Workshops/Presentations” should be numbered sequentially and listed chronologically.
- List full day and date for all presentations, e.g., May 28, 2016.
- Include here, in a separate sub-section, conference presentations that did not result in a publication. This should include conferences that were not sponsored by disciplinary and professional societies.

## 3. University/Campus Service

- Separate this into a “Committees” header and a “Workshops/Presentations” header
- Do not annotate entries.
- Distinguish between services within the Library and service to the wider university community.
- Indicate service on departmental, college, campus and university committees **as well as administrative assignments.**
- Include CARLI committees here.
- Include iSchool guest lectures or one-shot workshops here.

- Include work for the Mortenson Center here.
- No internal unit committees should appear in the dossier e.g., SSHEL, IAS, etc.
- “Workshops/Presentations” should be **numbered** sequentially, and listed chronologically.

## **B. Evaluation of Service (Author of evaluation: [name])**

- This should be split into 3 paragraphs, one under each category below. A brief summary statement or sentence should precede the three paragraphs.
- State something in all three categories. If the candidate does not report any public engagement, which is typical, you can explain that it is not expected.
- If the candidate has served on an especially prestigious editorial board or advisory board to a major publisher, this should be noted here and explained.
- Identify weaknesses in the service record and make specific suggestions for strategies to improve it.
- If needed, recommend means by which the candidate can develop contacts and colleagues on a national level.
- For models, see “[Sample Evaluative Statements](#).”

### **1. Public Engagement**

- Comment on evidence of quality and impact; describe dissemination of the public service work through publications and adoption by others. If appropriate, reflect on how the public service activities are integrated with research and/or teaching.

### **2. Service to Disciplinary and Professional Societies or Associations**

- See [Communication 26](#)

### **3. University/Campus Service**

See [Communication 26](#).

## **V. Diversity, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION ACTIVITIES**

A. Candidate Statement on DEIA

B. Unit Evaluation (Author of evaluation: [name])

## **VI. RESEARCH (to the extent applicable)**

A. Candidate’s Statement of Research Goals and Accomplishments (three pages or less)

- The statement should tie together past research and how it relates to future research plans and to librarianship/service duties.

- In the rare case that public engagement is the primary basis for the recommended promotion, the statement must reflect accomplishments and future plans for public engagement and how they relate to the research activity.
- Answer the “so what?” question. Why does your research matter? What new knowledge have you created, and what significance does it hold for your field of inquiry? Focus on impact.
- Present an integrated research agenda.
- If you have more than one research strand, tie them together with an overarching theme.
- Indicate your research trajectory. Demonstrate that you will keep building on the research you are doing today to produce more new knowledge in the near future and post-tenure.
- Explain why you, in particular, are in a good position to undertake this research successfully.

B. Unit Evaluation of Research Accomplishments

(with emphasis on one or two publications or creative works) (Author of evaluation: [name])

- Research must be evaluated (not merely described) with emphasis on one to two publications or creative works.
- The evaluation should address the dimensions of quality of execution, significance of topic and/or methodology, and impact on the field.
- Be specific in terms of evaluating the candidate’s progress on the research agenda, as measured against your previously expressed expectations.
- Be specific in suggesting the next steps and a time frame for achieving them. For example, state, “Finish the article by June 30” rather than “Finish the article in a timely way.”

C. Evaluate the anticipated value of any proposed research project for the candidate’s specific research agenda. Counsel the candidate not to pursue projects that fall outside the research agenda.

D. Unit Evaluation of Future Potential (Author of evaluation: [name])

- Evaluate the candidate’s strategy for developing a long-term research agenda or trajectory beyond recent accomplishments.
- Assess, in realistic terms, the probable standing of the candidate in the field five years from now.
- If there is a mismatch between the candidate’s research performance so far and the research agenda, or if the future research trajectory is underdeveloped, be clear about what has to happen to achieve a positive evaluation by next year.
- Include an assessment of the probable standing of the candidate within the discipline five years from the present.
- Encourage the candidate to think in terms of a career-long research trajectory, not tenure as the final goal.

