Nothing Happens Unless First a Dream
Demystifying the academic library job search & acing the application process

Scottie Kapel, Whitney Jordan, Elizabeth Skene
Western Carolina University

https://tinyurl.com/clc18dream
About us & WCU
Journey to librarianship: Liz

Undergrad: Spring Arbor University
- Elementary education (kind of)
- Library student worker

Grad: University of Michigan School of Information
- Archives and Records Management, Community Informatics
- Internship at the American University in Cairo
- Worked at the Ann Arbor District Library, UMich Herbarium
Journey to librarianship: Liz

Arab American National Museum, Dearborn, MI
- Curator of Collections

Western Carolina University
- Digital Initiatives Librarian
- Special and Digital Collections Librarian
- 5th year, gone through 2nd and 4 year TPR review
Journey to librarianship: Scottie

Undergrad: University of North Florida
- English

Grad: University of Pittsburgh School of Information Sciences
- Archives, Preservation, and Records Management

Episcopal School of Jacksonville
- Librarian and Archivist, Teacher

Western Carolina University
- Electronic Resources Access Coordinator
- Outreach and Scholarly Communication Librarian
- 2nd year, in process of year 2 TPR review
Journey to librarianship: Whitney

Undergrad: UNC Asheville
- Philosophy

Grad: University of Glasgow
- Information Management & Preservation

Caldwell County Public Library
- Technical Services Librarian
- Acting Interim Director

Nantahala Regional Library
- Branch Librarian

Western Carolina University
- Acquisitions Librarian
Liz Skene: On universities & labor
On terms, rank, & classification
Terms

Faculty status
having similar rights, privileges, and responsibilities as teaching faculty

Tenure
the availability of continuous appointment and permanent employment

Shared governance
participating in the planning and decision making process, typically through elected representation and committees
Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

Basic classification

- Doctorate-granting Universities
- Master's Colleges and Universities
- Baccalaureate Colleges
- Associates Colleges
- Special Focus Institutions
- Tribal Colleges

Undergraduate Instructional Program classification

- Associates Only
- Associates Dominant
- Arts & Sciences Focus.
- Arts & Sciences + Professions
- Balanced Arts & Sciences/Professions
- Professions + Arts & Sciences
- Professions Focus
Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, North Carolina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>4-year or above</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Population</td>
<td>10,382</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Master's Colleges &amp; Universities: Larger Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Instructional Program:</td>
<td>Professions plus arts &amp; sciences, some graduate coexistence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Instructional Program:</td>
<td>Research Doctoral: Single program-Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrollment Profile:</td>
<td>High undergraduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Profile:</td>
<td>Four-year, full-time, selective, higher transfer-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size and Setting:</td>
<td>Four-year, medium, primarily residential</td>
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Variations on faculty status

**Probationary period:** reappointed every 1 or 2 years

**Reappointment:** peer review, collegial review committees

**Promotion:** promotion without contract change; tenure, or permanent or continuing appointment.

**Rank and title:** librarian I, II, IV, university librarian; assistant, associate, full professor professor
On faculty status
On faculty status

A 2016 survey of 124 academic libraries revealed:

- 52% grant nominal faculty status to librarians - this number is lower than a 2008 study
- Faculty status is most common at public institutions, not private
- Less common at universities near the top of the U.S. News rankings

Criteria for reappointment & promotion

I. Overview

The purpose of annual evaluation, reappointment, tenure, promotion, and post-tenure reviews is to ensure that the Technology, Access and Special Collections (TASC) faculty and, therefore, the services of Hunter Library, are of the highest possible quality. To accomplish this, the Library seeks to attract and retain library faculty who are knowledgeable, professional, collaborative, productive, cooperative, committed to service and research, and current in the discipline. A TASC faculty member’s teaching/librarianship equivalent (an individual’s contributions as they pertain to assigned areas of responsibility) is the most important consideration for annual evaluation, reappointment, tenure, and promotion. Library faculty must demonstrate competency in librarianship and share knowledge within forums where such knowledge is subject to the scrutiny and assessment of peers. Each TASC faculty member has different areas of responsibility, different types of scholarship emphasized, and a different investment in service and engagement. TASC faculty members’ scholarly activities generally derive from their professional practice. With cross-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary scholarship is the norm, a wide range of scholarship is acceptable with the fundamental expectation that the results of those activities will be shared with the profession, academic community, and beyond. The guidelines presented in this document are intended to be specific enough to be practical, yet flexible enough to promote and accommodate individual differences and interests.

This document describes the policies, procedures, and criteria for faculty performance evaluation specific to the TASC Department of Hunter Library. It is guided by The Code of the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina (UNC) and by the Western
Tenure, promotion, & review

- Teaching/librarianship
- Service
- Scholarship
Tenure, promotion, & review

Teaching/librarianship

1. Managing personnel and resources
2. Acquiring, organizing, and creating information resources
3. Identifying and developing library collections to meet the needs of the university
4. Assisting patrons in the use of library services and collections
5. Evaluating and enhancing library operations
6. Applying/developing technology to enhance library resources
Tenure, promotion, & review

Scholarship

At WCU: expectation of 1 unit per year (on average)

3 units: peer-reviewed article published in a top tier journal, a book, grant of $75,000 or more

2 units: peer-reviewed article published in a lesser journal, national presentation, book chapter

1 unit: state or regional presentation, internal grant or external grant under $30,000

½ unit: review or abstract (Choice, Library Journal), local presentation, poster session
Tenure, promotion, & review

Service

Serving on department, college, university, public, professional committees

Providing leadership in or making significant contributions to major policy documents

Participating in governance

Mentoring others

Supporting student engagement, groups, activities
The dossier!
The narrative

Cumulative Professional Record
Elizabeth M. Skene
Hunter Library
2014 – 2017

1. Narrative

Introduction

I am pleased to submit my dossier for fourth year reappointment. In May 2014, I started at Western Carolina University (WCU) as Hunter Library’s first Digital Initiatives Librarian and, since July 2016, I have served as the library’s first Special and Digital Collections Librarian. During this time, I have expanded the library’s digital collections, increased the online availability of materials from Special Collections, collaborated with WCU faculty from many disciplines, provided beneficial learning experiences for students, and had meaningful collaborations with community partners. Additionally, I have sustained a high level of scholarly output. With two peer-reviewed articles, numerous presentations, trade publications, and posters, I exceed my department’s scholarship requirements. I also have a strong service record, serving on three college committees, more than five university communities, and in a variety of capacities in the region. I believe I have shown myself to be an effective, efficient, and productive member of the faculty.
The cumulative report

Managing Personnel and Resources

Digital Production Team meetings, (2014 – Present)
Hold monthly Digital Production Team meetings to discuss issues, improve workflow, brainstorm, and generate solutions. This meeting is attended by everyone involved in the digital projects workflow – those responsible for digitization, metadata, upload, and approval.

Supervision, (2014 – Present)
Supervise, train, and provide feedback for 4 SHRA staff, 3 student workers, and interns. Complete annual evaluations for SHRA staff and student workers. Actively mentoring staff by providing job interviewing feedback, writing letters of support, discussing future work, etc.

Special Collections and Digital Initiatives merger, (2016 – 2017)
Orchestrated the merger of the Digital Initiatives unit and the Special Collections department. One the major opportunities of this merger was the cross training of the unit staff. We hold weekly meetings to cover common research topics, review new donations and acquisitions, collaborate on reference requests, and identify items for digitization. Through these training meetings we have been able to institute reference desk shifts which not only takes the burden of reference off a single staff member but it is an immersive way for the staff to familiarize themselves with Special Collection's holdings.

4. Scholarship

Publications

Journal Article, Professional Journal


Journal Article, Public or Trade Journal


The appendices

Appendix A – Curriculum Vitae
Appendix B – AFE Statements
Appendix C – Results of peer review of teaching effectiveness
Appendix D – Student assessment of instruction
Appendix E – Samples of teaching materials/documentation of librarianship
Appendix F – Samples of scholarship and creative activities
Appendix G – Documentation of service and engagement
Appendix H – Other
On labor: Vocational awe, burnout, privilege

“Vocational awe” refers to the set of ideas, values, and assumptions librarians have about themselves and the profession that result in beliefs that libraries as institutions are inherently good and sacred, and therefore beyond critique.

Scottie Kapel: On application materials & interview preparation
On cover letters
Tailor your cover letter
Borrow language from job ad
Put a positive spin on gaps in experience
Common pitfalls

- Including wrong university name
- Not addressing position requirements
- Not providing specific examples of past experiences
- Failing to proofread
On curricula vitae
Maximize your space
Highlight transferable skills
Common pitfalls

- Using inconsistent verb tenses
- Including objective statement
- Not tying transferable skills to position requirements
- Failing to proofread
- Only highlighting responsibilities and not accomplishments
On preparation

Today

1) 

2) 

3)
Learn all you can about the library & university
Practice
Prepare questions
Common pitfalls

- Spending too much time on presentation prep
- Not researching the library/university/region
- Not reviewing documents sent by university
On interviewing
You are on the clock all day
Take advantage of any & all breaks offered
Common pitfalls

- Showing a clear lack of preparation
- Not being able to articulate goals
- Not having research interests
- Showing no interest in position beyond stepping stone
- Speaking poorly about current or past colleagues, departments, or employers
- Being too comfortable
- Not being able to answer succinctly
Whitney Jordan: On expectations
On specialized roles
Review job ad for responsibilities associated with position
Be able to articulate your role within the institution
On new responsibilities
Respect your staff & their responsibilities
Know your systems & resources
Budgets affect everyone
Common pitfalls

- Failing to understand and articulate new position
- Being afraid to say “I don't know”
- Not addressing feedback
- Lack of communication or poor communication
- Making decisions without historical knowledge
- Not being respectful of staff’s time
Discussion

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