

WSU Libraries Workload Policy

November 2025

To ensure a fair and equitable work environment, this document outlines the workload expectations for Librarians at Washington State University (WSU). At WSU, Librarians can be either ranked, tenure-track faculty or ranked, career-track faculty. Librarians are ranked II-IV, comparable to Assistant, Associate and Professor ranks. The ranking system for library faculty is outlined in the *WSU Faculty Manual*.¹

All areas of library work are grounded in the core values of the profession as outlined by the American Library Association (ALA).² Librarians at all ranks must continually promote and support equity and inclusion among our patrons, in our collections, and within our work environments. To promote an equitable, inclusive, and just environment, Librarians must take into account the diverse views, backgrounds, and perspectives of their patrons and colleagues, and assist patrons and colleagues in overcoming barriers to information access.³ The extent of the Libraries' success in achieving the tasks outlined below is contingent upon the Libraries' success in fostering a welcoming, diverse, and respectful environment.

To keep this document up-to-date and effective in ensuring a fair and equitable work environment, this document should be reviewed and revised as needed annually.

Workload Categories

The typical distribution for library faculty is 70/20/10% (Librarianship, scholarship, and service, respectively), and this is clearly noted in annual review and tenure and promotion review documents. Other configurations are possible and will be documented in offer letters or in individual's personnel files.

The *WSU Faculty Manual* defines our primary role as being responsible for developing, maintaining, and teaching library services to the university, communities across Washington State, and beyond. Library faculty have significant responsibilities in the following areas: (a) teaching, mentoring, and directly supporting the teaching and research missions of the university; (b) research, scholarship,

¹ WSU Faculty Manual, I.B.1 Definitions, p. 10. <https://facsen.wsu.edu/documents/2025/06/2025-2026-faculty-manual-update-7-1-25.pdf/>

² American Library Association. "Core Values of Librarianship." <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues>

³ American Library Association. "Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights." <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/EDI>. American Library Association. "Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries (2012)." <https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/diversity>

and creative activity; and/or (c) academic service.⁴ Depending on their appointment and assigned responsibilities, faculty are expected to establish and maintain a record of productivity and achievement specific to their workload.

The workload of each Librarian will vary from individual to individual and department to department, but is generally constituted of the categories of Librarianship, Research and Scholarship, and Service. More details on these categories is provided below.

Expectations

Librarians are faculty not merely in rank but additionally in terms of their importance for student success. A full workload for a full-time Librarian is the sum of their participation in Librarianship, Research and Scholarship, and Service. A full-time workload will represent 100% or 1.0 FTE (based on a 40-hour work week). The exact distribution of a Librarian's time between these three areas will vary based on the Librarian's area of specialization and specific duties outlined by their supervisor. Librarianship is the primary workload duty of all Librarians. Service and Research and Scholarship are potential workload duties that support the Libraries and the University but are secondary to Librarianship.

Based on the contractual distribution, a tenure-track Librarian will typically spend 70% of their time on Librarianship, 20% on Research and Scholarship and 10% on Service. Career-track librarian roles may or may not include Research and Scholarship and/or Service. The actual time spent in a week may vary and will be flexible based on the flow of semesters. All workload distributions are ultimately a decision made jointly by a Librarian and their supervisor. Factors to consider in this decision include the needs of the unit and/or department, the expertise and career stage of the Librarian, and the individual needs of the Librarian.

Although a discussion of the Librarian's workload distribution is advisable during the annual review period, workload distributions are flexible and can be re-evaluated on an ad hoc basis in response to unforeseen circumstances or new priorities. Either the Librarian or their unit head may initiate a re-evaluation of their workload distribution. Any significant and/or long-term changes in workload distribution will be agreed upon and documented by the Librarian, their unit head and LAO.

As the Librarian ascends in rank, their workload distribution may need to be re-evaluated to accommodate new responsibilities or tasks. Workload can also be re-evaluated after repeated annual rankings of less-than-satisfactory, following guidelines provided in the *WSU Faculty Manual*.

Librarianship

Librarianship is a broad category and will vary based on the domain or specialization of the Librarian. Within the Libraries, duties related to Librarianship are considered to be primary workload duties and are essential to the proper functioning of the Libraries and the University.

⁴ WSU Faculty Manual, I.B.1, p. 10, <https://facsen.wsu.edu/documents/2025/06/2025-2026-faculty-manual-update-7-1-25.pdf/>

Different Librarians perform different duties related to aspects of Librarianship based on their position. As defined in the WSU *Faculty Manual*, Librarianship is defined as “teaching, mentoring, and directly supporting the teaching and research missions of the university.” This work happens in a variety of units in the Libraries, including Research Services, Collections, Access Services, Technical Services, Systems, and Library Administration.

Librarianship duties may be comprised of but not limited to: Reference Service (online and in-person), Collection Development (selection of materials), Instruction in Information Literacy and Research Strategies, Metadata Organization and Control (cataloging, electronic resource management), and Systems (hardware/software support, management of the Integrated Library System and consortia resources).

Expectations for performance in these areas in terms of earning tenure, promotion, and satisfactory and meritorious performance reviews are outlined in the Library Faculty Handbook (3.B).⁵

With such varied duties and roles, there is no clear matrix to be created. Our work is not centered around the delivery of credit courses and therefore we do not utilize course buyouts. As 12-month employees, the library faculty has flexibility with scheduling and managing special projects or grant-related work. For example, Librarians often focus on Category 1/Librarianship and Category 3/Service during the semesters and use summers to work on Category 2/Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity.

Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity

Historically and as defined in the Library Faculty Handbook, Service to the Profession is included with Research and Scholarship. Within the profession, service may include holding membership in professional organizations, taking on a leadership role or office in organizations, and attending and participating in committees, working groups and conference activities.

In the context of library work, research and scholarship is how Librarians remain current with developments and best practices in their field(s), and generate new knowledge for the Libraries, University, and larger community. Unit or department supervisors should be kept apprised of a Librarian’s achievements and ambitions in this area so that they might assist and provide opportunities for them.

To remain current with developments and best practices, as well as to develop new expertise or skills, the Librarian may attend professional and academic conferences, attain certification from accredited organizations, attend courses on relevant subjects, engage in self-directed study, enroll in seminars and webinars on specialist topics, or other activities with approval by their supervisor. The ultimate goal in such activities is to maintain and improve the practice of the Librarian so they can better fulfill their duties.

⁵ WSU Libraries Faculty Handbook, <https://libraries.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/files/Faculty-Handbook-April-2024.pdf>

To generate new knowledge and to preserve extant knowledge, the Librarian may engage in publication, editorial work, presentations at conferences, invited talks and lectures on or off campus, research projects, online resource generation, grant writing, exhibit writing, or other approaches with approval by their supervisor. The ultimate goal in such activities is to contribute and preserve knowledge and expertise for the field.

Service

Service should be broadly understood to include service to the Libraries, the University, the state, and the community at large. Within the Libraries and the University, service may therefore include attending and participating in committees, working groups, and task forces. Within the community at large, the Librarian may engage in outreach and advocacy, promote access to materials beyond the University, serve in an advisory capacity for community groups, or engage in other professionally relevant efforts to enhance the quality of life in the community, as approved by their supervisor.