Reappraising Our Professional Identity:
Addressing the Knowledge Gap with Tenure and Promotion for Academic Archivists

Presented by Rachel Walton, Elizabeth Marzuoli Scott, Heidi Abbey Moyer & Rebecca Hankins
SESSION SPEAKERS

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**Background & Introduction**

- **Central Research Question:** What is the Landscape of the Academic Archivist Profession? How Does the Institution of Promotion and Tenure (P&T) Dictate Our Work and Professional Identity?

- **Genesis of Our Research:** Received positive feedback on our Webinar to the Pennsylvania Library Association (2018) and SAA Panel (2019)

- **Research to Date:** Autoethnographic among our group! Completed Initial Literature Review on P&T for Archivists, Yielded Gap in Scholarship.

- **We still have More Questions than Answers!**

  [Note: COVID-19 has made this research even more relevant!]

Moderator: Rachel Walton
**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**Related Research Questions**

- What Data Exists on Promotion & Tenure* for Archivists?
- What to Expect in a Tenure-Track Archives Position?
- What are P&T Standards for Archivists?
- What are P&T Challenges and Inequities for Archivists?
- What Support is Integral to the P&T Process for Archivists?
- What Additional Data Needs to be Gathered?

*Please Note: To be as concise and inclusive as possible throughout the presentation, we will refer to “Promotion and Tenure” as “P&T”*
What Data Exists?

  1st comprehensive survey
  35.8% of archivists reported working in “academia”

• **MARAC Membership Survey (2012)**
  43% listed “academic” as affiliation in membership directory

• **WArS-SAA Salary Survey (2017)**
  39% of archivists/records managers listed “academic”

• **Forthcoming Survey, A*Census II - Funded by IMLS (2020)**

• Literature Review
WHAT TO EXPECT?

• Job Prospects?

• Qualifications for Tenure Position – Minimum & Desirable
  • ALA-accredited master’s (MLS/MLIS) or equivalent (MA in history or other subject)
  • 2nd master’s degree in subject area (sometimes)
  • Serving dual role as librarian/archivist

• “Hidden” Job Expectations – Unspoken P&T Culture
  • Scholarly activity
  • Professional service commitments
  • Networking/Visibility/Outreach – “Who are your connections?”

Speaker: Elizabeth Scott
WHAT ARE P&T STANDARDS?

• Local, Institutional P&T Criteria is EVERYTHING – This is your roadmap to success!

• Typical Pillars/Measures
  • Librarianship/Teaching (?), Research and Publication, Service

• It seems simple, right? BUT…
  • There are so many more considerations!

Speaker: Rachel Walton
What Are P&T Standards?

• How and where does your work count within these criteria?
• What does NOT fit? How do you make it fit?
• How are these categories weighted? Is that clear or written down somewhere or is it open to interpretation?
• Your time is valuable and limited!
What Are P&T Standards?

• What are the other unwritten rules about your P&T criteria that you need to know (ASAP)?

• Know the pay off – what will be your reward when you “make it”?

• Because it’s a marathon not a sprint and it can be relentless!
**What Are P&T Challenges?**

- **Time**
  Research/scholarship, service that intersects with and reciprocally enhances librarianship and research

- **Lack of Support, Inequality, Discrimination**
  Administrative, cultural, financial, personal, professional

- **Lack of knowledge**
  Unclear tenure guidelines criteria, conflicting advice
  Objectivity vs. subjectivity of process

- **Stress/Pressure**
What Are P&T Inequities?

- **Time:** Overcome with Planning

- **Lack of Support, Inequality, and Discrimination:** Address with Mentoring and Dialogue. Start and continue conversations to break culture of silence, dynamics of power/control.

- **Lack of Knowledge:** Embrace Leadership
  
  Gain knowledge. Share it. Network with your colleagues.

- **Stress:** Counter with Emotional Resilience! Tenure stays. Personal wellness strategies. Keep a balance. Recognize that working in academia is not just a job/career but a **lifestyle**.
What Are Tenure Attrition Rates?

• Attrition = Rate of Leaving Employment/Academia Over Time

• What do we know? Lack of data.

• Who is impacted? Demographics of success/denial with tenure.

• What factors affect attrition?
What Support Exists?

• For Tenured Archivists
  • Within the professional community, if any?
  • Within an organization?

• Types of Support
  • Formal
  • Informal

Speaker: Rebecca Hankins
PLANNING, MENTORING, LEADERSHIP

- Planning
- Mentoring
- Leadership

Speaker: Rebecca Hankins
MOVING FORWARD

• Increase dialogue through publications and online forums
  • Our forthcoming journal article (2021)
  • Create blog and self-reporting surveys
• Provide input on P&T issues to SAA Sections and Committees
• Improve Advocacy
  • Get Involved! Pay It Forward!
  • Take Action Locally, Regionally, Nationally
THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

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If you are interested in our topic, or if you have further questions and feedback that you would like to share, please contact one of us!

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