

## **Hiring Chief Librarians**

Chief Librarians at the City University of New York occupy a unique placement. While they serve as Chairs of their respective Library Departments, they are appointed by the College President (CUNY Bylaws 9.1.b and 9.3.b, Appendix). In most instances, Chief Librarians report to a Provost rather than to a School Dean. As such, their reporting structure is equivalent to Deans, and they serve on the academic senior leadership team.

Accordingly, we strongly recommend that CUNY Chief Librarians be simultaneously appointed as Associate Deans with contracts in the Executive Compensation Plan. Appointment with tenure and rank of full Professor in the Library Department are also necessary to maintain leadership both within the department and with campus peers. Chief Librarians are both key contributors to the senior academic leadership team and proactive Department Chairs.

As Department Chairs, Chief Librarians supervise faculty and staff and support reappointment, tenure, and promotion of library faculty. Chief Librarians chair their Personnel and Budget Committees, so an underlying faculty-level appointment is critical to facilitate voting on faculty appointments both in the Library and on the college-wide Faculty Personnel and Budget Committee.

Unlike discipline-based academic departments tasked with course scheduling and curriculum development, librarians support the instructional and research mission of their colleges, providing service operations involving an extensive physical plant, deployment of technology, consortial contracts, purchasing, and oversight of collections, services, and policies. Chief Librarians must be well-versed in personnel management issues and possess corresponding skills in budget administration, strategic planning, technological knowledge, and customer service functions.

Chief Librarians should meet the CUNY requirements for library faculty appointments on a tenure-track line, have earned a Master's in Library and Information Science, and at minimum a subject Master's in an advanced discipline. Advanced degrees are beneficial to establishing a strong record of both administrative competence and scholarship. The Council of Chief Librarians recommends that recruitment of Chief Librarians consists of a national search with appropriate compensation.

## SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Chief Librarians are appointed at or parallel to the rank of Deans or Associate Deans on the Executive Compensation Plan**
2. **Chief Librarians are appointed with tenure with an underlying appointment at the rank of full Professor**
3. **Chief Librarians chair the Library Department Personnel and Budget Committee and vote on the campus-wide Faculty Personnel and Budget Committee**
4. **Chief Librarians are recruited via national searches**
5. **Chief Librarians require an MLS and an additional subject Master's degree**
6. **Interim Chief Librarian appointments will only be made while undertaking a national search or in temporary, critical situations**
7. **When appointing an Interim Chief Librarian, the incumbent must be tenured, appropriately compensated, and receive written notice of appointment for a specified term not to exceed one year**

CUNY Council of Chief Librarians  
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## APPENDIX CUNY Bylaws

### 9.1.b

The executive officer of the department shall be the department chairperson who shall be a professor, associate professor or assistant professor elected by secret ballot for a term of three years, except as provided below, by a majority vote of all the members of the instructional staff of the department who have faculty rank. Proxy or mail voting shall not be permitted. The department chairperson must be tenured or have been approved by the board for tenure at the time of his/her election, except in departments less than seven years old. Such elections shall be subject to the subsequent approval of the president and the chancellor, or his/her designee. The present system of staggered departmental elections shall be continued. The successors of department chairpersons shall be elected during the first full week in May at the expiration of the respective terms of office to take office as of July first of the year in which they are elected and at the three year intervals thereafter. Vacancies shall be filled by election for the unexpired term. **Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing to the contrary, in the library department, the president of the college shall from time to time recommend a member of the department to the chancellor, or his/her designee for designation as chairperson.**

9.3.b. Each library, where size makes it practicable, shall constitute an instructional department of the college. The chairperson thereof shall be designated by the president. Such chairperson, in addition to the duties of department chairperson as enumerated in paragraph "a" of this section, shall be charged with the administration of the library facilities of his/her college and shall perform such other duties as the president may assign. Such chairperson is hereby authorized to use the additional title of "chief librarian."

[http://policy.cuny.edu/bylaws/article\\_ix/section\\_9.3./text/#Navigation\\_Location](http://policy.cuny.edu/bylaws/article_ix/section_9.3./text/#Navigation_Location)