

2022-2023 Annual Report, Committee on Academic Freedom and the Professional Status of the Faculty (CAFPS)

1. Members of CAFPS during 2022-2023

Tracy Stokol (Chair, VET)
Virginia Doellgast (ILR)
Ellen Gainor (CAS)
Beth Lyon (LAW)
Angela Odoms-Young (CHE)
Ritchie Patterson (A&S)
Riche Richardson (CAS)
Michael Scanlon (SIP, CALS)
R. Bruce van Dover (ENG)

Preston Hailey (graduate student)
Ben Luckow (undergraduate student)

Eve DeRosa (Dean of Faculty)
Chelsea D. Specht (Associate Dean of Faculty)

2. Activity during 2022-2023

A. Tenure project

The pending legislation “Resolution on the Visibility of the Chair’s letter to the Dean in Tenure Cases” was withdrawn at the request of the Committee. This legislation is will be revised and resubmitted in Fall semester.

B. Discussion of Resolution 185: S.C. Johnson College of Business Harmonization of the Tenure Clock

The College of Business proposed to change the tenure clock from 6 to 8 years. CAFPS reviewed the proposal, met with Professor Shu from the College of Business, and requested additional information. A final report was submitted to the University Faculty Committee and presented to the Faculty Senate. The Committee felt it was important for the College of Business to have uniform tenure clock expectations and acknowledged that the 8-year clock was favored by most of the faculty and is in-line with the tenure clock at peer institutions.

Committee report to the Faculty Senate (below)

[Resolution 185](#)

C. Recognizing the value of collaborative scholarship at Cornell University

There is increasing emphasis on collaborative scholarship for successful acquisition of grants with certain federal funding agencies, yet successful promotion with indefinite tenure still largely relies on individual faculty accomplishments in many fields. It is unclear what guidance is available for evaluating faculty that are performing collaborative scholarship in the different units or Colleges at Cornell. The CAFPS devised

a survey to glean this information; the survey has been distributed to unit heads by the Dean of Faculty and we have only had 21 responses from select units.

D. Review of the Charge to CAFPS

The charge was last revised in 2012 but lacks clarity. The committee has an ongoing effort to review and potentially revise the charge.

**AFPSF Committee Review of the College of Business Harmonization of Tenure Clock Proposal
December 2022**

One of the charges of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Status of Faculty (AFPSF) is to review policies related to promotion of faculty and make recommendations to the Faculty Senate. The AFPSF Committee has reviewed the proposal for Harmonization of the Tenure Clock from the College of Business (COB). The AFPSF Committee also met with Professor Suzanne Shu, the Dean of Faculty and Research in the COB, and the Dean of Faculty to discuss the proposal.

Our committee supports the effort to standardize tenure clocks within the COB, since the current disparate tenure clocks of 8 years (Johnson Graduate School of Management) and 6 years (Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management and Nolan School of Applied Economics and Management) creates inequity for faculty with similar job expectations. Dr. Shu noted that new faculty are not hired into the traditional school structure, but into areas of discipline within the COB which span across all 3 schools. As a consequence, faculty with similar appointments are currently being judged with different clocks.

Strengths of the proposal are: a) More faculty prefer an 8- versus 6-year clock - 79% vs 19% in the updated survey provided by Dean Shu after our meeting; b) The majority of the 14 canvassed Business Colleges at peer institutions in the USA have a tenure clock longer than 6 years (7-8 years); and c) Pretenture assistant professors would be given the option to stay on their current clocks.

Several concerns regarding the proposal were raised by our committee:

Justification for the change

The argument that pretenture faculty on a 6-year clock have had insufficient time to accumulate a body of work that demonstrates their suitability for tenure is weak. This argument is not unique to the COB. In many other Colleges, it is taking longer for faculty to obtain required grants and publish in top-quality journals. In addition, pretenture faculty on a 6-year clock are often early in their upward trajectory of productivity. Nevertheless, our committee recognizes that in the updated survey, the majority of COB faculty expressed the preference for an 8-year clock. The latter survey was not split by rank, however an earlier survey showed that more assistant professors, who would be most impacted by the change, favored an 8-year clock. It is unclear how lengthening the clock would improve a faculty member's chances of tenure within

COB. After our meeting, Dr. Shu provided the committee with retention data for Dyson before and after the change in tenure clock in 2012. This data suggests that retention and tenure rates may improve with a longer clock (albeit the 10-year time frame for assessment).

It is proposed that female faculty would benefit from a longer clock because of their typical additional responsibilities of family care. Per data provided by Dean Shu after our meeting, female faculty represent 12-50% across the different areas of discipline within the COB. The issue of female faculty opting for 1- or 2-year extensions due to family considerations on their clock was not addressed in the original report. These additional extensions would potentially increase the tenure clock for female faculty beyond 8 years, placing them at a disadvantage to male counterparts with respect to career advancements, professionally and financially. After the meeting, Dr. Shu provided data showing that men and women have received parental leave and tenure clock extensions in COB, so this issue may affect men and women similarly.

Minorities represent between 15-53% of the faculty across the areas of discipline within the COB, based on data provided by Dean Shu after our meeting. The impact of an increased tenure clock on under-represented minorities was not addressed in the original report. Dean Shu responded that the low representation of minorities was an area of concern for the College. Our committee is particularly concerned about retaining or recruiting faculty in the Nolan School, which had the lowest proportion of faculty voting for an 8-year clock in the updated survey (61%). Comparisons of tenure clocks for 3 hospitality schools at peer institutions were provided upon request by the committee and all have a 6 year-clock. Dean Shu indicated that Cornell University is unique in having a hospitality school within the COB and said that most Nolan faculty that have left Cornell before tenure go to other business versus hospitality schools. However, the longer clock may make Cornell less competitive for hiring or retaining pretenure faculty working in areas aligned with a traditional hospitality school. The lack of peer comparison to international schools was also raised by our committee. Dean Shu responded that, although there are competing institutions in Canada and Europe, it is rare for our faculty to move to these international institutions from the US.

Option of early promotion to Associate professor without tenure

If pretenure faculty are not offered this option at a mid-tenure review, they will consider this an indicator of inadequate productivity and seek to leave Cornell, even if they are meeting performance expectations. Most of the assessed peer institutions did provide this option for faculty and it may place Cornell at a disadvantage if early promotion without tenure was not offered. There is still the possibility of early promotion to Associate Professor with tenure for high achieving faculty.

Summary: Our committee believes it is important to provide uniform expectations for tenure and standardize the tenure clock within the COB, whether it be a 6- or 8-year clock. We acknowledge that the majority of faculty, based on the updated survey, prefer an 8-year clock. Although this clock is longer than that for the rest of the University, the extended tenure clock was approved for the Johnson Graduate School by the Board of Trustees and is of similar or slightly longer length compared to Business Colleges at peer US institutions.