Tenure: To be or not to be?

Yiqing Song
ASTR 8500
May 1, 2018

disclaimer: the comics used in this presentation are in no means intended to reflect reality.
What's good about tenure?

- security
What's good

security

“A tenured appointment is an indefinite appointment that can be terminated only for cause or under extraordinary circumstances such as financial exigency and program discontinuation.”

---AAUP
What's good about tenure?

- security
- prestige + influence
What’s good about tenure?

- security
- prestige + influence
- academic freedom
What's good about tenure?

- security
- prestige + influence
- academic freedom
- $$$
What's good about tenure?

- security
- prestige + influence
- academic freedom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Division</th>
<th>9-month</th>
<th>12-month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>$78,400</td>
<td>$95,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professor</td>
<td>$65,000</td>
<td>$79,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>$53,000</td>
<td>$64,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>$36,800</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Research Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal scientist</td>
<td></td>
<td>$88,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior scientist</td>
<td></td>
<td>$57,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research scientist</td>
<td></td>
<td>$46,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research associate</td>
<td></td>
<td>$33,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UVA Minimum Entry-Level Salaries for New Hires
What’s good about tenure?

- security
- prestige + influence
- academic freedom
- $$$
- steady development/collaboration
What's “ugh” about tenure?
What’s “ugh” about tenure?

- # of PhD >> # of TT opening
What’s “ugh” about tenure?

# of PHD >> # of TT opening

“only one in five Ph.D.s in science, engineering and health end up with faculty teaching or research positions within five years of completing their degrees.”

—NSF
What’s “ugh” about tenure?

- # of PHD >> # of TT opening
- Tenure “Trek”: hard work + long wait + stress = uncertainty
What’s “ugh” about tenure?

- # of PhD >> # of TT opening
- Tenure “Trek”: hard work + long wait + stress = uncertainty

Assistant Professor
initial appointment
4 yr
annual report

Assistant Professor
renewed appointment
3 yr
annual report

Associate Professor

tenure

constantly being judged on research, teaching, and service
What’s “ugh” about tenure?

- # of PhD >> # of TT opening
- Tenure “Trek”: hard work + long wait + stress = uncertainty
- research: done << desired
What’s “ugh” about tenure?

research: done << desired

How Professors Spend Their Time

- How they actually spend their time:
  - Teaching: 59%
  - Research: 18%
  - Service: 23%

- How departments expect them to spend their time:
  - Teaching: 20%
  - Research: 175%
  - “Service” 20%

- How Professors would like to spend their time:
  - Don’t tell me what to do
What’s “ugh” about tenure?

- # of PhD >> # of TT opening
- Tenure “Trek”: hard work + long wait + stress = uncertainty
- research: done << desired
- loss of perspective, incentive, flexibility
Congratulations on getting tenure - and the security of knowing you'll spend the rest of your career listening to student excuses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What's it about tenure?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prestige + influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steady development/collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of PHD &gt;&gt; # of TT opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure “Trek”: hard work + long wait + stress = uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research: done &lt;&lt; desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loss of perspective, incentive, flexibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you are curious about...

How it works:
Wikipedia article on faculty positions (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professors_in_the_United_States)
AAUP: resources on tenure (https://www.aau.org/issues/tenure/resources-tenure)
UVA tenure review process (as.virginia.edu/procedures-renewal-promotion-and-tenure-TT)
UVA faculty salary index (http://www.cavalierdaily.com/page/faculty-salaries-2015-2016)

What do people find/think:
Why Are We Hiring So Many Non-Tenure-Track Faculty (https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/why-are-we-hiring-so-many-non-tenure-track-faculty)
Why College Professors Need Tenure (https://www.nas.org/articles/why_college_professors_need_tenure)
The Last of the Tenure-Track (https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Last-of-the-Tenure-Track/128076)

How did people do it:
Negotiating the Non-Tenure (https://www.chronicle.com/article/Negotiating-the-Non-Tenure/45495)
Career Profiles (http://www.astrobetter.com/blog/2013/06/06/career-profile-astronomer-to-tenure-track-faculty/)