

## Why Tenure?

Tenure was originally created to give teachers academic freedom. It was made to eliminate the fear teachers may have of losing their jobs while they teach and perform duties. Tenure is what makes it very difficult to fire teachers and professors after a certain number of years teaching. Those who know what tenure is have different views that concern its importance. It seems to be a very controversial issue in today's world. Jason D. Lively, chair of the Faculty Council and an associate professor of communications at Lindenwood University, claims that he admires Lindenwood's system. The reason for this is because tenure does not exist for professors at the university. He calls himself 'antitenure'. "In many cases you have professors locked into positions where they become complacent" (Stripling 3). Lively is making a great argument that teachers and professors can easily become lazy and inadequate when they receive tenure because they know that they cannot be fired. And this can obviously present a very big problem for both schools and students. Most teachers are more drawn to Lindenwood because of its different style; professors teach out of pure love of it and are not looking for ways to keep themselves safe from ever being fired.

I am against tenure. Tenure has a profound negative impact on students and schools alike. Many teachers and professors work their hardest in their first years of teaching mainly due to the fact that they want tenure and they want that stability in their careers. Once most teachers get hired, they become wrapped up in the idea of gaining tenure that they completely forget what their job description is all about: teaching. When teachers receive their tenure, they become lazy

and incapable of understanding the impact their laziness has on the learning and education of their students.

I had a teacher in high school by the name of Mr. Work. The irony in his name was that he hardly gave his pupils any work at all, with the exception of a few very simple handouts throughout the school year that I believe I had already done in junior high. I knew that he was a lazy teacher and I knew that he couldn't care less whether his students learned anything from his class or not. Looking back, I knew that this teacher had tenure. I knew because I remember overhearing him talking about it to another teacher when I had arrived early to class one day. But since I didn't know what this was during that time, I was quite frustrated that I wasn't getting anything from the class. I had many other teachers that had very similar teaching methods like this, mainly in high school, and I am positive that this was all mainly due to tenure.

I'm not here to say that all teachers in this world are lazy and stupid. That is not what I am saying at all. I know there are already many wonderful and influential teachers out there who teach because they love to teach and who could care less about tenure. What I'm trying to say is that there are also many teachers out there who take advantage of what tenure has to offer and use it under false pretenses. How, then, can we uproot all of those lazy and inadequate teachers? The answer is simple: throw out tenure completely.

Although tenure does not allow teachers to be employed for the rest of their lives, it is very expensive and difficult to fire those with it. M.J. Stephey states, "Though tenure doesn't guarantee lifetime employment, it does make firing teachers a difficult and costly process, one that involves the union, the school board, the principal, the judicial system and thousands of dollars in legal fees"(Stephey par 3). Stephey's statement makes me realize how very complicated and serious it is to fire a teacher with tenure. In this tough economic recession, why

have tenure if it is doesn't work well anyways? Wendy M. Williams claims, "Today less than 40 percent of U.S. faculty members are on the tenure track" (Williams par 1). If less than the majority even want or have tenure, then why not just get rid of it and focus on more important things?

Tenure may look beneficial to some people, but these people need to look at the bigger picture. Abolishing tenure should highly be taken into consideration. I say this not only for the sake of the students, but also for the sake of the schools. That way, we would be able to get rid of all those idle teachers and reward those who are actually there to teach. There are schools like Lindenwood where tenure doesn't exist and these schools are doing even better than the schools with tenure. So, again why tenure?

Works Cited

Stephey, M.J. "A Brief History of Tenure." *Time Magazine* 17 Nov.2008. Web

Stripling, Jack "Most Presidents Prefer No Tenure for Majority of Faculty." *Chronicles of Higher Education* 18 Oct. 2011. Web

Williams, Wendy M., "Does Tenure Really Work?" *Chronicle of Higher Education* Mar. 2007