A Call for Re-Evaluation

In the world of higher education, a concern arouses the consideration of abolishing tenure, due to the doubts of a Professors’ teaching abilities and the cost it takes to fire a tenured Professor. I stand against abolishing tenure, however, I do concur with the revision of tenure and its benefits. Tenure grants a Professor his or her right to academic freedom, meaning the Professor may teach what he would like to benefit his or her students. The evaluation process of promoting a Professor has many steps, and approval of tenure is done by the Board of Education of the college. From the Ky. Board article, they state that, “Abolishing tenure would have made it easier for community and technical colleges to lay off teachers whose positions are no longer needed” (Unknown 22.5). I do understand the point Ky. Board is making to their readers. However I believe a revision for tenure will allow the Board to fully have confidence in their Professor’s capabilities to improve student performances which will reassure the benefits of tenure are not taken advantage of by Professors, and last but not least the cost of removing a tenured Professor should also be re-evaluated.

To begin, I learn there is one more status which comes before tenure. This status is known as Probationary, almost like a substitute/ teacher assistant role. Unlike tenure, any teacher with a Probationary status can be easily terminated. On the other hand, Probationary status can
also be a stepping stone to be evaluated for tenure, if potential is seen in a Professor. Probationary status helps a Professor with gaining new ideas as well as developing commitments to educating students. Three years of probationary work is required to qualify for an evaluation of tenure track. I believe a revision in this qualification is needed because a Professor should not only be held to learning how to become a better Professor but to also be involved with the school. As Ms. Judy Hieman said, “With or without tenure, what faculties should be doing is meeting the needs of students.” For example, as the Probationary status Professor teaches his/her students, they should embrace the subject and charter a small organization to help students gain more knowledge about the many opportunities in careers. The University of California Los Angeles speaks of the significance of student groups as, “a form of experiential learning where students and faculty collaborate with communities to address problems and issues, simultaneously gaining knowledge and skills and advancing personal development” (Seider). I agree with this study from UCLA because it will show the college, Deans, and the Board, how much a Professor will dedicate their time to improve the learning skills of students who will eventually become the future.

This leads me to say Professors who are tenured should be evaluated through their student progress to make sure tenure is not being taken advantage of. Many college students were conducted in a study to measure how much progress was made from their freshmen year to the end of their higher education. According to the study’s statistics, “Approximately 58% of the enrolling 1994 cohort graduated in the minimum possible time. Of the remaining 42%, approximately 26% took longer than the minimum time; approximately 7% were still enrolled in 2000, seven years after initial enrolment. Approximately 8% had withdrawn totally from the course” (Robinson). This study helped me see the progress in students’ education, and how their
education is impacted by the abilities of a Professor’s teaching. Majority of students are learning from their college Professor’s overall, and for the 8% who withdrew included students who had transferred to another college. That is why I believe student progression should be a part of the evaluation for tenure-track Professor because it will show the Board how much a Professor dedicates their time into educating their students.

Although I side on the re-evaluation of tenure, the negative outcomes of tenure are not left aside. Many will argue their thoughts of tenure; majority will ride on abolishing tenure because the process of firing a tenured Professor is costly and time consuming. From “Teacher Tenure” the article states, “Districts have tight budgets and the costs of a due process hearing can cripple a district’s budget. It can also be argued that teachers who have received tenure status could lack the motivation they once had to perform well in the classroom” (Meador). This statement includes another reason why tenure should be considered for abolishment, due to the perception that teachers with tenure “could” lack the motivation. I disagree with this statement due to my own perception of observing my very own brother-in-law become a great teacher. Although he may not teach in higher education, he has taught a couple college courses and he’s been a teacher for over 20 years. He has his Masters in Liberal Art, which leads me to say many Professors do not lose their passion for teaching and their hard work and numerous hours dedicated are rightfully reward with tenure. Meador also stated, “It provides job security for teachers, which many believe, translates to happier teachers and teachers who perform at a higher level”. “It” is being referred to tenure.
Should tenure be abolished? I say no because I call for a revised vision for tenure to help improve our Professors and students. A re-evaluation will help answer questions of students who seek great Professors and also reward both students and Professors. Doubts will be removed if we do have a revision and progression as we know it will allow us to know we can trust in our Professors who are tenured.
Work Cited


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