

What good is tenure?



Tenure vs term contracts, pros & cons
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Introduction

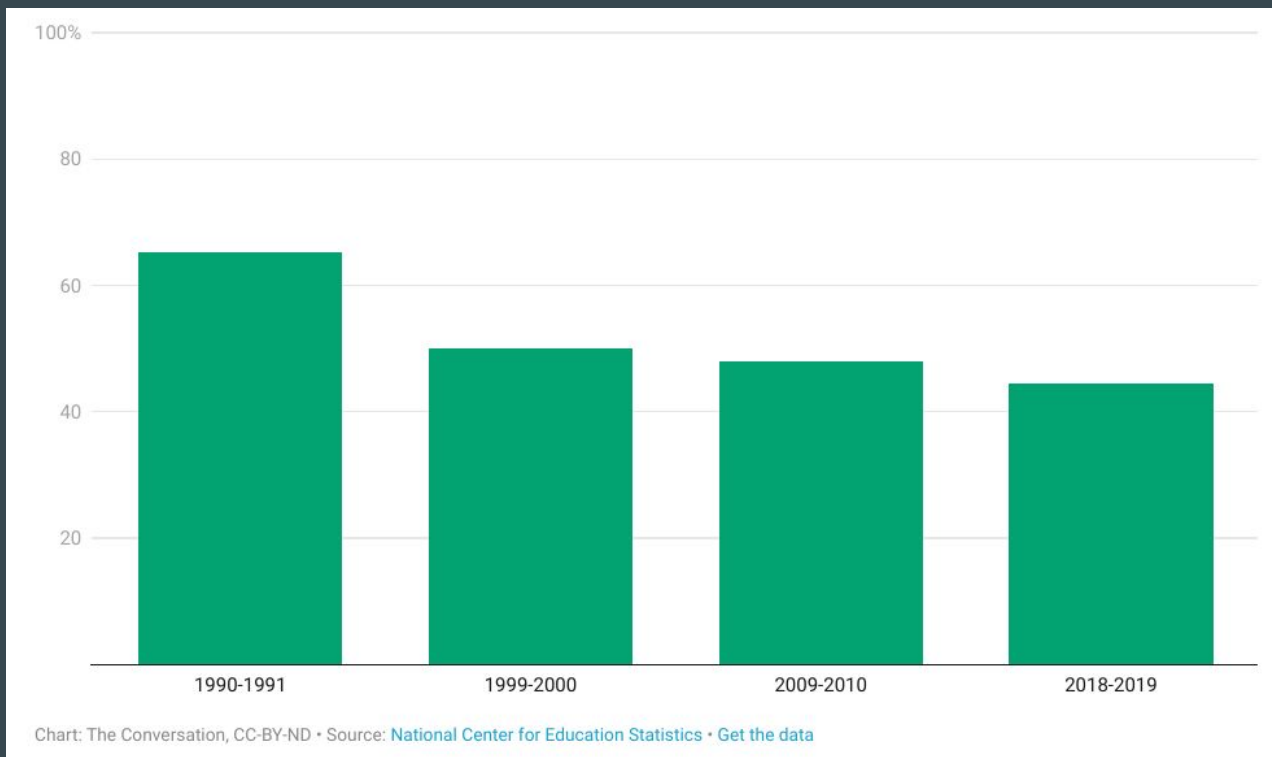
- **Tenure**
 - An indefinite/long term faculty appointment that is only terminated for serious offences
 - Ideally, it provides faculty academic freedom
- **Term Positions**
 - Faculty position with a predetermined end date; can often be renewed
 - Can be either full or part-time

The Job Market

- Only 27% of faculty positions are tenured
 - Thus, many faculty positions provide limited job security
- **38%** of full-time faculty are on annual contracts
- **58%** of full-time faculty have multiyear or at-will contracts

Tenure vs Term Over Time

- In 1990, 65% of full-time faculty had tenure, in 2019 only 45% have tenure
- Including part-time faculty, only 25% of faculty have tenure
- As of 2018, 54% of faculty is full-time



Tenure - The Details

Pros

- Good job stability, pay, and benefits
- Able to improve courses over time
- Helps promote a more unified research/working environment

Cons

- More expensive for universities to hire, can make budgeting less flexible during difficult financial times
- Can make it difficult to remove faculty members who are no longer a beneficial to the department
- Can lead to academic stagnation

Term Positions - The Details

Pros

- Can provide more flexibility for faculty
- “Contract research is necessary and unavoidable,” he says. “If all research was done using permanent positions, science would be paralysed, with no flexibility.” (Langenberg, 2001)
- Much less expensive than tenure faculty
- Provides more staffing and teaching flexibility

Cons

- Little job security; lower pay and few benefits
- An increasing number of term positions are only part time
- Less time for research

Can Tenure Keep Up with Changing Academic Environments?

- Full-time faculty¹ are overwhelmingly white
 - 53% of full-time professors are white men, 27% are white women
 - Thus, 80% of full-time professors are white
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- Research shows that a more diverse faculty improves the education quality, promotes innovation and creativity in the classroom

¹Data on Tenure faculty was unavailable

Questions?

Sources

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