Tenure:
To be or not to be ?
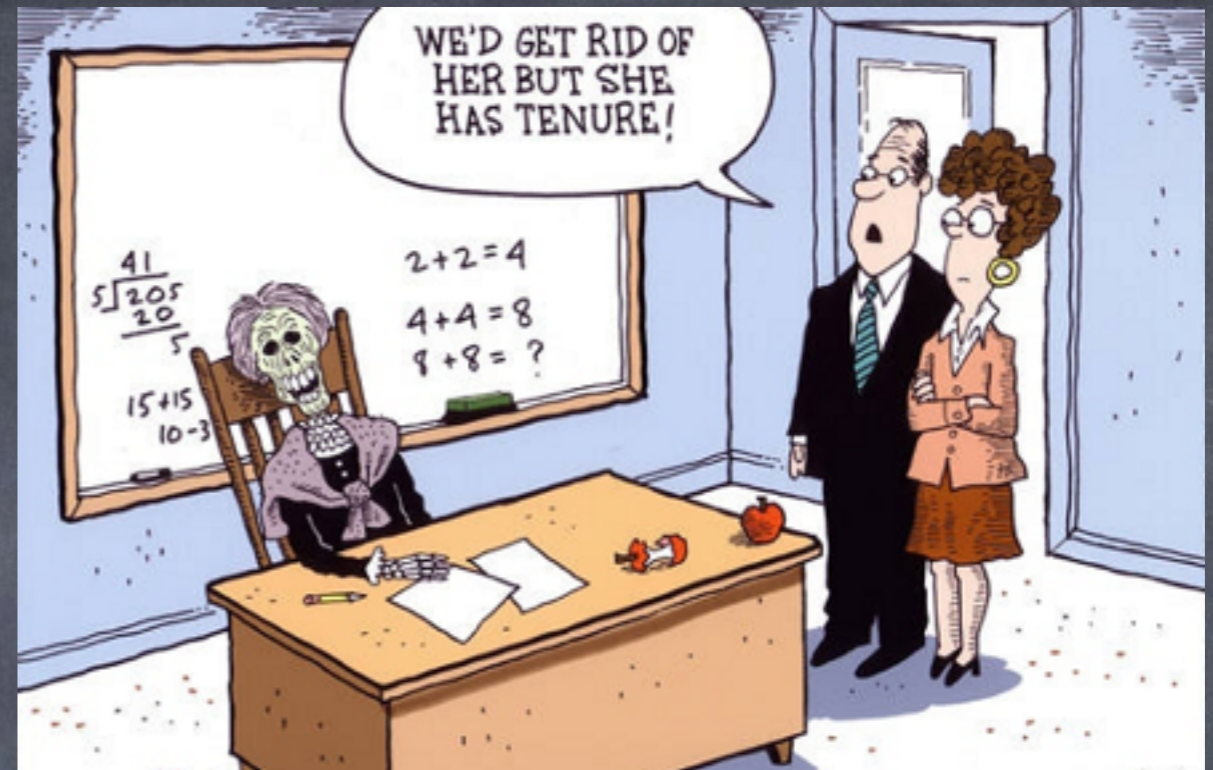
Yiqing Song

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?
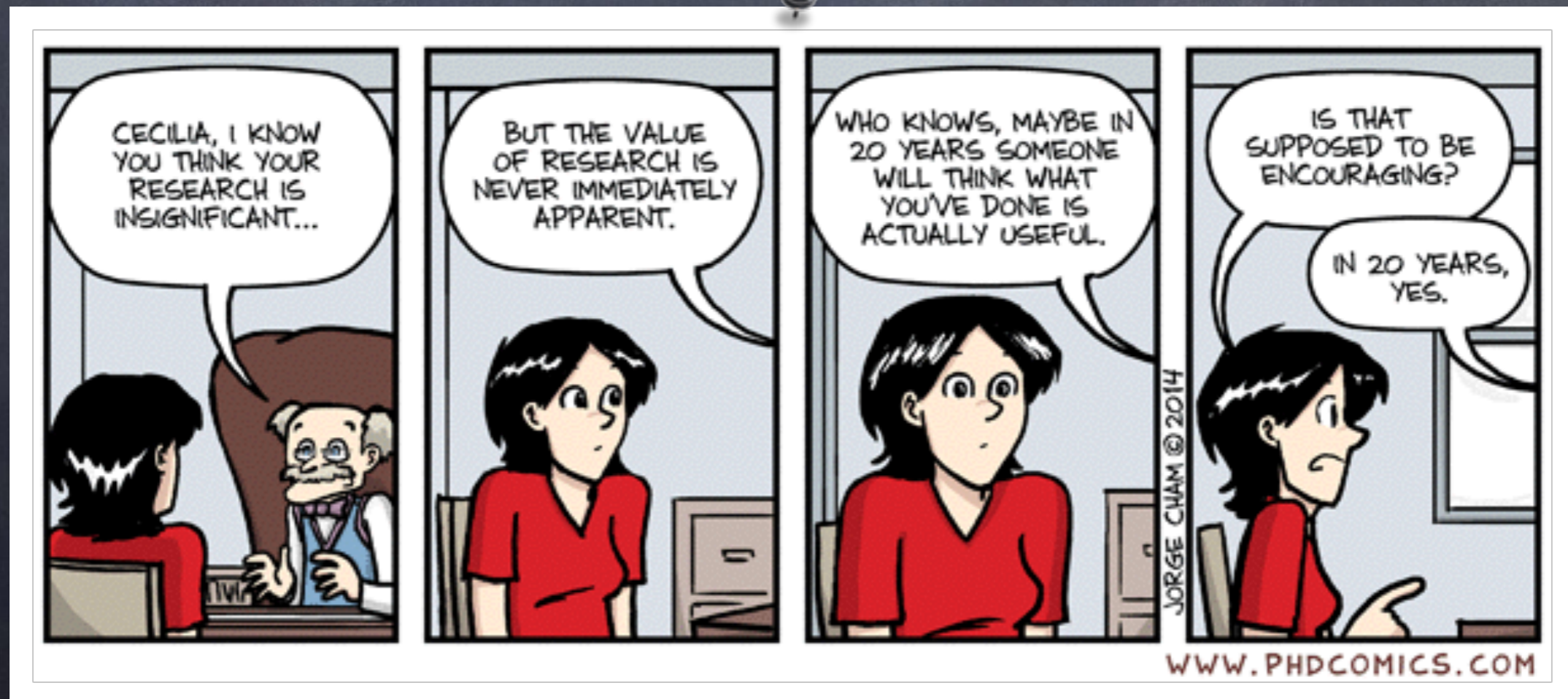
- security

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?

- securit[y]
- prestig[e]
- academ[ic]
- $$$

Academic Division

	9-month	12-month
Faculty		
Professor	$78,400	$95,800
Associate professor	$65,000	$79,500
Assistant professor	$53,000	$64,800
Instructor[1]	$36,800	$45,000
Professional Research Staff		
Principal scientist		$88,200
Senior scientist		$57,400
Research scientist		$46,200
Research associate		$33,300

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."

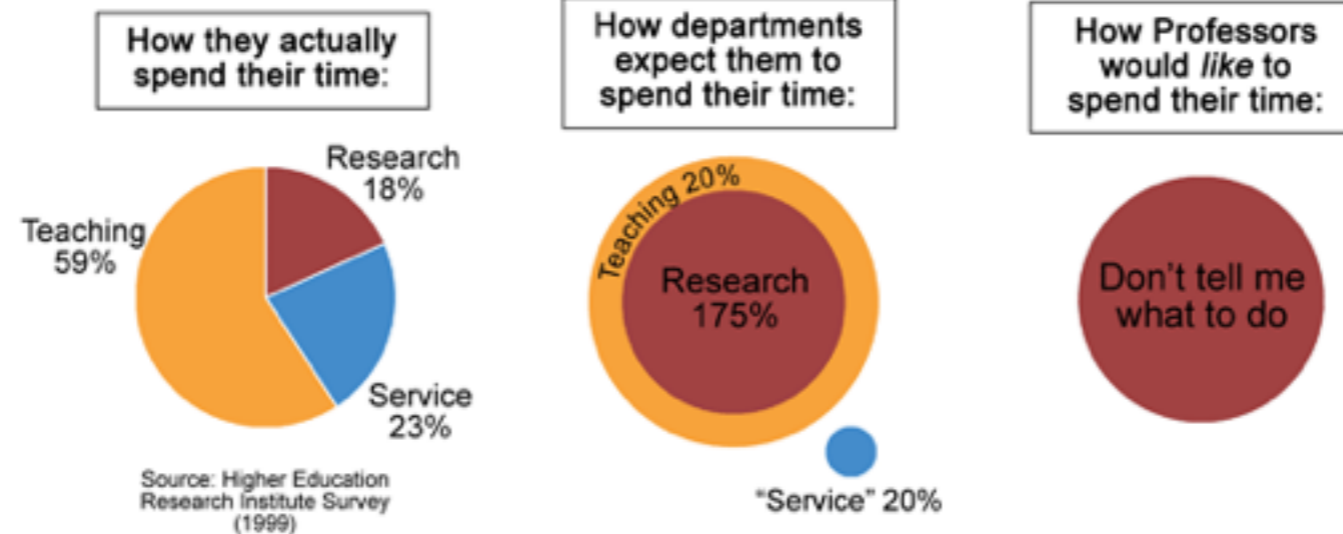—NSF

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
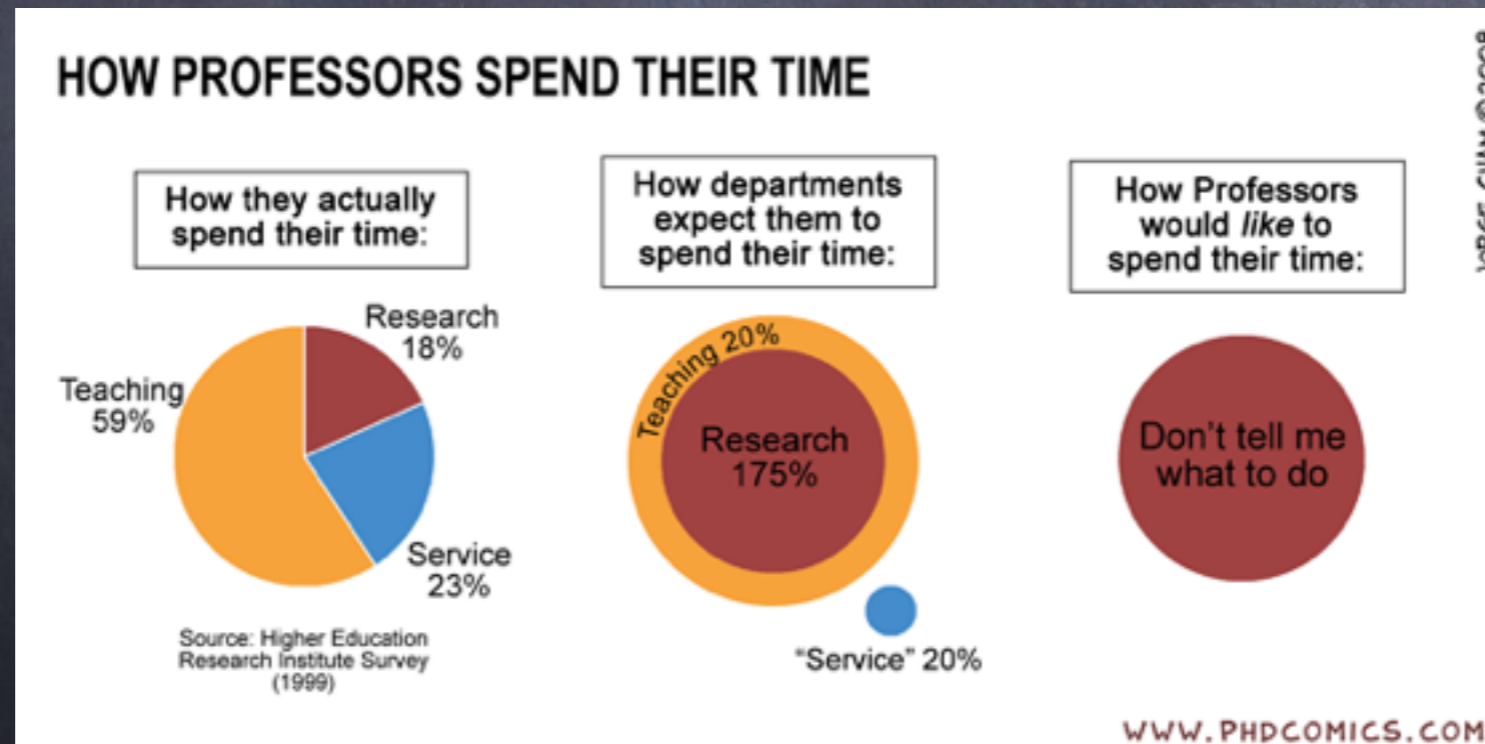

HOW PROFESSORS SPEND THEIR TIME

How they actually spend their time:

Teaching 59%
Research 18%
Service 23%

Source: Higher Education Research Institute Survey (1999)

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

JORGE CHAM © 2008

WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

What's "ugh" about tenure?

research: done << desired

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.

What's it about tenure?

- security

- prestige + influence

- academic freedom

- $$$

- steady development/ collaboration

- # of PHD >> # of TT opening

- Tenure "Trek" : hard work + long wait + stress = uncertainty

- research: done << desired

- loss of perspective, incentive, flexibility

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.aaup.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)

The Production Rate and Employment of Ph.D. Astronomers (Metcalfe, T. S. 2008, PASP, 120, 229M)

How did people do it:

Negotiating the Non-Tenure (https://www.chronicle.com/article/Negotiating-the-Non-Tenure/45495)

I Found a Tenure-Track Job. Here's What it Took. (https://chroniclevitae.com/news/1775-i-found-a-tenure-track-job-here-s-what-it-took)

Career Profiles (http://www.astrobetter.com/blog/2013/06/06/career-profile-astronomer-to-tenure-track-faculty/)