So You Want Tenure? Factors Affecting Tenure Decisions in Political Science Departments

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ABSTRACT This article investigates the variables that affect the award of tenure in political science departments in the United States. We examined two dependent variables: (1) whether a department has denied tenure in the past five years, and (2) whether a positive departmental tenure recommendation has been reversed by higher college or university authorities during the same period of time. Five clusters of independent variables were evaluated: (1) college/university and departmental characteristics, (2) the procedures employed to evaluate tenure cases, (3) the instruments used to assess teaching, (4) service expectations, and (5) research and publication standards. We found that the most important factors affecting departmental decisions to deny tenure were whether teaching and substantive publications were treated as equally valuable qualifications, the number of articles a candidate published, and the candidate's level of commitment to advising. Interestingly, reversal decisions by higher authorities were not strongly affected by any of the variables in the analysis.

Among the most important events in any scholar's career is the tenure decision.[1] A positive outcome may bring a scholar both financial security and the freedom to pursue his or her preferred professional agenda for decades to come. A negative outcome often means the sudden end of the candidate's life as a professional academic before this career is more than a few years old. For the individual involved, these enormous consequences can lead to anxiety, tension, confusion, and sometimes much worse.

When the importance of tenure decisions is juxtaposed with social scientists' tendency to examine even the most obscure subjects in great detail, it is surprising that a perusal of the scholarly literature indicates that there have been few systematic investigations of tenure-related issues. The handful of studies that does exist can be placed in two categories. The first compares tenure applications from several departments at a single university to chart the standards and procedures used when making decisions. For example, Lewis looked at the files of 118 tenure candidates at a large northeastern university in the late 1960s to determine how the files were organized and what they included, how they matched official university statements regarding tenure awards, and whether evaluation standards were consistent from one file to the next, concluding that "the entire process of evaluation . . . is marked by floating standards" (1980, 93). An additional intra-university review focused on how a dozen departments at a large southeastern university ranked the importance of teaching, research, and service in tenure cases, finding that research typically received the top ranking and teaching the second. These researchers also evaluated the use of peer reviews in appraisals of teaching (Yon, Burnap, and Kohut 2002; Kohut, Burnap, and Yon 2007).[2]

A second type of research uses surveys of faculty, department chairs, and/or administrators across universities to acquire broad information about tenure standards and decision-making procedures. A Carnegie Foundation national survey of faculty represents a nationwide effort both to assess the importance attached to teaching, research, and service in tenure evaluations and to determine how these basic professional activities are

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operationalized (Boyer 1990, 85–102). Perhaps the most important results of this survey are first, that research expectations appear to dominate the tenure process, with the prestige of a candidate's publication outlets playing a prominent role when tenure files are examined[3]; and second, that many institutions seem to either discount faculty teaching and service activities or else fail to measure them adequately (Boyer 1990, 28–34). Rothgeb and Burger (2009) also report results from a national survey in which political science department chairs indicated the specific procedures employed during tenure reviews both in their department and at their college/university; the techniques used to measure teaching, research, and service; and their institution's minimal expectations as far as publications were concerned. Other surveys have been conducted by Kawar, who reviewed official tenure statements from 44 colleges and universities in the western United States and found that teaching, research, and service were universally depicted as appropriate standards for judging tenure cases, but that "the relative weight of the criteria remains largely unknown" (1983, 542); Park and Riggs (1993), who examined the standards university librarians face when seeking tenure; and Premeaux and Mondy (2002), who surveyed business programs nationwide to investigate whether men and women faced different standards and procedures when applying for tenure.

As valuable as the previous research is, these studies concentrate on the procedures employed in tenure decision making and the opinions and official statements regarding standards, but they do not address how these standards and procedures actually affect the denial of tenure. After all, it is one thing to state that to award a scholar tenure, a department or college/university expects him or her to have produced certain types of publications, performed at a certain level in the classroom, and made a certain number of service contributions, and it is an entirely different matter to put those standards into effect consistently. The results of several of the research efforts noted previously suggest that in at least some circumstances, there may be a disconnect between the standards and procedures articulated and what actually happens. Moreover, scholars who are facing tenure or have recently experienced a tenure decision continue to assert that "the standards for tenure are notoriously unclear" (Anonymous and Anonymous 1999, 95).[4] Beyond this ambiguity, some research indicates that social networking is essential for bolstering a scholar's chances for tenure, and that women face greater obstacles than men, implying that elements other than teaching, research, and service play a role in the tenure process (see Anonymous and Anonymous 1999; Premeaux and Mondy 2002; Alex-Assensoh et al. 2005; Perna 2005). These considerations point to a need for systematic analysis to determine which variables are most closely associated with the denial of tenure. This research seeks to begin exploring that question.

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RESEARCH QUESTION AND DESIGN

This study employs cross-university analysis to investigate the factors that contribute to the denial of tenure in political science departments in the United States. Since the tenure decision-making process at most colleges and universities involves both a departmental recommendation for or against tenure and concurring or dissenting decisions at the college and/or university levels, two dependent variables are examined. The first, *denial*, represents a department-level decision against granting tenure to a candidate, while the second, *reversal*, pertains to actions taken by higher institutional authorities that cancel a positive departmental tenure ruling.

We examine the effects of five clusters of variables on denial and reversal. These variables are teaching, research and publication, service, the procedures used when conducting a tenure review, and the characteristics of both the department and the college/university. At the outset, we note that the data in this analysis pertain to departmental and/or college/university characteristics, standards, and procedures. Information about individual tenure applications was not used because of the legal and practical problems related to the acquisition of such data. One might hypothesize that the procedures and standards employed in deciding tenure cases have a large impact on the decisions reached. More restrictive procedures (requiring letters from outside reviewers, establishing department standards that guide tenure votes, and using special committees to make decisions) should reduce the roles of personality and social connections and lead to more denials at the departmental level. Likewise, setting higher publication standards, demanding more indicators of quality teaching, and expecting more service should also increase the difficulty of producing a positive departmental decision. At the same time, one might posit that increased rigor at the departmental level would reduce the chance of reversals by decreasing the probability that marginal cases would move beyond the department. Hence, the variables explored in this study should provide valuable clues about the factors that affect a scholar's failure to obtain tenure.

The data used to measure the variables in this analysis come from Rothgeb and Burger's (2009) 2008 nationwide survey of 393 political science department chairs in the United States.[5] This dataset includes information relating to whether a department denied tenure to at least one applicant in the past five years

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(yes = 1, no = 0) and whether the department had a positive recommendation for tenure reversed by higher college or university authorities in the previous five years (yes = 1, no = 0).[6] These are the measures for the dependent variables in this analysis. In addition, this dataset includes information on the teaching assessment techniques that responding institutions employ when evaluating candidates for tenure, the expectations they have regarding research and publication, their service requirements, the means by which they make decisions, and the type of institution.

As noted previously, the first cluster of variables that we investigated for their effect on denial and reversal pertains to teaching. A literature review suggests the need to include measures for teaching performance, peer reviews, and curricular contributions.[7] We created the teaching performance variable by assigning one point if a department used teaching evaluations of the candidate's courses in the tenure decision-making process, another point if applicants were required to set up a teaching portfolio, and a third point if the department also evaluated the syllabi of the courses candidates teach. The peer-review variable was created in much the same way, with one point awarded if a review by another faculty member was required, another point awarded if a review by the chair was required, and a third point if the department expected an administrator to conduct a review. Finally, we calculated the curricular contributions variable by allotting one point if applicants were expected to create a new course and one point each if candidates were expected to teach courses required by the university or courses required by the department. Hence, the value of each teaching variable ranges between zero (none of the evaluation techniques for that variable were employed) and three (all of the techniques were used).

We investigated six research variables:

1. Whether the department or institution allows a superior publication record to compensate for mediocre teaching (yes = 1, no = 0)
2. Whether publications on the subject of teaching are considered to be equal to substantive publications (yes = 1, no = 0)
3. If a record of single-authored publications is essential (yes = 1, no = 0)
4. The number of articles in the most prestigious journals in the field that a candidate is expected to publish (none = 0, at least one = 1, two or more = 2)
5. The number of refereed journal articles or their equivalent that a candidate is expected to publish (none = 0, one = 1, two or more = 2, one per year = 3, two or more per year = 4)
6. The number of books that a candidate must publish (none = 0, one = 1, two = 2).[8]

The service variables examined were committee membership, community and professional contributions, and commitment to advising. The committee membership variable was constructed by awarding one point each for the requirements for candidate service on departmental committees and service on college/university committees. The community and professional contributions variable was calculated in much the same way, with one point assigned if either community or professional service was expected.[9] The values for these variables ranged between zero and two. The advising variable was measured as one if the department considered advising to be important and zero if it did not.

Procedural variables included whether letters by outside reviewers were required (yes = 1, no = 0), if a special departmental committee made tenure decisions (yes = 1, no = 0), if the department had established standards to guide tenure votes (yes = 1, no = 0), and whether collegiality was an important factor in tenure decisions (yes = 1, no = 0).

The final cluster of variables pertained to departmental and college/university characteristics. These variables included whether the institution was public (coded 1) or private (coded 0), urban (yes = 1, no = 0), and unionized (yes = 1, no = 0). The number of tenured and tenure-track faculty in the responding department rounded out this variable cluster (10 or fewer = 1, 11–20 = 2, 21–30 = 3, over 30 = 4). Because the size of the department can affect the number of tenure applications it receives, this variable was included as a control.

We employed logit analysis to assess the effects that the independent variables in each cluster had on the denial and reversal decisions. Logit is a regression technique that allows the researcher to analyze the effects of categorical independent variables on dichotomous dependent variables.[10] The logit model used for examining the effects of the institutional/departmental cluster on denial provides an example of the structure of the basic equations:

$$\text{Denial} = a + b_1\text{DeptSize} + b_2\text{Public} + b_3\text{Union} + b_4\text{Urban} + e$$

The same types of equations were used to investigate each of the other variable clusters mentioned previously. As noted earlier, department size was included in each equation as a control for the likelihood that larger departments receive more tenure applications and therefore have a greater opportunity to deny tenure or see a positive decision reversed.

Before turning to the results, we note that when reading the tables in the next section, the first column lists the independent variables in the cluster; the second and third columns contain the logit regression coefficients and the change in the probability that tenure will be denied as a result of a one-unit change in the independent variable, respectively; and the fourth and fifth columns list the logit coefficients and the probability changes for the reversal variable.[11]

RESULTS

Table 1 contains the findings for institutional and departmental characteristics. As was expected, department size has a strong positive relationship with both dependent variables, possibly indicating that larger departments have more tenure applications and thus more chances to deny tenure and for a tenure decision to be reversed. A quick glance at the results for this variable in tables 2–5 indicates that as the size of the department moves from the smallest (10 or fewer faculty) to the largest category (over 30 faculty members), the probability of a tenure denial decision increases by roughly .27.[12] Public institutions are also associated with more denials, implying that the probability of denial is .11 higher at public colleges and universities than at private institutions. In addition, there is a weak tendency for urban institutions to deny tenure more readily than institutions in other areas do. Interestingly, having a unionized faculty appears to have no effect on tenure decisions.

Results for the procedural variables are presented in table 2. As was the case with the variables shown in table 1, there are positive relationships between the control variable (department size) and both denial and reversal. Among the procedural variables,

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Table 1

The Effects of Institutional Characteristics on Tenure Decisions

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	LOGIT MODEL FOR DENIAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF DENIAL	LOGIT MODEL FOR REVERSAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF REVERSAL
Department Size	.52**** (.15)	.09	.34** (.16)	.05
Public University	.69** (.29)	.11	.49 (.32)	.07
Unionized Faculty	−.07 (.34)	−.01	−.15 (.38)	−.03
Urban Area	.48* (.26)	.08	.36 (.28)	.05
Constant	−2.12**** (.27)	—	−2.14**** (.27)	—
LL	−186.63	—	−167.68	—
Wald $X^2(4)$	29.8	—	12.7	—
p	.000	—	.03	—
Pseudo R^2	.08	—	.03	—
n	368	—	365	—

Notes. Standard errors in parentheses are robust. *$p < .10$, **$p < .05$, ***$p < .01$, ****$p < .001$

Table 2

The Effects of Institutional Procedures on Tenure Decisions

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	LOGIT MODEL FOR DENIAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF DENIAL	LOGIT MODEL FOR REVERSAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF REVERSAL
Department Size	.51*** (.17)	.08	.49*** (.18)	.07
Committee Decision	−.08 (.29)	−.01	−.32 (.32)	−.05
Collegiality	−.10 (.28)	−.02	.23 (.22)	.03
Letters	−.05 (.28)	.00	−.37 (.31)	−.05
Department Standards	.71** (.33)	.11	−.09 (.32)	−.01
Constant	−1.87**** (.42)	—	−1.46*** (49)	—
LL	−187.07	—	−167.90	—
Wald $X^2(4)$	26.4	—	11.6	—
p	.000	—	.04	—
Pseudo R^2	.07	—	.03	—
n	365	—	362	—

Notes. Standard errors in parentheses are robust. *$p < .10$, **$p < .05$, ***$p < .01$, ****$p < .001$

the existence of established department standards to guide tenure votes results in a .11 increase in the probability of tenure denials. No other variable from this cluster affects denial, and none of these variables has any impact on reversal. That is, requiring letters from outside reviewers, using a special committee to make departmental tenure decisions, and either allowing or not allowing collegiality to play a role in tenure decisions all seem to have no apparent effect on the likelihood of denial or reversal of the tenure decision. These results imply that one of the variables (firm department standards) that may be employed to remove personal relationships and social networking from the tenure decision-making process may have the intended effect at the department level. However, if this variable is meant to enhance departmental credibility so that higher authorities approve the department's recommendations, these results indicate that the tactic does not work.

Teaching findings are presented in table 3. In this cluster, only the curricular contributions variable affects either of the dependent variables, displaying a weak negative relationship with denial. This finding implies that creating new courses and teaching classes required by the department and/or the college/university plays a modest role in increasing the chance of a positive departmental decision. It should be noted that the teaching performance and peer-review variables pertain to evaluations of the quality of the candidate's teaching, while the curricular contribution variable relates to whether the candidate is leading classes that the department and/or institution needs someone to teach. Thus, in tenure reviews, the need for faculty willing and able to teach key courses may trump teaching quality.

Table 4 shows results from the analysis of the service variables. Advising displays a strong negative effect on denial, with a strong commitment to advising resulting in a .16 reduction in the probability of a denial decision. The other variables in this cluster—committee service and community and professional service—have no apparent association with either denial or reversal.

The final cluster results presented in table 5 pertain to research and publication. Two variables—the number of articles that a department expects a candidate to publish and whether teaching and substantive publications are regarded as equal—stand out for their effects on denial. The remaining research variables are unrelated to departmental decisions to deny tenure. The positive relationship between denial and the number of articles variable indicates that when departments demand more publications, the probability of a tenure denial decision increases by approximately .16 from the lowest (no articles required) to the highest (two or more articles per year) value of the variable. The negative effect of the equal publications variable implies that when departments value teaching publications, there is a .10 decrease in the probability of a tenure denial decision. This cluster's pattern of results suggests that for many departments, the key to tenure is publishing as many articles as possible. These results also cast doubt on the frequent claims that the only publications that count in tenure reviews are those articles that

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Table 3

The Effects of Teaching on Tenure Decisions

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	LOGIT MODEL FOR DENIAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF DENIAL	LOGIT MODEL FOR REVERSAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF REVERSAL
Department Size	.65**** (.14)	.12	.41*** (.16)	.06
Teaching Performance	−.10 (.24)	−.02	.11 (.29)	.01
Peer Review	.04 (.13)	.01	−.07 (.16)	−.01
Curricular Contributions	−.22* (.13)	−.04	−.04 (.15)	.00
Constant	−1.19* (.67)	—	−1.91** (.82)	—
LL	−191.4	—	−171.36	—
Wald $X^2(4)$	26.2	—	9.2	—
p	.000	—	.06	—
Pseudo R^2	.06	—	.03	—
n	370	—	367	—

Notes. Standard errors in parentheses are robust. *$p < .10$, **$p < .05$, ***$p < .01$, ****$p < .001$

Table 4

The Effects of Service on Tenure Decisions

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	LOGIT MODEL FOR DENIAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF DENIAL	LOGIT MODEL FOR REVERSAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF REVERSAL
Department Size	.52**** (.15)	.09	.44*** (.16)	.06
Committee Service	.24 (.21)	.04	.05 (.22)	.02
Student Advising	−.86*** (.29)	−.16	−.04 (.34)	.00
Community and Professional Service	.08 (.21)	.01	.16 (.23)	.02
Constant	−1.27**** (.39)	—	−1.89**** (.40)	—
LL	−189.3	—	−171.7	—
Wald $X^2(4)$	28.4	—	9.5	—
p	.000	—	.06	—
Pseudo R^2	.07	—	.02	—
n	371	—	368	—

Notes. Standard errors in parentheses are robust. *$p < .10$, **$p < .05$, ***$p < .01$, ****$p < .001$

are single-authored and appear in the discipline's most prestigious journals.

A modest relationship exists between research and publications and reversal, suggesting that higher authorities are less likely to reverse decisions of departments that require candidates to publish more books. As well, the positive association between department size and reversal that was present when each of the other clusters was examined fades for the research cluster, indicating that at least a portion of the effect of size on reversal may result from the tendency of larger departments to have higher research expectations.

DISCUSSION

Several conclusions can be drawn from the prior results.[13] The first concerns the conditions that appear to contribute to the denial of tenure at the departmental level. Departments at public colleges and universities where the chair says that teaching and substantive publications are not equal factors in the tenure decision are more likely to deny tenure than are other departments. Beyond this factor, candidates who focus on publishing numerous articles, demonstrating an interest in advising, creating new courses, and teaching classes required by the department and/or the college/university enhance their chances of being awarded tenure. Interestingly, aside from a possible tendency for higher authorities to reverse recommendations from larger departments whose candidates have not published books, this research reveals little about tenure reversal decisions.[14]

A second conclusion that can be drawn from the present research is that the variables in this analysis cannot account for a relatively large part of the variance in denial and, particularly, in reversal. There are several potential reasons for the unexplained variance. First, many of the departments in the dataset may make one of two errors: either setting inappropriate standards, given their type of college/university, or else failing to consistently enforce the standards they claim to have. Both mistakes would lead to positive departmental recommendations for applications that both would and would not pass muster at higher levels, resulting in no consistent relationship with reversal when those standards were analyzed systematically. To examine these possibilities, future research might seek to survey college and university administrators.

Another reason for the unexplained variance is that the reversal process may reflect the standing of the department as a whole more than is commonly acknowledged. That is, higher authorities may take the contribution the department makes to the overall college or university mission into account when evaluating the files the department sends forward for tenure. Departments that teach large numbers of courses that nearly all students attending the institution are required to take, have huge numbers of majors, or play some other role considered vital by higher administrators may receive differential treatment when their tenure files are reviewed. Since some departments in the dataset may be in this position while others are not, this explanation would help account

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Table 5

The Effects of Research and Publishing on Tenure Decisions

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	LOGIT MODEL FOR DENIAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF DENIAL	LOGIT MODEL FOR REVERSAL	CHANGE IN THE PROBABILITY OF REVERSAL
Department Size	.43**** (.16)	.08	.27 (.18)	.03
Research Compensates	.04 (.30)	.01	.11 (.32)	.02
Single Author	−.22 (.28)	−.04	.25 (.30)	.03
Publications Equal	−.63** (.31)	−.10	.14 (.32)	.02
Best Journals	−.01 (.22)	.00	.28 (.24)	.04
Number Articles	.25** (.13)	.04	.12 (.14)	.02
Number Books	.12 (.14)	.02	−.33* (.18)	−.04
Constant	−1.65**** (.31)	—	−2.06**** (.33)	—
LL	−184.62	—	−166.40	—
Wald $X^2(4)$	29.3	—	15.0	—
p	.000	—	.03	—
Pseudo R^2	.08	—	.04	—
n	365	—	362	—

Notes. Standard errors in parentheses are robust. *$p < .10$, **$p < .05$, ***$p < .01$, ****$p < .001$

for the absence of an association between the standards that departments report and their tendency to have their cases reversed. To investigate this contingency, future analysis should include measures of departmental contributions to their college/university.

A final comment relates to what these results imply about the current national education debate.[15] Two claims commonly heard from promoters of reform are first, that private educational institutions are more efficient and less likely to spend money carelessly and thus are more diligent about granting tenure, and second, that a unionized faculty leads to more readily available faculty privileges, including tenure. Our research here indicates that these arguments may not be valid as far as higher education is concerned. The findings for public colleges and universities reveal that such institutions deny tenure more often than do private institutions, and that whether the faculty is unionized has no effect on an individual's failure to get tenure. If the reformers' claims are accurate, then private institutions would be more likely than public institutions to deny tenure, and union representation of faculty would be negatively related to the denial variable. Of course, the current results should be viewed as preliminary, and additional work is needed to fully understand the mechanisms connecting the public and unionized variables to denials of tenure, but our findings still raise interesting questions about some of the most common arguments regarding education reform.

In closing, this research provides an initial picture of the forces influencing tenure decisions. Future research should consider expanding the analysis by employing data based on responses from administrators, investigating the effects of some of the departmental characteristics mentioned previously, and developing alternative ways to measure what happens in the tenure decision-making process.[16] ■

NOTES

1. As Mawdsley points out, the 1981 *Beitzell v. Jeffrey* court case defined tenure as "a long-term academic and financial commitment by a university to an individual, providing faculty with unusually secure positions tantamount to life contracts" (1999, 167).
2. Deardorff et al. (2001), Adams (2002), and Kolmerton (2005) also discuss the difficulty of determining a college or university's tenure expectations.
3. Boyer quotes one scholar as saying "all that counts [in a tenure decision] is articles in high prestige journals" (1990, 29). Studies that have sought to rank political science professional journals suggest that journal prestige may also play a vital role in the tenure process. These articles include Giles, Mizell, and Patterson (1989), Garand (1990), and Giles and Garand (2007).
4. Additional comments about the vague nature of tenure standards can be found in Harmon (1991), Lang (2005), and Montgomery (2006).
5. Rothgeb and Burger (2009) conducted a mail survey in which they sent questionnaires to 1,229 political science department chairs regarding the tenure standards and procedures of both their college/university and their department. The contact information was provided by the APSA. Answers were received from 393 chairs, for a response rate of 32%. All responses were anonymous. The questionnaire included queries pertaining to each of the five categories of variables examined in this analysis and to whether over the course of the previous five years their department either had denied someone tenure or had experienced a reversal by higher authorities of a positive tenure decision.
6. Rothgeb and Burger (2009, 515) indicate that 22% of the responding departments denied tenure to at least one applicant, and 17% had a positive tenure recommendation reversed by higher authorities. It should be noted that this dataset treats the denial and reversal decisions as distinct, with denial representing a department-level action and reversal pertaining to decisions by college or university authorities beyond the department.
7. Boyer (1990, 37–40) asserts that teaching assessments should consider peer reviews, student course evaluations, syllabi, and a teaching portfolio. For discussion of some key issues associated with the use of teaching evaluations, see Langbein (1994), Algozzine et al. (2004), and Kelly-Woessner and Woessner (2006). Yon, Burnap, and Kohut (2002) and Kohut, Burnap, and Yon (2007) also describe the use of peer reviews in tenure cases.
8. Rothgeb and Burger (2009, 519) report that in survey responses, chairs provided their own definitions for the terms "substantive publications" and "prestigious journals in their field." For discussions of teaching vs. substantive publications and collaborative scholarship, see Boyer (1990, 39), Fisher et al. (1998), and Facione (2006).
9. Examples of community service offered by Rothgeb and Burger (2009, 514) include membership on the school board or service as a consultant to the government or businesses. Professional service examples include organizing a professional meeting or serving as an officer in a professional organization.
10. When multiple independent variables are included in an analysis, logit allows the researcher to assess the separate effects of each independent variable while controlling for the other independent variables in the equation. Logit also permits the analyst to determine how much change in the dependent variable can be attributed to a one-unit change in the independent variable. For more complete discussions of logit analysis, see Menard (1995) and Kennedy (2008, 241–44).
11. When evaluating how a one-unit change in the independent variable affects the probability that either tenure will be denied or a positive decision will be reversed, it is important to keep in mind that the probability changes associated with independent variables that are not statistically significant can be treated as though they are essentially equal to zero.
12. As may be recalled, department size is divided into four categories. In general, the results in tables 1–5 indicate that moving from one size category to another affected the probability of denial by about .10 and the probability of reversal by about .06. Hence, moving from the smallest to the largest department size categories would produce the total changes indicated in the text.
13. There is potential for bias in the Rothgeb and Burger (2009) dataset because of its reliance on the willingness of department chairs to complete and return

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a questionnaire. Since survey responses were anonymous, it is not possible to determine how well the respondents reflected the true population parameters. However, the large number of responses (393) helps enhance the value of the data. Moreover, scholarly research frequently employs information from similar surveys (see Euchner and Jewell 1989; Dolan et al. 1997; Fuerstman and Lavertu 2005).

14. These are general trends. Readers who are interested in what might happen in a particular department or at a specific college or university should consult with that institution's authorities.

15. Although the national debate has focused primarily on elementary and secondary education in the United States, many of the most-frequently-heard arguments have implications for higher education. A sample of some of this literature includes Friedman (1995), Rhim (2007), and Brill (2010). For a discussion of faculty unions and tenure in higher education, see Whicker (1997).

16. While this research employed a measure based on whether a department denied tenure or had a positive decision reversed in the past five years, alternative measures might look at the frequency with which a department granted or denied tenure and/or was successful or unsuccessful in gaining approval from higher authorities.

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