

Understanding Midcareer Faculty

The COACHE Approach

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

May 19, 2017



HARVARD

GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF EDUCATION

Kiernan R. Mathews, Ed.D.

Harvard Graduate School of Education

The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education

coachegse.harvard.edu | kiernan_mathews@harvard.edu

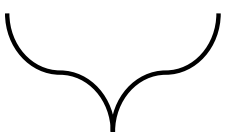
Think of one or two gratifying moments in your career as a professor.

What at that moment made being a professor a great job?

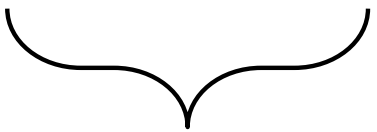
**Collaborative
On
Academic
Careers in
Higher
Education**

**Evidence-based
Faculty Affairs**

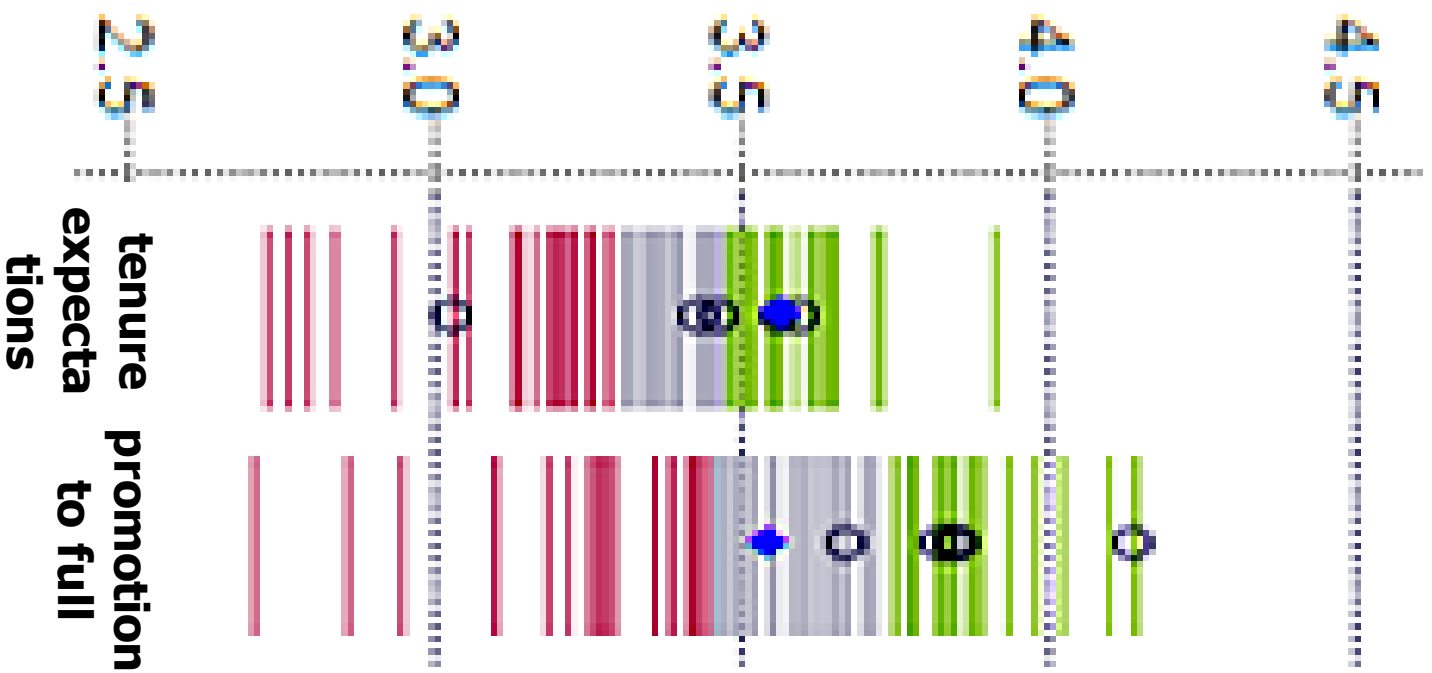




top 30% of all universities

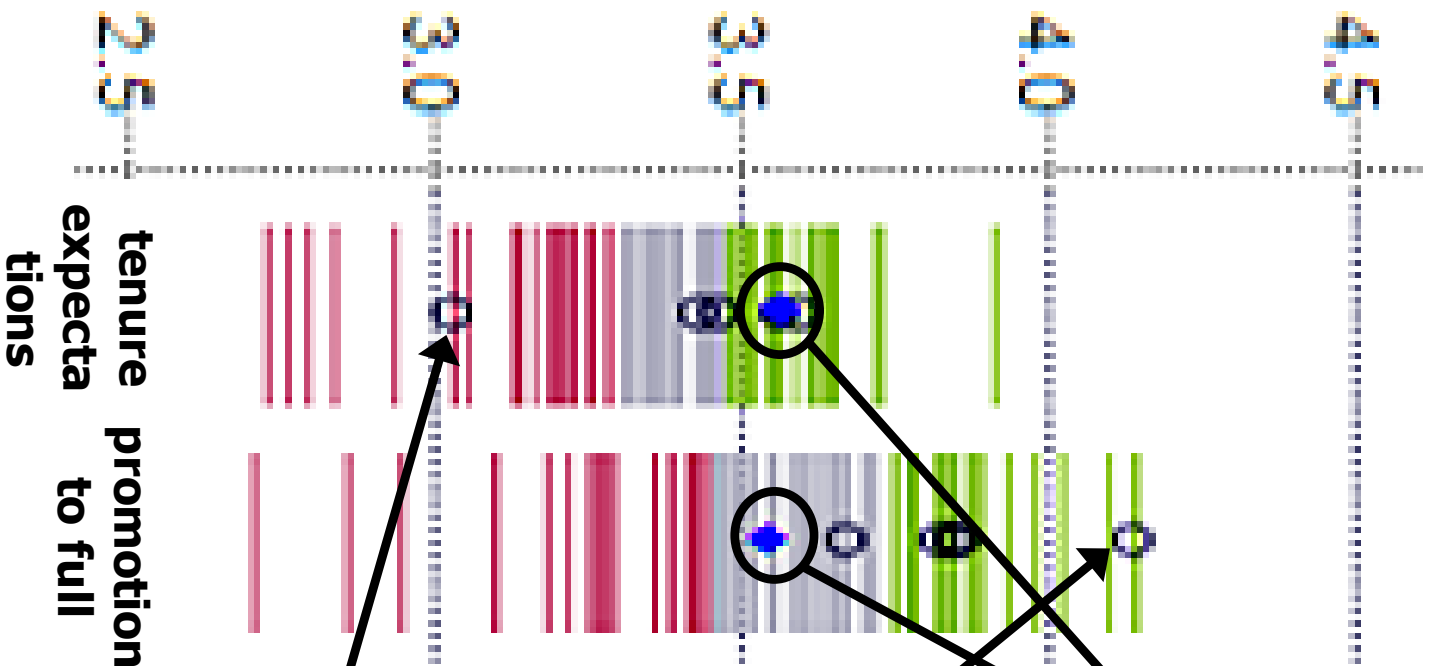


bottom 30% of all universities



◆ your university

○ peer universities



identical means...

but widely different meanings

What are they doing right?

Will they improve? How?

tenure
expectations

promotion
to full

My assumptions

Adults can grow.

We are unfinished, incomplete beings.

Limitations can be transcended.

Your high-growth experiences

Growing up, or in your working life:

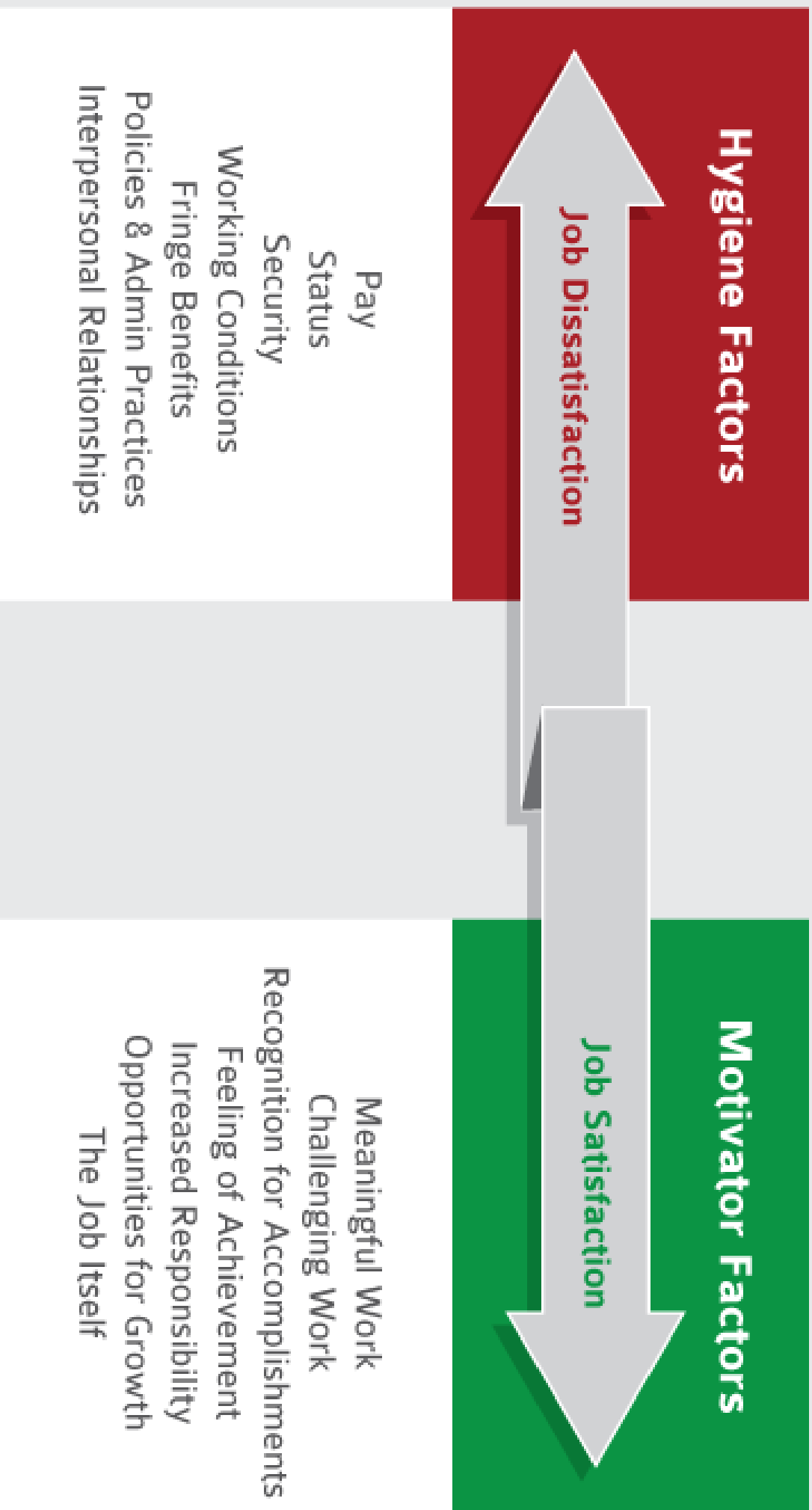
- a) What was the situation?
- b) What enabled your growth?
- c) What did that growth then enable in your life and/or work?
- d) Who helped you?
- e) How did they help?

My assumptions

Adults can grow.

Colleges thrive when faculty thrive.

... and suffer when faculty lack agency.



Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. (1993). *The motivation to work*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Trustee to President:

“What if we spend all of this time and money on ‘faculty development,’ and then they leave?”

President to Trustee:

“What if we don’t, and then they stay?”

My assumptions

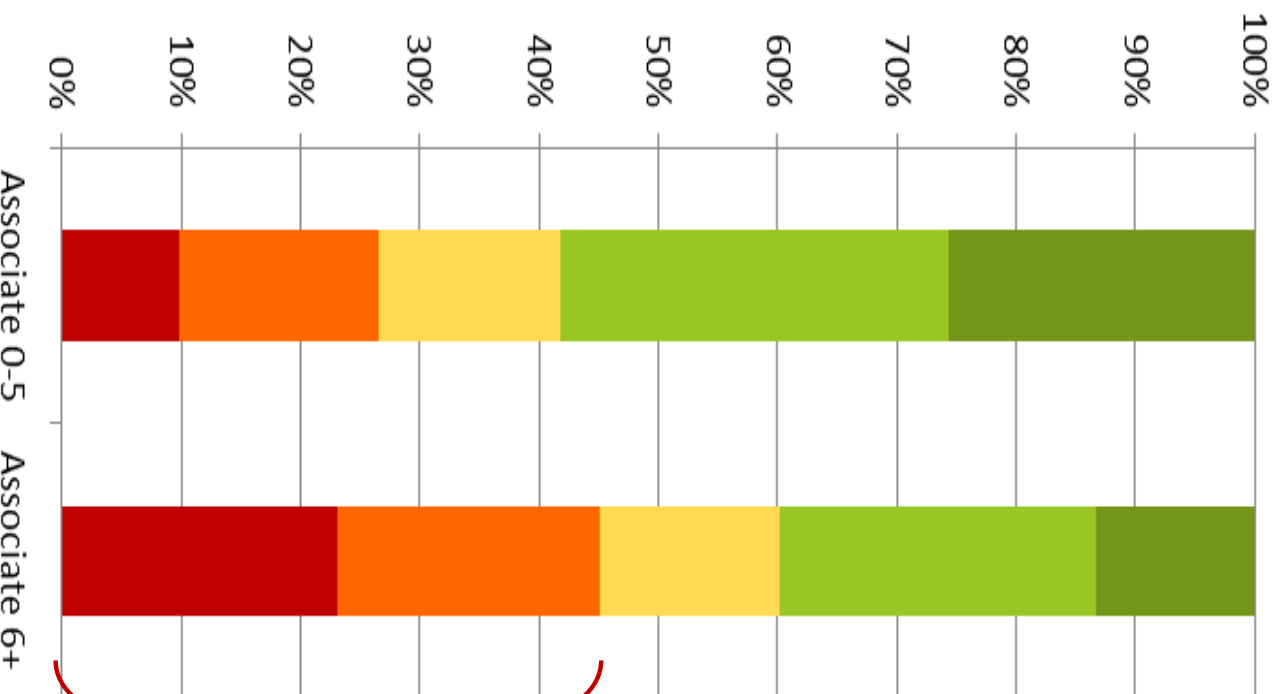
Adults can grow.

Colleges thrive when faculty thrive.

Promotion to full is the goal.

Tenure is granted on the expectation of a continuing trajectory (but obstacles arise).

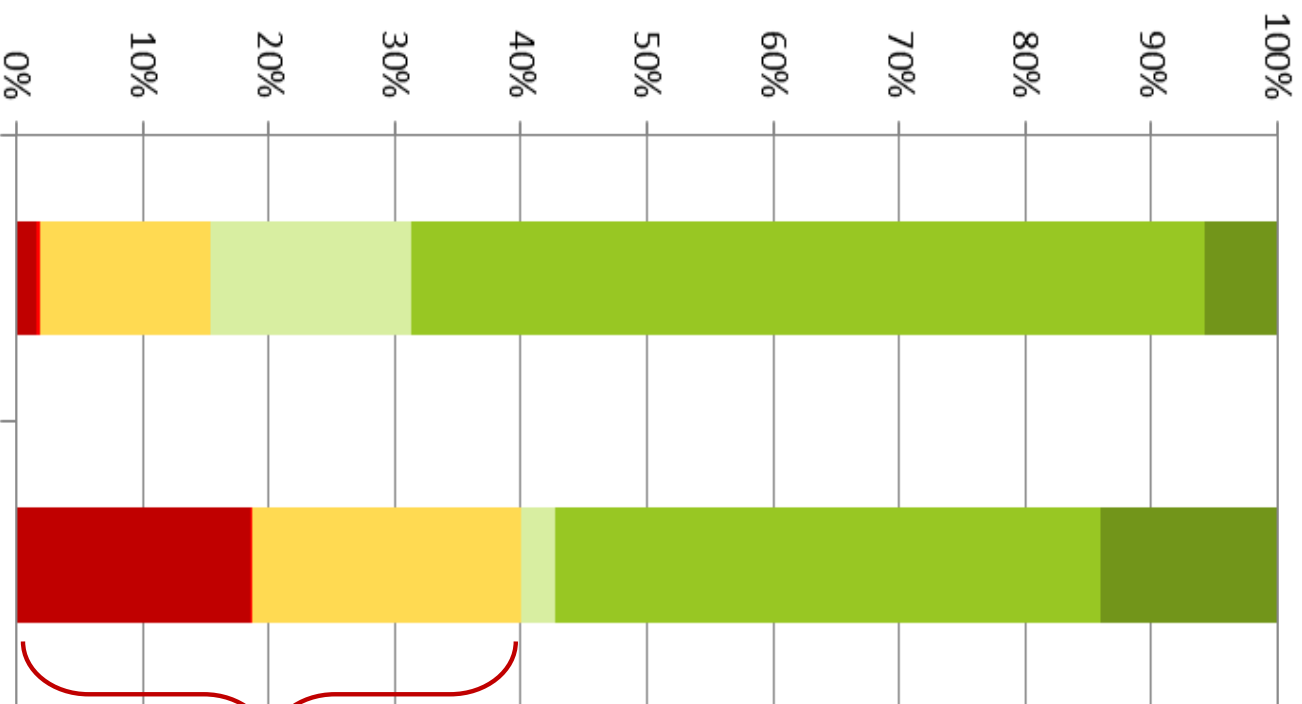
Q: My dept has a culture where associate professors are encouraged to work towards promotion to full.



n = 5,008 tenured associates

45% disagree

Q: When do you plan to submit your dossier for promotion to full professor?



n = 5,038 tenured associates

40% have no plans

Associate 0-5 Associate 6+

My assumptions

Adults can grow.

Colleges thrive when faculty thrive.

Promotion to full is the goal.

Being a “senior” associate isn’t “bad.”

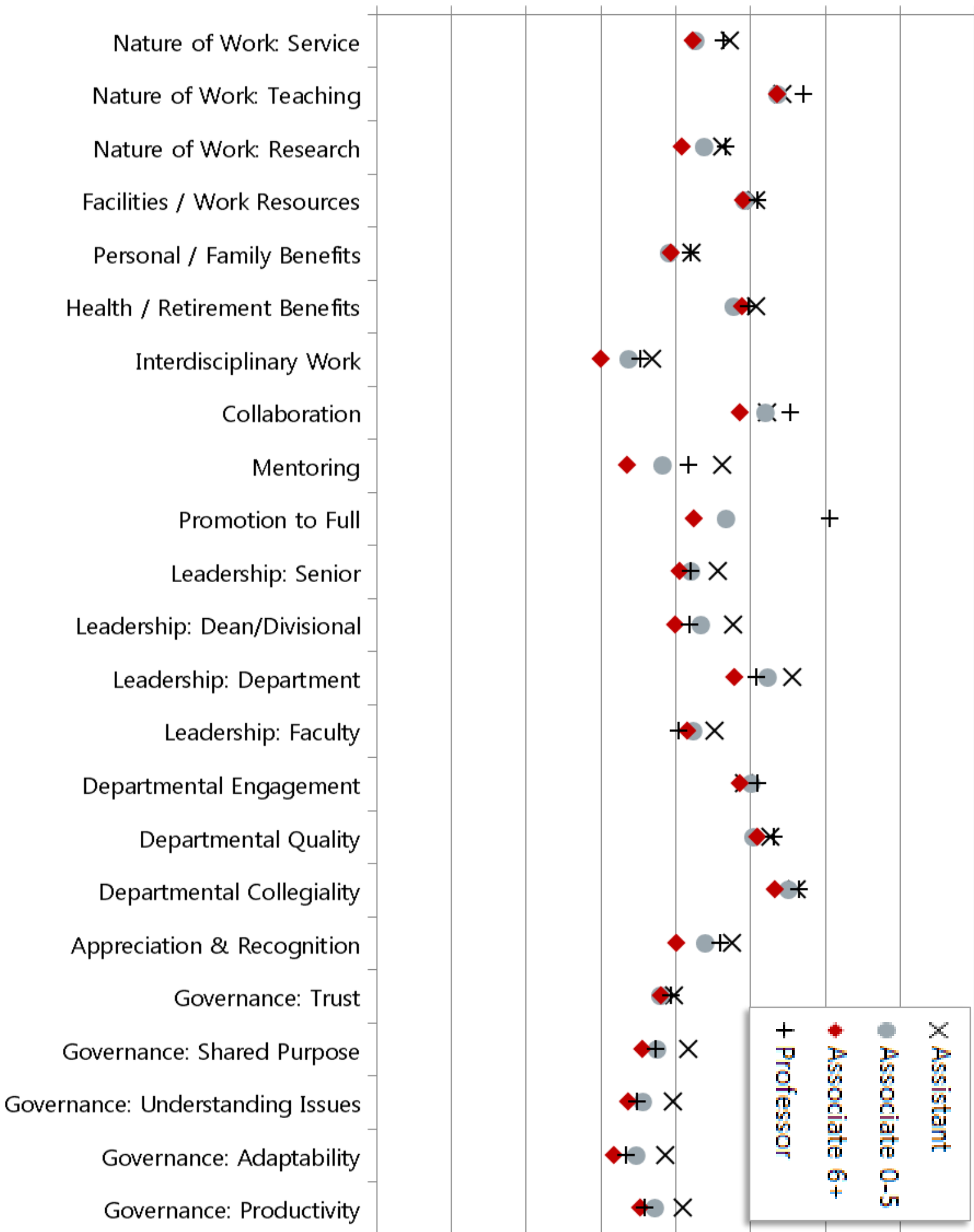
It’s just an unplanned outcome. Many are succeeding in ways we can’t see (or reward).

Wet Hot American Summer (2001)

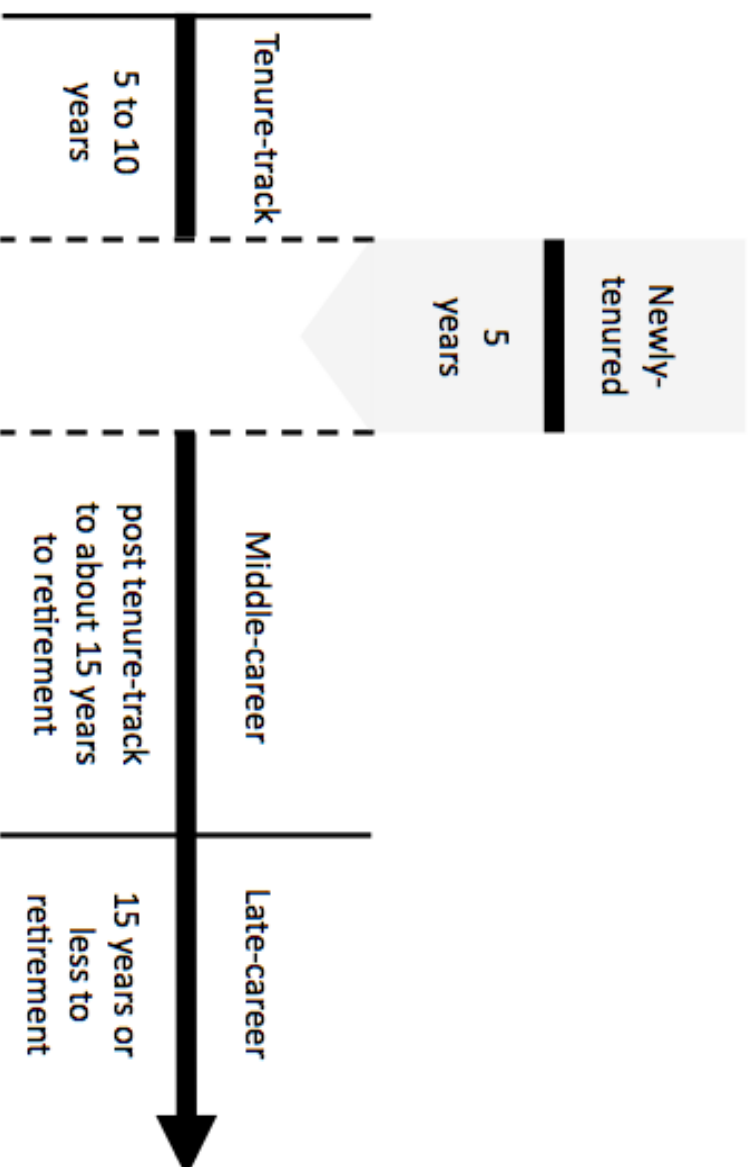
@kiernan_mathews

“less than”?

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0 4.5 5.0



The Three Classic Stages of a Faculty Member's Career with the Proposed "Newly-tenured" Stage

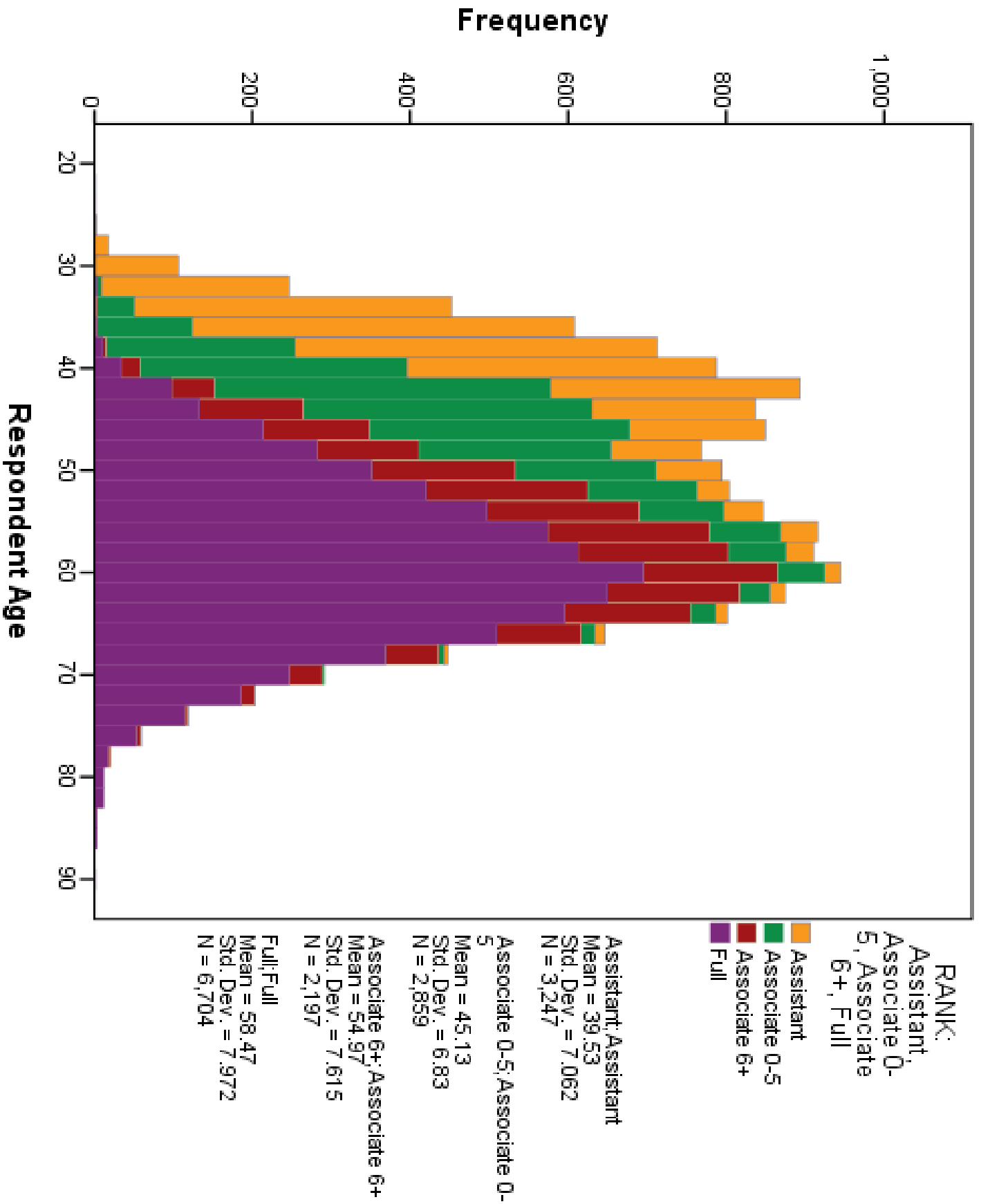


Sources:

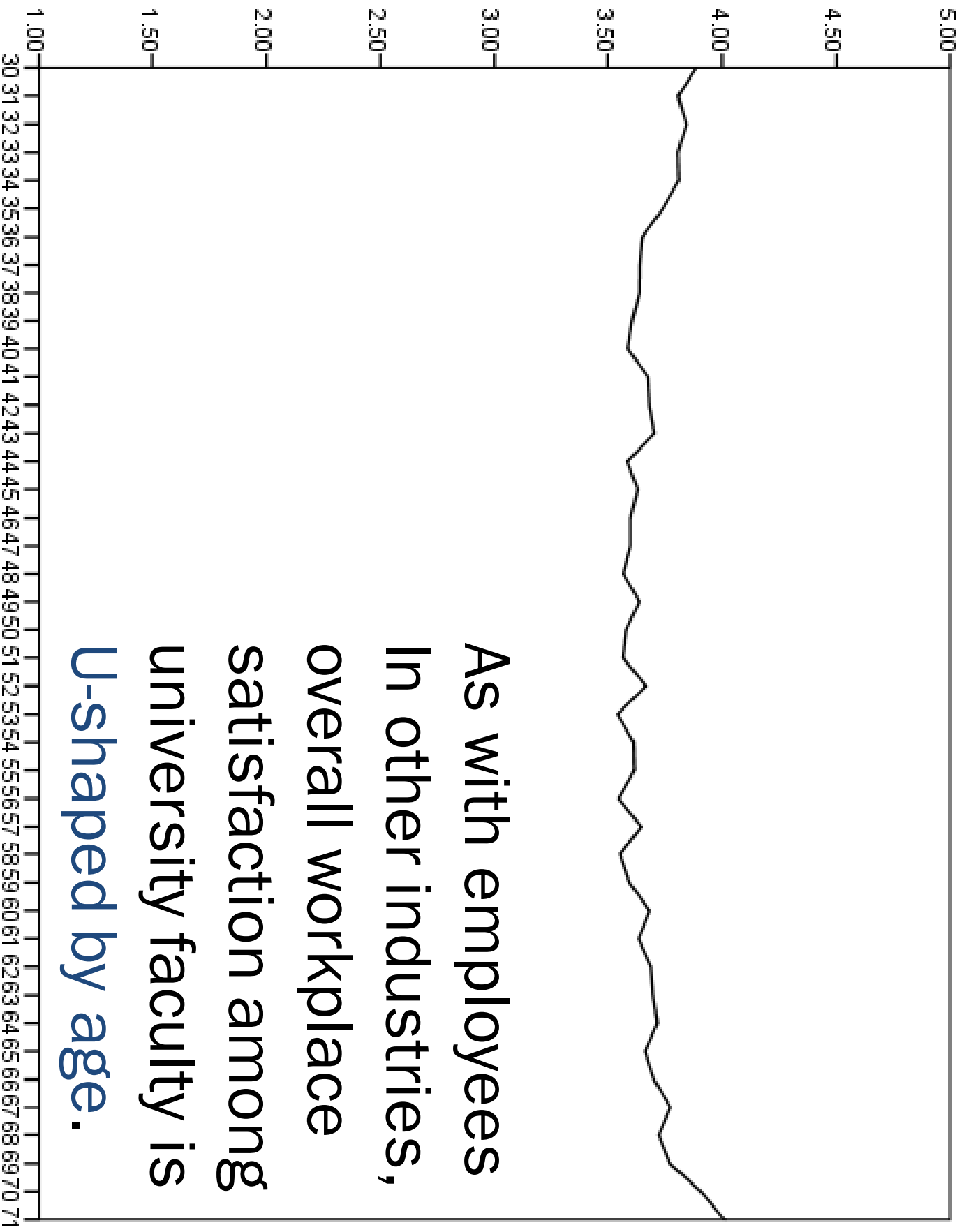
Russell, B. C. (2013). The workplace satisfaction of newly-tenured faculty members at research universities (Order No. 3579020). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1503847605).

Baldwin, R. G., & Chang, D. A. (2006). Reinforcing our "keystone" faculty: Strategies to support faculty in the middle years of academic life. *Liberal Education*, 92(4), 28-35.

Neumann, A. (2009a). *Professing to learn: Creating tenured lives and careers in the American research university*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.



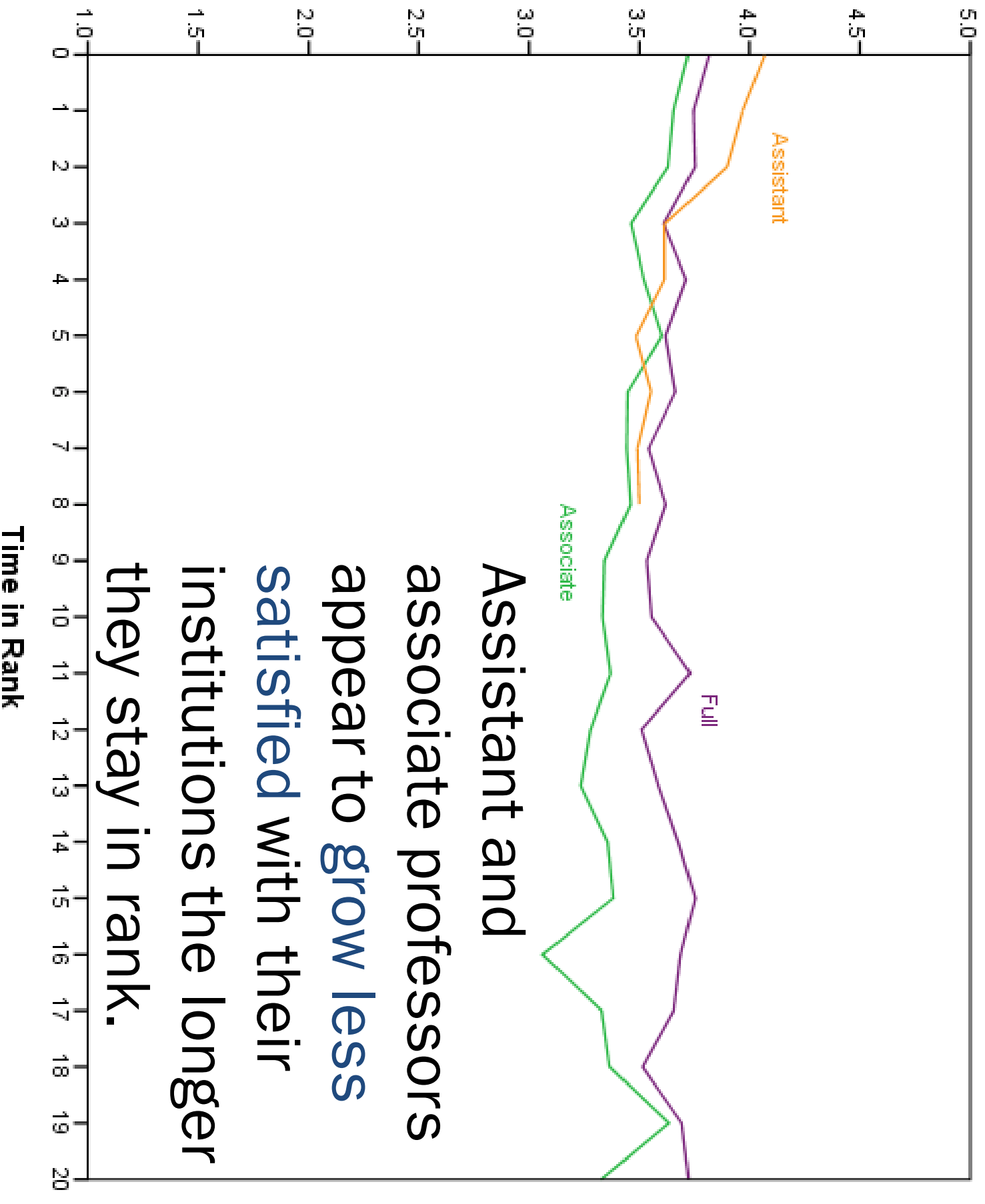
Satisfaction with Institution as a Place to Work



As with employees
In other industries,
overall workplace
satisfaction among
university faculty is
U-shaped by age.

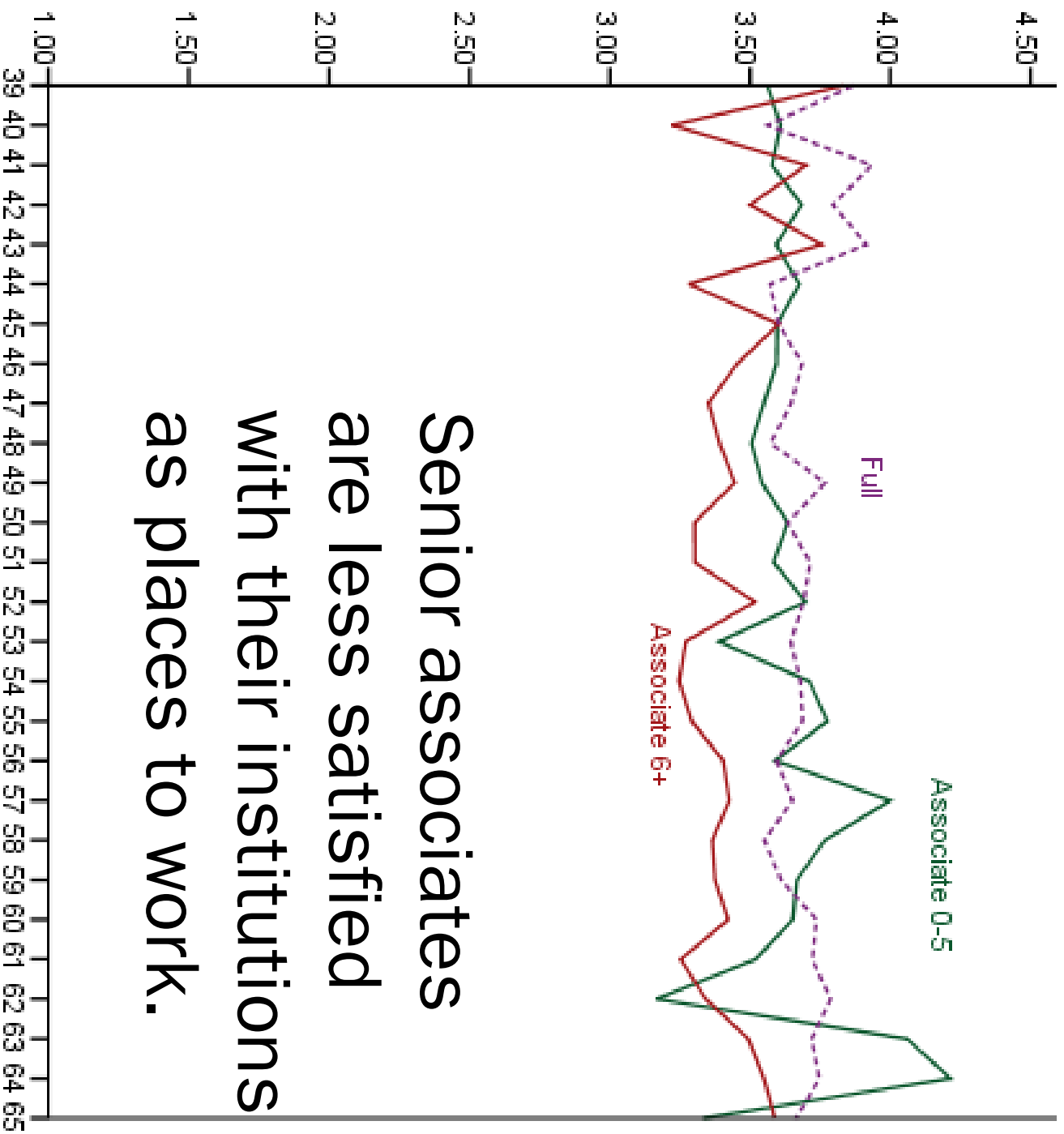
Respondent Age

Satisfaction with Institution as a Place to Work



Assistant and associate professors appear to **grow less** satisfied with their institutions the longer they stay in rank.

Satisfaction with Institution as a Place to Work



Senior associates are less satisfied with their institutions as places to work.

Respondent Age

Faculty Experience Doesn't Always Pay

As annual raises lag, professors look askance at salaries for new hires

By Audrey Williams June

The paychecks of professors continue to be

March 18, 2012

Aging Professors Create a Faculty Bottleneck

At some universities, 1 in 3 academics are now 60 or older

By Audrey Williams June

When Mary Beth Norton went to University in 1974, she was the department's first female hire. She is the oldest accomplished professor has a d



Sally Schriver Canning

June 3, 2012

Why Are Associate Professors So Unhappy?



Lisa DeJong for The Chronicle

Three associate professors at the College of Wooster (from left, Amy Jo Stavnezer, Judith Amburgey-Peters, and Susan Lehman) have formed a support group to help guide one another through the difficult midcareer years.

By Robin Wilson

Seven years after earning tenure at the College of Wooster, Judith C. Amburgey-Peters is still

The Associate Professor Blues

September 28, 2013, 7:10 pm

By Claire Potter



In "Supporting the Senior Book" (*Perspectives on History*, September 2013), American Historical Association President Kenneth Pomeranz came out and elaborates on a topic launched in the previous thought it was great that Pomeranz came out about his post-tenure delay: one of the things

Unhappy Associate Professors

June 4, 2012 - 3:00am

By Scott Jaschik

If one had to guess at a sector of the tenure-track and tenured professoriate likely to have the lowest job satisfaction, assistant professors might seem logical. They face uncertainty on whether they will earn tenure, the pressure to excel in teaching and research, the need to master departmental politics -- and they must do all of that with less power and less institutional knowledge than those at the associate and full professor ranks.

But the preliminary results of a national survey of professors by the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, at Harvard University, has found that in most measures, associate professors have lower job satisfaction levels than both assistant and full professors do.

PTSD

Post Tenure Stress Disorder?

Mail

Deleted Items

Drafts (1)

Inbox (1)

Outbox (99999)

Sent Items

Lazy, passive

Isolated

Marginalized
Cynical

Unaccountable

Old white male

Bored

Misunderstood

Not improving teaching

Discouraged

Stymied career

Angry

No-show
Complainer

Abandoned

Longing for the good ol' days

Isolated

Marginalized

Misunderstood

Discouraged

Stymied career

Abandoned

Adults can grow.

Colleges thrive when faculty thrive.

Promotion to full is the goal.

Being a “senior” associate isn’t “bad.”

Best moments and high-growth experiences

What keeps associates from promotion?

Institutional Connection

Strong

Post-tenure Pathways

Model

Low

Weary
Citizen

Synergistic
Citizen

Discouraged
Isolate

Independent
Agent

High

Career
Satisfaction

Weak

Source: Beaubouef, T., Erickson, K., &

Thomas, J. (2017). See

[https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/01/26/research-midcareer-professors-makes-case-support-after-tenure)

[01/26/research-midcareer-professors-](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/01/26/research-midcareer-professors-makes-case-support-after-tenure)

[makes-case-support-after-tenure.](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/01/26/research-midcareer-professors-makes-case-support-after-tenure)



Some categories of action:

- Midcareer awareness/info resources
- Programs for career planning, development, and renewal
- Mentoring and networking beyond classical models
- Teaching support
- Research support
- Awards and recognition
- Support available at consortia, national orgs

Get data-wise.

Engage allies.

Use a stump speech.

Start a “contested topics” conversation.

Make orientation an authentic eye-opener.

Encourage rebalancing / renegotiation.

Reform tenure and promotion.

Mentor across all ranks.

Invest in chairs.

There’s no such thing as “the Faculty”.

When all else fails...

Debate the “Contested Topics”

- “They get less, and they deserve less.”
- “At a research university, research productivity should be the primary criterion for promotion.”
- “Are specific criteria clear and fair, or narrow and inflexible?”
- “Should we tell them they barely made tenure?”
- “Are annual reviews too much at this stage?”
- “Can we ask them to align/redirect research to dept/college/institutional needs?”

Q&A

University of North Carolina at Charlotte
May 19, 2017



HARVARD

GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF EDUCATION

Kiernan R. Mathews, Ed.D.
Harvard Graduate School of Education
The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education
coache.gse.harvard.edu | kiernan_mathews@harvard.edu

HARVARD



GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF EDUCATION

