

CHOOSING YOUR ENGAGEMENTS:  
TENURE AND WORK LIFE AT STATE COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES

BY

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DISSERTATION

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## ABSTRACT

Based on interviews with eighteen tenured faculty members in departments of history at eight non-urban state comprehensive universities in the Midwestern, Northeastern, and Southeastern United States, this qualitative study investigated the perceived effects of tenure on faculty work life. The data suggest that these faculty members see tenure as an opportunity to choose their own engagements with the aspects of faculty work life that most suit their interests, abilities, and personalities. A sense of liberation, flexibility, and control is grounded, post-tenure, in an increased sense of responsibility that is located and manifested both within their institutions as well as within the discipline of history.

Preliminary chapters describe the institutional and disciplinary contexts and survey the evolution of studies on the occupational culture of academe. Findings are presented in two chapters, with the first exploring institutional considerations, including how tenure is conceptualized and how the expectations for tenure were understood and negotiated, and the second focusing on how the participants' post-tenure work lives have differed from their pre-tenure work lives. Both findings chapters include sections addressing the domains of teaching, research, and service; the second explores additional themes related to faculty work life.

A concluding chapter summarizes the core findings, offers implications for the future of tenure, presents reflections on noteworthy conditions, and provides suggestions for future research. Appendices include an essay on faculty unions (present at three of the eight sites) and a list of the 273 state comprehensive institutions in the United States (based on the 2010 classifications by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching).

*To A and B, for keeping me company*

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Thomas Lynch—poet, essayist, undertaker—once wrote that “Books do not come into being on their own.”<sup>†</sup> The same can be said of dissertations. Moreover, to borrow from James de Coquet, a dissertation “has a hidden side, like the moon.”<sup>‡</sup> The product at hand is but one manifestation of a long-term project aided and assisted by a large supporting cast: some obvious, others hidden. I am grateful to numerous institutions and individuals, both those I take the pleasure in naming here and those whose identities I mustn’t reveal. For all who have supported and encouraged me along the way, both named and unnamed, I thank you.

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<sup>†</sup>Thomas Lynch, *Bodies at Motion and at Rest: On Metaphor and Mortality* (New York: Norton, 2000), 13.

<sup>‡</sup>Quoted in Nicolas Freeling, *The Kitchen Book* (London: Hamilton, 1970), 6, where the original subject is naturally different.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Problem Statement**

##### Aperçu

In many academic fields, “elusive” and “tenure-track” have become a frequently coupled pair of modifiers, at least when used by graduate students, recent recipients of doctoral degrees, and junior faculty members reflecting on their career paths. The terms are typically encountered before such nouns as “position” (e.g., Duva 2000; Lang 2000), “trophy” (Logan 2005), or—most commonly—“job” or “jobs” (Braude 2011; Brooks 2009; Crosby 2002; Jacobson 2002; Plummer 2007; Rohrer 2004). For example, four years after completing a Ph.D. in political science, Paul Rohrer wrote (expressing relief instead of boastfulness) that he had “finally landed the elusive tenure-track job.” To Nicole Brooks, though, “that elusive tenure-track academic job that every young historian craves but only a handful of us attain” still remained “out of reach.”

Overall, the perceived elusiveness of tenure-track positions is not a fiction. Institutions of higher education in the United States have in fact been hiring more and more part-time and contingent faculty members: The faculty ranks are now populated by more part-time instructors than full-time instructors. And as the

tenure system has become an increasingly “contested feature of faculty life” (J. Cross and Goldenberg 2009, 13), support for academic tenure has collectively attenuated. Such is the case especially at community colleges and non-research universities, and particularly in the humanities—where members of a seemingly inexhaustible cohort of qualified individuals are willing to accept part-time and contingent positions, often out of necessity (see, e.g., Faunce 2010; Marti 2007; Nelson 2009, 2010). Over a decade ago, in fact, Jeffrey Williams remarked that, “regardless of the strength of tenure for those with a permanent position, a majority of faculty has effectively been de-tenured through the massive resort to part-time or temporary teachers” (1999, 227).

What effects are these shifts having on the professoriate? Although research has investigated the effects of tenure on the work lives of faculty members at research universities (e.g., Neumann 2009; O’Meara, Terosky, and Neumann 2008) and community colleges (e.g., Howton 2009; Ovadia 2009; J. Smith 2009; Washington 2008; Zografos 2005), little attention has been paid to the effects of tenure on the work lives of faculty members at comprehensive institutions. These institutions are among those that are likely to experience a greater replacement of tenure-line positions (created after retirements) with contingent positions (Cohen and Kisker 2010). Furthermore, positioned at neither extreme of the hierarchy of higher education institutions in this country, comprehensive institutions are commonly overlooked by higher education researchers as sites for their work (Henderson 2009b). This project addresses that oversight by examining perceptions of tenured faculty

members at non-urban comprehensive institutions regarding the effects of tenure on the nature, type, and quantity of work they carry out. The individuals in this study, then, have succeeded not only in landing “elusive” tenure-track positions but also in being granted tenure.

Because academic culture is a function of both discipline and institutional type (B. Clark 1987, 1997), only faculty in a particularly ubiquitous discipline—history—were investigated in this study. The specific institutional settings came from a subset of the 728 comprehensive institutions in the United States: the 273 state comprehensive universities identified in the 2010 classifications of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (appendix A). To be classified as a “comprehensive university,” an institution must annually award at least fifty master’s degrees but fewer than twenty doctorates.<sup>1</sup> Through qualitative interviews with faculty members who were almost all awarded tenure within the past eleven years (in or after 2000), this study illuminates the perceived effects of tenure on faculty engagements with and orientations to the traditional teaching, research, and service components of their faculty appointments within their particular institutional and disciplinary context. The findings of this study help better contextualize and situate the potential effects—both positive and negative—of increased dependence on part-time and contingent faculty at state comprehensive universities.

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<sup>1</sup>Current Carnegie nomenclature describes these institutions as “Master’s Colleges and Universities” (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching 2010).

## Background to the Problem Statement

In their 2006 presentation of a long-term study on changes to the American academic profession, Jack Schuster and Martin Finkelstein described higher education in the twenty-first century as a system on the verge of a revolution. The press of globalization, increasing numbers of students in higher education worldwide, advances in technology, expansion of for-profit higher education, and rise in market-driven initiatives coming from within and outside college and university campuses are among the “concurrent changes” that are contributing to a destabilization of higher education in this country (2006a, xvii). Schuster and Finkelstein portrayed this destabilization as the source of “seismic shifts [that] are changing how knowledge is acquired and transmitted” at an “unprecedented pace” (xvii). Their analyses revealed that the faculty, as the “most valuable asset” of the academic profession, is continuously changing in composition and role (17).

That the demographic face of the academic workforce has changed over the past several decades is not headline news. But that the nature of academic appointments has been shifting—and shifting rather radically and rapidly in recent decades—should not be ignored. Schuster and Finkelstein reported, for example, that contingent or term appointments have now become the modal form of new full-time faculty appointments.<sup>2</sup> According to the American Association of University

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<sup>2</sup>I am aware that David Bartholomae, for example, finds use of the term *contingent* to be “inappropriate and counterintuitive” when describing “positions that are renewed year after year” (2011, 8). I use the term for convenience, although Bartholomae would prefer the more cumbersome (though often more accurate) *full-time non-tenure-track* faculty. Michael Murphy argued that, although “many non-tenure-track faculty hold their positions essentially indefinitely and forge career tracks for themselves, . . . there is a great difference between managing to

Professors (AAUP), although the number of tenure-track positions grew by 7 percent between 1975 and 2007, the number of non-tenure-track positions more than tripled. Proportionately, the percentage of tenured or tenure-track faculty fell from 57 in 1975 to 31 in 2007.<sup>3</sup> Contributing to this decline is the fact that part-time appointments have risen “relentlessly” since the 1970s (Schuster and Finkelstein 2006a, 324). By fall 2007, in fact, parity was surpassed: just over 50 percent of the nearly 1.4 million instructors at degree-granting institutions in the United States are currently employed part-time. Although less marked at research universities and elite liberal arts colleges, contingent full-time and part-time staffing patterns are “now the chief modes of institutional operation” at other four-year institutions and within the two-year sector (324). Such institutions, Schuster and Finkelstein pointed out, constitute the “vast majority” of institutions of higher education in the United States (324).<sup>4</sup>

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keep a position across the long haul and being guaranteed one” (2011, 62n1). And after an almost thirty-year career as a non-tenured faculty member, John Boe admitted that he does not like being referred to as a “non-tenure-track faculty” member: “To me, it echoes the phrase ‘non-white.’ . . . I do not like that the only way to refer to me seems to be in terms of what I am not” (2011, 33).

<sup>3</sup>See “Trends in Faculty Status, 1975–2007,” a figure embedded in note 5 of “Tenure and Teaching-Intensive Appointments (2010),” a report prepared by a subcommittee of the AAUP Committee on Contingency and the Profession, at <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/comm/rep/teachertenure.htm>. Note that this percentage reflects faculty appointments, not full-time equivalencies. URLs presented in this dissertation were accurate as of August 8, 2011.

<sup>4</sup>Data from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching corroborate this comparative claim, identifying over 73 percent of the classified 4,634 public and private institutions of higher education in the United States (in 2010) as master’s colleges and universities, baccalaureate colleges, tribal colleges, or associate’s colleges. In that calculation, I have controlled for the “elite liberal arts colleges” by removing from consideration the top 10 percent of all baccalaureate colleges (81 institutions).

In jeopardy, therefore, is the future of academic tenure, a diverse set of policies and practices that are intended to protect faculty members from unwarranted dismissal. Tenure affords faculty members the freedom and intellectual autonomy to perform their professional responsibilities across the three “specific units of faculty work” (Tierney 1997, 8)—teaching, research, and service—without fear of repercussions based on their views, research agendas, or research findings. Tenure thus serves to protect academic freedom, an issue with which it is frequently intertwined. The 1940 “Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure,” jointly issued by the AAUP and the Association of American Colleges (now the Association of American Colleges and Universities), in fact, described tenure as “indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society” (reprinted in AAUP 2006, 3). Moreover, the 1940 “Statement of Principles” has been endorsed by more than two hundred additional professional and educational organizations.<sup>5</sup>

But tenure has come under fire and has been “almost everywhere under assault” for many years (Finkin 1996, 1). Jeffrey Buller, for example, wrote that “Few other topics in higher education are as cherished, controversial, and misunderstood as is tenure” (2011, 107). And Yvonna Lincoln explained the situation as follows: “Of all the controversies, stresses, and financial strains to have assaulted higher education in the last half of the twentieth century, none appears to be so fraught with both

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<sup>5</sup>The list of endorsers numbers 219 (as of March 2011) and can be viewed here: <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/endorsersalpha.htm>. The most recent addition to the list, the Southeastern Women’s Studies Association, was made in 2009.

bitterness and import as the issue of tenure. And no issue is likely to make such a profound and lasting impact on institutions of higher education” (1999, 175).

Systemically, tenure operates within a number of realms of perception: in the imagination of the public; in the day-to-day practices of college and university administrators and human resource practitioners; in the understandings of scholars who study tenure; and, perhaps most importantly, in the minds, activities, and lives of faculty members—and those who someday aspire to become faculty members—themselves. Navigating these realms requires the parsing of perceptions (and misperceptions), since each realm espouses a range of different symbolic views toward tenure: as a potential waste of taxpayer money; as a system in peril; as a merit reward, a marker of accomplishment, a signifier of status, an entitlement, a paladin of academic freedom.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the impact of tenure as both a system and symbol has ramifications at all levels within the broader ecosystem of higher education: tenure affects institutions; is felt within academic departments; and—at the micro level—factors into the career directions, productivity levels, and job satisfaction of individuals.

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<sup>6</sup>I consider *status* to be a relative positioning in a hierarchical system. It is closely related to *prestige*, which is also measured in relation to others. Any hierarchical structure begets systems of status and prestige (Siegel 1971). In the academy, individuals, institutions, departments, programs, organizations, publication outlets, and fellowships (for example) with greater status are generally those with the greater prestige. Status and prestige within the academy are related to social or professional standing and were favorite topics of sociologists during the 1960s and 1970s, who wished to explain three outcomes of the academic stratification system: individuals' positions within the hierarchy of institutional prestige; individuals' statuses within their academic disciplines; and individuals' statuses within their employing institutions (Finkelstein 2006). Frank Donoghue has argued that prestige in the twenty-first century, as “ghostly” as it may be, is “crucial to understanding the current and future trends of many American universities,” in part because of its “distinctive” relation to consumer culture (2008, 111).



Over two-thirds of the institutions of postsecondary education in the United States offer some form of tenure (NCES 2006), contributing to a system that is—or was, nearly thirty years ago—seen as “too prevalent a practice to disappear and too consequential a policy to disregard” (Chait and Ford 1982, ix). Economic exigencies and rationalizations, including desires for greater institutional flexibility amid budget constraints, help explain the attenuation of tenure over the past few decades (see, e.g., Baldwin and Chronister 2001; Ehrenberg and Zhang 2005a; Gappa and Leslie 1993; Mallon 2001; Schuster and Finkelstein 2006a), even though “tenure remains the commonly defined ideal of academic employment” (Gappa, Austin, and Trice 2007, 57).<sup>7</sup> Yet little is known about how this reduction in the number of tenure-line faculty will affect not only the functioning of higher education (for example, faculty governance) but also its functions (for example, student learning). Especially at institutions where contingent and part-time faculty are filling the majority of teaching positions, are such institutions still able to fulfill their obligations to their students and to society? One belief, for example, has been that the decline in tenure lines correlates with a decline in the quality of education (e.g., Benjamin 2002; Bettinger and Long 2005; Ehrenberg and Zhang 2005b; Jaeger 2008; Umbach 2007). But this concern is grounded on the assumption that teaching—and learning—are more effective and consequential at institutions with higher proportions of tenured

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<sup>7</sup>Arthur Cohen and Carrie Kisker (2010, 491) explained administrative motivations leading to an increase in contingent and part-time faculty hires: “Where an institution’s leaders see the necessity for rapid response to new demands and where they have problems balancing the budget, they will extol the virtue of a fungible faculty. . . . Where the faculty groups are able to counter those moves, the managers will build new types of units modeled on contemporary extension divisions and employ the needed faculty off-book, as it were.”

or tenure-line faculty: institutions that had, until recently, been the norm. In terms of numbers of degrees awarded annually (either associate's or bachelor's), over half of the undergraduate education in this country transpires at community colleges or comprehensive universities.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, these institutions place more emphasis on teaching than on research; but they also employ higher proportions of contingent or part-time faculty than research universities or private liberal arts colleges.

Tenure has entered the public imagination, inaccurately, as “employment for life” that promotes waste by, for example, appearing “to protect incompetent professors” (Amacher and Meiners 2004, 94). Critics of tenure have argued that tenure tolerates or even promotes a lack of productivity, a lack of engagement, and stasis (e.g., Kimball 2008; Riley 2011; P. Smith 1990; Sykes 1988). Published critiques, however, have been “rarely informed by data” and “rarely if ever analyzed relative to differences in discipline and institutional type” (O'Meara, Terosky, and Neumann 2008, 7). Most investigations into the realities of faculty work lives, in fact, do not support the views of the critics (e.g., Axtell 1998; Blackburn and Lawrence 1995; Gappa, Austin, and Trice 2007; Neumann 2009). Moreover, the most substantial investigations into the effects of tenure (both positive and negative) have focused on faculty at research universities—the “central or major universities . . . that rank high

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<sup>8</sup>This statement is based on the number of undergraduate degrees awarded during the 2009–10 academic year. See Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Carnegie Classifications Data File (updated May 31, 2011), “Data” columns AG and AH. Available at <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/resources>.

in the universe of learning” in this country (L. Wilson 1942, 6).<sup>9</sup> Clearly, then, studies that focus on the perceived effects of tenure at other institutional types are needed.

### Goals of the Study

Because much of the work on the effects of tenure on faculty lives has focused on faculty members at research universities, researchers such as Anna Neumann have had to hypothesize about the effects of tenure on professors at “other kinds of institutions,” such as community colleges or state universities (2009, 11; her examples). By “state universities,” Neumann is essentially referring to what Bruce Henderson (2007) termed “state comprehensive universities”: public institutions that focus on comprehensive curricula at the undergraduate level yet offer master’s degrees and, occasionally, doctoral degrees in select areas (chiefly vocational in nature). Such institutions were branded in 1942 by Logan Wilson, as a means for differentiation, as “lesser universities” (6); they today employ approximately 234,600 faculty members, enroll nearly 25 percent of the undergraduates in this country, and grant over 37 percent of the bachelor’s degrees awarded annually.<sup>10</sup> State

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<sup>9</sup>A notable exception—that is, an academic treatment of the pros and cons of tenure systems outside major research universities—is William Mallon’s (2002) description of three colleges that had recently moved from tenure systems to contract systems and three colleges that had moved in the opposite direction. Still, Mallon’s emphasis was on the organizational rationales behind such changes, not on their effects on faculty work and work life. Shirley Peganoff O’Brien’s (2008) dissertation considered perceptions about the tenure and promotion process held by faculty at a state comprehensive university, but her data (collected nearly a decade ago) were primarily used to demonstrate the changing organizational environment that had shifted expectations of productivity, through “institutional creep,” to one more in line with those placed on faculty members at research universities.

<sup>10</sup>NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2010*, table 255; and NCES, *The Condition of Education: 2011*, table A-44-1; Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Carnegie

comprehensive universities, along with two-year institutions (essentially, the community colleges of Neumann's example), are the institutions feeling the brunt of the shift to reliance on contingent and part-time faculty members. At the same time, these very institutions are commonly overlooked by researchers as sites for their work.

By looking at tenured faculty members at state comprehensive universities, then, this study focuses on a population that has been investigated only infrequently.<sup>11</sup> Little is known about how tenure affects such faculty members' relationships with and orientations to the teaching, research, and service components of their jobs. The issue is particularly worthy of study because one key argument for tenure is that it provides faculty members with opportunities to carry out long-term, exhaustive, or comparatively risky lines of research—yet faculty members at state comprehensive universities are typically expected to spend much more of their time engaged in teaching than in research. But even faculty at state comprehensive universities have not been immune to increased pressures to publish and make more visible both their work and their institutions (Henderson 2009a; Kassiola 2007; Worsham 2008), even though the desire to contribute to their disciplinary fields

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Classifications Data File (updated May 31, 2011). Available at <http://nces.ed.gov/> and <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/resources/>.

<sup>11</sup>Of course, the oldest tertiary institutions in this country have histories dating back to the seventeenth century (e.g., Harvard, the College of William and Mary), and research universities, to the late nineteenth century (e.g., Johns Hopkins, Chicago). Most state comprehensive universities evolved into their present forms in the 1950s and 1960s, although their antecedents (discussed in chapter 2) stem from the nineteenth century. Given their shorter histories, that the newer forms and institutions of postsecondary education in this country have received comparatively less attention in the scholarly literature is therefore not unreasonable—even though, as Finkelstein (2006) pointed out (and as also discussed in the next chapter), research on faculty and faculty careers did not become common until the second half of the twentieth century.

may be more internally motivated than widely presumed (see, e.g., Malesic 2009). To surmise that the increase in contingent and part-time faculty is having an overall negative effect on higher education—which may or may not be the case, in fact—first requires an understanding of what is made possible by tenure at institutions where tenure is most in jeopardy.

Moreover, because part-time and contingent faculty are most frequently employed to teach in the “soft” disciplines such as those found in the humanities or humanities-oriented social sciences (Cohen and Kisker 2010; Howard 2010; White, Ivie, and Czujko 2009), this study involves only faculty teaching within the discipline of history.<sup>12</sup> I have selected faculty in history—as will be further justified in the following chapter—due to the ubiquity of history within undergraduate general education requirements at state comprehensive universities, the fact that a faculty career remains the normative career for individuals holding Ph.D. degrees in history, the largely independent and narrative nature of historical scholarship, and the inclusion of departments of history in the 2001–6 Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate.<sup>13</sup> As of the 2007–8 academic year, across all institutional types respectively offering four-year degrees in history, 26 percent of faculty members in departments of

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<sup>12</sup>Orientations affect how the discipline is classified. In their particular knowledge taxonomy, for example, Patricia Gumpert and Stuart Snyderman (2002) classified history as a social science. The National Science Foundation, however, has aligned history with the humanities (Fiegener 2009).

<sup>13</sup>English, for example, is a field that is as ubiquitous as history at state comprehensive universities, but it is typically manifested as a collection of disciplines, including literature, rhetoric and composition, creative writing, and cinema or media studies. The comparative disciplinary continuity of history, explored in the following chapter, enables greater resonance and shared understanding among faculty members at different institutions.

history were employed off the tenure track, either full-time (8 percent) or part-time (18 percent). (Tenured faculty members made up 55 percent of all history faculty members, and tenure-track faculty members who were not yet tenured made up the remaining 19 percent.)<sup>14</sup> Indeed, history is one discipline that is witnessing a rise in the number of part-time and contingent faculty positions. In *The Education of Historians for the Twenty-First Century*, a report prepared for the American Historical Association, the authors rhetorically asked: “Are historians unintentionally advancing these trends by not advocating and practicing a commitment to teaching and institutional development that distinguishes the value of full-time (and tenured) faculty from part-time?” (Bender et al. 2004, 22). By exploring individual self-perceptions of “the value of full-time (and tenured) faculty,” this study speaks, in part, to that question.

Legal, historical, or organizational studies could engage with issues pertaining to tenure on different levels. For example, policy-related studies of tenure, many of which rely on quantitative data and analyses, tend to focus on the organizational and systemic implications of tenure, not on its meanings to the individuals involved. This study, as a study of faculty members, considered individuals and their experiential perceptions. In the literature (by faculty writing about faculty), tenure is viewed, for example, as a “major academic rite of passage” (Damrosch 2006b, 33); “job security,” a “merit reward,” and “career motivation” (Whicker, Kronenfeld, and Strickland 1993, 8, 9); a “personal reward” or a “luxury” (Semenza 2010, 27); and an

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<sup>14</sup>These data are from White, Ivie, and Czujko (2009), table 2.

“instrument of freedom” (Finkin 1996, 24) that allows the pursuing of research in which one is truly interested, to teach courses of one’s own choosing, and to serve on committees only of one’s interest—in other words, the freedom to say “no” (Goldsmith, Komlos, and Gold 2001; Gray and Drew 2008).<sup>15</sup> For newly tenured faculty members at research universities, Neumann (2009) found that both their scholarly work and learning grew more complex as they undertook new teaching roles and more significant responsibilities in institutional and disciplinary service. But, as suggested earlier, when one’s core scholarship may, in fact, be teaching, what effects is tenure perceived to have? How, exactly, are faculty work lives at state comprehensive universities believed to be affected by tenure?

### **Primary Research Question**

The primary question at the heart of this study was the following: *How is tenure perceived to affect the work lives of history faculty members at non-urban state comprehensive universities in the United States?* Or, more specifically: *How does tenure affect the perceptions of these faculty members’ roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis their students, their colleagues, their departments, their institutions, their discipline, and their profession?* Addressing this question required attending to the following two sub-questions, both of which highlight faculty perceptions:

- How does tenure affect individual faculty members’ experiences of the nature, type, and quantity of work they carry out?
- How does tenure affect individual faculty members’ understandings of the institutional, disciplinary, and professional expectations placed upon them?

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<sup>15</sup>These perspectives are testaments to the various ways tenure is perceived among members of the professoriate.

Although these questions acknowledge that faculty lives are lived and careers are performed within numerous overlapping relational and organizational networks,<sup>16</sup> individual faculty members and their perceptions of their experiences remained the focal points of this study. KerryAnn O'Meara referred to the "intimate spaces where faculty live their professional lives": "faculty live their daily lives in departments, programs, with students and colleagues, and in particular locations" (2010, 277). These particular, personal spaces—and how they are conceptualized and perceived by faculty members—are the ones I explored in this study.

### **Methodological Overview**

Because the goal of this study was to emphasize perceptions and experiences of faculty members, I emphasized, following Neumann (2009), the personal meanings and situatedness of faculty careers instead of the organizational stance common throughout much of the literature on faculty work and work life. For research sites, I purposefully selected nine non-urban state comprehensive universities in the Northeastern, Midwestern, and Southeastern United States. Data included transcripts of semi-structured interviews with a total of eighteen history faculty members from eight of the nine institutions; these transcripts were supplemented with reflective notes from the research process. Faculty participants were recruited by e-mail and asked to agree to face-to-face, hour-long interviews with the researcher between September 2010 and March 2011. Interviews took place at the participants'

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<sup>16</sup>Ann Austin (1990) referred to the four "cultures" in which faculty members live and work: the culture of the academic profession, the culture of their particular discipline, the culture of the academy as an organization, and the culture of their particular institutional type.



institutions or at other sites of mutual convenience. Pattern coding (Miles and Huberman 1994) was used to identify common themes in the interview transcripts regarding faculty members' perceptions of the effects of tenure on work life. This study was not designed for the purpose of generalizing beyond its particular participants.

### **Summary and Preview**

This introductory chapter has described this study of faculty work life as seeking to understand the ramifications of changes in faculty hiring practices that are affecting faculty in the discipline of history at institutions within a genus that is relying more and more on part-time and contingent faculty appointments. Whether complicated by demand or by other circumstances, tenure-track positions in history can indeed be described as “elusive” for the majority of those aspiring to them. But this study investigated not the disenfranchised but the tenured faculty.<sup>17</sup> The goal was to understand better individual perceptions of the benefits—or detriments—of tenure at state colleges and universities, where more emphasis is traditionally placed on teaching than on research.

I turn in the next two chapters to additional necessary contextualization. Chapter 2, through proffering a description of the institutional type that affords the focal sites for this study, provides a general overview of the institutional context. The presentation begins with a broad description of comprehensive universities in general—what the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching re-identified

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<sup>17</sup>I would argue that the non-tenured and non-tenure-track faculty are not “significantly absent” from this study à la Martha McMahon (1996) but are rather parties that should be interested in the findings.

as “Master’s Colleges and Universities” in their 2005 reclassification—before zooming in on state comprehensive universities, describing their histories and general characteristics of the type. Additionally, I consider the importance of discipline as an organizational context within higher education. Chapter 3 focuses on the occupational culture of academe. This chapter, too, begins broadly, situating the intellectual traditions behind earlier studies and investigations of faculty before focusing on findings from previous research that are germane to the specific institutional (state comprehensive universities), disciplinary (history), and thematic contexts (faculty work life, tenure) of this study.

Chapter 4 describes my research alignment and approach, methodological rationale, basic assumptions, and method for data collection and analysis. Supplemental material in the appendices fleshes out my participant-recruitment method and interview details, includes a list of the 273 institutions classified as state comprehensive institutions in the United States, and offers perspectives from faculty participants on the three sites in this study with unionized faculties.

Chapters 5 and 6 present the findings of this study. Chapter 5 focuses on my faculty participants’ perspectives about their institutional contexts, thus mirroring the background material presented in chapter 2. I describe and consider the backgrounds of my faculty participants; their perspectives on their departments and institutions; and their perceptions of the roles of teaching, research, and service at their institutions. I also explore my faculty participants’ experiences of going up for tenure and, ultimately, how it felt to be awarded tenure. This material sets the stage

for the core findings presented in chapter 6, which explores how my faculty participants feel their work lives and they themselves have changed as a result of being awarded tenure. Ultimately, I argue that these faculty members in history at non-urban state comprehensive universities see tenure as an opportunity to choose their own engagements with the aspects of faculty work life that most suit their interests, abilities, and personalities. A sense of liberation, flexibility, and control is grounded, post-tenure, in an increased sense of responsibility that is located and manifested both within their institutions as well as within the discipline of history.

The final chapter summarizes the findings, considers implications and questions for further study, and offers additional commentary on themes and ideas of note.

## CHAPTER 2

### ORGANIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVES OF AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

#### **Comprehensive Colleges and Universities: The Overlooked Segment of American Higher Education**

Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage; Aspen University in Denver; Bethel University in McKenzie, Tennessee; Coppin State University in Baltimore; Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont; Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles; Texas State University–San Marcos; Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska: What do these institutions have in common? Pointing out differences is not difficult: Their enrollments range from just under 400 (Aspen) to nearly 31,000 (Texas State); their full-time student percentages range from 59 (Alaska Pacific) to 100 (Goddard); they are located in a range of rural to urban settings (three thousand Plainfield, Vermonts, would equal the population of Los Angeles); they or their antecedents were founded between 1842 (Bethel) and the 1960s (Aspen); they may have been established to serve a particular population (Coppin State) or may be religiously affiliated—some more obviously than others (Alaska Pacific, Bethel, Loyola Marymount); they may be publicly or privately controlled—or even for-profit (Aspen). Besides the fact that most may draw the majority of their students from—and may be best known within—their respective geographical regions, though, what do these seemingly diverse institutions of higher education have in common?

One commonality is that the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, initiators of the “authoritative typology of American postsecondary institutions” (Finnegan 1991, 2), has classified these eight institutions—plus 720 others—into a broad grouping of Master’s Colleges and Universities in its most recent (2010) classification.<sup>1</sup> Roughly corresponding to institutions in the Comprehensive Universities and Colleges category of pre-2005 Carnegie schemes, Master’s Colleges and Universities are institutions of higher education that award at least fifty master’s degrees but fewer than twenty doctoral degrees per year. During the 2009–10 academic year, these institutions served almost 4.7 million students—over 22 percent of the over 20.7 million full- and part-time students enrolled in higher education at 4,634 accredited institutions in the United States (see table 1).<sup>2</sup> That same academic year, these 728 institutions collectively awarded over 37 percent of the total number of bachelor’s degrees and nearly 40 percent of the total number of master’s degrees awarded (see tables 2 and 3). Second only to research universities in the numbers of bachelor’s

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<sup>1</sup>The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1905 as a pension fund for college professors, initiated its first classification of colleges and universities in 1970. This first classification was published in 1973 by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, an independent policy and research center under the aegis of the Carnegie Foundation, “to support its program of research and policy analysis” (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching 2010). Updated in 1976, 1987, 1994, 2000, 2005, and 2010, the Carnegie Classification system uses time-specific snapshots of empirical data on institutional attributes and behavior to identify groups of colleges and universities that share certain traits.

<sup>2</sup>Some data used for reporting these figures may have come from the 2008–9 academic year. For accuracy, “United States” should here read “United States and its outlying territories and possessions,” as the total figures include institutions (88), students (245,315), and degrees awarded (30,233) in American Samoa, Guam, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, the Northern Marianas, Palau, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. (Technically, however, neither Micronesia nor Palau is presently a territory or possession of the United States. Note, also, that Puerto Rico claims the vast majority of institutions [79, or 90 percent], students [228,881, or 93 percent], and degrees awarded [28,858, or 95 percent].) Thirteen institutions in Puerto Rico and one in Guam are classified as Master’s Colleges and Universities.

**Table 1**

Numbers of and Enrollments at Institutions across All Institutional Types in the United States by Basic 2010 Carnegie Classifications, 2009–10 Academic Year

<b>Institutional Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Average Enrollment</b>
Associate's	1,920	41.4	8,185,725	39.5	4,263
Research Universities	295	6.4	5,775,622	27.9	19,578
Master's Colleges and Universities	728	15.7	4,665,753	22.5	6,409
Baccalaureate Colleges	808	17.4	1,421,397	6.9	1,759
Special-Focus Institutions <sup>a</sup>	851	18.4	659,403	3.2	775
Tribal Colleges	32	0.7	19,686	0.1	615
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,634</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>20,727,586</b>	<b>100.1<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>4,473</b>

*Source:* Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Carnegie Classifications Data File (updated May 31, 2011), "Data" columns E and S. Available at <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/resources>.

*Note:* In line with the Carnegie Foundation's desire to destabilize the hierarchy of institutions of higher education in the United States with its 2005 reclassification (and perpetuated in 2010), institutional types are arranged by decreasing enrollments by institutional type in this and subsequent tables listing multiple institutional types. Some underlying data reported by the Carnegie Foundation may be as old as 2008; the most recent data were provided and thus used to perform the calculations that populate this table.

<sup>a</sup>Special-focus institutions typically center on a specific field or a range of affiliated fields (e.g., seminaries, schools of art, freestanding law or medical schools). They may be exclusively undergraduate or exclusively graduate—or they may offer both undergraduate and graduate curricula.

<sup>b</sup>Does not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

**Table 2**

Undergraduate Degrees Awarded across All Institutional Types in the United States by Basic 2010 Carnegie Classifications, 2009–10 Academic Year

<b>Institutional Type</b>	<b>Number of Institutions</b>	<b>Total Associate's Degrees Awarded</b>		<b>Total Bachelor's Degrees Awarded</b>	
			<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>
Associate's	1,920	654,771	80.8	1,482	0.1
Research Universities	295	32,617 <sup>a</sup>	4.0	765,800	47.3
Master's Colleges and Universities	728	54,401	6.7	608,036	37.5
Baccalaureate Colleges	808	45,165	5.6	189,569	11.7
Special-Focus Institutions	851	22,131	2.7	54,936	3.4
Tribal Colleges	32	1,413	0.2	208	–
Total	4,634	810,498	100.0	1,620,031	100.0

*Source:* Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Carnegie Classifications Data File (updated May 31, 2011), "Data" columns AG and AH. Available at <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/resources>.

*Note:* Some underlying data reported by the Carnegie Foundation may be as old as 2008; the most recent data were provided and thus used to perform the calculations that populate this table.

<sup>a</sup>Includes 23,824 degrees (73 percent) awarded by the University of Phoenix (Online Campus).

**Table 3**

Graduate Degrees Awarded across All Institutional Types in the United States by Basic 2010 Carnegie Classifications, 2009–10 Academic Year

<b>Institutional Type</b>	<b>Number of Institutions</b>	<b>Total Master's Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Total Doctoral Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Associate's	1,920	184	–	3 <sup>a</sup>	–
Research Universities	295	356,652	53.3	55,535	89.1
Master's Colleges and Universities	728	265,693	39.7	2,034	3.3
Baccalaureate Colleges	808	12,085	1.8	188	0.3
Special-Focus Institutions	851	34,851	5.2	4,593	7.4
Tribal Colleges	32	3	–	0	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,634</b>	<b>669,468</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>62,353</b>	<b>100.1<sup>b</sup></b>

*Source:* Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Carnegie Classifications Data File (updated May 31, 2011), “Data” columns AI and AJ. Available at <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/resources>.

*Note:* Some underlying data reported by the Carnegie Foundation may be as old as 2008; the most recent data were provided and thus used to perform the calculations that populate this table.

<sup>a</sup>Awarded by the Ponce School of Medicine (Puerto Rico).

<sup>b</sup>Does not equal 100 percent due to rounding.



and master's degrees awarded, these institutions are therefore significant sites for education in this country. Throughout this dissertation, except when referring directly to the 2010 Carnegie Classifications, I refer to these institutions as *comprehensive* institutions.<sup>3</sup>

The 728 comprehensive colleges and universities in the United States can be further differentiated among any number of lines. For example, following a distinction made by British jurist, historian, and politician James Bryce (1838–1922), American colleges and universities can be divided into “private” and “public” institutions, depending on their primary funding source and locus of control.<sup>4</sup> With respect to comprehensive institutions, 455 can be identified as private (62.5 percent), and the remaining 273 can be identified as public (see table 4). Private comprehensive institutions have a much smaller average enrollment than their public counterparts, yet the privates collectively award a larger proportion of the master's degrees awarded within the institutional classification. In 2009–10, the 273 public comprehensive colleges and universities (appendix A) enrolled nearly 56 percent of the students within this institutional type, with an average enrollment of 9,504 students per institution (table 4). During this same period, these institutions awarded over 60 percent of the total number of bachelor's degrees and just under 40 percent of the total number of master's degrees awarded within the institutional type (tables 5 and 6). Average

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<sup>3</sup>Although “Master's Colleges and Universities” suffices as a descriptive category, the *comprehensive* in “comprehensive institutions” speaks directly to the missions of these colleges and universities.

<sup>4</sup>Bryce offered this distinction in his 1888 work *The American Commonwealth* (cited in Slosson 1910, 525). Although the two terms oversimplify reality (see, e.g., Whitehead 1973), I rely on distinctions made by the Carnegie Foundation for this project.

**Table 4**

Numbers of and Enrollments at Public and Private Master's Colleges and Universities in the United States, 2009–10 Academic Year

<b>Control</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Average Enrollment</b>	<b>Median Enrollment</b>
Public	273	37.5	2,594,549	55.6	9,504	7,803
Private	455	62.5	2,071,204	44.4	4,552	2,993
Total	728	100.0	4,665,753	100.0	6,409	4,243

*Source:* Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Carnegie Classifications Data File (updated May 31, 2011), "Data" column S. Available at <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/resources>.

*Note:* Some underlying data reported by the Carnegie Foundation may be as old as 2008; the most recent data were provided and thus used to perform the calculations that populate this table.

**Table 5**

Bachelor's Degrees Awarded at Public and Private Master's Colleges and Universities in the United States, 2009–10 Academic Year

<b>Control</b>	<b>Total Bachelor's Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Average Bachelor's Degrees Awarded per Institution</b>	<b>Median Bachelor's Degrees Awarded per Institution</b>
Public	365,252	60.1	1,338	1,075
Private	242,784	39.9	534	421
Total	608,036	100.0	835	561

*Source:* Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Carnegie Classifications Data File (updated May 31, 2011), "Data" column AH. Available at <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/resources>.

*Note:* Some underlying data reported by the Carnegie Foundation may be as old as 2008; the most recent data were provided and thus used to perform the calculations that populate this table.

**Table 6**

Master's Degrees Awarded at Public and Private Master's Colleges and Universities in the United States, 2009–10 Academic Year

<b>Control</b>	<b>Total Master's Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Average Master's Degrees Awarded per Institution</b>	<b>Median Master's Degrees Awarded per Institution</b>
Public	104,829	39.5	384	265
Private	160,864	60.5	354	218
Total	265,693	100.0	365	231

*Source:* Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Carnegie Classifications Data File (updated May 31, 2011), "Data" column AI. Available at <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/resources>.

faculty sizes are larger at the public comprehensive institutions, as well: the 273 public institutions employ 61 percent of the full-time faculty teaching in the comprehensive sector (table 7). Together, comprehensive institutions employ nearly 27 percent of all full-time postsecondary faculty in the United States (table 8).

Remarkably, however, comprehensive institutions—both public and private—have been largely ignored as sites for higher education research, leading W. Norton Grubb and Martin Lazerson to write just six years ago that “the research and writing on these institutions [regionally oriented comprehensive colleges and universities] is exceedingly sparse” (2005, 20n7). I posit a confluence of forces for the comparative paucity of material on these institutions, which I refer to throughout this dissertation

**Table 7**

Full-Time Faculty at Public and Private Comprehensive Colleges and Universities in the United States, Fall 2009

<b>Control</b>	<b>Number of Faculty Members</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent of Total Full-Time Faculty in U.S. Postsecondary Education</b>
Public	118,823	61.0	16.3
Private	75,814	39.0	10.4
Total	194,637	100.0	26.3

Sources: NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2010*, table 255; and NCES, *The Condition of Education: 2011*, table A-44-1. Available at <http://nces.ed.gov/>.

Note: Data have been extrapolated; rounding errors exist.

as *comprehensive institutions*, except when referring directly to the 2010 Carnegie Classifications. The primary reason is the relative lack of prestige associated with comprehensive institutions, a consequence of the epistemological and institutional hierarchy within academe that places the creation of knowledge (such as what may occur at research universities) above the consumption or translation of knowledge (transpiring at “lesser” colleges and universities) (see Riesman 1956).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ernest Boyer, in his foreword to Burton Clark’s *The Academic Life: Small Worlds, Different Worlds*, pointed out the omnipresence of the idea of hierarchy throughout Clark’s work. Describing hierarchy within academe as involving “several interlocking ladder systems” (1987b, xvi), Boyer highlighted the hierarchies of institutions (research universities to community colleges), disciplines (“hard” fields such as biology and physics to “soft” fields such as sociology and education), faculty ranks (full professors to instructors), faculty tasks (research over teaching and service). Today, named or chaired professorships trump full professors. And Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz (1987) would add the hierarchy of students on campus as another sequential system with academe.

**Table 8**

Full-Time Faculty at Public and Private Institutions of Postsecondary Education in the United States, Fall 2009

<b>Institutional Type</b>	<b>Number of Faculty</b>	<b>Percent Public</b>	<b>Percent Private</b>	<b>Percent of Total Full-Time Faculty in U.S. Postsecondary Education</b>
Associate's	147,982	99.0	1.0	20.3
Research Universities	314,918	69.9	30.1	43.2
Master's Colleges and Universities	194,637	61.0	39.0	26.7
Baccalaureate Colleges	72,169	37.4	62.6	9.9
Total	729,706	70.2	29.8	100.1 <sup>a</sup>

Sources: NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2010*, table 255; and NCES, *The Condition of Education: 2011*, table A-44-1. Available at <http://nces.ed.gov/>.

Note: Data have been extrapolated; rounding errors exist.

<sup>a</sup>Does not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

The status—or relative lack thereof—of the comprehensive institutions has been underscored by several circumstances, including the existence of classification-cum-ranking systems (such as the early Carnegie Classifications), the emphasis comprehensive colleges and universities have historically placed on access, and the unapologetic emphasis given to teaching and service over research at such institu-

tions. Moreover, that comprehensive colleges and universities are neither at the top nor the bottom of the academic hierarchy has contributed to their veritable invisibility to scholars, who have historically tended to study the best and brightest populations (at research universities and other elite institutions) or—just within the last few decades—the historically underserved or disenfranchised (at community colleges or tribal colleges).

Partly due to the allure of prestige, which “remains the oxygen of higher education” (Burke 1988, 114; see also Brewer, Gates, and Goldman 2002) and which, according to Frank Donoghue (2008), has now been commodified, the bulk of attention historically paid to higher education in the United States has been focused on the top of the academic hierarchy. The oldest, wealthiest institutions—categories which are often but not always mutually inclusive—have names with cachet, history, influence; among soon-to-be undergraduates (and their parents), Harvard, Yale, and Princeton have long made up the “holy grail” of desirability (Toor 2002, B12).<sup>6</sup> Classification and ranking systems, too, although ostensibly of expedient intent, have helped concentrate attention on small handfuls of institutions, especially with respect to general public opinion and awareness.<sup>7</sup> For example, since 1985, the *US*

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<sup>6</sup>Claimed Jack Calareso, president of Briar Cliff College (Sioux City, Iowa) in 2000, as it prepared to transition to Briar Cliff University: “You’re not well-known unless you’re Harvard, Yale or Princeton” (quoted in Weeder 2000). Curiously, however, the English language lacks a single term—akin to “Oxbridge”—to refer to the elite of the elite U.S. institutions.

<sup>7</sup>Yet the desire to classify, to categorize, to rank may simply be a function, among scientifically minded individuals, of the Linnean tradition of taxonomy. Classification, in a way, has become a natural instinct when confronted with any evolutionary system as complex and seemingly unplanned and unsystematic as that of higher education in the United States. Scholars have

*News & World Report* annual college rankings have emphasized national and regional quartiles of excellence. Such rankings receive far more attention among the public—and among either relieved or concerned college and university administrators, benefactors, and alumni—than their troublesome metrics of assessment and evaluation warrant.<sup>8</sup>

Grubb and Lazerson (2005) regularly referred to comprehensive colleges and universities as “second-tier” institutions.<sup>9</sup> Others have offered similar appraisals. I explore them here not to condone these views but to emphasize how overwhelmingly negative the portrayal of comprehensive institutions has been in not only the popular but also the academic press. The portrayals are not inexplicable; but they are unfortunate.<sup>10</sup> For example, Sandra Kanter, Zelda Gamson, and Howard London

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long tried to understand the system—a system wherein “diversity among institutions is a conspicuous and on the whole a desirable trait” (Bowen 1980, 114).

<sup>8</sup>See, for example, “A Cautionary Guide” (1999); Donoghue (2008); Felten (2009); Grewal, Dearden, and Lilien (2008); Griffith and Rask (2007); Koc (2009); Morse (2008); Volkwein and Sweitzer (2006). The issue of rankings is also a perennial topic among articles and commentators in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and at the InsideHigherEd.com website. One hundred years ago, in fact, Edwin Slosson pointed out that “university statistics are in hopeless confusion. The methods of reporting and the standards of classification in different universities are so diverse that conclusions drawn from their comparison are apt to be misleading” (1910, x). Some critics of the *US News* rankings, for example, would argue that little has changed in the past century, at least with respect to the ability to draw conclusions from comparisons among diverse institutions. Moreover, as Howard Bowen argued, the most important outcomes of higher education are intangible: “Learning—like liberty, equality, love, friendship, charity, and spirituality—carries qualitative connotations that defy numerical measurement” (1977, 24).

<sup>9</sup>Taxonomically, “second-tier” could be viewed as a somewhat neutral descriptor (one certainly better than “third-” or “fourth-tier”)—or at least as a descriptor that does not emphasize deficiencies, although the term simultaneously appears to carry a value judgment. Of course, as Pierre van den Berghe pointed out, “the overwhelming majority of universities and colleges are by definition not the top ones” (1970, 48–49).

<sup>10</sup>Note, too, that the individuals quoted here may not ascribe to the cited ideas themselves but are, rather, using the material as I am: as a backdrop or foil.

characterized the language used to refer to the “vast majority” of comprehensive institutions as follows: “nonelite, unselective, neither research institutions nor true liberal arts colleges” (1997, 2). Like Marcia Dalbey (1995), who described the comprehensive university as an “amorphous beast,” Kanter, Gamson, and London also reiterated the ambiguity of identity pointed out by Burton Clark ten years earlier: Clark described the “confusing category” of comprehensive institutions as a “sprawling family” (1987, 19). An institution in this group, Clark wrote, “is neither a true university nor a four-year liberal arts college, but an unsure hybrid often seeking to change its spots” (20). Indeed, Clark stated, “institutions happily move out of this category ‘up’ into university status when they begin to give doctoral degrees and garner more research money” (19–20), suggesting the undesirability of being classified as a comprehensive institution. David Riesman (1956, 25) notably termed this inherent aspiration to move up the academic prestige hierarchy as a “snake-like procession,” wherein the institutions located in the tail and body follow after yet continually try to catch up with the institutions located in the head.<sup>11</sup>

Bruce Henderson and Heidi Buchanan (2007) provided a raft of pejorative terms and phrases stereotypically associated with comprehensive institutions—

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<sup>11</sup>Riesman’s metaphor has been referred to as the “classic characterization of the importance of hierarchy and stratification in American higher education” (J. Berger and Calkins 2003, 1044). Howard Bowen also described the desire for greatness—the desire for prestige—to be systemic within academe: “Each institution tends to aspire to the status of the next higher institutions in the pecking order” (1977, 6). Similarly, Clark Kerr described state colleges and regional universities as “America’s most restless institutions of higher learning. . . . They continue to seek a brighter place in the academic sun” (1969, vii). Only those institutions that are already at the top are spared this desire. Views are divided as to whether the resultant mission creep is harmful or beneficial: Bruce Henderson found the “imitation of the research universities by other institutions” to be a detrimental desire (2009a, 185); yet Joel Kassiola claimed that instructors at master’s institutions must carry out research in order for their teaching to be effective—and thus that the accusations of mission creep at such institutions are misguided (2007).



descriptors that demonstrate how comprehensive institutions have been maltreated in the literature. An augmented list includes the following: “weaker universities,” “less prestigious universities,” institutions of the “non-university sector,” “poor-boy schools,” and “unproductive universities” (Henderson and Kane 1991, 342); “undistinguished middle child[ren] of public higher education” (Selingo 2000, A40); the “ugly duckling of higher education” (Wong 1990);<sup>12</sup> and “institutions that are of ‘higher learning’ only by the most charitable of definitions” (van den Berghe 1970, 12). Henderson and Buchanan also suggested a link between the growth in comprehensive institutions from the 1960s and 1970s and the struggles with maintaining a distinct mission so as to be differentiated from doctoral (research) universities and liberal arts colleges. Indeed, as Robert Birnbaum pointed out (1988b), and as reflected in several of the previously stated epithets, comprehensive institutions are often described antithetically—that is, as what they are not: they are not research institutions, not liberal arts colleges, not community colleges. Confusion arises, therefore, over not only what such institutions do (or do not do) but also what they *want* to do. These desires, in turn, are often limited by the exigencies of charters, funding, and accreditation and other regulating agencies. Prestige is closely tied to faculty productivity, as measured by research grants and publications, which are predicated on research and therefore function as “the fundamental currency” in the academy (Kennedy 1997, 186; see also Caplow and McGee 1958).

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<sup>12</sup>Wong’s depiction is cited by (for example) Boyer (1990, 62), Youn and Gamson (1994, 190), and Youn and Price (2009, 208). Curiously, the same expression—“ugly duckling of higher education”—had previously been applied to junior colleges (see, e.g., Jennings 1970, 15).

Unintentionally, the general lack of prestige afforded comprehensive institutions was perhaps reinforced by the earliest Carnegie Classifications. Published in 1973, even the first classifications—with their bifurcated, tiered, and remarkably enduring categories of “Research Universities” I and II, “Doctoral Universities” I and II, “Comprehensive Universities and Colleges” I and II, “Liberal Arts Colleges” I and II, and “Two-Year Colleges and Institutes” (the only non-divided classification)—were not proposed to serve as ranking systems, *per se*. As described on the Carnegie Foundation website, the Carnegie Classifications were never intended to “imply quality differences” but, rather, were developed to “identify meaningful similarities among institutions.”<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the early classification schemes “support[ed] hierarchical patterns of educational organization” (Lagemann [1983] 1999, 152).<sup>14</sup> According to Lee Shulman, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching from 1997 to 2008, the Carnegie Classification system “may have contributed to an overheated emphasis on research over teaching at universities in the United States” (1999, xiv). That the 2005 Carnegie Classifications were purposefully revised along a matrix of characteristics has complicated—or at least attempted to obscure—the hierarchical nature of higher education in this country. The new classifications were introduced to “call attention to the wide range of ways

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<sup>13</sup>“Carnegie Classifications FAQs,” available at <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/resources/faqs.php>.

<sup>14</sup>Of import is that the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education was chaired by Clark Kerr, president of the University of California from 1958 to 1967—and a key figure in the formulation of the 1960 California Master Plan for Higher Education, a plan predicated on establishing a clear hierarchy of missions, standards, funding levels, and admissions criteria among all public institutions in the state.

that institutions resemble and differ from one another and also to de-emphasize the improper use of the classification as [an] informal quality touchstone.”<sup>15</sup> Renaming the category of comprehensive institutions as Master’s Colleges and Universities was part of this reimagining.

Many other characteristics—including the regional focus, selectivity of the students, emphases on teaching and service over research, teaching loads of the faculty, and nature of the curricula offered—contribute to the relative lack of status afforded comprehensive colleges and universities, especially when compared with research universities, the “most desirable” institutions in the “academic pecking order” (van den Berghe 1970, 12, 7). Several of these features will be discussed in the next section, which explores the evolution and characteristics of one particular segment of the comprehensive institutions in the United States: the state (public) comprehensive colleges and universities.

### **State Comprehensive Universities: Identification and Contextualization**

#### **Public Comprehensive Institutions**

The subgroup of 273 public comprehensive colleges and universities within the Master’s Colleges and Universities category enjoys a further taxonomical association: these institutions can be classified as “state comprehensive universities.” Borrowing my definition from Bruce Henderson (2007), state comprehensive universities are *state* institutions that have historically received the majority of their

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<sup>15</sup>Indeed, the Carnegie Foundation claims that the Carnegie Classifications never implied quality differences. See “Carnegie Classifications FAQs,” available at the URL in note 13 (above).

funding from state governments, although more of the funding burden has begun to shift to students in the form of increased tuition and fees. (Endowments managed by state comprehensive universities make only negligible contributions to their annual operating budgets.) Such universities are *comprehensive* in that, although many originated as single-purpose teacher-training institutions (that is, as normal schools or teachers colleges), their missions and curricula expanded throughout the twentieth century to embrace more comprehensive missions. And they are called *universities* because they all award both bachelor's and master's degrees, with 57 (21 percent) even offering doctoral degrees in a small range of primarily professional fields (education, nursing, and others).<sup>16</sup> True, despite offering graduate curricula and degrees, some state comprehensive universities are “colleges” in name, as is Nebraska's Wayne State College from the chapter-opening example.<sup>17</sup> This institution, which celebrated its centennial in 2010, is typical of many state comprehensive universities in that its name has changed several times over the course of its history. Precipitated by changes in institutional mission, these name changes may have collectively

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<sup>16</sup>Fifty-seven of the 273 public comprehensive institutions granted a total of 670 doctorates during the 2009–10 academic year, at an average of 12 per institution offering the degree (2 per institution within the type). Eighty-three of the 455 private comprehensive institutions granted a total of 1,364 doctorates during the 2009–10 academic year, at an average of 16 per institution offering the degree (3 per institution within the type).

<sup>17</sup>As shown in appendix A, twelve other state comprehensive universities also have “college” in their names (without also having “university”). Seven are located in the Northeast, with four located in New Jersey: The College of New Jersey in Ewing, Ramapo College of New Jersey in Mahwah, the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey in Galloway, and Thomas Edison State College in Trenton. New Hampshire is home to Keene State College; Rhode Island, to Rhode Island College in Providence; and Vermont, to Johnson State College. Outside the Northeast are Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado; Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington; Peru State College in Peru, Nebraska; and the College of Charleston in South Carolina—in the same city that is also home to The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina.

contributed to the sense of comprehensive institutions creating a “confusing” category of institution.<sup>18</sup>

### Antecedents of the State Comprehensive Universities

According to Dorothy Finnegan (1991), many institutions that are today’s comprehensive colleges and universities evolved from institutions that were among the first to break down the barriers of gender, class, religion, and race that were characteristic of early higher education in this country. Finnegan explained that such institutions were founded to provide specialized curricula, to serve specific populations, or to meet both purposes. She noted four types of institutions from which many comprehensive institutions evolved: sectarian colleges, YMCA colleges, historically black colleges, and normal schools and teachers colleges. Most sectarian colleges that have evolved into comprehensive institutions (for example, Butler University in Indianapolis, which was founded as North-Western Christian University in 1850) remain private institutions. YMCA schools initially served urban populations in the late nineteenth century; those that have survived have done so by evolving into (or merging with) community colleges, comprehensive universities, or even doctoral

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<sup>18</sup>The name changes were as follows: In 1910, the State of Nebraska purchased Nebraska Normal College (established in 1891 in the northeastern town of Wayne), renaming it State Normal College. In 1921, the institution was renamed State Normal School and Teacher’s College; in 1949, it became Nebraska State Teachers College at Wayne. The present name was adopted in 1963. And although many similar institutions have ultimately replaced “college” with “university” to reflect their broader missions and scope, Wayne State College cannot do so, as the Wayne State University name is already taken (by the institution Detroit, Michigan, which is classified as a research university). Harclerod and Ostar (1987, 45–48) carried out a similar exercise on more than a dozen other institutions. Finally, for an insightful investigation into the historical phenomenon of nomenclatorial change from “college” to “university” see Morphew (2002).

institutions.<sup>19</sup> As with the comprehensive institutions that originated in sectarian colleges, most of the comprehensive institutions anteceded by YMCA schools are private.<sup>20</sup> Institutions from within the remaining two types, historically black colleges and normal schools/teachers colleges, were more likely to evolve into public comprehensive institutions, that is, today's state comprehensive universities.<sup>21</sup> I now briefly treat these two types in turn.

The 2005 Carnegie Classifications identify one hundred historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs); they enroll 307,594 students, under 2 percent of all students in higher education in this country. Of the 51 public HBCUs, 24 are classified as Master's Colleges and Universities.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, nearly 9 percent of all state

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<sup>19</sup>Sinclair Community College (Dayton, Ohio) is an example of a community college that had its origins as a YMCA school. Cleveland State University is an example of a school established as a YMCA school that is now a public doctoral institution; Golden Gate University—San Francisco is an example of a private doctoral institution that originated as a YMCA school. For more on the YMCA universities, see Finnegan and Cullaty (2001).

<sup>20</sup>A public exception is Youngstown State University in Ohio. Its origins can be traced to 1908, when the local YMCA joined forces with the Youngstown Association School. Youngstown Institute of Technology was born in 1921 and was followed by Youngstown College in 1928, Youngstown University in 1955, and Youngstown State University in 1967.

<sup>21</sup>Note, of course, that not all normal schools or teachers colleges evolved into state comprehensive universities. Duke University, for example, had its origins in a Randolph County, North Carolina, academy that was renamed Normal College in 1851. A prestigious public institution that evolved from a normal school is the University of California, Los Angeles, which was founded as the State Normal School at Los Angeles in 1882. And, importantly, the second institution of higher education to be founded in the American colonies—the College of William and Mary—was transformed into a teacher-training institute for a portion of its history (in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries), emphasizing once more not only the shifting nature of institutional missions and identities but also the importance of not generalizing from one institutional history to another.

<sup>22</sup>Only two HBCUs are identified as private Master's Colleges and Universities: Florida Memorial University (Miami Gardens) and Hampton University (Hampton, Virginia). The remaining 75 HBCUs are baccalaureate colleges (49), associate's colleges (11), research universities (10), and special-focus institutions (5). Several HBCUs are, in fact, considered to be elite and

comprehensive universities are HBCUs, a clear indication of the import historically (and contemporarily) placed by state comprehensive universities on access. Most black colleges (and all of those located in the South) were founded after the Civil War as a means to attend not only to the educational and religious needs of former slaves but also to the physical and economic reconstruction of the South (Anderson 1988; Finnegan 1991; Klein 1930). By focusing on vocational and technical training, including teacher training and ministerial education, most black colleges provided specialized curricula to a particular population. These foci persist in the present HBCUs that are currently counted among the 273 state comprehensive universities.<sup>23</sup>

The earliest public normal schools for the training of common school teachers were established in Massachusetts in 1839; such institutions gradually spread across many states and territories of the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century (Altenbaugh and Underwood 1990; Finnegan 1991; Goodlad 1990; Herbst 1989; Ogren 2005).<sup>24</sup> Normal schools were originally non-collegiate, since “the prevailing wisdom assumed that teacher training did not require a college education” (Finnegan 1991, 11). Moreover, with few exceptions, degree-granting

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prestigious institutions, thus cautioning against generalizing when considering the historical transformations, trajectories, and classifications of contemporary institutions of higher education in this country.

<sup>23</sup>This abbreviated treatment belies the complexities of history. For example, William Watkins (2001) demonstrated that the curricular foci at historically black colleges were largely imposed upon the black population by white philanthropists; and Marybeth Gasman (2007) complicated the treatment of gender in the literature on historically black colleges and universities.

<sup>24</sup>The English term *normal school* came from the French term for a teacher-training institute, *école normale*.

institutions of the time did not want the job of training individuals (mostly women) for teaching in the primary grades (Herbst 1989). According to Christine Ogren, normal schools nevertheless provided affordable access and opportunity: “Attending any form of ‘higher’ education was a stretch for the types of students who populated nineteenth-century state normal schools throughout the United States; normalites’ gender, race, or families’ financial struggles in many cases prohibited them from traveling to prestigious high schools, academies, or colleges. Affordable and accessible, normal-school training for teaching was within their reach” (2005, 85).

From the late nineteenth century through the first third of the twentieth century, many normal schools were renamed *teachers colleges* after they began to offer baccalaureate degrees for primary and secondary school teachers. In the mid-twentieth century, many changed their names to *state college* and, perhaps eventually, *state university*. But these transitions, although accomplished rather quickly in many cases, were neither as easy nor as straightforward as these summary statements might imply: accreditation was a challenge, as were developing new curricula, admissions standards, and faculty and administrator qualifications (see Dunham 1969; Harclerod and Ostar 1987; Harclerod, Sagen, and Molen 1969; Pangburn 1932; Richards 1987).<sup>25</sup> Today, the word *state* may or may not remain in the names of these institutions, which are typically categorized as state comprehensive

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<sup>25</sup>Prestige was at stake even historically, since association with teacher preparation “has always conveyed low status” (Henderson 2007, 27; see also W. R. Johnson 1989; Labaree 2004). Richard Altenbaugh and Kathleen Underwood did not mince words by suggesting as motives for institutional evolution, quite alliteratively, that “pretentious normal school pedagogues wanted the prestige of preparing professionals instead of training lowly elementary teachers” (1990, 152).



universities.<sup>26</sup> As another example, consider Indiana State Normal School, founded in 1865 in Terre Haute. In 1929, the institution was renamed Indiana State Teachers College (some twenty-one years after awarding its first baccalaureate degree and one year after awarding its first master's degree). In recognition of the institution's expanding mission, "Teachers" was dropped from the name in 1961, and Indiana State College formally became Indiana State University in 1965.<sup>27</sup>

Although the goals and missions of institutions that evolved into comprehensive institutions and state comprehensive universities were indeed "honorable" (O'Brien 2008, 108), the access, affordability, localism, and vocational focus—pragmatic characteristics that they were and are—have contributed to the very stereotypes described in the previous section.<sup>28</sup> And these stereotypes originated with the institutions that evolved into comprehensive institutions and state comprehensive universities. Ogren cited biographer Robert Caro's 1982 description of the Texas

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<sup>26</sup>I detailed the nomenclative history of Wayne State College, originally Nebraska Normal College, in note 18 (page 36).

<sup>27</sup>E. Alden Dunham (1969) presented a captivating discussion of debates behind the name changes of Kansas State Teachers College at Emporia (today Emporia State University); Kansas State College of Pittsburg (now Pittsburg State University); State University College at Brockport, New York (now SUNY Brockport); and Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo) at a time when faculty and administrators were not far removed from the discussions leading up to the changes. Indeed, some stakeholders felt name changes would mean losses in distinctiveness; some were concerned about the relationships with their states; others felt that the phrase *teachers college* carried a stigma: connotations of mediocrity (especially since the launch of *Sputnik 1* in 1957) and implications of a vocational thrust. Along with name changes often came changes in leadership (or vice versa). Kansas State Teachers College at Emporia had a new president—with a Ph.D. in history, Dunham pointed out—whom "some of the faculty on the academic side" hoped "will change both the image and the substance of the place" (6).

<sup>28</sup>Neither condemning nor lauding the effects of such transformations, Eleanor Terry (1984) referred to former state teachers colleges that transitioned to comprehensive universities as "emerging universities," an essentially neutral descriptor that nonetheless speaks to a culture of aspiration.

institution Lyndon B. Johnson entered in 1927 as an undergraduate as an example of the “dominant condescending view of state normals and infant teachers colleges” (2005, 3):

In all the 24,000 square miles of the Hill Country, there was only one college.

It wasn’t much of a college. Its Main Building—surmounted by four spires and by layers of arches, gables, pinnacles and parapets—had been built to impress, and had been placed on the highest hill in the San Marcos area, so that its red spires, trimmed with gold paint, glittered for miles across the hills as if Camelot had been set down in dog-run country. But “Old Main,” as it was known, and three other buildings lined up on the steep stairstep campus—a [rickety] library . . . ; a rough, wooden, barnlike “gymnasium”; and a squat, unadorned classroom structure—were, except for a few frame houses, converted to classrooms, the extent of the campus of Southwest Texas State Teachers College at San Marcos. (Caro 1982, 141)

Southwest Texas State Teachers College at San Marcos is today known as Texas State University–San Marcos, a state comprehensive university.<sup>29</sup>

Finnegan summarized her investigation into the origins of comprehensive institutions by emphasizing the special missions of and access provided by such institutions as early black colleges and normal schools. The institutions disregarded class, gender, and race; allowed the free expression of religious beliefs; and thus “extended the democratic ideal to education” (1991, 66). Furthermore,

The access provided by these institutions afforded students, white and black, male and female, many of whom during the 19th and 20th century were no more than one generation removed from the land, with means to climb the social mobility ladder. . . . As institutions outside of the mainstream, driven by their specialized missions, they progressed through a period of establishing legitimacy, especially with regard to accreditation

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<sup>29</sup>Despite—or, in this case, perhaps *due to*—its status as a comprehensive institution, the school was chosen as the signing site for President Johnson’s Higher Education Act of 1965.

criteria. The process standardized their structures, faculty, and curriculum, and, in many cases, their missions. (66)

One legacy of the associations of normal schools, teachers colleges, and historically black colleges to state comprehensive universities is that such traits as access and affordability—antitheses of elitism that function either as boons or as elements perceived as negatively affecting quality—have been applied to and affiliated with comprehensive institutions. Over forty years ago, as part of the preparations undertaken by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in creating its earliest classification scheme, in fact, E. Alden Dunham referred to state colleges and regional universities as “colleges of the forgotten Americans” (1969).

As a postscript to this discussion of the transformation from normal school or teachers college to comprehensive university, I must note that Ogren was not convinced that the initial transition to teachers college was necessarily or always beneficial. She described the changes in missions and names as manifestations of Riesman’s “snake-like procession” of American higher education. One consequence, Ogren found, was that transformed institutions often became self-conscious—even ashamed—of their histories. She cited the renaming of streets (from Normal Avenue to College Avenue and, ultimately, to University Avenue) and the sandblasting of buildings “to remove the ignominious word ‘Normal’” as examples of physical changes made to hide historical connections (2005, 3). With respect to the collective academic understanding, she felt that the majority of historians of education, perhaps themselves buying into Riesman’s paradigm of the academic procession, had served as “co-conspirators in the former normals’ efforts to bury their roots” (3).

Collectively, the actions of individual institutions, each of which seemed happy to rid itself of relics and reminders of its normal-school days, have served to complicate our present-day understandings of the history of higher education in this country. Even more regrettably, the mission creep that progressively transformed goals and curricula at state normal schools toward the end of the nineteenth century became “mission leap” (202) in the early twentieth century, leading to stratified curricula, the “glorification of football” (209), and a reduction in intellectual vitality that “did little to expand the intellectual and social worlds of economically disadvantaged and female students” (202).<sup>30</sup> Although Finnegan (1991) saw more continuity of purpose, Ogren found it ironic (and unfortunate) that this mission leap de-emphasized the normal schools’ original purposes: serving the needs of economically disadvantaged and female students. Ultimately, Ogren concluded, “normal schools erased qualities that had made them distinctive, all in the interest of institutional status in the academic procession” (209).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Clark Kerr, in an April 4, 2001, letter to California Senator Dede Alpert, defined and cautioned against mission creep by describing it as “a well-known phenomenon in American higher education in which one segment of higher education redefines its mission to include responsibilities already being performed by another. Once set in motion, mission creep is nearly impossible to reverse” (3). Available at <http://www.ucop.edu/acadinit/mastplan/edd/kerralpert.pdf>. The phenomenon has been more formally described as *institutional isomorphism* (see, for example, DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Jencks and Riesman 1968; Riesman 1956; Scott 2001).

<sup>31</sup>Distinctiveness was at stake, too, in the name-changing deliberations held at Kansas State Teachers College at Emporia in the late 1960s—when it was the last state teachers college in the nation. Dunham summarized the concerns as follows: “The institution has developed a name and a constituency for itself; its region is statewide and not confined to its immediate neighborhood. . . . To drop the name and change the name would mean a loss in distinctiveness. The broad political base of support in the form of public school people throughout the state is too important an asset to cast aside easily” (1969, 7). The state teachers college name ultimately persisted until 1974, when the institution became Emporia Kansas State College. (The final name change occurred in 1977.)

## Additional Characteristics of State Comprehensive Universities

### Contemporary Missions and Alignments

Although Ogren indeed complicated Finnegan's more optimistic portrayal, the missions of most of today's state comprehensive universities do, in fact, demonstrate connections with the goals and purposes of their antecedent institutions. Moreover, instead of attempting to obscure these connections, state comprehensive universities now frequently trumpet them as unique, defining characteristics. A study by Christopher Morphew and Matthew Hartley (2006) of key themes in mission statements for postsecondary institutions found that state comprehensive universities (identified as public Master's I institutions) most commonly mentioned the following three elements: "serves local area," "teaching centered," and "access." At state comprehensive universities, major curricula have applied aims, continuing the tradition of preparing graduates for the workforce. This description of the curricular focus at Lincoln University of Missouri (Jefferson City) is typical of that of many state comprehensive universities:

As a comprehensive University, Lincoln University offers a broad spectrum of undergraduate programs and graduate programs in selected disciplines. The liberal arts and sciences are emphasized in part through the general education curriculum that undergirds all undergraduate degree programs. The majority of credit hours generated and a significant number of degrees awarded are in the arts and sciences disciplines. However, over half of all the degrees awarded by Lincoln University are currently in Business, Computer Science, Engineering Technology, Nursing Science, and Teacher Education. Most of the graduate degrees are currently awarded in the Business and Education programs.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>From "Role and Scope" on the Lincoln University BISNet Homepage (<http://bisnet.sus.edu/Lincoln/Lincoln.htm>). Lincoln University is a historically black institution that was founded as Lincoln Institute, an industrial school, in 1866.

The description emphasizes the comprehensive aims of Lincoln's offerings as well as the vocational nature of the most popular degrees. Students receiving baccalaureate degrees from state comprehensive universities are more likely to enter the workforce than to enter graduate school immediately; graduate students at state comprehensive universities often acquire work experience before enrolling and may be attending on part-time bases. Education and business have historically been the most popular graduate fields at state comprehensive universities, but offerings and enrollments in technology and the health sciences have increased within the past decade (Henderson 2007). As for doctorates, those offered by state comprehensive universities are in similarly applied fields (not usually in the humanities or in the physical or biological sciences).

In comparing a state comprehensive university (California State University, Northridge) with a research university (West Virginia University), Donald Hall (2009) praised the "laser-like focus" (57) and "crystalline clarity of the mission" (56) of the state comprehensive university, which "was unequivocally focused on meeting the needs of its core student population" (56). At California State University, Northridge, "Every decision—financial, curricular and personnel related—was judged on its merits relative to that core mission. Peripherals not related directly to that mission were luxuries and deemed dispensable if conditions warranted" (56).

A further commonality shared by most state comprehensive universities is membership in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). (As of August 2011, 89 percent were members; see appendix A.) The Association of

Teacher Institutions, organized in 1951 to serve public comprehensive institutions, evolved into the AASCU in 1961 to serve a public relations function, act as an advocate for public comprehensive institutions, provide policy leadership and program support, and create professional development opportunities for institutional leaders. Its 430 members include not only state comprehensive universities but also public baccalaureate colleges and public research universities. Hallmarks of all member institutions are emphases on access and opportunity, student learning, and community engagement—the three key mission-statement themes identified by Morphew and Hartley (2006). Regarding engagement, the AASCU website describes member institutions as “stewards of place”: “We believe that through this stewardship and through our commitments to access and opportunity and to our students, public colleges and universities effectively and accountably deliver America’s promise. In so doing we honor and fulfill the public trust.”<sup>33</sup>

### Students and Administrative Styles

In his investigation into the lives of academicians across institutional and disciplinary lines, Burton Clark (1987) found that, at comprehensive institutions, “belief follows work” (127); and work is determined by institutional missions and environments. Existing under the “shadow of the research university” (Boyer 1990, 121), comprehensive institutions are sites where local realities—such as the elements affecting faculty work life at state comprehensive universities discussed earlier in the chapter—generate academic cultures and communities that are different from those

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<sup>33</sup>From “Who We Are,” available at <http://www.aascu.org/association/members/index.htm>.

at research universities. Henderson (2007) described state comprehensive universities as communal in that they are communities of scholars who indeed serve the larger community. In addition to faculty (considered in the next chapter), important actors in the creation of community on college and university campuses are students and administrators. These two groups I treat briefly here.

Henderson (2007) presented various stereotypes about students at state comprehensive universities: that they are, in general, underprepared and unmotivated. He questioned the findings of a study by J. Michael Pitts, William White, and Andolyn Harrison (1999) that had similar conclusions vis-à-vis student unpreparedness, arguing that we truly know little about the students at state comprehensive universities.<sup>34</sup> Still, Henderson concluded that most faculty members at such institutions “would probably list diversity in ability as a major distinguishing characteristic of SCU [state comprehensive university] students” (121). Selectivity levels (aligned with the missions of state comprehensive universities) are related to that aspect of student characteristics. But, in comparison with students at research universities and liberal arts colleges, students at comprehensive institutions (both public and private) spend less time engaged in preparing for class or participating in cocurricular activities and more time working, commuting, and caring for dependents.<sup>35</sup> As support, Henderson proffered findings from the 2004 National Survey of Student

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<sup>34</sup>The Pitts, White, and Harrison study (1999) involved interviews with faculty members at two open-admission state comprehensive universities; they were investigating the effects of student qualities on faculty in the liberal arts and sciences.

<sup>35</sup>Thus, Henderson implied that certain characteristics of students at comprehensive colleges and universities are more closely aligned to those of students at two-year institutions (Cohen and Brawer 2008).



Engagement that indicated first-year and fourth-year students at state comprehensive universities scored at the national average in student engagement. He reported the following “striking” finding: 74 percent of first-year students and 69 percent of fourth-year students at state comprehensive universities reported spending less than 16 hours per calendar week on academic work (118). These findings seem to support an “unseemly bargain” that Kuh (2003) described as a “disengagement compact” (28): As long as faculty members do not ask too much of the students, the students will agree to leave faculty members alone to attend to their own work.<sup>36</sup>

Of particular import to this study is institutional culture at state comprehensive universities, and administrators play an important role in the creation and maintenance of institutional culture (Parker 2000; Schein 2004). William Bergquist and Kenneth Pawlak (2008) combined definitions of culture from cultural anthropology, business, and organizational theory to conclude that culture “provides meaning and context for a specific group of people. The culture holds the people together and instills in them an individual and collective sense of purpose and continuity” (9–10). Moreover, “a culture is established around the production of something valued by its members”; and “culture helps define the nature of reality for those people who are part of that culture” (10). Shared meaning and goals are key—which is one reason why “incoherent institutional character” (B. Clark 1987, 115) and shifting institutional missions can lead to role ambiguity and uncertainty,

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<sup>36</sup>In their recent exposé on the “limited learning” they argued is occurring on many contemporary college and university campuses, Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa cited this “disengagement compact” as evidence that faculty should take at least “some responsibility for the low standards” that may exist on their campuses (2011, 5).

particularly for faculty members and administrators at institutions such as state comprehensive universities.<sup>37</sup>

Henderson (2007) evaluated the four institutional cultures presented by Bergquist (1992) with respect to their relevance to state comprehensive universities: collegial culture, managerial culture, negotiating culture (renamed *advocacy culture* in 2008), and developmental culture. He concluded that all cultures surface from time to time among the administrative styles and systems at state comprehensive universities but that administrators frequently align themselves with one particular culture.<sup>38</sup> In Henderson's view, collegial culture, most associated with residential liberal arts colleges, is not common at state comprehensive universities.<sup>39</sup> The managerial culture, while valuing efficiency, is typical at institutions with weak faculty governance and lack of institutional commitment. For unionized state comprehensive universities (see appendix F), Henderson found the negotiating culture to be most commonplace: individualism is attenuated, and bureaucracy and legalism are strengthened. For non-unionized state comprehensive universities, Henderson

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<sup>37</sup>Indeed, Robert Birnbaum (1988a) pointed out that "organizations are presumed to be most efficient when the institutional level specializes in coping with uncertainty and the technical level specializes in functioning effectively in conditions of certainty" (18). Defining administrators as members of the "institutional level" and faculty as members of the "technical level" is perhaps too straightforward a translation of Birnbaum's concept to the academic organization—but, as suggested by Burton Clark (1987) and others, faculty are most content at institutions with clear alignment between their roles and the institutional missions and purposes.

<sup>38</sup>Robert Birnbaum (1988a) described the appropriateness of models as follows: "no model illuminates all aspects of any institution all of the time, and every model illuminates some aspects of every institution some of the time" (84).

<sup>39</sup>Pockets of the collegial culture—where administrators have come from the faculty ranks and the faculty are thus the central element of the culture—could be found at smaller state comprehensive universities or within the traditional arts, sciences, and humanities at larger state comprehensives.

found the developmental culture to be a “natural fit” (134), especially because it emphasizes teaching, learning, and student development and is thus “consistent with the emphasis on traditions of teaching and learning at SCUs” (134). As Henderson demonstrated, the administrative cultures of state comprehensive universities affect how administrators perceive and interact with faculty and are therefore relevant to faculty perceptions of campus community and job satisfaction.

In Robert Birnbaum’s view (1988a), regional state universities are best described as what he termed “political institutions”: Decision-making and power are diffused and decentralized; the organization is fragmented into special-interest groups and coalitions; and indifference is common. Despite these perceived weaknesses, political systems allow decisions to be made even in the absence of clear goals. And of all institutional types, state comprehensive universities, because of their historical aspirations for moving up the academic prestige hierarchy, are portrayed as suffering from the most goal uncertainty. Some of this uncertainty may be due to the perceived “middling” (Riesman 1965) position of comprehensive colleges and universities, especially as implicated in the desires for greater recognition and status (that is, prestige) within the academic world.

### The “Problem” of Prestige

The noble, pragmatic aims of state comprehensive universities have not helped raise the collective impression of their levels of prestige. One reason such institutions have low status in the academic pecking order is by association with their antecedents, as suggested previously. Another reason, according to Henderson (2007),

is that state comprehensive universities have not taken major advantage of the potential ways to “generate” prestige. Dominic Brewer, Susan Gates, and Charles Goldman (2002) identify three “prestige generators” for use by institutions of higher education: selectivity (student quality), research, and athletics.<sup>40</sup> Clearly, these generators are important factors in the relative prestige levels of the major research universities.<sup>41</sup> For state comprehensive universities, though, manipulating these generators is difficult. Considering these three potential generators of prestige reveals additional characteristics of contemporary state comprehensive universities.

With respect to selectivity, the identity of state comprehensive universities is tied to their historical emphases on access and the democratizing mission of higher education (Bardo 1990). In terms of undergraduate admissions, state comprehensives are less selective than elite liberal arts colleges and major research universities but more selective than most community colleges (which epitomize access through open admissions policies). The average preparation levels, retention rates, and graduation rates of students at state comprehensive universities fall between the respective levels and rates for students attending these other institutions. Some state comprehensive universities have established honors programs (or even “honors colleges”) to attract and provide higher-quality students with affordable educations;

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<sup>40</sup>Athletics have played different roles historically on college campuses. According to Ogren (2005), one of the early attractions to athletics at normal schools—with their heavily female student populations—was to draw and retain male students in the late nineteenth century. Ronald Smith also argued that athletics played an important role during the same period for all tertiary institutions, giving “an image of virility to institutions of higher learning” and providing “institutional visibility to attract both students and a supportive public” (1988, viii–ix, viii).

<sup>41</sup>Another generator of prestige for research universities, at least, is the presence of a (respected) university press (Gump 2006).

but these comparatively few students cannot effect major increases to the averages of the various quantitative measures (for example, standardized test scores or high school rank) of all incoming students, even if the retention and graduation rates of these select students are ultimately higher than the overall norms.<sup>42</sup> In addition, the regional emphases of state comprehensive universities—in terms of outreach and consulting for economic development, for example—are often concretized by geographically delimited “service areas.” State comprehensives are therefore at a disadvantage to elite liberal arts colleges and research universities in that the bulk of their student populations typically hail from their service areas; in other words, these institutions do not generally compete for students (undergraduate or graduate) on national or international scales.

In terms of generating prestige through research, state comprehensive universities are at a disadvantage to research universities due to their comparative lacks of infrastructure and their emphases on teaching over research. Although the argument may be somewhat circular, this emphasis is, in fact, shared with most baccalaureate colleges and community colleges. Donald Hall (2002) thus sees commonalities across all three institutional types, referring to them as “teaching schools” due to the heavy teaching loads placed on full-time faculty members—compared with the lighter

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<sup>42</sup>For just one example, the Honors College at Western Kentucky University (Bowling Green) describes its purpose as follows: “to offer high-achieving young scholars the environment of a small highly selective college, while providing the resources and benefits of a large public university” (“Honors College: Message from Dr. Craig T. Cobane,” available at <http://www.wku.edu/honors/index.php?page=ctcmmessage>). Average standardized test scores, high school ranks, retention rates, and graduation rates are used as proxies for selectivity by such ranking schemes as the one promoted by the *US News & World Report*. Moreover, Finnegan (1993) suggests that postgraduation success is another student-related source of prestige for institutions of higher education; honors colleges may help attract students who are predisposed to success.

teaching expectations of faculty at research institutions. Roles of the faculty in the teaching–research division at state comprehensive universities—and of the somewhat contentious push toward increasing research productivity of faculty at these institutions—are detailed in the next chapter.

As generators of prestige, sports offer a zero-sum game, since the number of winners is fixed.<sup>43</sup> Henderson (2007) described involvement in big-time sports as an expensive strategy that is too big of a gamble for most state comprehensive universities to consider, at least on a national scale. Still, one sport that provides exposure to some state comprehensives is basketball, especially when their teams participate—and advance (almost always as underdogs)—in the annual NCAA basketball tournament.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>In their work, Brewer, Gates, and Goldman (2002, 30) differentiated between *prestige* and *reputation*. Institutional prestige is measured relative to others, is defined by insiders, depreciates slowly, and is a rival good (meaning that one institution's consumption of a unit of prestige precludes another institution from enjoying that unit; in other words, prestige is a zero-sum game). On the other hand, institutional reputation is measured in absolute terms, is defined by customers, depreciates rapidly, and is a non-rival good (one that can be enjoyed by many institutions simultaneously without diminishing the value to any one of them; reputation is therefore a positive-sum game). One reason why state comprehensive universities have come to market themselves as providing access and opportunity, I believe, is because doing so feeds into reputation—as defined by customers and other stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, guidance counselors, employers, and state officials and agencies). Even non-prestigious institutions can have good reputations. Thus, in the transformation from normal school to teachers college, as understood by Ogren (2005), the desire was for prestige. In the transformation from teachers college to comprehensive university, as portrayed by Finnegan (1991), the emphasis may have originally been on acquiring prestige; but when missions were connected or reconnected to those of the normal schools, the intention was to use distinctions detrimental to prestige as attributes to assist reputation.

<sup>44</sup>For example, of the sixty-eight teams invited to participate in the 2011 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, only two are state comprehensive universities: Alabama State University (Montgomery) and Morehead State University (Kentucky). Alabama State advanced to the second round; Morehead State, to the third. As a whole, teams from private comprehensive institutions have historically done better than those from state comprehensive universities in the NCAA Tournament: In 2011, Butler (Indianapolis) advanced all the way to the national championship round.

### Summary of Characteristics of State Comprehensive Universities

In short—and also in comparison with other institutional types—state comprehensive universities are medium to large institutions in terms of both student enrollments (table 1) and faculty numbers (table 8); they are smaller than most research universities but larger than most liberal arts colleges. They are likely to be members of the AASCU. Their comprehensive missions emphasize regional foci and the applied nature of many of their curricula (particularly teacher training, business, and other vocational areas such as nursing). Student selectivity and retention levels are low to moderate, due in part to the historical emphases placed on access. Administrative styles may lean toward a culture of negotiation or development. Funding comes from the state and from student-provided tuition and fees. Athletics programs are only rarely the generators of prestige that they tend to be at most research universities. And faculty members at state comprehensive universities tend to focus more on teaching and service than on research.

What the institutional focus on teaching and service over research at state comprehensive universities means for faculty members—and how this focus has been shifting—is examined in more detail in the next chapter. The final portion of this chapter considers the second major contextual component of this study: discipline.

### **Disciplinary Environments in Higher Education**

In the words of Burton Clark (1987, 25),

there is no more stunning fact about the academic profession anywhere in the world than the simple one that academics are possessed by disciplines, fields of study, even as they are located in institutions. With the

growth of specialization in the last century, the discipline has become everywhere an imposing, if not dominating, force in the working lives of the vast majority of academics. Organized around individual subjects, the disciplines have their own histories and trajectories, their own habits and practices.

Or, more succinctly but lacking the sense of marvel at the situation: “Disciplines pervade academic life” (Kreber 2009a, 19). Disciplines are important in the study of higher education—and in the study of faculty, in particular—because of the ways in which they, as tools for the organization of knowledge, directly impact the organization of academe and the attitudes, activities, affiliations, cognitive approaches, and worldviews of academics (Barnett 2009; Becher and Trowler 2001; Braxton and Hargens 1996).<sup>45</sup>

As understood today within the realm of higher education, disciplines are the results of historical processes that have continued to evolve even after the establishment of the “modern university” near the end of the nineteenth century (D. Pace 2009, 96).<sup>46</sup> According to Paul Dressel and Lewis Mayhew (1974), in their investigation

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<sup>45</sup>As tools for the organization of knowledge, the concept of disciplines predated literate civilization, even if the notion of the discipline was not immediately articulated. Writing about the Sumerian civilization, which flourished in the alluvial plain between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (in present-day Iraq) from the late sixth to early second millennium BCE, Christopher Lucas (1994, 6) concluded that the disciplinary organization of knowledge supported the rise of civilization: “Specialized or advanced training in mathematics, literature, possibly law, medicine, and theology was in fact both characteristic of, and ultimately indispensable to, the shaping and maintenance of the earliest literate civilization to emerge at the dawn of recorded history” (around 3500 BCE).

<sup>46</sup>Although David Pace (2009) does not qualify his use of the concept of the “modern university,” I use the idea as William Clark (2006, 4) described it: as a descriptor of the research university. “Modern,” in this sense, can be contrasted with the “traditional” academic order. Although, *ex necessitate rei*, the “traditional” preceded the “modern,” the two paradigms are not chronologically exclusive and thus coexist today. Talcott Parsons and Gerald Platt (1973, 3) described the American version of the “modern university” as “the current culmination of the educational revolution.” This use of the concept of the “modern university” is therefore a much less value-laden version than the one used by, for example, Julie Reuben (1996), who equated



into the development of higher education as a scholarly field, “the concept of a discipline probably is one of the most overworked and ill-defined terms bandied about in the academy” (3). Dressel and Mayhew proposed eight criteria for disciplines (or disciplinary areas). Within the academy, disciplines are understood to be discrete bodies of knowledge with: reasonably logical taxonomies, specialized vocabularies and generally accepted bodies of basic literature, bodies of accepted theories (and techniques for testing and revising theories), systematic methodologies and research strategies, techniques for replication and validation, affiliated “trappings” (including scholarly associations and journals), recognized training for the preparation of scholars and researchers, and an “elegance” of structure that “enables scholars to predict where they should look next” (3–6).

Other researchers in the 1960s and 1970s (e.g., Biglan 1973a, 1973b; Hirst 1974; Phenix 1964; Scheffler 1965; Schwab 1962, 1978) broadly sought to investigate the nature of disciplines and the differences among them. Many approached the issue as psychologists, wishing to understand disciplines as they relate to curricula; to cognitive models; or to teaching, learning, and assessment. Much of this research was carried out simultaneously with the development of more sophisticated methods of institutional research (especially with respect to understanding student learning and the pedagogical role thus implicated).<sup>47</sup> Dressel and Mayhew (1974)

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modernity with an ontological understanding: a particular conception of truth that was institutionalized into the structure of higher education toward the end of the nineteenth century.

<sup>47</sup>W. H. Cowley (1960) argued that activities that took place on college campuses over two centuries ago could be considered the first forms of “institutional research”; but the methods used for data collection and analysis were, by today’s standards, quite primitive.

also suggested influences by the testing, counseling, and guidance movements on theoretical and empirical modeling.

Research on the relation between academic disciplines and learning continues to the present, although it tends to be action-oriented and focuses more on student learning (at all levels of education) than on instructor understandings, epistemologies, or the nature of the creation of knowledge.<sup>48</sup> Thus disciplines are focal points for discussion in investigations into intellectual development, academic learning, and even the broader goals of higher education (Donald 2002; Hativa and Marinovich 1995; Kreber 2009b; Smart, Feldman, and Ethington 2000). This research frequently—but not always—presents disciplines as taken-for-granted constructs.<sup>49</sup> To Robert Matthew and Jane Pritchard (2009), for example, “the division of knowledge and underlying epistemologies into defined disciplinary regimes is seemingly part and parcel of the post-industrial western university.” In fact, they “cannot think of it being any other way” (58). Thirty-five years after Dresser and Mayhew investigated the concept of the discipline, therefore, disciplines are seen by some within the academy, at least, to be firmly established, canonical organizational systems that

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<sup>48</sup>One notable exception that tackles the epistemological link between the effects of a discipline on the construction of knowledge is a piece by Susan Bruce, Ken Jones, and Monica McLean (2007), wherein the authors examine how the discipline of English is collaboratively “produced” within the classroom context. Again, though, one goal is a better understanding of student learning.

<sup>49</sup>In response to this situation, several of the essays in Carolin Kreber’s edited volume (2009b) explore what can happen when faculty members, who are understood to be products of their own disciplines, challenge—or at least rethink—the ways in which their intellectual lives are organized by their disciplines. See, in particular, the essays by Poole (2009) and Trowler (2009).

exist not to be challenged but rather to provide categories for identification and orientation and to enable and support increasing levels of specialization.<sup>50</sup>

Tony Becher and Paul Trowler (1989, 2001) questioned the impact of the disciplines on academic life and work. At the same time, they were aware that academics wield a certain amount of power “to mould the shape and content of their disciplines” (2001, 15). In their work (see also Becher 1994), they explored the epistemological nature of disciplines, that is, the ways in which disciplines influence the creation of knowledge. They portrayed disciplinarity within the world of higher education as an organizational structure that encapsulates particular traditions and norms for socialization. In two wide-scale investigations into various disciplinary cultures, they interviewed a total of nearly 250 academics in twelve disciplines in the pure sciences, applied sciences, social sciences, humanities, and professions

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<sup>50</sup>Some scholars, though, would undoubtedly feel umbrage at that statement and would challenge me to take even a cursory look at the learned journals in their disciplines and fields. In those pages, to use the words of Carolyn van der Meer (2004, 173), I would certainly find a “record of the circulating theories and ideas that constitute” any discipline “at a given moment.” Read diachronically, then, the collected volumes of a journal, from its inception to the present, “can be viewed as a kind of map through a discipline or a field” (172). My conclusion, ultimately, would be that disciplines certainly can be fluid, can be contested, and can be transformed. Moreover, journals—especially those in the humanities—often publish useful pieces of metadiscourse on their fields of focus. Even a surface-level review of the past few years of academic journals would turn up scholarly commentaries and opinion pieces on the “state of the discipline” in numerous fields, including aesthetics (Poulakos 2007), comparative studies (Damrosch 2006a), criminology (Chunn and Menzies 2006), folklore studies (Wells 2006), geography (Waterman 2008), history (Schmidt 2007), home economics (Fields and Connell 2004), religion (Cabezón 2006), and women’s studies (Zimmerman 2002). Note, however, that editorials or commentaries on disciplines are different from research on or into disciplines, disciplinary structures, or disciplinary evolution. And, importantly, many of the fields needing to define or redefine themselves are evolving interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary fields.

(academic law).<sup>51</sup> The broad academic communities to which these academics belonged were their titular “academic tribes”; the scopes of the ideas with which they worked were their “territories.” Interviews, carried out in the 1980s and 1990s, involved questions along the following six lines: characteristics of the discipline, epistemological issues, career patterns (including socialization), reputations and rewards, professional activity, and value systems.

In their work, Becher and Trowler (1989, 2001) looked at the influences between two distinct spheres: the social aspects of knowledge communities (academic tribes) and the epistemological properties of knowledge forms (disciplinary territories). What is particularly compelling about their approach is the way they used disciplines as a frame for understanding patterns and differences in the lives of academics. By straddling the “little-explored border zone between the sociology of knowledge . . . and the study of higher education” (2001, 29), their work has extended the sociological work on the occupational culture of academe begun by sociologist Logan Wilson in 1942 (work that will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter). Whereas Wilson collapsed differences among disciplines to focus on shared social relations between the individual academics and their departments and institutions (at one particular type of institution), Becher and Trowler zoomed in on the disciplinary differences from individual perspectives and related them to both

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<sup>51</sup>Becher and Trowler (2001, 23) defined “cultures” as “sets of taken-for-granted values, attitudes and ways of behaving which are articulated through and reinforced by recurrent practices among a group of people in a given context.”

professional identity and the organization of disciplines, departments, institutions, and the ecology of higher education as a whole.

Becher and Trowler's theoretical approach speaks directly to this study. It supports my premise, asserted by Burton Clark, that disciplinary affiliations affect faculty perceptions about their work lives. As a consequence of disciplinary socialization (which begins in graduate school) and acculturation into disciplinary value systems, what it means to be a professor of a particular discipline, therefore, is of import in considering faculty perceptions of work life vis-à-vis tenure.<sup>52</sup> To reduce interaction effects by discipline, I focused on members of just one discipline among the single institutional type of state comprehensive universities: history.<sup>53</sup>

I selected faculty in departments of history for six reasons. First, as mentioned in chapter 1, the highest concentrations of part-time and contingent faculty can be found in the humanities and humanities-oriented social sciences—especially in fields associated with general education requirements. Studying the tenured faculty

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<sup>52</sup>The impact of professional and disciplinary socialization has received much scholarly attention and deserves more than passing mention in a footnote. Many of the earliest works on this topic, published in the 1950s, focused on socialization into professional fields (medicine, business, law, social work); see Becker and Carper (1956) and Gottlieb (1961) on occupational socialization. Katz and Hartnett (1976) and Mix (1971) expanded the focus to include socialization into academe (also a “professional” field, of course). More recent works on socialization and acculturation of future members of the professoriate include Aitchison, Kamler, and Lee (2010); Austin (2002); Bieber and Worley (2004); Colbeck, O'Meara, and Austin (2008); Davis and Webb (forthcoming); Gardner (2009a, 2009b); and Wulff, Austin, and Associates (2004). Lovitts (2001); Nettles and Millett (2006); Pasco (2009); Thein and Beach (2010); and Walker et al. (2008) emphasized the roles of mentors in disciplinary acculturation and socialization. Casanave (2008), Kalish (1997), Tierney (1997), Tierney and Bensimon (1996), and Tierney and Rhoads (1993) all concluded that socialization and acculturation in the academy continues well beyond acceptance of the first academic position.

<sup>53</sup>The potential interaction effects are as much functions of key differences in disciplinary cultures as they are of the fact that “different standards [for tenure and promotion] exist for different departments” even within the same institution (Burton 2007, 80).

in a discipline that is representative of these areas will help articulate possible ramifications of increased reliance on part-time and contingent faculty. Second, history is a near-ubiquitous presence in general education requirements for undergraduate students across all institutional types offering four-year degrees. Even at state comprehensive universities, where the most popular majors are typically vocational or pre-professional, one would be hard-pressed to find a campus that offers no coursework in history and employs no faculty members holding Ph.D. degrees in history. Third, for doctoral students in history, the professional pipeline has traditionally led to careers in academia (Bender et al. 2004). Although alternative trajectories certainly exist, “a faculty career is the normative and desired career path” for doctoral students in history (Golde and Dore 2004, 38). According to Sterling Fluharty, in fact, “it should go without saying that the vast majority [of graduates from history doctoral programs] want to become tenure-track history faculty” (2009).<sup>54</sup> Fourth, texts are the objects and products of scholarship in history—Stephen Pyne referred to history as a “book-based” discipline (2010, 15); and the nature of scholarship tends toward independent work.<sup>55</sup> Doctoral work in history involves “long hours of solitary reading, thinking, and writing” (Golde, Walker, and Associates 2006, 352). Arguments

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<sup>54</sup>But the demand for such positions is greater than the supply of new doctoral graduates, contributing to the sense of “elusiveness” of tenure-track positions (described at the outset of chapter 1). Although Bender et al. (2004) wrote encouragingly about the strides made within graduate programs in history with respect to preparing their graduates for “alternative” careers, Alexandra Lord recently presented a different view: “The failure of graduate programs to educate historians so that they can work outside of academe has been especially egregious” (2011).

<sup>55</sup>Leonard Cassuto (2011) described this “myth of the writer as solitary genius striving away in the garret” as surprisingly persistent. At the outset of the acknowledgments to her first book—and specifically with respect to history—Anne Marshall both recognized and challenged this espoused notion of historical scholarship being created in solitude: “Though the experience of writing a history book is meant to be a solitary one, mine has been anything but” (2010, xi).

about the collaborative nature of all forms of writing aside (e.g., Bazerman and Prior 2004; Prior and Shipka 2003), one explanation for the purported independence of historical scholarship is because history enjoys an intimate relation between scholarship (research) and writing (Kennedy 1997): “knowledge is created through the act of writing” (Lovitts 2007, 87). Writing is, indeed, heuristic; or, as John Gage pointed out, “The road to a clearer understanding is travelled on paper” (1986, 24).<sup>56</sup> Fifth, history was a focus of the recently concluded Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate: a substantial base of recent research into how doctoral students in history are trained and socialized exists.<sup>57</sup> Sixth, because of the role of interpretation in historical studies (Appleby 2006), professors of history should be likely to think of—or at least be able to describe—their own professional lives as narratives.<sup>58</sup> Historians, in fact, are committed to “narrative storytelling as an essential rhetorical

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<sup>56</sup>Stephen Pyne, coming from the “tradition of history as part of the humanities,” described history as a “text-based tradition” (2010, 17). “Whether or not our sources are texts, we transmute and transmit our understanding into and by texts,” he wrote (17).

<sup>57</sup>Begun in 2001, the five-year Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate focused on doctoral education in six disciplines: chemistry, education, English, history, mathematics, and neuroscience. Two core products of this project summarized and incorporated much of the research on training and socialization of doctoral students in history: *Envisioning the Future of Doctoral Education: Preparing Stewards of the Discipline* (Golde, Walker, and Associates 2006) and *The Formation of Scholars: Rethinking Doctoral Education for the Twenty-First Century* (Walker et al. 2008). An additional valuable resource is *The Education of Historians for the Twenty-First Century* (Bender et al. 2004), which itself includes a useful selected bibliography on graduate training and historians. These works were invaluable in informing my understanding of the discipline and its norms and expectations.

<sup>58</sup>In his study of faculty work, Aaron Kuntz (2009) pointed out that individuals make meaning within both local and global spheres, that is, both within cultures of their immediate environments and in relation to larger sociohistorical trends. In the case of faculty, the global sphere includes what Laura Stempel Mumford (1994) articulated to be the “academy’s narrative” with respect to the scholarly life and academic careers. I suspect that faculty members in history will share this or a similar narrative and will understand where their personal narratives diverge from the disciplinary (global) and institutional (local) norms.

and analytical tool for conveying historical knowledge” (Cronon 2006, 333; see also Pyne 2009). Individuals trained in historiography should also be well positioned to reflect on their academic lives as narratives (Blanton 2003), thus potentially providing rich data for this investigation.

### **Summary of Institutional and Disciplinary Foundations**

The 663 comprehensive colleges and universities in the United States are a diverse set of institutions, predominantly regional in orientation, that offer a wide variety of undergraduate and graduate curricula to over one-fifth of the nearly 17.6 million full- and part-time students enrolled in higher education in this country. Despite their diversity, these institutions share many commonalities of mission and scope with each other and play a vital role in American higher education. But because of their location at the middle of the academic hierarchy—and their perceived “middling” qualities (Riesman 1965)—such institutions have largely been ignored by education researchers as sites for their work. Worse, the derisive epithets often used when such institutions are invoked in the literature have only infrequently been contradicted.

In this chapter, I offered statistics on comprehensive universities relative to other institutional types before focusing on one subset of these ignored and frequently maligned institutions, the 273 public comprehensive universities, termed *state comprehensive universities* following Bruce Henderson (2007). Works by Dorothy Finnegan (1991) and Christine Ogren (2005) were particularly important for understanding the history; works by Burton Clark (1987) and Henderson proved



important for contextualizing the institutions. Many of today's state comprehensive universities evolved from historically black colleges or from normal schools and teachers colleges dating from the second half of the nineteenth century; and Finnegan traced the emphases on access, on serving local or regional populations, and on teaching to the missions of these antecedent institutions.<sup>59</sup> Today's state comprehensive universities, most of which belong to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, can thus be considered "stewards of place." Students at state comprehensive universities are commonly described as being underprepared; and the organization and administrative styles lean toward that of "political institutions" (Birnbaum 1988a). Although they suffer from potential confusions of purpose (as some, such as Burton Clark, have argued) and a lack of prestige (as numerous commentators have noted), most state comprehensive universities are not in positions to alter their identities by raising their selectivity levels, substantially increasing their research outputs, or investing in large-scale athletics programs.

Then, arguing for the import of disciplinary contexts with respect to understanding faculty work lives, I justified why the discipline of history was selected for this study, relying on work by Tony Becher and Paul Trowler to provide a theoretical framework.

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<sup>59</sup>William Tierney and Estela Mara Bensimon justified the import of institutional histories in this way: "All institutions have histories. History should not be used to fossilize an institution, but rather to help explain how it came to be what it is today. An institution bereft of history is without clear markers of identity and ideology" (1996, 58). As I have explained in this first part of this chapter, links between historical and contemporary missions and scopes may indeed be revealed in the histories of state comprehensive universities—emphases on access, vocational training, regional foci—but, at the same time, these connections with the past may contribute to the lack of prestige (though potential positive reputations, at least within their immediate environs) affiliated with such institutions.

Now that the institutional and disciplinary sites have been described, the next chapter considers the key actors in this study: faculty. By presenting what has been gleaned from both historical and contemporary research on faculty, the goal is to describe current understandings of the populations in this study: the institutional population (faculty at state comprehensive universities) and the disciplinary populations (faculty in history).

## CHAPTER 3

### FACULTY IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

#### **Occupational Culture of Academe**

##### Provenance and Rationale

As a study about faculty perceptions of the effects of tenure on work life, this study is, on the macro level, an investigation into the occupational culture of academe. Its conceptual underpinnings can thus be traced back nearly seventy years to Logan Wilson's seminal investigation into "the complex roles and processes in which the academician participates" (1942, 5). Tenure is one such process that, controversially, involves a gradually shrinking percentage of academicians today; and the perceived roles of tenure in the academic life course are focal points of this study. And because academic culture is a function of both discipline and institutional type (B. Clark 1987, 1997), as I argued in the previous chapter, the disciplinary and institutional situatedness of the faculty participants in this study create the final major node requiring exploration. "The academic culture is probably fragmented into a thousand and one parts defined by the crosscut of many disciplines in many types of institutions," Burton Clark wrote (1987, 105), implying the need for studies of diverse disciplines across institutional types. Thus, in order to understand how faculty members perceive the effects of tenure on work life, the variables of discipline and

institutional type were controlled in this study. Indeed, the focus was necessarily narrow: Just as “academic culture” can only sketchily be defined in the general, so, too, is the concept of “work life” situated in individual academicians’ lives.<sup>1</sup> The real and realized contexts, environments, and affiliations are of supreme importance, as are perceptions of these factors. In this chapter, I explore what is known about faculty at state comprehensive universities as well as what is known about faculty in history, specifically as the disciplinary and institutional contexts overlap. First, though, I examine the occupational culture of academe and faculty work. As Martin Finkelstein pointed out (2006), research on academic careers has a history of little more than half a century and, within this short lifespan, has reflected shifting disciplinary concerns, public-policy needs, and political and economic contexts. My presentation thus continues with an overview of this body of work.

### Faculty as a Subject of Inquiry

In part because studies on faculty present such a fascinating existential situation—faculty are generally studied by other faculty, with doctoral dissertators providing the major exception—this section opens with a survey of the evolution of investigations into the occupational culture (or cultures) of academe, specifically with respect to the ways that such studies speak to the lived experiences of faculty

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<sup>1</sup>When attempts at defining “academic culture” are made, presumptions are typically introduced (either obviously or tacitly) that limit the generalizability to a certain segment of academe. Tony Becher and Paul Trowler (2001) wisely referred to “academic cultures,” in the plural; and, from an organizational perspective, William Bergquist and Kenneth Pawlak (2008), mentioned in chapter 2, defined six academic cultures that map only imperfectly onto the various institutional types. Nevertheless, their perspective resonates with Robert Birnbaum’s (1988a) conclusion that certain organizational models generally fit certain institutional types better than others.

members.<sup>2</sup> My purpose is to explore not only some of the findings of seminal and early studies but also to show how these studies gave theoretical direction by defining and creating a particular discursive space for later studies.

Targeted studies of college and university faculty in North America have taken many forms over the past seven decades. Initiated by scholars in such disciplines as sociology, psychology, economics, and history, the first studies on faculty arose as faculty came to be identified as members of an expanding professional group (Finkelstein 1984; Metzger 1987; Veysey 1988). Gradually, as higher education began to assert itself as a field of study, faculty-centric investigations came to be initiated by scholars whose entire research purviews were the evolving field of higher education, although these scholars' methodological groundings remained in the established disciplines (Keister 1990). Reflecting the methodological mores of the time, most of the earliest studies of faculty were empirical and involved macro-scale mapping of demographic and other descriptive data.<sup>3</sup>

Today, scholars of higher education may think of themselves in those terms—that is, as scholars of higher education. They approach faculty as a broad, complex research topic with a wide variety of established and experimental methodological

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<sup>2</sup>Of course, faculty are also written about by journalists and novelists—and by others in capacities that are not intended to be consumed in an academic manner. When the issue of tenure surfaces in fiction, William Tierney has identified an enjoyable and enlightening opportunity for “think[ing] self-reflexively about the academic life” (2004, 163). For additional material on portrayals of higher education in non-academic literature that is intended for consumption by a broad audience, see L. Johnson (1995), Kramer (1981), Lyons (1962), Rossen (1993), and Thelin and Townsend (1988).

<sup>3</sup>In an essay on sociologist David Riesman's contributions to the study of higher education, David Webster pointed out that “other students of higher education” during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s had a tendency to rely “mostly on the numbers on the computer printout” (1981, 131).

approaches and perspectives.<sup>4</sup> Of course, studies of faculty continue to be carried out by sociologists, psychologists, economists, historians, and others beside those who consider themselves (or who are labeled as) scholars of higher education. No single approach to such a multifaceted subject can provide an adequately nuanced look at both individual faculty members and the collective field, especially given both individual differences and situational differences—those among disciplines and institutions, which, according to Burton Clark (1997, 22), comprise the “primary matrix of induced and enforced differences among American academics.”<sup>5</sup>

Among the earliest targeted investigations of faculty in the North American context is the largely descriptive work of Melvin Haggerty (1937). Haggerty’s work emerged from a study of “the crucial problem of an accrediting agency” (1), in this case the North Central Association: to determine “those qualitative measures which would more clearly define the actual worth of the college or university” (vi). But because accrediting agencies must consider institutions rather than individuals, this work is primarily a quantitative analysis of characteristics of faculty as an aggregate, specifically as these qualities can be parlayed into rubrics for assessing institutional effectiveness. Thus the purpose of Haggerty’s investigation was not to understand faculty members *qua* faculty but, rather, to learn how they can best be assessed as contributors to the missions and goals of their employing institutions. Many notable

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<sup>4</sup>To Burton Clark, whose very works “helped lay the foundation for the study of higher education” (Gumport 2008, xi), “a perspective wears better than a method” (Clark 1987, xiv).

<sup>5</sup>Becher and Trowler phrase the level-of-analysis issue as follows: “One has to allow for a trade-off between comprehensiveness and specificity, between a broad view and a scrutiny in depth; each approach has its own particular advantages and limitations” (2001, 21).

earlier works that addressed higher education in North America—among them those of Thorstein Veblen (1918) and Abraham Flexner (1923, 1930)—also offer commentaries on faculty, but, as with Haggerty’s presentation, the overall aims of those authors and scopes of their works involved much more than faculty.<sup>6</sup> These early works, as well as more journalistic treatments such as found in Upton Sinclair’s *The Goose-Step: A Study of American Education* (1923), were especially notable for their visibility as well as for setting a critical tone in investigations into the state of higher education in this country.

One of the earliest and most influential studies of faculty *as faculty* in the North American context, then, is Logan Wilson’s landmark *The Academic Man* (1942). In this “pioneering volume” (Finkelstein 2006, 159), Wilson approached faculty from a sociological viewpoint, applying perspectives from the then-recently articulated “sociology of knowledge” to the nascent field of the “sociology of the professions.”<sup>7</sup> Wilson described the goal of his work as “giving a broad but unified view of the academic profession in its institutional setting” (4). Although he used the term “institutional setting” in the singular form, he was well aware of both inter- and intra-institutional diversity: “Institutions of higher education differ widely in aims,

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<sup>6</sup>As they also involved investigations into faculty and faculty work life, works of John Ervin Kirkpatrick (1926, 1931) could be categorized alongside those of Veblen and Flexner, but they enjoyed a much briefer half-life in subsequent scholarship on higher education.

<sup>7</sup>Invoking Durkheim, Florian Znaniecki (1940) reminded readers that the “sociology of knowledge” is not a sociological *theory* of knowledge: as a field of study, sociology concerns itself with interactions among people or groups of people. Theories or systems of knowledge are therefore not social systems. The “sociology of knowledge,” then, reflects awareness that sociological systems share features with other kinds of systems—e.g., linguistic systems, religious systems, and technical systems.

facilities, procedures, levels of accomplishment, and in other respects. There is no exact pattern to which they all conform" (6). In short, "university environments in which academicians work vary extensively" (6). Wilson focused on examples of the "contemporary American university" (5) that he described as being "central or major" in that they "wield the most influence in setting the pattern of higher learning" (6). Narrowing his focus to institutions of one particular type also enabled generalizations. In focusing on American institutions that "rank high in the universe of learning" (6), Wilson delimited the institutional purview that would come to be tacitly accepted by the majority of scholars who investigated faculty and students at institutions of higher education in the succeeding generation.<sup>8</sup> Dating his work, yet giving credence to the title chosen for the book, Wilson described college teaching as "a predominantly male occupation" (17).<sup>9</sup> With the exception of a brief discussion, in a section on "economic status," of the depression of average salaries caused by a larger number of women in certain sectors of education (136–37), he did not further

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<sup>8</sup>Wilson lists Columbia, Chicago, Wisconsin, Harvard, Yale, and California as exemplars in his main text (1942, 6). An appendix (228) provides the top thirty graduate centers leading in the production of doctorates between 1929–30 and 1938–39, courtesy a 1940 report of the American Council on Education. Rounding out the top ten are Cornell, Michigan, Illinois, and New York University.

<sup>9</sup>Wilson's use of "man" in the title, I believe, was more a function of the time and the situatedness of his sociological training than of any intentions to occlude (or exclude) women from his investigation. (In the work, to his credit, Wilson wrote "person" or "persons" in places where, had he been consistent with his title, he would have instead used "man" or "men.") Still, he relegated the following important observation to a footnote: "The proportion of women teachers varies greatly according to the type of institution. In teachers colleges and non-degree-granting institutions, women outnumber men; women form less than a third of the faculty in publicly controlled universities, and slightly more than a third in privately controlled universities" (1942, 137). In his introduction to the 1995 Transaction edition of Wilson's book, Philip Altbach identified a number of "caveats," including the near absence of a discussion of women in academia and Wilson's emphasis on "the top tier of academic institutions, the research universities and prestigious liberal arts colleges," in *The Academic Man* (Altbach 1995, xii).



interrogate, in the body of his text, any of the implications behind this gender imbalance.<sup>10</sup> At the time of Wilson's study, women who taught were more likely to do so at the primary or secondary levels.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the book, Wilson proved to be both insightful for his time and remarkably prescient about numerous issues that continue to be central to academic life and its concordant difficulties: ambiguities regarding requirements for promotion and tenure; potential ill effects "when the evaluative system prevailing in leading universities is indiscriminately forced upon the staffs of lesser colleges and universities" (112), today recognized as a form of mission creep; and the "unadmitted exploitation" of instructors (61), today continued by heavy reliance on part-time and contingent faculty.<sup>12</sup> Although he identified numerous sources of tension between the ideals and realities of both structural and functional aspects of the university, thus paving the way for later organizational studies of higher education, he ultimately concluded that the "human coefficient of intellectual activity is of the

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<sup>10</sup>One potential justification comes from Znaniecki (1940), a sociologist cited multiple times by Wilson in his work: "The sociologist is bound to abide by whatever standards of validity those individuals or groups [he or she studies] apply to the knowledge in which they take an active share" (5). When a sociologist studies the social lives of members of a group, as did Wilson, he or she "has no right as a sociologist to oppose his [or her] authority" to that of members of the group being studied (6). Wilson was likely aware of the volume from Committee Y (on taxation) of the American Association of University Professors, *Depression, Recovery, and Higher Education* (Willey 1937), wherein the representative and economic situations for women faculty are not ignored. Thus, I posit that he would have interrogated the lack of women in the professoriate in his study if he had encountered such concern among members of the professoriate at large.

<sup>11</sup>As I explained in the previous chapter, the confluence of (negative) associations involving teacher preparation served to distance normal schools and teachers colleges from elite institutions of postsecondary education during the first half of the twentieth century.

<sup>12</sup>Some, such as Marc Bousquet (2008), would add graduate teaching assistants to the exploited.

utmost importance” (223). Thus, Wilson was among the first to argue that the scholarly literature needed more systematic investigations into the occupational culture of academe and the way that culture plays itself out in the lives of academicians.

### Studies on Faculty within the Evolving Field of Higher Education

Heeding Wilson’s call, scholars have subsequently provided foundations for the now robust literatures on faculty, faculty life, and the cultures of academe in the nearly seven decades since publication of *The Academic Man*. That period not only witnessed remarkable growth in the North American higher education sector (Geiger 1999; Jencks and Riesman 1968; Thelin 2004; Trow 1970, 1973, 2001) but also coincided with the development and evolution of higher education as a field of study (Dressel and Mayhew 1974; Keister 1990; Richardson 2006; Rogers 1969).<sup>13</sup> The combined result: more people *in* higher education (as students, faculty, staff, and administrators) and more people *studying* higher education. Still, although the situation has improved remarkably in the last two decades, Stephen Keister pointed out that, as late as 1990, “most persons who conduct research on higher education have their scholarly origins in other disciplines—sociology, psychology, political science, history, and so on” (1990, 63).<sup>14</sup> Early research into faculty, then, either was ensconced

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<sup>13</sup>In 1962, Robert Knapp wrote that the rise of the profession of college professor “in recent years has been sensationally rapid” (290). Those increases only continued: “The number of new positions created between 1965 and 1970 alone exceeded the total number of positions extant in 1940” (Schuster and Finkelstein 2006a, 33). And John Thelin (2004, 260) pointed out that the period from 1945 to 1970 has been referred to by historians, journalists, and college administrators as higher education’s “golden age,” “marked by the ‘three P’s’ of prosperity, prestige, and popularity.”

<sup>14</sup>Even though his use of the word “other” in this quotation implies that Keister considers higher education to be a discipline of its own, his comment on the nature of those who carry out

within the paradigms of established disciplines or was used as a vehicle to suggest, tentatively at first, that higher education could be viewed as an academic field of its own (Dressel and Mayhew 1974). Ironically, perhaps, though typical of the partitioning of fields and disciplines (Metzger 1987), such intimations were most frequently made by borrowing the accepted research methods of other fields. Empirical studies were therefore *de rigueur*: Studies into faculty have been “dominated” by empirical data analysis (Finnegan, Webster, and Gamson 1996, xx) and have thus typically used “recognized and highly systematic research methods” (Keister 1990, 60) as, I believe, a means for positioning, ratifying, and self-validating.<sup>15</sup>

Quantitative as the majority of these studies may be, they have taught scholars and students of higher education quite a lot about the general landscape of faculty, faculty life, and the cultures and contexts of academe. Studies based on or involving national data sets, large-scale surveys, or other historical evidence have investigated, among other topics, the academic labor market (Caplow and McGee 1958), employment mobility (D. Brown 1967; Burke 1988), pathways to the professoriate (Crane 1970; Smelser and Content 1980; Wulff, Austin, and Associates 2004), faculty

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research in higher education could be easily appropriated to argue that higher education is simply a field of study or perhaps an interdisciplinary construct, not a unique discipline that is based on particular objectivist and realist epistemologies (Barnett 2009; Becher and Trowler 2001). Nevertheless, regardless of field or discipline, all researchers with college or university appointments are *in* higher education; but only for some does the study of higher education itself provide a professional affiliation.

<sup>15</sup>Haggerty, for example, highlighted the facts that “modern statistical methods played an important part” in his survey of faculty (1937, vi) and that punch cards were used for “mechanical tabulation” of data (31). Despite the scientific authority of the method for data collection and analysis, Haggerty’s work remained primarily descriptive. For other largely descriptive presentations, see Bornheimer, Burns, and Dumke (1973); Mayhew (1965); Millett (1961); Schuster and Finkelstein (2006a); Tuckman (1976).

productivity (Allison and Stewart 1974; Bayer and Dutton 1977; Fulton and Trow 1974; Tierney 1999a), and faculty unionization (Hutcheson 2000; Tuma and Grimes 1981). These studies—just a sampling of the scores upon scores of relevant articles and books now issued on an annual basis—provide trends, benchmarks, and snapshots for understanding the past and current environments in which faculty carry out their responsibilities and live their lives.

### The Impact of Diversity and the Expansion of Research Paradigms and Methods

Demographics of the professoriate through the first half of the twentieth century, at least at the types of institutions most commonly studied during this period, favored the white male. In fact, as recently as 1996, William Tierney and Estela Mara Bensimon wrote that, “in most colleges and universities, the whiteness of the professoriat stands out conspicuously, particularly in comparison to the more racially and ethnically diverse composition of the student body” (1996, 103).<sup>16</sup> Operating against these precedents, then, discourse on faculty from feminist or minority viewpoints was understandably slow to enter the mainstream literature on higher education.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, although “diversity has been characteristic of American institutions

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<sup>16</sup>Note that “professoriat” is an alternative spelling of *professoriate*.

<sup>17</sup>Likewise, discourse on college or university students from feminist or minority viewpoints was equally slow to establish a foothold in mainstream research publications. Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz (1986, 1987) described the nature of the ubiquitous “college man” (white, upper class, 18 to 22 years old) who permeated the early literature on college students in much the same way that Wilson’s “academic man” offered an overly generic view that lingered for decades in both the popular and scholarly imaginations. Like Horowitz, Ernest Pascarella and Patrick Terenzini (2005) described the “bias” of the early research base on students as focusing on “‘traditional’ White undergraduates, ages 18 to 22, who attended four-year institutions full-time, lived on campus, did not work, and had few, if any, family responsibilities” (2).

of higher education since the early nineteenth century” (Horowitz 1987, xii), many scholars appeared oblivious (or at least indifferent) to this diversity until the mid-twentieth century. (When diversity was mentioned, as was the case with Wilson in 1942, it was often presented as a caveat or apology intended, it seems, to support or justify the emphases on the majority.) With publications on women faculty (Bernard 1964; Roby 1972) and African Americans within the professoriate (Mommsen 1974; Rafky 1972; Thompson 1978), however, “researchers began to challenge the generic representation within the literature on American faculty that innocently emerged from Logan Wilson’s first sociological analysis of life in the academic grove” (Finnegan, Webster, and Gamson 1996, xx). Perhaps intentionally referring to Wilson’s title, Donald Light Jr. claimed that “the academic man is a myth. Although we think of ‘the professor’ as a distinct type in society . . . this image results from research which combines college teachers with research faculty, ignores the distinctly different experience of women in academic life, and overlooks important differences between disciplines” (1974, 14). Today, research investigating issues of sex, ethnicity, age, and social class forms a critical component of the literature on faculty. Such work has served, collectively, to illuminate that both faculty and institutions of higher education are diverse—a conclusion that, from the perspective of the twenty-first century, seems remarkably intuitive.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>At the same time, Alan Schoenfeld (1999) might qualify such a conclusion, if offered uncritically, as “superficial” (170), thus supporting the need for further investigation of the implications, meanings, and manifestations of said diversity. In other words, unless used to shape theoretical perspectives and understandings, mere acknowledgement of the diversity among the ranks of faculty in higher education today—that is, diversity as an unstated given—could be likened to the tacit (or at least unchallenged) presumptions of homogeneity that seemed to

Just as alternative perspectives entered the literature on faculty, so too were alternative methodologies gradually embraced. Preeminence of the large-scale quantitative, positivist, empirical approach, driven by sociologists and psychologists and labor economists, for example—or by higher education researchers trained in such research approaches—eventually declined, opening a theoretical and discursive space for naturalistic, qualitative studies, typically on a smaller scale and with a smaller scope. But the methodological awakening was gradual. As Dorothy Finnegan, David Webster, and Zelda Gamson (1996) pointed out, earlier works typically made use of interviews and other qualitative methods in combination with quantitative data; they cited works by Christopher Jencks and David Riesman (1968) and Reece McGee (1971) as early examples.<sup>19</sup> Eventually, though, as qualitative inquiry gathered a foothold in education research (Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Reichardt and

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underscore many of the earliest works on faculty. Moreover, using *diverse* in a descriptive sense does not imply equality or equitability of said diversity across disciplines, fields, and faculty ranks. The point remains, though, that researchers must no longer presume homogeneity among the faculty.

<sup>19</sup>The idea that quantitative and qualitative approaches offer complementary views of a phenomenon under scrutiny seems to have been forgotten during the height of the quantitative–qualitative debate (Reichardt and Rallis 1994) and was apparently resurrected only later as a compromise, of sorts, between members of the two polarized camps. (Schwandt, however, complicated the dichotomy by describing “qualitative” and “quantitative” as “ambiguously used adjective[s]” [2007, 248] when it comes to methodological approaches.) In a fascinating methodological appendix to his *Academic Janus*, Reece McGee (1971) suggested that technological advances and psychological factors enabled his interview approach. He even stated that a subpurpose of the pilot study leading up to *Academic Janus* was “to test the utility of the tape recorder as an interviewing instrument” (218). By the mid-1960s, “the tape recorder had not only come of age mechanically but, with the advent of transistors, had been miniaturized to a startling degree. Recorders were now familiar features in many homes. . . . Respondents, thus, might be expected to be less shy with them than might have been true earlier” (218). The qualitative turn was thus not only an epistemological shift: it was also made possible by advances in technology (e.g., portable tape recorders and transcription devices) and an increasing level of comfort with such technology (e.g., administrative assistants familiar with transcription equipment; interviewees not feeling inhibited to speak freely when they are being recorded).

Rallis 1994), studies carried out on smaller scales—for example, life-studies of individual faculty members (B. Berger 1990; Weiland 1994)—began to be taken as serious contributions to the understanding of faculty lives and experiences.

Contemporary research on college and university faculty in North America, then, employs a range of methodologies to reflect the diversity of individuals holding faculty positions at a range of institutions of higher learning.<sup>20</sup> Collectively, the literature provides a sweeping portrait of the profession; yet gaps in the literature remain. Tony Becher and Paul Trowler (2001) invoked the metaphor of knowledge as a “badly made patchwork quilt, some of whose constituent scraps of material are only loosely tacked together, while others untidily overlap, and yet others seem inadvertently to have been omitted, leaving large and shapeless gaps in the fabric of the whole” (30). With respect to the figurative quilt of understanding about faculty, a key area in need of further elaboration is ways in which differences among disciplines and differences among institutional types affect the faculty experience. As stated earlier, disciplines and institutions are the two dimensions of Burton Clark’s matrix of differences among academicians in North America (1987, 1997); they simultaneously prove to be the two primary sources of affiliation and identity for full-time faculty members (Di Leo 2003b). Indeed, Clark has referred to these two realms

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<sup>20</sup>In 1910, Abraham Flexner wrote that “the loose use of the words ‘college’ and ‘university’ prolongs educational chaos” (231). Here, I use the terms as I write generally about faculty—full-time, part-time; tenured, non-tenured; adjunct, contract, visiting—at all categories of institutions of higher learning.

as faculty members' "dual commitments" (1987, xxx).<sup>21</sup> Researchers have covered some of the territory—some patches of Becher and Trowler's metaphorical quilt—through large-scale overviews (e.g., B. Clark 1987; Schuster and Finkelstein 2006a) and small-scale investigations (e.g., B. Clark 1970; Wolfe and Strange 2003), but much more work is needed before fuller coverage at the various intersections of disciplines and institutional types is achieved.

Finkelstein (2006) carried out a similar exercise as I have done in this section—surveying the evolution of the literature on academic careers—and he proposed three distinctive "eras" of empirical research on academic careers. Research on faculty and academic careers during each largely self-contained era, Finkelstein found, involved scholarly emphases on different societal exigencies that were colored by specific disciplinary approaches. His first era, the "Golden Age," spanned the years 1958 to 1974 and witnessed rapid growth in higher education in the United States.<sup>22</sup> Key contributions during this period investigated faculty from sociological,

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<sup>21</sup>Also important is that faculty alignments with their disciplines and institutional types might be incredibly nuanced: they might vary over time and among disciplines and institutional types. Over forty years ago, for example, David Riesman (1965) found that prestige complicated the affiliation equation: Faculty at prestigious institutions were happy to identify with their institutions; faculty at the least prestigious institutions had little mobility or awareness of the external academic world that they maintained their institutional loyalties; but faculty at what Riesman called the "middling-good schools"—such as those investigated in this study—were becoming more strongly aligned with their disciplines than with their institutions. Burton Clark (1987, 107) differentiated between the "locals" and the "cosmopolitans" in exploring the issue of identification with institution or discipline; he, too, found similar variance among faculty at different institutional types.

<sup>22</sup>Instead of beginning the first era with publication of Logan Wilson's *The Academic Man* in 1942, Finkelstein fixed on Theodore Caplow and Reece McGee's 1958 *The Academic Marketplace*, arguing that "Wilson's voice was relatively isolated for more than a decade" (2006, 161). Nevertheless, Finkelstein credited Wilson with conceptualizing higher education as a socially stratified system, where the currency of status is measured by prestige or reputation. This idea



historical, and economic-psychological perspectives, seeking to understand, for example, the evolution of faculty careers (e.g., Carrell 1968), the implications of prestige on scholarly productivity (e.g., Cole and Cole 1967), and the mobility of the faculty (e.g., Caplow and McGee 1958). Finkelstein's second era, the "Leaden or Tin-cup Era," lasted from 1974 to 1990 and was a time of only moderate growth in the economy and in public higher education. Literature during this period emphasized faculty development, productivity, and vitality (e.g., Baldwin and Blackburn 1981; S. Clark and Lewis 1985); academic reward systems (e.g., Boyer 1990); and diversity in the faculty ranks (e.g., Centra with Kuykendall 1974). Finally, the current era, beginning in 1990, is one of "Marketization and Restructuring." One hallmark, highlighted in the first chapter of this proposal, is a revolution in faculty appointments (Schuster and Finkelstein 2006a), resulting in a destabilization of the "singular, predictable, lockstep academic career track . . . in the four-year collegiate sector in the United States" that had been the norm for much of the half-century after 1958 (Finkelstein 2006, 197).<sup>23</sup> The restructuring of academic careers will only accelerate, Finkelstein predicted, suggesting that the "traditional" academic career track—itsself a phenomenon of the late twentieth century—will continue to become less commonplace (204).

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served as an undercurrent for much of the work on faculty careers carried out during the first era.

<sup>23</sup>The "traditional" career track proceeds as follows (Breneman and Youn 1988): Ph.D. receipt; initial appointment as full-time assistant professor (on the tenure track); review for tenure after a six- to seven-year probationary period; institutional and external tenure review based on success in teaching, research (publications), and service; promotion to associate and full professorships.

In short, studies on the occupational culture of academe, a subject for empirical inquiry that did not come into focus in the United States until the mid-twentieth century, have been fueled by a diverse array of motivations and needs, have been approached from a variety of disciplinary and theoretical perspectives, and have provided scholars of higher education with a wealth of material. Understandably, the exigencies of the times have influenced the various approaches used and goals sought.

### **Characteristics of Contemporary Faculty**

#### **A Snapshot of Changing Times**

“Change” has come to be ubiquitously used to describe the landscape of American higher education in the twenty-first century. Because contexts for faculty work and workplaces are changing (Gappa, Austin, and Trice 2007)—including generational changes among faculty, technological changes, changes in pedagogical approaches, and the rise in for-profit educational providers (Cohen and Kisker 2010; Cope and Kalantzis 2009; Rice 2005), academic appointments, work, and careers are likewise changing (Schuster and Finkelstein 2006a). Indeed, in a summary of their 2006 *The American Faculty*, Schuster and Finkelstein concluded that “in the near-millennium history of the academic profession, there has never been a time in which change is occurring so rapidly” (2006b, 51).

Fortunately, given that much of what we know about faculty is demographic and quantitative in nature—as suggested in the previous section—we are aware of macro-level ways in which these changes are playing out and altering the contexts

of academic appointments, work, and careers. Yet the data can only connect themselves to lived experiences of faculty members to a certain extent. Thus we have broad brushstrokes of understanding: archives of statistics on many of the same demographic variables that were documented and considered by Logan Wilson in 1942. In this country, organizations such as the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, and the American Council on Education are awash with data, having initiated national surveys of faculty in 1969—and beginning what Schuster and Finkelstein referred to as the “modern era” of surveying the faculty (2006a, 391). These data make for easy comparisons across any number of variables. Comparisons are key to situated understandings, in fact, because “the academic profession is an odd occupation. . . . Variety is its name” (B. Clark 1987, xxi). And, as James Axtell wrote, “America’s professors display as much variety and versatility as their institutions” (1998, 8).

Since most institutional descriptors have greater meaning in a relative context, I provided statistics about other institutional types in setting up my description of state comprehensive universities in the previous chapter. And even though Robert Blackburn and Janet Lawrence described their 1995 *Faculty at Work* as being focused “on the individual faculty member” (4), their useful volume is a veritable picture book of tables, figures, and charts. Schuster and Finkelstein’s more recent *The American Faculty* (2006a) is similarly supported. The reason may be because, even when describing an individual faculty member in terms of easily quantifiable categories—say, for example, the number of hours she spends in the classroom per

week, the number of classes she teaches per year, the number of publications she has authored or coauthored, her salary—the individual data points are of little meaning unless compared with respective numbers from other faculty members or, better yet, averages across like (and unlike) faculty. If she is employed full-time at a state comprehensive university, does she teach more classes and spend more time in class per week than her colleague at a research university? (Yes, most likely.) Has she authored or coauthored fewer publications over the past two years than her research-university colleague? (Yes, most likely.) But does she earn less than her male colleague of the same rank, even though they were both hired in the same year and have terminal degrees from the same institution? (Yes, most likely.) Most lacking in these data, however, are the personal elements: the feelings, the experiences, the internalized meanings that lie behind the façade of quantitative material. As Alexei Matveev put it, “what the national surveys cannot address is the meaning faculty members attach to the roles they perform in everyday work” (2007, 5). This study specifically sought to address those heretofore largely neglected areas.

In this section, then, I present a snapshot of the contemporary state of the faculty in the United States, using material culled primarily from the 2010 *Digest of Education Statistics* (NCES 2010a), Schuster and Finkelstein (2006a, 2006b), and Judith Gappa, Ann Austin, and Andrea Trice’s *Rethinking Faculty Work* (2007). These largely quantitative data are provided to help contextualize the more specific and relevant material on faculty at state comprehensive universities presented in the next section. I focus on only a few of the numerous faculty characteristics commonly

examined by researchers: numbers, employment levels, gender and racial demographics, salaries, work hours, publication rates, and other such quantitative elements that are descriptive of faculty appointments and faculty work.

### Faculty Appointments and Faculty Members

The institutional division of the over seven hundred thousand full-time faculty members at degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the United States in fall 2009 is provided in table 8. They represent just under half of the total number of full- and part-time faculty members in this country. (The extent of part-time appointments ranges widely among institutional type, however, from a high of 69 percent at public two-year colleges to a low of 32 percent at public four-year colleges and universities.)<sup>24</sup> Moreover, as explored in chapter 1, nearly two in five of all full-time instructors hold term-limited appointments that are subject to renewal. Schuster and Finkelstein (2006a) were surprised by the rising trend in appointments off the tenure-track: In the eleven-year period ending in 2003, the percentage of new full-time faculty with contingent or term appointments rose each year, from just over 50 percent to nearly 59 percent. Thus, contingent or term appointments have become the modal form of all new full-time faculty appointments.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Note that the categories used by the U.S. Department of Education do not map neatly on to the categories used by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. These percentages, the most recent provided by the NCES, are from fall 2003; trends indicate that they will continue to increase.

<sup>25</sup>To address the common misperception that alternative employment structures (such as annual contracts) would necessarily reduce faculty job security, Chait (2002b) pointed out that faculty turnover rates are likely to be no higher among contingent or term appointees than they are among faculty on the tenure track.

Women have made inroads in the professoriate, with the percentage of women among new faculty more than doubling in the twenty-five years ending in 2003, from 20 percent to 44 percent. Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007) predicted that this rise will continue, given that women are being awarded an increasing share of doctoral degrees.<sup>26</sup> Still, the status of women in the profession is not equal to that of men. Although all of the following statistics obscure differences by discipline and institutional type, the averages are nonetheless telling: Men are more likely than women to be full professors (31 percent versus 16 percent [table 260]), and men are more likely than women to be tenured (55 percent versus 41 percent [table 274]).<sup>27</sup> Men received higher base salaries than women during the 2009–10 academic year (\$80,885 versus \$66,653 [table 267]). And men are less likely than women to be employed off the tenure-track. “Taken together,” Gappa, Austin, and Trice concluded, “differences between men and women in types of appointments, rank, and compensation raise questions about gender equity in the profession and about attractiveness of an academic career for women” (62).

In terms of faculty diversity by race, in fall 2009, just under 18 percent of faculty across all institutional types self-identified as Black (5.4 percent), Hispanic

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<sup>26</sup>According to the 2009 Survey of Earned Doctorates, the percentage of women receiving doctorates by field was as follows: education (66.9), social sciences (58.4), life sciences (54.5), humanities (51.9), physical sciences (29.5), engineering (21.3). Available at <http://www.nfs.gov/statistics/nsf11306/>, table 12.

<sup>27</sup>Data, from the NCES *Digest of Education Statistics: 2010*, are from the bracketed tables cited. To explain the first pair of data, 31 percent of all men employed in tenure-track positions across all institutional types are full professors; only 16 percent of all women so employed are full professors. Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007) offered these same comparisons but used older data.

(3.8 percent), Asian/Pacific Islander (8.2 percent), or American Indian/Pacific Islander (0.5 percent [table 260]). And as with the number of women earning doctorates and thus potentially preparing for academic careers, Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007) also considered the numbers of people of color earning doctorates. Updating their figures with data from the 2009 Survey of Earned Doctorates, nearly 24 percent of the doctorates earned by U.S. citizens or permanent residents in 2009 were earned by people of color.<sup>28</sup> But presuming that the increased number of non-White doctoral recipients will translate into increased representation in the faculty ranks is not possible. Gappa, Austin, and Trice concluded that “academe has not attracted and does not benefit as much as it could from the rich diversity of qualified people who are available. . . . Today’s diversity of faculty members and academic appointments raises important questions about the attractiveness of the academic career to prospective and current faculty” (64, 65).

### Faculty Work and Careers

In their study, Schuster and Finkelstein (2006a) found that the nature and distribution of academic work had shifted over the past several decades. For example, they found a rising faculty perception—across all institutional types—of the increase in research and publication required for the purposes of promotion and tenure.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>From the 2009 Survey of Earned Doctorates, table 17. Includes U.S. citizens or permanent residents who reported any of the following races: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic, or two or more races; “other/unknown” category was removed from total before calculating percentage.

<sup>29</sup>William Massy and Andrea Wilger (1992) referred to the situation as an “academic ratchet,” with one implication being that, for full-time faculty, research norms gradually rise, while expected teaching loads decline.

Most striking to Schuster and Finkelstein, and contrary to the suggestions put forth in Boyer's 1990 *Scholarship Reconsidered*, was the increase in the import placed on research by faculty outside the university sector: "Thus, a pivotal sector of higher education that several decades ago had only marginally bought into the expectation of research and publication as a crucial gatekeeping function for admission into the 'guild' has tilted heavily in that direction" (129). At the same time, they found that the research function was becoming more the purview of full-time faculty; part-time and contingent faculty were increasingly spending more time on teaching and teaching-related tasks. They referred to this development as "role encapsulation" (2006b, 56). Part-time and contingent faculty positions, especially, were becoming more narrowly focused and defined: "the familiar triumvirate of teaching, research, and service has largely morphed for the contingent faculty into a single-function role—teaching or research (for those less numerous research-only faculty appointments and post-docs)" (56). With the specialization of part-time faculty members, full-time faculty members have consequently been expected to absorb additional service and administrative duties.

For the 681,800 full-time faculty across all institutional types in fall 2003 (the most recent data for the following considerations), the average week included 53.3 hours of work. Of these hours, 58.2 percent were spent in activities related to teaching, 20.0 percent were spent in activities related to research, and the remaining 21.7 percent were spent in other work-related activities (including departmental and institutional service). These figures, expectedly, differ markedly across



institutional types (table 9), making the averages most useful in understanding broad inter-institutional differences. Since higher prestige for faculty members is affiliated with lower teaching responsibilities (Bogue and Aper 2000), that the percentage of faculty time spent on teaching and teaching-related activities steadily increases as one descends the institutional hierarchy is not surprising. Inversely, the percentage of faculty time spent on research and research-related activities steadily decreases as one descends the institutional hierarchy.

Faculty time devoted to research is not of much visible value to institutions unless something measurable results—and as William Savage Jr. (2003) and numerous others have pointed out, the academy takes the matter of productivity quite seriously. In terms of research productivity, the most commonly used measure for individuals and departments has been the number of publications in outlets such as academic journals, because “publishing productivity has the advantage of having similar meaning and value across types of institution, at least as reflected in faculty rewards” (Fairweather 1999, 61; see also Fairweather 1996).<sup>30</sup> Yet, in alignment with a key theme of this project, article publication rates vary widely by discipline: they are highest in the sciences and lowest in the arts and humanities.<sup>31</sup> Robert

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<sup>30</sup>Consider Larry Spence’s (2001) argument that the market for teachers does not come close to the market for researchers, since nobody is particularly good at producing learning outcomes. “The more you teach the less you earn. That is the market’s stinging rebuke,” he wrote (14).

<sup>31</sup>To give a sense of the disparities, consider these data collected by the University System of New Hampshire for the year 2000: Of the total publications by full-time faculty at six land-grant universities in New England, 79 percent were in the sciences (Science Citation Index Expanded journals), 18 percent were in the social sciences (Social Sciences Citation Index journals), and 3 percent were in the arts and humanities (Arts and Humanities Citation Index journals; cited in Toutkoushian et al. 2003, 142). The most recent University System of New Hampshire “strategic indicators” annual report (for 2009) does not present publication rates.

**Table 9**

Full-Time Faculty and Instructional Staff in Degree-Granting Institutions, by Type, Hours Worked, and Work Time Distribution, Fall 2003

Activity	All Institutions	Research	Doctoral	Compre- hensive	Private Liberal Arts	Public 2-Year	Other
Number of Full- Time Faculty (in thousands)	681.8	225.6	73.0	148.7	49.6	114.6	70.2
Average Hours Worked per Week	53.3	55.7	53.5	52.8	54.0	49.2	53.1
Work Time Distribution	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Teaching	58.2	43.4	55.4	65.4	65.9	78.4	55.0
Research/ scholarship	20.0	33.5	23.0	13.9	12.7	3.7	18.7
Other	21.7	23.1	21.6	20.7	21.3	17.9	26.3

Source: Adapted from NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2010*, table 261 (aggregated). Available at [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10\\_261.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10_261.asp).

Toutkoushian, Stephen Porter, Cherry Danielson, and Paula Hollis (2003) provided telling data about faculty productivity based on a survey of publications by faculty at 1,309 four-year institutions in more than 6,600 journals catalogued by the Institute of Scientific Inquiry.<sup>32</sup> Using 1996 as the year for analysis, they found that almost 20 percent of the institutions had no publications that year, while 13 percent had 200 or more. The mean number of indexed publications per faculty member was 0.26 (range = 0–7.63, median = 0.056). The data collected by Toutkoushian et al. suggested that the “average” faculty member at a four-year institution in 1996 was producing only one published article in ISI-listed outlets every four years. Of course, their methodology was unable to accommodate for the publication of books and articles in non-ISI journals; and their conclusions were based on publications in 1996. But Toutkoushian et al. did disaggregate the data along institutional lines; I present those findings as they relate to comprehensive universities in the next section.

Finally, in terms of faculty careers, Finkelstein (2006) emphasized the need to abandon overreliance on models of the “traditional” academic career for understanding directions for future growth (and future concern). Researchers, Finkelstein wrote, “will need to diversity” their “assumptive foundation” (203). Indeed, at many times in the history of the study of higher education, as I demonstrated in the first part of the conceptual framework section of this chapter, paradigms have shifted so as to necessitate using new lenses, new theoretical or analytical frameworks, and new methodological approaches for the study of the systems, actors, agents, purposes,

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<sup>32</sup>The catalog includes journals in the sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities.

and outcomes of education. As for faculty themselves, then, Schuster and Finkelstein (2006b) described the “ongoing transformation of the profession into a majority of contingent employees” as “most consequential for academic career trajectories” (57). They expressed concern over the attenuation of relationships between faculty members and their employing institutions—concerns that Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007) concluded could best be addressed when institutions reevaluate or rethink their approaches to ensuring equity in academic appointments, protecting the academic freedom for all categories of faculty appointments, allowing flexibility in academic appointments, providing opportunities for professional development and professional growth, and fostering collegial environments. These five elements were those that Gappa, Austin, and Trice found to be most essential in that they are most attractive to faculty members and most contributive to satisfying academic careers.<sup>33</sup>

### **Faculty in Institutional Context**

#### **Contextualizing Faculty at State Comprehensive Universities**

Statistics about the state of the faculty are quite helpful for understanding general differences in faculty characteristics among institutional types. But the key word is *general*: Averages obscure the ranges of possibility that allow individual faculty members at different institutional types to have similar experiences. In collecting and

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<sup>33</sup>The essential elements corroborate well with findings of earlier investigations into the perceptions of early-career faculty members regarding their expectations, work experiences, and concerns about their academic careers (see Austin and Rice 1998; Bataille and Brown 2006; Menges and Associates 1999; Sorcinelli and Austin 1992; Tierney and Bensimon 1996). For material specifically germane to the growing faculty populations of women and faculty of color, see, e.g., Boice (1993), Glazer-Raymo (1999), and Philipsen (2008). On collegiality, in particular, see Silverman (2004).

analyzing data from individual faculty members, this study addresses the inherent variability of experience within one institutional type. Yet this section nevertheless relies on averages and aggregate data to portray the general faculty situation at the institutional context of this study, state comprehensive universities. After presenting a range of statistics to complement those offered in the previous section on the even more generic situation of faculty across all institutional types, I briefly consider two particular though interconnected elements affecting faculty life at state comprehensive universities: the issue of status (and prestige) and the role of research.

First, the numbers. Just as Henderson (2007) explained that reporting the precise number of students enrolled at state comprehensive universities at any one time is difficult, so, too, is reporting the precise number of faculty employed by these institutions. Although we both used the same data source (the U.S. Department of Education Center for Education Statistics), my numbers differ from Henderson's by a substantial amount.<sup>34</sup> I calculated a total of 118,823 full-time faculty members at public comprehensive colleges and universities as of fall 2009 (table 7). Approximately

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<sup>34</sup>One reason for disparity is that Henderson relied on older data (from 2003); another reason is that the constituents and labels of the categories themselves have shifted over time. But these reasons alone cannot explain the substantial differences between our figures. Henderson reported—in 2007—that public comprehensive universities employed just 83,000 full-time and 48,400 part-time faculty members (81). My figures came from triangulated data based on percent distributions of faculty as of fall 2009. The NCES reported that 16.3 percent of all full-time faculty members (729,706) were employed in public master's colleges or universities, hence my much higher total number of full-time faculty members at state comprehensive universities (118,823). Elsewhere within the NCES *Digest of Education Statistics: 2010* (e.g., table 263), figures more in line with Henderson's are reported. These data, like Henderson's, also claim to be from 2003: public comprehensive institutions employed 107,300 full-time faculty members and 60,300 part-time faculty members (for a total of 167,600 faculty members, still larger than Henderson's total of 131,400 faculty members). Unfortunately the most recent data that identify the proportion of full-time to part-time faculty members by institutional type come from 2003, so I am unable to extrapolate a figure from the 2010 NCES data for fall 2009 part-time faculty members at public comprehensive institutions.

70 percent of full-time faculty members at state comprehensive universities held doctorates (compared to 73 percent for public research and 69 percent for private research universities, 62 percent for private comprehensive institutions, and 61 percent for private liberal arts colleges).<sup>35</sup> In fall 2003, women made up 41 percent of full-time faculty and 50 percent of part-time faculty [table 264].<sup>36</sup> Nearly 54 percent of full-time faculty at state comprehensive universities held tenure during the 2009–10 academic year: 60 percent of the male faculty and 46 percent of the female faculty [table 274]. At state comprehensive universities, the average salary for full-time faculty on nine-month contracts for the 2009–10 academic year was \$68,176; for men, it was \$71,579, and for women, \$64,086 [table 268].

With respect to diversity by race, in fall 2003, 78.0 percent of full-time faculty at state comprehensive universities self-identified as White, 8.7 percent as Black, 7.9 percent as Asian or Pacific Islander, 3.7 percent as Hispanic, and 1.8 percent as American Indian or Alaskan Native [table 264]. As for part-time faculty, 87.2 percent self-identified as White, 4.7 percent as Black, 3.3 percent as Asian or Pacific Islander, 3.1 percent as Hispanic, and 1.7 percent as American Indian or Alaskan Native [table 264]. These data, subdivided by gender, appear on table 10.

For the 148,700 full-time faculty at both public and private comprehensive universities in fall 2003, the average workweek included 52.8 hours, slightly under

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<sup>35</sup>Although these data were reported in the *NCES Digest of Education Statistics: 2010*, they were collected in fall 2003 and are the most recent data. In all cases, the most recent data are provided.

<sup>36</sup>As before, bracketed table numbers refer to those in the *NCES Digest of Education Statistics: 2010*.

**Table 10**

Percentages of Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty and Instructional Staff in Public Comprehensive Institutions, by Sex and Race/Ethnicity, Fall 2003

Characteristic	Total	White	Black	Asian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic	American Indian or Alaskan Native
Full-Time Faculty						
Women	41.3	32.1	4.0	2.6	1.6	1.0
Men	58.8	45.9	4.7	5.3	2.1	0.8
Total	100.1 <sup>a</sup>	78.0	8.7	7.9	3.7	1.8
Part-Time Faculty						
Women	50.0	44.1	2.4	1.3	1.5	0.7
Men	50.0	43.1	2.3	2.0	1.6	1.0
Total	100.0	81.2	4.7	3.3	3.1	1.7

Source: NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2010*, table 264. Available at [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10\\_264.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10_264.asp).

<sup>a</sup>Does not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

the all-institution average of 53.3 hours (table 9).<sup>37</sup> Of these hours, 65.4 percent were spent in activities related to teaching (higher than the all-institution average of 58.2 percent), 13.9 percent were spent in activities related to research (lower than the all-institution average of 20.0 percent), and the remaining 20.7 percent were spent in other work-related activities (including departmental and institutional service; only slightly lower than the all-institution average of 21.7 percent).<sup>38</sup> The subdivision of faculty time indicates that comprehensive universities, in general, can indeed be considered “teaching schools” (Hall 2002): faculty members at these institutions spend more time teaching (and engaged in teaching-related activities) than the average faculty member across all institutional types.<sup>39</sup> Time in the classroom per week for full-time faculty members at state comprehensive universities averages between nine and twelve hours. Henderson (2007) qualified that teaching “more” can also be defined in terms of numbers of credit hours, teaching loads, or numbers of students—or through a mixture of such indicators. In addition, teaching should be more important in considerations that lead to receiving tenure, promotions,

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<sup>37</sup>Note that these data for fall 2003 included both private and public comprehensive institutions; the figures here and in the next sentence are as close as the data allow for approximating work subdivisions for faculty at state comprehensive universities vis-à-vis those at other institutional types.

<sup>38</sup>Although I consider *outreach* to be a fourth area for faculty involvement, NCES uses a division similar to that in the traditional triumvirate of teaching, research, and service: they replace *service* with *other*—implying that the third category includes all non-teaching or non-research activities, most notably service and outreach (or, as described below, *engagement*). For comparison, and clearly reflecting Schuster and Finkelstein’s aforementioned concept of “role encapsulation” (2006b, 56), part-time faculty at public comprehensive institutions in fall 2003 worked an average of 38.8 hours, distributed as follows: teaching, 90.8 percent; research, 3.2 percent; other, 6.0 percent [table 262].

<sup>39</sup>By this definition, then, private liberal arts colleges and public two-year institutions are also “teaching schools.”



and merit pay allotments or increases at state comprehensive universities. As a result of the teaching emphasis, students at state comprehensives and other teaching schools are frequently enrolled in smaller classes than students at research universities, and these classes are more likely to be taught by full-time faculty members (as opposed to teaching assistants or adjuncts).

As the figures in table 9 show, service is the second most prominent work-related activity for the average full-time faculty member at a state comprehensive university. The broad category includes institutional, disciplinary, and community service—the latter of which is now frequently referred to as *engagement*, as it moves beyond the academy. Duties related to institutional service (for example, serving on committees that make decisions on curricula, textbooks, or promotions) carry the least status and are often perceived as “onerous and time sapping” (Henderson 2007, 94), even though decisions about hiring and retaining faculty members, for example, are extremely important. Disciplinary service (for example, serving in leadership roles for national or regional organizations, reviewing conference proposals, or serving on editorial boards) carries greater status and provides faculty members with opportunities to interact with faculty from different institutions. Travel to conferences can afford faculty members at state comprehensive universities, especially those at rural campuses, to enjoy cosmopolitan benefits and interactions with colleagues from around the region, country, or world.<sup>40</sup> Henderson found that faculty

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<sup>40</sup>Alvin Gouldner (1957, 1958) distinguished between “cosmopolitan” and “local” faculty with respect to faculty loyalties (to the discipline or to the school). An earlier exegesis on the basic dichotomy was offered by Robert Merton (1949).

members at state comprehensive universities are most likely to become involved with disciplinary organizations having either pedagogical or student orientations;<sup>41</sup> but several national disciplinary organizations have regional organizations that exist, in part, to allow easier access and greater opportunity for involvement by faculty from regional institutions.<sup>42</sup> Finally, community service (or engagement) is particularly common at state comprehensive universities, given the applied nature of certain curricula (education, health services, criminal justice, business) and local or regional orientations.

Research, on average, occupies the smallest portion of faculty members' time at state comprehensive universities. But because of the increase in attention that seems to have been given to research at state comprehensives—a development that invokes Riesman's "snake-like procession," on the one hand, and Boyer's (1990) expanded definition of scholarship on the other, more reasonable and optimistic, hand<sup>43</sup>—I treat the "moving target" of research at state comprehensives (Darden 2007, 1) in a separate subsection, using a wider scope and considering scholarship of varying forms. Next, though, I consider the imbricated topic of status and prestige, especially as it relates to faculty at state comprehensive universities.

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<sup>41</sup>Discipline-specific honor societies, for example, are student-oriented organizations; these organizations need advisers and may have regional and national annual meetings.

<sup>42</sup>For example, six regional associations are affiliated with the Modern Language Association. Officers in these associations routinely come from a mix of institutional types, including state comprehensive universities.

<sup>43</sup>The simplest and most straightforward distinction between *research* and *scholarship* I know comes from Jules LaPidus, who wrote: "Research is something you do. Scholarship is the way you think about it" (2000, 90).

### Faculty Status and Prestige at State Comprehensive Universities

Material cited in chapter 2 suggested that the comparative lack of attention given to comprehensive institutions by higher education researchers was related to the lack of status and prestige afforded such institutions. The earliest Carnegie Classifications, in privileging research over teaching, likely reified the academic hierarchy. After offering a laundry list of non-constructive, derogatory epithets given to comprehensive institutions over the years,<sup>44</sup> I explored the roots of the various prejudices in the histories of tertiary institutions that commonly evolved into state comprehensive universities. And I invoked the work of Brewer, Gates, and Goldman (2002) to examine the relative lack of prestige generators at such institutions. How, though, do these contexts affect the status and self-esteem of individual faculty? This question has no single answer; the possible answers, as demonstrated below, can range most conspicuously.

On one end of the status and self-esteem spectrum is the work of Dorothy Finnegan, whose ideas about the origins of comprehensive colleges and universities were explored earlier. A champion of the comprehensive institution, Finnegan critiqued the “conceptual postures” of prestige and hierarchy that had been espoused in most literature on the academic labor market, feeling this narrow focus had severely limited our understandings (1997, 337). She questioned the simplistic though influential labor-market view that faculty jobs at comprehensive institutions are

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<sup>44</sup>“Oh, but such epithets are, in fact, constructive,” the cynical critic would argue, “in that they support the academic hierarchy, thus reminding us that only the prestigious institutions are important.” My hope is that I am demonstrating otherwise in this project.

awarded only to less competitive or less competent graduates of research universities—or graduates from less prestigious research universities. Instead, she argued that many faculty members at comprehensive institutions did not merely settle for their jobs but, rather, intentionally chose them (1993, 1997). Many faculty members at comprehensive institutions, Finnegan found, simply have different aspirations than faculty members at research universities. Such faculty “are motivated . . . by the type of students they encounter, the institutional community they find, the freedom to pursue eclectic research projects, and the institutional emphasis on teaching. These factors are essential components of their professional lives and are more important than smaller teaching loads, better pay, and the pressure to publish” (Finnegan 1997, 347).

Equally optimistic is Donald Hall (2002), who challenged faculty at “teaching schools” to be self-reflective and to take charge of their careers and their situations. He decried faculty who are cynical, pessimistic, and selfish; and he wrote about how the identities of faculty members are interwoven into the very fabrics of their disciplines and institutions. In a later work (2007), one also “animated by . . . optimism” (15), Hall elaborated on the importance for faculty of respecting the work that their employing institutions do. Every faculty member must strive to develop “a successful career on one’s ‘own’ terms,” he argued, “even when the larger profession has looked at our institutional affiliation (which is far from prestigious) and implicitly or explicitly defined us otherwise” (2002, xix, xxi). Doing so is especially necessary for “those hard-working academics employed at schools that emphasize teaching rather

than research,” because they “often feel misunderstood, undervalued, or ignored by the profession as a whole” (23).<sup>45</sup>

A case in Hall’s last point is Terry Caesar, who, for thirty years, was a professor of English at Clarion University in Pennsylvania (an SCU). In a bitter article that appeared in the *South Atlantic Quarterly* in 1991, he claimed, in language full of “the wild candor of a Dostoevsky character” (McLemee 2005), that his institutional affiliation made him invisible to others within his discipline. For example, he wrote that “teaching at a second-rate university is knowing, at least, that you’re not worth knowing” (T. Caesar 1991, 466). Likewise, having such a position is “to be deprived of integrity,” as the institution “abides . . . in a continual inferiority” (466).

Caesar’s work stands in marked opposition to that of Hall, who himself spent the first thirteen years of his academic year at a state comprehensive university. In the acknowledgments to a collection of his essays, Caesar complained—for that is how it reads—that he had “very little to mention” (1992, xxix). Tellingly—and germane to his argument about the meanings of being employed at a “second-rate university”—he announced, as if in an oddly defiant sort of superciliousness, that he “had no released time or research help or funding of any kind” from his university in the writing of the book (xxix). Now, had the book been unrelated to his occupation or employer, such a comment would not necessarily have seemed so out of place.

What a world of difference there is, then, between Caesar’s “acknowledgments” and

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<sup>45</sup>Ann Green, of Saint Joseph’s University (Philadelphia) would likely appreciate Hall’s work. “While it will take a great deal of time to undo the privileging of research and the research institution in discourses about and practices of higher education,” she wrote, “those at nonelite institutions can speak rhetorically to make public the rich teaching and intellectual work of our professional lives” (2008, 144).

the acknowledgments that appear in Hall's *The Academic Self: An Owner's Manual* (2002), written while Hall was professor of English at California State University, Northridge! Hall's gracious acknowledgments begin as follows: "This book would have been impossible without the support and wisdom of all my fine colleagues at California State University, Northridge. They continue to amaze me with their energy, determination, and commitment to students. And those students were also key to the production of this book" (ix). This extended comparison demonstrates how differently two individuals can respond to their lots at state comprehensive universities: Caesar clearly internalized—and contributed to the perpetuation of—the damaging rhetoric; Hall questioned the "traditional assumptions of the entrenched academic hierarchy" (Henderson 2007, 51), casting them aside and making the most of his situation in an eloquently inspiring manner.<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately for his self-esteem and career satisfaction, then, Caesar had internalized the following koan-like observation about the ubiquity and force of prestige vis-à-vis the state comprehensive university: "Prestige is everywhere and nowhere. It explains everything and nothing to say that it seldom ceases to be 'a factor'" (1992, 153).

### Research at State Comprehensive Universities

Despite their similar exigencies of heavy teaching loads and lack of release time for carrying out their scholarly projects—and despite their contrary attitudes

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<sup>46</sup>Jeffrey Di Leo spoke to the inherent self-reflexivity encouraged by the academic lifestyle, writing that "It is vital for us as member of academic culture to consider whether our affiliations are working for or against the ends that we value both individually and collectively" (2003b, 4). Caesar felt his affiliation with a state comprehensive university worked against him; Hall used his affiliation in a positive way.

about their respective situations—both Caesar and Hall were successful in publishing their scholarship in journals and at scholarly presses while employed at state comprehensive universities. They thus engaged in one of the most visible forms of research: writing for scholarly publication. Caesar was perhaps instrumentally motivated, likely buying in to the complementary ideas that research is “the primary basis for prestige in the many disciplines” (B. Clark 1987, 70) and that “academic reputation and rewards are . . . dependent on publication” (Rhode 2006, 11). He was apparently seeking acknowledgment, status, and reputation, after all. Hall, on the other hand, seemed to be writing because he felt he had a genuine contribution to make; to appropriate a phrase from W. Brad Johnson and Carol Mullen, he was “writing to thrive” (2007, 63).<sup>47</sup>

Research at state comprehensive universities—at least research in the traditional sense, that is, work that leads to the creation of knowledge—is quite a debatable issue. It plays directly into the idea of both faculty and institutional status and prestige.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, the products of research are disciplinarily grounded; but publications remain the key commodity. According to one approach, at least, “successful publication of scholarly work is the *sine qua non* of an academic career” (Kalish 1997, 157). Donald Kennedy (1997) explained that “All the thinking, all the

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<sup>47</sup>In other words, Hall viewed research as “an expression of faith in the possibility of progress,” a form of “optimism about the human condition” (Rosovsky 1990, 89). Although quite famous himself, Gerald Graff (2003) would side with Hall, believing that being a professor should not be primarily about published scholarship or the quest for professional distinction.

<sup>48</sup>But not always positively. To quote Burton Clark: “The research orientation is viewed by many observers, however, both within and outside the university, as a corruption due to prestige-hungry administrators and self-seeking professors who selfishly turn their back on the undergraduate” (1963, 48).

textual analysis, all the experiments and the data-gathering aren't anything until we write them up. . . . It is a truism that an experiment is not done until it is published" (186). In short, administrators of most state comprehensive universities would not complain if they were to have a more "productive" faculty: and publications have the potential to reach a wider audience and are much more visible and easily "counted" than is teaching.<sup>49</sup> New faculty members at state comprehensive universities, as well, are largely keen to continue in the scholarly conversations that engaged them with their disciplines as graduate students (see, e.g., Malesic 2009).<sup>50</sup> But with their missions, stakeholders, and budgets in mind, administrators at state comprehensive universities are reluctant to reduce the amount of time that their faculty members are expected to spend teaching and engaging with students (Darden 2007). Therefore, faculty members at such institutions who wish to carry out research for publication must do so in the 7.3 work hours per week, on average, they are ostensibly allotted for research—or on their own time.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Of course, as explored earlier, it is not only due to the ease of "measuring" publications that they have been privileged over teaching in the academy. And with respect to teaching and productivity, a faculty member interviewed by William Tierney had the following to say: "*Productivity* is a stupid word to use when you talk about teaching. Machine workers are productive, or an economy can be productive. What I do in the classroom has less to do with productivity and more to do with quality" (1999b, 42; original emphasis).

<sup>50</sup>Blackburn and Lawrence (1995) explained this development as follows: "At the larger regional university the younger faculty are coming increasingly from research universities and are being socialized via their graduate programs to place less emphasis on teaching." Moreover, "the new hires at the regional university were recruited for their research potential, with the clear message that research is what will be rewarded" (275).

<sup>51</sup>The number was calculated from figures provided in table 9. Bearing in mind that the figures are averages, compare the number of hours per week the average faculty member at a state comprehensive university spends on research and research-related activities (7.3) with those for faculty members at public two-year institutions (1.8), private liberal arts colleges (6.9),



Research at state comprehensives carries with it another dimension: that of pressures on faculty to increase their research productivity (that is, in the traditional understanding, to publish more). This aspect of the situation, as an expression of mission creep, has received much attention (by, for example, Aldersley 1995; Dey, Milem, and Berger 1997; Eddy and Gaston-Gayles 2009; Henderson 2009a; Henderson and Buchanan 2007; J. Murray 2009; Schevitz 2004; Youn and Price 2009). But such pressures are not new. Antecedents of the contemporary pressures at many state comprehensive universities transpired earlier in the histories of those institutions, during the transitions—and “upgradings”—from teachers colleges or other institutions to state comprehensive universities. At those junctures, as I described in chapter 2, institutions struggled to improve faculty qualifications, among other characteristics, so as to be able to make the transition from one institutional type to another. But how did faculty members perceive these changes? Linda Eisenmann (1990) recounted an interview with a faculty member at West Chester University (Pennsylvania) about the institution’s transitions from West Chester State Teachers College to West Chester State College in 1960: According to the faculty member, a retired professor of health education, the administrators seemed to “wish to create a ‘little Harvard’ at this former normal school, playing down the historical attention to teacher training in return for an enhanced research impetus” (304). Ultimately,

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doctoral universities (12.3), and research universities (18.7). And note that the possibility for research at state comprehensive universities favors faculty members in the humanities and social sciences over those in the natural or physical sciences, as budgets for necessary research infrastructure—personnel (faculty and research assistants), facilities (laboratories, libraries), and other research materiel—are significantly smaller at most state comprehensives than they are at research universities.

faculty members who served at West Chester in the 1950s and 1960s “lamented the loss of focus on the teacher training mission” (304), reflecting Ogren’s (2005) impressions from an earlier wave of institutional transformations that evolutions from one institutional type to another were not beneficial to all parties involved.<sup>52</sup>

More stringent requirements for tenure at state comprehensive universities have contributed to the pressure to publish. Longitudinal data about faculty perspectives from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching demonstrate the magnitude of the change. For faculty members at comprehensive institutions, the percentage answering “Strongly Agree” to the question “In my department it is difficult for a person to achieve tenure if he or she does not publish” rose from just 6 percent in 1969 to 43 percent in 1989—more than a sevenfold increase (reported in Boyer 1990, 12).<sup>53</sup> But, also in 1989, 60 percent of faculty respondents at comprehensive institutions answered in the same survey that they had published no articles in academic or professional journals (19 percent) or only one to five articles (41 percent) in their entire academic careers (reported in Boyer 1990, 103). Henderson (2007) took these and other data (e.g., Henderson and Buchanan 2007)—even though they were for institutions instead of individuals—to indicate that faculty members at state comprehensive universities are publishing more than they did

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<sup>52</sup>Indeed, B. Clark (1984), Hodgkinson (1971), Jencks and Riesman (1968), C. Pace (1974), and others noted how higher education in the United States became more homogeneous in the 1960s.

<sup>53</sup>In fact, the magnitude of this increase was the greatest across all institutional types. The percentage of respondents at two-year institutions answering “Strongly Agree” rose from 3 to 4; at liberal arts colleges, from 6 to 24; at doctoral institutions, from 27 to 71; and at research universities, from 44 to 83 (Boyer 1990, 12).

a few decades ago; but “it is clear for the SCUs, publish-or-perish is an overstatement” (69). Nevertheless, John Murray, in a study of new faculty at a state comprehensive university in the Northeast (2009), found that ambiguities about tenure requirements—which differed from field to field—understandably contributed to faculty stress, especially when the majority of his interviewees (twelve of fourteen) felt they had a lack of time for scholarship. (Murray found, in agreement with the findings of other studies, that preparation for teaching consumed most new faculty members’ time.)<sup>54</sup>

Recall the study by Toutkoushian et al. (2003) that I introduced in the section on faculty work. In 1996, the mean number of indexed publications per faculty member at 1,309 four-year institutions was 0.26, implying that the “average” faculty member at a four-year institution produced just one published article in an Institute of Scientific Inquiry–listed outlet every four years. Toutkoushian et al. disaggregated the data by institutional type, though they did not separate public and private comprehensive institutions. The mean number of publications per faculty member at the 398 Master’s I institutions was 0.10; at the 88 Master’s II institutions, it was 0.04. Henderson (2007) used these data to calculate that “it took 20 comprehensive university faculty to produce as many publications as one Research University I faculty

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<sup>54</sup>The most commonly invoked reason for this situation is that most graduate schools prepare their students to be researchers, not teachers (see, e.g., Blackburn and Lawrence 1995; Cahn 2008; Gergits 2009; Gumpert 2001). Writing about a newly minted Ph.D. who had accepted a position at a private comprehensive institution in the Northeast, veteran James Lang realized she will face “the traumas of every first-year professor.” Yet he was confident that “she will survive that first year the way we all survive it: barely treading water, getting her head above the surf just in time to see the next wave of papers come crashing down, wondering whether she is doing it right and what she has got herself into” (2005, 180, 181).

member did in 1996” (68). Even though the data from the study by Toutkoushian et al. are not the most current and focus on publications of a particular type and rigor, if faculty members at state comprehensive universities are, in fact, responding to the pressure to publish, one possible explanation for the apparently low average publication rates is that faculty at these institutions may be publishing in less prestigious outlets: regional journals, newsletters, magazines; professional or pedagogical journals (Henderson and Buchanan 2007); or in other venues or genres (for example, textbooks).<sup>55</sup> Such publications do not show up in ISI or other similar citation indices or databases and are thus absent from most cross-institutional analyses.

With respect to the issue of research at state comprehensive universities, Ernest Boyer created quite a stir with the 1990 publication of his *Scholarship Reconsidered*, wherein he enunciated a “new vision of scholarship” for America’s colleges and universities (13). While visiting campuses across the country in preparation for his *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America* (1987a), he had perceived numerous ways in which doctorate-granting institutions, comprehensive universities and colleges, and liberal arts colleges “live in the shadow of the research university” (121).<sup>56</sup> One manifestation was the increased pressure to publish, which he found “to one degree or another in all types of institutions” in the study (122).

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<sup>55</sup>That some how-to writing guides for academic audiences devote space to these “less threatening, less competitive avenues for getting published” (Micklos 2006, 88) indicates the relativity of publishing in venues that, in certain cases, may “carry virtually no relative weight in the hierarchy of values of scholarly publications” (Porter 2010, 36). See, for example, Kitchin and Fuller (2005); Lussier (2010); Rocco and Hatcher (2011); Wepner and Gambrell (2006).

<sup>56</sup>Boyer was studying four-year institutions, and his categorizations reflected those used in the 1987 Carnegie Classifications. At the apex—or, as Burton Clark once worded it, “at the top of the stairs” (1985, 39)—were research universities.

Affected by the increasing tensions between research and teaching—and concerned for the experiences of both students and faculty members<sup>57</sup>—he proposed that teaching and other institutional obligations be rewarded and recognized by institutions in similar ways as publications (that is, the measurable output of research as traditionally defined).<sup>58</sup> Thus he redefined research to include scholarship of several forms, encouraging faculty work to be seen in a much broader, expanded context. Traditional scholarship, which he called the “scholarship of discovery,” was of course still important; but alongside it Boyer identified three additional scholarships: integration, application, and teaching (1990).<sup>59</sup>

Russell Edgerton (2005) described Boyer’s *Scholarship Reconsidered* as promoting an “energizing idea” that initially, at least “elicited a surge of faculty interest and energy” (xiv, xiii). The interest was particularly vibrant among certain sectors of higher education, among them comprehensive institutions.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, Boyer felt that

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<sup>57</sup>Here, Boyer surmised that the education of undergraduates might be suffering if full-time faculty members become more engaged in research and less engaged in classroom teaching. At the same time, he was worried that faculty career satisfaction would decline if faculty members who preferred teaching (or service) over research were forced to spend more time engaged in research.

<sup>58</sup>Grants and patents, too, are measurable outcomes of traditional research—but they remain largely (though not exclusively) in the purview of the more elite institutions, where they are likely to be outcomes of research in the sciences.

<sup>59</sup>The scholarship of teaching is today widely known as the *scholarship of teaching and learning* (Huber, Hutchings, and Shulman 2005; McKinney 2004; Shulman 2000). Although this form of scholarship is particularly apropos to the faculty situation at state comprehensive universities, so, too, is the scholarship of application, particularly application through service (see O’Meara 2002).

<sup>60</sup>Still, I recall discussions of the work taking place during Faculty Senate (at the time, Faculty Council of Representatives) meetings at Cornell University in the mid-1990s. The discussions, initiated by Ronald Ehrenberg, largely focused on how an expanded definition of scholarship could speak to faculty members in such fields as the visual and performing arts.

comprehensive institutions, perhaps more than any other type, could “benefit most from a redefinition of scholarship” (1990, 61). Although Boyer did not cite this study in his report, Glenn Pellino, Robert Blackburn, and Alice Boberg (1984) had previously reported the results of a study on research-related perceptions of faculty and administrators at selected colleges and universities. Participants in that study had identified six distinct dimensions of scholarship: professional activity (service to the discipline through critique and review), research and publication, artistic endeavor, engagement with the novel (innovations in teaching and service), community service, and pedagogy. Of particular relevance to Boyer’s connection to comprehensive institutions is that Pellino, Blackburn, and Boberg found that faculty members at research universities valued research and publication as the most important form of scholarship, but faculty members at all other institutional types most valued the scholarship of pedagogy. One conclusion, at least, disrupts the assumption that research-as-publication has always been perceived as the only legitimate form of scholarship: “faculty who are not productive, using professional activity and publication standards, perceive their work to be in some fashion scholarly” (114).

Henderson (2007) used Boyer’s model to suggest that much of the “unaccounted” work-related time spent by full-time faculty members at state comprehensive universities is in fact scholarly in nature: but instead of being related to scholarly production, it is related to scholarly consumption (75).<sup>61</sup> The institution-level

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<sup>61</sup>This unaccounted time arose from comparing the average number of hours spent per week teaching or in teaching-related activities (34.5, calculated from figures on table 10) with the 9–12 hours actually spent in the classroom. Certainly, preparing for a lecture, if it involves engaging with recently published literature, is a form of scholarly consumption.

studies I have reported here provide contextualization for this conclusion. But necessary for appreciating this conclusion—and one of the motivators behind this study—is a more nuanced understanding of how individual faculty members perceive the nature of their work.

### Summary of Faculty in Institutional Context

In considering faculty at state comprehensive universities in their institutional context, I first examined numerous characteristics of faculty members (numbers, employment levels, gender and racial demographics, salaries, work hours, publication rates, and other quantitative elements), comparing them with previously presented data on faculty across all institutional types. This portrayal allowed for situating faculty at state comprehensive universities with respect to faculty at other institutional types. Then I considered two particular though interconnected issues that pertain to faculty work life, framing them within the contexts of state comprehensive universities. Regarding status and prestige, the first issue, two extreme examples—of Hall and Caesar—demonstrated how the historical quest for increased status can affect the self-esteem of faculty at such institutions. My presentation of research at state comprehensives involved considering trends in publication rates, the increasing expectations for tenure, and the impact of Boyer's 1990 *Scholarship Reconsidered* on the conceptualization of scholarship at state comprehensive universities. In this study, I expected these concerns to be related to the issues over which faculty participants must negotiate a balance in their work lives.

Finally, I conclude this section with an excerpt from an article prepared by Burton Clark in 1985, while he was working on his *The Academic Life: Small Worlds, Different Worlds* book project. In this segment, he effectively summarizes several of the issues described earlier in this dissertation, using memorable language and metaphors that are all too infrequently found in presentations of contemporary higher education research. Clark managed, in few words, to offer insights into some areas that I have not previously addressed:

We do not need to stray very far from the leading universities before teaching becomes a true “load,” jumping to twelve hours a week and leaving little or no time for research. In the public comprehensive colleges, teaching is undergraduate centered, with perhaps some master’s level instruction but not a Ph.D. student in sight. Pay is less than in the universities, and professors know they are in second- and third-level institutions, ones of “some status” in the institutional hierarchy.

Generally, the state college of today was a teachers college in the recent past and is now somewhere midstream between that blighted shore and the promised land of university status. The midstream location may be nigh-permanent, however, since existing universities have already pre-empted the high ground on the far shore and state plans insist that the newcomers stay out of Ph.D. programs and away from major research. Some respondents referred to an inchoate institutional character—“the place has not come to terms with itself”—that confuses their own professional culture.

. . . . Many professors struggle hard to do some research and stay abreast of their disciplines, but are constrained by institutional conditions. As in the private liberal arts colleges, they individually teach across a broader spectrum of less advanced courses than do university specialists. . . . Travel monies are scarce, making it difficult to get to national meetings. (1985, 39–40)

Thus was the institutional context for faculty at state comprehensive universities in the mid-1980s; over a generation later, many continuities remain—although Clark’s average, innominate “state college” has now become a university.



### **Tenure and Its Effects on Faculty**

In chapter 1, I described how tenure is perceived and misperceived—and how tenure, “as the ideal employment model for academe,” has increasingly been questioned and challenged (Gappa, Austin, and Trice 2007, 50).<sup>62</sup> The rising concern is that when tenured faculty members retire, their positions (if they are to be replaced) will increasingly be filled with part-time or non-tenure-track faculty. Schuster and Finkelstein (2006a, 2006b), for example, expressed concern that, individually, the attractiveness of academic careers is being threatened and, collectively, the “vitality of the nation’s university-based research enterprise” may be at risk due to the restructuring of academic life and careers (2006b, 58). Although tenure may be attenuating, we know little about the effects of tenure, positive or negative, on faculty members—and even less about the effects of tenure on faculty members at state comprehensive universities. A key motivator of this study into how tenure affects the work lives of faculty members at state comprehensive universities was, in fact, to be able to illuminate a topic of interest to the debate on the restructuring of academic life.

“The sine qua non of a great university, above all else, is an outstanding faculty,” James Axtell wrote (1998, 88). Tenure, to a certain extent, gives institutions a semblance of control over how at least some portions of their faculties are comprised.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>“In both public and professional discourses,” Anna Neumann wrote, “few questions are as contentious as those about academic tenure and the tenured career” (2009, 273n11).

<sup>63</sup>The multiple qualifications in this statement are grounded on several assumptions: That initial faculty hiring decisions are primarily made at lower levels (departments, colleges) within the institutional structure; that ultimate decisions to approve individuals for tenure are made at

On an operational and organizational level, tenure serves to reward and retain faculty members who have effectively contributed to the core missions of an institution and who are likely to continue doing so. Thus, for faculty members, tenure should encourage loyalty (Hanney 2007). Victor Shaw offered a different interpretation, however, in suggesting that tenure “prevents a free, healthy flow of academic personnel from place to place across the market or through the community of scholarship. An institution owns a scholar once it grants him or her tenure” (2004, 159). I doubt that many faculty members feel this extreme position to be the case, since research on faculty careers and life courses generally shows increased job satisfaction over time.

Over a decade ago, Wilbert McKeachie observed that “we do not have . . . extensive research on the middle years” of faculty careers—the years that follow tenure (1997, 31); his remark still rings true today.<sup>64</sup> We do have anecdotal commentaries, however, such as this succinct, equivocal observation from Shaw (2008): “After tenure, some academicians change” (165). Although Shaw’s observation allows for

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the upper levels of institutional administration; and that tenured faculty constitute the “core” faculty that should be expected to be responsible, at least to some extent, to the institution and its governance.

<sup>64</sup>Demonstrating the comparative dearth of material on post-tenure or mid-career faculty, Gretchen Bataille and Betsy Brown’s *Faculty Career Paths* (2006) jumps from a chapter on early-career faculty to a chapter on late-career faculty (although a chapter on non-tenure-track faculty is sandwiched between the two). In addition, the majority of publications about tenure, from the faculty perspective, seem to involve how to *get* tenure. Jeffrey Buller includes a brief chapter entitled “Special Challenges for Midcareer Faculty” in his *The Essential College Professor* (2010); but therein he shifts attention to preparing for the next promotion—normally that to full professor. One node of literature, however—that on faculty vitality—has not ignored mid-career faculty. See, for example, Chan and Burton (1995); S. Clark and Lewis (1985); Kalivoda, Sorrell, and Simpson (1994); and McLaughlin (1999); but I have seen very few additions to this body of scholarship in the last decade. Huston, Norman, and Ambrose (2007) reexamined the literature on faculty vitality in an attempt to reconnect it with current concerns.

positive changes, his implication was changes for the worse. Public perception of tenure, indeed, regularly emphasizes the “widespread myth” of deadwood and waste (Neumann 2009, 38)—as if tenure encourages all professors to reduce their commitments and levels of productivity, becoming content to rest “on wilted laurels” (Toor 2011). Of course, such cases are possible. While president of the AAUP, Fritz Machlup, for example, responded to the argument that tenure led to “deteriorated professors” as follows: “it must be granted that the tenure system may contribute to some deterioration in the performance of some professors” (1964, 118). Note, however, Machlup’s qualifiers. And note, how, over forty-five years later, little research has explored potential faculty deterioration in post-tenure years: what we presume is largely left up to anecdote. A similar view in the public imagination is that tenure offers “the freedom to be a serious contrarian” on campus (Riley 2011, ix).

Roger Baldwin, Christina Lunceford, and Kim Vanderlinden (2005) agreed with McKeachie that faculty in the “middle years”—those following tenure—have been largely overlooked: “Basically, the largest and most important component of the academic profession has been ignored both by scholars and policymakers,” they wrote (97). Challenging those who assume that faculty members enter a “quiescent period” following the demands leading up to tenure (98), they investigated satisfaction, productivity and work effort across the faculty career collectively, that is, across faculty careers at all institutional types. They found a downward linear pattern of dissatisfaction, a justifiable variation in forms of scholarly productivity

across life and career stages,<sup>65</sup> and “modest but important variations” in faculty work life at successive career stages (114).

McKeachie (1997) described the post-tenure years as ones in which “faculty members settle into their careers” (31) yet should be invigorated and inspired by the security of tenure to be creative and to take risks in their research and teaching. Potentially confounding those possibilities as well as affecting motivation and intrinsic satisfactions are certain changing demands experienced by post-tenure faculty. A case that, at the time, was particularly apropos to faculty at state comprehensive universities is as follows: “They were hired for one role—teaching—and now find that their college or university is putting more emphasis on research” (32).

For faculty members, then, recognizing and anticipating changes in work-life situations over time is important.<sup>66</sup> But what of the specific role of tenure in these changes? Marilyn Gist (1996) described an academic career as a continuum of professional development, one that is punctuated by “marker events” (for example, getting the doctorate, accepting a tenure-track position, being tenured) that “merely

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<sup>65</sup>For example, mid- and late-career faculty produced more books and book chapters than early-career faculty. According to the definition used by Baldwin, Lunceford, and Vanderlindin (2005) for their calculations, however, the “mid-career” years do not immediately follow tenure but rather describe faculty who have between twelve and twenty years of experience. “Late-career” faculty members have twenty-five or more years of experience.

<sup>66</sup>Tenure, for example, marks a workplace shift: it involves a change in the relationship between employer and employee (O’Meara, Terosky, and Neumann 2008, 131). One consequence is that faculty members who are awarded tenure are generally expected to take on greater institutional responsibilities. William Tierney and Estela Mara Bensimon (1996), using the lens of critical postmodernism, described tenure as “the strongest example of a socializing mechanism for new faculty in that it involves the exchange and definition of thought and action” (36–37). They emphasized the reciprocity of the change, arguing that individuals should be encouraged to shape and change the very organizations whose mores are likely to be shaping and changing them. Tenure empowers individuals to do so.

indicate phases of transition in the ongoing process of acquiring and utilizing knowledge and skills” (185). Tenure, as one such event, “denotes a stage of transformation whose meaning is clarified by hindsight” (192).<sup>67</sup> She offered the following commentary that suggests the meaning of tenure is best understood retrospectively: “After tenure, when we look back at where we started, most of us are amazed at how much we have learned. . . . The marker event of tenure coincides with a stage of development that is no longer characterized mainly as potential but as potential augmented by substantial accomplishment” (186). The rewards brought about by tenure, she found, include both internal and external validation (with a concomitant adjustment in self-image) and greater freedom and flexibility in activities. Likewise, Dorothy Finnegan and Adrienne Hyle (2009), in a study of expertise and faculty rank among history faculty at two research universities, also considered growth and development over time, noting “a surge in public confidence once tenure and the rank of associate professor were awarded that was not visible while in the lower rank” (475). They found tenure, for example, to be one of a number of “factors [that] exist that propel and guide faculty toward control and confidence in their expertise” over time (475).

By considering an academic career as a continuum with a particular trajectory, Gist, in particular, invoked the life-course frame, a collection of sociological theories particularly suited to the study of learning and career-identity construction (see

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<sup>67</sup>Shaw pointed out that “tenure may represent a significant turning point for many academicians” (2008, 163), but the extent of its importance is something not immediately perceived.

Pallas 2007). The four key ideas of the life course frame, applied to faculty members, are: the lives of faculty members are embedded in particular historical contexts; faculty actively construct their life trajectories through their actions and choices; the facets of a faculty member's life—work, family, background—are intertwined;<sup>68</sup> and the developmental impact of a life transition (such as the awarding of tenure) depends on when it occurs in a person's life (O'Meara, Terosky, and Neumann 2008).

Anna Neumann also appropriated such a frame in the studies she presented in *Professing to Learn* (2009). As described in chapter 1, Neumann's investigation into the post-tenure work lives of faculty members at research universities uncovered what she described to be an overwhelmingly positive dimension to tenure: the scholarly work and learning of faculty members continued to grow more diversified and complex after tenure. This learning was unbounded and not tied to particular contexts or locales; even service, she found, could be "transformed into a site of scholarly learning" (163). But she also found that newly tenured professors feel as if they are "doing more work than ever before" (3), perhaps as a result of their responsibilities having expanded, "sometimes in overwhelming ways" (2).

At the research universities where Neumann's participants were tenured, the cultures were such that junior faculty members are largely "protected" (17) from heavy teaching and service loads in the years before tenure (so they can focus on the research that is necessary for them to be tenured). As a result, many of her participants had been caught "off-guard" after receiving tenure by the nature and quantity

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<sup>68</sup>David Perlmutter explained this obvious association as follows: "all of the human factors of academic life are interrelated" (2010, 85).

of new work that was “necessary to the academic enterprise but of lesser personal meaning to them” (17). Such work included service that necessitated learning how to navigate their institution in different ways; teaching that exposed them to new challenges, formats, and technologies (see Huston 2009); and even research that was unrelated to their specific interests. This professional learning was of a different nature than disciplinary learning in their scholarly fields (Neumann, in fact, occasionally referred to it as “instrumental learning”—but it was learning nonetheless).

What is particularly interesting about Neumann’s approach is that she did not privilege the organizational stance.<sup>69</sup> She was therefore quite aware of the research university context and how it affected the kinds of professorial work that are central to institutional missions and aims. As a result, she postulated that, given differences in institutional missions, “the nature of professors’ scholarly learning—and how it relates to research, teaching, outreach, an service—is likely to vary by institutional type” (11). Professors at other types of institutions, she suggested, may face fewer discrepancies between their pre- and post-tenure existences: “Professors in community colleges or state universities, for example, well socialized in extensive teaching and service before earning tenure (given the demands of their campus missions), are likely to be less surprised with new or increased teaching and service demands after getting tenure than will university professors who, because of their campus’s emphases on research and researcher development, learned little about

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<sup>69</sup>As a case in point, neither the term *prestige* nor the term *hierarchy* appears in the body of her work.

their university's teaching, advising, mentoring, service, and administrative responsibilities through their pre-tenure careers" (11–12). Neumann's hypothesis about faculty at state universities served as a fitting motivation for this present study, which aimed to uncover faculty perceptions of differences between pre- and post-tenure work lives of faculty members at state comprehensive universities.<sup>70</sup>

### **Faculty in Disciplinary Context: History as a Discipline, Profession, and Career**

Burton Clark (1987, 1997), as previously cited, believed that academic culture is a function of both institutional type and discipline. Attempting to understand contemporary faculty work—and its complexities, challenges, and shifting nature—thus necessitates an understanding of both institutional and disciplinary contexts. Having investigated institutional characteristics of state comprehensive universities, as well as general characteristics of faculty at such institutions, I now turn to an investigation into the disciplinary culture of my target discipline. This exploration is necessary because, as John Smart, Kenneth Feldman, and Corinna Ethington (2000) proposed, “thorough knowledge of academic disciplines is a prerequisite to understanding variations in the professional attitudes and behaviors of college faculty” (2). Here, I focus on how the nature of the discipline of history may shape and affect the identities of its practitioners. I am aided in my task by the fact that professional self-consciousness has reached a “heightened state” (T. Caesar 1992, 158) in the discipline of history,

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<sup>70</sup>For a well-executed comparison between faculty perceptions of institutional culture at a community college and institutional culture at a state comprehensive university, see Burton (2007).



resulting in an abundance of descriptive, evaluative, and self-reflective writings on the state of history as an academic disciplines.<sup>71</sup> Offering particularly helpful contextualizing material is *Envisioning the Future of Doctoral Education*, a collection of Carnegie Foundation essays on the doctorate (Golde, Walker, and Associates 2006) that includes three pieces specifically on doctoral education in history (Appleby 2006; Bender 2006; Cronon 2006).

“What does it mean to be a tenured professor of history at a state comprehensive university?” That was a question underlying my interviews with faculty members in departments of history. Here, though, I briefly attempt to answer the more general question, “What does it mean to be a historian?” A discipline with a “clear and cohesive identity” (Golde, Walker, and Associates 2006, 291), history borrows theories and techniques from other fields and disciplines. As a result, and even though historians share certain intellectual commitments, normative assumptions, and theoretical inclinations (Cronon 2006), “historians are a large and variegated group” (Bender et al. 2004, 3). Some historians align themselves with the humanities, and others, with the social sciences. History has, though, moved closer to the humanities in recent decades, especially through the ways in which text and language are

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<sup>71</sup>Only the field of English studies (including literature and composition—but also encompassing creative writing, rhetoric, writing studies, and even film and new media) appears to have a more active component of self-reflectivity. In part, much of the activity involves the occasionally contentious debate that has followed the post-modern and critical turn recently taken by the field. *Profession* is an annual publication by the Modern Language Association—the major professional organization for faculty in English—that offers reports, essays, commentaries, letters, and opinion pieces about “current intellectual, curricular, and professional trends and issues that are of importance to the field.” See <http://www.mlajournals.org/>.

understood (Bender 2006).<sup>72</sup> *The Education of Historians for the Twenty-First Century*, a report published in 2004 for the American Historical Association (AHA), described the discipline of history as empirically grounded and dependent on “the imaginative construction of narratives that are explicitly referential and thus distinguishable from fictional narratives” (4).<sup>73</sup> The research product of historians is configurational narrative: narrative that is empirically grounded but imaginatively constructed (Chartier 1995, 154). In their work, historians emphasize the importance of time and location in the interpretation of social life. The discipline of history is thus interpretive, dialogic, hermeneutical (Bender 2006). The primary aims of history as a discipline are “to examine the human experience over time, with a commitment to the explanatory relevance of context, both temporal and geographical” (Bender et al. 2004, 4). If history has an epistemology, it is grounded in the idea that intellectual independence is established by original documents, which empower historians to speak truth, as they interpret it (Bender 2006).

According to the AHA report, the mission of the profession of history is “to increase and enrich the fund of historical knowledge, to expand and deepen the general understanding of history, and to promote its public usefulness” (Bender et al. 2004, 4). The careers and work settings of historians are diverse, although graduate

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<sup>72</sup>Gordon Wood differentiates the social-scientific strand of history from sociology, psychology, political science, and the other social sciences by describing that they “try to breed confidence in managing the future,” yet “history tends to inculcate skepticism about our ability to manipulate and control purposefully our destinies” (2009, 6).

<sup>73</sup>Historian Stephen Pyne, in writing about writing history, summarized the two nonnegotiable rules as follows: “you can’t make anything up, and you can’t leave out something that really matters” (2009, 19).

education in history “is largely oriented toward academia” (Golde, Walker, and Associates 2006, 291). Results from a 1995 survey of all then-currently employed history Ph.D. recipients under the age of seventy-five indicated that 71 percent of all professional historians were pursuing their careers as faculty in institutions of higher education.<sup>74</sup>

Annually in the United States, about 950 Ph.D. degrees in history are awarded. History departments at doctorate-granting institutions are generally rather large, with the average department having twenty-five faculty members, about eighty graduate students, and an average entering cohort of nineteen doctoral students. Approximately 40 percent of doctoral students in history are female, and most are White. Only about half majored in history as undergraduates (Golde, Walker, and Associates 2006).

The structure of doctoral programs in history has changed little since World War I. Until 1960, doctoral education for most historians was provided by private institutions.<sup>75</sup> Since then, however, public institutions have educated a substantial majority—68 percent in 2000 (Bender et al. 2004, figure 1.16). Today, average time-to-degree for a doctoral degree in history is 9.3 years, and the average doctoral

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<sup>74</sup>Data are from Ingram and Brown (1997). Of the 71 percent in higher education, 65 percent were at four-year institutions. Of the 29 percent employed outside higher education, 8 percent were employed in other educational institutions; 7 percent with the federal, state, or local government; 6 percent with private not-for-profit organizations; 4 percent with private for-profit companies; and 3 percent were self-employed (total does not equal 100 percent due to rounding). Cited in Bender et al. (2004, 5).

<sup>75</sup>Bender (2006) pointed out that in 1950, just twenty departments produced 75 percent of all history Ph.D.s. By the 1990s, those twenty departments produced only 40 percent of all history Ph.D.s. During the same period, the number of departments offering the doctorate in history doubled.

student receives 3.5 years of financial support (meaning that many rely on student loans and part-time jobs to cover living and other expenses). As with students in humanities disciplines in general, students in doctoral programs in history complete their work in two stages: coursework and the dissertation. Between the two stages lie comprehensive exams (in one major field and from one to three minor fields). A history dissertation is a book-length manuscript that, after revision, is ideally published by a university press (Golde, Walker, and Associates 2006).<sup>76</sup> William Cronon (2006) described the work, also ideally, as a “masterpiece” (341) that serves triple duty as the final requirement for the doctorate, a necessity for gaining an academic job in most institutions, and—once published as a book—the main basis on which tenure is awarded. And although Golde, Walker, and Associates (2006) made the following comment in the context of doctoral education in English, it is germane to students of history, as well: “The competitiveness of the job market has pressured students to publish during graduate school, leading to concerns that students are professionalizing prematurely, before their ideas have had time to ripen” (352).<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Even given the so-called (and ongoing) crisis in scholarly publishing, scholarly books in history remain central to the programs of almost every university press (Dalton 2008). Dalton estimated the growth of publishing historical texts as follows: In 1895, at least 7 percent of the titles published by university presses were in the field of history. By 1925, that figure had grown to at least 12 percent; by 1955, to 15 percent; by 1985, to 17 percent; and by 2004, nearly 23 percent.

<sup>77</sup>Over the past dozen years or so, authors of numerous opinion pieces in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, for example, have commented on the increased pressures on graduate students to publish and present. Leonard Cassuto remarked that “‘publish or perish’ has already become a graduate-school mantra” (1998, B4); Courtney Leatherman wrote that graduate students “feel more and more pressure to publish and present papers just to be competitive on the market” (2000, A16); Thomas Benton described “successful graduate students” as those who “publish as much as . . . [they] can” (2003, C3); and Norman Plummer, a doctoral student in English, felt pressure to “produce sufficient publications” to set himself up “for that elusive tenure-

Indeed, the publication of books, almost always single-authored works, is the core professional activity of historians: scholarly monographs are central to the discipline (Dalton 2008; Pyne 2009, 2010). As such, historiography is a key focus of reading seminars during the coursework phase of doctoral education in history. In seminars, graduate students are expected to learn and practice constructive criticism, to learn how historians use primary documents to support and elaborate their claims, and to learn to read “as a professional historian,” which “means paying as much attention to footnotes and bibliographies as to the main body of the text” (Cronon 2006, 343).<sup>78</sup> Writing, therefore, is central to the historian’s craft. Like English, history is a “‘word’ discipline”; “good writing is in itself a part of the job” (Berelson 1960, 55, 248). And although recent debates have considered the need to

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track job” in his field (2007). In a different venue, Charles Lord advised graduate students to “build publications from day one and not wait until the third or fourth year of a PhD program to set out on the publication trail” (2004, 10). If graduate students do not publish—or do not publish early and prolifically enough, the argument goes—their prospects of securing tenure-track jobs decrease, since, “on the job market, those with completed dissertations *and* publications have the best advantage, all other things being equal” (Lauer 1997, 233; original emphasis). In some fields, even, “competition is so strong that some publication is virtually required for success in the job market” (Goldsmith, Komlos, and Gold 2001, 67). Though these observations and conclusions may seem anecdotal, Paul McEwan (2003) nonetheless proffered as fact that “graduate students must now present and publish much earlier than in preceding generations” (50). Likewise, in a handbook for humanities graduate students published in 2010, Gregory Semenza claimed that “many students do, in fact, feel overwhelmed by the emphasis in today’s graduate programs on publishing and conferencing” (91). As for the minority view that premature publishing may be risky, see Paré (2010) and Pasco (2009).

<sup>78</sup>In the words of Anthony Grafton, “footnotes matter to historians. They are the humanist’s rough equivalent of the scientist’s report on data: they offer the empirical support for stories told and arguments presented. Without them, historical theses can be admired or resented, but they cannot be verified or disproved. As a basic professional and intellectual practice, they deserve the same sort of scrutiny that laboratory notebooks and scientific articles have long received from historians of science” (1997, vii). And “footnotes form an indispensable if messy part of that indispensable, messy mixture of art and science: modern history” (235).

place more emphasis on writing in graduate history education, effective historians “speak to the hearts as well as the heads of readers” (Demos 2010, 21).

History was among the first group of disciplinary professions organized at the time of the emergence of the new research universities in the United States: the American Historical Association was founded in 1884.<sup>79</sup> The discipline has diversified remarkably over the past half-century. One hundred years ago, for example, virtually the entire realm of professional historical inquiry focused on the North Atlantic and Euro-American region. Today, though, with one-third of current full-time faculty having earned their doctoral degrees since 1990, these faculty are more likely to be students of Africa, Asia, Latin America, or the Middle East than are members of the current retiring faculty cohort. Today, history is one of the academy’s largest disciplines (Bender et al. 2004).

Dana Ringuette, chair of the Department of English at Eastern Illinois University (Charleston), has advocated a synthetic approach to Ernest Boyer’s four scholarships. Although, like Donald Hall, his perspective and examples are grounded in the culture of English studies, his argument—that English studies can coexist with the culture of state comprehensive universities—is germane to the disciplinary culture of history within the same institutional environment. This lengthy extract from an essay that appeared in the Modern Language Association’s *Profession* persuasively and compellingly details an ethic of scholarly synergies that seems quite

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<sup>79</sup>The AHA was one of a handful of professional organizations that were born soon after the start of the university movement in the United States. Others in that “new wave of learned societies” included the American Philological Association (1869), the American Chemical Society (1877), the Modern Language Association (1883), and the American Economic Association (1885) (Rudolph [1962] 1990, 406).

appropriate to the state comprehensive university. In the passage, Ringuette presents a refined, sophisticated understanding of how knowledge is produced, synthesized, and transmitted, emphasizing what Yvonna Lincoln referred to as the “qualitative content of faculty work” (1999, 180). “Faculty members at regional and comprehensive colleges and universities,” Ringuette (2008) explained,

have been more or less compelled (to good effect, I think) to believe that our work in the classroom, in our reading and writing, and in committee must be associated. When we do good research, we are refining and redefining what it is we do in the humanities, both for ourselves and for our professional audiences. This kind of work makes one a better teacher, not only for the practice of intellect it demands but also for the understanding of the profession one then takes back to the classroom and, for that matter, to every department or university committee. Any research worth doing involves, even necessitates, thinking about what we’re doing and why, if only because it involves such a dynamic commitment of energy, time, and scheduling. Publication of research, which is in practice outwardly directed beyond the confines of the department and university, must move also inward. The research a colleague does, for example, into the aesthetic values underlying an obscure novel may lead her to think about high and low art in ways that change her syllabi, to shape the way she presents material in the classroom, and to think about the curriculum when she serves on committees. It also sends her to conferences where she talks to people from other universities about their teaching, service, and research.

Such work, I would contend, is no less viable, valuable, or worthwhile than that conducted in literature and language departments at large, research-oriented institutions. . . . (188)

Ringuette’s views, validating the type of scholarly work that can be and is done at state comprehensive universities, serve as a fitting segue to the final substantive section of this chapter, a discussion of the effects of tenure on faculty.

### **Summary of Faculty Contexts**

Historically, studies of faculty—or of the occupational culture of academe, formally initiated by Logan Wilson in 1942—have focused on individuals at the top of the academic hierarchy: faculty members at research universities or elite liberal arts colleges. The earliest studies were predominantly quantitative, relying on demographic statistics and other easily measurable characteristics and features. Today, studies of faculty have diversified in epistemological and methodological approach—a fitting state for a more diversified (that is, less predominantly male and White) faculty. But the faculty landscape continues to change, especially with respect to the nature of faculty appointments. No longer can the “traditional” model of a faculty career—where a Ph.D. recipient enters a tenure-track job and advances steadily toward tenure and promotion—be relied upon as a means for conceptualizing or understanding current and future challenges to the academic profession (Finkelstein 2006).

Together, state comprehensive universities may employ as many as 150,000 full-time faculty members. On average, most of their working time (over 65 percent) is spent teaching or in teaching-related activities. Because prestige is associated with research, not teaching or service, faculty members at state comprehensive universities differ as to how they negotiate and internalize the missions of their institutional homes. Some embrace the missions and the challenges and responsibilities affiliated with them (as demonstrated by the example of Donald Hall); others (such as Terry Caesar) feel ignored by their academic disciplines and the larger world of



academe. Still, faculty members at state comprehensive universities are gradually increasing their rates of publication (a traditional measure of research productivity), perhaps in response to increased expectations for tenure, even though the ideas behind Ernest Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990) regarding an expanded definition of scholarship seem to have found a niche at state comprehensive universities.

Because this study focuses on faculty members, their disciplinary affiliations are also of import, as disciplines are animated by different epistemological properties and thus inform professional identity in different ways. Faculty members in departments of history were selected for this investigation. Doctoral students in history are traditionally preparing to enter the academy; texts are their main products of scholarship; and, as a core area for general education, history is among those disciplines experiencing increased numbers of contingent faculty appointments.

Finally, tenure has long been studied as a policy and as a procedure, but surprisingly little—beyond anecdote—is actually known about how tenure affects the work lives of faculty. Anna Neumann (2009) investigated the effects of tenure on faculty members at research universities, specifically with respect to their engagements with their scholarly and research interests. In contrast, this study investigates perceptions of the effects of tenure on faculty members who, despite mission creep, spend the vast majority of time engaged in teaching and service. On one level, then, this study translated Neumann's study to a different population and considered the extent to which Boyer's multiple scholarships are viewed and practiced as scholarly engagements by faculty members at state comprehensive universities. On a more

immediate level, this study considered the specifics of faculty members' perceptions: how tenure affects their experiences of the nature, type, and quantity of work they carry out vis-à-vis the institutional, disciplinary, and professional expectations placed upon them. The next chapter considers the method used in this study to address these considerations.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHOD OF THE STUDY

#### **Methodological Context and Justification**

##### Research Alignment and Approach

In *Professing to Learn*, Anna Neumann (2009) focused on the early post-tenure careers of tenured professors at major research universities. She was aiming to understand better certain nuances of the “deceptively complex” issue of faculty growth, a concept she defined, with KerryAnn O’Meara and Aimee LaPointe Terosky, as “change that occurs in a person through the course of his or her academic career or personal life that allows her or him to bring new and diverse knowledge, skills, values, and professional orientations to her or his work” (O’Meara, Terosky, and Neumann 2008, 25, 24). In this study, I focused on the post-tenure careers of professors at state comprehensive universities, looking at ways in which tenure, in particular, was perceived to have influenced changes in faculty lives. Some of these changes may, in fact, be classified as manifestations of growth, according to O’Meara, Terosky, and Neumann’s definition. Like Neumann, I chose not to “privilege the organizational stance” (2009, 13) in order to give voice to the “personal origins and meanings of career as situated in a personal life” (14).

I subscribe to Neumann's emphasis on the personal because individuals—faculty members, in this case—although they operate within organizational structures, networks, frameworks, and expectations, might not be continuously attuned to the ways in which those structures, networks, frameworks, and expectations influence or exert force on their own perceptions, actions, and beliefs.<sup>1</sup> Thus, although theories—organizational and otherwise—may certainly prove relevant to individuals' situations, the individuals themselves might not be living their lives in conscious accordance to such theories.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the contexts within which lives are lived are indeed “real”; but how these contexts and their influences are perceived may differ from individual to individual, even for individuals who, based on outward appearances alone, may seem to be in similar situations or circumstances as others within the same or similar classifications, categories, and shared networks.

The underlying approach of this study thus emphasized the personal: I collected and considered individual experiences of and stories from tenured faculty members in history at state comprehensive universities. As the material in chapters 2 and 3 demonstrated, the individuals, their discipline, and the sites of their work are all important. “Behind (buried underneath?) the abstract titles of the higher education

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<sup>1</sup>By conceptualizing intellectual fields as dynamic structures that consist of networks of interactions among institutions or individuals, Pierre Bourdieu (1966) emphasized the interconnectivity among academicians. By extension, his argument applies to academic disciplines, within which faculty members are individual agents. Wright et al. (2004) examined a portion of the vast literature on structural features of institutions and departments with respect to how these contexts affect the conditions of academic life and the various demands placed on faculty members.

<sup>2</sup>At the same time, I agree with Anthony Giddens, who wrote that “The ‘identity’ of the self . . . presumes reflexive awareness” (1991, 52). But an individual's resultant self-identity is grounded in internal, not external, theories that arise from these very reflexive experiences and activities.

literature,” Colin Evans compellingly argued, “behind the statistics and the accounts of governance are individual men and women, staff and students, living their lives within academic communities which are largely unstudied *qua* communities and sites of experience” (1993, ix). Although Evans’s goal was to write an ethnography of the discipline of English at British universities, I narrowed the aperture and focused on the lives of individuals in order to understand how employment at a particular institutional type in the early twenty-first century intersects with disciplinary and professional expectations, goals, and growth.

Without enumerating the distinctions between quantitative and qualitative approaches, Theresa Enos (1996) straightforwardly suggested that stories of the professional lives of academics prove a more powerful use of “data” than can be offered by statistical analyses: stories “help us define our places in academia so that we can better trace our future” (1). She explained further: “For the subject of our professional lives to be touched on and told about, we of course depend on the power of language. . . . The stories you will hear, more than the ‘hard data’ you will read, use the power of the occasion to make our histories more compelling, more true” (1). In short, from the faculty perspective, “our stories, more than statistics, tell who we are” (2). Ultimately, then, “only by placing narrative against narrative (against narrative against narrative),” Donald Hall attested, “do we acquire some marginal ability to rewrite, synthesize, or even reject the stories that we have internalized or embraced as the singular truth about professorial life” (2007, 1). Thus this project takes a step toward making sense out of material that, until now, has

primarily existed in the presumptive or anecdotal worlds or has been buried behind the aggregated quantitative data on faculty work life collected in large-scale surveys of faculty habits, attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs.

### Rationale for the Research Method

For the individual faculty member who is interested in understanding where she or he fits relative to the norms—or for the higher education researcher interested in understanding those norms—works such as Jack Schuster and Martin Finkelstein's *The American Faculty* (2006a) prove to be valuable resources. Nevertheless, as sociologist Bennett Berger reminded us, “lives are more complicated than social categories” (1990, xxiv). And adding the dimension of time to understandings of individuals' work and life courses prompts the need for further investigation of faculty careers as vehicles for both personal and professional development and growth.

The aim of this project was to understand faculty members' perceptions of the relationship between tenure and their work lives. Specifically, this study investigated how tenure was perceived to affect faculty members' roles and responsibilities with respect to their students, colleagues, departments, institutions, discipline, and profession. Answering this question involved attending to how tenure was perceived to affect individual faculty members' experiences of the nature, type, and quality of work they carry out—as well as how tenure has influenced their understandings of the institutional, disciplinary, and professional expectations placed upon them. A qualitative, interview-based approach was thus employed in order to

gather insights into each participant's perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs (Creswell 2008), with the ultimate goal of comprehensively and meaningfully depicting the fullness of experience. A qualitative approach was the most reasonable for investigating the work lives of faculty members at state comprehensive universities, since qualitative studies seek depth rather than breadth and thus require neither large samples nor comparative elements in order for their findings to be of value. Moreover, qualitative research is especially appropriate for studies where little empirical research exists (Patton 2002); it sets the stage for future studies by identifying questions that can be effectively addressed through a variety of methodological approaches.

Because tenure standards, even at the same institution, vary over time (Chait 2002b; Chait and Ford 1982; Finkin 2007), I attempted to limit this investigation to faculty members who were tenured in the past eleven years (that is, in or after 2000). Also, because I sought to understand how tenure is perceived to affect faculty work life, I had to rely on my participants' abilities to remember their pre-tenure faculty lives. Selecting faculty who were tenured within the previous eleven years allowed for more temporally proximate pre-tenure memories.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, within the

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<sup>3</sup>Still, consensus among psychologists is that our memories are not exact replicas of past events: memory is reconstructive, not reproductive (Clifasefi, Garry, and Loftus 2007). Memories, indeed, are often a blurry mix of accurate recollection and material that fits with our needs, emotions, beliefs, and hunches—the latter of which are based on our knowledge of ourselves, the events we are trying to recall, and experiences we recall from similar situations ("schematic memory" à la Rodeiger and McDermott 1995). Paul Levy is not the only memoirist, for example, to have begun his personal story with a confession that it is "a work of fiction" because, he attested, "The human memory is a poor thing" (1990, 1). (He was, granted, looking back over forty years.) Finally, Burton Clark (1987), although writing over twenty years ago, pointed out a concern that, if still relevant, I wish to ameliorate: "In the teachers college turned state college [in

past forty years, state comprehensive universities have experienced a substantial amount of mission creep (Kassiola 2007; Henderson 2009a), whether as a reaction to institutional ambiguity or as a function of the desire for prestige (both of which were described in chapter 2).<sup>4</sup> One consequence is that faculty at state comprehensive universities are now typically expected to contribute to their professional or disciplinary conversations through publications and presentations at academic conferences, albeit on a lesser scale than that of their research university peers (Worsham 2008). (For example, regional conferences or regional journals are often adequate; and the scholarship of teaching and learning is often considered valuable.) Eric Dey, Jeffrey Milem, and Joseph Berger (1997) found that faculty across all institutional types reported increased in publication productivity between the 1970s and 1990s, but the largest increases were reported by faculty members at comprehensive universities. Given that understanding tenure and its perceived effects was the key goal of this project, attempting to compensate for major shifts in tenure

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his study], the newer faculty also have a distinct sense of being different from their older colleagues" (115). I therefore attempted to limit my focus on faculty who arrived in the 1990s or 2000s, not before. Underscoring this attempt, ultimately, was that potential faculty participants would self-select in accordance with my designs.

<sup>4</sup>See also Aldersley (1995). In short, many state comprehensive universities have made strategic decisions that imply a desire to climb to the next "prestige" level within the academic hierarchy: adding doctoral programs, encouraging (or requiring) greater research productivity among faculty members, hiring staff to support applications for competitive research grants, and more (but see Kassiola 2007 for an alternative interpretation). Writing about a department of chemistry at a state comprehensive university, for example, Ball et al. (2004) stated that "potential hires are [now] more thoroughly evaluated on their research potential and their ability to garner external funding than they are on their potential to become outstanding teachers" (1796). Ironically, mission creep as a response to institutional ambiguity seems only to increase such ambiguity among stakeholders. Some may argue that community colleges have recently received more attention than state comprehensive universities vis-à-vis purported mission creep, especially with respect to the community college baccalaureate (Floyd 2006; Floyd, Skolnik, and Walker 2005; see also Gump 2007a).



expectations by faculty tenured within the same “academic generation” was important (Finkelstein, Seal, and Schuster 1998).<sup>5</sup>

### Site Selection and Description

For this study, I purposefully selected nine state comprehensive universities from the 189 such institutions located in the Midwestern, Northeastern, and Southeastern United States (see appendix A).<sup>6</sup> The institutions, as representatives of their type, had enrollments between 5,000 and 16,500 students for the 2009–10 academic year (the most recent data that were available from all institutions at the time of selection); the average enrollment was 11,300 students. All institutions were classified by the 2010 Carnegie Classification as “larger” master’s colleges and universities, where the average fall 2009 enrollment across all such institutions was

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<sup>5</sup>Anecdotal stories abound of faculty members at state comprehensive universities complaining that the full professors serving on their promotion and tenure committees—especially those who were tenured or promoted well over a decade prior—would themselves not be favorably considered for promotion or tenure today, given the higher standards and expectations. In 1997, R. M. Douglas referred to the situation as one “in which a portfolio that might have sufficed to earn its holder consideration for tenure a decade ago is now merely the prerequisite for a realistic chance at a tenure-track position” (1997, 150n14). Indeed, “What it means to be a junior faculty member changes from generation to generation, from situation to situation,” William Tierney and Estela Mara Bensimon argued (1996, 17). By extension, what it takes to become tenured changes from generation to generation, from situation to situation.

<sup>6</sup>Together, the institutions in these three regions account for nearly 70 percent of all state comprehensive universities. In accordance with the definitions established by the U.S. Census Bureau, I defined the *Midwestern United States* as including the following twelve states that make up the “West North Central” and the “East North Central” regions: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin (56 institutions). The *Northeastern United States* includes the following nine states and commonwealths: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont (65 institutions). The *Southeastern United States* is composed of the “South Atlantic” and “East South Central” regions and includes the following twelve states and commonwealths (plus the District of Columbia): Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia (68 institutions).

11,750 students.<sup>7</sup> Only one institution is located in a city with a 2009 population greater than 50,000; the average population was 32,500, but the median population was 21,500. Eight of the nine sites are at least twenty-five miles from the nearest metropolitan area of greater than 100,000 inhabitants, suggesting that the service regions of most institutions in this study are predominantly rural. The institutions were also selected so that multiple visits to each campus, if necessary, would not put undue burden on the researcher.<sup>8</sup>

Selected institutions reflect the diversity of the backgrounds of state comprehensive universities as described, for example, by Dorothy Finnegan (1991). Six of the institutions were founded as *normal schools* or *state normal schools* between 1865 and 1900; all evolved into universities between 1950 and 1960. Along the way, these six all transitioned through one or more of the following identifications: *teachers college*, *state teachers college*, *state college*, and *state university*. Two institutions were founded as universities between 1955 and 1970. One institution was founded as a *private subscription school* before the Civil War and transitioned through multiple identities, as the institutions above, before becoming a university around 1960. Individual pseudonym pairs were given to each institution and its location: for example, Spenwood State is a state comprehensive university that is located in the

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<sup>7</sup>Enrollments are as quoted by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; the source is the 2009 IPEDS Institutional Characteristics and Fall Enrollment (NCES 2010b; available at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/surveys/2009.asp>).

<sup>8</sup>For the purposes of maintaining site anonymity, I offer no additional details about the specific locations.

eponymous town of Spenwood, located somewhere in the Midwestern, Northeastern, or Southeastern United States.

All institutions were initially selected on speculation—that is, I identified sites with what appeared to be large numbers of potential participants and hoped that these institutions would ultimately grant permission for me to invite certain faculty members to participate in my study.<sup>9</sup> Before contacting any faculty members, I was in touch with the institutional research directors at the respective institutions in a two-stage sequence of correspondence (see appendix B). First, I sent a brief message introducing myself, describing the purpose and goals of this study, and explaining how the study would involve faculty from their institution, if permitted to proceed.<sup>10</sup> Permission to proceed with the necessary Institutional Review Board (IRB) paperwork was granted in each case. Second, after receiving provisional approval from the University of Illinois (College of Education) IRB, I submitted full project descriptions to the institutional research directors at the nine selected institutions. These materials included the contingent approval letter from the University of

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<sup>9</sup>Several institutions in my target regions had history departments with numerous “old” and “young” members—that is, faculty who would have likely been tenured before 2000 and faculty who were not yet tenured at the time of the study—and very few in the range I was targeting. Because (as described in the next section) my initial faculty participation rate was returning below 25 percent, I did not intentionally identify any institutions with fewer than five faculty members whom I believed would be eligible to participate in my project.

<sup>10</sup>This preliminary message was necessary so I could include the sites as potential sites on my University of Illinois IRB application and subsequently seek permission for full IRB approval from the potential sites. I was thus seeking their *willingness* to consider my full IRB application at a later date.

Illinois (College of Education);<sup>11</sup> certification of my IRB training; and copies of my recruitment texts (appendix B), informed consent form (appendix C), and interview protocol (appendix D). In three cases I was also asked to complete the institutions' own IRB applications; one institution required a letter of support from my faculty adviser. After a small amount of negotiation at two sites,<sup>12</sup> permission to invite faculty members from the nine institutions was granted.

### **Empirical Data and Their Collection**

The core empirical data collected for this study consists of transcripts of interviews I conducted with eighteen faculty members in departments of history (or their equivalents)<sup>13</sup> at eight of the nine state comprehensive universities selected and approved for this study. I transcribed these data from the original digital recordings<sup>14</sup> and supplemented them with reflective field notes that I made after each interview (as suggested by Bogdan and Biklen 2007).

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<sup>11</sup>Approval was contingent on the individual sites approving my project. In asking for formal permission, the understanding was that my University of Illinois IRB would be approved if the potential sites themselves were ultimately willing to serve as sites for my project.

<sup>12</sup>In two cases I was asked (and complied with the request) to add local contacts to the informed-consent forms that I would be giving to participants at those sites.

<sup>13</sup>For example, at some state comprehensive universities, faculty who teach history are housed in departments of history and philosophy. (Other variations and combinations exist, as well: history may also be paired or grouped with anthropology, geography, legal studies, political science, religious studies, or sociology. This list is not exhaustive of the possibilities. My unscientific search suggests that such pairings or groupings are particularly common at smaller comprehensive institutions.) For this study, however, all faculty participants were hired to teach history courses, regardless of the names of the departments with which they are affiliated. Hereafter, when I write "departments of history," I mean "departments of history (or their equivalents)," as described in this note.

<sup>14</sup>I used Express Scribe Transcription Software for Typists version 5.06, freely available from Canberra-based NCH Software, to transcribe from .wma (Windows Media Audio) files to text.

Appropriate and eligible faculty participants were identified through a combination of strategies. “Appropriate” faculty participants taught history courses in departments of history and thus aligned their identities with historians; “eligible” faculty participants had been tenured within the past eleven years and still taught full-time (as opposed to currently serving in an administrative capacity, for example, and having less than a half-time teaching load).<sup>15</sup> In some cases, departmental websites provided adequate details for me to discern which faculty members had been awarded tenure within the past eleven years. In cases where these details were not forthcoming, I contacted departmental representatives (such as administrative assistants or department heads) to determine potential participant eligibility. And in cases where departmental representatives would not share the necessary information (citing, for example, confidentiality of personnel data), I modified my recruitment text so as to invite all faculty from relevant departments and to allow self-identification of fit with the described eligibility criteria.<sup>16</sup> In all cases, departmental websites provided contact e-mail addresses for all faculty members I ultimately invited to participate in my study.

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<sup>15</sup>This qualification was made so that I would be interviewing individuals who would identify themselves primarily as faculty members, not as administrators. Ultimately, of my eighteen faculty participants, two had served as department chair (or interim department chair), and one was about to become department chair the following term. In all cases, faculty members serving as department chairs still taught at least 50 percent of a normal faculty load in their departments.

<sup>16</sup>Given that I was working with public institutions, I was surprised that collecting dates when faculty members had been tenured proved to be difficult in some cases. The subsequent revision to the recruitment text required an amendment to both my University of Illinois IRB application and the institutional IRB applications that I had previously filed.

At the time of this study, the departments themselves ranged from 12 to 26 faculty members, with an average of 19.1 and a median of 16.0.<sup>17</sup> Although such matters as sabbatical leaves complicate the figures, the departments employed an average of 15.4 tenured or tenure-track faculty members (median = 15.0); and they were home to an average of 3.7 non-tenure-track faculty members (median = 2.0), who held either part-time or full-time positions.<sup>18</sup> These figures are in line with averages reported by the American Historical Association based on a survey conducted during the 2007–8 academic year (Townsend 2010). The 929 history departments in four-year colleges and universities employed an average of 16.5 faculty members each.<sup>19</sup> Of the total of 15,360 faculty members in history departments, 74 percent were in tenure-eligible positions (compared with 81 percent in my sample).<sup>20</sup> Overall, 35 percent of faculty members in departments of history in 2007–8 were women (compared with 44 percent in my sample).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Aggregating and comparing among the departments is difficult, however, given that some departments house multiple specialties. Not all of the faculty members reported in these calculations, then, teach history courses.

<sup>18</sup>Of the 18 non-tenure-track faculty members in these departments for whom I know credentials (55 percent of the total), 8 (44 percent) of them hold Ph.D.s.

<sup>19</sup>Departments at research universities were the largest, with 33.5 faculty members per department; and departments at baccalaureate institutions were the smallest, with 9.2 per department. Extrapolating from data presented in Townsend (2010), departments of history at master's institutions employed an average of 22.2 faculty members each, suggesting that the sites in my study have history departments that are, on average, smaller than the average within their institutional type.

<sup>20</sup>More useful would be these figures broken down by institutional type; but the Townsend (2010) report offered only the composites.

<sup>21</sup>Mary Ann Mason (2011) was not the first to point out that, across all disciplines and faculty ranks, women are more highly represented at institutions lower on the academic hierarchy: 50 percent at community colleges, 41 percent at baccalaureate and master's institutions, and

Methodological suggestions made by Rebekah Hamilton and Barbara Bowers (2006) informed my strategy for recruiting participants. First, I sent individualized e-mail messages to all eligible faculty members in the potential sample groups. For certain sites, as described above, recipients were only the faculty members within a department whom I was able to identify as having been tenured within the past eleven years; for other sites, I e-mailed a slightly modified message to all faculty members within the department (see appendix B for both versions). These messages briefly introduced the study and inquired as to the recipients' willingness—and, in the second case, eligibility—to participate. Faculty members were asked to respond to the inquiry message, indicating their willingness to participate, within one week. After ten days had elapsed, I sent follow-up messages to faculty members who had not yet responded to my preliminary inquiry; no further correspondence was thereafter sent to the non-respondents.

Between July 29, 2010, and January 22, 2011, I sent eighty-five individually addressed e-mail addresses to faculty members in departments of history at the nine selected institutions. After second rounds of inquiries had gone out to faculty members at each institution, I ultimately heard from eighteen faculty members in the positive (21 percent). Seven responded with their regrets (they were either too busy or indisposed—that is, unavailable due to being out of the country) (8 percent); seven responded to inform me that they were ineligible to participate (they were either not yet tenured or not holding full-time appointments) (8 percent); and

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33 percent at doctoral-level universities. Furthermore, women fill more than half of all non-tenured positions across all institutional types.

the remaining fifty-three did not reply (62 percent).<sup>22</sup> None of the nine faculty members I e-mailed at Tunworth State replied to my messages. For that reason, I ultimately interviewed faculty from only eight of the nine approved institutions. And despite my intentions of interviewing only faculty members tenured in or after the year 2000 (see wording in messages in appendix B), one participant overlooked that criterion in the recruitment message. In chapter 5, I address why I ultimately did not discount his interview material in the context of understanding shifting expectations for tenure in departments of history at state comprehensive universities.

Faculty participation entailed taking part in a semi-structured face-to-face interview with the researcher. Interview locations were chosen for their convenience to the participants; all but four were held in the participants' campus offices.<sup>23</sup> Interviews were arranged via e-mail and were held at times convenient to the participants between September 22, 2010, and March 22, 2011 (see appendix E). At least one week prior to the interviews, I sent reminder messages to my participants with a brief list of issues to begin reflecting upon (appendix B); these issues represented

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<sup>22</sup>Sum does not equal 100 percent due to rounding. Ultimately, I was overly optimistic about the willingness of faculty members to participate in my study. Instead of canvassing members of the nine faculties at once, I proceeded in a piecemeal fashion, adding institutions incrementally as I approached what I believed would be an adequate number of interviewees to reach theoretical saturation (Corbin and Strauss 2008). The addition of each institution (or pair or group of institutions) required that I file an amendment to my University of Illinois IRB application; much time was spent negotiating different stages of applications throughout the duration of the data-collection phase. My first sites were approved in July 2010; my final site, not until January 2011. The ongoing, iterative nature of site selection and identification of faculty—which occurred simultaneously with the process of interviewing, transcribing, and reflecting on completed interviews with faculty at previously approved sites—gave the project an organic feel: it did not proceed in a clearly prescribed, lock-step manner.

<sup>23</sup>Of the four held elsewhere, two were held in off-campus cafés; one was held in a departmental conference room down the hall from the faculty member's office; and one was held in the participant's home, just minutes from campus.



key themes of the interviews. In all but one case, the interviews were conducted within spans of approximately 90 minutes, including greetings, introductions, explanations (including presentation and signing of the informed-consent form and a brief recapitulation of my project and its goals), the recorded interviews proper, and post-interview questions and pleasantries.<sup>24</sup> All eighteen participants showed up at the appointed times and places; some had even jotted down notes based on what they had thought about in preparation for the interview.

In recruiting faculty participants, I sought only willingness and ability to participate in my project, not gender representation or ethnic representation. Ultimately, as mentioned above in the context of averages, my participants included eight women (44 percent).

During the interviews, all of which were digitally recorded (with permission of the participants), I asked open-ended questions from an interview guide (appendix D). The questions, modeled after those included in the interview protocol for Anna Neumann's "Four Universities Project" (2009, 243–51), were chosen to address issues related to the primary analytic question of this study. The guide was structured thematically, with questions organized into three overarching nodes: foundations, contexts, and perspectives. Questions considered each participant's (1) background and ideas about tenure in general; (2) teaching, service, and research;<sup>25</sup> and

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<sup>24</sup>The one interview session that lasted longer than 90 minutes did so because the participant had several questions about the purpose of my project. The recorded portions ranged from 56 minutes to 77 minutes and averaged 64 minutes.

<sup>25</sup>These work-related "contexts" are William Tierney's three "specific units of faculty work" (1997, 8). In my original design, I had included "outreach" as a separate topic in this node;

(3) epistemologies, identity, and workplace orientations. Questions were not asked *seriatim*, however, as if I were a journalist merely reading a survey instrument. Rather, I approached the interviews as journeys (à la Kvale 1996) or as flexible, guided conversations (à la Rubin and Rubin 1995). This conversational approach allowed space and time for probes and follow-up questions. My intention was to elicit “rich data filled with words that reveal” the perspectives of my participants (Bogdan and Biklen 2007, 104). Ultimately, as my familiarity with the interview protocol progressed, I referred to it less and less frequently. For my final interviews, then, I did not even need to consult the prepared list of questions. The earlier interviews conformed, largely, to a similar structure that approximated the outline of the interview guide, even though the order of topics within each node was occasionally different.<sup>26</sup> Having internalized this structure through transcribing and rereading the earlier interviews, I continued in a similar vein for the final interviews.

Appendix E lists the eighteen participants, by their chosen pseudonyms and de-identified institutional affiliations, and indicates the dates and lengths of the (recorded) interview portions. A benefit of carrying out the interviews across a six-month period was that I was able to fine-tune my questions and interview strategies

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questions I had planned followed the pattern established under “teaching,” “service,” and “research.” After interviewing faculty members at two institutions, however, I stopped asking about outreach as its own topic, since everyone I had spoken with about the concept had placed the idea under the umbrella of “service.” The state comprehensive universities in this study, in fact, delineated faculty work along the lines of just “teaching,” “research,” and “service.” Appendix D does not include the planned questions about outreach.

<sup>26</sup>In node 2 (“contexts”), for example, I always began by asking questions about teaching; but whether we progressed from there to a discussion of service or research depended on, largely, the interests of the participant. The transitions between topics were often initiated by the participants themselves.

based on what had previously been most productive and effective for eliciting the most useful data from my participants. For example, I learned to avoid asking open-ended questions about the content of faculty members' specific research interests and projects, even though I was interested in this material: that material was tied too closely to their individual identities and would thus have proven impossible to report without major alterations to the subject matter to preserve participant anonymity.<sup>27</sup> Instead, I asked targeted questions that allowed my participants to introduce their research—if they chose—in ways that spoke to understanding the particular goals of my study. Understanding the specific nature of my faculty participants' research, then, was not germane to my goals. Rather, such issues as how my faculty participants' perceived their research, how they engaged with it, and how it and their approaches to it had changed over time were relevant to my investigation.

### **Data Analyses and Safeguards**

Immediately following each interview, I wrote down reflective field notes about the interview process in a journal (Bogdan and Biklen 2007). For example, I described the location, how the faculty participant handled interruptions (if any), how particular questions seemed to work (or not), how I might revise (add, move, edit) questions, how I might improve the flow of subsequent interviews, what insights I had gained about either the research content or the research process, and

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<sup>27</sup>In addition, I quickly learned that an innocent "Can you tell me a bit about your research?" could easily turn into a ten-minute lecture. Interesting? Yes. On point? Unfortunately not. Of course, each directive action carries potential risks as well as potential benefits: Proactively attempting to limit or curtail digressions about material that, on the surface, seemed to be unrelated to the research at hand may have left certain relevant material uncovered or unmentioned.

what sorts of additional procedural and methodological issues germane to interviewing I should investigate (either through reengagement with methodological literature or through questioning a faculty expert or experienced researcher) before the next interview. Because “to do research is always to question the way that we experience the world” (van Manen 1990, 5), I used these notes and the related investigations as a means to refine my approach and continually improve my skills as an interviewer.

Transcription of the recordings began as soon after the interviews as possible; and the transcription act provided me with an initial review of the detailed contents of each interview.<sup>28</sup> In total, I transcribed over 185,000 words—an average of over 10,000 words per interview.<sup>29</sup> As I transcribed (an interpretive act in itself, according to Kvale [1996]), I noted—mentally and physically (on scrap paper, the contents of which I later transferred to a computer file)—potential themes.

To ensure that my theoretical conclusions are grounded in specific contexts and real-world patterns, I first aimed to understand each individual case before aggregating the interview data and proceeding with cross-case analysis. An early step, after repeated readings of the interview transcripts and my post-interview journal entries, was to write brief, informal summaries of each participant, with emphases on the participants’ contributions that speak to my key research question. These

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<sup>28</sup>My post-interview journal entries provided my first review of the contexts and overall contents of each interview; but those had been jotted down very close to the interview engagements themselves.

<sup>29</sup>This material totals some 350 pages in single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman. And it marked just a beginning, since “Qualitative research projects breed words” (Street and Higgs 2009, 295).

summaries were not intended to serve as formal portraits (à la Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis 1997); rather, they were used only by me as a means of differentiating (and remembering) the participants and their respective stories and contributions. I quickly found that I did not have a difficult time remembering one participant from another. The reason, I presume, is because I conducted and transcribed all of the interviews myself—and because each participant brought his or her own unique background and perspectives to the issues at hand. Eighteen also seems to be a manageable number: with more participants—or perhaps with the same number compressed into a shorter data-collection period—I might have needed to take additional measures to keep the individual participants separate in my mind. In my mind, at least, my faculty participants soon came to inhabit their pseudonyms as I became more and more attuned to cross-case similarities and differences.

Simultaneously with the creation of participant summaries, I read across interviews, noting similarities and differences, before identifying common themes based on a series of steps adapted from John Creswell (1998, 2008) and Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman (1994). Through pattern coding, the highest-order themes emerged through reiterative readings of, first, the entire transcripts; second, condensed, proto-coded transcripts; third, further condensations of the proto-coded transcripts. Secondary themes emerged through repeated engagements with the condensed transcripts and my descriptions of the highest-order themes. These themes and selected quotations from interviews were used to build the results and discussion section of my dissertation (chapters 5 and 6). Before translating my

notes to the primary draft of my findings, however, I reengaged with fresh, unmarked copies of the transcripts once again, rereading them all for details I might have overlooked earlier (due to not having yet been aware of potential nuances or significances, for example).

IRB-sanctioned procedures were followed throughout the solicitation, interview, data-analysis, and writing processes. Institutions and faculty members were de-identified, with the faculty participants given the opportunity to choose their own pseudonyms.<sup>30</sup> Although identifying details were retained in the transcripts, they were removed from any quotations used in this dissertation so that the quotations cannot be connected with individual faculty members, their departments, or their institutions. All participants were given the opportunity to review transcripts of their interviews to ensure accuracy and to help establish the trustworthiness of the transcript (Poland 1995). Ten accepted the offer (and I subsequently sent their transcripts to them as e-mail attachments); three replied by stating that reviewing the transcript would be unnecessary (and they would just wait to see the finished dissertation); and five did not respond to my offer. Only one responded to me after having read the transcript: that participant corrected a date that had been misrepresented in the transcript.

My status as a graduate student with no direct connections to institutions in the sample pool reduced threats to the well-being of participants in this study.

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<sup>30</sup>Surprisingly, this question proved to be one of the most perplexing to my earliest interviewees. Therefore, for subsequent participants, I asked them in the reminder e-mail message to think of a pseudonym. I was also expecting faculty members to give me surnames; all who provided me with pseudonyms of their own creation, however, gave me first names. Two participants—"Melinda" and "Ling"—allowed me to select pseudonyms for them.

Furthermore, I deliberately employed a stance of “empathetic neutrality” (Patton 2002) in order to minimize any sense of exploitation by the interviewer: I attempted to display openness, sensitivity, respect, and awareness at all times throughout the interviews (as well as in all other interactions with my faculty participants).<sup>31</sup>

### **Delimitations and Limitations**

Although colleges and universities around the world share common historical roots, the attitudes and roles of the academic profession are—quite understandably—influenced by different national systems, policies, and emphases.<sup>32</sup> To mitigate international differences in faculty work lives, this study includes only faculty members at universities in the United States.<sup>33</sup> But even within the American higher education system, “much occupational consciousness is also tied to type of institution” (B. Clark 1987, xxvii). Thus, faculty at only one institutional type—state comprehensive universities—were participants in this study. Moreover, as justified earlier, this project involved interviews with only full-time, tenured faculty from the discipline of history, a discipline that is not only ubiquitous among comprehensive institutions but also representative of the humanities-oriented social sciences. Finally, a focus on

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<sup>31</sup>Indeed, along with the interviews with faculty members and visits to the campuses, cultivating a comportment of mindfulness was a particularly enjoyable aspect of the data-collection phase of this project.

<sup>32</sup>The common origins can be traced from the first European universities in the medieval period to the earliest research universities, also in Europe, in the late nineteenth century. See, among others, Altbach and Lewis (1996); W. Clark (2006).

<sup>33</sup>For sound introductions to (and useful bibliographies for) the comparative study of faculty across nations, see: Altbach (1996); Boyer, Altbach, and Whitelaw (1994); B. Clark (1983); Gordon and Whitchurch (2010).

the post-tenure careers of participants protected faculty who have not yet achieved tenure (although their in-the-moment stories about the tenure process would certainly yield rich material). Because the tenure process must be successfully navigated to be in a post-tenure position, participants were free to speak about these procedural experiences, including concerns and difficulties, during their interviews.

As an exploratory study, this study is methodologically limited by the small number of interviewees coming from a single discipline. Generalizations beyond the population of my participants were not possible, but such were not an aim of this study.<sup>34</sup> Instead, the goal was to explore how tenure affects the perceptions of these faculty members' roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis their students, their colleagues, their departments, the discipline of history, and their profession as faculty members. Thus, a further limitation involves the nature of the data: Faculty perceptions—based largely on memories of experiences—form the heart of the data. According to Robert Frank and Philip Cook (1995a, 1995b), psychologists are aware of a so-called Lake Wobegon effect, which casts doubt on the accuracy of self-reported data about individuals' skillfulness or proficiencies.<sup>35</sup> Frank and Cook cited surveys that have

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<sup>34</sup>Jerry Gaff presents the following warning, heeded in this study: "generalizations about different kinds of institutions are dangerous" (2007, 15). I have, however, not refrained from exploring when and how my faculty participants themselves made generalizations about different institutional types. Most commonly during my conversations with my participants, as explored in the next two chapters, research universities were invoked as a foil to explain (rationalize, justify) cultural, operational, or work-life differences at state comprehensive universities. Indeed, the very notion of *difference* carries with it a sense of a theoretical "norm" that many of my faculty participants conceptualized as existing at research universities, not at their own state comprehensive universities.

<sup>35</sup>For a discussion of this effect, named after Garrison Keillor's fictional Minnesota town where, among other remarkable situations, "all the children are above average," see, for example, Frank and Cook (1995b, 105); Gilovich (1991, 77–78).



shown, for example, that “some 80 percent of us think we are better-than average drivers; and that more than 90 percent of workers consider themselves more productive than their average colleague” (1995a, 17). Moreover, the material in the remaining chapters of this dissertation is based not just on the perceptions of the faculty participants but also on how they explained these perceptions to me—and how I interpreted them. Thus, in this case, my abilities as a researcher are an additional limitation. The transference and filtering from recalled experience to perceived effect, and from explained effect to understood and interpreted meaning, indeed complicate and serve as limitations to any research of this nature.

In the process of questioning tenured faculty members about their evolving engagements with and orientations to the teaching, research, and service components of their faculty appointments, this study also explored faculty perceptions of their learning, agency, professional relationships, and commitments—four aspects of professional growth of faculty members identified by O’Meara, Terosky, and Neumann (2008). The unique contribution of this study, however, is on its focus on faculty members at state comprehensive universities, institutions that have been largely overlooked—and institutions where the trend toward greater and greater reliance on contingent and part-time faculty has shown no recent signs of abating. Once the norm, faculty members like those in this study, then, have become something of a threatened species. At the very least, this dissertation will stand as a record of some of their experiences.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCEPTUALIZATIONS AND UNDERSTANDINGS OF TENURE AND WORK LIFE AT STATE COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES

#### Chapter Overview

Although this chapter includes the word *analyses* in its title, it is largely descriptive in nature.<sup>1</sup> I briefly describe the backgrounds of my faculty participants; offer their perspectives on their departments and institutions; and provide their perceptions of the roles of teaching, research, and service at the state comprehensive universities in this study. This material sets the stage for a consideration of how my faculty participants responded to the requirements of tenure, how they recall their experiences of going up for tenure, how they felt upon being awarded tenure, and—ultimately, as explored in the following chapter—how they feel they changed as a result of being awarded tenure at the state comprehensive universities in this study. I use my faculty participants' own words as much as possible to capture their own voices and the nuances of their descriptions. Institutional affiliations—or, more accurately, the pseudonyms thereof—are provided not under the expectation that readers will mentally compartmentalize and hold distinct the eight history departments and institutions from which my faculty participants have come. Rather, they

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<sup>1</sup>I performed the titular analyses, in fact, behind the scenes; their fruits are visible in the organizational schema I devised to give structure to this chapter and the next.

are provided to emphasize how different faculty members at different state comprehensive universities in the Midwestern, Northeastern, and Southeastern United States often have similar perceptions about the nature of their work, their departments, and their institutions.

Macro-organizationally, this chapter is the foundation upon which the next chapter is built.<sup>2</sup> Because the next chapter focuses on perceived changes to individuals over time, this chapter mines my participants' perceptive memories to describe not only the current context for work at their state comprehensive universities but also how these institutional contexts themselves have changed. Although the focus of this chapter, then, is environmental and institutional, I do not exclude material that demonstrates the personal and individualized nature of my data. The institutional and contextual portraits presented here are, after all, montages of individuals' understandings and perceptions: I do not interject or supplement the portraits with materials that were gathered through other channels. The reality described in this chapter, then, is the reality that is perceived by my faculty participants—or at least the reality that I understood based on the descriptions and explanations they gave to me.

What may seem to be missing, then, is a synthesized description of the *procedure* of going up for tenure at the state comprehensive universities in this study. My faculty participants operated under the assumptions that I was familiar with this

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<sup>2</sup>And, in an acknowledgment of the relevance of the matryoshka principle to the overall design of this dissertation, the material presented in this chapter should be understood as existing within the broader environmental context of higher education in the United States that I presented in chapter 2.

process, which is detailed on numerous institutional websites, and thus did not spell it out in our conversations. I was, in fact, much more interested in how they interpreted the expectations (rather than what those precise expectations happened to be) and how they felt about the experience of going up for and ultimately receiving tenure (rather than, for example, what sorts of documents they had to gather for their dossiers or how long they had to wait for their decisions).<sup>3</sup> Worth noting, however, is that tenure decisions within the departments in this study—typical of decisions at state comprehensive universities—are made entirely within the institutions themselves. That is, external reviews (by disciplinary members at other institutions) are not solicited. Publication is thus of import prior to tenure because successful publication (in refereed outlets) indicates that a faculty member's work has been vetted externally.<sup>4</sup> Becoming tenured at a state comprehensive university of course also requires satisfactory internal reviews (with respect to teaching and service); but relying on the results of peer review to speak to the evaluation of scholarship thus makes tenure decisions at state comprehensive universities, on one level, a product of the “collective responsibility” of the discipline.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Nonetheless, for a brief description of the general process of applying for tenure—situated primarily within the context of research universities but relevant, as well, to the basic situation at state comprehensive universities—see Goodwin (2007).

<sup>4</sup>Possible, of course is that a faculty member publishes a piece (or pieces) in a refereed journal that was vetted by reviewers and an editor who happen to be in the same department or at the same institution. In such situations, however, faculty members with such publications on their curricula vitae would most likely be urged also to publish in venues with no editorial ties to their department or institution.

<sup>5</sup>Alison Lee (2010, 16) used the phrase “collective responsibility,” attributed to Jean Cham-baz (Université Pierre et Marie Curie, Paris), in the context of earning a Ph.D. by publication in Europe, where peer reviewers take the place of a “traditional” internal dissertation committee.

Also foreshadowed in this chapter are a number of themes that will be elaborated upon in the following chapter, including the various positionalities of professional identity; contextual layers that overlap or intersect with institutional contexts; and the imbricated nature of “work life” and “personal life.”

### **“I Had a Very Different Path than Typical of Others”**

Even though I limited this study to recently tenured faculty members who teach history in departments of history at state comprehensive universities,<sup>6</sup> I found remarkable diversity not in their “paths to the professoriate,” per se, but in the pathways they took to their current faculty positions.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, although they all hold Ph.D. degrees in history (or an allied field),<sup>8</sup> and although they were all at the rank of associate professor or professor, they came to these ostensibly similar positions via a variety of routes, having picked up a variety of experiences along the way. At the same time, most seemed to invoke during our conversations, either directly or indirectly, a notion of a “typical” academic career: a career where one goes straight

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<sup>6</sup>In this study, I focused on individuals who identify themselves as historians and teach courses about history at state comprehensive universities, whatever the names of their departments may be. In the next section, I will introduce Percy at Berkswell State as an unintended outlier to my “recently tenured” criterion (and will explain his inclusion in this study).

<sup>7</sup>In *Paths to the Professoriate*, Donald Wulff, Ann Austin, and Associates (2004) focus on the graduate school experiences of future faculty members. Here, I am broadening that sense to include both experiences prior to enrolling in doctoral study and those subsequent to completing the doctorate yet prior to entering into the employ of the current institution. The idea of these pathways and experiences being diverse and varied is corroborated by, for example, Gerlese Åkerlind and Lynn McAlpine (2010).

<sup>8</sup>One participant has a Ph.D. in art history, yet this individual teaches world history. Together, my participants include both classicists and modernists who specialize in the following geographical regions: North America, Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Their periods of emphasis span from antiquity to the present.

from a baccalaureate degree to graduate school—and then straight from completion of a Ph.D. to a full-time faculty position. Not necessarily their own experience, this archetype (or stereotype) has evolved over time: What used to be progression from Ph.D. to a tenure-track job—the “traditional” route—has now become a progression from Ph.D. to the *search* for a tenure-track job—the “contemporary” route—which, especially in the humanities, may involve years of adjunct instruction or part-time work (see, for example, J. Caesar 2007; Faunce 2010; Marti 2007). By mentioning—and comparing their experiences with—either the traditional or contemporary idealized career pathway, then, my faculty participants complicated and caused me to question the very ideal, leading me to believe that what may be conceived as a “normal” pathway to an academic career at a state comprehensive university may, in fact, encompass more possibilities than the analogous archetypical or stereotypical pathway for faculty members at research universities.<sup>9</sup>

Ronald prefaced the story of his arrival at Grovehill State with the following:

“there are many things in my career that are certainly not in any way typical.”

Melinda, at Spenwood State, said, “I didn’t hear of my position through the typical channels.” And, later: “I had a very different path than typical of others.” Both David

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<sup>9</sup>This idea insinuates that the sense of a stereotypically monolithic “academic culture” in this country may be based on perceptions that emanate from research universities. My faculty participants corroborated this thought by using, most commonly, research universities as bases for comparison when describing characteristics of their work, workloads, and experiences as faculty members at state comprehensive universities. One reason for using research universities as the touchstone may be simply because their doctoral degrees had all been awarded by research universities. Regardless of their undergraduate backgrounds, then, all shared their most recent experiences as students within the research-university paradigm. Mark Long is one who has lamented the fact that “the values and practices of the research university [are] accepted as the profession-wide standard” (2005, 371).

at Meldon State and George at Spenwood State came to their institutions with high school teaching experience. Four participants were hired at their present institutions before having finished their doctoral dissertations (David; Melinda; Debra at Grovehill State; and Eleanor at Whitehaven State). (David, in fact, described his case as “not a typical” one: he deemed his being hired without a finished doctorate in hand, in particular, as one that would “very unusual” at state comprehensive universities today.) In addition to those four, four others had no full-time teaching experience in postsecondary education before being hired at their present institutions (George; H. P. at Ashdale State; Owen at Meldon State; and Percy at Berkswell State). Five participants came to their present institutions with full-time or part-time teaching experience at other state comprehensive universities in the Western, Midwestern, or Northeastern United States (Debra; Ling and Sarah at Grovehill State; Thelonious at Ashdale State; and William at Parkham State). Indeed, before coming to their current institutions, my faculty participants had collectively taught, either part-time or full-time, and either on or off the tenure track, at quite a range of institutional types: community colleges, private baccalaureate colleges, private research universities, and other state comprehensive universities. In all of these cases, the institutions were located in different states, acknowledging the often underappreciated cosmopolitan nature of faculty members at state comprehensive universities.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>With respect to faculty members, I use the term “cosmopolitan” in its dictionary definition, that is, as an antonym of *parochial*, not in the sense suggested by Alvin Gouldner (1957, 1958), whose functionalist distinction between “cosmopolitans” and “locals” referred to orientations and loyalties that were focused either outside or inside one’s employing organization. Gouldner’s sense, of course, certainly has applications to faculty orientations, where faculty members with greater loyalty toward their disciplinary communities are “cosmopolitan,” and

Only for David, George, H. P., Owen, and Percy were their appointments at their current institutions their first postsecondary teaching positions outside of graduate school. They came to their respective institutions, were tenured and promoted, and have stayed. The majority of my faculty participants, however, demonstrate that movement among institutions is common. Ling, who came to Grovehill State after having spent a year on the tenure-track at a different state comprehensive university, said this: “Usually, the first job—people say that your first job is not, um, a long-term job—so you can move later, after a year or two.” H. P., in fact, had planned to use his position at Ashdale State as a stepping stone:

I came here . . . expecting that we would be here for three or four—maybe five—years. And then we would move on to the kind of institution that I imagined I *could* be teaching at, which would be something more akin to an R1 [Research I]—or a very small, very selective college.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to Ling, three others—Peter (Parkham State), Ronald, and William—landed at their current institutions by trading one tenure-track job for another. After two years in a tenure-track position, Peter left a small liberal arts college that was approaching major administrative changes and a shift in its core mission.<sup>12</sup> Also after two years on the tenure track, Ronald left a private liberal arts college to be closer to his spouse. And William spent two years on the tenure track

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faculty members with greater loyalty toward their employing institutions are “locals”; these distinctions have not gone unnoticed in the literature. For a recent piece that complicates the dichotomy by introducing the concept of “local cosmopolitans,” see Rhoades et al. (2008).

<sup>11</sup>Italics used in quotations from my faculty participants indicate inflected speech patterns, not editorial emphases. Ellipses may signify lengthy contemplative pauses and are not always indicative of omissions of material. Bracketed materials add explanations or context and are also used to replace unnecessarily specific details with general descriptors of the replaced content.

<sup>12</sup>In short, the institution was soon to become a for-profit institution.



at a different state comprehensive university before moving to be closer to both his and his spouse's families.<sup>13</sup> But most who had previously worked at the postsecondary level had done so on limited-term or contingent appointments before coming to their present institutions. Katherine (Daylesford State) used a one-year visiting professorship at a small liberal arts college as the "stepping stone to get" her current position. Amy (Parkham State) transitioned from a one-semester full-time position at a private research university to her current tenure-track position. Both Sarah and Athena (Spenwood State) finished their dissertations while on one-year visiting appointments at different institutions; their first postdoctoral positions, then, were tenure-track jobs. In short, my participants were together describing a sense of a new "norm," a new "typical" that can be contrasted with their collective sense of the "traditional." Most of their experiences did not take them from Ph.D. completion (before which they had been full-time students) directly to their first tenure-track positions. Thelonious, in fact, inverted the markers, describing his period of postdoctoral itinerancy in search of a tenure-track position as not only the "norm" but also "common" and "typical":

I think it's the norm that people get a job that's not a tenure-track job [first]. . . . I taught at my grad school, at two schools as adjunct, basically, then at [another state comprehensive university]—so I've taught at four schools, if you count grad school, before getting this job. I think that's common, right? So, um, I think my experience is a typical experience in the humanities—I know there are some disciplines that are "harder" than

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<sup>13</sup>Marco at Spenwood State offers an extreme case. He had recently *given up* tenure at a public liberal arts college several states away to be closer to both his and his spouse's families. He came to Spenwood without tenure (but was on the tenure track with an option for a shortened clock) and was thus ineligible to participate in my study. As explained in chapter 4, I purposefully chose to interview only tenured faculty members so as to avoid putting those not yet tenured in potentially uncomfortable situations.

others [in terms of finding tenure-track jobs]. History I don't want to consider "easy"; but I'm happy to, sort of, say that anthropology is "harder" or philosophy is "harder"—just because there're fewer jobs in those fields.

Gomez, also at Ashdale State, had a similar experience, although his quest for a tenure-track job did not involve stints at so many institutions. While on four successive year-long appointments at the same institution, he was able to turn his dissertation into a book—a publication "that really helped in the job search." Nevertheless, he "still took . . . a while to find a tenure-track position." For "a lot of people in the humanities and social sciences," he explained, concurring with Thelonious, "you spend a lot of your time adjuncting around until you find that tenure-track position."<sup>14</sup> Indeed, even though tenure may be perceived as the ultimate "Holy Grail" (Sarah), landing a tenure-track job is a prerequisite.<sup>15</sup> To Thelonious, a tenure-track job is "what we are told we're supposed to want" while in graduate school; and to Melinda, "it's an instant badge of honor at a conference—that you're employed in a tenure-track job." William was more nervous about finding a tenure-track job than he was, ultimately, about going up for tenure: "I was very nervous, naturally, getting

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<sup>14</sup>Individuals teaching in part-time or limited-term positions in the hopes of someday landing tenure-track positions have been described by David Leslie and Judith Gappa as "aspiring academics" (2002, 60). Frances McConnel (1993) described such individuals as "the migrant workers of the academy"; Eileen Schell (1998), as "gypsy academics"; and Rudolphus Teeuwen and Steffen Hantke (2007), as "gypsy scholars." Indeed, the very vocabulary of "landing" a tenure-track job implies that the moment is preceded by a disconnected groundlessness, of sorts. Specifically with respect to historians, Anthony Grafton and Robert Townsend (2008) described the transitional period of moving from graduate student to faculty member holding a full-time tenure-track position as the "threshold" stage. This stage, they pointed out, may now last "anywhere from one to several years"; it complicates—and outdates—"think[ing] of the job market in terms of the step from PhD to the tenure track" (39).

<sup>15</sup>Alexandra Lord and Michelle McClellan (2011) were even more particular, describing the "holy grail" for historians with Ph.D.s as "a tenure-track job with a light teaching load."

out of Ph.D.-land and facing a very tough job market. . . . All my grad-school life, I kind of . . . nervously wondered if I would ever find work.” But, he continued,

at a place like Parkham—or even . . . where I was beforehand—I kind of felt, coming into it. . . . Well, the fact that I got jobs at regional four-year institutions, and not at Research I’s but at the next tier down: it kind of felt to me that it would be easier to get tenure here than it would have been at a place like that [a Research-I institution], because I’m going to do my scholarship anyway. So I *didn’t* feel a lot of pressure [going up for tenure], and I think that does make a difference between a Research I and a place like this.

Again, note the comparison by institutional type in William’s analysis: the state comprehensive university is described in relation to its difference from a (normative) Research-I institution.

Eleanor’s case offers yet another pathway to the professoriate, as she had worked in industry before commencing her doctoral studies. That “real-world” experience, to her, was formative in shaping the manner in which she approaches academia and being an academic. She elaborated—using her background as an opportunity to describe how she might not be the most typical history professor:

I do think that [work experience] makes me a little bit different. My experience at Whitehaven has been, so far, that we really have two streams of faculty in the History Department. We have those people like myself who left—for that “gap year” as they call it in Europe, or whatever, you know—and worked a couple of years or three years, like I did. Then I came back into academia. And then we have the people who went from undergrad to grad school and then immediately to a job in academia—and they have this sort of tunnel vision about it.

Although many faculty members brought up different dichotomies during our conversations, only Eleanor and one other participant created and described a dichotomy

of academicians based on work experience.<sup>16</sup> When others referred to their experiences as either “typical” or “atypical,” they were generally referring to the ways in which they arrived at their current positions. Here, Eleanor’s sense of difference stems from her prior professional experience.

These backgrounds matter, of course, because the ways in which my faculty participants perceive tenure and its effects on their work lives are imbricated in the ways they understand the very narratives of their professional lives. The profiles of my faculty participants in this section also demonstrate at least two important considerations. First, even within the same discipline, one can find remarkable diversity in backgrounds and pre-professorial experiences of faculty members. Subsequent material will show how, depending on the nuances of the position, faculty roles and responsibilities themselves—still within the same discipline—can be quite varied. Second, the notion of a “typical” pathway to a tenure-track job in the humanities or social sciences at a state comprehensive university is—and should be—contested. Based on my small sample, I would argue that the notion of “typical,” at least with respect to career pathways to faculty positions at state comprehensive universities, be broadened so that it is not conflated with an equally contestable sense of “traditional,” a sense that is also *chronotopically* situated and thus engages reality in a way that is non-transferrable across time and space (in this case, institutional type).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Gomez (Ashdale State) was the other. He said, in describing his background: “I’m not one of those people who was just always in school and then became a professor at thirty-one or something.”

<sup>17</sup>I use the term *chronotopically* in the Bakhtinian sense—that is, reflective of both time and place (Bakhtin 1981). Ronald Barnett has recently written about how “these two dimensions—of

In this introductory section, then, I have briefly introduced all eighteen of my faculty participants, whose diversity of backgrounds and experiences thus questions the notion of the “typical” path to tenure-track positions at state comprehensive universities. Their experiences and perspectives will become developed in much more detailed relief throughout the remainder of this chapter and the next. I have also planted the seeds of at least two additional significant (and related) considerations that emerged from my interviews: that families are important, and that personal life and work life often intersect in intriguing ways. These considerations will also be developed later in this chapter and the next. In the next two sections, I explore my participants’ pathways to tenure at their current institutions. Their experiences reveal characteristics of their departments, their institutions and the institutional locales, and their own understandings of the evolving nature of their work, roles, and responsibilities.

### **“This Is Definitely a *Teaching* University”**

#### Prioritizing Time for Teaching

In the previous section, more than one quotation invoked a comparison with research universities: namely, that state comprehensive universities—for better or worse—are not research universities. Shortly after his comment about the type of institution he imagined he “*could* be teaching at,” H. P. described Ashdale State, in a context of damning ambiguity, as simply “a different kind of institution.” Indeed, a

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space and time—intersect, and even contend with each other, so making even more intricate their effects on the university” of the twenty-first century (2011, 73).

common theme that emerged in my conversations with faculty members involved the natures of their institutions, particularly as these natures have influenced their experiences of faculty work in the realms of teaching, research, and service. Because all are state comprehensive universities, the majority of these institutions still hold fast to their historical emphases on teaching. Faculty members from four different state comprehensive universities described their institutions as such:

Amy (Parkham State): "This is a teaching institution."

David: "We are a teaching university. . . . Meldon State . . . defines itself as a teaching institution."

George (Spenwood State): "This is definitely a *teaching* university. . . . Service and scholarship are important, but they're not as important as teaching. . . . I mean, the university and the faculty, I think, pride themselves on their teaching."

Sarah (Grovehill State): "We're a teaching institution, and we teach teachers. So teaching is the most important, and it would be disingenuous to say that it wasn't."

As teaching institutions, then, the requirements for tenure typically emphasize the importance of demonstrating excellence in teaching:

Athena (Spenwood State): "When you first get here, teaching is *everything*. So you have to have the highest evaluation in teaching to get tenure."

George: "I remember very distinctly in the interview . . . I remember [the dean of the college] talking about the tripod: teaching, service, and scholarship—and *how* important teaching was. You know, they don't hide that."

Gomez (Ashdale State): "Our number-one responsibility here is teaching."

Katherine (Daylesford State): "The primary criterion for tenure, at this institution, at least, is excellence in teaching. If you're just *good* [laughs], it's not good enough."

Percy (Berkswell State): “The constant is teaching: teaching is the core.”

Thelonious (Ashdale State): “Essentially, this school, in the contract . . . says that teaching is your primary duty. The other things are distinctly secondary. So it’s not three equal legs on the stool; it’s teaching, then scholarship, then service. . . . Teaching is always number one—as it should be, here.”

Debra described the level of excellence that faculty members must reach by the time they are up for tenure (in order, that is, to be tenured) at Grovehill State: “you have to be organized; you have to be a content expert; you have to be pedagogically sound in your delivery; you have to be fair and unbiased in your grading.” She described these requirements as “*heavy expectations*,” especially given that “many of us didn’t have experience with teaching” when we started at Grovehill: “Most of us were not teacher-cert[ified] as undergrads; most of us did not have a career in the [K–12] classroom before we became faculty.”<sup>18</sup> Peter also commented on the import of good teaching—and, in particular, good teaching evaluations: “If you don’t have good evaluations, you’re probably not going to get good reviews or get tenure. It’s a basic thing that we do, so it has to be at least pretty good—not perfect; but, yes, teaching is taken seriously.”

Regarding the nature and numbers of courses taught, David at Meldon State offered the following (with yet another comparison with research institutions):

We’re expected to be, you know, somewhat generalists. We do teach in our field, but we teach a lot of different courses, probably more than somebody at a research institution—or, if somebody is at a research institution

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<sup>18</sup>To clarify, Debra was referring to her departmental colleagues not having had prior experience teaching at the K–12 level, which is where many students in history courses at Grovehill State themselves may end up.

with a lot of courses, you know, their range of courses is very much geared to what their research is—their specialty.

The teaching loads for faculty members in four of the eight departments are 4–4; at the other four, 3–3.<sup>19</sup> The numbers of unique course preparations per semester—either two or three—are largely functions of curricular needs, which themselves depend on the sizes of the departments and numbers of majors enrolled in affiliated programs. Teaching loads can fluctuate slightly depending on the proportion of undergraduate-level to graduate-level courses taught: At Meldon State, for example, the normal course load for faculty members teaching only undergraduate-level courses or both undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in any given semester is four courses. In the atypical situation where a faculty member happens to be teaching only graduate-level courses, a full load for that semester would be three courses. Teaching loads can also be reduced based on service responsibilities: When William served as chair of his department, he was released from two of his four

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<sup>19</sup>All institutions are on the semester system. A “4–4” course load, therefore, means eight courses are taught per academic year: four in the fall and four in the spring. Especially in the case of a 4–4 load, some courses may be multiple sections of the same course in any given semester. Across institutions is little uniformity in class sizes (typically functions of course level and learning goals), course assignments by level (often functions of individual faculty members’ specializations and how these intersect with departmental needs), and involvement of history faculty members in general education (the teaching of so-called service courses). At almost all institutions, summer teaching, which carries an extra stipend, is voluntary. Donald Hall pointed out, however, that “there is a world of difference between a 4/4 teaching load with little or no research expectations, and a 3/3 teaching load with the expectation of clear research success and demonstrated capacity to build on that success” (2009, 60). Hall, in fact, “would like to see ‘teaching’ institutions require less teaching, but of significantly higher quality, and require more research for tenure and promotion” (60). A 3–3 teaching load, in Hall’s understanding, would make stronger research expectations more reasonable, without simply—and undesirably—“mirror[ing] the priorities and work balances of research institutions” (60). As discussed below, the departments with 3–3 teaching loads generally do expect greater scholarly productivity than those with 4–4 teaching loads.



courses per semester. Gomez, Owen, and Peter all received one course release while serving as the director of graduate studies for their departments.

Teaching loads, moreover, can vary across departments at the same institution. At Grovehill State, for example, where the institutional norm is a 4–4 teaching load, faculty in the History Department negotiated many years ago to teach only three courses per semester. The factors they used in making their case included the writing-intensiveness of their courses; the role of history courses in the institution's general education requirement; and the "profile" that the faculty members had established—as active *researchers*. Ronald explained as follows:

The History Department at Grovehill has always been—or, well, for a long time—sort of recognized as one of the best departments on the campus, where it has an active faculty and a strong research life. And one of the things that was emphasized [when I came here] is the importance of helping the department sustain that tradition so that it maintains the benefits that come with that. And there are distinct benefits, such as the 3–3 teaching load.<sup>20</sup>

Sarah explained the situation like so: "We see ourselves as a research department for a comprehensive institution." Thus, although teaching is the top priority at Grovehill, "research—this is the way the chair explained it to me when I got the job: research is, like, right, right below, almost as important" (Sarah). Debra concurred: On the departmental criteria for tenure, "it's clearly identified among your teaching duties, your research, and your service. And they are listed in that order: teaching, research, and service. . . . The emphasis is that you have to comply with expectations in all three, but teaching bears priority." Offering another institutional comparison

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<sup>20</sup>On sustaining the tradition of scholarship within the department, Debra said, "We have to do the best we can at all times in order to defend our cushy position of being 3–3."

to a research university, Ling explained her perception of the situation in the History Department at Grovehill as follows:

In my case, however . . . although the teaching here is considered more important than compared to at a research university, in my department—at least, my experience in my department was that they had the same weight for research, as much as teaching. So, in my head, it was always like 40 percent, 40 percent—research and teaching—and then 20 percent service.

Across the board, teaching reigned supreme at the institutions in this study; but, perhaps given the particular nature of the History Department within the institution at Grovehill State, the importance of research was emphasized to be very close to that of teaching within the department.<sup>21</sup>

Given the import of teaching at the institutions in this study, students were naturally a common topic of discussion with my faculty participants. Amy commented multiple times on the “tremendous respect” she has for her students at Parkham State: “I’ve just got a tremendous respect for them. . . . I have students who *constantly* rise to the bar that I set, against all odds.” Having taught undergraduates while a graduate student at an elite research university, she compared the two groups in this way:

In the classroom at [elite university], the learning is something that comes more easily to them, and it’s a more intellectual process. In the classroom here, either they’re students for whom traditional education has never been easy and they really have to work at it to get it—which I

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<sup>21</sup>Of course, research was valued and important at other sites in this study, as well. Peter described the Department of History at Parkham State as espousing a culture of research: “There’s a lot of research going on. . . . It’s just something that the department values: the chair and your colleagues are proud of and happy about it; they’re encouraging.” William, also at Parkham State, reaffirmed how such cultures can be specific to certain departments: “There are departments around here that really want to say that they don’t want to emphasize scholarship at all. I’ve never quite understood that.”

truly respect—or they’re being exposed to ideas or information that they’ve never heard before or that really is different from what they would have expected. And I like the fact that it’s not just an intellectual process for them—they’re actually trying to somehow apply it to their worldview. And that’s a marvelous thing to witness. And sometimes it makes them very mad at me. . . . They don’t express that—they are polite—but you can see it in their faces: the tension over what I said is . . . challenging something very personal, and I can see it. I really like that, because it means they’re grappling with something.

Sarah, likewise, described the students at Grovehill State as “polite, conscientious, and open-minded, even if they’re not very well-informed about things. They’re eminently teachable.” And, like Amy and Sarah, Owen sensed a similar difference in student preparedness as well as ambition levels when he compared undergraduates at his graduate institution with his students at Meldon State; a particular challenge for him in his early years as a professor was getting used to the large number of students “who are very happy to be getting a ‘C.’”

Eleanor described her current students at Whitehaven State in both positive and negative terms:

I actually think this generation of students . . . they’re very good at certain things. My students are *very* good at thinking outside the box about certain things. Their critical-thinking skills are very good. They’re very good at applying their knowledge in different ways. They’re also much better with technology than I could possibly ever imagine myself being. But they don’t seem to take much initiative. They don’t seem to do much more than what you tell them—and they want handouts for everything, you know? And they want everything spelled out.

Ronald (Grovehill State) concurred with Eleanor’s final comments: “There is this greater sense where students are expecting things to be handed to them for their ease.” And Thelonious (Ashdale State) said, “I think I hold my students’ hands more” now.

At the state comprehensive universities in this study, teaching—and the affiliated work that goes on outside the classroom—naturally occupies the majority of most of my faculty participants’ time and energy.<sup>22</sup> The next chapter will consider how their levels of engagement with teaching have changed over time. Also of import—and to be addressed in the next section of this chapter—is how four faculty members in the history department at one institution had slightly different understandings of what should have ostensibly been the same expectations for tenure. First, however, I consider the roles of research and service at the state comprehensive universities in this study—and how my faculty participants perceived the competing demands on their time. These presentations simultaneously raise ideas and issues that will be germane in the subsequent exploration of the perceived effects of tenure on work life: the cycle of the academic year vis-à-vis research time; the perceived need for large blocks of uninterrupted time—variously described as “breathing space” or “intellectual space”—to make progress on scholarly projects; the importance of “meaningful” service that is seen as making a difference; the “communitarian” characteristics of departments; the various locations of faculty work; and the sense that teaching time is typically not compromised, while research time is.

### Finding Time (and Resources) for Research

With teaching as the most important faculty function at the institutions in this study, what—besides secondary—are the roles of research and service? My faculty

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<sup>22</sup>Often overlooked is the fact that teaching, too, is the primary task upon which the compensation for most academicians across all institutional types is based (Shaw 2004, 2008).

participants portrayed a picture of remarkable research productivity: At least half had scholarly books published before or around the time they were awarded tenure. They have won awards for these books; multiple Fulbright awards; and research grants and fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, American Philosophical Society, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Smithsonian Institution.<sup>23</sup> These activities and achievements are all the more impressive when one considers the across-the-board pressures on the most precious resource: time.<sup>24</sup> The teaching loads described above, coupled with service (explored below), leave most of my faculty participants with very little time during the fall and spring semesters to follow their own scholarly pursuits. Three described their current situations as follows:

Eleanor (Whitehaven State): "I've got *tons* of research done—it's just translating it into writing that needs to be done. I've given conference papers, but I need to take each of those conference papers and try and get a journal article out of it. It's more of a time thing. It's the 4–4 [course load] thing."

Owen (Meldon State): "You know, I would love to be doing more research: I have a whole file of research projects I would like to be working on. But, you know?"

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<sup>23</sup>This list is incomplete, as it mentions only those awards that came up in our conversations.

<sup>24</sup>I had presumed, incorrectly, that my participants would tell me that *money* is the resource that would best help them to accomplish their own scholarly projects and pursuits. In fact, the near unanimous response was *time*—"one of the most fundamental aspects of human experience and of social life" (Ylijoki and Mäntylä 2003, 57). (Money, though, clearly came in second; it is discussed below.) Time would allow completion of fellowship and grant applications that would, ultimately, afford the time to carry out research abroad or to write up reports on projects carried out earlier. Time would afford those faculty members who have not yet turned their dissertations into books (and who are currently still aspiring to do so) the chance to make progress on their updates and revisions. Time, in short, would free creative space and enable scholarly and research productivity during the semesters instead of primarily (or only) during summer and, to a lesser extent, winter breaks.

Ronald (Grovehill State): “I’ve got the material—I’ve got the arguments worked out. It’s just having the time to sit down and write [that I don’t have].”

Indeed, they face what Dawne Clarke referred to as the “tyranny of the immediate” (2005, 115),<sup>25</sup> which effectively relegates quality writing and research time to the breaks between academic terms: When classes are in session, the needs of others (students, colleagues, family members) are more pressing, and engagement with scholarly projects is all too easily postponed.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, even though my participants frequently mentioned that teaching takes *a lot* of time, they did not complain—as several did regarding research—of there not being *enough* time for teaching.<sup>27</sup> Research was typically the task that was put off until an ambiguous, indefinite later.<sup>28</sup> Gomez (Ashdale State) explained the situation like so: “It’s easier to push that stuff [research and writing] away and down the line than it is with the teaching stuff, which is more immediate.”

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<sup>25</sup>To be precise, this phrase came from a faculty member Clarke interviewed for her doctoral research.

<sup>26</sup>A further complication for some is their field of study. Several of my faculty participants mentioned how the significant travel—to archives and other research sites—their scholarly work requires does not allow such trips to be taken during school terms; many envied their colleagues who taught and researched American history or, most convenient of all, local history. Said Eleanor: “There’s just no way that someone who does what I do can keep up with someone, say, for instance, who’s a local historian, and can go [down the road to do his or her research]. There’s just no way.”

<sup>27</sup>Sarah (Grovehill State) did admit that teaching is stressful to her “just in terms of feeling like I’m able to get it all done. That’s what was stressful [particularly before tenure]. I mean, I knew I could do it—but just physically getting all the grading done, making sure I was prepared for class, and so on and so forth.” And George (Spenwood State) commented that “teaching has a way of taking over, somehow.”

<sup>28</sup>I must credit Wendy Belcher (2009, 100) for the idea of postponing writing (and scholarship of any form) until an “indefinite later.”

Likewise, William described his own sense of the “tyranny of the immediate” as a hindrance to his making progress on his scholarly projects during academic terms:

I try to carve out time here and there [during the semester] to get back to my projects, but, to be honest, when you’ve got three stacks of papers to grade and a ton of [pressing service obligations], those things are just so urgent: you’ve got to have them done next week, right?

As a result, he makes “*serious* progress on scholarship . . . over the summer and during Christmas break.” He offered another comparison with research universities by describing that acknowledgment as “a very common refrain, not just at regional comprehensives like this but also at Research I’s (as I’ve heard from my colleagues at Research I’s). . . . But I think it’s even truer at a place like Parkham than it is at a Research I.”

Melinda (Spenwood State) also reported being “able to get a fair amount [of research] done in the summer,” particularly in her years prior to tenure, thanks to having put her young daughter “in constant daycare or camp.” Others mentioned the importance of summer and winter breaks for accomplishing research:

Amy (Parkham State): “I do an awful lot of my research in the summer.”

David (Meldon State): “Here, the available time for writing is nil, basically, during the semester. . . . Pretty much, any of my writing has had to be done in the summer.”

Debra (Grovehill State): “Summers are your research time—your research and your writing time.”

Eleanor: “You wind up doing it [research], um, summers—and Christmas, you know?”

Peter described the academic cycle as providing pockets of time for research at different points during the fall and spring semesters at Parkham State. When we

spoke in late September, he described the cycle as one that “goes in waves. This semester, there’ve already been certain times that I’ve been really busy, but there are some weeks—often early in the semester—where I can devote all of my time to research. I’ve done that today, in fact.”<sup>29</sup>

Gomez (Ashdale State) also described the cycle of an academic year as allowing different times for engagement with research and writing. Like Peter, he often has extra time during the beginning of the semester (when “nothing has to be graded yet”), a time when he also looks forward to attending a conference. We talked near the end of the fall 2010 semester, which is when he situated this description of his annual cycle of research productivity:

I think, as of the middle of October, my own scholarship just came to a screeching halt. That happens—every fall. Yes, that happens every fall. I’ll pick up again, a little bit, in the winter break and in the beginning of January, in January and early February, and probably the middle of February; but then any kind of scholarship I do will come to a halt until the middle of May, when it will pick up again. So that’s usually the pattern. Every academic year I go through that: the summer’s a great time; early fall’s a great time; and then things, when it comes to my scholarship, just shut down. Then it’s briefly revived at the beginning of the spring semester—but then shuts down again until the end of the spring semester; then it picks up again. So that’s the ebb and flow of it for me.

Owen’s perceptions of his experiences at Meldon State nearly mirrored Gomez’s at Ashdale State:

For any kind of large, sustained [research] project, the way our sort of cycle works on this campus is that, if you start in the fall, there’s two to three weeks, maybe, at the beginning of the semester when things are just starting to go, and we’ve got a little bit of free time—a little breathing

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<sup>29</sup>His last sentence succeeded in making me feel briefly guilty for interrupting his research and writing time. In doing so, he reminded me of the generosity of my faculty participants—all of whom gave me more than an hour of their otherwise “free” time to talk with me about their professional lives and work.



space. By early October—the month of October, with respect to scheduling, midterms: it's just lost. You can usually find a little bit of free time in the month of November. And then, from Thanksgiving until whenever grades are due: that's lost, too. And usually there's a little bit of time between the end of the semester and the beginning of the semester, although a significant chunk of that's going to go to getting ready for the spring classes. And then it's the same pattern. . . . The summer is really the time when things—if you're going to do any significant research—that's when it's going to happen. But, again, there's all kinds of other conflicts. I always had this vision that summer would be this peaceful time, but it's really not. That's not the case. It's busy; but it's just that you have a little bit more flexibility.

Note how Owen described time to think about (and ideally make progress on) his own projects as “breathing space.” Gomez, in a passage not previously cited, likewise described summers as offering the most “intellectual space”—space in which he is “able to think.”

Thelonious (Ashdale State) portrayed the nature of his intellectual work with particularly memorable analogies, ultimately coming to the same conclusion as reached by the others: “It's not Picasso, but it's a creative activity, and so, you know, it's not always easy to turn off and on the tap. So, like with many people who write, I think having larger chunks of uninterrupted time is essential. That usually means working more in the summer.” And Katherine (Daylesford State), too, mentioned the need for space for giving her work sustained attention—and that such space is most available in the summer:

It's frustrating when you can't give it [your research] that kind of sustained attention. It's hard—I find it's hard to do it in small doses and batches, but that's the best one can do [during the semester]. . . . I think most of us who take our scholarship seriously and want to do it—and enjoy doing it—kind of look on the summer as the time to carve out some more space and give it a more concerted effort.

In addition to time, money is, of course, an additional concern for faculty members at state comprehensive universities who have ambitious research agendas.<sup>30</sup>

Katherine lamented the lack of funding for research or professional development at Daylesford State:

We get, like, \$650 [per year] for faculty development—which isn't even enough to attend a conference. . . .<sup>31</sup> So there's a financial challenge—and, especially for me, at some point, to really do my research, I need to travel abroad, and it's very expensive. There are, again, some competitive pools that we can tap into—and I got a grant a few years back, which was nice; but that's the other big challenge: I don't feel like I can apply for that every year, you know? . . . I've always taken for granted that they're not going to give it to the same people year after year.

William was less concerned about applying for grants repeatedly, since he knows that “there's money that goes unused at the University Research Committee every year.” Combined with funding from other sources—Thelonious said, “you always have to take the initiative, of course”—William recently used university grants to travel abroad three summers in a row to collect materials for his next book project. Peter pointed out a relatively new initiative at Parkham State: “junior scholars now almost automatically get a summer research grant for, like, their first two or three

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<sup>30</sup>Indeed, coming up with funding for research and travel was a common concern. An uncommonly raised topic during my conversations with faculty members, however, was faculty salaries; fewer than half of my participants mentioned them, either positively or negatively. William was the most outspoken, particularly with respect to the economics of salary compression: “I think that the one thing that *stinks* about Parkham State: *good grief* do salaries stink around here! I mean, they really do—especially for those of us in mid-career.”

<sup>31</sup>Regarding funds for conference attendance, Percy offered the following: “The good thing about this place [Berkswell State] . . . is that they always have provided very good levels of support for going to conferences. And they still do. And from what I hear of other places, they don't get nearly the support for attending conferences and doing that type of stuff. But, for as long as I've been here, I've always had funds—as long as I was giving a paper: you have to give a paper.” At the same time, though, he added: “When I look at other people—at research institutions—I definitely haven't had the same opportunities that they've had to travel, or the same financial support.”

summers, so they can do research then.”<sup>32</sup> And Eleanor described Whitehaven State as having “a very supportive internal grant service” for research; she had received four grants to assist with her research.

Another research-related resource is the role of library resources. William said, “For historians, obviously library resources are important”; he then mentioned the existence of grant money for traveling to research libraries. Amy, H. P., and Ling all mentioned the benefits of interlibrary loan as well as living within a couple hours’ drive of strong collections relevant to their research needs. Ling, in fact, described the existence of a large research library within two hours of her workplace as “an incentive to apply for” her current position at Grovehill State.

This discussion of research must be contextualized in terms of institutional expectations—and, in doing so, the efforts of these faculty members will seem all the more remarkable. In short, and largely because teaching is the top priority at these state comprehensive universities, the research expectations for tenure remain low:

Percy (Berkswell State): “We have very low research expectations.”

Thelonious (Ashdale State): “I guess the expectations for scholarship are minimal, I’d say. . . . The minimum is a pretty low bar.”

William (Parkham State): “The scholarly bar, frankly, is quite low in most departments on this campus. It’s fairly easy to clear; you just need to show that you’re doing *something*, you know? In most departments, an article or two would be sufficient—as long as they’ve been accepted (even if they’re not in print yet).”

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<sup>32</sup>With respect to “tak[ing] the initiative,” Percy mentioned that Berkswell State had recently put money into grant-writing support for faculty members, which he thought “was a very good idea.”

At Meldon State, in fact, faculty research is referred to as “professional growth.”

David confessed to what he felt was a strange practice: “If you attend conferences—even if you don’t give papers—it can count, so-called. There are people who put on their CVs all of the conferences they have attended, which I think is weird.”

That at least half of my faculty participants had books published—revisions of their doctoral dissertations, mostly—around the time they went up for tenure is a testament to their dedication to their scholarly pursuits. None of the state comprehensive universities in this study requires a book for tenure, so these faculty members were tapping into another source of motivation. In the next chapter, I explore how the faculty members in this study see themselves vis-à-vis their disciplinary colleagues. Their scholarship, indeed, offers them a connection to disciplinary communities, allowing themselves to locate their scholarly identities as historians on maps that extend far beyond the borders of their campuses, some of which seem to be “in the middle of nowhere” (H. P.).

### Making (or Sacrificing) Time for Service

In the next chapter, I also offer perspectives from the faculty members in this study whose post-tenure careers have involved significant and lasting engagements with service. Many of the more substantial engagements involve service to the discipline or profession—or service that is aligned with issues about which the faculty members are particularly passionate: “work that really matters” (Milem 2011, 332). Here, I briefly explore the role of service in faculty life at state comprehensive universities—as well as the near universal dislike, at least among the faculty members

in my sample, of “meaningless” service, typically service found at the departmental or institutional levels.

These faculty sentiments about service speak largely for themselves:

Percy (Berkswell State): “I don’t like committees at all. . . . I didn’t come here to be an administrator! . . . I find committee work to be tedious and simply, um, a tremendous waste of time.”

Peter (Parkham State): “There are some committees—and I’ve always felt this way—that I just dread the experience.”

Ronald (Grovehill State): “I don’t like serving on committees that I don’t think are meaningful—or being involved in activities that I think are . . . not just *futile*, but, you know, just wheels turning. And I see way too much of that in way too many committees—and I don’t want to serve on committees for the sake of having committees to serve on. I serve on committees where I think the work is important and I think I can play a substantive role.”

Indeed, I triggered the most complaints from my faculty participants when asking about service.<sup>33</sup> But note, in the quotations above, how the *idea* of service itself is not what these faculty members dislike. What they dislike, rather, is tedious, meaningless service work—service work that they see as a waste of time or effort: “just wheels turning.” Eleanor (Whitehaven State) offered the following: “I actually don’t have a problem with service; I am happy to do it. But I find that sometimes service doesn’t go anywhere.”<sup>34</sup> Owen (Meldon State) served for two years as the faculty representative on a university committee that “met every week, and, literally, what

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<sup>33</sup>The complaints were not about the questions but, rather, came in the form of their responses to them.

<sup>34</sup>Eleanor followed that comment with a story of having participated in a task force that determined “what, anecdotally, we probably could have concluded before we had the task force.”

you would do is just go over [certain numbers that were continually being updated].

It was just a nightmare.”<sup>35</sup>

Melinda described what she does and does not want from committee work at Spenwood State this way:

With service, especially, I’ve wanted not just a lot of hot air and talking; I’ve wanted to see tangible effects of it: policy changes or ideas . . . because I hate people just sitting around and blowing a lot of hot air and complaining and not having *any* actual effect of bettering the process—bettering it for students, first of all, but also for faculty.

Ronald suggested that how committees are led can make the difference between a positive and negative committee experience:

I find that academics are really bad at leading committees. Far too much time is wasted making sure that everybody has their voice heard. Not everybody always has something meaningful to say. So I value a committee that recognizes that time is a valuable commodity and should not be wasted.

Gomez (Ashdale State) also quickly learned that

a lot of faculty like to hear themselves talk . . . just pontificating about whatever—and it’s, like, I’ve got a class to prep for; I’ve got a book review to finish: there’s stuff I could actually be doing—and I don’t want to sit here and listen to you tell me this and that, because it’s a waste of my time.

Moreover, an experience while an assistant professor helped Gomez discover that, like Melinda and others, he craves service that makes a difference. He related the story as follows:

Well, they have this one . . . committee for the whole university, and I was chair of it—and this was while I was an assistant [professor], so I

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<sup>35</sup>To be fair, in commenting on how committee work is frequently maligned by his colleagues, Owen remained more optimistic than most: “You know, you can still do some good on committees.” And Debra offered an important assessment: “The service that we do is what keeps the university together and functioning.”

volunteered to do it—and our job was, basically, to monitor how all the different disciplines are dealing with [a particular issue]. And we would do reviews of their programs. So we would do a review; we would have our critique; and then we would let them know what our critique was. And there were no teeth in anything that we did! So we could say, “Yeah, you’re not doing this, this, and this”—and they could ignore us. And so, very quickly, I realized that this was a pretty meaningless thing. But it worked towards having something to put on my portfolio for tenure. I did it to the best of my ability and did what I could—but I realized that it was a big time-waster.

Note how these comments, most of which were made in response to open questions about service, are all directed toward committee work. The two concepts, however, are not entirely synonymous. Yes, committees are one manifestation of “service”; but the concept is typically defined by departments as existing in a number of contexts and potential outlets: “Our department [at Grovehill State] defines *service* rather broadly. Service to the department is first . . . and then service to the university, service to the profession, and service to the community” (Sarah). Although she left out community service, Debra largely corroborated the situation at Grovehill, adding that “You’re supposed to serve at the departmental, college, university, and professional levels—ideally all of those levels. And service is incredibly time-consuming.” The prevailing sentiment seemed to be that service to the department is perceived as most valuable in terms of tenure, perhaps because it is the most visible on the departmental level, and departmental committees must support tenure nominations. To Katherine (Daylesford State), administrative or committee work has “no return on it, other than that it needs to be done, and you have the respect of your colleagues—I guess that’s a valuable return.” Ronald, though, identified the University Tenure Committee as a meaningful committee. He added: “Curriculum

committees are also important—and job search committees. I'd say those are probably the big ones." And Peter (Parkham State) said his department's Promotion and Tenure Committee is "a very important committee, because we're really holding somebody's career in our hands."

Katherine also explained her perceptions about how the understanding of service has changed over time so that service at the departmental level is now privileged over service to the community:

There's been a shift in what "service" means, because, for a lot of people, service used to mean being out in the community doing things. It didn't just mean all this blasted committee work and administrative, bureaucratic stuff. And, so, you know, I think that, at one time, that emphasis on service and combined service and scholarship—and the idea that service could really be scholarship, and there's some overlap there—that's changed.<sup>36</sup>

Like Ronald, Melinda, and others, Katherine places greater personal value on service work that is of personal meaning to her. But, in talking about service, particularly the way in which the service gaze seems—unfortunately—to have shifted inward over time, she took the opportunity to muse on reasons for "the perpetuation of bureaucracy" on her campus:

As far as what I value, I value the fact that everyone needs to do the things that need to get done on campus; but I probably put higher value

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<sup>36</sup>Katherine, as it turns out, was the only one of my faculty participants to bring up Ernest Boyer's multiple forms of scholarship, from his *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990), even though she commented that she does "traditional" research" herself. Note, though, that she had sensed a regression *away* from perceiving service as scholarship, not *toward* that ideal. I had expected that several of my participants would invoke Boyer's ideas as a way to explain (and justify) their teaching and service activities as scholarly acts, but nobody else did. Peter, in fact, explained the lack of interest in the scholarship of teaching and learning within his department at Parkham State by suggesting that his colleagues tend to have "traditional" research agendas: "I think, in my own department, there is nobody who's really interested in it [the scholarship of teaching and learning], because we all have a pretty active research agenda in history."



on some of the things that go on . . . more in service to the profession or through community outreach. One thing that I find disconcerting—that I’m *not* happy with—is the perpetuation of bureaucracy on this campus. Since I’ve been here, I think the number of administrators has doubled and we’re constantly just adding new committees and new layers to do this or to do that and, um, so that . . . I don’t know: Maybe faculty are doing it to themselves? Then these committees have to be staffed, and that just creates more work. I don’t know how to . . . roll that back, but I sure would like to. But that’s not something that I value—it’s something that goes beyond what’s really necessary to manage ourselves so that we can be teacher-scholars, which is what we’re really hired to do, versus what is just kind of perpetuating, proliferating this . . . because some people feel like, as long as they’re in a meeting, they’re doing something important, but I’m not one of those people.<sup>37</sup>

Owen described the proliferation of committees at the department level at Meldon State as contributing to an inflated CV that he found “embarrassing”:

At the department level, there’s so many—I mean, there’s just this enormous number of committees: professional affairs and hiring committees and assessment committees; curriculum committees; research committees; advisement committees. . . . I have several different versions of my CV—which I assume most people do—but I’ve got my sort of “internal” CV [the one I used for tenure and promotion], which has *so many* committees on it. It’s just embarrassing! I would never show this to somebody at another institution, because they would think it’s ridiculous to see this much [service].

Athena (Spenwood State) initially told me, “I don’t enjoy service. Not in the least.” Like Katherine, she, too, was responding to the bureaucratization—and, specifically, the politics—of committee work, particularly the type of work that she saw as not making a difference. Some service, then, she does enjoy:

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<sup>37</sup>Melinda was the only other faculty participant in this study to mention the concept of the “teacher-scholar.” She did so in the context of describing how her research occasionally influences her teaching. Katherine’s sense is similar: the ideal teacher-scholar is not someone who is overburdened with service or administrative work. Of note about Katherine’s desires to try to “roll . . . back” the “perpetuation of bureaucracy” within her department, in particular, is that she was to begin a three-year term as department chair the semester after our conversation, releasing her from one of her three courses per semester.

Where I enjoy service is inside the department, okay? Where the, um, the fruits of the labor are directly visible to the outcomes of the people I give a damn about, which are my students, okay? Outside of the department, the different *agendas* of the different departments—and the agendas are legitimate; I'm not saying that the word "agenda" is, like, a bad thing: it's that, you know, people have different numbers of seats that they're serving; they're serving the general education curriculum in a particular manner; and that determines, you know, whether they can get new hires.<sup>38</sup> All of that complicated maneuvering stuff bores me to tears, okay? I'm interested in something else other than the negotiating. I am not wired for politics.

In the role of researcher, I felt I began to understand my departmental sites as communities after having spoken with multiple faculty members in the same department and having learned how individuals' likes and dislikes for serving on certain committees worked together in complementary ways.<sup>39</sup> One faculty participant described his department's Social Committee as a committee that "doesn't thrill [him] at all."<sup>40</sup> Another faculty participant in the same department referred to a faculty member who had "side-stepped Social Committee—and that's the *easy* one to be on." The first faculty member wondered why anyone would *want* to be on the

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<sup>38</sup>Others made similar observations about the politics of committee work. Debra (Grove-hill State) offered the following: "I'm naïve in that I assume that people do things for the betterment of the good; and, instead, there were a lot of people [on a particular committee] who were very concerned about their own departments and territory. . . . I was just appalled at the way people operated."

<sup>39</sup>Although individuals within the departments may clearly have different interests, all were concerned about the ability of (and need for) the department to work together to function effectively. The departments are thus much more akin to *gemeinschaften* (communities) than to *gesellschaften* (companies), the two types of social organizations distinguished by Ferdinand Tönnies in the late-nineteenth century. (H. P., however, did not view his department as functioning particularly well; following the *gesellschaft* model, he considers those with whom he works to be "co-workers," not "colleagues.")

<sup>40</sup>He said: "I'd much rather deal with [higher-stakes issues such as faculty searches and promotion and tenure] than with 'What time's the picnic?' and 'Who's going to bring the chicken?' and the like—those things just don't appeal to me."

Social Committee; the second member wondered why anyone would *not*. In a somewhat similar case, one faculty member described “an Assessment Committee, where you just have to go through piles of papers: I really dislike that. . . . We do it just because we have to do it.” Later, I spoke with a faculty member in the same department who has a less antagonistic relationship with the same committee:

I’ve done our assessment for many years—I’ve *coordinated* it, I should say—for many, many years. It’s a committee that nobody wants to be on; but almost everybody in the department has served on it and been a good sport about it. And now I’m sort of becoming the person who kind of takes care of it for us. And I’m okay with that; it doesn’t bother me as much as it bothers some other people, so, fine, I’ll make that my niche here. That’s cool. Different people here have different niches and what they do for the department—and those are recognized and appreciated. I think that’s nice.

The idea of having “different niches” that are “recognized and appreciated” contributes to the communal sense pervading many of the departments in my study. Debra (Grovehill State) specifically mentioned the “communitarian ideal” of her department; Katherine (Daylesford State) referred to the “communitarian spirit” of hers, while also describing it as a “fairly egalitarian department.” “I have a good department with a lot of autonomy, and we give each other autonomy,” she remarked, adding, “We live and let live.” Melinda described her department at Spenwood State as “really participatory.” Along those same lines:

Amy (Parkham State): “This is a blessedly collegial department—thank God!”

Athena (Spenwood State): “The department is one that is very, very functional, very collegial.”

Debra (Grovehill State): “We have a very strong, very supportive departmental culture here.”

Eleanor (Whitehaven State): “My department, for the most part, is very collegial.”

George (Spenwood State): “We have a very democratic department. We are very—we have a good relationship. . . . When I came, I mean, it was almost like a family.”

Gomez (Ashdale State): “I think of this as a very democratic sort of department.”

This sense pervades not only the ways in which faculty members engage in service to their departments and institutions but also how, for example, shared resources are allocated and course assignments are made.

Just as with research, many of the faculty members in my study do more service than necessary—with some of them doing far more themselves or telling me about such individuals in their departments or at their institutions. Gomez described one colleague who’s “got to be on fifteen different committees. And she’s a non-tenured assistant [professor]; that’s just what she loves to do. And she’s very effective at it; I think she just really enjoys it.” Eleanor also described having colleagues who love to serve on committees at Whitehaven State, “just because they like to be in the know.” At the same time, Gomez said that he “was told from Day One that no one has ever been denied tenure or denied promotion [at Ashdale State] based on lack of service.”

Faculty at all state comprehensive universities in this study perceived service to be the third priority of their departments, even if, in terms of expected percentages of work allocation, it is on par with research. George said, “The scuttlebutt, anyway, is that service doesn’t count the way that scholarship or teaching does. But

people do it.” Likewise, “there’s still a premium placed on research” over service, Eleanor explained, perhaps since most research is visible on a larger—or, at least, different—scale than most service, the bulk of which is localized.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, service to the department or institution is a component of my faculty participants’ localized identities, as members of particular departments at particular institutions. In the next chapter, I focus more on service to the profession—and on how that service is imbued with different meanings with respect to faculty members’ professional identities.

### Managing Time for Teaching, Research, and Service

Although teaching, research, and service are not given equal weight at the time of tenure decisions, the rhetoric of evaluation speaks to the importance of desiring “excellence” across all realms. At Whitehaven State, for example, Eleanor described a “sort of juxtaposition of ‘We expect you to have excellent teaching’ with ‘We expect you to have excellent service’ and ‘We expect you to have excellent research’—but how can you really balance all that? It’s really hard.” Percy echoed Eleanor’s sentiments. In commenting on the difficulties of being a productive researcher at Berkswell State, he said, “the sad thing . . . is that those other pressures—of the four-course load and the administrative [service] responsibilities—just drive a lot of people. . . . It’s hard. It’s hard to do all of it. And so the first thing to go for a lot of people is publications.” Amy (Parkham State) described the “teaching alone [as] a full-time

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<sup>41</sup>In her study of faculty perceptions of tenure and promotion requirements at a state comprehensive university, Shirley Peganoff O’Brien described the same situation as a “hidden message” gleaned by faculty members about “the value of research over service” (2008, 112).

job.” She continued: “There’s no doubt in my mind. The service is extra. You do the service, you know, beyond the forty hours—and then the scholarship even beyond that. . . . I’m just dog tired at the end of the day. I am. I’m very tired.” George (Spenwood State) also commented on the workload: “It’s way more than a forty-hour-a-week job.” Owen, in fact, described the daily compromises that he must make as he negotiates his multiple roles at Meldon State:

As an educator—and doing research, and doing service—I have this great ideal of what I’d like to be doing, what I could be doing; and then there’s the reality of how many hours there are in the day and how much time one has. So there is just very fundamentally a compromise that you make every single day, between what you know is possible and what is feasible.

Given that “the constant is teaching” (Percy), the expectation seemed to be that faculty members would divide any additional working time—after satisfying their teaching-related responsibilities—between service and research. Negotiating the balance and protecting time for research, however, is not always easy. George mentioned how easy it is to “get sucked into other things,” a concern also expressed by Katherine (Daylesford State):

And the thing about research here . . . I find—and I’ve just been very conscious about this from the very beginning—that you have to consciously make it a priority over service, because the service stuff: you’ll automatically get sucked into committee work. Then again, if you prove to be half-way competent, you’ll just get asked to do more and more. . . . And so I’m just trying to be very conscious about the fact that my scholarship is a priority—and, you know, you try to carve out one day a week and jealously guard it, but stuff comes up *all* the time.

As others explained in the earlier discussion on research, snatching small windows of free time throughout the term is often not adequate to afford “sustained attention”

to writing or research projects—especially since the ideal for engaging in scholarship seems to be long periods without interruption or distraction.<sup>42</sup>

Some faculty members, though, seem to be able to compartmentalize both their work and time in personally effective manners. This compartmentalization is often as physical as it is temporal. Every weekday, Peter, for example, comes in to his office at Parkham State at around 7:30 in the morning; he remains on campus until about 5:00 in the afternoon. This routine is his norm, regardless of when his classes are scheduled. He said: “That’s just the way I work. I like to have an office: I come here and get stuff done. And then I go home. With some exceptions, I don’t bring work home. I don’t work on the weekends—I just do my work here.” Likewise, Melinda works in her office at Spenwood State, typically between 8:00 and 4:00 each weekday, when her children are at daycare:

I do not work once I go home. That’s never been my work style, anyway; I can’t concentrate. My brain is best right now—sort of morning and mid-day, in terms of thinking and writing and doing hardcore research or thinking about teaching. Well, teaching I can think of a little more [at different times]. Service—it’s easy to do service at night [laughs]. . . . I just make *extremely* good use of my time here. So, the days I was teaching, if I wasn’t talking to a student in office hours or teaching, I was prepping; I was grading; I was filling in on the service stuff. And the days I wasn’t teaching—it would usually be two days a week, usually—one would be about finishing grading and prepping, and the other would be a little bit of research.

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<sup>42</sup>This sense of “sustained attention” can be actualized at times other than during the breaks between semesters, however. Half of my faculty participants mentioned sabbatical leaves—all in very positive, wistful ways. Peter pointed out the connection between tenure and sabbatical leaves at Parkham State: “You can only get a sabbatical after six years—and, I mean, it’s not exactly [because of] tenure [that you’re granted one]; but the way our system is set up, there’s no real way to get a sabbatical before you’ve been tenured, because you just haven’t been here long enough [to be eligible for one before you are tenured].”

Although clearly serving psychological purposes, physical compartmentalization of the location of work is also practical, given the apparatus of the profession. Percy (Berkswell State), for example, does all of his research at home, which is where he keeps all of his research-related materials. George currently operates in the opposite: “I try to separate my home life from my work life. I’ve moved back and forth over the years. But now all my books related to my teaching and my research are here [in my office].”

Gomez (Ashdale State) described the temporal compartmentalization of a typical workweek as follows:

I don’t usually do any schoolwork or scholarship or anything on a Saturday. But Sunday’s usually a work day—I might only work for four to six hours on a Sunday—and then maybe four to six hours on a Friday. But, then, it’s more like ten hours [per day] Monday through Thursday. So . . . my workweek generally will begin on a late Sunday morning and then would end on a Friday afternoon. And I put in probably fifty or so hours a week—maybe sixty, depending on the time of the semester, whether there’s just more grading to do—so it just depends. . . . On rare occasions, I might have a seventy-hour workweek.

But protecting her weekends from work seems to be neither possible nor effective for Amy (Parkham State):

I work weekends. I’d like to say that I don’t work weekends—that I work *long* weekdays but not on weekends—but that’s not true. Last year I sort of managed that: I worked really long weekdays but then I just worried on weekends that I wasn’t working. This semester, I’m in the office a lot of weekends.

Although preparing new courses (or redesigning old courses) is one of the more time-consuming teaching-related tasks the faculty members in my study undertake, once new courses are up and running, grading is the most time-consuming



task. “There is grading galore,” Amy commented. History courses are often writing-intensive courses, and the grading requires investments of both time and energy.

Athena (Spenwood State) portrayed her approach as follows:

I don’t know how to teach students to write without making them do it again and again and again. And the truth is that, when you do that, that’s *you* hurting yourself, right? I don’t know how to do it any other way. And I don’t mean they have to rewrite one paper. . . . I mean, I believe in editing and drafting. But the truth is that fluency—it’s like learning a language—fluency: you just have to do it and do it and do it. Not keep rewriting the same thing—you don’t keep repeating the same sentence until you get it right: you just keep going and keep going. I mean, you’ve gotta teach them to write! Okay, so we write and we write and we write and we write.

And, as a result, she grades and she grades and she grades and she grades—to such an extent that teaching regularly requires up to 80 percent of her working time (which she has reported, conservatively, as sixty-four hours per week). Athena described the time-reporting form that she has to fill out each semester at Spenwood State as a “dumb pink thing.” Her estimates are always low: “It looked dumb for me to put the actual number that was there. I think they’d just think I’m lying.”

At the time of our interview, Sarah (Grovehill State) was teaching a “writing-centered” class with a “pretty reasonable” enrollment. The smaller-than-usual enrollment was having a significant positive effect on her experience with grading.

Sarah shared, also, how she had recently begun using technology to assist with her grading:

So I haven’t had as many students as I’ve had in previous semesters, and the grading has actually been kind of a joy—because I’ve been able to see it as what it really is supposed to be: an exchange between professor and student. And I think one of the things that’s helped is that I’ve actually started grading the papers electronically, so that—not only can I manipulate the document, but I can also actually write a lot of comments a lot

faster, and they can actually read them. . . . I mean, I just got tired of giving papers back, and the students couldn't read my handwriting. . . . But I think the smaller class sizes—I guess this is a plug for, you know, a better higher education policy: smaller class sizes make a huge difference for not just the workload but the quality of the instruction.<sup>43</sup> My comments are so much better when I can take the time to really reflect on a student's paper, you know, than when I'm teaching forty-person sections.

Faculty participants who are not lucky enough to have smaller numbers of students in their classes may do what Thelonious has done at Ashdale State: "I used to have a short research paper in my intro classes, but I stopped. . . . I decided that a short research paper wasn't that beneficial to them—or me." David commented that some of the professors who teach introductory-level world history courses at Meldon State have "cut back . . . on the writing assignments" now that the university raised the maximum enrollment per section from thirty-eight to forty-four students. "We've talked about that as a department," David related, in reference to the larger class sizes. "You know, if they're going to put more [students] in our classes, then we cannot be expected to do the extra work," he said. And George (Spenwood State), finally realizing that he had been spending too much time with his teaching, described a new approach:

This year, I've been radical. This is unprecedented for me—and I don't even think my colleagues know. But, in two of my classes, I'm assigning no papers. I just got tired of grading papers that nobody would really look at. You know, I spent a lot of time grading papers—going over language and stuff. And I do that well; and I like doing that, actually. I feel that I can teach writing—and I felt, here, that much of my job is teaching writing. . . . I thought that it was more important to teach the writing. This was, you know, content that they could use—but the content wasn't the most important thing. But that just takes too much time, so, I mean—I've never

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<sup>43</sup>Regarding small class sizes, Debra offered: "There's a culture about the classroom that's way beyond just delivering information. There's an exchange: I'm going to learn from you, and you're going to learn from me. That's what I appreciate, wherever you can have a small class."

done this before, but I started this semester—with two of the courses I teach: no papers; just tests. And a big amount for participation: 25 percent. And a lot of quizzes, too.

George's plan was to use the time freed from grading to work on his stalled book project. But, because he finds it particularly easy to "get sucked into other things," his progress had been less than he initially expected.<sup>44</sup>

With respect to assistance from graduate assistants, I found quite a bit of variation across the institutions in my sample. At Parkham State, for example, the History Department has four graduate assistants who lead weekly break-out discussion sections (of 40 students each) for large lecture courses (with enrollments of 120 students each); they also assist professors with other projects on a floating, ad hoc basis.<sup>45</sup> At Grovehill State, according to Debra, the graduate assistants do not assist with grading: "That is made explicitly clear." Instead, they sit in on large classes and serve as tutors for students "who are less comfortable coming to the faculty member with questions—they are supposed to go talk with the grad students." And at Ashdale State, the graduate students may help with both teaching and grading; and they normally hold office hours, as the graduate assistants do at Grovehill State. The extent of classroom involvement at Ashdale depends on the desires of the various

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<sup>44</sup>These statements from Thelonious, David, and George were the only ones I was offered that could be used to lend support to George Kuh's idea of a "disengagement compact" (2003, 28), introduced in chapter 2.

<sup>45</sup>Regarding the time that graduate assistants are able to offer to professors in her department, Amy asked, "But what can I ask them to do for me? They can't really go through stuff to find books and interlibrary loan them for me; I'd have to give out my passwords. They can't track down sources for me; they're in languages they can't read. I've always wondered to what extent professors *really* used [graduate students as] research assistants. I've never known anyone who did that a lot." Soon after, though, she added: "Some of this may just all be excuses."

professors who are assigned graduate assistants. Gomez explained, making another comparison to research institutions in the process:

Some faculty members really don't have their GAs [graduate assistants] do much of anything other than, maybe, take attendance or something like that. We can also have them do research. I've had some GAs do research for me—but it just kind of varies around here. So it's almost like a TA [teaching assistantship], but just not quite the full teaching that you'd have at a research institution—it's something a little less than that.

Finally, in organizing this presentation to mirror the teaching–research–service paradigm (itself appropriated from the research–university model), I have not given due space to certain faculty activities that contribute to the diversity within faculty positions as well as to the ways in which faculty members organize their work time. Two departments in this study host master's degrees in public history; some of my faculty participants are involved in coordinating, teaching for, and advising for those programs. These responsibilities often encompass varying levels of community outreach through, for example, coordinating the placement of student volunteers and interns. In the context of course releases, I mentioned that two of my participants had served department chairs and three of my participants had served as the directors of graduate studies for their respective departments' master's degree programs. One of my participants supervises and advises student teachers. And advising of undergraduate students follows two main models: some departments have centralized advising (with an academic professional handling the lot of it); others require faculty members to share that work. Depending on the department, these responsibilities can be aligned with either service or teaching.

Overall, my faculty participants were remarkably self-aware and self-reflective; some were even rather self-critical. Athena, who described herself as “neurotically” self-critical, admitted that she is “always trying to figure out, ‘Okay, what’s happening here?’” This quality, which may correspond with the willingness of these faculty members to participate in my study, naturally contributed to the richness of the material I gathered during our conversations. At the same time, these self-reflective, self-aware faculty members know how their time for research will be limited by the time they must spend teaching (and preparing to teach, and grading, and—in some cases—advising) and the time they devote to service (which may also encompass advising). Ultimately, they have all been able to cope with the competing demands on their time and to respond in their own ways to the “tyranny of the immediate.”

### Locating Institutions within Their Communities

A further contextual element for the institutions in this study involves how my faculty participants perceived the towns and cities in which their institutions are located. I offer this discussion as a footnote, of sorts—but one that is nevertheless revealing of the typical environment of non-urban state comprehensive universities as well as of the ways in which faculty members, who tend to be rather cosmopolitan in outlook, cope with these environments.<sup>46</sup> Owen, for example, had never heard of Meldon State before encountering the job advertisement; when he consulted his atlas and noticed that the town of Meldon was not even on the state map, he thought,

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<sup>46</sup>Again, as at the outset of this chapter, I use the term “cosmopolitan” not in a Gouldnerian (1957, 1958) sense but to mean, for example, *worldly* or *urbane*.

"This is kind of a bad sign." Likewise, despite having previously spent time in the same state as Ashdale, H. P. had heard of neither Ashdale State nor its location before seeing the job posting. He and his family currently live just minutes from campus. He said: "From the standpoint of quality of life, there are quite a few things that are attractive about being in a place like Ashdale. From a professional standpoint, it's exactly the opposite."<sup>47</sup>

Both Amy and Peter echoed the attractive elements about living in Parkham, with Amy saying, "I live in a place that's affordable—that's a big part of being comfortable." Peter offered that he "liked the sort of small-town feel and the low prices on real estate." He has found Parkham to be a good place to raise his family: "A lot of the things about it that other professors don't like, I actually like." On the other hand, Sarah echoed H. P.'s comment about the professional challenges of being at a smaller school in a smaller town: "One of the . . . *disadvantages* of being in a place like Grovehill . . . at an institution [like Grovehill State is that] there aren't any other people who do what I do, or exactly what I do—and so, for that reason, conferences are vital." Sarah goes to conferences at her own expense, in fact, "because it's so energizing and refreshing to be around people who are specialists." And David said about the town of Meldon: "It's not exactly the height of intellectual sophistication around here."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>H. P. thus corroborated Richard Florida's (2008) central premise: "where we live is a central life factor that affects all the others—work, education, and love" (6).

<sup>48</sup>One of my participants commented on the importance of departmental and disciplinary colleagues as helping to assuage the "isolating" nature of academic life, "especially when you're in—pardon me—the rural Midwest, where anti-intellectualism is much stronger than thought."

For some faculty members, then, periodically escaping the intellectual isolation of their departments (where they may be the only specialists in their fields on campus) or the perceived parochialism of their communities by attending conferences is a sufficient enough reprise. Others, however, including faculty at Berkswell State, Grovehill State, Meldon State, Parkham State, and Spenwood State, have chosen not to live in the same towns as their workplaces but live, instead, in larger neighboring cities, enduring one-way commutes of thirty to sixty minutes.<sup>49</sup> Percy is one such commuter. He offered: “There was no way I was going to move to Berkswell.” Ling gave living in her university’s community a try, spending her first year at Grovehill State in the town of Grovehill. She was generous in her initial motivation yet quite diplomatic in explaining why she decided to move to a larger city, about an hour from campus, the following year:

[When I accepted the job at Grovehill,] I wanted to learn more about the community and see how I can serve; and I wanted to learn more about the student body. So I made a decision that I was going to live there [in Grovehill]. . . . I spent my first year there, trying to learn about the community. But, um, unfortunately the town and the university didn’t seem to have a well-developed strategic relationship. I’m quite satisfied with the university and with how the institution works; but the town didn’t really attract me. And so, the next year I moved to [the closest significantly larger city] and decided to commute. Precisely because there is a good number of faculty members—a good portion of faculty members at Grovehill—who commute from [that city], it wasn’t that difficult a decision to commute.

Eleanor was not keen on the town of Whitehaven when she first moved there. As no substantially larger communities exist within an hour’s drive of Whitehaven,

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<sup>49</sup>In many cases, living in a larger town or city affords the spouses of my faculty participants (at least those with spouses) greater employment opportunities.

however, she had no choice but to remain. Fortunately, she came to appreciate the community:

When I first moved to Whitehaven, I hated it. I moved here—and I'm from a small town in [another state]. But I'm from a "small town" that has 40,000 people! When I moved to Whitehaven [with a population less than one-fifth of my hometown], my first couple months here were tough. It's, like, Oh my God. And I was single, which makes it a little bit worse in a town where everybody's paired up, almost—or it seems like it, even if not everybody's paired up, it feels like everybody's paired up. And, so, it was tough. But, you know? It [the town] just really grew on me. . . . In fact, I live right by campus. . . . And I love everything about it. I love hanging out with the students.

Family—and the presence or absence of it with respect to job satisfaction and mobility—is considered in greater detail at the end of the following chapter. In the next section, I consider my faculty participants' perceptions of the tenure situation at their institutions: how they responded to their understandings of the requirements and how they recalled the process of going up for tenure.

### **"You Don't Really Have to Worry about Getting Tenure"**

#### Introducing Different Perspectives

Earlier in this chapter, I noted how four faculty members in the history department at one institution (Grovehill State) had slightly different understandings of what should have been, in theory, the same expectations for tenure. What can account for these different perceptions? My interviews with faculty members pointed to at least four possible interpretations: (1) Tenure expectations have shifted over time—and are continuing to shift. (2) Written criteria, even when explicit, still require a level of interpretation and application. (3) Colleagues and mentors can send



messages that are aligned with different expectations. (4) Individual personalities affect the awareness of both explicit and implicit requirements, which are often complicated by being perceived as negotiable to different extents.<sup>50</sup> In this section, I treat each of these four perspectives in turn before concluding with a summary of how the faculty members in my study felt as they themselves went up for tenure. By describing my faculty participants' perceptions of the requirements and expectations for tenure, then, this section portrays the road to tenure within the history departments at the institutions in my study.

### Shifting Expectations for Tenure

Percy was able to offer one of the clearest and most personal examples of the shift in tenure expectations over time, as he, in fact, fell outside one of my criteria for recruitment. He was tenured at Berkswell State approximately ten years before my advertised requirement of having been tenured in or after the year 2000; he simply overlooked that criterion in the recruitment message.<sup>51</sup> He fits the "traditional"

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<sup>50</sup>Together, these interpretations fit with Gretchen Bataille and Betsy Brown's portrayal of tenure expectations by faculty members as a "moving target," due in part to unclear or ambiguous guidelines for tenure; different expectations at departmental, college, and university levels; reliance on "alternate sources" for information about the tenure process; and insufficient or inconsistent feedback on progress toward meeting tenure criteria (2006, 63, 64).

<sup>51</sup>Instead of discounting his interview material, however, I have used it, cautiously, to underscore the rationality behind attempting to restrict my participants to those tenured only within the past eleven years. As the experiences of my faculty participants will show, however, an even more severe temporal restriction could have ameliorated some of the experiential variances (although finding an adequate number of participants would have been more difficult in such a situation), since even my "eligible" participants commonly explained how the tenure expectations are different today than they were when they were hired and when they themselves went up for tenure. But even this presumption is complicated by the fact that different institutions have altered their tenure expectations at different times and in different ways. Percy, in fact, creates a useful comparison of an archetypical "then" (comparatively lax requirements for

career route of having been hired at Berkswell directly upon completing his Ph.D. and has stayed ever since. Percy is now, in fact, the senior member of his department—a department that is currently quite heavily populated by untenured assistant professors. He recounted this pre-tenure exchange with his department chair:

I had a chair who was very dedicated to service—and who never did any research. And it was clear, after the first couple of years, that I spent a good deal of time on research and very little on service. And he came to me one day, and he said, basically, “There’s room enough for both of us in this department. I prefer doing service and no research. That’s fine. And you prefer doing research and very little service. That’s fine, too.” And so it was basically a “live and let live” mentality. So that’s—that’s changed in the department since then. But that was the understanding that I had when I came in. . . . The constant has been teaching. . . . And the other two [research and service] were peripheral. But that’s changed. In the last decade or so, we’ve had several chairs who’ve focused much more on research. But not when I came in.

When asked to describe the major differences for members of the newest generation of faculty members in his department, Percy described an overall attitudinal shift that has translated into greater pressures and, in fact, a reduced level of perceived autonomy:

It’s different for these guys now. For my case, things were very, sort of, easy going. When I got here—whenever it was: twenty, twenty-five years ago—there weren’t the same requirements. There wasn’t the same amount of pressure put on me to do lots of service or lots of this and lots of that. And there wasn’t a lot of intense—I think *overbearing*—supervision of what I was doing. . . . There is much more administrative junk that they have to go through than I ever had to go through. When I went up for tenure—um, you know, we always had student evaluations and all that type of stuff. We also had publication requirements that that type of stuff. But all I did was I had a file folder of, you know, the appointments to committees and the student evaluations; and I had my publications, so I put them in a box; and I left everything in the dean’s office. Now, *everything*

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tenure) versus “now” (stricter requirements for tenure, particularly with respect to research); the tenure experiences of my other faculty participants fall squarely between these extremes.

that they do has to be documented, organized in a huge binder. They're pressured to do much more committee work than I ever did. Plus they have their requirements to publish. Plus they have the teaching load. I think—it just looks to me like they're much more overburdened with a lot of administrative requirements that I never had to go through.

Current faculty at Berkswell State who are going up for tenure, according to Percy, “have to keep a record of basically every little thing that they did: every little committee, every service thing, and all that junk—a record of everything. These binders are *huge!*”<sup>52</sup> Still, Percy described the research expectations at Berkswell—even the current expectations—as “very low.” When he went up for tenure, his recollection was that “all you had to do was to get out one peer-reviewed article. And I think now it's two—I'm not 100 percent sure of that. But, still, that's not an onerous publication requirement for tenure.”

Katherine described her understanding of cultural changes within her department at Daylesford State—changes that largely preceded her arrival—as follows:

Some of the people who've been here a long time sort of describe it that the original feel was that this institution was a “publish *and* perish” institution: if you were publishing, you didn't have your priorities straight. And then it evolved . . . and then it became acceptable—and even

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<sup>52</sup>Indeed, representing the experiences of faculty at three other institutions in my study, Eleanor, Owen, and Peter each had their tenure dossiers on hand during our meetings: all were in imposing 4-inch three-ring binders. Not having known a system where such binders were *not* the norm, though, all three presented the binders as matters of fact, not as matters of annoyance or complaint. On the other hand, Athena mentioned the “dumb pink” form she fills out each semester at Spenwood State; Katherine twice mentioned the “perpetuation of bureaucracy” at Daylesford State; David, with respect to supervising student teachers at Meldon State, lamented the rise in “virtual paperwork”—much of which he dubbed “busywork”: “some of it is just putting the student teachers through hoops and putting me through hoops”; George said, “We have reviews all the time” at Spenwood State; and Sarah referred to the completion of her annual portfolio at Grovehill State as “a huge pain in the neck.”

desirable—to publish. So now more and more emphasis is being placed on that [publishing].<sup>53</sup>

Owen based his lack of concern about getting tenure on the fact that teaching was the most important criterion when he went up for tenure at Meldon State:

It was pretty explicit that, when I arrived, the focus of my energies should be on teaching—that was the majority of my responsibility. . . . One of the things that was also made pretty explicit at the outset was that, if you're doing a good job teaching, then you don't really have to worry about getting tenure. At this particular institution, it was very, very unusual when people didn't get tenure. . . . It's interesting, because that has changed pretty dramatically over the last few years. Now . . . there's also an expectation that they're doing research as part of their professional responsibilities. And if they're not doing research, that could be a basis for not getting tenure—which was not something that was the case when I was hired.

Likewise, when Amy came to Parkham State, “it was at a time that there was less emphasis on scholarship.” But she arrived in the midst of the transition and was able to feel the effects of the shift toward greater emphasis on scholarship:

It was made very clear to me that teaching was the primary activity. But it was also made clear to me that scholarship was going to be a larger focus than it had been in the past. Officially, it was 60–20–20. The first 20 was service, and the second 20 was scholarship. I always maintained that it was 80–20–20!

George, too, commented on the recent attention paid to scholarship at Spenwood State: “I think there's been more of an emphasis on scholarly production since I've been here—even since I've gotten tenure.”

Faculty members' awareness of the changes to tenure requirements and expectations during and prior to their own careers at their institutions, therefore, seem to

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<sup>53</sup>Peter (Parkham State) offered that, “at some places, you might even be penalized [for publishing]: ‘Why are you wasting your time with *that*?’”

have influenced individuals' memories of their tenure experiences, as will be explored below. At the same time, different perceptions are reflective of the actual changes that have been made to tenure expectations at state comprehensive universities even within the past decade.

### Explicating and Interpreting Criteria for Tenure

The faculty participants in my study acknowledged that written tenure criteria themselves require interpretation. I found, in short, that the "clearer" the tenure criteria are believed to be, the less uncertainty individuals reported having faced in the process of going up for tenure. Ashdale State, Grovehill State, and Meldon State—all three of which happen to have unionized faculties—had the strongest consensus among faculty participants regarding clarity of tenure criteria. Consider these four perspectives from faculty members at Grovehill State:

Debra: "If you're meeting the criteria, then there should be no question [about being tenured]."

Ling: "The tenure-evaluation criteria are pretty clear—they're crystal clear. There's almost no surprise or unexpected success or failure for the individuals who are up for tenure."

Ronald: "I had a very, pretty clear sense of what tenure expectations were at my institution. I knew the types of things they did and didn't value. . . . Grovehill's system for tenure is very transparent."

Sarah: "All of the tenure requirements are clearly spelled out. . . . There are no surprises when you come down to the tenure decision."

David, Gomez, and Thelonious, in fact, directly connected their faculty unions with the clarity of tenure and promotion expectations:

David (Meldon State): “It’s no question that it [the union] made the tenure process—or that it contributed to the tenure process being very transparent—and having clear benchmarks that one could reach.”

Gomez (Ashdale State): “With the union, everything is laid out (so it winds up becoming horribly bureaucratic, and that’s a headache); but you know exactly where you are. And if there’s a problem, you can then—it can be addressed. So everything is very transparent. . . . You know exactly what you need to do for publications; it’s spelled out in terms of the types of service you need to do; it’s spelled out in terms of what your teaching responsibilities are. . . . So, you know, there’s really no surprise.”

Thelonious (Ashdale State): “The reason why I mention it [the union] is because the job qualifications and criteria for retention and promotion are very clear. And they may or may not be at other schools: I don’t think they’re usually as transparent.”

Further discussion of faculty perceptions of the roles of unions at the institutions in this study is offered toward the end of this chapter and in appendix F.

Eleanor (Whitehaven State) and Peter (Parkham State) both described their institutions’ criteria for tenure as “pretty clear,” with Eleanor later describing the document her department uses as “*very* clear.” Eleanor described this document—a document that shares characteristics with those used by other departments—as follows:

It’s a document that we’re given as soon as we’re hired that says, “These are the minimum expectations for teaching” [to be awarded tenure]; “These are the minimum expectations for scholarship”; and “These are the minimum expectations for service”—and then each of those areas is ranked across different levels. . . . There are statistical things: for history, the minimum for tenure in scholarship is a book or two peer-reviewed journal articles combined with two conference papers—I mean, there’s, like, a little list. And then, for service, it specifies—and it’s *very* clear. . . . I think we’re pretty lucky that it’s so specific. I have colleagues who

complain about how specific it is—but I think I’d much rather have it *be* that specific.<sup>54</sup>

She continued by sharing the story of a colleague who was recently denied tenure because he had published nothing, despite constant reminders to do so: “We would tell him every year, ‘You gotta do something, you gotta do something.’ And it was like he had blinders on his ears or something, you know?” Eleanor’s view is that her colleague felt his “pretty excellent service” would compensate for his lack of scholarship—but he had clearly not met the minimum in scholarship and thus could not be granted tenure, according to the policies. “Like I said,” she concluded, “I appreciate the specificity.”

Peter also connected the importance of clear criteria not with his own tenure experience but with the time he spent on his department’s Personnel Committee:

Most of the cases were fairly easy, because we have pretty clear criteria. There were one or two where things were a bit grey, because there were previous policies, and we had to take into account those earlier policies. So it helped me see what a benefit it was to have clearer, more defined policies.

Clarity, of course, is in the eye of the beholder. Peter found that “clearer, more defined policies” helped to avoid situations “where things were a bit grey”; but the fact remains that “there’s always room for interpretation” when it comes to

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<sup>54</sup>Note that having a book published is listed as one route to tenure at Whitehaven State; books are norms for tenure in history at research universities. (Ling, at Grovehill State, explained that “in the field of history, you are expected to write a book—to turn your dissertation into a book.” She was addressing the norms of the professional field, though, not of the expectations of individual institutions for tenure.) But, of course, the publication of a book is not a requirement at Whitehaven; other possibilities for meeting the research component exist. Nearly half of the current history faculty at Whitehaven, however, had published (or had under contract) their first books—based on their doctoral dissertations—by the time they went up for tenure.

departmental criteria for tenure and promotion (Debra). In Eleanor's own case, in fact, she described certain "tenure drama" around her publications, because she

had a couple of online things. That's not a big deal now, but [a decade ago], there was this suspicion that if you have something that's online, it's not as good, or it's easier, or something—I mean, now they don't worry about that, but [a decade ago]: "*Online* journal?" It was all sort of iffy.<sup>55</sup>

Now the tenure requirements at Whitehaven State accommodate for online publications. But because they did not when Eleanor went up for tenure, the "room for interpretation" that Debra identified was important for the success of Eleanor's tenure bid.

Finally, with respect to interpretation, Ronald mentioned how even "articulated expectations" have to be interpreted. He thus extolled the virtues of formalized annual feedback, in the years leading up to tenure, regarding how well a faculty member is actually meeting the expectations. Sarah credited annual feedback at Grovehill State as being the reason why "there are no surprises when you come down to the tenure decision." Also about the system at Grovehill, Ronald said:

You get feedback from multiple levels every year, and from that, you have a very clear sense of if you're doing what you need to do, if you're not, or if you're borderline. If somebody is surprised by the decision of tenure, then I'll say without hesitation that that person wasn't paying attention to the feedback that he or she was getting.

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<sup>55</sup>Deborah Andersen's *Digital Scholarship in the Tenure, Promotion, and Review Process* (2004), for example, documented what was then a "widespread lack of appropriate review guidelines for new scholarly media" in the tenure, promotion, and review process (Sewell 2004, 124). In a chapter co-written with Dennis Trinkle, she offered the following three perspectives about online publications, collected in spring 2000 from chairs of history departments: First, "What hasn't been directly addressed is the question of 'Is an on-line publication a publication?'" Second, "Many professors in my department are not clear that this [digital scholarship] qualifies as research." Third, "I do not believe that most publications in electronic media earn much respect. These are seen as curiosities rather than as scholarship" (Andersen and Trinkle 2004, 65).



Eleanor's former colleague at Whitehaven State, for example, was someone who clearly "wasn't paying attention to the feedback" that he was getting. Regarding his own annual feedback—from the dean and the department chair—and semesterly feedback from students (in the form of student evaluations) and colleagues who undertake peer-review, Ronald said, "There was never anything that made me worry." Moreover, he combined the annual feedback he received with critical self-reflection in order to improve his practice: "Looking at all of those [evaluations from multiple sources], you know, I didn't have a sense of problems; I had a sense of, 'Okay, there's something where I want to think about doing that differently.' But that's just learning from what's there."<sup>56</sup>

#### Receiving and Interpreting Messages from Colleagues and Mentors

The messages that pre-tenure faculty members at state comprehensive universities receive regarding their performance are one form of feedback that they use to negotiate their understandings of the tenure expectations—and their likelihoods for achieving tenure—at their institutions. In Sarah's case, for example:

I always expected that I would get tenure. My colleagues had always made it very clear to me that I was going to get tenure—because I was getting regular feedback and I was getting, whatever, *superior* in everything every year. I knew that I couldn't *not* get tenure, then, by the time it came down to it.

But in other cases, especially those where the tenure criteria themselves are less exact, the pre-tenure feedback that faculty members can get may be ambiguous or

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<sup>56</sup>This example of Ronald's self-reflection and self-criticism is akin to what William refers to—later in this chapter—as having a "growing mind."

even, as in Amy's case at Parkham State, conflicting. This lengthy excerpt from my conversation with Amy reinforces the value of clear criteria for tenure. At the same time, it illuminates how a certain level of flexibility in those requirements allows for potential benefits to the department.

I was not sure at all that I had done what was needed [for tenure], because the parameters weren't that clear, and I'd been given conflicting information from people. The chair at that time at one point pulled me into his office and said, "Given who's going to be chair next year, you'd better get an article published if you want tenure"—which was interesting to me, because the chair isn't on the promotion and tenure committee. . . . I never knew if that was an attempt to sort of scare me into doing something that hadn't happened yet, or if it was an actual concern. But I could only have done what I had done; and that's what I had done. And I was told by other people that it was sufficient. So, I put in my packet, and it came back. No, I mean it *went through*, and, you know, life was good. But it was a bit unsettling for me, and I'm glad that much of that has been clarified. It's still a little bit unclear. It says you must have a "refereed article"—it doesn't say specifically in a *juried* journal; and it's not entirely clear what "refereed" means. But it is clear that someone has to have read it and said, "Yes, this is worthy of publication." It can't be personally published, you know? So it's still a little open, but I think that's by design, because this department is made up of many different people, all involved in many different projects. One of the nice things about it is the attempt to celebrate what people are doing rather than telling them that what they are doing is not good enough, which, I think, is kind of a nice attitude to work with. It gives you the freedom to do your scholarship without worrying unduly about its nature.<sup>57</sup>

Amy's experience again emphasizes that changes have occurred at her institution since she was awarded tenure: "much . . . has been clarified." Another change

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<sup>57</sup>Freedom of scholarship, indeed—and particularly the freedoms of the professorial life—were major draws of several of my participants to the profession, including Eleanor, Owen, Peter, and Thelonious. To Owen, "the freedom and the creativity and the opportunity to feel like you're doing something that's really meaningful—it's amazing." Thelonious described the "relative freedom of faculty" as "tremendous." And said Eleanor: "I joke that, how can you be at a job that, if you have a book, you know, on a [particularly esoteric yet fascinating figure from history], you spend all day Saturday reading it—and somehow that counts as work?" But, in our conversations, the concept of *freedom* took on a more transcendent meaning for most of my faculty participants after tenure.

that has come to Parkham State is the initiation of a formalized mentorship program for new faculty in the History Department.<sup>58</sup> Amy, in fact, was to begin mentoring an incoming faculty member the semester following our conversation. Ling was part of a formal mentoring circle at Grovehill State for two or three years; in my conversation with her, she emphasized the need for having mentors both within and outside the department. Mentors within the department would “have the knowledge of the way things work” in the department, which is especially important, given that tenure evaluation criteria differ from department to department. But mentors outside the department, who have a sense of the culture of the institution, are also necessary, since “oftentimes the newly hired assistant professor might not feel 100 percent comfortable in asking some basic questions” that could expose his or her ignorance about academia within the department. Others, Ling explained, might be reluctant to share, honestly, their plans for further professional development with mentors within their department—especially if those plans might include moving to another university in the future.<sup>59</sup>

After accepting the job at Ashdale State, H. P., as mentioned earlier in this chapter, had initially planned to move from Ashdale to another university: “to the kind of institution that I imagined I *could* be teaching at.” Wisely, then, he found a mentor in his field at a Research-I university. Whether at the recommendation of his mentor or

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<sup>58</sup>Hallie Savage, Rashelle Karp, and Rose Logue (2004) explored the goals of a mentoring program at a state comprehensive university, corroborating the benefits of such programs that emerged from my faculty interviews.

<sup>59</sup>Ling, who left her first tenure-track job at a different state comprehensive university after one year, is likely speaking from firsthand experience.

on his own accord, H. P. did not set his sights on the tenure requirements at Ashdale. Rather: “My thought was, ‘What do I need to do to get tenure anywhere else?’ Because, my thought was, ‘You set the bar as high as you can: If you jump over the bar, you don’t have a problem here.’” H. P. did not, in fact, have a problem getting tenure at Ashdale. In the next chapter, I will explore how he feels about still being there.

### Understanding Different Personalities

The case of Eleanor’s former colleague at Whitehaven State demonstrates that individuals, despite the existence (in most cases) of clear tenure criteria, and despite regular feedback—both formal and informal—from colleagues and administrators, can still be in denial about the reasonableness of their prospects for being awarded tenure at state comprehensive universities. Amy had received contradictory messages about her chances for tenure at Parkham State, even though, in the end, she “could only have done” what she had done, which turned out to be sufficient. Thus these messages—from tenure criteria, from colleagues, from mentors—and their implications affect different individuals in different ways.

Owen’s approach to tenure was perhaps enviable, yet it was grounded in the reality that he saw around him at Meldon State:

I would say that, compared to just about everyone else I know everywhere else [in academe], when it came to tenure, I had almost no worries. And it’s not because I’m, you know, an ego maniac: It’s because my experience was that everybody got tenure [here].

David corroborated Owen’s sense of the near automatic nature of tenure at Meldon State:

For better or for worse, our department basically approves just about anybody once they get to that point [of applying for tenure]. If there's somebody who's in a tenure-track position—we have not had [that person turned down]. We've had adjuncts whom we have refused to rehire; there have been tenure-track people who've left—who left on their own accord, or for other reasons—who we might have, in the end, stopped. But since I've been here—for [more than ten] years—everyone we've hired on the tenure track [in my department] we have recommended for tenure.

The applications of those who are recommended for tenure at the departmental level are then forwarded to a committee at the university level. Owen described the University Tenure Committee at Meldon—up through the time he had received tenure—as “a rubber stamp”: “If you had submitted everything on time, [and] if your department said that you should get tenure, the Tenure Committee would pretty much sign off on it, and the president would concur.”<sup>60</sup> David offered a first-person account that supports Owen's sense:

I actually was the chair of the [University] Tenure Committee one year—it was probably the next year after I got tenure myself. And there were a couple people—not from my department—who I was hesitant about. And the committee basically said, “Well, if their department voted for them, then who are we to say ‘No’?” And the departments usually say, “Well, we want to be nice; we'll vote [in support] for this person. And, if the Tenure Committee wants to say something different, then that's their job.” So it's fairly easy to get tenure at this university. And my reasons—it's not that we have specific requirements for publication or research—but we were approving people who had literally *no* research or publications—and didn't seem to have any prospects. So I thought that was a little bit too, um, *lenient*, shall we say? But that's pretty much the procedure.

Indeed, a greater challenge than being tenured at Meldon, as both Owen and David reported, is being promoted. Tenure and promotion are not coupled at Meldon

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<sup>60</sup>Note the institutional differences between Meldon State and Grovehill State, where Ronald described the University Tenure Committee as a meaningful committee. Individual opinions about what is “meaningful” and what is not, then, can certainly be informed by institutional differences (and related perspectives).

State;<sup>61</sup> and promotion, not tenure, is competitive. “You really want to be focusing on preparing for promotion as opposed to tenure. And I can remember very, very well the year that I was going up for promotion” (Owen).

George, at Spenwood State, had yet another type of response to the expectations for tenure at his state comprehensive university:

I was obsessed about getting tenure. . . . Whatever people told me—um, I was always worried. My way of dealing with that was *not* to read the operating papers [which included the departmental criteria for tenure]. I didn’t *care* what they said. I knew that—I guess I felt like, you know, I didn’t need to be told—I knew that I had to meet a certain level in all the areas. I knew that teaching—they tell you this right away—teaching is most important. And service and scholarship are important, but they’re not as important as teaching. . . . I was just working, you know? And I would do my best. I really wasn’t thinking about how many articles I had to have. . . . I mean, the word was, basically, that if you do a decent job—if you don’t do a really *bad* job—at least, once you got through your third year (we have a third-year review that’s a big deal), you really have to screw up *not* to get tenure.

Continuing the earlier theme of changes in tenure expectations and requirements, George’s next sentence was: “I think it’s gotten a little more intense since then.”

So far, then, this discussion has shown how the criteria for tenure (and also for promotion) at state comprehensive universities can mean different things to different people at different times. Here, although other stakeholders are involved, I have focused on how these criteria are understood from the perspectives of faculty members who have successfully gone up for tenure. Some of the differences are due to substantive changes in tenure criteria that have occurred over time. Others are due

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<sup>61</sup>Although changes have recently been made at several institutions, separate procedures and committees (and, often, timelines) for tenure and promotion had been the norm at most of the institutions in my study and are still the case at some of them. As explained in chapter 4, this situation complicated my initial invitation of faculty participants, as I was unable to presume that all “associate professors” had tenure—or that all “assistant professors” did not.

to the injection of personal subjectivities when it comes to interpreting these criteria: interpretations can vary, regardless of whether the criteria are seen as being “clear” or “transparent” or “still a little bit unclear.” Still other differences are due to interpreting the layer of interpretation added by others, including colleagues and mentors. Finally, individual personalities respond to the explicit and implicit tenure requirements and expectations in noticeably different ways. Through exploring these scenarios, I have painted a more nuanced picture of the ways tenure is conceptualized at the institutions in this study—at least through the eyes of faculty members who have successfully navigated the expectations. I further build on this foundation as I explore, in the next chapter, the perceived effects of tenure on my faculty participants’ work lives. First, though, I must share (in some cases) or recapitulate (in others) how my faculty participants recalled the experience of going up for tenure.

### Going Up for Tenure at a State Comprehensive University

In the second section of this chapter, I introduced how William was more nervous about getting a tenure-track job than he was about getting tenure at Parkham State. Ultimately, he “*didn’t* feel a lot of pressure” when he went up for tenure.<sup>62</sup> And in this section, I have already cited quotations from Ronald, Owen, and Sarah, all of whom were confident and unconcerned about the outcome of their cases. Ronald, whom I quoted earlier as having commented on the value of annual feedback,

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<sup>62</sup>Not quoted earlier from William was the following: “I was never nervous about tenure, never nervous about tenure—but probably should have been. I was a little bit complacent.”

added: “I don’t really remember having any stress going up for tenure. I was, you know, confident that I had met the expectations, and the feedback that I’d gotten all along the way had reinforced that.” And going up for tenure was, for Owen, “low stress.” His words about Meldon State form the title of this section: “You don’t really have to worry about getting tenure.” At Meldon State, more pressure and competition surrounds the application for promotion to associate professor.

Indeed, the idea of going up for tenure as stressful was generally absent from my conversations with faculty members. Stress was more commonly mentioned as something that is not characteristic of the state comprehensive university environment—at least stress at high levels. Peter described his life at Parkham State as one of little stress:

Comparing my life to that of my brothers, my high school friends—it’s so much easier. There’s so much less stress. I would say I have maybe 5 percent of the stress—it’s not even in the same ballpark. I come to work, teach classes, read books. . . . They deal with millions of dollars, the real pressure of being fired, and that sort of stuff. To me, it’s like I can’t imagine a less stressful sort of environment. . . . I mean, other people can be fired at any time. Here [in the academy], you have just one thing coming up, and you know what you need to do, and you know the people evaluating you, and it seems pretty fair. So, to me, the campus is like a magical place.

Thelonious also compared his professorial life at Ashdale State to that of a sibling:

“My brother’s an M.D.: he makes more money and does really great, important work.

But, you know, he also has a lot more stress.” Ronald did, however, suggest that

stress can be involved with the interpreting of tenure requirements—offering more support for the importance of feedback about job performance prior to going up for



tenure. And Sarah explained that having clear, straightforward requirements helps reduce “the uncertainty that causes the stress.” But, she continued:

I would not say that I wasn’t stressed at all along the way. My sense was that my stress was probably greatest—the stress that I felt, or maybe I should say the *pressure* that I felt—was really at the beginning of the tenure process. So that, by the time I got to the end, I was more confident that I was on the right track, and I was becoming accustomed to the workload. . . . You know, it’s like running a marathon or something: you’ve reached your stride. I knew by then [when I went up for tenure] that I had the support of my colleagues.

H. P. felt the same way about the likelihood of being awarded tenure at Ashdale State, adding support to William’s concern over ultimately landing a tenure-track job: “Here, getting the job is the golden ticket, because, once you’re hired here, you’re going to be tenured here.” In his next comments, H. P. qualified the absolutism of his statement. In doing so, he revealed the lack of confidence he has in the scholarly abilities of the faculty at his university:

Now, it comes to pass that some folks are denied tenure—there’ve been a few tenure cases decided negatively in the last few years—but *damn* few: *appallingly* few, given, quite frankly, the low quality of faculty on this campus. That’s not to say we don’t have good faculty: we do have some *very* good faculty. We have quite a number of very good teachers. We have a *hell* of a lot of faculty members who really should be teaching high school—and that’s not to denigrate high school teachers. . . . But in terms of academics? Wow.

H. P.’s view of the faculty at his institution was, overall, different from the views presented by my other faculty participants, who—if they were not positive—were generally much more circumspect when commenting about the scholarly attributes or productivity of their departmental and institutional colleagues. Recall that H. P. held himself, in terms of scholarship, to the standards of a Research-I university. According

to those standards—and to H. P.’s view—the majority of faculty members at Ashdale State are not “productive” scholars.<sup>63</sup> Like Owen, Ronald, and Sarah, H. P. was therefore unconcerned about his own application for tenure, since he had set his own bar for scholarly productivity higher than necessary to be tenured at Ashdale State.

Having served as chair of his department for several years, William was able to offer insights about what contributed to the scholarly inclinations of the faculty in his department at Parkham State. He was particularly vocal about the high quality of the newest recruits to the department, a situation he credited to the academic job market in history:

I think the *best* thing about this department is that we take the hiring process extremely seriously—and we want to make sure that we bring in the door people who are going to want, twenty years from now, to continue to have growing minds. And that’s something we consciously talk about up and down these hallways—that we want a *growing mind* over the course of a career. I wish every department were that way. . . . I think we’ve made good choices over the years—with some exceptions, I’ve got a couple of colleagues in mind who I wouldn’t call “deadweight,” but they’ve got less active and growing brains than others. . . . There are a lot of other departments kind of like us around campus—departments that are in good hiring conditions because they’re in fields where Parkham can attract top talent. And, frankly, it’s the job market: we’re honest about that up and down these hallways, too. It’s harder to do this in economics, for example; it’s harder to do this in some fields where you’ve got demand outside the academy or where there’s less supply of new Ph.D.s. But in a discipline like history, for Pete’s sake! I mean, we can bring in *great* people into a place like this. And we do. . . . Our junior faculty up and down this hallway are just dynamite. It’s *awesome*.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>H. P. explained as follows: “For historians, it’s essentially—well, it’s changing, but, when I entered graduate school [around 1990], the expectation was effectively a book a rank, if you were going to be—yeah, and I won’t say a ‘hotshot’ (that’s the wrong word to use)—but if you were going to be a *productive* historian. If you were going to expect to be able to jump the tenure hurdles and the promotion hurdles at each stage, it was a book a rank.”

<sup>64</sup>Earlier in our conversation, William had offered this comment on the academic job market in history: “Despite the fact that we’re offering starting salaries that are *significantly* lower

Because Parkham State is capable of hiring such talented faculty members in the Department of History, the feeling is that these individuals should have no difficulty achieving tenure there—if they choose to stay.<sup>65</sup> The situation is not, then, one where everybody is perceived as getting tenure because the tenure requirements are so minimal. Instead, everybody gets tenure because everyone hired in the Department of History is qualified for tenure at Parkham State.

Amy described members of the same department at Parkham State in quite glowing terms, in contrast to the way H. P. described the faculty at Ashdale State: “This department is extraordinary,” she said. “These people are tremendous teachers. But they do so much more than just that. This is a heavily scholarship-publication department *and* it does a ton of service, too. It’s pretty extraordinary.” Note how, unlike H. P., Amy prioritized the import of teaching, thus aligning her expectations with the historic mission of the institution. Instead of looking at the scholarly output of her departmental colleagues and finding it lacking (by Research-I university standards), she looked at the additional contributions that her colleagues are able to

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than Research I’s, we still are able to get great candidates, because there are just more people who want to be history professors than there are jobs out there, and they’re willing to take less.”

<sup>65</sup>William had the following to say about a junior colleague in his department who had recently interviewed at a prestigious Research-I university, directly acknowledging David Riesman’s “academic procession” (1956): “He may be gone over the next few years. . . . Maybe. But, for the time being, I think he’s quite happy here. Sure, it would be nice to work at the next level: Ph.D. students, a big library, more prestige; but, in the meantime, Parkham’s not a bad place to be.” Sarah described the benefits of working with “top talent” at Grovehill State, even if briefly: “Sometimes we’ll hire people knowing that they’re not going to stay very long, because it’s good for the department to have, you know, some hotshot from, oh, Harvard here for a couple of years—someone who’s enthusiastic and teaches a couple of really interesting courses and then moves on to someplace else. Sometimes we’re willing to accept that, because it enriches our experience with the program and the experiences of the students.”

make, in spite of their remarkable—and necessary—dedication to teaching, as “extraordinary.”

Of course, not everybody was as unconcerned about his or her tenure application as were H. P., Owen, Ronald, and Sarah. Amy, in fact, as described earlier, was unsure of the strength of her candidacy; and Eleanor experienced what she described as “tenure drama” over others’ perceptions of her online publications at Whitehaven State. George, also as previously described, was “obsessed” with tenure at Spenwood State; but he avoided reading and rereading the departmental criteria for tenure, because knew he was going to do his best, regardless. Gomez mentioned “anxiety” regarding his application for tenure at Ashdale State, even though he “was always reassured” that he would be “just fine” whenever he talked with the chair of his department or with members of the Personnel Committee. He said, later admitting the obviousness of his explanation: “I think that, yeah, there was still anxiety, because, until you’re granted tenure, you don’t . . . have it.” Peter (Parkham State) made a similar comment when he said that, before tenure, “there is that uncertainty.”

Ling explained the source of her confidence when she went up for tenure as the result of seeing clear alignment between the tenure criteria at Grovehill State and her own professional commitment and goals:

In my case—probably many other people felt the same way too—tenure, getting tenure, is a byproduct; it’s not the goal itself. . . . I came to think about getting tenured as a byproduct because I had a clear idea of what the evaluation criteria were and how they were closely aligned with my professional commitment. And so, I guess, if there were a gap—some gap or discrepancy between your individual professional goals and the evaluation criteria, then you’d have to really work, um, by going out of your way to meet the criteria to be tenured. In that case, it’s more than just a

byproduct. [My activities at Grovehill, in terms of] research publications, teaching, curriculum development, and creating new programs and serving administratively . . . were a good fit with the departmental, college, and university priorities and goals. And so, in that sense, I had an easier time, in a way, to meet the criteria for tenure evaluation while doing what I wanted to do as an individual professional.

Although nobody else used the term “byproduct” to describe tenure, the term seems particularly suitable for use by faculty members whose confidence upon going up for tenure stemmed from the sense that the work they had done—the teaching, research, and service—aligned with their own professional identities, interests, and goals.<sup>66</sup> The “growing minds” mentioned by William, for example, would be individuals for whom the requirements for tenure should be met almost naturally. They should share this previously cited sentiment held by Sarah: “I knew that I couldn’t *not* get tenure, then, by the time it came down to it.”

Byproducts of tenure are, in effect, the focus of the next chapter of this dissertation. A brief excursion into one final element of the tenure experience is necessary first, though. In the next and penultimate section of this chapter, I consider my participants’ perspectives as to what it was like to be awarded tenure at their institutions.

### **“You Feel Like a Grownup, Finally”**

Accomplishment. Liberation. Satisfaction. Relief. Disappointment. When I asked my faculty participants what the actual “moment” of achieving tenure was like for them, I received quite a variety of answers:

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<sup>66</sup>Ling’s case thus offers a prime example of a faculty member who did not fall into this trap described by Jeffrey Milem: “too many of our junior faculty have come to view tenure as *the* goal, instead of as a reward or as a privilege that we earn, one that comes after we successfully achieve a number of very important professional goals” (2011, 323, original emphasis).

Amy (Parkham State): “[Now] I have job security, and that ends a lot of nightmares, you know? It ends a great deal of worry.”

George (Spenwood State): “I probably swaggered a little bit. . . . I think tenure, basically, was an ego boost.”

Gomez (Ashdale State): “I just felt a sense of accomplishment. . . . I think that, for us, tenure is probably more of a psychological thing than anything else—in how we react to it.”

H. P. (Ashdale State): “It was not exactly what I thought it was going to be: I didn’t think I was going to be here post-tenure. . . . It was not what I expected—let’s put it that way.”

Katherine (Daylesford State): “It definitely is liberating. . . . When you’re untenured . . . you certainly feel a lot more pressure to build your vita. And so it’s liberating, in a sense, in that you can be more selective about how you spend your time and proportion your time.”

Melinda (Spenwood State): “I feel that it’s a tremendous sense of accomplishment. If you do nothing else in your life but get your doctorate and get a tenure-track job and get tenure—and, along the way, you have to do a lot of things—then that’s . . . pretty much, you’ve reached the epitome of your field.”

Sarah (Grovehill State): “I think the main way that it changes is that you feel like a grownup, finally.”

Thelonious (Ashdale State): “Regardless of if you know, or not, that you are supposed to get promoted and tenured, I think, still—including for me—the experience of actually doing it is one of satisfaction but also relief.”<sup>67</sup>

Before embarking on this study, I had presumed—as Amy indicated—that tenure would have been the primary source of job security felt by my participants. I

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<sup>67</sup>These responses could be considered descriptions of the immediate “tenure effect.” More broadly, as I investigate in the following chapter, Jeffrey Williams referred to the “tenure affect” (1999, 234): ways in which tenure governs faculty members’ self-images and how faculty think and feel about their lives.

was overlooking, though, the power of the faculty unions.<sup>68</sup> One faculty participant from a unionized campus extended his sense of job security to before he had tenure, thanks to the union contract: “Yes, in terms of job security: obviously I have tenure [now]. Before I had tenure, I could see that there were protections in the [union] contract that you just don’t have at other institutions.” Toward the end of the interview, in response to a question I asked about the importance of tenure on a day-to-day basis, he offered the following: “I don’t really think about it [tenure] at all. I think I probably think more about the union contract—and having a collective bargaining agreement. That gives me more security than tenure. But that’s just, sort of, my personal feeling.”<sup>69</sup>

Sarah, who likened getting tenure to being able to “feel like a grownup, finally,” was one of the most reflective of my participants about the experience of being tenured. She emphasized that the moment is not one that occurs in a vacuum: other life events—both personal and professional—are proceeding, as usual; and they may even overshadow certain positive feelings that may be associated with tenure, eclipsing them with other pressing concerns:

People had warned me that it would be anticlimactic—and it was anticlimactic. Yes. I kind of felt like, well, I have tenure—but I’m still doing exactly the same things I had done before. And, also, let me think . . . the year that I was awarded tenure—it was announced that May—I was finishing up my book manuscript. And that was, I found, more stressful than anything I’d ever done before. So I mean, in that sense, it [tenure] was

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<sup>68</sup>Tellingly, Gary Rhoades stated that “one can read many of the most widely read books on higher education and not learn that faculty unions exist” (1998, 10).

<sup>69</sup>This dissertation, of course, is constructed of a collection of personal feelings. I continue the discussion of unionized faculties in appendix F.

sort of an anticlimax. I'd achieved this thing, but I still had this other project that I still had to finish up.

In the following extended quotation, Sarah comments, also, about the potential disappointment that newly tenured faculty members may feel, especially if they feel, at least initially, that “things haven’t changed that much.” She ultimately gets to the heart of one of the expectations that accompanies the awarding of tenure: the increase in professional responsibility. Indeed, the sense of *personal* satisfaction and relief, for example, that some newly tenured faculty members may feel can be accompanied by a potentially disappointing *professional* realization that life after tenure might not be any easier than life before tenure, after all:

And there’s also another weird thing that makes it feel a little bit anticlimactic—and it also goes along with feeling like a grownup—and that’s that it’s also a little bit disappointing. Other people have felt a little bit depressed after getting tenure, because it’s the thing that you work for, I mean, from the moment you start a Ph.D. program—well, in history, anyway. (I’m sure, for other fields—where you might be going into the private sector or whatever—it might be different.) But, the time that you start your Ph.D. program and you’re wanting to teach at a four-year institution, you know, you’re hoping the Holy Grail is the associate professorship—and then eventually to be full professor. And so you’ve spent the better part of your adulthood working toward that. When you get it, you realize that things haven’t changed that much. And then you find yourself in your late 30s, early 40s, you know? You’ve bought a house; now you’re here. What’s next? I don’t suspect that—I wouldn’t be surprised if the people at the, um, the big Research-I institutions might have the same reaction—that might be part of what’s going on with their sense of, you know, “Now what?” or frustration that tenure’s not what they thought it was going to be, because now they have all these other responsibilities. Part of that is just finding out—it’s the down side of being a grownup.

In commenting on both post-tenure disappointment and the increase in responsibility that accompanies becoming tenured, Sarah has thus set the stage for my next chapter, where I explore the perceived effects of tenure on work life at the state



comprehensive universities in my sample. Indeed, as mentioned in chapter 3, Marilyn Gist described tenure as a “marker event” that “denotes a stage of transformation whose meaning is clarified by hindsight” (1996, 185, 192). In the next chapter, I thus tap into my faculty participants’ reservoirs of hindsight in order to understand how they understand the roles and functions of work in their post-tenure careers. My goal is to identify differences in pre- and post-tenure orientations, views, and experiences.

### **Chapter Summary and Preview**

In this chapter, I used the perspectives—and words—of my faculty participants to depict and situate their backgrounds, explore their understandings of their departments and institutions, consider how they perceive the chief responsibilities of their jobs, outline how they navigate time throughout the academic cycle (where research, for example, is mostly relegated to the breaks between academic terms), and describe their expectations and experiences pertaining to the process of going up for—and ultimately being awarded—tenure in departments of history at eight state comprehensive universities located in the Midwestern, Northeastern, and Southeastern United States. I contested the notion of a “typical” pathway to a tenure-track job in the humanities or social sciences at a state comprehensive university and showed, indeed, a diversity of backgrounds, expectations, and experiences. Some of this diversity was departmental or institutional in nature, such as the teaching loads (either 3–3 or 4–4) and the atypical emphasis placed on promotion over tenure at Meldon State; but much of it was a reflection of individual responses to

these various situations. I also explored perceptions of temporal changes that have affected the institutions in this study, particularly with respect to requirements for tenure, which themselves are products and markers of institutional and departmental priorities. Indeed, of note is how these “teaching institutions” have come to emphasize, in their history departments, at least some modicum of scholarly productivity as a requirement for tenure—and that my faculty participants implied, counterintuitively, that neither teaching nor service were particular concerns of theirs upon going up for tenure. An attitude where the primary concern for tenure involves research seems more aligned to research institutions than to comprehensive universities but may, in fact, be a function of the discipline of history. Even if the motivations for research are self-initiated (William, for example, said, “I’m going to do my scholarship anyway”), managing the heavy responsibilities of teaching and service to carve out space and time for research was at least an initial challenge for the majority of my faculty participants.

I did not attempt to smooth out the inconsistencies and fabricate a “generic” institution that represented, somehow, the average of the eight institutions from which my faculty participants came. Doing so would have been disingenuous to my participants, whose work lives are largely lived in *particular* departments at *particular* institutions.<sup>70</sup> Despite the institutional and individual diversity portrayed in this

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<sup>70</sup>Moreover, as these institutions were not selected randomly, any “averages” I would have contrived and reported about faculty perceptions or experiences would have been relevant across only the eight institutions in my sample, not to all state comprehensive universities in the United States. Portrayals of the institutions in my sample are certainly *evocative of* such institutions in this country, since all institutions *are* state comprehensive universities; but such evocation is not synonymous with representation of the type as a whole.

chapter, though, my faculty participants shared similar developments in their post-tenure careers—developments that will be explored in the next chapter. Indeed, Burton Clark wrote of the apparent self-contradiction of individuals with the normalized whole when he explored the “diversity and unity in the cultural life of the academic profession” (1987, 105).

This chapter, then, offered only a partial, preliminary view into what it means to be a tenured history professor at a comprehensive teaching institution. The teaching, research, and service described in this chapter are largely located within the contexts of the institutions themselves—and primarily within the departments. Faculty participants related their experiences with tenure as based upon their understandings of institutional and departmental policies, expectations, and atmospheres. This organizational conceit will serve to underscore an orientational shift that accompanies tenure and is explored in the next chapter: Before tenure, faculty energies are frequently focalized within the departments and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the institutions. After tenure, however, implications of the mantle of greater responsibility come into focus, and faculty members experience a significant example of “the exchange and definition of thought and action” (Tierney and Bensimon 1996, 37). As detailed in the next chapter, the faculty members in my study responded to the added responsibilities and sense of “liberation” of tenure by engaging more deeply, post-tenure, with the particular aspects of work about which they are most passionate. In short, they used the so-conceived freedoms of tenure to choose their own engagements and thus, post-tenure, have been contributing to

their departments, institutions, and discipline on deeper, more personally meaningful levels.

## CHAPTER 6

### PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF TENURE ON WORK LIFE AT STATE COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES

#### Chapter Overview

In the previous chapter, I considered tenure primarily from an institutional perspective—albeit one seen through the eyes, and filtered through the perceptions, of my faculty participants in departments of history at state comprehensive universities.<sup>1</sup> In this chapter, I consider tenure primarily from an individual perspective as a means of directly addressing the key research question of this study: How is tenure perceived to affect the work lives of faculty members in history at state comprehensive universities? Indeed, the nature of *work lives* is rooted in the workplace (the department and institution, in one sense); but faculty work itself operates on different planes that intersect with and transcend different physical and intellectual realms, the boundaries of which are not analogous to the campus borders. Tenure, on one hand, solidifies and reaffirms the investment of the institution in the tenured

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<sup>1</sup>In that chapter, however, I did not espouse an organizational stance: my faculty participants were my only informants. Instead, I focused on my participants' understandings as affected and influenced by the institutional contexts of their departments and universities and their understandings of the institutional requirements for tenure. The "institutional perspective," then, involved perspectives *on* the institutions in question.

faculty members.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, it affords tenured faculty members, who are expected to continue to serve and support the missions of their institutions, the opportunity to concentrate their personal investments and efforts within the realms they find most personally engaging and fulfilling.

The main premise of this chapter—and, in fact, the major thesis of this dissertation—is that faculty members at state comprehensive universities, at least those in departments of history, use tenure as a vehicle for choosing their engagements with the aspects of faculty work life that most suit their interests, abilities, and personalities. The pre-tenure experience gives faculty members the opportunity to develop or display proficiency in the realms of teaching, research, and service; in fact, the challenge leading up to tenure, as explained in the previous chapter by Eleanor at Whitehaven State, is to demonstrate certain levels of excellence in all three of those realms. At state comprehensive universities, a varying mix of teaching, research, and service still needs to be carried out by all tenured faculty members after tenure; and teaching generally remains “the core.” But the post-tenure experience allows greater flexibility, selectivity, and—to a certain extent—control over the allocation of at least some work-related time and energy. Gomez explained: “I kind of craft my career to fit my personality. I’ve been able to do that here at Ashdale without much of a problem.”

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<sup>2</sup>The initial personnel investment, as Jerry Gaff (1975) pointed out over three decades ago, is made when colleges and universities hire faculty members on the tenure track. Sarah (Grovehill State) shared a personal theory with me: the psychological support afforded by being on the tenure track fosters an environment in which tenure-track faculty should have an easier time being “successful” than non-tenure-line faculty, who may be just as capable but lack the psychological support of investment by their employers. Landing a tenure-track position, then, carries with it a sense of “dumb luck,” especially given all the talented candidates for each tenure-track job.

In the previous chapter, I offered the following quotation, also from Gomez: “tenure is probably more of a psychological thing than anything else—in how we react to it.” In this chapter, I consider how those reactions are played out in faculty work. On one level, this chapter mirrors the previous chapter, in that its heart is a consideration of faculty members’ approaches and orientations to teaching, research, and service. The focus of this chapter, however, is on how my faculty participants perceived that tenure had specifically affected those approaches and orientations. To further contextualize the post-tenure transformation, I first describe an overarching change in perception that accompanied the awarding of tenure and affected my faculty participants’ senses of duty and obligation. I conclude the chapter by addressing additional noteworthy findings about tenure and work life at state comprehensive universities that emerged from my conversations with these faculty members. These issues involve the perceived relationships between tenure and faculty voice, tenure and faculty growth, and tenure and work satisfaction; and the overlapping relationships between “work life” and “family life.”

### **“With Tenure Comes Responsibilities”**

Amy (Parkham State) suggested that “most people don’t end up becoming professors unless they’re sort of responsible in some way.” Indeed, writing a doctoral dissertation in history, a lengthy process in which dissertators are mostly left to their own devices and thus must be largely self-motivated and self-directed, seems to be a suitable preparation for certain aspects of academic life, where most work is

unsupervised.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, my faculty participants appear to have reacted quite responsibly to becoming tenured at their respective state comprehensive universities:

Amy: “For me, I don’t know that it [tenure] *really* changed what I do here—or my attitude here.”

Debra (Grovehill State): “I believe tenure means that you better continue to be superior. You know, that continues to be a challenge.”

Gomez (Ashdale State): “I work just as hard now, as a tenured associate [professor], as I did as a non-tenured assistant [professor]. It’s just I’m doing other things. . . . I’m just taking on other responsibilities.”

Katherine (Daylesford State): “For myself, it [tenure] hasn’t impacted my priorities in any way.”

Peter (Parkham State): “I don’t know that my days are really that different, though, you know? I was doing a fair amount of reading, research, and writing before I was tenured. And I continue to do the same.”

Although Peter’s comment on the overall effects of tenure focused on his own scholarly work, the concept of responsibility brings with itself the idea of responsibility to others. Amy spelled out her understanding of these responsibilities as follows: “I have responsibilities to my students; I have responsibilities to colleagues in the organizations I serve; I have responsibilities to the department, you know—and to family, obviously. But as far as work goes, these are responsibilities to other people.” Earlier in our conversation, where she also offered the telling sentiment that “with tenure comes responsibilities,” she had illustrated how some of these

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<sup>3</sup>To quantify this “lengthy process,” these data on time to degree (including coursework) are from a survey of ninety departments of history administered in 2001 (closer in time to when my faculty participants were finishing or had finished their degrees): range = 4–11 years; mean = 6.9 years; median = 7 years (Bender et al. 2004, 159). With respect to working unsupervised, Jerry Gaff made a useful distinction when he pointed out that many of the activities of college and university faculty members are “individual but not solitary,” as “they occur within a social context” (1975, 7).



responsibilities are manifested: “Tenure means you become a mentor to the junior faculty. Tenure means you have to serve on certain committees. Tenure does not mean you get to have a lighter teaching load at all!” Likewise, Debra invoked her responsibilities to others in commenting on how she felt tenure had affected her teaching, research, and service as a whole:

All I know is that tenure has just affirmed that I’m doing it [my job] right, and I’m going to continue to do it the best that I can. Look at all the people who depend on you, you know? The whole field! I mean, you have to continue to think things and write things about whatever your area is. I mean, these kids have a more complex—well, as a historian, I can’t say that. The world they enter provides them with challenges that we have to help them prepare to fulfill. And service, too: I’m just a party animal, I guess; I like to serve. And it’s my community.

Comments made by my faculty participants about their senses of responsibility spoke across several realms of faculty influence, including those mentioned by both Amy and Debra: their students, fellow faculty members (both departmental and disciplinary colleagues), and their institutions.<sup>4</sup> (Amy even mentioned a realm of personal influence—her family. The role of the influence of “personal life” on “work life” is taken up in the last section of this chapter.) With respect to his departmental colleagues and in the context of teaching, Ronald (Grovehill State) offered the following:

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<sup>4</sup>Even in the interests of parallelism, I could not write that my faculty participants felt a sense of responsibility toward their administrators; such direct expressions were not made. In most cases, however, my faculty participants regarded their department chairs as colleagues and thus felt responsible toward them as fellow faculty members. Several issues are implicated here, including understandings of the perceived “divide” between faculty and administration (as mentioned in chapter 5—and perhaps more perceptible at unionized campuses [see appendix F]) and the importance of senior administrators being perceived as being “of the faculty,” at least as one way to erode or perhaps ameliorate some of the real or imagined faculty-administration tensions. The sense of responsibility to the institutions, though, is seen as one that “emphasizes faculty members’ commitment to institutions’ success, and the use of their intellectual capital for institutions’ benefit during their time of employment” (Gappa 2010, 215).

I think all of us, at least in my department, have a sense of the responsibility we have [to each other]. We know we need to teach certain kinds of courses. We know those freshman surveys need to be taught; we know research methods needs to be taught. Most semesters I've taught courses that I want to teach—and by that I mean within the context of knowing that I need to fulfill certain responsibilities.

With regard to the determining of course assignments and schedules, in fact, Ronald was not alone in his comments about feeling responsible to his faculty colleagues and the needs of his department. Debra, commenting on the same department, added that “if a person only wants to teach upper-division courses, they're not going to get to do it, no matter if they're tenured or not.”

Gomez incorporated a temporal sense to his acquisition of increased responsibility: “As I move through time,” he said, “I'm just sort of taking on other responsibilities.” Gomez's experience aligns with the following nuanced description that H. P. offered regarding how his sense of his position changed and evolved after he was awarded tenure at Ashdale State. Note, though, that this description is based on his understandings of tenure from the very beginning of his academic career. H. P. coupled increasing privileges with increasing responsibility as he climbed the academic ladder from assistant professor to associate professor to professor:

[When I started at Ashdale,] I was acutely aware of my position as an untenured assistant professor. I understood coming in that this was a guild system—and it *is* a guild system—and that I had certain expectations, as an assistant professor: that I could be afforded certain protections by my seniors; that I would be expected to carry water in certain ways that I might not want to carry . . . with the understanding that, as I work my way up through the hierarchy, certain privileges would come down to me—but certain other new *responsibilities* would come my way. And those responsibilities were not the responsibilities that should be given to assistant professors, because assistant professors are not ready for them—and they need *protection* from administrators.

In addition to hinting at the divide between faculty and administration, H. P. suggested that untenured assistant professors are not prepared for certain departmental or institutional responsibilities. Two implications underlie this suggestion: that untenured assistant professors have enough burdens already and thus do not have—or should not spare—the time to devote to increased responsibilities; and that untenured assistant professors might not be capable of handling certain responsibilities by virtue of lacking certain skills. (H. P. leaned toward the latter, thus suggesting that Neumann’s model of post-tenure faculty learning could apply also to faculty at state comprehensive universities.)

Amy and Thelonious spoke directly to these two senses, with Amy implying that untenured assistant professors at Parkham State are busy enough already: “There were certain decisions that were made in this department not because the junior faculty *can’t handle* something but to protect them so they don’t *have to* handle something.” Thelonious commented on participation by an untenured faculty member on a search committee for a senior-level administrator at Ashdale State: Junior faculty members “don’t have the conception or the capability to engage in that level of university service—nor do they have, essentially, the knowledge, I think.” Thelonious explained his understanding by framing it with his own experience as a junior faculty member on the tenure track in his department:

Your first year or two . . . you’re just sort of not even thinking of the big picture, because you’re busy: you’re learning to be a better teacher; you’re often learning the content; you’re also learning the culture of the school—and that includes workload expectations, student types, as well as your colleagues. It depends on the person, obviously, but I didn’t pay

attention, too much, beyond my own little world—even at the department level.

Athena corroborated Thelonious's sense, commenting that her pre-tenure life at Spenwood State was largely lived within the department. I consider the "learning curve" she mentioned with respect to institutional service later in this chapter.

Amy spoke about tenured faculty members' responsibilities to their institutions—responsibilities that carry service obligations:

It's harder to control how the university works when you are a junior professor. When you're tenured, there is a little bit more of a voice. But for your voice to be heard, and for the things that you'd like to see get done, you have to engage in the service. And, therefore, you end up having more work to do.

And Peter broadened his sense of professorial responsibility to the very institution of higher education, ending with a question of profound importance that underscores his sense of responsibility:

I love the university as a concept. Having said that, I see lots of problems with the modern, contemporary university that I'd like to fix or, at least, improve—but probably the best way to do that is from within the university. It's a lot harder from the outside. But who's going to fix the university if it's not the professors?

H. P. offered an interesting, and much less optimistic, perspective on tenure and the responsibilities it carries. "If you're not going to *use* tenure, you don't *deserve* tenure," he said. "I don't think most faculty use it. And, for that reason, I don't think faculty deserve it." His explanation involved a sense of lack of preparation for the role:

Folks who are coming out of Ph.D. programs now . . . they don't have a clue what they're getting themselves into. And they all want the same—they all want tenure: it's the brass ring. Well, it's also an iron collar. And

it's not very comfortable, sometimes. And it comes with responsibility—and they're not being trained, or anything. And once they're landing positions, they're not being mentored as to how to use it—they really aren't.<sup>5</sup>

If used properly, H. P. felt that tenure could, essentially, be used to fix or at least address some of the problems that he and others, including Peter, have noticed. His outlook, though, is not positive: “I fully expect that sometime between now and the end of my career, we're going to see it [tenure] disappear. It's already disappearing.”

A perceived abdication of responsibility lies at the heart of H. P.'s prediction:

I think we *do* need tenure, but we're not going to keep tenure. And the reason we're not going to keep tenure is because faculty have abdicated their responsibility. They've abdicated their responsibility in using it properly; they have abdicated responsibility in mentoring and professionalizing the generation that came after them as to the reasons you have tenure; and faculty, by and large, do—I'm sorry—they do a *piss-poor* job when it comes to speaking with folks outside the academy. Faculty—tenured faculty—are their own worst enemies. And that's why I think we're going to lose it. I'm certain we're going to lose it. The university will be—what's left of the university—will be much the worse for it.

H. P. likened the majority of faculty members to sheep and described their “herd mentality.” Such is the environment that he feels is dooming tenure. In the extreme case that H. P. portrayed, faculty members are not living up to their collective responsibility to their profession. The very future of tenure, then, is what is at stake.

As the quotations included in this section have shown, the idea of professorial responsibility—itsself a kind of professional responsibility—manifests itself in a variety of ways and affects a number of constituents. Responsibility, in fact, will

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<sup>5</sup>In a note toward the end of the previous chapter, I cited Jeffrey Milem's concern that “too many of our junior faculty have come to view tenure as *the* goal.” H. P. was channeling his thoughts, since Milem also continued with the following explanation: “I think that those of us who are senior scholars have played a significant role in helping to create this problem because we do not mentor our students and our junior colleagues well enough” (2011, 323).

continue to surface as a theme in the following discussions of perceived effects of tenure on teaching, research, and service.

### **“I Feel More Relaxed in the Classroom”**

#### **Nuances of Teaching after Tenure**

Given the import placed on teaching at the institutions in this study, as explored in the previous chapter, that the majority of my faculty participants still spend the bulk of their time engaged in teaching and teaching-related activities even after receiving tenure should be no surprise. Time, in fact, was an important theme in our conversations about faculty work; I described it as faculty members’ “most precious resource” in the previous chapter. Indeed, learning to strike a balance in faculty life can be conceptualized as learning to rein in or gain a sense of control over the various activities that require a faculty member’s time—with teaching being a, if not the, major obligation and responsibility for faculty members at state comprehensive universities. This section thus begins with an exploration of the various temporalities of post-tenure teaching as perceived by my faculty participants. I follow with a discussion of evolving attitudes toward teaching; these attitudes pertain to the faculty members’ perceptions of both themselves and their students, including how they perceive student evaluations of their teaching. I conclude the section by offering a detailed consideration of one participant’s understanding of her learning curve in the classroom after considering some of the ways my faculty participants’ approaches to teaching shifted after they were awarded tenure—approaches that, as many of my participants suggested, may just as well have been

affected by personal experience and growth that reached respective zeniths, of sorts, at the time that tenure was achieved.

### Temporalities of Teaching after Tenure

In short, the pre-tenure years can perhaps best be summarized as years that are consumed by preparations for teaching. Debra described her experience at Grovehill State as follows:

My memories of teaching before tenure were staying up ungodly numbers of hours trying just to do basic course prep. . . . World historians have the world to cover, and that's formidable. . . . [At first,] I felt very ineffective and underprepared for many of these things.

George (Spenwood State) offered the following: "I focused on it [teaching], I think, more than anything else up to then [tenure]. I think what's happened since then is that I've sort of realized that I spent too much time with my teaching."<sup>6</sup> Owen invoked his wife's recollection of his initial years on the tenure track at Meldon State: "My first couple of years, my wife just said I was busy all the time. I would come in [to campus] early and would work until late in the evening, just basically trying to get my courses up and running." Melinda, in her first semester at Spenwood State, was assigned a course that was far outside her own expertise. "From Day One, I knew I'd be completely teaching outside my own comfort zone—and I really had to *throw* my effort into preparing that class," she said.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>The "radical," "unprecedented" changes that George recently made to his teaching—described in the previous chapter—were direct results of this realization.

<sup>7</sup>Therese Huston recently tackled the issue of teaching unfamiliar material in her *Teaching What You Don't Know* (2009). She asked, "If it's so commonplace to teach what you don't know, and it's clearly hard to do, why don't academics discuss it?" (21).

Amy recalled her initial years at Parkham State as “just insane”:

I taught something—something outrageous. I mean, it was crazy! I had twelve new preps in three years or something—just insane. Every semester, it was new preps! It was just . . . I mean, I was a frantic woman. And this isn’t because undue pressure was put on me. It was because they [the department] *needed* the courses taught. A body was needed, and there were some new people, and so, you know, we were, well, asked to do our jobs, which involved prepping new courses. And also it was a time that there was less emphasis on scholarship.

Note how Amy rationalized that preparing new courses was part of her job. She also hinted at her responsibility to her department and departmental colleagues. And by commenting on the fact that her department placed “less emphasis” on faculty research productivity during her early years on the tenure-track at Parkham State, she acknowledged that the extreme nature of her initial years—twelve course preparations in her first three years—is a situation that new faculty members in her department are unlikely to experience themselves.

Quite logically, the time spent preparing for classes by the faculty participants in this study seems to be a function of whether the courses in question are new to the instructors. Athena (Spenwood State) described the situation like so: “Look, the first year you’re here—the first two years, you’re writing courses, man. That takes *forever!* Right? And then you’re fiddling with them, even though you wrote them—and you’re fiddling with them. . . . Developing a curriculum is *work*.” And David (Meldon State) offered the following explanation:

If you’ve taught a course ten times, or five times, your prep for that course is going to be less. You’re still going to have the same amount of grading and all that—and you’ll hopefully make some changes along the way to make it better; but the prep time, you know, is going to be decreased.



William's experience at Parkham State seems to align itself with David's understanding:

Year two or three, I was still spending a *great* deal of time prepping for class. . . . I was prepping nonstop, it seemed. But once I got to years three, four, five, as a teacher, I pretty much felt like I had that down. . . . Years one and two, I spent *a lot* of time prepping for lectures and discussions. . . . Years six or seven of my career [after tenure], I was spending virtually *no* time prepping for class.

And Percy reported a similar experience after being tenured at Berkswell State, making note of the efficiencies he developed after having taught the same courses a number of times:

I definitely spend less time preparing: I spend very little time preparing for class now. Half of my teaching load is introductory courses, so I can do those from memory now. The grading hasn't changed, so that remains the same. But prep time definitely declined.

Melinda, too, explained that, after tenure, she has tended to "prep less"—and less farther in advance. She equates repeating courses that she has previously taught, however, to a decline in her effectiveness as a teacher: "I'm also not as good a teacher, because I've prepped a lot of courses that I teach. . . . I don't quite prep in advance as much [any more]."<sup>8</sup>

Underlying the time-consuming nature of preparing for class, then, is preparing new courses. Several of my participants described that preparing new courses after tenure has not necessarily taken less time than it did before tenure. Likewise, returning to courses that one has not taught in a number of years requires substantial

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<sup>8</sup>The experiences of my faculty participants, with respect to noting a decline in the time spent preparing for teaching over time, thus correspond with the findings in a five-year longitudinal study of pre-tenure faculty reported by Deborah Olsen and Mary Deane Sorcinelli nearly two decades ago (1992).

reengagement with the material and thus increases preparation time. David, using his situation at the time we talked in November 2010 as an example, described the cycle as follows:

After the first, you know, five years or so—roughly corresponding with the time to tenure—I taught pretty much everything that I’ve taught since then, and so the time allotted for course-preparation work is somewhat lower. Now, this semester I’m really in a mess, because I’m teaching two classes—two different courses, neither of which I’ve taught for five years, so I really am redoing them, and they are very different from they way I did them five years ago. So I’m spending a lot of time this semester on course prep. But, you know, the last couple of years [after receiving tenure] I spent much less. So that, you know, corresponds with the tenure decision.

Indeed, the theme of continuously changing and improving courses ran through several of my conversations with faculty members. Amy, addressing the importance of scholarly engagement by faculty members—an issue I turn to in the next section—said that if professors are “teaching students what was known fifteen years ago, then they are not teaching students what is known—they are teaching students what *was* known fifteen years ago.” She therefore debunked the idea that all professors necessarily turn on autopilot when teaching a course on subsequent occasions; and she suggested a sensible rationale for “redoing” courses that have not been taught for some time.<sup>9</sup> Like David, Amy also described her current (fall 2010) situation with respect to course preparations after tenure:

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<sup>9</sup>In fact, Amy related the need to teach current knowledge to her understanding of why faculty members must remain engaged with their fields—at least as consumers of recent scholarship, if not so much as producers of it: “Having the time to read and do scholarship—more than doing scholarship, almost, just having the time to read is essential. Obviously that’s part of scholarship. But having the time to read—and think—is tremendously important to being a good teacher. It’s hard to get that in a 4–4-load teaching institution anywhere, though, because of service demands as well.” (On the import of faculty at state comprehensive universities actively reading in their fields, see K. Brown [2010].)

I'm teaching a new prep this semester, and it's kicking my butt, if you can pardon the expression. It's no easier to prep a new course after tenure than it was before—if you care about teaching, which I do. In some cases, it's a little bit harder, because I foolishly thought that I'd be able to fully prep a course in three weeks. And it really wasn't quite enough time. So I'm scrambling, still, and that's not good. . . . [My students] don't need me being behind in lectures and stuff like that. It worries me.

Although, as detailed in the previous chapter, most of my faculty participants came to their present jobs with postsecondary teaching experience, only two commented on how that experience lessened the attention they had to give to preparing for classes at their current institutions. Ronald had taught for a total of five years at a community college and a small liberal arts college before coming to Grovehill State. He said that he “was a pretty experienced teacher coming in. . . . I was walking in, for example, with lecture notes on some of the topics already established. I wasn't having to reinvent the whole wheel.” Gomez also mentioned his years of experience as an instructor at his doctoral institution<sup>10</sup> and as a contingent faculty member at a research university as helping to build his arsenal of courses taught prior to starting at Ashdale State:

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<sup>10</sup>Melinda (Spenwood State) explained that many graduate programs in history have recently sought to make teaching experience a more common component of their requirements—as if such programs have heeded the findings of the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate (see, for example, Cronon 2006; Golde et al. 2009; Wulff, Austin, Nyquist, and Sprague 2004). Melinda said that “it's almost *very* rare that you find someone who's only been a teaching assistant [in graduate school]. It's very, very rare when they haven't had their own section where they write the syllabus, etc.” In Melinda's own case, however, her graduate program—over a decade ago—had not yet gotten “the message that their students had to be not just TAs but somehow try to teach their own seminars or courses or first-year writing seminars or whatever. I sort of did it because I wanted to earn money and sort of keep myself active and to meet people—to network. . . . I don't think I did it because my grad school said, ‘Hey, go get yourself some adjunct courses.’ They didn't really care about that, actually.” Melinda is confident, however, that her experience as an adjunct instructor at a number of institutions was critical in landing her job at Spenwood.

When I got here, there were some new courses I taught. . . . So that required a lot of prep work. But the other stuff I had already done. So I could tinker with the other courses, but they were all ready—so I would thank [my Ph.D. institution] for giving me the opportunity to teach and then taking me out on the road as a journeyman, so to speak, at [the research university where I taught off the tenure track before coming to Ashdale]. There, I got a chance to broaden my teaching experience—and then I was able to focus on my teaching ability here at Ashdale.

Although most of my faculty participants reported that the time they spent teaching or with teaching-related activities declined at least somewhat after they were awarded tenure, many were cognizant of the learning curve that coincided with the pre-tenure years (and about which more will be offered later in this chapter). Katherine, however, did not perceive any post-tenure difference in her experience at Daylesford State: “I don’t feel like it [tenure] has changed at all the amount of time I invest in teaching.” And Eleanor at Whitehaven State perceived one of the liberations of tenure as allowing her to feel as if she could put even *more* time into preparing for classes:

Now that I have tenure, two things: One is I feel I can teach [a class outside my natural milieu of teaching without so much worry]. But I think the other difference is that, where I might have said [before tenure], “Well, I only have three hours to spend today—and, once I’ve spent those three hours, I have to move on: I have this to do, this to do, this to do.” You know? Now, if I want to spend ten hours doing it [preparing for class]—who’s going to stop me?

In the previous chapter, I reported how Eleanor marveled that the reading she does for her job counts as “work.” Instead of looking at preparing for class as a burden, she considers it to be an opportunity to learn.<sup>11</sup> Like most of my faculty participants,

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<sup>11</sup>Eleanor, who started reading when she was very young, shared that she had always been interested in history: “I was from this little no-place [of a town], and I was so fascinated by these

Eleanor does not teach the same courses every semester; one result is continual engagement with the subject matter of her courses: “what I wind up doing is immersing myself in that subject during the semester I’m teaching it.” Eleanor thus has chosen teaching as her post-tenure engagement: it is not only where she invests most of her time but also the professional activity from which she garners the most personal satisfaction and fulfillment.<sup>12</sup> Other faculty participants have chosen different engagements; these I consider in subsequent sections of this chapter.

### Attitudes toward Teaching after Tenure

Accompanying the general decline in time my faculty participants spent preparing for classes after tenure (Eleanor aside) was a change in attitudes toward teaching. The comments I received from faculty members on this topic revealed the complicated relationship between tenure and the temporal element of teaching experience. Peter commented on his willingness to be more accommodating before tenure at Parkham State:

Before tenure, I was more flexible in offering to teach new preparations. And so, I mean, I would teach almost anything for any reason. And I did end up with a lot of different preparations, whereas I think that, at this point, I’m less likely to teach something I haven’t done before.

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faraway places. You know? . . . That’s the stuff that fascinated me—I was in [my home state], and I could read a book set in Japan [an example she invoked due to my background in Asian studies], and then it was like I’d be there.”

<sup>12</sup>Could, though, Eleanor’s devotion to preparing for classes perhaps have a downside? She may be interpreting her understanding of the responsibilities that accompany tenure as including continued responsibilities to her students to offer up-to-date materials; and the way she ensures she is doing so may be through her continual engagement with historical literature. As long as she is not neglecting her other responsibilities—and her nuanced cognizance of those responsibilities suggested to me that she is not—that she uses her discretionary time in such a manner should not be seen as negatively impacting the other arenas of her work.

Owen, too, began his career at Meldon State in a supremely accommodating position: “My first semester, I showed up, and I had the *world’s* worst schedule. I mean, it was clearly the classes that nobody else wanted to teach—at the times that nobody wanted to teach.” After that first semester, Owen’s schedule improved markedly; seniority (as much or more than tenure) allowed him to settle into teaching patterns that were largely of his own preference.<sup>13</sup>

In the classroom, George commented that he has “become a little more laid back” since receiving tenure at Spenwood State. He contrasted his experiences before and after tenure as follows:

What happened is that I focused very much on teaching before tenure. I mean, I was really uptight about it. . . . I don’t worry—think about it, even, now, really. Or not much. . . . I don’t prepare the way I used to. . . . In some of my classes, in my specialty, I would completely redo them every time I taught them, you know?

George’s complete revisions to his classes are a manifestation of Athena’s sense of “tinkering” with one’s own courses. Owen described similar inclinations at Meldon State. Over time, though, he reported having learned, to a certain extent, to let things be:

Clearly, with the teaching, you do reach a point where—you know, I guess I’m a little bit of a perfectionist, and I would always be tinkering and trying to improve things. And there just comes a point where certain things, if they work, you just say, “I’ll let this be.” And when the course rolls around again, I’ll teach it—even though I know it could potentially be better; but with everything else that’s going on at the moment, I’m going to make a compromise here.

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<sup>13</sup>He attributes the maintenance of certain teaching patterns to the department itself: “I think that the longer you’ve been around, if you tend to teach Thursday nights, and you’ve been teaching Thursday nights for ten years—if somebody else wants to teach on Thursday nights, they’ll [the department] say, ‘That’s when Dr. G. teaches.’ I think that’s helped a bit.”

George's sense of being more "laid back" corresponds to the feelings of two other participants who reported being more relaxed in the classroom after tenure:

Peter (Parkham State): "I feel less nervous about it [teaching]. I'm not so worried about saying the wrong thing, or, you know, wondering what students will think. . . . I feel more relaxed in the classroom post-tenure."

Sarah (Grovehill State): "I think that I am just as conscientious about my teaching. . . . But I'm much more relaxed in the classroom than I was when I first started. I think part of that comes from experience, right?"

Sarah's comment about conscientiousness speaks to her responsibility as a teacher to her students; her comment about experience seems directly related to the increased sense of confidence that several of my faculty participants reported. Debra, for example, described her increase in confidence in the classroom at Grovehill State as follows:

Prior to tenure, it was just sheer grunt work: getting adequate materials, keeping up with students—applied learning, always minds-on learning, no matter what you're teaching. That has not changed. But I've become more confident in how to do it, and it's become more second-nature, whereas previously I was always having to be conscious of doing it.

Owen, in explaining reasons for his increased confidence in the classroom, gave specific examples of skills he has begun to master and also introduced a temporal element that he believes has helped with how he relates to students:

I feel much more confident teaching than I did when I started. I think there's just certain things that come much easier—in terms of, you know, trying to conceptualize what to do in a class period, or trying to think about how things work. So I think the confidence is clearly one thing. I think my—and I don't know if this is just because I'm older than I was when I started—I think, when I was a teaching assistant, I felt very close in age to my students. And I think that's not really the case any more. . . . And I think that has really changed my relationship to them, you know?

Age played into Amy's sense of how she has changed with respect to her students at Parkham State: "I might be a little bit sterner than I used to be—but part of that's not tenure; part of that's just me getting older and more tired!" Ronald connected his post-tenure attitude in the classroom at Grovehill State to changing students:

Having tenure does make me more willing to be a little blunter [with students], but not exceptionally so. . . . *Maybe* there's a connection with tenure there, in that I'm a little more willing to say, "Tough." But I don't think there's much of one. I think it's much more a product of responding to changing students.<sup>14</sup>

Athena, too, claimed that she has "gotten extremely unsympathetic with the needs" of her students over time; but this comment was made within the context of her explaining that she is "a much better teacher now" than she was before she had tenure, when she "was effective in an immature way." She explained this aspect of her maturation as a teacher as follows:

When I wasn't very mature [as a teacher], it *was* important to me for my students to like me. That was important to me—that they feel safe, that they feel comfortable. I thought that comfort with me would make them learn [laughs]. It's not true! Comfort with me meant they could be, you know, they could act; they could. . . . It's like with small children: wherever the boundaries are, that's where they stop. And if you've got very elastic boundaries, then, you know? And the needs of students are, you know? It's, like, nature abhors a vacuum: they just swell to whatever limits you have. And then, after I got tenure, my sense of . . . patience with that—now, certainly my *impatience* with it was growing before I had tenure. But my absolute exhaustion with that: after tenure, I've been much less sympathetic—and much more willing to make people angry in my class.

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<sup>14</sup>In chapter 5, I quoted Ronald as having said, with respect to how students had changed over the years, that "There is a greater sense where students are expecting things to be handed to them for their ease."



Athena further elaborated on her own learning curve as a teacher; I treat her understandings in greater detail at the end of this section.

My faculty participants' attitudes toward their students were also expressed through comments about student evaluations—not their evaluations of students but, rather, the formal evaluations that students make of their instructors in each course, typically near the end of each academic term.<sup>15</sup> Of note is that most participants who mentioned student evaluations did so neutrally, in the context of what sorts of materials figure in to their pre-tenure evaluations. Thelonious, however, had the most to say about how student evaluations had continued to affect his attitudes toward both students and his perceptions of his teaching abilities:

Student evaluations, I think for many—including me—are often seen as, sort of, the grumble factor, like, “Why do they get to evaluate me? They’re not qualified to do so! It’s anonymous,” and all those issues. . . . But, post-tenure, I definitely am less concerned about individual student evaluations. I still care; I still actually get nervous when I see the folder [containing the completed evaluation forms] in my mailbox. . . . I still actually fear, perhaps, doing poorly—based upon that little gut, little butterfly that I feel pretty much every semester, whether they’ll [the evaluations] be good enough. But, nevertheless, does that impact how I teach? I don’t think so, too much, on a day-to-day basis.

Thelonious nonetheless remarked that, even though he is confident that he can remain at Ashdale State essentially as long as he wants (thanks to having tenure), student evaluations continue to carry at least some psychological significance for him:

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<sup>15</sup>The literature on these evaluations, referred to as student evaluations of teaching (SETs), is vast, with a corpus of *thousands* of articles (Centra, 2003)—and with “dozens of new studies continu[ing] to inundate the literature every year” (Gump 2007b, 55). Herbert Marsh referred to SETs as “probably . . . the most thoroughly studied of all forms of personnel evaluation” (1984, 749). Still, given the subjective nature of perceptions and opinions, SETs need to be treated—and interpreted—cautiously by all stakeholders.

Sometimes I will think, even at this point—not that I’m so senior or anything—but, like, post-tenure, sometimes I will think about what the students think of me—whether they’re complaining, but, really, it’s that they’re lazy or not doing a good job or—and I do sometimes mentally check myself as far as what I might say to a student, or e-mail a student, or perhaps even sometimes in terms of grades—because there is still that little thing: Well, they have *some* sort of modest power over me—even if they are unaware of it—because I think, generally, students don’t appreciate, fully, that student evaluations have a meaning, you know? I tell my students when they’re filling out their forms, “Hey! This is significant—and I want to hear what you have to say. You get a chance—this is your one chance to evaluate the instructor.” But they actually—few of them usually say anything on them, though.

Evaluations also carry great psychological weight to Melinda, although she has learned to compensate in a different way. She confessed that, as soon as she received her course evaluations after each semester, she “didn’t immediately pick them up and start reading them and thinking about, ‘Oh my gosh, how do I improve these student comments? How can I respond?’” Instead, exercising great self-control, she would put them away and read them later, when she could place them into greater context as to what sorts of comments are important and what sorts of comments are “not relevant to evaluating me or my course.”

In her self-interpreted maturation, Athena related that she had come to understand that student evaluations are “entirely tied to student motivation.” Hers “have been top-notch forever,” for reasons she attributed not as much to her skill as an instructor but to her personality:

I have the gift of the gab, right? . . . I have never had any trouble holding people’s attention and making people laugh, you know? In some ways, students like you if you’re entertaining. And I have no illusion that being entertaining is equivalent to being a good teacher. . . . I have no attendance policy, but students still come, right? So, that’s good. In that sense, temperamentally, I’m someone who’s a good interface for students.

And attendance, to Athena, relates to student motivation, which has reflected positively on her student evaluations:

If students came to my class motivated to learn, then they're, like, "Wow. The readings were relevant!" (That's because they read them.) And they can put in your evaluation, "Yes, the readings were relevant," right? "Did you leave class knowing more than you knew before?" "Well, yes." (Why? Because they came here motivated to learn.) So, if you came to my classroom, you know, with an impatience with the whole education process, no matter what I say, it's in my evaluations. So evaluations aren't about my teaching; they evaluate the students' motivation. That's how it reads to me, right? And certainly, in my field, I have a very stiff self-selection situation. . . . Students who are going to come to study [my field] are curious. So my student evaluations are always very high, right? But it's nothing about *me*; that has to do with the self-selection process, right? For me to snip through the belief that evaluations were actually evaluating me: that was a maturation issue. And so, by the time I got to tenure, I was, like, "Oh. I get it."

In other words, the tenure moment coincided, for Athena, with an awareness that her excellent student evaluations had largely been a function of (pre-existing) student motivation.<sup>16</sup> A certain relief accompanied this awareness, as the need to be "obsessive" about student evaluations is generally lessened after tenure (although maintaining strong evaluations remains important at state comprehensive universities).

As the above quotations attest, Athena was quite cognizant of her development as a teacher—her "maturation," as she called it—that corresponded with the pre-tenure years. Others, too, mentioned this development, with Sarah, for example, referring to it as "experience."<sup>17</sup> However conceptualized, these processes were

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<sup>16</sup>A certain level of humility is also likely at play in Athena's explanation.

<sup>17</sup>In using the terms that my faculty participants themselves used, I realize the potential ambiguity. I therefore offer this definition of *faculty development* from Mervin Freedman and

described as evolving in a manner that positioned tenure as a capstone, of sorts. My faculty participants, in responding to questions about their pre- and post-tenure work lives, then, were able to sense differences in their attitudes toward teaching over time that may have been functions of tenure, experience (or maturation or development), or a combination of these factors. Parsing the sources or initiators of individual changes was therefore not possible for most of my faculty participants.

### Approaches toward Teaching after Tenure

In addition to displaying attitudes toward teaching that typically varied before and after tenure, my faculty participants also often approached the presentation and organization of materials within their classes in different ways over time. As with certain attitudes toward teaching described above, however, some of these changes are not necessarily attributable to tenure but rather to individual experience or growth. Ronald, for example, did not credit tenure with causing any changes in his approach to teaching at Grovehill State: “I can’t think of any way in which it [tenure] affected my teaching. Even before tenure, I was willing to experiment with different types of courses and try new things and integrate technologies that I thought were useful.” Melinda, however, connected tenure to the fact that she is “certainly experimenting more” in the classroom:

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Nevitt Sanford, which encompasses the senses of *development*, *maturation*, *experience*, and *growth* expressed here: “favorable change whose consequence is that faculty members operate with increasing autonomy in accord with internalized values and goals—and function more effectively as individuals and as members of society” (1973, 3). This understanding fits nicely with the concept and definition of *faculty growth* from KerryAnn O’Meara, Aimee LaPointe Terosky, and Anna Neumann (2008) that I presented at the outset of chapter 4.

I felt freer to try different things in the classroom [after tenure], because I wasn't always so stuck on the idea that we gotta get through the content. . . . I started thinking more, ironically, about how students learn. . . . I actually struggle, now, more with how I teach these students than I did, I think, before [tenure]. Before, it was, like, "How do I just get through this material?" And now, I think, it's, "How do I teach these students?" So that makes me a better teacher, in some ways.

Earlier, I quoted Melinda as having said that her reliance on course materials that she had prepared earlier makes her "not as good a teacher." Her comments are not contradictory: Her post-tenure attention to how she teaches has made her more critical of the materials that she prepared earlier—for example, PowerPoint presentations—when she was focusing more closely on covering the course content. But is this awareness somehow a reflection of a transformation enabled by tenure or, as with Athena, Sarah, and others, a process of growth, maturation, and experience as a teacher?

Teaching styles, too, have changed among my faculty participants over time. Ronald, for example, noted that he has made "a general shift away from lecture and toward other types of learning." Katherine, too, remarked that, since she started at Daylesford State, she has

adopted a much more interactive teaching style. . . . Maybe, by virtue of teaching at a smaller institution with small classes [compared to those at her own undergraduate and graduate institutions]—it's just kind of natural to have some level of interaction. And, to some extent, the students seem to expect that. They've gotten increasingly used to the idea that they don't just get to show up to a class and sit there and be filled with knowledge.

Later in our conversation, Katherine added the following: "Over the years, at all levels of teaching, I've just cut way back on the quantity of material that I try to get

across and emphasize shorter, higher-quality writing assignments and shorter reading assignments—so that you can really discuss things.” Others, such as Thelonious (Ashdale State) and Sarah (Grovehill State), also reported scaling down the quantity of material so as to emphasize depth over breadth.

David at Meldon State, however, reported moving in the opposite direction over time. He explained that part of this shift has been due to increasing class sizes: “I lecture more—and I expect less discussion, for better or for worse.” He offered the following recollection that speaks to a perceived change in student attitudes and abilities over time or to an unwillingness of faculty members to adapt their teaching styles so as to inspire and motivate students who may come to the classroom with backgrounds and expectations that are different from those of students of previous generations:

My first couple of years, I really did expect more discussion. Sometimes it worked, and sometimes it didn’t. It often led to problems in getting through coverage—you know, getting through the syllabus—which I found okay; I can live with that. And I have a very strong memory of my first—maybe my second—year, talking with the department head, who had been here for twenty-five years or so (maybe more)—and I was asking about a good book that I can use to get good student discussion on [a particular topic]. And he said, “Well, I used to use this, but I’ve pretty much given up on discussion about those things. It’s too hard with the freshmen and sophomores.” Well, I still want discussion, and I certainly still try to do it; but I think I do less than I did originally.

Unexamined in the above story is whether tenure could have led to faculty complacency in the case of the department head—a common criticism, especially from those from outside academe.

Although much of this material on changing approaches to teaching is only tenuously attributed to tenure, Katherine made a direct comment about the effect of tenure on her approach to the classroom, also invoking the idea of complacency in the process:

Another thing that I've found so wonderful about tenure [is that] before tenure, you're really having to *prove* that you're an excellent teacher, so when things don't go well, you just invest so much time and energy into analyzing and trying to figure out. . . . It's just, sometimes things just don't work, you know? Of course, I still analyze and think about, "What can I do next time?" But, for me, a lot of that agonizing and anxiety is what's gone away. I still have to worry about promotion, so it's not like you can just become complacent and not care at all.

Ultimately, Katherine pointed to the next hurdle: promotion to full professor, an undercurrent that was also felt in other participants' approaches to research and service.

Finally, Athena was most willing to discuss the particular learning curve that she faced with respect to teaching when she started on the tenure track at Spennwood State. The way that she described her experience was a testament not only to her "neurotically" self-critical attitude (mentioned in the previous chapter) but also to the ways in which tenure-track faculty members, in particular, at state comprehensive universities are expected to be reflective practitioners, especially when it comes to their teaching. Along those lines, Athena said, "I can't make them be good students; I can make myself be a good teacher, right? And that may or may not enable them to learn. And that's my realm of control: What can *I* do differently?" I include this material not because it speaks to changes that tenure *initiated* as much as

it does to changes that tenure—and being on the tenure-track, in particular—*enabled*.

Athena's greatest challenge was learning how to teach history in a way that she was not taught history herself. In her experience at Research-I institutions, history—and, particularly, the writing of history—had never been operationalized. Instead, she was allowed to “intuit, slowly, over time” how the process works: by reading a lot of research, reading a lot of footnotes, looking at a lot of primary documents. “Slowly, over time, you intuit how to cobble together this business,” she said. Here is how she described the long and complex—and arduous—process of translating her experiences into an understanding of how she can effectively teach history to her students at Spenwood State:

I had to spend a lot of time deconstructing what Research-I institutions do to you, right? And I had to get rid of the idea that intuitive learning was of value—because I can't *teach* intuition. My job is not to just, kind of, open a space for people to intuit. They come to my classes to *learn* what I know how to *do*. And I had come here thinking that students needed to learn what I *knew*. Those are different things entirely! . . . I know stuff that is of *no* practical value. What I do know that's of practical value is how to *do* things: look at raw data and pick it apart and put it back together, and compare it to other things, and find a way to communicate what I see inside of that, and make hypotheses, and test hypotheses, and make those hypotheses repeatable for other people—this is what I know how to do, and this is what's relevant to students. Now, history just happens to be the *medium*. [My field of] history just happens to be a field through which you can teach these things. So that means, then, okay, How do I operationalize what I know how to do? Right? And so I began to undo how I—how I'd studied history as an undergraduate and how history had been taught to me at the graduate level. I had to take that *all* apart. Um, and that's—that's what I did, up until I got tenure. That's what I did. And now I am tweaking and perfecting [laughs]—and, you know, further experimenting with how to teach history in a way that I was not taught history.



Athena described this process as taking place up until she got tenure; she referred to it as a “very intense examination” of the way that history is taught.

Although few of my participants claimed to enjoy being observed by faculty colleagues while teaching, Athena was one who appreciated that component of the annual evaluations undertaken within her department. As a result of the observations, in fact, her teaching approach is being incorporated into all introductory courses in her department:

In our department it’s really nice, because your teaching is evaluated every year . . . and the Evaluation Committee is made up of full professors, associates, assistants, people who are tenured, people who are not tenured—so everybody can look at everybody’s teaching. So, you know, people began to encounter what I’m doing pedagogically in the classroom and said, “Wow, okay, this is really useful.” And it’s had an effect—which, you know, was not my intention. I was just trying to figure out, “Oh, how do I take care of my shit?” This is all I’m thinking. But, then, in trying to think about it that way, it apparently had enough value to, then, influence the entire curriculum. And that is *incredibly* gratifying. . . . In a sense, that’s the flower on the vine that I’ve been working for.

Athena’s experiences at Spenwood State reinforce how seriously teaching is taken not just by individual participants in my study but by entire departments—a fitting acknowledgement of the role that teaching continues to have at state comprehensive universities.

In this section, I described how tenure was seen to influence my faculty participants’ attitudes, approaches, and understandings of time. Although the import of tenure was foregrounded throughout all of our conversations, the material presented in this section suggests that some changes to teaching—such as increased confidence in the classroom—may be as much influenced by individual experience

and growth (demonstrated, for example, through Athena's presentation of her learning curve) as they are by effects clearly traceable to tenure. At the same time, some faculty members suggested that certain changes were perceived as results of reduced pressures that stemmed from having achieved tenure. Until tenure, then, my faculty participants had to be conscious of proving (and, in some cases, improving) their skills in the classroom. After tenure, a sense of mastery that coincided with a sense of "liberation" granted with tenure allowed, in some cases, greater experimentation, flexibility, and increased attention to the depth of student learning.

Teaching after tenure largely remains as time-consuming as always, however, especially with respect to grading (most often without the help of graduate assistants) and to the preparation of new courses or the revision of previously taught ones. But Eleanor at Whitehaven State provides an interesting case: She has used the freedoms of tenure to allow her not to worry about the large amounts of time that she routinely continues to channel into her course preparation. She offered: "I would say that my life after tenure is actually tons better—because I can relax a little bit and enjoy teaching and not feel like Big Brother is watching me all the time."<sup>18</sup> Post-tenure, Eleanor has chosen to engage most deeply with her teaching responsibilities. In the next section, where I consider perceived effects of tenure on the scholarly and research pursuits of my faculty participants, I offer brief portraits of faculty members who have chosen research as their post-tenure engagement.

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<sup>18</sup>Peter (Parkham State) corroborated the sense of being under less surveillance after tenure: "I am probably less worried about . . . what other people are thinking about how I'm spending my time," he said.

### **“Now I Can Write More”: Orientations toward Research after Tenure**

In general, my faculty participants were able to make clearer connections between tenure and changes in their orientations toward research than they were between tenure and their orientations toward teaching. I sensed no learning curve with research as seemed to be present with teaching.<sup>19</sup> Instead, the major difficulty, as explored in the previous chapter, was finding adequate time for research. In many cases, the perceived differences of carrying out research before and after tenure were psychological; in some cases, the very contents of and approaches toward research were perceived as having been affected by tenure.

Ronald, at Grovehill State, mentioned a lessening of pressure after tenure: “There wasn’t quite the same pressure that, you know, you needed an article out every year—or you needed to have a book every five years. That type of pressure *wasn’t* there in the same way” after tenure.<sup>20</sup> Peter described receiving tenure at Parkham State as similarly lessening some of the pressure that had previously been placed on research:

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<sup>19</sup>The intuitive explanation for this difference, of course, is that doctoral programs produce researchers, not teachers. Conducting historical research is therefore a skill that should have been mastered by all of my faculty participants by the time they had completed their Ph.D. degrees. In fact, David Perlmutter based his *Promotion and Tenure Confidential* (2010) on the premise that “most newly launched faculty” are “well trained to do their research, modestly trained to teach, and poorly trained to be *faculty*” (85, original emphasis). Still, as I mention in the final section of this chapter, some faculty members reported feeling as if they had become better *writers* over time.

<sup>20</sup>Recall that the History Department at Grovehill State is a research-oriented department. Still, having a book published every five years is not a departmental requirement but, rather, a collective aspiration that acknowledges the norms of the discipline as practiced at research universities. Debra described the faculty members in her department as being historians “in the traditional monograph-and-article-and-classroom approach.”

There's always a little bit of tension in trying to do research at the same time with a heavy course load. It was probably more that way when I was untenured, because I *had* to get something published, whereas now I'm just doing it [research] because I love it. . . . I think I enjoy it [research] now more than I did before tenure.

And Melinda, at Spenwood State, noted a similar sentiment and also associated the resultant decrease in tension with an increase in the enjoyment of research:

Before tenure, I think you're much more tense, too, about research, and it almost makes it harder to get started—to write. And, after tenure, you're much more relaxed about research, and you actually look *much more* forward to it. The days you have to read and write are like, "Oh my God! I get to do my own stuff!" You know?

Similar to the way that Eleanor at Whitehaven State viewed tenure as the imprimatur on her spending as much time preparing for teaching as she wishes, Ling at Grovehill State viewed tenure as the chance to return her attention to some of the research projects she had been postponing throughout her pre-tenure years:

Because of my other rigorous agenda for program development and service [prior to tenure], I felt like focusing on my own book or article publications at the expense of cutting hours from curriculum development or interdisciplinary program development seemed a little selfish. And so I put off some of my big writing agenda to the post-tenure years. And so, for me, one of the big changes after tenure is that now I can write more and put a little more time into my own book manuscript and editing projects.

Ling's conceptualization of not wishing to be—or be perceived as being—"selfish" before tenure fits both with the "communitarian ideal" of her department (as described by Debra) and with the sense of responsibility to her departmental and institutional colleagues. She thus offered a clear connection between tenure and how she will subsequently redirect some of her energies that she had previously been devoting to other interests. At Meldon State, David likewise said that he has allocated

his “research time differently as a result of having gotten tenure.” In short, after tenure, both he and Ling were able to focus more of their time, energy, and effort on research-related projects that held personal, as opposed to instrumental, meaning.<sup>21</sup>

William (Parkham State) commented on a different type of orientational change with respect to his research that was afforded by tenure: the opportunity to be theoretically and methodologically innovative—even potentially controversial. He described an edited volume that arose out of connections made at a scholarly conference as a post-tenure project that allowed him to be “really kind of theoretically innovative.” He continued:

I did think that I was at a point in my career, when we were putting this [volume] together, where I could afford to be experimental. And I will say that I could be controversial and experimental because I was tenured—I was set, right? So I could participate in this volume that was a little bit methodologically cutting-edge.

When questioned about his willingness to be “controversial and experimental,” he replied that there was “no way” that he would have done so before tenure. William had prepared his first book (based on his doctoral dissertation) in his years leading up to tenure; in it, he undertook nothing as potentially controversial as he did in the edited volume.<sup>22</sup> He elaborated as follows:

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<sup>21</sup>I do not mean to imply a false dichotomy, however. Projects with personal meaning can certainly yield professional benefits, such as Ling’s post-tenure investment in her scholarly projects (using time that had previously been channeled into program development and administration). But tenure, for David and Ling, at least, enabled a shift in the *motivations* for such decisions.

<sup>22</sup>William’s first book, in fact, won a book prize—the “highlight” of his scholarly career to date. The conference where the award was presented was, in fact, the conference that sowed the seeds of this edited volume by bringing together many of the individuals who subsequently contributed to this interdisciplinary project.

I wouldn't have gone out on a limb methodologically in the first book. But the fact that I did have tenure allowed me to do something a little more experimental in that [second] book. And I did. I was conscious of that. I realized I was at a point in my career where I didn't have to worry about getting a negative review, if somebody thinks we're being a little bit methodologically *too* innovative or too creative. . . . I was, in my second book project, willing to be a little more daring than I was in my first book project.

Thus one freedom of tenure enjoyed by William was a true freedom of scholarship. Amy, also at Parkham State, was in fact the only one of my participants to address this freedom directly: "Well, you know, obviously—well, not *obviously*—but my understanding is that, for the most part, tenure exists to ensure freedom of scholarship." Earlier in our conversation, she had also remarked (and as I quoted in the previous chapter) that tenure "gives you the freedom to do your scholarship without worrying unduly about its nature." Herein I uncovered one unanticipated finding: Of import is that William is a full professor—a professor who is thus not haunted by the specter of a further promotion. Others, particularly those who were not yet full professors, responded differently to tenure vis-à-vis their scholarly work.

Recognizing his idealism, William commented on the freedoms he enjoys in his current position:

Frankly, at this point in my career, I don't necessarily have any requirements standing over my head that have to do with my research at all. But it's a platform from which I can create what I want to create. I want to continue to create historical knowledge; I still want to write books; I still want to participate in my field.

This freedom was not shared by all of my participants. Gomez (Ashdale State), for example, is currently an associate professor who is working on a project for which he might not be able to find an academic publisher. His concern is that, if the project

were to go to “some sort of specialty publishing house,” it would not count toward his promotion to full professor:

It’s something that I’ll wait until I’m a full professor to see if I can turn that project into a book. And if it gets to an academic publisher, great; if it doesn’t, it doesn’t matter. But if I were to do that now, it wouldn’t count towards full professor. So that’s why I’m going to do the more mainstream thing with it now and get it into a regular journal and get that counted towards full professor.

By “do[ing] the more mainstream thing” with his project, Gomez is conscientiously not taking any chances with his scholarship—chances that could jeopardize his anticipated promotion to full professor. In his understanding, then, his freedom of scholarship was not tied to tenure but will instead come after his final promotion.<sup>23</sup> He explained as follows: “What I look forward to most right now is becoming full professor . . . and turn[ing] myself, I think, in terms of scholarship, in a more creative direction—and not worry[ing] about where stuff gets published but simply publish[ing] what I want to publish.”

But Gomez is in no hurry to garner his final promotion. He explained his motivations as follows:

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<sup>23</sup>Each department at Ashdale State, a unionized campus, has its own criteria for promotion to full professor; these criteria are intended to be as black-and-white as the criteria for tenure and for promotion to associate professor. The criteria for promotion to full professor are met, typically, by maintaining adequate teaching and service records while producing a certain number of publications of a certain type or types above and beyond those that were produced for promotion to associate professor. Thus the emphasis for the final promotion is largely on scholarship. Separate external evaluations of this scholarship, however, are not taken into account (as they would be at a most research universities). The understanding is that acceptance of work for publication in certain venues (or by certain presses) carries with it adequate evaluation: the contributions are automatically of merit for academic promotion. “Peer review” for promotion, then, is peer review that has been carried out within the purview—and for the purposes—of scholarly publishing (see, for example, Dipboye 2006; Fischer 2011; Lindholm-Romantschuk 1998; Osburn 1989; P. Parsons 1990; Wheeler 2011).

I don't feel like I'm really in a hurry, because I am a tenured associate [professor], so I'm just really looking at promotion to full [professor]. I can literally be a tenured associate for the next twenty-five years; I don't *have* to go up for full professor if I don't want to—no one can make me do that. I want to do it, because there's a pay increase. And I think that's the only thing—because my job won't change, other than that, I'll just make more money, which would be nice. And it would also be satisfying to be full professor, too. But those things aren't really—the money or the prestige—are not something that's a strong motivating factor.

Melinda also commented on the difference in pressure that is felt between tenure and promotion at Spenwood State, where tenure and the first promotion, to associate professor, are separate processes: "If you get tenure here and then you don't get promoted right away, you don't get fired, you know? So the monkey is off your back—and it's all self-motivated [after tenure]; it's much, much more self-imposed, and I think that makes it, to me, liberating." This liberation, to Melinda, has contributed to how much she now enjoys and looks forward to her research. But faculty members who are concerned about future promotions may not extend that sense of liberation to the approaches they use in their own scholarly work.

This foray into the issue of promotion to full professor reveals an interesting situation at the state comprehensive universities in this study: In general, teaching is the most important criterion for tenure; scholarship, the most important for promotion. Where tenure and promotion (to associate professor) are coupled, pre-tenure faculty members must ensure they are meeting both criteria—in addition to the requirements for service. Both Melinda and Gomez pointed out how the stakes—the potential continuance of one's job—are higher for tenure. Promotions, where the benefits are of money or prestige, need not follow according to a "strict timetable"



(Buller 2010, 67). And although several of my faculty participants, at least, would agree that a sense of relief accompanied their being awarded tenure, Thelonious specifically mentioned “the relief that will come when you get full [professor].”

Sarah provided a memorable example of how, for her at Grovehill State, being tenured corresponded to a shift from an emphasis on teaching to an emphasis on research:

It used to be that, when I had anxiety dreams, they were teaching-anxiety dreams. I would show up and be unprepared—and I would have . . . usually classroom-management problems. Students would be doing horrible things, and I couldn’t make them stop. And then, recently, when I was desperately trying to finish a conference paper, I finally had my first *research*-related dream, in which a sort of colleague at a different institution who had invited—well, who was organizing this conference. . . . I didn’t turn in a paper; I didn’t even bother to show up for the conference, because I had gotten the dates confused, and he was so mad at me. And I think that is [laughs] . . . maybe that symbolizes the turning of the corner. The students don’t intimidate me so much anymore, but the research, then, has become. . . .<sup>24</sup>

Although this dream had certain qualities of a nightmare, an implication seems to be that, for Sarah, research has become a greater concern than teaching after tenure and promotion to associate professor. Now, instead of focusing on putting herself before her students and being concerned with how they respond to her teaching, she must put herself before her disciplinary peers and be more concerned with how they respond to her research.

Even before tenure, research was a concern of H. P. at Ashdale State. In aiming to reach the tenure requirements, in terms of scholarly productivity, for a research

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<sup>24</sup>Sarah did not finish this thought, although the implied conclusion is that research has become what intimidates her now.

university, he assured that he would meet the research requirements for tenure at his state comprehensive university. At the same time, his continued emphasis on research progressively isolated him from some of his departmental colleagues—a painful, difficult process that saw him voluntarily going into what he termed “internal exile” from his department. One result, though, is that he has been able to focus on his research and his scholarly engagement with disciplinary colleagues outside Ashdale. At the same time, he registered general disappointment in the situation, even if it has ultimately allowed him to be the productive scholar that he had always wanted to be:

Tenure has given me the ability—well, I don’t know if it’s tenure; maybe it’s seniority—it may be the fact that, at this point, the chair and others just want to leave me alone. I teach basically in the evenings. I do evening courses. I managed to worm my way into doing online courses—which are a joke—but, it means it keeps me off campus: I can work at home; I can work in my office in the basement. I don’t have to go to campus. I have the freedom to determine my own hours—fine. You know? That’s the accommodation that I’ve worked out. I’m here; I’ve got to do the work; I can punch the clock—that’s the day job. And that’s not the way I envisioned tenure, right, when I was starting out. I never envisioned that, as a tenured full professor, my attitude would be: What I do on this campus is . . . the production-line factory work that brings me the money so I can do what I *really* want to do, which is scholarship and having an active life in my discipline and field. That’s not the way it’s supposed to be, and I know that.

H. P. has chosen his engagement: it is with research. But it has come at the sacrifice of a “normal” relationship with his departmental colleagues, whom I should point out he refers to not as *colleagues* but as *co-workers*. H. P.’s case thus complicates my sense of post-tenure “engagements” carrying only positive connotations. Indeed, to engage with his scholarship, H. P. has effectively *disengaged* with his department,

doing only the minimum required for teaching and service. As a result, tenure for H. P. has been “a real mixed bag”:

It’s not been what I’ve expected—let’s put it that way. That’s not to say that, from a research standpoint and my scholarship that I haven’t done what I expected to do; I have. It’s just that I thought that I would have found myself, having done what I’ve done, someplace else [e.g., at a research university].

In H. P.’s case, I sensed, perhaps, that some of his fellow department members may have been experiencing “research envy,” an issue that surfaced in conversations with only two other faculty members in this study. Percy (Berkswell State) mentioned “a lot of resentment” over the facts that he does less service than others in his department and is away from campus more than most. And George (Spenswood State) recounted an emotionally charged episode from a meeting where senior professors who do a lot of service and “no research” voiced their resentment over a well-published colleague who had a “checkered history” of showing up at meetings because she has a “big research agenda that keeps her away from campus—she’s traveling all the time.” These stories, however, were not the norm in the departments in my study.<sup>25</sup>

Athena also reported a painful association with research after tenure at Spenswood State, but hers has stemmed from a different set of expectations and experiences. Because she had invested so much time and energy in her teaching prior to

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<sup>25</sup>These stories are, alas, not without precedent. Rowena Murray (2009), for example, wrote of “successful” scholarly writers at certain institutions being “marginalized or even bullied” (203) by their “less successful” (read: jealous) colleagues. Dawne Clarke (2005) reported faculty members sharing similar situations with her. Cultures that are inhospitable to scholarship do exist, then, even within academe, suggesting that adopting an emphasis on research may be detrimental to certain faculty members in such (unfortunate) situations.

tenure, her scholarship languished. She had satisfied the requirements for tenure within her department in her first two or three years: “So, as soon as I came out of graduate school, publications: *boom, boom, boom, boom*, right? And then it stalled. And it has been stalled ever since!” Her research, she said,

is dead: I burnt all my *self* in teaching. And, post-tenure, this is *incredibly* painful for me—not for the same reason it was painful for me before tenure. Before tenure, it was painful for me because I was afraid I couldn’t get tenure. . . . But, after tenure, I’m not afraid I can’t keep my job; I’m *embarrassed*. I’m *embarrassed* before my colleagues. And that’s a *different* pressure.

Like H. P., she is referring to how she is seen by her disciplinary colleagues here—her peers from graduate school, who “all have books,” making her look, in comparison, like a “second-rate, non-publishing scholar.” Like Ling, then, Athena is planning to reengage with her research and scholarship in the post-tenure years ahead.

Tenure at the state comprehensive universities in this study, therefore, carries with it a general lessening of pressure to produce that bestows the freedoms to be more creative in one’s scholarly work—although this potential is complicated by whether the individuals have achieved the rank of full professor and, if not, how they are anticipating that final promotion. Some participants are looking forward to a re-engagement with scholarship now that they have fulfilled the requirements for tenure. Others have always maintained an engagement with scholarship, perhaps—as in H. P.’s exceptional case—at the detriment of their teaching and service.

### **“I’m Doing a Lot More Service to My Field”**

#### Increasing Service after Tenure

When Amy was hired at Parkham State, her understanding was that 60 percent of her time was to be devoted to teaching and the remaining 40 percent was to be divided more or less evenly between service and scholarship, with emphasis slightly privileging service. Although different now—“It’s now supposed to be 60–20–20 teaching, *scholarship*, service”—Amy described having “made commitments starting under the old ‘regime’” that have resulted in her doing a lot of service, particularly for disciplinary organizations.<sup>26</sup> She described her involvement as follows:

The service to the profession that I’ve done has been extremely time-consuming: I will be the first person to admit that. . . . The service to the field has been more than I ever anticipated or expected. I have enjoyed it greatly. It’s given me a lot.

Others are aware of her dedication to service, which she sees as having allowed her to remain connected to her field:

I’ve been doing almost—some people have told me—*way* too much service to the profession. But the people who’ve been telling me that are not in this department. They’re other [disciplinary] colleagues who want me to do more scholarship. Well, *I* want to do more scholarship, too. But, right now, I’m the only one of my kind in this state. So my service to the profession as an officer, particularly in one national organization linked to my field—I’ve been doing that for seven years now: treasurer, vice president, and now president—has . . . kept me linked up with my field, which would otherwise, in my circumstances, have been nearly impossible, I think.

For Amy, then, service to disciplinary organizations has allayed the geographical isolation that accompanies being the “only one” of her kind in the state. (Several of my

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<sup>26</sup>To be fair, Amy added that “the old regime really did respect scholarship” as well as service.

other participants in this study were the only ones of their kind—in terms of their fields of specialization—within their departments.)<sup>27</sup> Service has also allowed her to become respected in her field: “people who know about [all her work to the field] appreciate that.”

Another way that Amy reported having benefited from her service activities is through synergies with both her teaching and her research: The service she has performed has “actually really informed my teaching a great deal—and my scholarship as well. There are people now I can contact and ask questions about things I wouldn’t have known existed before.” Amy was the only one of my participants to connect service with teaching (where I should note that her students were thus also beneficiaries), although others associated service with research activities. Ronald, for example, connected his heavy involvement in disciplinary service with research:

Grovehill had a long tradition of supporting this type of [service] work. So I started doing this [leading a professional organization] before I had tenure, but I knew it was something that was valued within the department. On the other hand, after I got tenure . . . I was able then, I think, to devote more [time and energy] to it because I knew it was respected in the university—and because I had tenure, so I wasn’t as concerned about making sure that I was consistently publishing so much stuff. When I was promoted to full professor, I was promoted—a lot of it was based upon this work I had done for this professional organization. It counted heavily toward not just service but also my research activities. So, while I had certainly published some more stuff, I certainly hadn’t published as much more as I would have liked to going up for full professor. But because I knew that this [service] stuff was valued as highly as it was—it’s valued more highly than giving a conference paper, for example—it allowed me to be able to be willing to devote more time to it.

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<sup>27</sup>Such is the norm in history at state comprehensive universities, particularly at smaller institutions within the classification, and particularly when faculty members specialize in fields other than U.S. or European history. I considered the role of institutional locations in the previous chapter.

Ronald's application for promotion to full professor thus benefited from his extensive disciplinary service. But note, especially, how Ronald positioned his understanding of tenure in his involvement with service: He had initiated his involvement prior to being awarded tenure, but tenure enabled him "to devote more" time and energy to service than he otherwise would have been able to do. In the decade under his leadership, in fact, the organization had "expanded wildly." Ronald thus provides an example of a faculty member who has chosen service as his post-tenure engagement. His professional identity is tied to his leadership of this position; and he considers his primary colleagues to be those in his field with whom he interacts on a regular basis through this organization.

Amy supported Ronald's description of the role of tenure on service involvement when she said: "Tenure made it possible for me to do more service—and no one could tell me I couldn't." Amy is another example of a faculty member who has chosen to engage with service, although she did admit looking forward to returning to research in the near future:

When my tenure in office in a couple of these things [organizations] is up, I'll be relieved not to have those responsibilities. They've been very good for me and have done a lot for me—and I think they've done some things for other people, too, which is good.

Indeed, the idea that service benefits others was seen as a motivating factor for many of my faculty participants to invest their own time and energy into service.

Melinda (Spenwood State) said that, after tenure, "I'm doing a lot more service to my field." For example, she has come to see herself as a mentor to others in her field—after she realized that others look at her in that light:

I was at a conference the other day, and someone said to me, “Well, I want to organize a panel at next year’s conference and have a mixture of young scholars and senior scholars.” And they looked at me, and I was, like, “And you want me to give a paper?” And they were, like, “Yeah.” And I’m, like, “Well, which one am I?” And they’re, “You’re the senior one now! You know, you’ve had tenure for five or six years—so you are senior one.” I’m, like, “Oh, okay.” So I’m now thinking of myself in that way, in terms of mentoring other people in my field and doing this sort of constructive criticism.

At Ashdale State, Gomez said that he had never particularly thought of himself as part of the “old guard,” yet “some of the non-tenured assistants [assistant professors] sort of look to *me*, in a way, to kind of marshal stuff through” department meetings and other such situations. Together, Amy, Ronald, Melinda, and Gomez demonstrate awareness of how their professional identities are situated within both disciplinary and institutional (departmental and university) communities.

As Gomez’s case indicates, too, beneficiaries of service also exist at the departmental and institutional levels. Athena, for example, put a face on the beneficiaries of some of her service at Spenwood State:

Most of my satisfaction comes from teaching and influencing the shape of our curriculum, changing our curriculum, assessing the success and functionality of our curriculum, fixing our curriculum to stop the holes—that’s where a lot of my satisfaction [originates] and service goes. It’s service to students, not really service to the institution.

Of course, when students benefit from curricular changes, their institutions also benefit. Gomez, in fact, decided to take on more departmental service responsibilities as a tenured associate professor. With respect to his involvement in one particular project, he said, “For me, it was all about the students.” Another factor, though, was that service was viewed as least important when he went up for tenure, so, on



one level, he was compensating for the fact that he had done less service earlier in his time at Ashdale State. In addition, his sense of responsibility to the department and institution encouraged him to take up a leadership position that directly influenced students and student learning:

It has been an *incredible* amount of work. So, here I took on a whole lot of work that I didn't really have to take on—but I just thought it was a good idea to do it. . . . And maybe being a tenured person gave me a little bit more confidence, in the sense that I would be listened to and . . . my point of view would be taken seriously, versus as a non-tenured assistant [professor] in that position.

Yet another factor that gave Gomez the confidence to undertake the work was his status as a tenured faculty member. I consider the issue of voice and empowerment in the next section of this chapter.

In addition to doing more service to her field, Melinda took on a large-scale service project at Spenwood State after tenure: she created, chaired, and has run an ad hoc faculty-driven task force on an issue about which she is particularly passionate:

It's been time-consuming. . . . But that's been one of my passionate, passionate service projects. And I will see it through to the end; I won't let anybody drop it—and I haven't. And other people [are helping out] . . . but I'd say that I've been one of the few consistent people who've applied their time to this issue. And it's going to help a lot of people.

Like Gomez, who took on a time-consuming service project for the students at Ashdale State, Melinda “was ‘doin’ it for my sisters’ [on the faculty], as they say!” Service that has meaning, then, particularly when that service is internally motivated, is service that is worth the time and effort invested in it. Requirements for tenure or

promotion were not the motivating factors for either Gomez or Melinda to become involved in their respective projects.

With respect to responsibility, both Debra and Ling (Grovehill State) commented on the leadership expectations that resulted after tenure:

Debra: "Before tenure, service was more being sub-members of various committees. After tenure, you're suddenly the chair of committees, or you're taking on more leadership roles."

Ling: "Now I'm in a position where I chair the committees rather than being the latest addition to the committee. . . . If you're chairing a committee, it's ultimately your responsibility what the committee does."

David said, "I became more involved in other parts of the university [Meldon State] after I got tenure." And Peter, at Parkham State, became more engaged, post-tenure, with the Faculty Senate, to which he had been appointed prior to receiving tenure:

To be honest, in my first year or two—this is my third year—I was pretty bored by it; I was sort of doing it for the line on my résumé. There were only maybe one or two times that I actively participated. And I was frustrated that my obviously intelligent and well-reasoned arguments didn't convince anyone to do anything. (That's a joke, obviously.) But that's the way of any body like that: you're not always going to convince people. I think, this past year, I've been more committed to taking this seriously: It is important; it does affect the university as a whole; I need—even if there are things that I think are kind of boring—I need at least to read them ahead of time to figure out what's going on so I can make an informed vote, if I have to vote. So I'm trying to be more responsible.

Peter, though, was not sure to what extent tenure had influenced his sense of the import of his service on the Faculty Senate.

The types of faculty service activities I have addressed so far include mentorship, organization or committee leadership, and committee participation (which

could be considered, perhaps, guidance or consultation).<sup>28</sup> A further manifestation of leadership service is institutional or departmental administrative work, which Ling, William, and Eleanor demonstrated: Ling as director of an interdisciplinary program before tenure; William as department chair at Parkham State after tenure; and Eleanor as interim department chair at Whitehaven State after tenure.<sup>29</sup> Ling's biggest challenge was maintaining a balance between her administrative work, on the one hand, and her teaching and research, on the other:

I guess that anyone who has an administrative position as part of their job—I think it's always a challenge, because administrative work—especially directing a program—and especially an interdisciplinary program, where you really have to reach out across the campus, to different disciplines, departments, colleges: really, the sky is the limit.

In addition, Ling described the pre-tenure challenges of being involved in work that counts as service to the institution but is not necessarily seen as service to the department (from where support for tenure must originate), particularly given the political and economic natures of resource allocation:

In any university—or any organization—taking new initiatives and doing something new and creating something new almost always brings supporters—but you also, unfortunately, create enemies as well, because it does require an investment of resources and energy and human resources from the university. . . . I tried to keep two things in mind when I tried new things before tenure [in my capacity as director of an interdisciplinary program]: First, I need to collaborate with existing faculty members, including the senior and mid-career professors [in my department]. . . . The

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<sup>28</sup>Missing, I realize, is outreach or community service, but such activity came up only infrequently in my conversations with faculty members. Amy is one who mentioned having provided translation for the local community on occasion. Still, she felt as if she had done “not enough [service] to the community.” And Debra mentioned community involvement in her role as a public historian.

<sup>29</sup>In the previous chapter, I mentioned that George, Owen, and Peter had served or were serving as director of graduate studies for their respective departments.

second thing I kept in mind was that, no matter how good an initiative it may look to me, if it doesn't fit with the larger institutional priorities or mission—along with the departmental mission—then it's going to receive less support, no matter how brilliant your initiative was. To tailor your ideas in a way that will directly support the university's mission and priorities—you know, strategic planning, goals of the university, college, and department—was really crucial.

William, who served as department chair, commented on the service component of his position—and on how the experience helped him when he went up for full professor:

It counted a lot, I suppose, in my promotion to full professor. It's not just being department chair that gives you the service experience—it's that department chairs are expected to do so much college and university service outside of just managing the department.

Serving as department chair may be the most intense service that a faculty member can do at the department level. The appointment thus carries both a stipend and a course release at some institutions. (William was released of two of the normal four courses per semester; Katherine, who was to begin a term as chair of her department the semester after our conversation, was to be released of one of her normal three courses per semester.) It also carries increased stress and increased responsibility.<sup>30</sup> And not all faculty members are temperamentally suited to the position: Eleanor filled in as department chair for a colleague who was on sabbatical leave from Whitehaven State, and she “absolutely hated it. I was telling somebody not too long ago about how much I hated it, and I was, like, ‘It was the worst year of my life!’” She

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<sup>30</sup>A few of my faculty participants mentioned having previously endured “ineffective” department chairs, including one who commented on a former chair who “was not really into the job” and “kind of messed things up”: “We lost at least one position, I think, because the forms weren't filled out—you know, the proposal was messed up or something. It was a disaster.” But the department “survived that; and that was a testament to how cohesive the faculty is as a group, because, basically, we had no leadership for six years.”

was glad to have had the experience, however, because she knew that she did not want to serve in the position later:

When she [the chair who was on leave] ended up retiring, they [the Dean's Office] asked me if I wanted to step in and be one of the people they were going to interview for the position, and I was, like, "Hell, no!" I was, like, "I don't think so! No way, no how!"

Although "teaching loads" were a common topic in my conversations with faculty members, "service loads" came up infrequently.<sup>31</sup> Thelonious, though, hinted at the mantle of responsibility that accompanies tenure—and also departmental and institutional seniority—when he said that "the service load increases over time" at Ashdale State. Eleanor, however, offered a case to the contrary at Whitehaven State:

My experience has been, at Whitehaven, that—fortunately or unfortunately, given whoever you talk to—junior faculty actually work more service than senior faculty. And there's a combination of reasons for that. One is that the senior faculty think they now have the big projects, and, you know? But the other thing I think is [that] they see service as how you learn. I mean, how do you really learn about curriculum unless you sit on the Curriculum Committee? How do you understand, you know, compliance with the NCAA unless you sit on the NCAA Committee?

Indeed, how do new tenure-track faculty members learn about service? Gomez, who had spent several years on the adjunct track at another institution before coming to Ashdale State (and thus came well equipped to teach), said, "I never really did service until I got here."<sup>32</sup> And Athena commented that "the learning curve for service

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<sup>31</sup>Consider what E. Grady Bogue and Jeffery Aper had to say on the issue: "Some writers have noted the inclination in colleges and universities to refer to the 'teaching load' of faculty, but they do not refer to a research or public service 'load.' An implication that can be read into this terminology is that teaching is a burden to be borne but research and service are not" (2000, 161–62).

<sup>32</sup>As a visiting professor at his previous institution, he taught an additional class each semester: "Instead of doing service, you just taught an extra class."

is *really* different [from the learning curve for teaching]: This is one thing that you have *no* education for.” Amy mentioned faculty workshops for professional development as researchers at Parkham State; Percy mentioned proposal-writing assistance for faculty members at Berkswell State. Debra (Grovehill State) and all three of my participants from Spenwood State mentioned the workshops and presentations offered by their institutions for professional development as teachers. Athena, however, pointed out that no such professional development opportunities exist for learning about service: you simply learn by doing it. At the university level, in Athena’s case, such learning did not come easily:

So, I’m on the Faculty Senate now. . . . I show up there [when I was first appointed a few years ago], and I don’t know *anything* about how the university is administratively organized, right? I don’t know anything about the decision-making process; I don’t know what *Robert’s Rules of Order* are! I *don’t* know! Right? They didn’t teach me *that* in my Ph.D. program! . . . I’m always trying to figure out, “Okay, what’s happening here?” Maybe because I do social science, and I do observation; so I’m looking at, you know, the “politics of the room,” right? Junior people sit in the back and doze; and there’s a small number of people who are—people who are attitudinally engaged in this kind of administrative activity. And they’re usually the same people who are always in the Senate—the same people who are always chairing everything: they actually know what’s happening. And the rest of us are, like, deadweight, you know? We’re supposed to carry things back to our constituents; but everything’s spoken in code, right? So they’re having a meeting, and they’re saying, “Well, the meeting of the RKCP did this. . . .” “What the hell’s ‘RKCP’?” And there’s no translator! Like, my Babel fish is not working, right? So, um, it took me almost *two years* to know what the hell was going on in the Faculty Senate. And in either of those two years, if someone in my department had said to me, “What is happening in Faculty Senate that’s relevant to our department?” I would have said, “I don’t know! I haven’t got a clue.” Right?

Fortunately, Athena eventually joined a subcommittee of the Faculty Senate, where she gradually learned how the Senate itself functioned: possible sources of action

items, who could propose them, and the paths they took after they were proposed; the functions and agendas of other subcommittees; how voting worked. Still, her initial perspective, compounded by the impenetrable language (the “code”), the rituals of order, and the fact that the other members of the Senate “know each other . . . [and] call each other by their first names,” was that “there’s a whole range of junior people who are *locked out* of the in group.” In recalling her discomfort, she proposed what seems to be a simple solution that would certainly benefit new members of the Faculty Senate at Spenwood State (and elsewhere):

There is *no* orientation to Faculty Senate or anything that would help *new* people who are coming in to that—you know, people who are new to the whole administration idea: there’s nothing to orient them. So I remained disoriented. And, partly, that two years of disorientation makes me *not* disposed to do it again, right? . . . So I had an incredibly steep learning curve for service *after* tenure. After tenure I’ve had this steep, painful, uncomfortable, frustrating, what-the-hell point is this, right? Is this really shared governance, or is this just, like, a line that’s been cast down—you know, is it just crap? Is it a smokescreen?<sup>33</sup>

Athena’s learning load with respect to service on the Faculty Senate, then, was complicated by the lack of transparency and, on the part of the assembly, either a simple unawareness of the lack of operating transparency or the expectation that new members would figure things out without much difficulty.<sup>34</sup> Her case demonstrates, also, that not only professors at research universities are potentially “surprised with

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<sup>33</sup>In response to a follow-up question about shared governance, Athena said, “I think it’s really important. I think that it will always be a negotiated space: I think that there are some procedures that get in the way of it.”

<sup>34</sup>I have borrowed the concept of “learning load” from Anna Neumann (2009). Complementing the concept of “workload,” the idea reflects the “learning side of professors’ work” (271).

new or increased teaching and service demands after getting tenure” (Neumann 2009, 12).

### Retreating from Service after Tenure

Although Thelonious suggested that “the service load increases over time” at Ashdale State—and Eleanor suggested the opposite at Whitehaven State—the typical system at the state comprehensive universities in this study is more aligned with the Ashdale model, with new tenure-track professors being eased into service and expected to take on more and more service as they accumulate seniority. About his experiences at Parkham State, William said: “I wasn’t expected to give a lot of service [in my early years on the tenure-track]; I was expected to give a little bit, and that’s what I did.” Some new tenure-track faculty members are even absolved of all service for a period of time. Owen shared the following about his initial year at Meldon State:

In terms of the department, my first year, the chair was very explicit—he said, “You do not do any service during your first year. The first year is just where you try to figure out what’s going on. You don’t have any expectations that you’ll do service.” But, after your first year, you probably should—actually, after your first year, you *must* do service.

Thelonious recalled an even more generous exemption at Ashdale State: “The expectations are zero for service your first two years; and then, progressively, a little more of your time—and I think that makes sense.” Owen and Thelonious seem to have been lucky, though. George pointed out that tenure-track faculty members tend to “get sucked into [a lot of service] very early in their careers,” despite what their departments—including his at Spenwood State—say about protections from service.



Athena also noted that intentions do not necessarily reflect reality at Spennwood State: “The first two years I was here, the department said that they would try to protect me from service. But, you know, it’s hard to be protected when you’re enthusiastic.” She later qualified that the rationale was not to free up time so new faculty members could work on publications required for tenure; instead, it was to allow time to learn how to teach effectively. Melinda corroborated that service was de-emphasized for her at first; but she “was never told not to” serve on committees during her early years. And George said, “We were told our first semester that we didn’t have to do service [that semester].” He continued:

But that has really changed. There was a period when we were really short of faculty: we had lost people, and we hadn’t replaced them yet. So, last year, for example, we had first-year faculty on search committees! That didn’t go on my first year. We had two first-year faculty who were on search committees—they traveled to AHA [the American Historical Association annual meeting] and all that. And I didn’t have to deal with that. . . . Search committees were generally for people who were, you know, pretty far along in their careers. But we’ve had (and we have) junior faculty—I mean first-year faculty here—on all kinds of committees, not just at the department level. We have a second-year faculty member now—maybe she’s third-year: she’s the chair of a college committee—the Teaching Excellence Award, which is a big deal here. She’s the chair of that committee, and she’s in her third year.

George was not identifying a cultural change within his department as much as he was commenting on how exigencies can result in undesirable situations that place burdens on junior faculty members. He thus exposed situations where what is desired (“protecting” new tenure-line faculty members from service responsibilities for the first semester, at least) is not what is practiced.

At Grovehill State, Debra found herself chairing an important university committee before she was tenured. What she learned from that experience is that her “real skills are as a facilitator and a doer, not as a decision-maker and a leader”: “There are other people who can do that better,” she said, in reference to chairing committees. Now that she is serving on the same university committee again, but not as chair, she noted that she is demonstrating “the opposite of what [she earlier] theorized”: “You know, when you get tenure, you become a leader? Well, no; I’m going to be happy as a tenured person to be there offering advice—but I don’t have to lead it.”

In the previous chapter, I described that most of my faculty participants were not interested in becoming involved with service they found to be “useless” or “meaningless.” Tenure, in general, has endowed them with the freedom to be selective in their service activities. For example, Peter noted the following, with respect to committees, in particular: “There were a few things that I did before I was tenured that I did purely to look good—things I haven’t done since.” After tenure, he said, “I haven’t signed up for any things that I view as ‘useless’ in the service department.” And Eleanor said: “Now . . . I sort of pick and choose [my service]. That’s another freedom I have with tenure.”

Owen commented on reasons why new tenure-track professors often agree to serve on committees more readily than senior faculty members. In doing so, he revealed his perceived sense of duty to his department; an awareness of needing to

learn, through exposure, about various service opportunities; and a sense of freedom or empowerment to say “no” after tenure and promotion to full professor:

My first couple of years, whenever an opportunity presented itself—no matter what it was—I think I was eager to, you know, do it. . . . Part of it was that I was interested in helping. Part of it was that I really didn’t know what things were. And I think, now, especially after being tenured and promoted to full professor . . . I think I can say “no” to things and feel a little bit less worried about what the implications are going to be.

The extreme example of retreating from service after tenure is Percy, who said that he felt obligated to serve on committees and take on a lot of other service before tenure. He explained the post-tenure shift as follows: “I slowly stepped back and stopped doing as much [service] as possible so I could concentrate on my research.” Later in our conversation, when I asked him how he was able to manage to devote as much time as he does to research, he was more direct:

I’ve cut out service. Because being a good teacher and doing the service and doing the amount of research that I want to do: it was too much; I couldn’t do it. And, so, to continue to pay attention to the classes and do the marking and all that type of stuff that I regularly did—and to do the amount of research that I want to do—I’ve cut out almost all service.<sup>35</sup>

With the possible exception of H. P., none of my other faculty participants admitted to having retreated to such an extent from service at any level.

Overall, then, the service carried out by my faculty participants operates on a number of relationship and investment levels (e.g., mentorship, committee membership, leadership) in a number of locales (e.g., departments, institutions, professional organizations) and impacts a number of beneficiaries (e.g., students, disciplinary

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<sup>35</sup>Percy will, however, serve on committees at the departmental level: “If I’m asked, I do make the effort to serve on departmental committees; but I don’t accept—I *haven’t* accepted appointment (I won’t say I *don’t*, but I *haven’t* accepted appointment) to university or college committees for a long time.”

colleagues, departmental or institutional colleagues—including staff members and administrators). It is initiated for reasons both instrumental (for tenure and promotion) and altruistic. It allows faculty members to serve as representatives of their department, their discipline, their field, their institution, and their profession. A necessity for tenure at the state comprehensive universities in this study, service is also “part of the system” (Percy). According to Sarah, “That’s just what you do: You help run the institution. And you pitch in and do your share.”<sup>36</sup> Tenure impacted my faculty participants’ engagements with service in different ways, predominantly under the shadow of responsibility, with Ronald and Amy, for example, undertaking more disciplinary service after tenure, Gomez and Melinda undertaking more departmental and institutional service, and Percy undertaking as little service as possible after tenure. For most, the concept of service in the post-tenure context, then, became emancipated from pre-tenure frustration over “useless” or “meaningless” service (read: committee) activities, as faculty members were empowered to say “no” and to devote their service time to activities with meaning and import to them, as contributing members to departments, institutions, and professional organizations within their fields.

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<sup>36</sup>Echoed Julia Gergits about the role of service at state comprehensive universities: “Without faculty participating in department, college, and university-wide committees, little gets done. . . . Without faculty members actively participating in service, the university stops working” (2009, 33–34).

### **“Lifelong Learning: It Doesn’t Stop with Tenure”**

#### **Tenure and Overarching Themes in Faculty Work Life**

In both the previous chapter and in the previous sections of this chapter, I perpetuated, for the purposes of organizing my findings, a somewhat artificial separation of teaching, research, and service. As described in chapter 4 and appendix D, I had followed such an organizational scheme during my conversations with my faculty participants, focusing on the three contextual realms of faculty work and engagement at different points during our discussions. My organizational attempts were reinforced by the fact that institutions themselves divide faculty responsibilities as such; and my faculty participants were cognizant of how they were expected to subdivide their work-related efforts, at least in theory. Even if the expectations did not reflect the lived realities, these expectations—and how they were fulfilled or exceeded—were particularly salient for my faculty participants when they completed annual reports and the materials required for their applications for tenure and promotion. But many of my faculty participants also pointed out beneficial synergies among activities tied to these three realms, meaning the distinctions among the realms are not necessarily as rigid as they may appear. Debra, for example, noted the overlap in how certain work can be conceptualized: “The line really does blur between things that I would do that . . . some people might consider service, but they also have a significant research element to them as well.” Ronald likewise commented on the scholarly nature of the professional service work he undertakes.

And Ling mentioned how “so much of the [teaching, research, and service] work overlaps.”<sup>37</sup>

In this section, I explore various aspects of faculty work that clearly transcend the three realms of teaching, research, and service. If not direct byproducts of tenure, these issues nonetheless provide context and complement the ways in which my faculty participants carry out their work lives. Here I consider the issues of tenure and faculty voice, tenure and faculty growth, and the relationships between “work life” and “family life.” Most of these issues have already been invoked, without much comment, in quotations provided for different purposes in earlier sections.

### Tenure and Faculty Voice

About his experiences at Grovehill State, Ronald said, “I didn’t have this sense of being *empowered* after tenure, because I didn’t feel disempowered before tenure.” For most of my faculty participants, however, tenure did afford them the perceived freedom to be more vocal without worrying so much about potential consequences.

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<sup>37</sup>Of course, on annual reports and documentation for tenure and promotion, professors must compartmentalize work that, to them, might cross boundaries. Ronald related his professional-organization involvement as follows: “It’s up to the individual to determine what of what you’re doing is a scholarship or research-role sort of editorial work, i.e., helping people build arguments—that type of thing has a more scholarly component—and what of what you’re doing is more of a service component: organizing, for example, in a way that doesn’t directly tie into scholarship. And that’s been important, because it’s allowed me to really take on a heavy component of professional work—because different aspects of it tie within both of those frameworks. . . . A lot of it is tied with scholarship; I mean, trying to figure out, okay, ‘What are the key issues within the profession? How can we bring those issues out for discussion?’ And that’s something more than just organizational work. . . . [But] you can’t double-count something; you have to say, okay, this part—where I’m doing this editorial role—this is the ‘research.’ And when we submit our portfolios, we have to be clear that we’re distinguishing these activities in different ways. In fact, when I turned in my portfolio to go up for full professor, I had a cover letter that explained it. It said, ‘This activity fits in both of these areas; no activity will be counted in both areas, but different aspects of that work will be counted in different areas.’”

For example, I previously quoted Owen as having said that he felt able to say “no” to certain service opportunities after he had received tenure at Meldon State. Here are two similar views from Ashdale State:

Gomez: “I’ve just felt freer to speak up [after tenure].”

H. P.: “That’s the one thing tenure does give you—and that’s the freedom to speak. . . . As an untenured junior faculty here at Ashdale, there were times when I kept my mouth shut when I thought it would be best to keep my mouth shut.”

Earlier in this chapter, I also quoted Amy as having said that tenure has given her “a little bit more of a voice” at Parkham State. And with respect to departmental service, I quoted Gomez as having said that tenure made him feel as if he “would be listened to” and that his “point of view would be taken [more] seriously” within the department. In short, my faculty participants generally felt as if tenure gave them not only more powerful voices but also the freedom to use them.

The perceived freedom to be more vocal that accompanied tenure for most of my faculty participants is, in fact, played out in a number of arenas: in the classroom, at the department level, at the college and university level, and within the community. In the section on the perceived effects of tenure on teaching, I noted how several of my faculty participants felt they could be “blunter” (Ronald) or “sterner” (Amy) or more “unsympathetic” (Athena) with their students—while being aware that, in doing so, they are being more effective teachers, regardless of the effects on the student evaluations of their teaching.<sup>38</sup> Also related to teaching—but at the level

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<sup>38</sup>Recall, from earlier in this chapter, that Athena described one fruit of her “maturation” as a teacher to be the realization that student evaluations of her teaching are more a function of inherent student motivation than of her teaching abilities.

of the department—Amy said that, before tenure, “it was a little harder to say ‘no’ to the chair” with respect to teaching assignments.

Where the majority of my faculty participants gave examples of having more voice after tenure was at the level of governance. Katherine suggested the following:

I think one of the biggest impacts of tenure is that people feel like they can be more bold and assertive—and, for a lot of people, it seems to be the case here [at Daylesford State] that a number of faculty, once they reach tenure (sometimes they start before, but), they join the Faculty Senate or they start getting involved in governance and with issues directly.

Katherine connected involvement in governance with the freedoms to be “more bold and assertive”; but another factor for such involvement, explored at the outset of this chapter, is the heightened sense of responsibility that accompanies tenure.

Owen bridged the association of responsibility with voice:

I also now have a sense of responsibility: I’m in a position where I can do things and say things that others can’t, because I’m not as vulnerable. And so, for example, I actually serve on two university committees right now. . . . One of the things that I really feel is that, on those two committees, people are nervous—because you’re sitting there with the deans; you’re sitting there with the provost. And not having to worry about tenure and promotion—that does give you the freedom to, you know, tell the truth—to ask difficult questions that other people may be thinking but don’t feel comfortable asking, because they’re not sure what the implications will be. It [tenure] has clearly changed my perspective in relation to service that way.

Owen mentioned how tenure made him feel “not as vulnerable” and gave him the freedom to “tell the truth” and “ask difficult questions.” Indeed, vocalism and assertion with respect to governance is naturally connected with criticism of the administration, as Melinda and William also pointed out:



Melinda (Spenwood State): “I *probably* would not have felt comfortable to be so vocal before tenure. . . . Yeah. Absolutely. I have felt much more comfortable being critical of the administration [after tenure].”

William (Parkham State): “Yes, I feel like I can say more, absolutely. I feel as if I’ve got job security, and I can say things that I feel need to be said. And I have shot off, in my career, a few e-mails to the Provost’s Office and the President’s Office on things that I’ve felt strongly about. And I never did that before tenure, obviously.”

Both Katherine and H. P., though, pointed out how a certain level of restraint nonetheless remains necessary. Katherine reported personally feeling as if she can now be more assertive—yet in a “diplomatic and tactful” manner:

Again, I don’t feel like I can say that it is 100 percent tenure, because I think some of these other things go on, and you just acquire a certain amount of experience, and you get more confident—but I think a lot of it is tenure. People still hold the purse strings, so you don’t want to be an idiot, you know? You have to be diplomatic and tactful—but I feel like it does really liberate.

And H. P. summarized the impact of tenure on his voice on campus as follows:

So what does tenure give me? Tenure gives me the ability to speak about these things [campus policy issues] when I want to—and I have, in a public forum. It gives me the ability to speak frankly with deans and members of the administration—well, understanding that you don’t want to be abusive: you don’t want to call them the names to their faces that you call them behind their backs. And [tenure gives me] the hope that by leading by example, you might be able to encourage one or two others to show some backbone.

Earlier in our conversation, H. P. explained the matter quite similarly: “Yes, tenure has given me freedom. It’s given me freedom to stand up to deans; it’s given me freedom to stand up to provosts; and it’s given me freedom to speak very boldly with the current president of this institution.”

Implicated with these freedoms is a sense of protection afforded by having tenure. Above, Owen mentioned feeling less vulnerable at Meldon State, and William mentioned the job security he feels at Parkham State due to having tenure. William's colleague Peter shared that sentiment: "Yes, I feel more protected than if I didn't have tenure. That's definitely true." Peter has also used his "protected" status to be more vocal about issues of personal importance both on campus and within the local community:

I think this is slowly happening that I'm more outspoken—not necessarily on academic issues, but just sort of on policy issues or on political issues on campus [and in the community]. For example, a few years ago, I wrote a few letters to the editor that I wouldn't have written before I was tenured, and, at the moment, I'm involved in a major controversy [of a political nature on campus], where the last issue of the campus paper was basically devoted to five letters from faculty and a full-page ad against my views. I don't think that I would have been involved in that before tenure. That's probably where the university notices me the most: I'm speaking out more.

Peter, who joined the Faculty Senate at Parkham State prior to being tenured, also recounted this instance of being conspicuously vocal at a Senate meeting:

I think I'm probably more prepared to vote against something I disagree with than I was that first year, when I wasn't tenured, just because I'm not as worried about what other people think. . . . One big example was—I think it was last year: [a particular policy change was suggested], and I thought this was unfair. I was prepared to speak about it. And then the president got up, in the Faculty Senate meeting, and supported that policy—which he never does. I mean, I don't remember him ever following up on any other policy [proposals] and telling us which way to vote. I think I was the first person to speak after he spoke, and I said I thought it was a really bad idea that was unfair and unjust and other things along that order. So in one instance I was bolder—and I'm thinking that I'll continue to be bolder.

With respect to being able to speak up and still feel “protected,” then, tenure offered most of my faculty participants freedoms that they felt they did not have to the same extent as untenured members of their departments. This newfound voice was used in the realms of teaching and service but was particularly noticeable in the context of faculty governance—or at least with respect to issues of institutional policy. Faculty members’ sense of responsibility to their institutions, in particular, is thus manifested through the ability to speak freely and openly, an ability that is widely perceived as being enabled and protected by tenure.

### Tenure and Faculty Growth and Satisfaction

In the previous explorations of the perceived impacts of tenure on teaching, research, and service—and also with respect to the perceived impact of tenure on faculty voice—my faculty participants frequently credited at least some of the changes they had experienced to other changes, notably increased expertise, skill, or age (including seniority within their departments). Speaking from her experience at Daylesford State, for example, Katherine suggested that the awarding of tenure is not the only situation that creates a psychological feeling of being “liberated” later in one’s academic career: “Life is complex; and it might also be just a greater confidence level that you achieve at a point in your life that helps create this sense of being more selective or more empowered to decide how you want to invest your time.” Forty years ago, psychologist Nevitt Sanford described what my faculty participants were essentially relating to me: “college professors develop as individuals in much the same way that other people do. Their development is progressive and is

marked by distinguishable stages which are only loosely related to chronological age" (1971, 360).<sup>39</sup> Here I present some of the additional ways my participants understood their own growth as faculty members. Many of these understandings are tied to various individual or environmental factors that have influenced my participants' general senses of satisfaction with their work.

Debra spoke out against complacency when she said, "Lifelong learning: it doesn't stop with tenure." She also indicated that professors must remain engaged in all three realms of teaching, research, and service:

No, you can't *just* become a researcher [after tenure], because you still, if you want to be promoted, you're going to be doing the teaching and research and service. You can't do just one. I'm sure some people may stop publishing, or they may stop thinking about their course content differently. But I can't speak to what they think or do.

Earlier in this chapter, in the section on research, I addressed the issue of promotion to full professor that remains in the backs (or in some cases, the fronts) of my participants' minds after they have been tenured and promoted to assistant professor. Debra, I should note, was already a full professor at the time of our conversation. If Melinda was anticipating that next promotion, however, she did not offer it as a direct motivator for her continued engagement with, in this case, her scholarly activity:

In my mind, there's always an expectation that I have got to continue my productivity. I want to. I enjoy it, for one reason, because it engages me

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<sup>39</sup>Sanford (1971) spells out the stages, essentially changes in consciousness, as follows: (1) achieving "a *sense of competence* in one's discipline or specialty"; (2) self-discovery, which complements the sense of competence with an awareness of additional abilities, interests, and aspirations; and (3) a discovery of others, in which one's skills are used to engage in "genuine relationships" with others (360–61; emphasis in original).

with my colleagues outside of Spenwood, you know, and in my field. And I *love* that—it's stimulating; it's invigorating.

Attitudes toward prestige were implicated in my participants' senses of satisfaction with their careers. But the concept of prestige arose very infrequently in our conversations. When it did, it was often invoked in the context of David Riesman's "academic profession" (1965). H. P., for example, referred to prestige as "another aspect of academic culture: the incredible degree of hierarchy of prestige—or *perceived* hierarchy of prestige." Yes, such perceptions can be powerful; but Melinda, at one point, referred to how some people seem to obsess over "prestige and all that bullshit."<sup>40</sup> When recounting how, after being tenured at Spenwood State, she had been recruited to apply for a position at a research university, Melinda offered the following comparison that revealed not only her perceptions of the purposes of research universities (of which she, of course, is a product) but also her alignments with the educative mission of state comprehensive universities:

I don't want to teach in an institution that only cares about producing two graduate students a year—that doesn't care about their impact on everybody else that they are coming into contact with at that university. That's not how the world gets better. Does it really contribute to the world to produce two, you know, new graduate students? No! What contributes to the world? If you have a hundred children—"Children"! I shouldn't say "children"!—*students* in your classrooms, then that's how you're impacting the world, that way. That's what, to me, the purpose of being a university professor is. It's not to churn out more people just like yourself, you know?

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<sup>40</sup>Melinda clearly does not harbor any sense of what Frank Donoghue (2008) termed "prestige envy" with respect to higher education; rather, she seemed to exhibit a feeling more akin to prestige *aversion*.

With respect to others' perceptions of the location or (not particularly high) status of Parkham State, Amy reported the following: "I do get people saying, 'How can you be happy there?' It's, like, 'How can I *not* be happy here?'" But all was not rosy among my faculty participants. Recalling his original intentions to use his job at Ashdale State as a stepping stone, H. P. felt as if his opportunities for escape had become fewer and fewer the longer he remained at Ashdale, which he described as a "podunk, crabgrass institution":

From my standpoint, the day I got tenure was probably the darkest day of my academic career, because I was tenured *here*, okay. And I saw it, more than anything, as just a chain around my neck. Going to full professor has been even worse—because there are no jobs. And the prospects of leaving here have gone from slim and none to virtually nonexistent.

What H. P. wished, more than anything, was to be able to move "up the food chain." He saw no personal gain in "do[ing] one of those lateral arabesques" to a faculty position at an institution comparable to Ashdale State. Thus his sense of personal dissatisfaction with his job—explored in various ways throughout this dissertation—was, in effect, a reflection of unhappiness with the way his career has unfolded with respect to the expectations he had had for it. H. P.'s case was exceptional. My other faculty participants waxed positively about how they see themselves and the contributions they are able to make in their current positions.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>For just one example, Owen, who thought the fact that he had never heard of Meldon or Meldon State was a "bad sign" before he applied for a position there, shared a particularly positive attitude about his work: "For me, what I've determined is that I really do like where I am. I feel incredibly privileged to be doing what I'm doing—it's an incredible, incredible opportunity to be able to teach in academia. It's just amazing to me—compared to all the other things I've done and all of the people I know who are doing other things: the freedom and the creativity and the opportunity to feel like you're doing something that's really meaningful. It's amazing to me."

### “Work Life” and “Personal Life”

Work-related happiness, such as that experienced by Amy at Parkham State, or unhappiness, such as that experienced by H. P., does not occur in a vacuum. My faculty participants demonstrated the relationships between their work lives and personal lives by mentioning, in particular, their families on numerous occasions, despite the fact that I never once initiated conversation about spouses or children. Immediate families—or the lacks thereof—figured in to issues of mobility, time management before and after tenure, finances, and satisfaction with the community; as explored at the outset of chapter 5, extended families figured in to reasons why my faculty participants ended up at institutions in certain regions of the country. I was not particularly surprised by these disclosures. In 1975, and with an apology for the gendered language, Jerry Gaff wrote that “an individual’s professional work is intimately connected with his personal life” (7).

Issues of identity are often those where one overlap between the professional and the personal can be seen. For example, Percy described his “principal identity” as that of a researcher; his personal identity did not figure in to his explanation. Peter, too, emphasized his professional identity: “I tend to like being affiliated with a university and see it as part of my identity.” Melinda, however, was much more direct: “That’s how I’ve always defined myself . . . I guess: there’s the mom; there’s the teacher; there’s the researcher.” (She later added “wife” to the mix.) This conflation of personal with professional was pointed out in this interesting observation offered

by Eleanor on how faculty identities seem to be affecting the culture of the academy

(a suggestion worthy of future research):

In some ways, I think that participation by the faculty has started to decline—not just at Whitehaven, but nationwide. You know, when I was an undergrad, faculty would . . . be everywhere. And nowadays, at 4:30 or 5:00, faculty pack up, and they go home. . . . I just know the culture's different [now]. . . . The professors of the '70s and '80s *were* their jobs. But new professors see themselves as having more hats than that. You know, they're not just *professors*—but they're also, say, *fathers*. Well, the professor of 1975 might have been a father, but his "professoriness" trumped his "fatherness"—and maybe that's not necessarily the case anymore. You leave to go to your little boy's ball game—or you leave to go, you know, take your girl to her dance practice.

Eleanor, who has no children of her own, described her association with her work in the following way: "To me, what I do is who I am. And it's even more important than my name, in some ways."<sup>42</sup>

Those with children often commented on how having children limited their abilities to entertain the possibilities of extensive travel, residential fellowships, and other such opportunities facilitated by tenure. For example, Peter had not visited his region of expertise for a number of years: "Maybe part of it is family: I've got young kids, so I'm probably not going to go anywhere for a long time." With respect to Fulbright grants and the like, Ronald said, "I certainly feel that there are things that I could have pursued that I didn't because of family issues." And H. P. offered the following:

Other factors that began to shape decisions, of course, are family issues. We have [children]. That means your opportunities, when you have kids,

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<sup>42</sup>Eleanor was aware that her lack of children affects her perspective. Consider the following: "I had a colleague who just resigned because she had a baby in August, and she's decided to be a full-time mom. And—I don't have any children, so I realize that I'm speaking from a lack of experience—but I can't even *imagine* that. I can't even imagine it."



are limited. If I was single and all the rest of it—if I was single, I would not be here. Now, that's not to say that I'm upset by having a family: I love my family. But [without them] I would have the mobility.

Children were not seen as impediments to travel in all cases, however. George reported traveling and spending time abroad with his young children before tenure. But his case, within my sample, at least, was atypical.

The presence of children was also offered as a factor that limits time for engaging in scholarship at home. Owen's first child was born within his first few years at Meldon State:

And that was the rudest awakening ever in terms of time management! That was when I realized—I thought I was busy up until that point, and then I discovered, wow, no, I was *not* busy. . . . I think the first couple of years, just about everything I had was going into teaching and trying to do the service to the best of my ability. After the kids came along, then it became much more difficult, and I had to be really strategic. . . . It was pretty chaotic and pretty frantic.

Athena reported a similar situation with her children, particularly with respect to the pressures on her time. She explained, as another type of maturation, how she came to abandon the idea of having large periods of uninterrupted time and subsequently learned to make use of every spare moment for advancing her research agenda:

[I had to realize that, for example,] all I have is fifteen minutes today to look at this material. And that fifteen minutes has to be *enough*. It used to be that, well, if I don't have an hour, I can't be bothered—an hour's enough time to do something. Well, no, this is all there is. And maybe tomorrow I'll have another fifteen minutes, and I can have fifteen minutes in line for five days in a row, you know: That's over an hour! But I don't have an empty hour in any single day, right? So, you know, it's that kind of maturation of, like, "All right. Well, if fifteen minutes is all I have, fifteen minutes is what I've gotta use."

Clearly, however, children's relative ages factored in to my participants' experiences of tenure. In David's case, his children were older when he started on the tenure track at Meldon State:

The question of children had an impact. . . . Roughly, after I got tenure, the first one left the house, went to college, you know—it was easier around other things. So, in that sense, the tenure decision coincided with some other changes in my situation.

Percy reported having a similar experience as Melinda, Owen, and Athena, with respect to having young children join his family during his pre-tenure years at Berkswell State. Because he was tenured nearly two decades ago, he reflected on the experience at a distance. He, too, had to negotiate the loss of free time; although he recalled being able to snatch hours, as opposed to Athena's minutes. Percy demonstrated the full cycle, however, of living with young children to having those children grow up and leave home:

When I had kids growing up [at home], it was harder to [set aside weekdays for research pursuits], and so I did have to change my schedule when they were little. . . . It's ebbed and flowed. When I first came to Berkswell, I definitely spent every minute that I could possibly spend, you know, doing my research when I wasn't on campus. And then when I had kids, there was a lot less time. You know, I would always be sort of grabbing a couple hours here and grabbing a couple hours there. And when they went to school, it made things easier. And now that they're both grown and gone, now I actually feel. . . . It's like, "Oh!" Sometimes I don't know what to do with all the time I have.

On one level, then, the family cycle is one that is superimposed atop the annual academic cycle (described in chapter 5)—but one that moves at a slower pace and intersects with the academic cycle in different ways at different times. Melinda, as described in chapter 5, was productive during her summers prior to tenure, since

she put her young daughter “in constant daycare or camp.” Now that her children are older, she still sends them to camp in the summers. But she now sends them to camp for their own good, not for hers: “After tenure, I’ve really relaxed about how I use my summers,” she offered. Her sense of *relaxing*, however, should not be conflated with *idling*; after tenure, for example, she began teaching in the summers, something she had not done before tenure (when she used her summers to do research and write). And when Owen described summers as “busy” instead of peaceful, he was reflecting on summers spent with young children at home.

On another level, presence or absence of family served as the motivator—or, in some cases, the excuse—for certain activities undertaken (or sacrificed) or attitudes held by the faculty participants in my study. Studies that are ostensibly on “work life,” then, must not ignore participants’ personal lives, especially given the way that such factors inform and influence decisions—both large and small—that affect work-related attitudes, behaviors, and orientations.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I have explored various ways in which my faculty participants—tenured members of departments of history from eight state comprehensive universities in the Midwestern, Northeastern, and Southeastern United States—perceived their work lives (which themselves are not disengaged from their personal lives) had been affected by having been awarded tenure. Increased responsibility was an overarching theme: responsibility to students, other faculty members, their institution, their discipline, and even to the future of tenure. This responsibility,

then, intersects with the realms of teaching, research, and service in ways that complement the perceived increase in “voice”—and freedom to use that voice—afforded by tenure.

For my faculty participants, tenure was seen as a factor in their feelings of being more relaxed in the classroom, although experience and other manifestations of development (greater skill, maturity, growth) were identified as contributing factors. Even though grading time had remained relatively steady, less time was generally required to prepare for teaching after tenure, in part because fewer completely new courses were being regularly prepared. Eleanor, however, chose to use tenure as an opportunity to spend as much time as she wished preparing for class; she thus exemplifies a professor who chose teaching as her post-tenure engagement.

My faculty participants generally felt less pressure to be constantly producing research and generating publications after tenure. The decline in pressure did not correspond to a decline in obligation or interest. In fact, as a whole, my faculty participants enjoyed research more after tenure. Some had taken advantage of freedoms to take risks (topical, methodological, and otherwise) with their research after tenure; others were planning to remain conservative in their research foci and approaches until after their anticipated promotions to full professor. Percy and H. P. exemplify professors who have engaged with research after tenure; and Ling was planning to reengage with an ambitious research agenda she had set somewhat to the side during her pre-tenure years, during which she focused more on teaching and service so as not to appear “selfish.”

Although many of my faculty participants were involved in extensive service at multiple levels before tenure, service after tenure generally saw a shift from a departmental focus to greater service to the institution and the discipline (through increased levels of service to professional organizations). Corresponding to the perceived increase in responsibility to various constituents across the various realms, service after tenure took on even greater alignment with my faculty participants' passions and interests. As Eleanor had done with teaching, Ronald engaged with professional service even more deeply after tenure, knowing that his efforts—that, in part, were scholarly in nature—were not misaligned with the priorities and interests of his institution.

What the experiences and perceptions portrayed in this chapter show, then, is that the faculty members in this study did not use tenure as an excuse to disengage with their professional responsibilities. Rather, for my faculty participants, tenure was viewed as a vehicle for encouraging and supporting greater freedom and autonomy with respect to the choice of engagements across the realms of teaching, research, and service—and across the gamut of beneficiary constituent populations. After tenure, and corresponding to a greater sense of skill and experience across the three realms, faculty work was imbued with additional depth and meaning. To a certain extent, then, tenure was perceived to have contributed to both the desire and obligation, in Debra's words, to "continue to be superior."

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND REFLECTIONS

#### **“You Can’t Do Everything”**

While discussing the types of courses she had taught and particularly likes to teach, Debra of Grovehill State offered what became the title to this section: “You can’t—you can’t do everything.” The sentiment applies equally well to the possibilities facing the other tenured professors of history at the state comprehensive universities in this study. For them, tenure fell at a time in their careers that saw a convergence of the actual and the perceived—experience (perceived as skill and expertise) and seniority (perceived as increased authority and voice)—that was accompanied by a newfound element of greater flexibility and choice. Additionally, tenure brought perceived freedoms: freedoms to use, for example, the authority and voice that had accrued over time and had been validated by the awarding of tenure. Different faculty members responded to and operationalized their senses of freedom, flexibility, and choice in different manners; but their inclinations were largely formulated during their pre-tenure years.

The pre-tenure years not only offered my faculty participants the opportunity to enhance their expertise in teaching, service, and research but also—according to their perceptions and memories—required that they demonstrate mastery, to varying

extents, in all three work-related realms. For these faculty members, teaching was, not unexpectedly, a primary focus of the pre-tenure years: State comprehensive universities remain, by and large, teaching institutions, where “teaching is the core” (Percy at Berkswell State). Because “Developing a curriculum is *work*” (Athena at Spenwood State), a common recollection during the initial years on the tenure track—particularly for faculty members without full-time postsecondary teaching experience—was something akin to “I was prepping nonstop, it seemed” (William at Parkham State).

Service began at the departmental level but was not immediate for all of my participants, some of whom were “protected” from service for their first semester or year on the tenure track. Most of my faculty participants thus experienced an abbreviated version of the type of protection that essentially extended for the duration of the pre-tenure years for the faculty members at research universities interviewed by Anna Neumann (2009). At the state comprehensive universities in this study, however, the rationale was not so that the faculty members’ research agendas could be given a strong foundation (as would be one reason for such sheltering at research universities) but rather so as to afford them greater time for becoming accustomed to teaching and its related (and time-consuming) tasks. Generally, “the service load increases over time” (Thelonious at Ashdale State) at these institutions, with many of my participants serving on—and even chairing—college- or university-level committees before they had been tenured. Owen commented on the “embarrassing” number of committees on which he has served at Meldon State; Katherine commented

on the ease with which one “get[s] sucked into committee work” at Daylesford State.<sup>1</sup> Several also engaged in professional service to disciplinary organizations. Such activities were often viewed as a means of overcoming geographic isolation and remaining connected with the field, particularly when these faculty members were the only specialists of their kind at their institutions.

Through her involvement with the faculty senate at Spenwood State, Athena experienced a learning curve for institutional service that did, however, follow Neumann’s model: she was challenged by learning of a different type after tenure. This experience, explored in chapter 6, also demonstrated that the perceived empowerments of tenure (authority, voice) are conflated with the temporal changes afforded by experience (maturity, seniority). The learning curve for teaching, though, was on a different track than the learning curve for service. Since state comprehensive universities emphasize teaching in both their missions and in their expectations of faculty work-time allocations, mastering skills in teaching is expected to occur at an earlier stage than mastering skills in service. In fact, service is “measured” (that is, counted, as entries on a curriculum vitae), not externally evaluated, meaning the very concept of “skills” in service is not clearly articulated. The faculty members in this study felt, however, that they were generally expected to engage in service at broader and deeper levels over time. They thus gravitated to service that touched

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<sup>1</sup>Julia Gergits, writing about the situation at Youngstown State University (Ohio), concurred with the descriptions my faculty participants offered: “Many departments at YSU try to protect their new faculty members from getting too immersed in committee work, but it’s usually hopeless. After a token semester or two with a lighter load, new faculty members begin committee work, and committee appointments pile up. Within a short time, most new faculty members are on five or six committees and responsible for such things as departmental program assessment (that hot potato)” (2009, 34).



upon realms of their own interests and allowed them to use the leadership (or, in some cases, followership) skills that they had practiced over time.<sup>2</sup>

Over the past decade at the state comprehensive universities in this study, research had become emphasized more strongly in the requirements for tenure, which, by the time of the study, had become clearer and more specific with respect to criteria and expectations. At these institutions, the changes had been initiated by the faculty members themselves and were not, in fact, purely top-down efforts by mission creep–inclined administrators to enhance the research profiles of their institutions.<sup>3</sup> Instead, most of the history departments in this study can be portrayed as research-friendly departments, despite the heavy teaching loads (either three or four courses per faculty member per semester, with little to no support from graduate assistants). Motivations to be active teacher-scholars in the traditional sense—not in the sense of Ernest Boyer’s *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990), where pedagogy itself is promoted

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<sup>2</sup>Athena, in fact, specifically pointed out that the introduction to committee work, at least in her case, was made in a calculated manner. In her early pre-tenure years, she did not chair any departmental committees. Also, when she was recommended to sit on a committee outside the department, she explained that “it was a committee that, in some ways, is ‘dead’—you know?” It was “something that can go on your forms for P[romotion] and T[enure]; but, in terms of actual time commitment, it’s really not that serious. . . . I think it’s more of the matter that there would be no kind of negative consequences in terms of my reviews . . . if I *didn’t* expend any effort on that [committee]. If I *wanted* to participate, that would be fine; but if I didn’t, there was no sense that that was a danger to me.” Athena therefore demonstrated that the initial “protection” from service was, in a sense, a protection from a certain type of service: that involving greater responsibility and accountability. In most cases, that type of service—a more engaged level of service—was encouraged and expected after tenure.

<sup>3</sup>Bruce Henderson described that phenomenon—not apparent at my research sites—as follows: “The imitation of higher-status research universities may be seen by leaders [of state comprehensive universities] as a means for improving the scholarly quality of the institution” (2009b, 14). KerryAnn O’Meara referred to such behavior as “striving behavior” (2007, 122–23). See also O’Brien (2008) for examples of faculty responses to shifting tenure requirements at a state comprehensive university.

as a form of scholarship—are largely internal.<sup>4</sup> “I’m going to do my scholarship anyway,” said William, who also pointed out how the current job market for professors of history makes it easy for institutions such as those in this study to attract top talent: individuals who desire to contribute to their disciplinary conversations through scholarship.<sup>5</sup> Although, by research-university standards, research requirements for tenure at the institutions in this study remain low, many faculty members challenged themselves to rise to the disciplinary expectation that they will convert their doctoral dissertations into books. Some accomplished this goal prior to tenure; others waited until after. At the time of our conversations, even though not all had completed the task, none had yet abandoned their hopes that a scholarly monograph under their authorship would someday be issued.

My faculty participants perceived that teaching was and is ostensibly the most important criteria for tenure. For promotion, however, research was seen as carrying more weight: tenure and promotion are not coupled at all institutions in this study. Despite the “crystal clear” criteria (Ling at Grovehill State), some of my faculty

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<sup>4</sup>Below I consider the (unexpectedly) widespread dismissal of Boyer’s ideas with respect to the history departments in this study. A “traditional” teacher-scholar both teaches and conducts research in his or her academic field.

<sup>5</sup>Bruce Henderson suggested that “Individual faculty members who value success in their disciplines will . . . support an increased emphasis on research” (2009b, 13). I am able to triangulate the suggestion that increased requirements for research have been bottom-up (instead of top-down) initiatives with a comment from a source at an institution that is classified as a neighboring institutional type. A professor at a private comprehensive university in the Northeast explained to me, via personal communication in March 2009 (before he was awarded tenure), that, at his institution, “it’s all of us on the tenure track who want the higher publication requirements for tenure.” He also mentioned both the synergies with teaching and the benefits of being an active researcher: “My research often comes out of things I cover in class, and I can keep my mind sharper if I have a project other than teaching to work on.” Indeed, his first book—based on his dissertation—was published before he was tenured.

participants were not able to relax until they had cleared the tenure hurdle, simply because even “clear” criteria remain open to interpretation—and “there is that uncertainty” (Peter at Parkham State). Still, provided that some visible and measurable amount of effort is directed into teaching, research, and service, Owen remarked that “you don’t really have to worry about getting tenure” at Meldon State; and others would concur with that sentiment about the situation at their institutions. An important finding, however, at least within the departments of history in this study, was that the minimal requirements for tenure at state comprehensive universities are not the reason why “everyone” is frequently perceived to get tenure at such institutions. Instead, almost all the faculty members who have gone up for tenure—in the collective memories of my participants—had been awarded it because they were qualified for tenure. Again, the success rates for tenure in these departments can, on some level, be attributed to the selection process for new tenure-track faculty members:<sup>6</sup> top talent can be recruited without much difficulty. When a tenure bid had been unsuccessful, as in the case with Eleanor’s former colleague at Whitehaven State, the justification was that the periodical formal and informal feedback was ignored (“it was like he had blinders on his ears or something”).

For the faculty members in my study, tenure served as a transitional moment: a symbolic “marker event” (Gist 1996) perceived as “a sense of accomplishment” (Gomez; Melinda at Spenwood State) that was both “liberating” (Katherine) and “an

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<sup>6</sup>Serving on faculty search committees, although described as “a lot of work” (David at Meldon State), was also described as an important and valuable service role, since new hires are “going to be the next generation of your colleagues” (Melinda at Spenwood State).

ego boost” (George at Spenwood State). Sarah (Grovehill State) reported finally “feel[ing] like a grownup,” even though the nature and quantity of the work itself did not immediately or noticeably change upon the awarding of tenure.<sup>7</sup> In addition to the psychological benefits, tenure afforded increased choice and additional freedom in determining how my faculty participants’ work-related time is allocated and spent. Julia Gergits summarized the “good work” of faculty at Youngstown State University (Ohio) as follows: “Regardless of the obvious challenges, teaching at a comprehensive university offers faculty freedom and responsibility that are unavailable at research universities—and I mean responsibility as a gift, not a burden: it is to be prized” (2009, 40). The work of the faculty members in my study demonstrated the confluence of freedom and responsibility that is particularly heightened after tenure. The flexibility they enjoyed, supported by a sense of increased voice (including a greater freedom to say “no” without worrying unduly about the repercussions), coincided with an increased sense of responsibility to students, colleagues on and off campus, and the institutions themselves—a responsibility that itself somewhat attenuated the desire to say “no,” except perhaps to serving on committees that my faculty participants deemed “meaningless” or “wastes of time.”

This flexibility also allowed my faculty participants to respond, quite sensibly, to the reality that they “can’t do everything.” In their minds, tenure allowed them to choose their own engagements with the particular aspects of faculty work life that

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<sup>7</sup>The idea of tenure as a “marker event” is therefore one that is best understood retrospectively. What *did* change after tenure—although neither immediately nor uniformly across all participants—were my faculty participants’ *approaches* to their work during their post-tenure lives.

they found to be most compatible with their interests, abilities, and dispositions. In some cases, faculty members had a clear favorite. With respect to teaching, for example, Eleanor explained that her time was liberated after tenure: “Now, if I want to spend ten hours” preparing for class, she said, “who’s going to stop me?” Amy, at Parkham State, said that “Tenure made it possible for me to do more service—and no one could tell me I couldn’t.” And although both were active researchers prior to being tenured, Percy and H. P. (Ashdale State) both chose research as their post-tenure engagement. Tenure allowed them to inch away from their institutional responsibilities and channel more time into their research activities, which were perceived as disciplinary responsibilities. Although such behavior could be interpreted as a negative effect of tenure, these faculty participants were not motivated by selfishness. Rather, their emphases on research seemed to complement the emphases and engagements of other faculty members in their respective departments.

For some, tenure was seen (and used) as an opportunity to redistribute effort into areas that they had given less attention in the pre-tenure years. At Ashdale State, for example, Gomez channeled renewed energy into departmental service after tenure, with the explanation that service had been the “least important” prior to tenure. Since he now felt he could afford the time, he wished to give back to his department for the purpose of bettering the student experience. (Note, of course, that the service responsibility he undertook was, to him, meaningful service.) At Grovehill State, Ling was looking forward to reengaging with her scholarly agenda after having devoted more of her pre-tenure time to the development of an interdisciplinary program

than to her own scholarly pursuits. In all cases, these faculty members had been productive across all three realms of teaching, research, and service prior to tenure: tenure would not have been awarded had they done either no research or performed no service—or had their performance in those areas been deemed inadequate. For these faculty members, the post-tenure shift was one of manipulating the balance of effort and attention, a fine-tuning of energy as it is directed across the three realms. On one level, then, what I have identified as post-tenure *choice* vis-à-vis engagements could be interpreted as an internal *redefinition* or *realignment* of these faculty members' responsibilities.

I thus have used the term *engagements* to emphasize the post-tenure focus of effort and attention on the part of the faculty members. The term also connotes both connection and perseverance. When I have referred to faculty members engaging in research, as in the cases of Percy and H. P., however, I am not referring to “engaged scholarship,” which carries a connotation of participatory, reciprocal community engagement and civic duty (see, e.g., Boyer 1996; Glass and Fitzgerald 2010; Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land Grant Universities 1999, 2000; O'Meara et al. 2011; Ward and Moore 2010). The sense of engagement used here, rather, is a more personal sense, one that is internally motivated yet frequently undertaken due to a sense of responsibility to others—or to the “honorable missions” (O'Brien 2008, 108) of the employing institutions. Such engagements are thus personally fulfilling for the faculty members involved and contribute to the general rise in job satisfaction

that has been documented as occurring during the post-tenure years (e.g., Baldwin, Lunceford, and Vanderlinden 2005).

The idea of an investigation into the perceived effects of tenure on work life may seem straightforward, especially when confined to a single discipline within a single institutional type, but the reality is complicated by the nature of memory, the subjective nature of individual perceptions, and the overlapping character of “personal life” and “work life.” Indeed, one phenomenon that this project did not seek to untangle was the way in which tenure is imbricated in faculty members’ own development (or “maturation,” to use Athena’s term) as well as in their personal lives. Nevertheless, different faculty members described different awarenesses of—and responses to—various learning curves that they perceived in their work lives.

The learning curve for teaching was perhaps most expected. Even before applying to Meldon State, for example, Owen had a sense of what he could be getting into:

One of the things that struck me first is that, when I went on to the website to look at, you know, what people’s teaching was, I was just amazed at—compared to other places I had been applying and interviewing—just simply *how many* courses people were teaching. . . . That was something that struck me right off the bat.

In the interviews for their jobs, too, my faculty participants recalled being told how important teaching is at their institutions. Tenure requirements, also explained early, stressed the importance of demonstrating excellence in teaching.

The learning curve for research was not a skills-based learning curve, since appropriate skills had been honed in graduate school. Instead, it was one of learning

how to carve out time within the academic cycle and was thus tied directly to the learning curve for teaching.<sup>8</sup> Teaching—and its associated tasks—could easily consume my faculty participants' early days and years on the tenure track: even after courses had been designed and taught, the “tweaking and perfecting” (Athena) could essentially continue without end. But as greater skill and confidence in the classroom were accrued, largely through experience, more time was freed for devoting to scholarly pursuits.<sup>9</sup> Semester-long sabbatical leaves, which were not available to my faculty participants until after they had been awarded tenure, were welcome oases that allowed immersions into research: “I could finally spend several months *just* doing research,” Katherine reminisced about her sabbatical (with a touch of longing), “which was *really* nice.” During his sabbatical, Owen reported being able to write three scholarly articles—quite a substantial portion of the post-tenure scholarly activity required for promotion to full professor at Meldon State.

Service, and its accompanying learning curve, afforded at least some of my faculty participants the most surprises: “This is one thing that you have *no* education for,” Athena recalled. With respect to service within the institution, although departmental service is intended to pave the way—and thus smooth the transition—to service at the college and university levels, Athena’s appointment to the Faculty

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<sup>8</sup>Julia Gergits explained work life at state comprehensive universities as follows: “The reality of our version of the professoriate includes trying to dig out time for scholarship while managing high teaching and service loads that were, for most new Ph.D.s, a huge, and unpleasant, surprise” (2009, 36).

<sup>9</sup>Of course, many of my faculty participants came into their tenure-track positions with full-time postsecondary teaching experience, shortening the learning curve for teaching and the affiliated learning curve for figuring out how best to balance the time for teaching, research, and service duties.



Senate at Spenwood State left her facing the same sort of “catch-up learning” identified by Anna Neumann in her study of faculty at research universities (2009, 11). In general, though, and conforming to Neumann’s expectations, the timing of that type of instrumental learning happened earlier in my faculty participants’ careers than in the careers of the faculty members in Neumann’s studies. Despite departmental intentions, remaining “protected” from service for long at state comprehensive universities is difficult to manage.

### **Implications**

As detailed in chapter 1, one impetus for this project was the declining proportion of new faculty members being hired on the tenure track and, concomitantly, the perceived elusive nature of tenure-track jobs: What is potentially being lost as tenure is apparently being “eviscerated de facto through the downsizing and ‘casualization’ of academic labor” (Williams 1999, 226–27)? By focusing on faculty members who had been awarded tenure at state comprehensive universities, I considered experiences of the survivors, so to speak, and did not engage directly with faculty members who had been unsuccessful in either landing tenure-track jobs (but still wished for them) or being granted tenure.<sup>10</sup> The statistics presented in chapters 1 and 3, then, suggest that my participants are in the shrinking minority. As such, my implications hinge on what I know about the members of my research population

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<sup>10</sup>With respect to the participants in my study, at least, and as described in chapter 5, being granted tenure did not appear to be as difficult—or elusive—as getting a tenure-track job in the first place.

and what the potential loss of or decline in certain situations experienced by them would suggest for their students, institutions, and the professoriate writ large.

For example, although future studies will have to be undertaken to illuminate what sorts of engagements are, in fact, made by faculty who are teaching off the tenure track—though see Baldwin and Chronister (2001); J. Cross and Goldenberg (2009); and Gansneder, Harper, and Baldwin (2001) for reports about job satisfaction of non-tenure-track faculty members—the findings of this study suggest that faculty members benefit from simultaneous involvement in teaching, research, and service.<sup>11</sup> When faculty members are hired off the tenure track, their workloads (both in expectation and reality) typically reflect a different balance among teaching, research, and service than that for tenure-track faculty members in the same department.<sup>12</sup> In lieu of service expectations, for example, an additional course or courses may be taught. (These courses are commonly all at the introductory level.) Retention may be based solely on teaching evaluations; and opportunities for participation in institutional governance may be limited or lacking altogether (Baldwin and Chronister 2001). Although, as Roger Baldwin and Jay Chronister pointed out, full-time non-tenure-track faculty may be “committed to teaching” and “happy that no other expectations of campus involvement were held for them” (55), such faculty members are not afforded the opportunities to benefit from the types of synergies

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<sup>11</sup>If engagements and job satisfaction are related, as suggested by this study, whether faculty members are off the tenure track *by choice* would need to be taken into consideration. See, for example, Loh (2003).

<sup>12</sup>Here I am presuming a more common environment involving both tenure-line and non-tenure-line faculty, not one where, for example, all faculty members are off the tenure track.

among teaching, research, and service experienced by the faculty members in this study.

Indeed, two-way synergies between research and teaching and between service and research were common among my faculty participants. Although such exemplary moments were often not directly tied to tenure in our conversations, the fact that my participants were in tenure-line positions presented them with teaching, research, and service expectations and opportunities, thus enabling such connections. Moreover, my participants reported that the awareness of such synergies came into greater focus after tenure, perhaps suggesting influence by the development or growth that impacted my participants' teaching throughout the pre-tenure years.<sup>13</sup> For example, Melinda (Spenwood State) reported a heightened awareness of "epiphanic moments" after tenure: "every now and then I get them in teaching, where I realize I'm being that teacher-scholar that our university wants us to be." These healthy relationships, according to Jeffrey Buller, help faculty members avoid isolating "their various activities into separate and airtight compartments" and allow "single activities [to] have multiple benefits" (2010, 251). Beneficial connections between teaching and research have long been lauded as a rationale for why faculty members at any institutional type should remain connected with scholarship in

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<sup>13</sup>In the introduction to a collection of essays about synergies between teaching and research (written by professors primarily at research universities), the editors noted that, "our contributors tell us repeatedly that, unless they are pre-tenure, they do not themselves separate teaching and research" (André and Frost 1997, xvi-xvii). For just two examples, Barbara Gutek referred to teaching and research as "inexorably linked" (1997, 27); Thomas Mahoney called the pair "inextricably intertwined" (1997, 113).

their fields—or even should be generating it themselves.<sup>14</sup> Connections between service and research have been less commonly documented and may, in fact, be functions of the various disciplines.<sup>15</sup> Connections are also, in part, a function of the nature of the work itself.<sup>16</sup> As Melinda demonstrated, these connections often came into clearer focus after tenure, when faculty members in my study were able to engage with the particular work-related realms that afforded them the most personal satisfaction.

Referring to the idea of a university campus—and not just to his specific environment at Parkham State but also to the more abstract notion of a university—Peter described the campus as a “magical place.” His idealism was not shared by H. P., though, whose experiences at Ashdale State had not lived up to his expectations. In my sample, H. P. was an obvious outlier. For him, in fact, being tenured—and, eventually, becoming full professor—at a state comprehensive university was not a positive experience. The institution and its location were primary reasons for his dissatisfaction. My other faculty participants predominantly shared the positive attitude of Donald Hall; but H. P. was more in line with another individual described in chapter 3: Terry Caesar, who suffered for thirty years at a “second-rate university”

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<sup>14</sup>Although she was writing from the perspective of community colleges, Carolyn Prager’s perspective is relevant here: Scholarship, when disseminated, “endows faculty members with the privileges of citizenship beyond the classroom” (2003, 591). See also Carroll (2003).

<sup>15</sup>David (Meldon State), for example, described reviewing manuscripts for journals as “service”; but he described book reviews as “research.” (But, he added, “I think if you’re at a Research-I institution you’d be urged to call them [book reviews] service to the profession.”)

<sup>16</sup>For example, Ronald (Grovehill State) is heavily involved in editing, which he conceptualizes as both a scholarly activity and service to his discipline.

(T. Caesar 1991, 466). Hall described such “bitter and resentful” faculty members as follows (2009, 61):

Of course they are not in the majority (or even close to it) of the hard-working and usually highly enthusiastic faculty members at the state comprehensives, but they are a significant minority. Some are legitimately angry about funding and other issues that state comprehensives face as the “poor relations” of the flagships; others are filled with a more amorphous and free-floating anger that can only be attributed to a sense of frustration, status envy and disconnect from the vibrancy of their fields and the intellectual conversations that are ongoing in their professional organizations and among scholarly peers.

The implications here are multifold but focus on the need to understand the role of the individual and his or her attitudes, orientations, and expectations vis-à-vis his or her perceptions, experiences, and job satisfaction. Was H. P., for example, unhappy with his situation *because* of tenure—and because of the way he felt being tenured at a state comprehensive university impeded his mobility? Studies of faculty are wise to be positioned at a level that allows such outliers and their experiences to be investigated, even if such individuals are ultimately not representative of the norms that are used, for example, to inform personnel policies or to generate generalized portraits and understandings. At least one question remains: What, if anything, can be done to reduce the chances that an individual faculty member at a state comprehensive university is dissatisfied and unhappy and ultimately heads “down the tragic road to cynicism and burnout” (Hall 2009, 61)? Julia Gergits suggested that faculty members at state comprehensive universities essentially realign their goals and “become the kind of professional that our university values, not necessarily the kind that we intended when we first joined the profession” (2009, 30). What, then,

can be done to allay the dissonance that often leads to dissatisfaction? And how is the rise in competition for tenure-track positions (which follows from the decline in the proportion of new faculty being hired on the tenure track) impacting that dissonance? Roger Baldwin and Jay Chronister (2001) pointed out, rather intuitively, how non-tenure-track faculty who aspired to tenure-track positions often expressed more dissatisfaction with their situations than those who did not. How are these dynamics changing as the competition for tenure-track positions increases—and as such positions continue, in the eyes of the aspirants, to become more and more elusive?

Further implications for administrators at state comprehensive universities involve the types of support that are offered to new faculty members (regardless of appointment type). For example, even though many of my faculty participants arrived at their present institutions with previous postsecondary teaching experience, many nevertheless seemed caught off guard by the steep learning curve that accompanied teaching. In some cases, the challenge was a function of scale and, essentially, of learning appropriate time management techniques. (By the time they were tenured, if not before, my participants had essentially reached the summit of the learning curve, although continuous improvement was an undercurrent of several of my faculty participants' comments.) Most institutions and administrators are clearly aware of this situation, having instituted formal or informal policies involving, for example, faculty mentors for new tenure-line faculty members, attempts at "protections" from onerous service loads in the early years, and limits on the number of different courses taught simultaneously or new course preparations per term or year.

Graduate programs in history, too, are now aware of the situation (as suggested by Melinda's observation about applicants for faculty positions regularly having had teaching experience while in graduate school—and as documented in, for example, Bender et al. [2004]; Golde, Walker, and Associates [2006]; and Walker et al. [2008]). But how changes in doctoral curricula or training are affecting the experiences of new faculty members—and how departments and institutions are responding to these changes—remains to be thoroughly understood. Awareness is key, on the part of all parties involved.

The learning curve for service described by some of my participants, similar but not identical to the one documented by Neumann at research universities (2009), however, seems to have received comparatively less attention. One implication is that graduate programs in history, at least, need to rethink the manner in which they prepare future faculty members to be contributing members of their departments, institutions, and institutional and disciplinary communities. This implication transcends research and teaching and speaks to the attenuation of tenure-track positions by emphasizing the type of work that is less likely to be carried out by contingent faculty members, at least at the department and institutional levels (Baldwin and Chronister 2001). How the burden of this work shifts when tenure-track positions are replaced by non-tenure-track positions must not be ignored when resource-allocation decisions involving academic personnel are made.

With the exception of H. P., then, the faculty members at the state comprehensive universities in this study reported feeling as if they had benefited, both person-

ally and professionally, from being awarded tenure. Yet many of the current debates over tenure—often fueled by concerns over fiscal exigencies and responsibility or even as misunderstandings of the idea and implications of academic freedom—seem to support a reconfiguration of academic labor along a corporate model instead of a professionalist model.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, the continued “casualization” (Leatherman 1999) of academic labor suggests that the perceived benefits of tenure are being viewed, at least on some levels, as unnecessary, expendable, or no longer cost-effective. But are the true costs understood? This study sought to investigate what is potentially at risk behind the debates over tenure, at least from the perspectives of faculty members in departments of history at state comprehensive universities.

In short, if tenure disappears, what would happen? The faculty members in this study were not directly asked that hypothetical (and, depending on one’s perspective, apocalyptic) question. But the descriptions they offered of the perceived effects of tenure on their work lives point to a sense of loss that would accompany the end of tenure systems for faculty members. The engagements enabled and supported by tenure offer clear benefits to institutions (and their educational missions); to the advancement of disciplinary knowledge; and—in most cases—to individual faculty members’ senses of success, satisfaction, and even longevity in the profession. At risk, potentially, is the very sense of responsibility that faculty members have for their institutions, their students, their disciplines, and the professoriate: the same responsibility that encourages engagements with the teaching, research, and service

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<sup>17</sup>See Williams (1999). For both ideological as well as material implications, see, for example Rhoades and Slaughter (1997); Slaughter and Rhoades (2004).



components of their jobs. Without tenure, then, would the overall academic environment—and the specific environment at postsecondary institutions—encourage such engagements?

### **Reflections and Suggestions for Future Research**

This study is fundamentally about the relationships among the contexts and conditions of employment (chapters 2 and 3), individual perceptions of these contexts and conditions (chapter 5), and perceptions of the influences of these contexts and conditions on individuals' work lives (chapter 6). Important in this complex equation (which, although commonalities exist, is different for everyone) are perceptions of changes that have occurred to individuals in similar positions over time, perceptions of differences among similar professionals in different employment contexts and conditions, and perceptions of the import of both physical (geographical) and psychological (hierarchical) location. The early chapters of this dissertation thus offer a descriptive portrait—largely quantitative—of the broader contexts and shifting conditions of the professoriate and attenuation of new faculty hires in full-time tenure-track positions. The latter chapters build on that foundation to explore the contextualized perceptions of individual participants in the system. Ultimately, what I learned was how tenure is perceived to operate within particular settings at a particular point in time. The chronotopic nature of this study thus situates the findings yet allows them to be used for contextualizing future related studies.

In undertaking this project, I was prepared to learn a lot about the work lives of faculty members in departments of history at state comprehensive universities.

Through engaging with the literature, I had investigated the profession, the discipline of history, the broader organizational context academe, and the specific institutional context of state comprehensive universities—Ann Austin’s “four primary cultures that influence faculty values and behaviors” (1990, 62). The basic architecture of my understanding of those “cultures,” then, including the location and import of tenure within them, underscores my presentation in chapters 2 and 3. Still, I was surprised by certain elements that emerged from my conversations with faculty members. Here, I enumerate and briefly describe seven particular conditions, germane to faculty work life at state comprehensive universities, that I was not expecting to encounter. These conditions may appear to be in coupled relationships with tenure, but, because I investigated only tenured faculty members in this study, the inherent binary relationship is not those with tenure versus those (on the tenure track) without it. Rather, the construct positions those who are *eligible* for tenure against those who are not: part-time faculty members or full-time non-tenure-track faculty members.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the implications of this study of perceptions of the effects of tenure on faculty work life are essentially related to indicators of the *potential* that being in a tenure-track position affords. Each condition is accompanied by its own set of suggestions for future research.

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<sup>18</sup>I realize this construct is complicated by the fact that tenure-track faculty members, even at state comprehensive universities, are not always successful in reaching tenure. Sarah (Grovehill State) offered a fascinating theory involving the psychological advantage given to tenure-track faculty members to succeed—especially when they are straight out of Ph.D. programs and are being compared with non-tenure-track faculty who have also just completed their doctoral degrees. Getting a prized, “elusive” tenure-track job is therefore seen as an indicator of (and investment in) potential.

First, I was surprised by the overall lack of attention (or, in some cases, respect) given to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), in particular, and to the ideas of Ernest Boyer with respect to multiple forms of scholarship (1990, 1996), in general. Based on my understandings of SoTL (Angelo and Cross 1993; K. Cross and Steadman 1996), of Boyer's ideas, and of the missions and goals of state comprehensive universities (as presented in chapter 2 and outlined, for example, in Henderson 2007), I presumed that SoTL would register prominently in the minds and actions of my faculty participants. Bruce Henderson and Heidi Buchanan (2007), in fact, had made a compelling argument for the relevance of SoTL at state comprehensive universities. Relevant as SoTL may be, though, only a handful of my participants acknowledged much awareness of its principles and practices. At Parkham State, for example, Amy offered the following, which was typical of my participants: "I'm more of an historian than an analyzer of my pedagogical process—although I do it a lot, just not on paper." Amy's colleague Peter offered an explanation, of sorts, when he said that the members of his department "all have a pretty active research agenda in history." The implication, then, is that SoTL is not necessarily compatible with an environment where faculty members aspire to—and do—produce "traditional" (which one could alternatively, though somewhat condescendingly, read as "serious") research in their respective disciplines or fields.<sup>19</sup> Finally, only Katherine mentioned that "the Boyer model . . . is the official model of this institution [Daylesford State]"; but she noted some trends—as discussed in chapter 5—that seem to

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<sup>19</sup>See Cooper and Nojima (2002) for a more optimistic view.

indicate movement away from that model at her institution. Future research, then, could investigate the extent to which SoTL is, in fact, embraced by state comprehensive universities—and whether (and why) certain disciplines seem to be more favorably aligned with the approach. Julia Gergits wrote that SoTL “gets lip service at best” at Youngstown State University (2009, 36); such seemed to be the case in the history departments in my study.<sup>20</sup> I thus cannot say that scholarship seems to have been “reconsidered” in these departments of history, some two decades after Boyer’s “energizing idea” initially “elicited a surge of faculty interest and energy” (Edgerton 2005, xiv, xiii). Or, if scholarship had been reconsidered at some point within the past two decades in these departments, it had been re-reconsidered and returned to a position mirroring (mimicking?) the scholarly practices of faculty at research universities. Tenure, at least among the participants in my study, did not motivate increased engagement with the principles and practices of SoTL. In fact, I would hypothesize that SoTL could be of greater interest to non-tenure-track faculty at state comprehensive universities, as they are typically not obligated to produce “traditional” research, and their effectiveness in the classroom (which could be

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<sup>20</sup>At the same time, Gergits reported that, even when comprehensive universities “respect and foster teaching scholarship,” SoTL “is a safe endeavor only after faculty members have satisfied discipline-specific requirements and achieved tenure” (2009, 37). Such is the prevailing perspective about SoTL at research universities. Indeed, the greatest alignment with the principles and practices of SoTL seems to occur at community colleges (Block 1991; Kroll 1990, 1992; Palmer 1991; Parilla 1987; Prager 2003; Sperling 2003; Vaughan 1988, 1991); but is that situation perhaps changing as well?

increased through engagement with SoTL) is often the one criterion on which their work performance is evaluated.<sup>21</sup>

Second, I was accordingly surprised by the attention given to research—and by that I mean “traditional” research—at the state comprehensive universities in my study. Again, the discipline is a likely factor. Even though the research expectations for tenure may still be “very low” (according to Percy at Berkswell State) in these departments of history, most faculty members easily exceed them. The scholarly bar, then, is generally higher for promotion. I sensed no pushback from faculty members that would suggest administrators were “forcing” higher research productivity on them. Instead, my faculty participants saw increased research expectations as an opportunity: an opportunity for increased institutional funding and support, an opportunity for resisting larger course enrollments (or, in some cases, even maintaining reduced course loads), and an opportunity for increased engagement with their discipline. Further investigations could consider differences among disciplines and research alignments (both desired and actual) at state comprehensive universities. In addition, future studies could investigate differences in perceptions about research expectations held by tenure-track faculty at state comprehensive universities before and after tenure.

Third, I was surprised how service was primarily enacted within the institutions in this study themselves. Again, considering the missions of state comprehensive

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<sup>21</sup>Is this suggestion, though—one that essentially presumes that, by virtue of the emphases on teaching that are normal for their positions, non-tenure-track faculty would be less interested in “traditional” research—a product of the kind of condescending attitude that my faculty participants did not themselves display?

universities, I was expecting to find greater emphasis placed on service to the community. Katherine explained how she felt that such was the case in the past at Daylesford State; but she perceived an evolving, somewhat introverted sense of service that was resulting in (or stemming from) a proliferation of committees and other busywork at the departmental, college, and institutional levels. The substantial service undertaken by Ronald at Grovehill State was disciplinary service, which he saw aligning itself, in some ways, with research. Again, such was not the type of service I expected to find. Future research could investigate Katherine's hypothesis about shifts in service orientation over time at state comprehensive universities. Or is service, too, tied in to the disciplines, with faculty in certain disciplines enjoying or appreciating greater compatibility with community service?

Fourth, I was surprised by the general lack of attention paid to prestige, particularly given that one-third of my participants received their doctoral degrees from Ivy League institutions. At Spenwood State, Melinda was quite dismissive of prestige, offering her memorable "prestige and all that bullshit" comment. Amy credited her "very good" dissertation mentor for preparing her for the type of career she would likely have:

He explained to his students in class and out of class more than once that—the way he said it was great—he would say, "You're not going to be at Harvard, because So-and-So's there and isn't retiring for x years. You're not going to be at Stanford, because So-and-So's there. You won't be at Michigan; you won't be at Texas; you won't be here; you won't be there." He'd go through the whole list, and then he'd say, "Those jobs are taken. The jobs at the big, major universities are taken. . . . Here's where you—all of you—are going to end up teaching." And he told us that we were mainly going to be at regional state schools and that the key was to

hopefully be in a state school that was near a place that had resources you could use or that had a very good interlibrary loan system.

Thus prepared, Amy perhaps did not experience as much “disillusionment and distaste” over ending up at a “lower-level” university as she might have otherwise (Gergits 2009, 32, 31). Thus a question for future research: To what extent is faculty satisfaction conditioned by a perceived fit (or dissonance) between the institutional type at which one is employed and the institutional type at which one wishes one were employed? Recall that H. P. felt the day he received tenure was “the darkest day” of his academic career, given that he soon felt as if he would be unable to move to a different university, which had been his plan all along. Like some of Gergits’s colleagues at Youngstown State, H. P. felt “‘trapped’ . . . with no way to ‘escape’” from Ashdale State (31). What, then, can be done to help this “significant minority” (Hall 2009, 61) of unhappy, unsettled faculty members learn to appreciate the work that they do and can do from their positions at state comprehensive universities? Bruce Henderson suggested that control over satisfaction lies within the individuals themselves, concluding that “Faculty members who are willing to forego institutional and individual status and prestige may find the SCU [state comprehensive university] the very best place to work” (2007, 151). The issue is thus largely one of contexts (and perceptions thereof). A related question could be posed to faculty members in non-tenure-track positions, addressed by Baldwin and Chronister (2001) a decade ago: To what extent are happiness and job satisfaction in the present economic environment predicated on the *conditions* of one’s employment—and perceived dissonance between where one is and where one would like to be?

Fifth—and directly related to the previous comment from Bruce Henderson about the work environment at state comprehensive universities—I was surprised by how content and happy most of my faculty participants seemed. I am embarrassed by that admission; but it simply proves how even individuals who study higher education—and thus should be attuned to the power of stereotypes, for example—can get caught up in the rhetoric and the (often negative) labels that are affixed to institutions with lower levels of student selectivity. Peter, in my first interview, described the university as a “magical place,” and he was not being discriminatory. In short, with the exception of H. P., my faculty participants were Donald Halls, not Terry Caesars. On a personal level, I potentially learned as much from their attitudes and positive outlooks as I did from the rich and nuanced materials about their work lives (and, where overlapping, their personal lives) that they shared with me during our conversations. Indeed, I may have simply been speaking with so many positive, optimistic faculty members because of the self-selection required: everyone with whom I spoke had volunteered to talk with me about her or his work life. To that end, I was lucky to have H. P. volunteer to participate: Had I not spoken with him, my perceptions would have been even more rose-colored.<sup>22</sup> Future research, for example, could investigate potential institutional or disciplinary

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<sup>22</sup>At the same time, I was not unaware of the plights of the Terry Caesars in academe. Negativity toward state comprehensive universities (and community colleges) seems to be most charged on electronic forums such as those hosted by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Inside Higher Ed*. That individuals can post anonymous comments contributes, I believe, to the disrespect that is frequently displayed toward institutions with little national recognition—including their students and the members of their faculties (with many of the disrespectful comments apparently coming, alas, from disgruntled, bitter, cynical, and resentful faculty members at such institutions).



sources for faculty satisfaction at state comprehensive universities. Are faculty members who are able to carry out “traditional” scholarship within their discipline—even if at a slower rate or on a smaller scale than their counterparts at research universities—more likely to be satisfied with their careers at state comprehensive universities? If so, how can institutions best promote, encourage, and reward such work? How are non-tenure-track faculty at state comprehensive universities supported, if at all, with respect to research? How should they be?

Sixth, I was surprised by the prevalence of comparisons with research universities that were made by my faculty participants. I noted this point early in chapter 5, suggesting that their doctoral studies (necessarily at research universities) had conditioned them to think of research universities as the touchstone, of sorts, of the academy. Are faculty members without terminal research degrees—for example, those on instructor appointments (with master’s degrees that may have been awarded by comprehensive institutions)—less likely to be aware of the research-university paradigm and less likely to use it as a model upon which to compare and contrast their faculty work, workloads, and identities? Are such comparisons as commonplace among faculty members or administrators at community colleges? To what extent are they manifestations of individual backgrounds and experiences or of the overall culture of academe in this country? And to what extent do such espoused theories or theories-in-use (Argyris and Schön 1974) that epitomize research universities affect feelings that feed into prestige envy or institutional mission creep? Equally surprising, however, was the complete absence of comparisons

with community colleges.<sup>23</sup> Were the numerous comparisons with research universities (and lack of comparisons with community colleges) that were made by my faculty participants simply tacit acknowledgments of David Riesman's "academic procession," with my faculty participants looking forward, not backward? Future research could investigate the relative positioning of such comparative perceptions within the academic hierarchy. Views of not only faculty but also administrators and students would undoubtedly be illuminating. For faculty members, does tenure status matter in terms of perceptions held? For administrators and faculty members, what about prior experience—either as a student or as an administrator or faculty member—at different institutional types?<sup>24</sup> For students, what about those who transfer from one institutional type to another?

Seventh, I was not expecting that unions would play such an important role to so many of the faculty at the three campuses with collective bargaining agreements. I mentioned this issue toward the end of chapter 5, where I shared that Gomez (Ashdale State) said the union contract offers a greater sense of security to him than the fact that he has tenure. (I explore the role of unions in greater detail in appendix F.)<sup>25</sup> Until I had tracked down materials from the National Center for the Study of

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<sup>23</sup>Indeed, they were mentioned only by my faculty participants who had prior teaching experience at community colleges—and only in the context of that experience (not, for example, in comparisons with their situations at state comprehensive universities).

<sup>24</sup>Addressing this question would reveal the relevance of my theory associating references to research universities with the shared experience of studying for a Ph.D. at one.

<sup>25</sup>Another reason I have offered appendix F—and have presented lengthy quotations from many of my faculty participants therein—is in the hope that someone with academic interest in the topic may be able to make use of this material.

Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions (Moriarty and Savarese 2006), in fact, I had a difficult time identifying which campuses in my sample had unionized faculties. (An investigation into why the public faces of some public universities seem to hide—or at least ignore—the fact that the institutions are unionized would make for an interesting study.) Moreover, I sensed a slightly different atmosphere at the unionized campuses, perhaps due to a more conspicuous “us” versus “them” mentality with respect to how the faculty perceived the administration at such institutions.<sup>26</sup> Faculty work life seems directly impacted by whether a campus is unionized, then; and, as such, I am surprised that the majority of studies on faculty work life seem to pay little to no heed to faculty unions (as if ignoring them will somehow make them disappear).<sup>27</sup> Much work, then, seems as if it could be done on unions and campus climate.<sup>28</sup> For example, a comparison between the experiences of tenure-track faculty and part-time or non-tenure-track faculty at unionized versus non-unionized state comprehensive universities would shed light on a number of issues I was able only to touch on in this study.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Little weight should be placed on this feeling, however, as the numbers—nine faculty members at three unionized campuses versus nine faculty members at five non-unionized campuses—were too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

<sup>27</sup>Schuster and Finkelstein (2006a), for example, seem to limit their discussion of collective bargaining to the effects of such agreements on faculty salaries.

<sup>28</sup>I am aware that “campus climate” is often associated with student perceptions vis-à-vis inclusivity and diversity (e.g., Hurtado 1992; Hurtado et al. 1998). But the concept can also be applied to faculty-administrator relations (e.g., R. Wilson 2008), with unions undoubtedly figuring into the equation.

<sup>29</sup>A key piece in the literature on faculty unions is Rhoades (1998). See also Ehrenberg et al. (2004), Myers (2011), Seestedt-Stanford (2006), Wickens (2008), and other sources cited in appendix F.

Finally, to put into perspective what I have learned in carrying out this project, I offer an experience of my own—fitting, I believe, since the bulk of this dissertation is situated around others’ experiences. This story is from my first semester as an undergraduate at a prestigious university in the Northeast.<sup>30</sup> One afternoon, as I met with the professor who ultimately became the director of my senior thesis, she inquired about my parents (or perhaps I volunteered the information): She knew I was from Kentucky, so when I told her my parents were professors, her response was, “Oh. At the University of Kentucky?”—as if she had struggled to name a university located in Kentucky but had somehow managed to presume, correctly, that a University of Kentucky exists. When I shared, confidently, the name of the institution—not the University of Kentucky but, rather, a state comprehensive university—she was clearly unimpressed.<sup>31</sup> What did she know that I didn’t know, I wondered? Should I feel embarrassed for my parents—for my hometown? Of course, I was not completely naïve to the academic hierarchy; after all, I chose (with encouragement from my parents) not to remain in Kentucky for my postsecondary education, in part because of the attitude that I had just witnessed. But that exchange from nearly two decades ago has persisted in my memory, in part because of the way that it regrettably caused me to become attuned to a sense of academic snobbishness that I had never previously experienced or (I hope) exhibited myself.

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<sup>30</sup>The prestige factor I state here as a matter of fact, not as a boast. I personally had nothing to do with the status of my undergraduate alma mater in the academic pecking order.

<sup>31</sup>Again, Julia Gergits was on point in remarking that “Most regional state universities have little national recognition; they often have strong reputations within their states, but they may be ciphers to Ph.D.s applying for their first positions” (2009, 31). They may be ciphers, too, among faculty members at research universities.

Thus, on one level, I understand why state comprehensive universities are overlooked—why they “have been largely invisible in the larger picture of American higher education” (Henderson 2009b, 22). “The scholarly reputations of most comprehensive universities are faint traces on the national academic map,” Julia Gergits remarked (2009, 39). But, at the same time, and as demonstrated by this study, the faculty members at state comprehensive universities “do good work” (40). In short, my conversations with eighteen faculty members in departments of history at state comprehensive universities in the Midwestern, Northeastern, and Southeastern United States renewed my respect for these institutions and their missions. To that extent, this dissertation project succeeded in initiating a personally transformative experience.<sup>32</sup>

What, then, of the value of tenure? And what of its future? From my perspective, and based on my conversations with faculty members, tenure is a benefit to the institutions, to the faculty members privileged to be in tenured positions, and—ultimately and perhaps most importantly—to the students whose lives are enriched by their educational encounters. Most of my faculty participants cared deeply about student learning. And even though I did not triangulate my impressions with students themselves, I could sense that the classrooms of my faculty participants were frequently sites of “transforming encounters” (Rhodes 2001, 65): stories that were shared with me about memorable teaching experiences, in fact, all focused on student

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<sup>32</sup>Carol Roberts, for example, described a successful “dissertation journey” as “a transformative and fulfilling life event” (2004, 13).

learning.<sup>33</sup> Of course, without further investigation, I cannot claim that faculty members at state comprehensive universities who are hired off the tenure track are less effective as teachers, or less reflective in their work, or less committed to the educational missions of their institutions, or less able to experience beneficial synergies across other realms of their work or their lives (though the latter must be more complicated when one's work expectations are more specialized, as is the norm among part-time and contingent faculty members). Even though this study considered only the lives of tenured faculty members in departments of history, I would expect similarities among faculty members in similar "soft" disciplines in the humanities and humanities-oriented social sciences at state comprehensive universities—institutions that are too important a segment of the U.S. higher education landscape to remain, in the memorable phrase of E. Alden Dunham, "colleges of the forgotten Americans" (1969).

I conclude, then, with a call to action, encouraging students and scholars of higher education to turn at least some of their attention to what remains as the "most neglected and least understood segment of American higher education" (Henderson 2009b, 5). The suggestions for future research I have identified in this section merely scratch the surface of the rewarding work that that remains to be initiated. Specifically with respect to tenure and its attenuation, the more that

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<sup>33</sup>These stories were among the many from my conversations that, unfortunately, did not find a place in the body of this dissertation. (They did, however, inform my impressions and understandings of my faculty participants and their approaches to their work.) A common motif of such stories was the unwillingness of students to leave the classroom at the appointed hour. William recounted an episode—a particularly "golden moment," as he described it—from Parkham State, where a discussion session ran twice as long as scheduled: "the students just would not leave the classroom: they were so interested in the material."

individuals—researchers, faculty members, and administrators alike—understand about its perceived effects and import, the greater will be the collective ability to maintain or introduce policies that create or enable situations that are beneficial to faculty, institutions, and students.

## APPENDIX A

### LIST OF STATE COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES

This list, organized alphabetically by state or territory, includes all 273 institutions identified by the 2010 Carnegie Classifications as public “Master’s Colleges and Universities.” Parenthetical city locations are given when not provided in the institutions’ names. Note that, of the fifty states, Arizona, Hawai‘i, and Nevada are home to no institutions classified as public Master’s Colleges and Universities. Asterisks (\*) identify the 122 campuses (44 percent) with collective bargaining agreements covering any category of faculty as of 2005, according to Moriarty and Savarese (2006). Daggers (†) identify the 30 institutions (11 percent) not holding specific institutional membership in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities as of August 2011.

#### **Alabama** (8)

Alabama A&M University (Normal)  
Alabama State University (Montgomery)  
Auburn University at Montgomery  
Jacksonville State University  
Troy University  
University of Montevallo  
University of North Alabama (Florence)  
University of West Alabama (Livingston)

#### **Alaska** (2)

- \* University of Alaska Anchorage
- \* University of Alaska Southeast (Juneau)

#### **Arkansas** (6)

Arkansas State University–Jonesboro  
Arkansas Tech University (Russellville)  
Henderson State University (Arkadelphia)

#### Arkansas (*continued*)

Southern Arkansas University (Magnolia)  
University of Arkansas at Monticello  
University of Central Arkansas (Conway)

#### **California** (22)

- \* California Polytechnic State University (San Luis Obispo)
- \* California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
- \* California State University, Bakersfield
- \* California State University, Channel Islands (Camarillo)
- \* California State University, Chico
- \* California State University, Dominguez Hills
- \* California State University, East Bay (Hayward)
- \* California State University, Fresno
- \* California State University, Fullerton



**California** (*continued from previous page*)

- \* California State University, Long Beach
- \* California State University, Los Angeles
- \* California State University, Monterey Bay (Seaside)
- \* California State University, Northridge
- \* California State University, Sacramento
- \* California State University, San Bernardino
- \* California State University, San Marcos
- \* California State University, Stanislaus (Turlock)
- \* Humboldt State University (Arcata)
- † Naval Postgraduate School (Monterey)
- San Francisco State University
- San José State University
- Sonoma State University (Rohnert Park)

**Colorado** (3)

- Adams State College (Alamosa)
- Colorado State University–Pueblo
- † University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

**Connecticut** (4)

- \* Central Connecticut State University (New Britain)
- \* Eastern Connecticut State University (Willimantic)
- \* Southern Connecticut State University (New Haven)
- \* Western Connecticut State University (Danbury)

**Delaware** (1)

- \* Delaware State University (Dover)

**District of Columbia** (1)

- \* University of the District of Columbia

**Florida** (5)

- \* Florida Gulf Coast University (Ft. Myers)
- \* University of North Florida (Jacksonville)
- †\* University of South Florida Polytechnic (Lakeland)
- \* University of South Florida St. Petersburg
- †\* University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee

**Georgia** (11)

- Albany State University
- Armstrong Atlantic State University (Savannah)
- Augusta State University
- Columbus State University
- Georgia College and State University (Milledgeville)
- Georgia Southwestern State University (Americus)
- Kennesaw State University
- North Georgia College and State University (Dahlonega)
- Southern Polytechnic State University (Marietta)
- University of West Georgia (Carrollton)
- Valdosta State University

**Guam** (1)

- University of Guam (Mangilao)

**Idaho** (1)

- † Boise State University

**Illinois** (7)

- \* Chicago State University
- \* Eastern Illinois University (Charleston)
- \* Governors State University (University Park)
- \* Northeastern Illinois University (Chicago)
- \* Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville
- University of Illinois at Springfield
- \* Western Illinois University (Macomb)

**Indiana** (6)

- Indiana University Northwest (Gary)
- Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne
- Indiana University South Bend
- Indiana University Southeast (New Albany)
- Purdue University Calumet (Hammond)
- University of Southern Indiana (Evansville)

**Iowa** (1)

- \* University of Northern Iowa (Cedar Falls)

**Kansas (4)**

- Emporia State University
- \* Fort Hays State University (Hays)
- \* Pittsburg State University
- Washburn University (Topeka)

**Kentucky (5)**

- Eastern Kentucky University (Richmond)
- Morehead State University
- Murray State University
- Northern Kentucky University  
(Highland Heights)
- Western Kentucky University  
(Bowling Green)

**Louisiana (9)**

- Grambling State University
- Louisiana State University in Shreveport
- McNeese State University (Lake Charles)
- Nicholls State University (Thibodaux)
- Northwestern State University of Louisiana  
(Natchitoches)
- Southeastern Louisiana University  
(Hammond)
- † Southern University and A & M College  
(Baton Rouge)
- Southern University at New Orleans
- University of Louisiana at Monroe

**Maine (1)**

- \* University of Southern Maine (Portland)

**Maryland (7)**

- Coppin State University (Baltimore)
- Frostburg State University
- Salisbury University
- Towson University
- † University of Baltimore
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore  
(Princess Anne)
- University of Maryland University College  
(Adelphi)

**Massachusetts (7)**

- †\* Bridgewater State University
- \* Fitchburg State University
- \* Framingham State University
- \* Salem State University
- \* University of Massachusetts Dartmouth  
(North Dartmouth)
- \* Westfield State University
- \* Worcester State University

**Michigan (7)**

- \* Eastern Michigan University (Ypsilanti)
- \* Ferris State University (Big Rapids)
- Grand Valley State University (Allendale)
- \* Northern Michigan University (Marquette)
- \* Saginaw Valley State University  
(University Center)
- \* University of Michigan–Dearborn
- \* University of Michigan–Flint

**Minnesota (8)**

- \* Bemidji State University
- \* Metropolitan State University (St. Paul)
- \* Minnesota State University–Mankato
- \* Minnesota State University–Moorhead
- \* St. Cloud State University
- †\* Southwest Minnesota State University  
(Marshall)
- \* University of Minnesota, Duluth
- \* Winona State University

**Mississippi (4)**

- Alcorn State University
- Delta State University (Cleveland)
- Mississippi University for Women  
(Columbus)
- Mississippi Valley State University  
(Itta Bena)

**Missouri (6)**

- Lincoln University of Missouri  
(Jefferson City)
- Missouri State University (Springfield)
- Northwest Missouri State University  
(Maryville)

**Missouri** (*continued from previous page*)

Southeast Missouri State University  
(Cape Girardeau)  
Truman State University (Kirksville)  
University of Central Missouri  
(Warrensburg)

**Montana** (1)

- \* Montana State University–Billings

**Nebraska** (3)

- \* Peru State College
- \* University of Nebraska at Kearney
- Wayne State College

**New Hampshire** (2)

- \* Keene State College
- Plymouth State University

**New Jersey** (10)

- \* The College of New Jersey (Ewing)
- †\* Kean University (Union)
- †\* Montclair State University
- \* New Jersey City University (Jersey City)
- \* Ramapo College of New Jersey (Mahwah)
- \* The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey  
(Pomona)
- \* Rowan University (Glassboro)
- †\* Rutgers University–Camden
- \* Thomas Edison State College (Trenton)
- \* William Patterson University of New Jersey  
(Wayne)

**New Mexico** (4)

- † Eastern New Mexico University (Portales)
- New Mexico Highlands University  
(Las Vegas)
- † New Mexico Institute of Mining and  
Technology (Socorro)
- Western New Mexico University  
(Silver City)

**New York** (22)

- †\* The City University of New York, Bernard  
Baruch College
- \* The City University of New York, Brooklyn  
College
- †\* The City University of New York, City  
College
- \* The City University of New York, College of  
Staten Island
- \* The City University of New York, Hunter  
College
- \* The City University of New York, Herbert H.  
Lehman College (Bronx)
- †\* The City University of New York, John Jay  
College of Criminal Justice
- \* The City University of New York, Queens  
College (Flushing)
- †\* Fashion Institute of Technology (New York)
- \* State University of New York, Brockport
- \* State University of New York, College at  
Buffalo
- †\* State University of New York, College of  
Environmental Science and Forestry  
(Syracuse)
- \* State University of New York, Cortland
- \* State University of New York, Empire State  
College (Saratoga Springs)
- \* State University of New York, Fredonia
- †\* State University of New York, Geneseo
- †\* State University of New York, Institute of  
Technology at Utica-Rome
- \* State University of New York, New Paltz
- \* State University of New York, Oneonta
- \* State University of New York, Oswego
- \* State University of New York, Plattsburgh
- \* State University of New York, Potsdam

**North Carolina** (7)

Appalachian State University (Boone)  
Fayetteville State University  
North Carolina Central University (Durham)  
University of North Carolina at Pembroke  
University of North Carolina at Wilmington  
Western Carolina University (Cullowhee)  
Winston-Salem State University

**North Dakota** (1)

Minot State University

**Ohio (1)**

- \* Youngstown State University

**Oklahoma (8)**

Cameron University (Lawton)  
 East Central University (Ada)  
 Langston University  
 Northeastern State University (Tahlequah)  
 Northwestern Oklahoma State University  
 (Alva)  
 Southeastern Oklahoma State University  
 (Durant)  
 Southwestern Oklahoma State University  
 (Weatherford)  
 University of Central Oklahoma (Edmond)

**Oregon (3)**

- \* Eastern Oregon University (La Grande)
- \* Southern Oregon University (Ashland)
- \* Western Oregon University (Monmouth)

**Pennsylvania (17)**

- \* Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
- \* California University of Pennsylvania
- \* Cheyney University of Pennsylvania
- \* Clarion University of Pennsylvania
- \* East Stroudsburg University of  
 Pennsylvania
- \* Edinboro University of Pennsylvania
- \* Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
- †\* Lincoln University
- \* Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania
- \* Mansfield University of Pennsylvania
- \* Millersville University of Pennsylvania
- † Pennsylvania State University–Penn State  
 Erie, The Behrend College
- † Pennsylvania State University–Penn State  
 Great Valley (Malvern)
- † Pennsylvania State University–Penn State  
 Harrisburg (Middletown)
- \* Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania
- \* Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania
- \* West Chester University of Pennsylvania

**Rhode Island (1)**

- \* Rhode Island College (Providence)

**South Carolina (5)**

The Citadel, the Military College of South  
 Carolina (Charleston)  
 Coastal Carolina University (Conway)  
 College of Charleston  
 Francis Marion University (Florence)  
 Winthrop University (Rock Hill)

**South Dakota (2)**

- \* Black Hills State University (Spearfish)
- \* Dakota State University (Madison)

**Tennessee (4)**

Austin Peay State University (Clarksville)  
 Tennessee Technological University  
 (Cookeville)  
 University of Tennessee at Chattanooga  
 University of Tennessee at Martin

**Texas (16)**

Angelo State University (San Angelo)  
 Midwestern State University (Wichita Falls)  
 Prairie View A & M University  
 Stephen F. Austin State University  
 (Nacogdoches)  
 Sul Ross State University (Alpine)  
 Tarleton State University (Stephenville)  
 Texas A & M International University  
 (Laredo)  
 Texas A & M University–Texarkana  
 Texas State University–San Marcos  
 University of Houston–Clear Lake  
 University of Houston–Victoria  
 University of Texas at Brownsville  
 University of Texas–Pan American  
 (Edinburg)  
 University of Texas of the Permian Basin  
 (Odessa)  
 University of Texas at Tyler  
 West Texas A & M University (Canyon)

**Utah (2)**

Southern Utah University (Cedar City)  
 Weber State University (Ogden)

**Vermont (1)**

- \* Johnson State College

**Virginia (7)**

- † Christopher Newport University (Newport News)
- James Madison University (Harrisonburg)
- Longwood University (Farmville)
- Norfolk State University
- Radford University
- † University of Mary Washington (Fredericksburg)
- Virginia State University (Petersburg)

**Washington (6)**

- \* Central Washington University (Ellensburg)
- \* Eastern Washington University (Cheney)
- † Evergreen State College (Olympia)
- † University of Washington, Bothell
- University of Washington, Tacoma
- Western Washington University (Bellingham)

**West Virginia (3)**

- Fairmont State University
- † Marshall University (Huntington)
- Shepherd University (Shepherdstown)

**Wisconsin (10)**

- University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire
- University of Wisconsin–Green Bay
- University of Wisconsin–La Crosse
- University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh
- University of Wisconsin–Platteville
- University of Wisconsin–River Falls
- University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point
- University of Wisconsin–Stout (Menomonie)
- University of Wisconsin–Superior
- University of Wisconsin–Whitewater

## APPENDIX B

### CORRESPONDENCE WITH PARTICIPANTS

#### **Initial Communication with Institutional IRB Officers**

This message, with “Seeking IRB Consideration” in the subject line, was sent via e-mail to the institutional research directors of the nine selected institutions (as described in chapter 4).

Dear [contact’s name]:

My name is Steve Gump, and I’m a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I am currently revising my dissertation proposal, under Dr. Timothy Reese Cain, on faculty perceptions regarding tenure and work life at state comprehensive universities.

For the study, I plan to interview, individually and in person, approximately 20 tenured faculty members from the field of history in sessions lasting approximately 60 minutes each. Participants will be asked to reflect on the perceived effects that the awarding of tenure has had on their teaching, research, service, and other faculty duties.

I plan to interview faculty members from at least three state comprehensive universities (publicly funded small, medium, or large “Master’s Colleges and Universities,” according to the 2005 Carnegie Classifications) in the Midwestern, Northeastern, or Southeastern United States. [Your university] fits the ideal institutional type perfectly.

At this time, I am writing only to ask whether you, as [addressee’s title], would be willing to consider and review my study for approval at a later date. *You need to make no decision as to whether I may use your campus as a site for my research at this time.* This step is one that the IRB office at the University of Illinois requires before an application can be considered for approval when the research sites involve other purposefully selected college campuses.

If you will agree to consider and review my study—and a brief e-mail to me (sgump@illinois.edu) to that effect is sufficient—I will send you my completed University of Illinois IRB application and all supporting documentation (participant-recruitment texts,

interview protocols, informed consent form, and proof of ethics training) later this summer. I would of course be happy to answer any questions you may have about my project or this pre-consideration acknowledgment (via e-mail or phone at 217-344-6055).

I look forward to hearing from you soon—though, given the timing of my message, I will certainly understand if any final decisions cannot be made until the fall.

Sincerely yours,

Steve Gump  
sgump@illinois.edu

Department of Educational Organization & Leadership  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
351 Education Building (MC-708)  
1310 South Sixth Street  
Champaign, IL 61820-6925

### **Second Communication with Institutional IRB Officers**

A message organized along the lines of the following was sent to the institutional research directors of the nine selected institutions after they had extended preliminary approval for consideration and I had been granted provisional approval from the University of Illinois (College of Education) IRB. Item 1 in the following text was used for the three institutions that required me to complete their own IRB applications. Only one institution required a letter of support from my faculty adviser (item 3).

Dear [contact's name]:

Thank you very much for your willingness to review my research project that, at present, is designed to involve interviews with faculty members at [your university]. (I particularly appreciate your willingness to receive the materials electronically.)

The following materials are attached to this message (in a single .pdf file):

1. **[Your university's] Application to Use Human Subjects in Research** (2 pages)
2. **Approval Letter from Human Subjects Review Committee at the University of Illinois (U-C)**: This letter, dated [e.g., October 25, 2010], indicates that the project was deemed to qualify for exempt review. (1 page)

3. **Support letter:** Letter of support from my faculty adviser and the Responsible Project Investigator, Dr. Timothy Reese Cain, dated October 27, 2010. (1 page)
4. **Certification of IRB training:** This completion report was issued on March 12, 2010, after I completed the required online training modules offered by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (<https://www.citiprogram.org/>). These modules included an overview of the Belmont Report and units on history and ethical principles, defining research with human subjects, informed consent, and privacy and confidentiality. (2 pages)
5. **Project description:** A description of the research project, using language copied directly from the original IRB application filed with the University of Illinois (U-C). (3 pages)
6. **Recruitment texts:** Texts of e-mail messages to be sent to potential participants. These were included as attachments to the original IRB application. (2 pages)
7. **Interview protocol:** Included as an attachment to the original IRB application. (4 pages)
8. **Informed consent form:** Included as an attachment to the original IRB application. *Please note that the University of Illinois IRB will permit my including a local (that is, an individual at your institution) contact on the second page, under "Contact Information," if you so desire.* (2 pages)

If you need additional materials or have any questions about the attached materials, please do not hesitate to contact me (via e-mail or phone at 217-344-6055).

Ultimately, I hope you will find that my project meets your institutional guidelines and that I will be able to invite faculty at [your university] to participate in my project. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Steve Gump  
sgump@illinois.edu

\* \* \* \* \*

Attachment: Gump\_IRB.pdf (404 KB)

(Note that this message appears, in letter form, as the first page of the attached .pdf.)



### Original Participant-Recruitment Text

This preliminary recruitment message was sent via e-mail to faculty at selected institutions where I was successful in learning which history faculty members had been tenured in or after the year 2000. Messages were addressed individually and sent only to those faculty members.

Dear Dr. [name]:

You are invited to participate in a research project on **faculty perceptions of the effects of tenure on work life at state comprehensive universities**. Under the supervision of Dr. Timothy Reese Cain of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, I am conducting this research in partial fulfillment of requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Educational Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois.

For the study, I will **individually interview** approximately 20 tenured faculty members in sessions lasting around **60 minutes** each. In these interviews, which will be held at a mutually convenient time and place on or near your campus between May and October\*—and which will be digitally recorded with your permission, you will be asked to **reflect on the effects that the awarding of tenure has had on your teaching, research, service, and other faculty duties**.

I do hope you will be willing to assist me with this important project. If so, please reply in the affirmative to this message by **[reasonable deadline]**. I will then work with you in finding a time and place for our interview.

If you have any questions or concerns about this project, please contact either me (at 217-344-6055 or sgump@illinois.edu) or Dr. Cain (at 217-333-1931 or tcain@illinois.edu).

With best wishes,

Steve Gump  
sgump@illinois.edu

Department of Educational Organization and Leadership  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
351 Education Building (MC-708)  
1610 South Sixth Street  
Champaign, IL 61801-6925

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\*My original plan was to complete the interviews by October 2010. I later extended the interview window through March 2011 to accommodate interviews with additional faculty participants. Messages were individualized to reflect months I would be able to visit the various campuses.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Additional project and participation details:

This study has been approved by both the University of Illinois and [your institution's] IRB. We do not anticipate any risks of participating in this research project beyond those of ordinary life, and we anticipate that the results will increase our understanding of the work lives of faculty members at state comprehensive universities. You will not be paid for your participation in this research project, nor is it expected that your participation will bring you any benefits, tangible or otherwise. The results of this research project may be used for a dissertation, scholarly reports, journal articles, and conference presentations. In any publication or public presentation, pseudonyms will be used and all identifying information will be changed.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and you will be free to withdraw at any time and for any reason without penalty. Your choice to participate or not participate will not impact your job or status at work, nor will it have any effect on any future relations with the University of Illinois. You will be free to refuse to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You will receive a copy of the research results after this project is completed.

### **Revised Participant-Recruitment Text**

This version of the preliminary recruitment message was sent via e-mail to faculty at selected institutions where I was unable to learn which faculty members had been tenured in or after the year 2000. Messages were addressed individually and sent to all faculty members listed on history departmental web pages who (a) were not identified as “lecturer,” “instructor,” “visiting,” “adjunct,” or “emeritus”; and (b) were identified as teaching courses aligned with history. (As explained in chapter 4, several departments included faculty in other disciplines and fields, including anthropology, geography, legal studies, philosophy, political science, religious studies, or sociology.)

Dear Dr. [name]:

Greetings at this busy time in the academic year. *If you are a full-time faculty member in the [formal department name] at [university name] who was tenured in or after the year*

*2000, the following message applies to you. If you do not meet those criteria, please disregard this message.*

You are invited to participate in a research project on **faculty perceptions of the relationships between tenure and work life at state comprehensive universities**. Under the supervision of Dr. Timothy Reese Cain of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, I am conducting this research in partial fulfillment of requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Educational Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois.

For the study, I will **individually interview** approximately 20 tenured faculty members in sessions lasting around **60 minutes** each. In these interviews, which will be held at a mutually convenient time and place on or near your campus in November or December—and which will be digitally recorded with your permission—you will be asked to **reflect on the ways that the awarding of tenure has influenced your teaching, research, service, and other faculty duties**. Additional details are at the foot of this message.

I do hope you will be willing to assist me with this important project. If so, please reply in the affirmative to this message by **[reasonable deadline]**. I will then work with you in identifying a time and place for our interview.

If you have any questions or concerns about this project, please contact either me (at 217-344-6055 or sgump@illinois.edu) or Dr. Cain (at 217-333-1931 or tcain@illinois.edu).

With best wishes,

Steve Gump  
sgump@illinois.edu

Department of Educational Organization and Leadership  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
351 Education Building (MC-708)  
1610 South Sixth Street  
Champaign, IL 61801-6925

\* \* \* \* \*

Additional project and participation details:

This study has been approved by both the University of Illinois and [your institution's] Institutional Review Boards. We do not anticipate any risks of participating in this research project beyond those of ordinary life, and we anticipate that the results will increase our understanding of the work lives of faculty members at state comprehensive universities. You will not be paid for your participation in this research project, nor is it expected that your participation will bring you any benefits, tangible or otherwise. The results of this research pro-

ject may be used for a dissertation, scholarly reports, journal articles, and conference presentations. In any publication or public presentation, pseudonyms will be used and all identifying information will be changed.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and you will be free to withdraw at any time and for any reason without penalty. Your choice to participate or not participate will not impact your job or status at work, nor will it have any effect on any future relations with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. You will be free to refuse to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You will receive a copy of the research results after this project is completed.

### **Participant Confirmation Message**

This message was sent via e-mail to each faculty participant approximately two weeks prior to the scheduled interview. The purpose was to provide material on which participants might reflect in the days leading up to the interview. The concluding comment about a pseudonym was not included in the reminders I sent to my earliest participants. Rather, I added it to reminder messages I sent to later participants after several of my earliest interviewees seemed to have been caught unprepared when I asked them to offer me a pseudonym.

Dear Dr. [name]:

Again, thank you very much for your willingness to participate in my research project on the perceived effects of tenure on faculty work life at state comprehensive universities. I look forward to meeting with you on [**confirmation of date and time**]. Unless you'd like to meet elsewhere, I'll plan to come to your office at [**office location**].

During the approximately 60-minute interview, which I will conduct, you will be asked to reflect on the effects that the awarding of tenure has had on your teaching, service, research, and other faculty duties. To prepare for the interview, please spend some time over the next two weeks—if you have the time—thinking about the following questions:

- If you could describe a “typical” workweek, what activities or events would you describe as consuming most of your time?
- If you can remember a “typical” workweek before you were awarded tenure, how different would it be from a “typical” workweek today?

- Think about how you and your department define the concepts of *teaching*, *research*, and *service*. In what ways has tenure affected your engagement with or orientation toward each of them?
- With respect to the three concepts above, think about one particularly memorable experience you have had in each realm.

I'll also ask you for a pseudonym that I can use if I refer to you in my work.

I look forward to meeting and having an engaging conversation with you on [date].

With best wishes,

Steve Gump  
sgump@illinois.edu

Department of Educational Organization and Leadership  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
351 Education Building (MC-708)  
1610 South Sixth Street  
Champaign, IL 61801-6925

## APPENDIX C

### TEXT OF CONSENT FORM FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

#### **Description and Purpose of the Research**

You are invited to participate in a research project on faculty perceptions of the relationships between tenure and work life at state comprehensive universities. Under the supervision of Dr. Timothy Reese Cain, Steven Gump is conducting this research in partial fulfillment of requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Educational Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Approximately 20 tenured faculty members will be interviewed at least once by Mr. Gump for about 60 minutes per interview. In these interviews, which will be digitally recorded with your permission, you will be asked to reflect on the ways that the awarding of tenure has influenced your teaching, research, service, and other faculty duties. The recordings and all other information obtained during this research project will be kept secure. Recordings will be transferred to a password-protected personal computer and will be accessible only to project personnel. The interviews will be transcribed and coded to remove individuals' names, and the original digital files will be deleted after the project is completed.

#### **Risks and Benefits**

We do not anticipate any risks of participating in this research project beyond those of ordinary life, and we anticipate that the results will increase our understanding of the work lives of faculty members at state comprehensive universities. You will not be paid for your participation in this research project, nor is it expected that your participation will bring you any benefits, tangible or otherwise. The results of this research project may be used for a dissertation, scholarly reports, journal articles, and conference presentations. In any publication or public presentation, pseudonyms will be substituted for all identifying information. The things you say may be presented without specific reference to you, referenced only by pseudonym, or combined anonymously with the words of other participants.

#### **Voluntary Nature of Participation**

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time and for any reason without penalty. Your choice to participate or not participate will not impact your job or status at work, nor will it have any effect on your future relations

with the University of Illinois. You are free to refuse to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You will receive a copy of the research results after this project is completed.

### Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this research project, please contact either Mr. Gump (*phone: 217-344-6055 / e-mail: sgump@illinois.edu*) or Dr. Cain (*phone: 217-333-1931 / e-mail: tcain@illinois.edu*).

### Consent Statement

- I have read and understand the above information and voluntarily agree to participate in the research project described above.

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Signature

---

Date

- Yes, I agree to have the interview audio taped for the purposes of transcription.

---

Signature

---

Date

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant please contact Anne Robertson, Bureau of Educational Research, College of Education, University of Illinois (*phone: 217-333-3023 / e-mail: arobrtsn@illinois.edu*), or the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board (*phone: 217-333-2670 / e-mail: irb@illinois.edu*).

*Two copies of this form are provided. Please sign both copies where consent is granted. Return one copy to the researcher and keep the other for your records.*

## APPENDIX D

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### **Foundations 1: Background**

I'd like to start by getting some background information about you.

- I'd appreciate if you would offer me a mini biography, taking me from graduate school through to the time you accepted the job here. Feel free to include whatever details you think are salient—but I'd be happy if you could include some years, so I can fill in a mental timeline.
- When in your life/academic career did you realize you wanted to be a professor?

#### **Foundations 2: On Tenure in General**

- (*If applicable*) Could you describe the role that a tenure-line appointment played in your decision to accept a position here?
- I understand you were tenured in [year]. What was the tenure review process like for you?
- For professors at research universities, it is frequently said that the granting of tenure offers them more power—or perhaps more opportunity—to determine the course of their day-to-day intellectual work than they had at earlier times in their careers. Do you think this has been the case for you?
- What has changed most for you since you were granted tenure?
- What has changed most for this institution since you were granted tenure?
- Have you served on your department's tenure committee? Can you tell me about that experience—of course, without revealing any privileged information?

#### **Contexts 1: Teaching**

I'd now like to ask you some questions about your teaching.

- Approximately how many hours per week are you *expected* to spend on your teaching-related activities? Is that enough time to get everything done?
- Approximately how many hours per week do you actually spend engaged in teaching or teaching-related activities? Do you wish you could spend more time? Less time?



- Did the amount of time you spend in class or preparing for class change substantially after you received tenure?
- Do you think you’ve changed as a teacher since your first days as an assistant professor? If so, in what ways? (*Probe about what caused changes.*)
- Thinking back over your teaching, what challenges have you faced over the years?
- Would you say the subjects you would prefer to teach have remained the same, or have they changed over the years?
- How much control do you have over which courses you teach each semester? Did achieving tenure change the amount of control or influence you have?
- How much control do you have over your schedule (i.e., when your courses meet) each semester? Did achieving tenure change the amount of control or influence you have?
- Do you think your students have influenced your thinking as a teacher or scholar?
- What value does your institution place on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning? What value do you place on it yourself?
- How important are teaching evaluations in your annual reviews/merit-pay calculations? How important were teaching evaluations in your tenure packet?
- Have you felt more able to take risks in your teaching or pedagogical style after achieving tenure?
- How important is teaching to you personally? Has your personal investment in teaching changed since achieving tenure?
- Tell me one of your most memorable teaching-related experiences. Why was this experience memorable?

### **Contexts 2: Research**

I’d now like to ask you some questions about research.

- How does your department/institution define “research”? Does this definition fit with your own definition?
- Approximately how many hours per week are you *expected* to spend engaged in research activities? Has that number stayed relatively stable over the years?
- Approximately how many hours per week do you actually spend engaged in research activities? Do you wish you could spend more time? Less time?
- What sort of support does your department/institution provide to help you with your research?
- What challenges do you face when it comes to carrying out research?
- Has the amount of time you spend engaged in research changed substantially after you received tenure?
- Have you felt more able to take risks in your research after achieving tenure?
- How important is research in your annual reviews/merit-pay calculations? How important were research activities in your tenure packet?
- How important are your research activities to you personally? Has your personal investment in research changed since achieving tenure?
- Tell me one of your most memorable research-related experiences. Why was this experience memorable?

### Contexts 3: Service

I'd now like to ask you some questions about service.

- How does your department/institution define "service"?
- Approximately how many hours per week are you *expected* to spend engaged in service activities? Has that number stayed relatively stable over the years?
- Approximately how many hours per week do you actually spend engaged in service activities? Do you wish you could spend more time? Less time?
- How much control do you have over the service activities in which you take part? (In other words, are you assigned to specific committees, for example?)
- Since achieving tenure, have you become more or less active in service activities at the department level? University level? Professional level?
- Has the amount of time you spend engaged in service changed substantially after you received tenure?
- How important is service in your annual reviews/merit-pay calculations? How important were service activities in your tenure packet?
- How important are your service activities to you personally? Has your personal investment in service changed since achieving tenure?
- Tell me one of your most memorable service-related experiences. Why was this experience memorable?

### Contexts 4: Other (and Summary)

I've now asked you questions about your teaching, service, and outreach.

- Are there other aspects of your job that don't fit neatly into one of those categories? If so, tell me about them.
- Is there such a thing as a "typical week" for you during the semester/term? If so, what is that week like? And how do you feel at the end of that week?
- If you could change one thing about your "typical week," what would it be? Why?
- Can you remember your "typical week" before tenure? If so, how was it different from your "typical week" now?

### Perspectives 1: Collegueship

Now I'd like to turn to some more thematic questions about work life at [your institution]. First, I have a couple of questions about "collegueship." Collegueship is a real but not often discussed aspect of professors' work lives, so I'd like to ask you a bit about your relationships with colleagues.

- What makes someone a "colleague" for you? Has this definition changed over time?

- Who do you think of as your primary colleagues? Has this group changed over time?
- How involved are you in institutional (campus-related) activities and issues at this time? What activities/issues are these? Does this feel like the right level or kind of involvement to you? Does being tenured affect the amount of time you spend engaged with these activities/issues?
- With respect to faculty governance at [your institution], does having tenure mean greater responsibilities? If so, tell me a bit about these.

### **Perspectives 2: Well-Being in the Workplace**

Academia is sometimes referred to as a stressful environment, and some academics find themselves worrying about their health or their general well-being.

- What do you worry about in your work?
- Have your perceptions about that concern/those concerns changed since achieving tenure?
- What do you most look forward to in your work?
- Did achieving tenure have any role in what you most enjoy about your work?

### **Perspectives 3: Epistemologies and Identity**

I'd like to ask you some more questions about how you think about the subjects you study and teach—and how you see yourself in the world.

- To which professional organizations do you now belong? How long have you belonged to these? How important are these to you at this time?
- Other than professional organizations, do you see yourself as belonging to some community—or maybe an informal group of professors or scholars who share similar experiences? Does your institution foster such communities?
- How important is your institution in your sense of identity?
- How important is tenure in your day-to-day life?
- Professors occasionally talk about boredom in aspects of their work. Has boredom ever been an issue for you in your work? Can you tell me about that?
- You have been making a career for yourself as a professor of [history]. Why do you think you became attracted to this area of study in the first place? Has your career at [institution] allowed you to explore the kinds of questions that still inspire you?
- To what extent has living in this [community/city/region] affected your job and career as a professor?
- Do you have a particular pseudonym that you'd like me to use if I quote you in a presentation of my research?
- Finally, do you have any questions for me about this project?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

<u>Participant*</u>	<u>Institution*</u>	<u>Interview Date</u>	<u>Length**</u>
1. Peter	Parkham State	September 22, 2010	68
2. William	Parkham State	September 23, 2010	63
3. Amy	Parkham State	September 24, 2010	77
4. Debra	Grovehill State	October 1, 2010	62
5. Sarah	Grovehill State	October 1, 2010	60
6. Katherine	Daylesford State	October 27, 2010	64
7. Ronald	Grovehill State	November 19, 2010	61
8. Percy	Berkswell State	November 23, 2010	56
9. David	Meldon State	November 29, 2010	71
10. Owen	Meldon State	November 30, 2010	63
11. Eleanor	Whitehaven State	December 1, 2010	63
12. Gomez	Ashdale State	December 8, 2010	61
13. H. P.	Ashdale State	December 8, 2010	64
14. Thelonious	Ashdale State	December 8, 2010	67
15. Ling	Grovehill State	December 16, 2010	65
16. George	Spenwood State	March 22, 2011	66
17. Athena	Spenwood State	March 22, 2011	57
18. Melinda	Spenwood State	March 22, 2011	64

\* Pseudonyms

\*\* In minutes (recorded and transcribed portion only); total = 19 hours, 12 minutes

## APPENDIX F

### UNIONS AND WORK LIFE AT STATE COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES

In 2005, according to data from the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions, over 318,000 faculty members in postsecondary education were covered by 575 separate bargaining units operating on 1,125 campuses in this country (Moriarty and Savarese 2006, vii). These faculty members represent roughly 25 percent of all higher education faculty—a percentage that is twice that of all workers and thrice that of those in the private sector (Cohen and Kisker 2010). Some 95 percent of all unionized faculty members are employed by public institutions, including state comprehensive universities (Wickens 2008).<sup>1</sup> I have indicated in appendix A the 122 state comprehensive universities with collective bargaining agreements covering at least a portion of their faculty members as of 2005; they represent over 44 percent of the 273 institutions identified by the 2010 Carnegie Classifications as public “Master’s Colleges and Universities.”<sup>2</sup> As Carrie Myers (2011), for example, has recently pointed out, unionization is

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<sup>1</sup>In a 1980 U.S. Supreme Court decision, full-time faculty members at private colleges and universities were deemed to be “managerial employees” and are therefore excluded from legal protection for collective bargaining activities (*National Labor Relations Board v. Yeshiva University* 1980). Only faculty members at public universities thus have the legal right to unionize. Some states, however, have laws that prohibit or restrict union organization by public employees (DeCew 2003; Sun and Permuth 2007).

<sup>2</sup>Many differences are hidden in these blanket data, however. The majority of unionized institutions have collective bargaining agreements for all main types of faculty appointments

both a legal issue and an issue of workers' rights and benefits.<sup>3</sup> Both contexts surfaced in the comments on unions made by faculty participants in this study.

When I selected sites for this study (see chapter 4), I did not take into consideration the presence faculty unions. My presumption was that, for most faculty members, whether a campus was unionized would not have been the deciding factor regarding the acceptance of a tenure-track job. One participant corroborated this sense by saying: "I think, for many faculty, it [whether a campus is unionized] plays, at most, a minimal role—and, for most, it plays, like, 'I'll take the job.'" Another said, "You know, the job market for historians is terrible. So I would have taken a job [almost anywhere]." And, from a third: "I would have gone almost anywhere." Still, two participants from unionized campuses recalled positive experiences—and active roles—in unions as graduate students; and a third mentioned having been part of a trade union while working part-time to support his undergraduate education. This latter participant, in fact, was offered two tenure-track jobs simultaneously and chose the job at the unionized state comprehensive university over a job at a small liberal arts college in a different region of the United States, where his teaching would have been more specialized (and thus more closely aligned with his scholarly

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(full-time permanent, part-time permanent, and adjunct); but some have collective bargaining only for certain subpopulations, contributing to a trifurcated faculty labor market. In such cases, the rarest are institutions with collective bargaining agreements only for adjunct faculty members. I encourage those interested in which institutions have which sorts of agreements to consult the latest *Directory of Faculty Contracts and Bargaining Agents in Institutions of Higher Education* issued periodically by the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions, housed at Hunter College in New York (see <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/ncscbhep/>).

<sup>3</sup>Myers (2011) used hierarchical linear modeling on a national dataset to determine that unionized faculty report lower levels of job satisfaction than non-unionized faculty.

interests). He recounted his decision to accept the offer at the unionized campus as follows:

What attracted me to this university was the collective bargaining agreement: This is a unionized campus. And, when I was a kid, working my way through undergrad, I [had a job in my home state and belonged to a trade union there]. So I just remembered what that union experience was like, in terms of the wage and the benefits and all that kind of stuff. And I thought, you know, the kind of job security that was available at this university . . . versus the non-union liberal arts college in [another state]—I thought I would go with that kind of job security that I thought came with a union, even though, culturally, I might have been more at home in [the other state], where it would connect me to a variety of metropolitan areas. I decided I would go with what I thought would be a better work environment.

In chapter 5, I quoted this same participant as having said that he “probably think[s] more about the union contract” than about tenure on a day-to-day basis, thanks to the sense of security the union contract gives him.

Half of the eighteen faculty participants in this study came from the three campuses whose tenure-line faculty members are unionized: Ashdale State, Grovehill State, and Meldon State.<sup>4</sup> Overall, unions were mentioned in my faculty interviews in a number of contexts—most of them positive. For example, they were mentioned as protectors of faculty rights and autonomy, as supporters of faculty solidarity and collegiality, and as guarantors of faculty salaries and benefits. These contexts resonate with reasons offered by Philo Hutcheson (2000) to explain the interest and eventual commitment of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) to faculty unions and collective bargaining in the 1960s and 1970s: anxiety over

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<sup>4</sup>One other campus in this study has a collective bargaining agreement that does not involve the tenure-track faculty members at that institution. In the context of this study, then, I have not considered that institution to have a unionized campus; hence I refer to just three unionized campuses.

perceived bureaucratization of higher education, concerns about the voices and power of faculty members on college and university campuses, and a desire to support the economic interests of AAUP members. In this appendix, I offer comments from my faculty participants concerning their faculty unions so as to shed light on their perspectives and experiences as faculty members on unionized campuses. In some cases, I have presented quotations at especial length to show how individual participants contextualized their comments about the union at their institution. And although I have occasionally identified the campuses (in terms of the pseudonyms I have attached to them for this study), I have not directly identified the speakers, since my purpose was not to make dichotomized conclusions based on the presence or absence of a unionized faculty.

The context in which the union was most commonly invoked—although one participant from Grovehill State did not mention the union at all in our conversation, and another offered only a passing comment<sup>5</sup>—was with respect to criteria for tenure and promotion. As I mentioned in chapter 5, many faculty at the unionized campuses felt that the clarity of the criteria for tenure and promotion was likely a function of involvement by the faculty union. The unions at all three unionized campuses are, in fact, involved in the negotiating of departmental criteria for tenure and promotion. My participant who chose the job at the unionized campus over the non-unionized liberal arts college offered this rationalization of one of his perceived values of the faculty union:

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<sup>5</sup>One faculty participant from Grovehill State said only this: “You might have heard that Grovehill has a very good faculty union, one that is very active.”



I have some friends at other institutions in which you have two reviews during your six years of probation: at the third and sixth year. And at the sixth year, you're either kept or let go—and you really don't know the decision process. But with the union . . . there's no, you know, everything is fine at three years, and then suddenly, "Well, you don't measure up, so we're letting you go" after six. You would know *long* before that ever happened, if there was an issue. And then there's all kinds of appeals and all kinds of stuff. And then you've got, you know, a union lawyer, if you need it. I think, as a working person, it's a pretty good deal.

Another participant described the benefits of "very clear" qualifications for tenure and promotion as affording faculty members a sense of "protection":

If you meet them [the criteria], and you don't get retained or promoted, you can—you know, the parlance is, "you can grieve it." So I know that I now meet the requirements for promotion to full [professor]. And, so, it's a pain, and there's a little nervousness involved—but I have almost zero concern, where I know many people, when they go up for promotion and tenure or then promotion to full, there's more uncertainty, because there's less transparency, and there's less protection, essentially, for faculty. So I think I was already pro-union [before I came here], but my experiences here have reaffirmed that for professors or faculty, a union is such a significant benefit. And I think most of my colleagues would agree; they just came in less certain about their views, I think. Whereas, for me, I was already pretty certain—but I didn't have the personal experience yet. So, yeah, the idea that you know clearly . . . and, of course, there are guidelines—or *criteria*, I should say, *department criteria*—they're negotiated. That means the department—that means the *faculty*, actually—have some say. And, ultimately, the administration has the final say, as with many—but not all—things. But they have to seriously, essentially, consider and work with—"negotiate" is may not always be the right word, but, um, *consider*, you know: "bargain in good faith" is the legal term. So, even, working on department criteria: in a sense, it's not the contract, but it's part of what the contract requires.

Union negotiations involve other policies concerning faculty work beyond tenure and promotion criteria. Also detailed in faculty contracts, these policies address, for example, class sizes, course loads, numbers of course preparations per academic year, and summer teaching. At Grovehill State, explained one participant,

“the union specifies that people who teach one summer term go to the bottom of the queue for the next year—and, it’s a very collegial sort of thing.” Indeed, of the unions at the three unionized campuses, the union at Grovehill State was described in the most positive terms. The same faculty participant described Grovehill’s union as supporting “lots of opportunities . . . that encourage excellence—and recognize excellence.” For example, the union sponsors campus-level awards that are given annually for excellence in teaching, research, and service.

Another participant from Grovehill State praised the union from the outset of our conversation, saying the union “makes all the difference in the world”:

It’s really a great department—and a great institution to work at. One of the reasons—and it’s probably the first thing I should mention about Grovehill—is that we’re a unionized campus. And I think that makes all the difference in the world, especially for an institution of our kind. All of the tenure requirements are clearly spelled out in our [departmental tenure criteria]; and, every year . . . we get annual feedback. So there are no surprises when you come down to the tenure decision.

Later, this participant mentioned that the union at Grovehill is “always reminding us of shared governance.” The union was described as “reassuring” and as a protector of rights for non-tenure-line faculty members in the department, thus contributing to solidarity and collegiality. Note, especially, the final sentences of the following quotation; they are among the most supportive comments I received about the value of faculty unions at state comprehensive universities:

I knew a couple of people here already [before I came]—they were really happy with the union situation. And the culture of the department is also really positive. I have to give a lot of credit to that. But I think it’s certainly one of the things that has kept me here. . . . One of the non-tenure-track people here in the department has said that he’s turned down tenure-

track jobs before: because of the union, his position is secure.<sup>6</sup> And I think one of the good things about the union is that, because we are all in it together—we have different contracts, but we bargain collectively—it creates a lot of solidarity and a lot of collegiality between the [tenure-line] and the [non-tenure-line] people. At least it has in our department; and I know that it has in other departments as well. That means that they're not, sort of, "outsiders" in the institution. And I think it's good for everybody. I can't say it enough: *Everybody should be unionized*. I think it's our last, best hope against the erosion of academic freedom and tenure and everything else.

Two of the three faculty participants from Ashdale State were positive about their faculty union. Both mentioned the importance of the union with respect to faculty salaries. One said:

Another thing about the union contract that I think is very good—and that you wouldn't have at other institutions—is that we have these, basically, I guess, for lack of a better term, we have a "minimum wage." So it's really good for people in the humanities and social sciences: they can't go below a certain level. It doesn't really matter to people in business or computer science—I mean, they make—there's this starting salary for one person in accountancy—it was \$107,000! I mean, so our minimum wage is like half that. But at least it gives you a wage scale to count on. . . . So I thought that we do pretty well, and I would attribute it—almost all of it—to the union. Because without that, um, you'd have all different varying levels of pay within your own department, and it's all individual negotiating, and things of that sort—and I think that's the way it was before there was a union, and that all came to an end. So I'm happy with that.

And the other said:

Because of the union—this, I think, is an example of a union [campus] being different than a non-union [campus]—there are minima, essentially salary floors. So, full professor, you get a bump—a significant bump in salary. And then you get one at professor plus five years, professor plus ten years. . . . So that's the case in most contracts, but they don't exist in non-union universities. So I don't know, actually, how it works in other

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<sup>6</sup>Such behavior may not be uncommon. According to John Cross and Edie Goldenberg, "It is not unusual for non-tenure-track instructors who are offered tenure-track positions to decline the opportunity, either because the institution that offers the position is in a different geographical region (and may not be regarded as equivalent in quality), because the work expectations are too great, or because termination (through failure to achieve tenure) is a real possibility" (2009, 77).

cases: Do you have to go to your chair or your dean and say, “Hey, I want a raise?”

One faculty participant from Ashdale State spoke of the union in the context of the “democratic culture” of his institution and department. He also mentioned, tellingly, that the union “make[s] you more conscious of the divide between faculty and administration”:

Part of it is the democratic nature of the institution—but I think the union helps to try to perpetuate that democratic culture. And then I also must say, when it comes to our department—maybe it’s part of the union culture or not, I’m not sure—but we did have a dean who wanted to bring in outside chairs. And we resisted that. We did not want anyone who was going to come in to be, essentially, the man or woman of the dean. And so, even though we have a very diverse department and some contentious elements, we all came together and basically agreed that we would not accept anyone other than one of our own who was qualified to be chair. And the dean agreed to that: she didn’t fight us over that. So, I don’t know if that’s the “union culture,” or if that’s just self-preservation: I don’t know. But I’m glad we were able to protect ourselves in that regard. And maybe, you know, part of the union element does make you more conscious of the divide between faculty and administration that you wouldn’t have at other institutions. But they are different [and have] different interests. And I really noticed that when I was on the Salary Equity Committee—that the admin think in one way, and faculty think in another way; and faculty need to protect their own interests.

Despite the protections that the union contract at Ashdale State affords junior (that is, non-tenured) faculty members, the same faculty member also told a story that demonstrates how junior faculty members may still be reluctant to speak out against proposed action initiated by tenured faculty in the department:

I have some colleagues who are not tenured who—I can tell them a thousand times, “You’ve got protections in the union contract,” but they just do not see that. And they’re afraid to speak up; they’re afraid to—I mean, we made some changes in our department criteria. For example, we wanted to increase the number of publications [required for tenure and promotion], and—I think of this as a very democratic sort of department—

so we just said, “Hey, you people who are coming in, this is going to affect you: Are you fine with it?” And everyone said they were fine with it. After we made the decision, then I hear all this stuff: “You should have looked out for me; you should have spoken for me.” “But you never came to talk to me. You never said, ‘Will you speak up for me?’ You never said anything. And so I thought you were fine. And now you’re mad at me because I couldn’t read your mind?” And I was thinking: “Well, if we’re asked to publish more, then we can argue that we should not teach more,” because, technically, we could teach a 3–4 teaching schedule [instead of a 3–3 schedule]. . . . So I thought, “Well, if we had more we were expected to publish, then we could hold to that 3–3.” That was my rationale. Plus, I also had a book published, so maybe I didn’t feel as intimidated by it. I mean, we weren’t telling people they had to write a *book*—just to write an additional article. So I didn’t think it was that scary. But, for other people, that’s a lot—they haven’t had that kind of experience. But, anyway, those were some of the things that happened.

As explored toward the end of chapter 6, though, tenure—not a union contract—is what gives most faculty members the confidence to speak their minds about issues related to policies, governance, and other such department- and university-related matters. Even faculty members at unionized campuses mentioned the import of tenure in their in their perceived abilities to remain “protected” while being more outspoken in the classroom, at the department level, at the college and university level, and within their communities.

Both faculty participants from Meldon State pointed out how serving on the Faculty Union counts as service toward promotion and tenure. One connected the union to salaries, clear tenure requirements, shared governance, and equitability among departments. He also mentally associated, at least, the union with the somewhat suppressed scholarly culture at the institution: he referred to the situation as being one of “less of a culture of research and real professional development than there might be” without a union. This lengthy quotation, in response to a question

about the impact of the union on faculty satisfaction and the faculty work atmosphere, shows how he bridged the connection among all these ideas:

Certainly with regard to tenure: I can't say whether it's the union that *made* that process—but certainly the union *protects* that process. And, to a certain extent, I think it's a little *too* lenient. I've talked with the union, the president, and vice presidents about that, and they said, "Well, that's not our job. If management wants to say that somebody is not qualified to keep going, then management needs to document that." I actually think—for example, our deans are not allowed to sit in on our classes—I do think there is a place for that. Our peer evaluations become a little bit too cozy otherwise—you know, "So-and-so's the greatest professor ever!" There's a lot of "greatest professors ever" in this sort of situation. But that's probably true in other places, as well. So, yes, it's no question that it made the tenure—or that it contributed to the tenure process being very transparent—and having clear benchmarks that one could reach. . . . For a place like Meldon, which defines itself as a teaching institution: "Okay, let's make sure that the tenure process focuses on teaching—maybe service." You know, that's very legitimate. . . . But even though I am very involved in the union, I do think the union—I think that there is less of a culture of research and real professional development than there might be, and I'm not going to say that the union causes that—I don't think it does—but I wish there were more of a sense that everyone should be engaged in research and writing, you know, significant projects. A lot of people in my department are—and the English Department is actually very good in that regard. But, you know, some people in my department—many people around the university—I don't think are, and I wish there were more. So, that's something that I would say. In terms of—not so much work life but, you know, the attractions: I came here because they offered me a job, and I didn't have anything else at the time. Certainly one of the things that made it attractive was the salary, which was pretty good for this kind of institution at that time. We've actually lost ground since, comparatively; but, you know, that [the originally attractive salary], I think, is certainly a function of the union that I am grateful for, and that's one reason why I've participated in it. I also think—I do think that, in terms of the general shared governance in the university, that the union—and this is not so much for any individual promotion and tenure case, but in general—the shared governance is protected by the union, and that makes things better. We were not able to win a lot on the class-size issue last year [when the administration wanted to raise maximum class sizes], but we did force the university to bring more transparency—or at least to try to be more equitable between departments in terms of pushing more people into sections around and across departments.

Things like that. So, you know, the union is helpful. That's been the case here.

If that faculty member at Meldon State was hinting that unions might have a downside in terms of not encouraging faculty members to be more “engaged in [a culture of] research and writing,” even if he believes the union is not the cause or origin of the situation, he nevertheless saw the union as bringing more benefits than detriments to the faculty members. The third faculty member at Ashdale State, however, held a dissenting view about his faculty union and its impact on the campus:

The union is a problem unto itself. The union, I think, is actually one of the biggest problems on this campus. It's a protection racket. And it is—to be quite frank—it's a closed shop. . . . So does the union complicate matters? The union *is* part of the problem: that, and the dysfunctional administration.

Although one faculty member at Ashdale State, as quoted above, pointed out the “divide between faculty and administration” that seems exacerbated by the union, his implication was nonetheless that the union works to protect faculty interests against those of the administration (which are often sensed as being in opposition, or at least divergent). His colleague agreed with the principle but not with its application: “You need some protection against the folks in administration. You have to have it. And the unions are not going to do it, because the unions are *absolutely* as corrupt as anything [here].” But he did not discount the union and, particularly, the union contract altogether:

Tenure—actually, this is one spot where the union has helped: The union contract clearly delineates the procedures that take place when faculty have to be laid off for fiscal exigency. Senior faculty are protected, according to the contract. Now, the contract—the contract can be broken! Again, the University of Southern Mississippi, Florida State, elsewhere; I've seen

this happen; I know that. But, in that regard, the union does afford at least a modicum of protection of senior faculty—and that’s what tenure. . . . I mean, “last hired, first fired” is more or less the way it works, and you’d begin with the non-tenure-track faculty. And, given the fiscal realities, they should have started laying people off two years ago.

Finally, only one faculty member at a non-unionized campus commented on unions during our conversation. A nearby unionized campus in the same state (not one of the campuses selected as a site in this study) had just been mentioned, and this participant was comparing the two campuses, although I did not inquire as to upon what evidence: “Well, I think we’re happier here. There are a lot of unhappy faculty there: they have trouble with their union and union administration; we’re not unionized. So, you know? I think this is probably a more peaceful place to work.”

Overall, then, those in this study who spoke about unionized faculty generally did so in a positive tone, emphasizing the benefits to policies (particularly requirements for tenure and promotion) and faculty salaries. Their comments therefore reinforce the suggestion made by Christine Wickens, after a thorough review of the literature on university labor unions, that positive outcomes are generally believed to be returned by faculty unions on “job security and tenure, promotion procedures, and general due process”—a “set of working conditions [that are] at the heart of the faculty unionization controversy” (2008, 551). I repeat the words of a very pro-union faculty member at Grovehill State: “I can’t say it enough: *Everybody should be unionized*. I think it’s our last, best hope against the erosion of academic freedom and tenure and everything else.”



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## VITA

Originally from Kentucky, Steven E. Gump earned an undergraduate degree in Asian studies and religious studies from Cornell University as a Cornell National Scholar and Cornell Tradition Fellow (*summa cum laude*, 1996) before spending two years in Matsusaka, Japan, as a junior high English teacher on the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program. While in Japan, he completed numerous pilgrimages, including the historically and culturally significant Saigoku Kannon route, and traveled around much of East and Southeast Asia. After working in the technology and automotive industries, he matriculated at the University of Wales, Cardiff, as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar (MBA with distinction, 2001). At the University of Illinois, he completed a master's degree in Asian studies (with distinction, 2003) before beginning his doctoral studies as an Illinois Distinguished Fellow and Letitia Walsh Fellow in the College of Education.

As a graduate student at Illinois, Mr. Gump served as teaching assistant for the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, graduate assistant and research assistant for the College of Education, consultant and assistant director at the University of Illinois Writers Workshop, and editor of the *Southeast Review of Asian Studies*. He served as graduate student representative to such committees as the Tuition Policy Advisory Committee, the Graduate College Fellowship Board Executive Committee, and the Graduate College Executive Committee and Program Subcommittee. Off campus, he presented papers at annual meetings of the American Educational Research Association, Association for the Study of Higher Education, Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs, Midwest Conference on Asian History and Culture, and Southeast Conference of the Association for Asian Studies; and he presented at graduate student conferences at Harvard University, the University of Illinois, and the University of Toronto. He was an invited speaker at the University of Wisconsin International Education Conference in 2003.

His articles, essays, and reviews—predominantly on such topics as Asian culture and religion, business education, educational leadership, food culture, international education, pedagogy, and scholarly writing and publishing—have been published in such venues as *Business Communication Quarterly*; *College Teaching*; *Educational Studies*; *Food, Culture & Society*; *International Education*; the *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*; the *International Journal of Human Resource Management*; *Japan Studies Review*; the *Journal of Ethics in Leadership*; the *Journal of General Education*; the *Journal of Language for International Business*; the *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*; and the *Phi Delta Kappan*.