

MAKING THE MOST OF THE MID-CAREER AS AN MSU ACADEMIC

A symposium for fixed-term and tenure system faculty, academic staff, and leaders

April 30, 2018, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., MSU Union, Ballroom



Academic Advancement Network (AAN) in collaboration with MSU's
WorkLife Office and Vice President for Research & Graduate Studies



What is Mid-Career?

- A long, but somewhat loosely defined, phase of academic life
 - Rich with opportunities and challenges
 - Qualitatively different from early career
 - New responsibilities, such as service, leadership, mentoring
 - High expectations for achievement
 - Somewhat more autonomy, more room for individual initiative
 - Less clear goals than early career
 - **Thoughtful strategy is required to make the most of mid-career**





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The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education

A Research Practice Partnership

<http://coache.gse.harvard.edu> | @coacheproject



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Understanding & Supporting Faculty at Midcareer

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(he/him/his)



Think of a **gratifying moment** in
your career so far.

What at that moment made
being a professor (or other
academic) **a great job?**

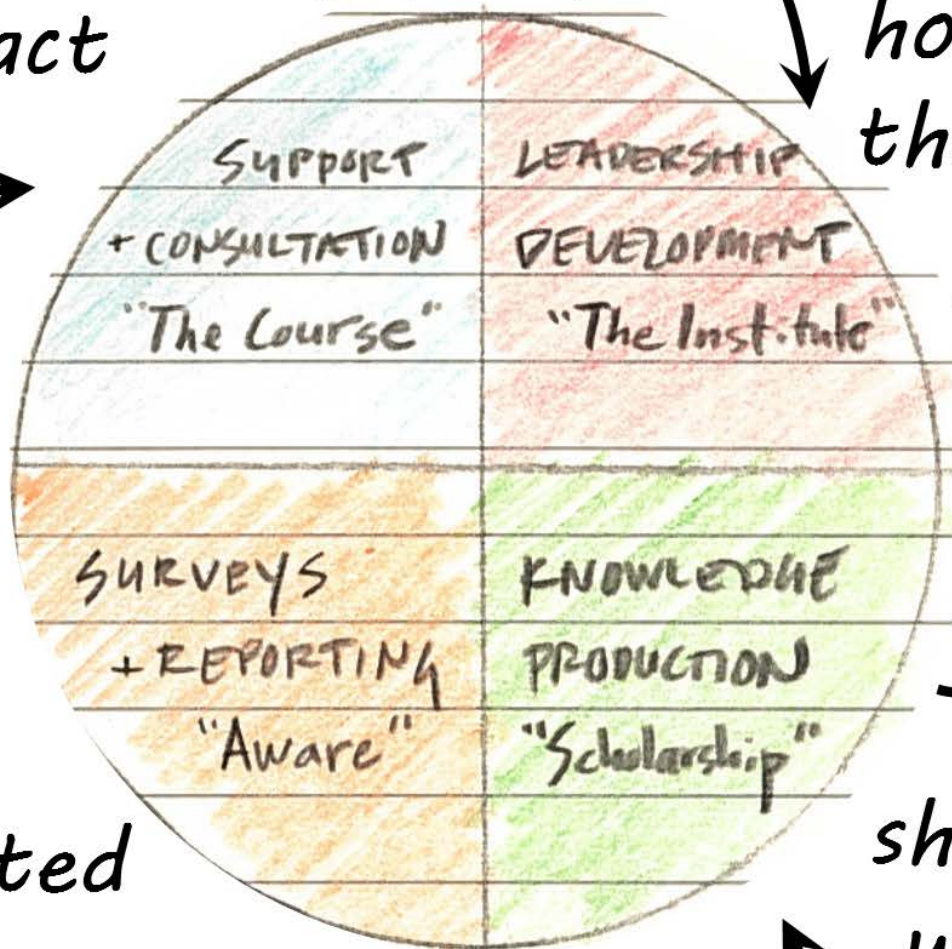


collaborative on academic
careers in higher education



needed this
for impact

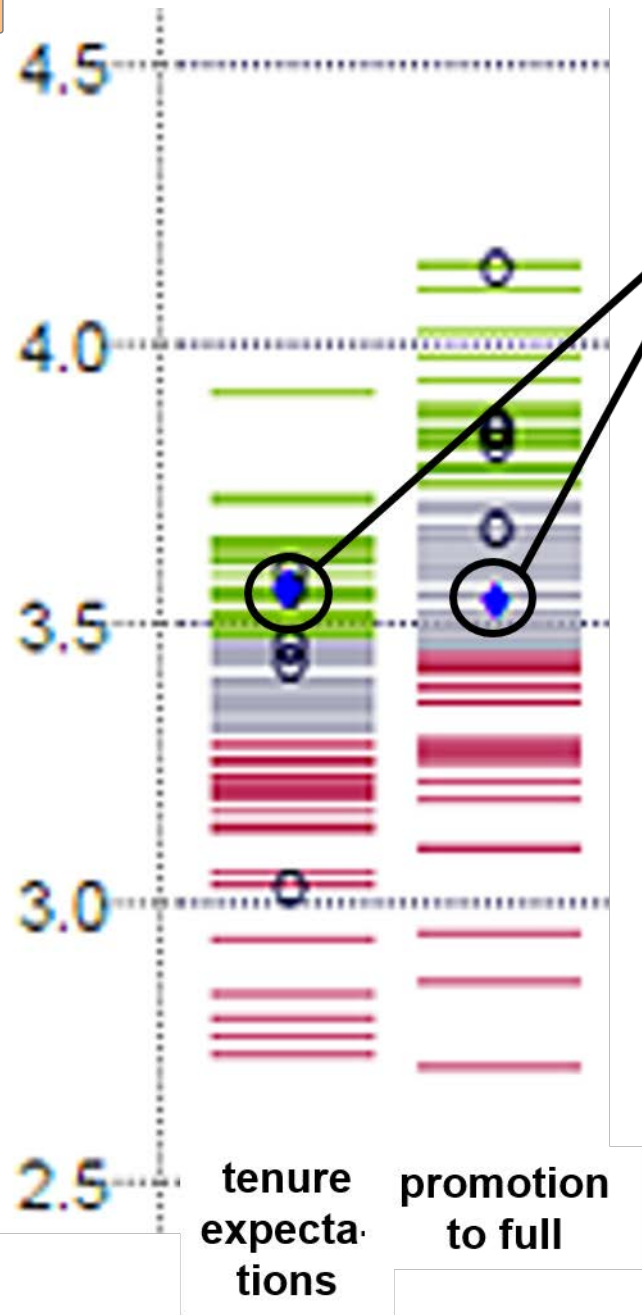
how to lead
the faculty?



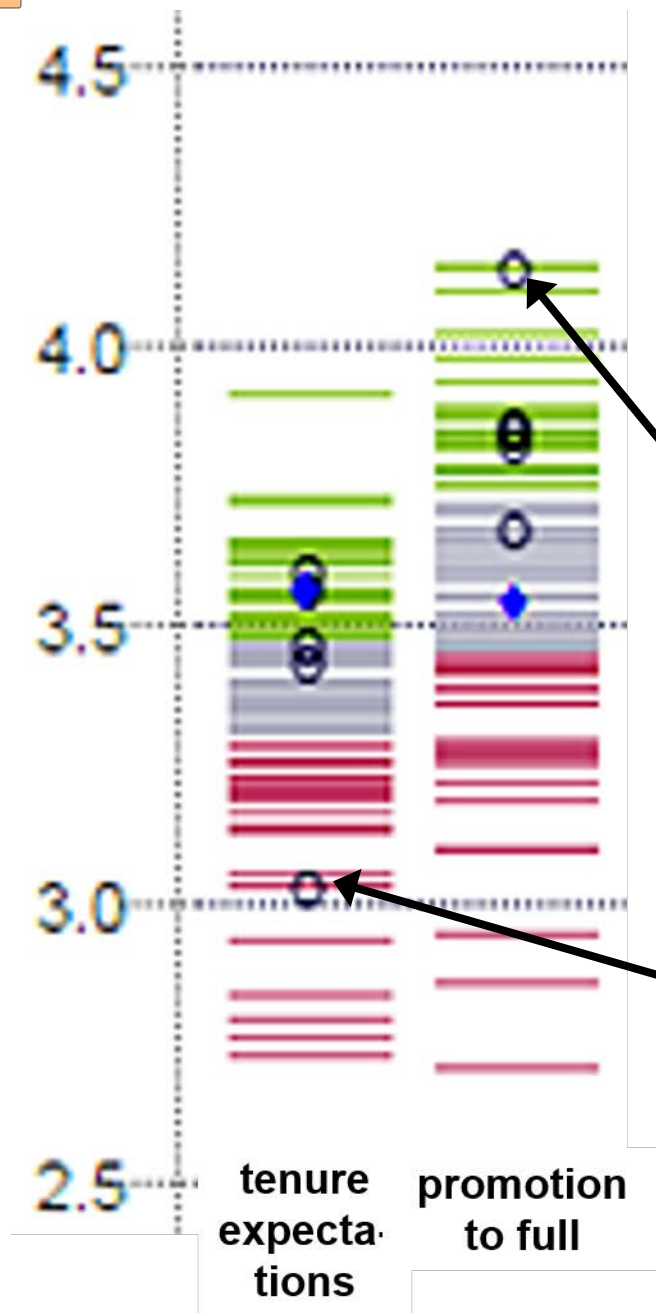
started
here

shared data
w/scholars





identical means...
but widely different meanings



What are they doing right?

Will they improve? How?



My Assumptions

Adults can grow.

We are unfinished, incomplete beings.
Limitations can be transcended.



Your “high-growth” experience

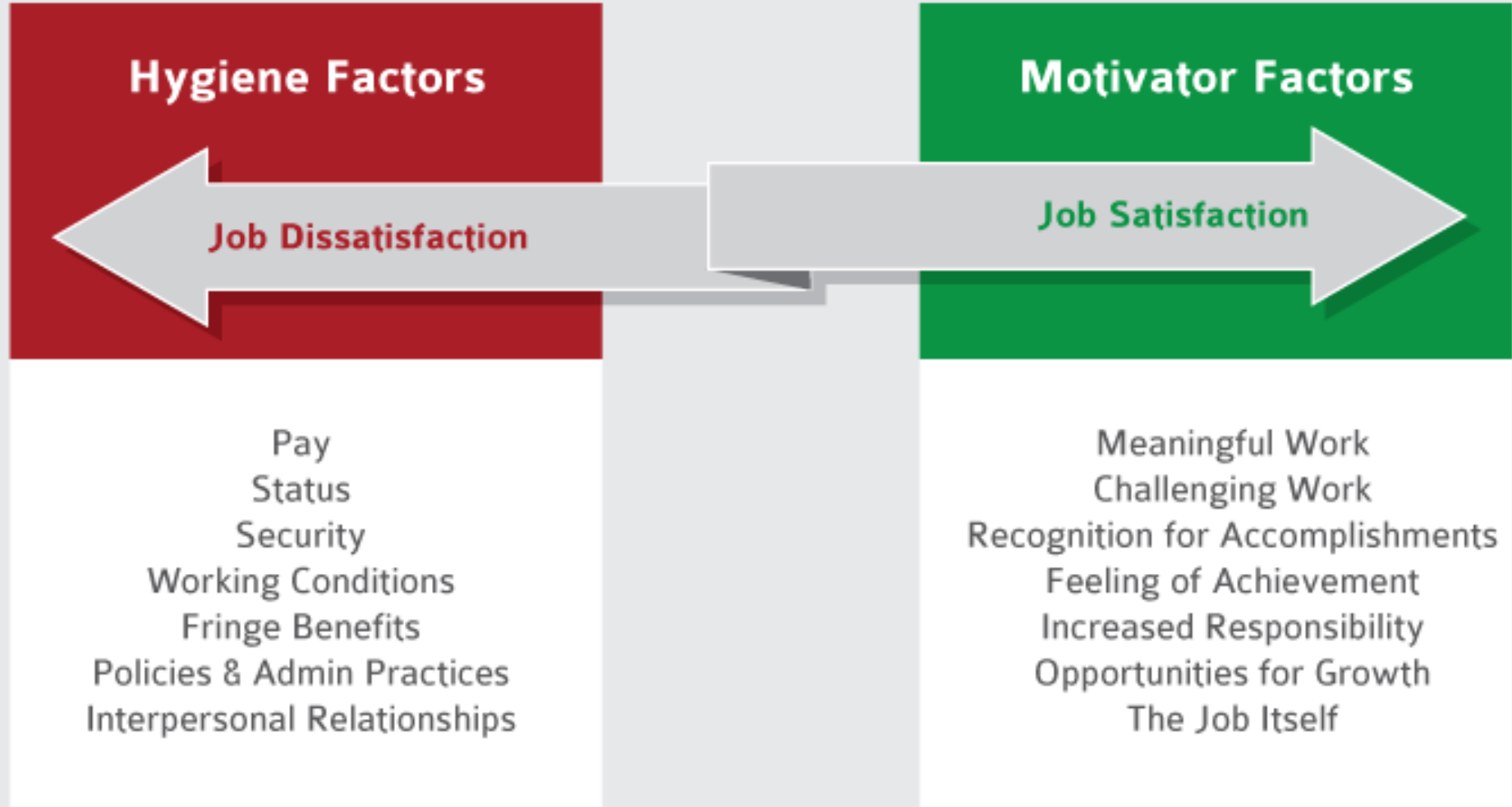
- What was the situation?
- What enabled your growth?
- What did that growth then *enable* in your life and/or work?
- Who helped you?
- How did they help?



More Assumptions

Adults can grow.

Colleges thrive when faculty thrive...
... and suffer when faculty lack agency.





Trustee to President:

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

Trustee to President:

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

President to Trustee:

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



My Assumptions (3)

Adults can grow.

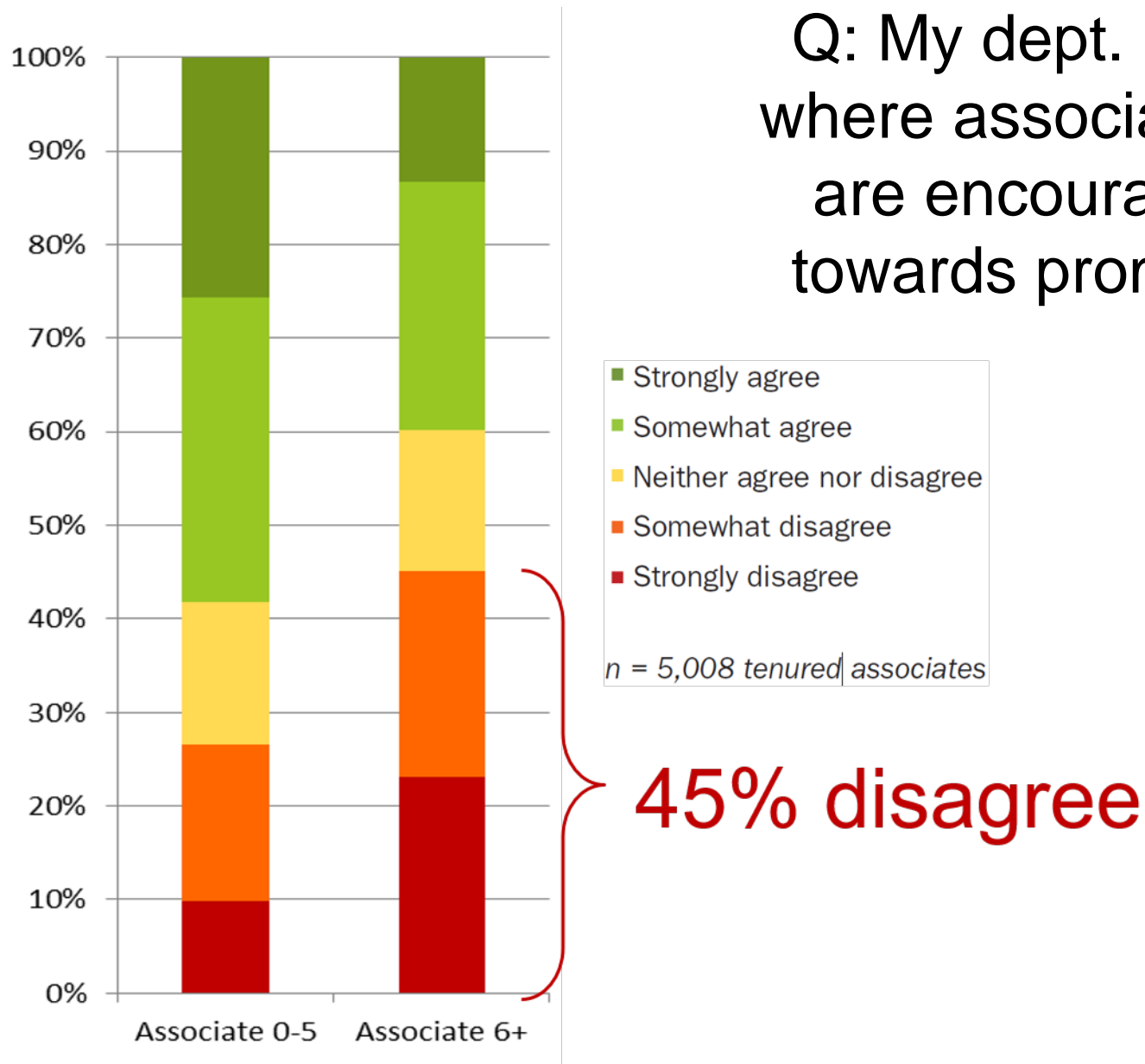
Colleges thrive when faculty thrive.

Further promotion is a good goal.

After all, you were promoted with the expectation of continuing your trajectory... but obstacles arise.

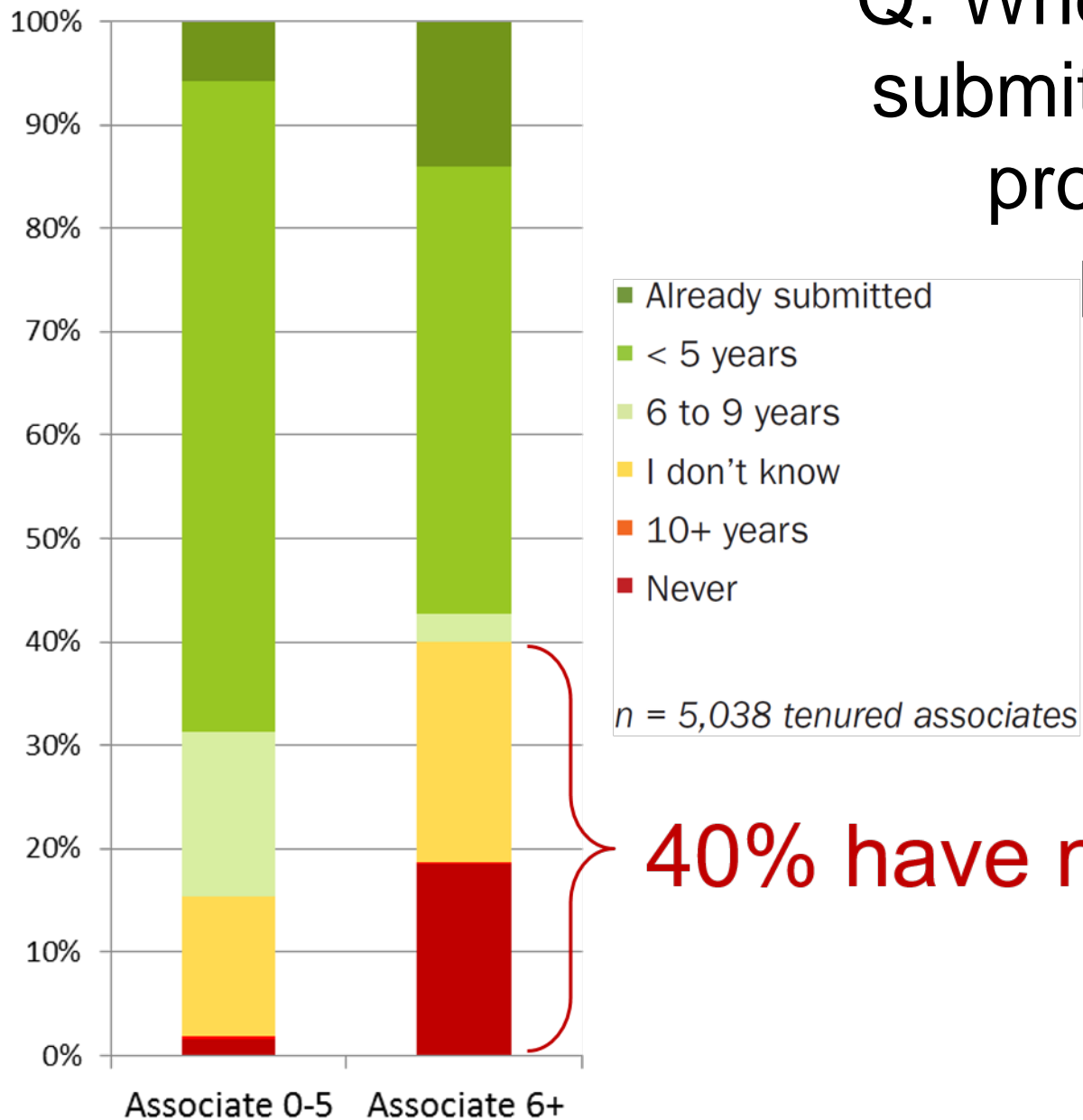


Q: My dept. has a culture where associate professors are encouraged to work towards promotion to full.

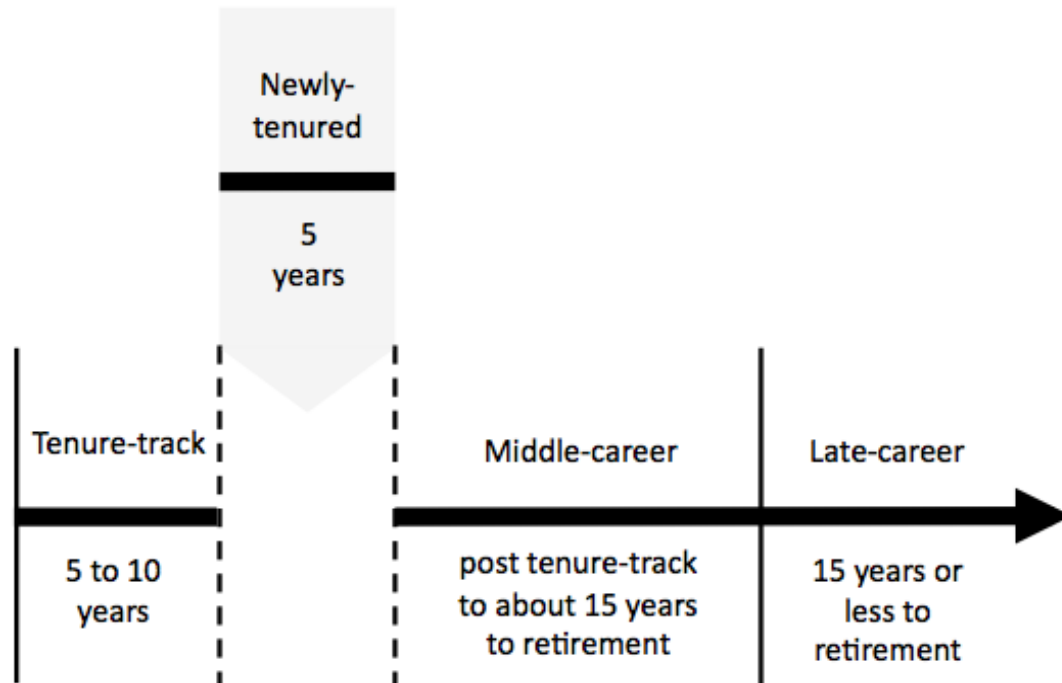




Q: When do you plan to submit your dossier for promotion to full professor?



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



- Sources:
- Russell, B. C. (2013). The workplace satisfaction of newly-tenured faculty members at research universities (Order No. 3579020). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1503847605).
- Baldwin, R. G., & Chang, D. A. (2006). Reinforcing our "keystone" faculty: Strategies to support faculty in the middle years of academic life. *Liberal Education*, 92(4), 28-35.
- Neumann, A. (2009a). *Professing to learn: Creating tenured lives and careers in the American research university*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.



My Assumptions (4)

Adults can grow.

Colleges thrive when faculty thrive.

Further promotion is a good goal.

Most midcareer faculty work really, really hard. (Really hard.)

Many are succeeding in ways others can't see (and don't reward).



Wet Hot American Summer (2001)



“less than”?



Coping With Midcareer Malaise



How to assist professors through the post-tenure blues.

March 18, 2012

Aging Professors Create a Faculty Bottleneck At some universities, 1 in 3 academics are now 60 or older



By Audrey Williams June

When Mary Beth Norton went to Cornell University in 1971, she was the department's first female hire. An accomplished professor has a

: She is the oldest Associate Professor at Cornell.

The Associate Professor Blues

September 28, 2013, 7:10 pm

By Claire Potter



In "Supporting the Second Book," (*Perspectives on History*, September 2013), American Historical Association President Kenneth Pomeranz elaborates on a topic he launched in the previous issue. I thought it was great that Pomeranz came out last month about his post-tenure publishing delay: one of the things that I have learned on the #CraftonLine

June 3, 2012

Why Are Associate Professors So Unhappy?



Lisa DeJong for The Chronicle

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

By Robin Wilson

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

Unhappy Associate Professors

June 4, 2012 - 3:00am

By Scott Jaschik

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

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



PTSD

Post Tenure Stress Disorder?



E-mail

Ext Messages

Deleted Items

Drafts

(1)

Inbox

(99999)

Outbox

Sent Items



Lazy, passive

Isolated

Marginalized

Cynical

Unaccountable

Old white male

Bored

Misunderstood

Not improving teaching

Discouraged

Stymied career

Angry

No-show

Complainer

Abandoned

Longing for the good ol' days



Lazy, passive

Cynical

Unaccountable

Old white male

Bored

Not improving teaching

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No-show

Complainer

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Isolated

Marginalized

Misunderstood

Discouraged

Stymied career

Abandoned



Adults can grow.

Colleges thrive when faculty thrive.

Further promotion is a good goal.

Midcareer faculty work really hard.

Gratifying career moments

High-growth experiences

What gets in the way?



- Teaching protections are lifted
- Service load increases
- Asked to serve as chair
- Mentoring disappears
- Grants are more competitive
- Family life / crisis intervenes
- New chair/dean moves goalposts to full
- No clear path to promotion?
- Advising
- Bad experience at tenure—won't repeat it!
- *All of the above x2 for women, fac. of color*

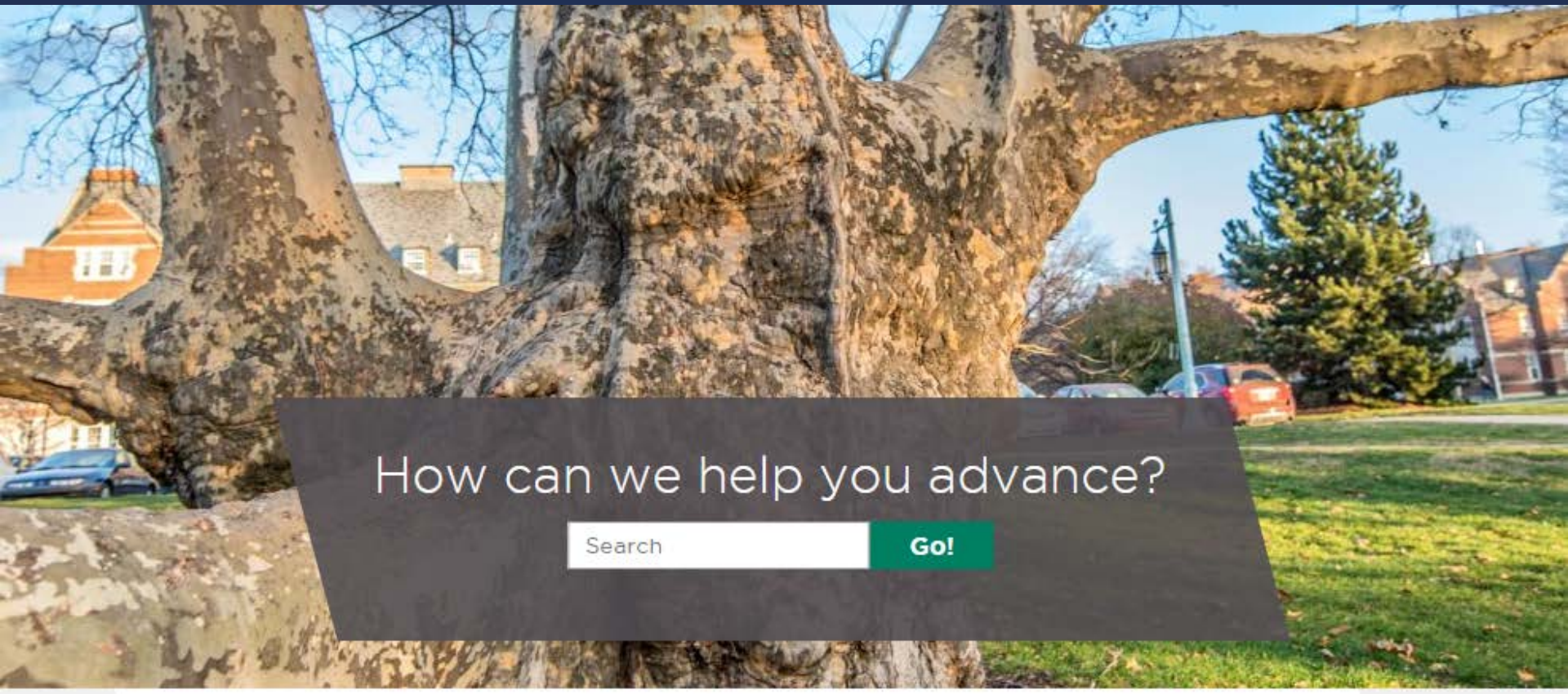


Average age of faculty, by rank and tenure status, at 50 COACHE research universities

Tenure status	rank	<i>n</i>	median	mean
not tenure track	Instructor/Lecturer	6,771	48	48.4
not tenure track	Assistant	5,078	44	46.0
not tenure track	Associate	2,364	53	52.8
not tenure track	Full	1,064	60	59.3
pre-tenure	Assistant	9,245	38	39.0
tenured	Associate	14,129	48	50.2
tenured	Full	18,306	60	59.3



Supporting Faculty



How can we help you advance?

Go!



Get data-wise.



Years in rank, current associate professors, COACHE research universities, 2015-17

“For how long have associate professors here been at this rank?”

Academic Area	median	mean	Standard deviation
Humanities	9	10.4	7.93
Visual and Performing Arts	9	9.8	7.29
Business	8	9.8	8.12
Education	8	9.6	7.76
Social Sciences	7	9.5	8.13
Engi / Comp Sci / Math / Stats	6	9.4	8.33
Biological Sciences	6	9.0	8.07
Physical Sciences	6	8.6	7.67
Health / Human Ecology	6	8.1	6.34
Ag / Nat Res / Env Sci	6	8.1	7.13



How does our time-in-rank compare to other faculties like us?

**Years in rank,
current associate professors,
50 COACHE research universities,
2015-17**

Discipline	Comparison Univ. median	Comparison Univ. mean	Comparison Univ. Standard deviation	Anonymous Big Ten median	Anonymous Big Ten mean	Anonymous Big Ten s.d.
Humanities	8	10.3	8.15	12	11.5	4.51
Business	7	9.7	8.34	9	10.3	5.34
Visual & Performing Arts	8	9.6	7.53	10	11.1	5.47
Education	7	9.4	8.04	9	11.0	5.49
Social Sciences	7	9.4	8.29	11	11.4	5.62
Engi/CompSci/Math/Stats	6	9.3	8.36	11	11.1	7.16
Biological Sciences	6	8.8	7.93	9	11.7	9.65
Physical Sciences	6	8.5	7.96	9	9.6	4.24
Agri/NatRes/EnviSci	6	8.0	7.13	n/a	n/a	n/a
Health & Human Ecology	6	7.6	6.08	10	10.7	7.38



Reverse-engineer
successful careers



Make orientation
an authentic
eye-opener.

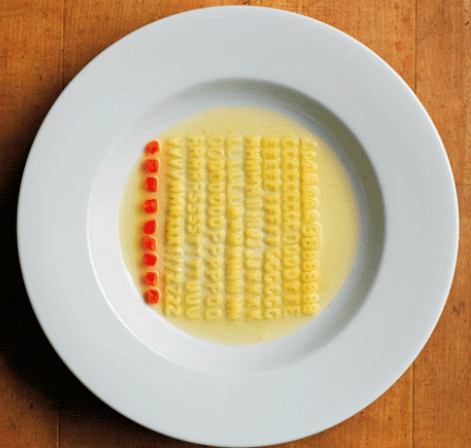




Start a “contested
topics”
conversation.*

*Source: Baldwin, R., DeZure, D., Shaw, A., and Moretto, K. (2008). Mapping the terrain of mid-career faculty at a research university. *Change*, Sept-Oct 2008, 46-55.

Open new pathways
to promotion through
modest T&P reforms.



Start a
departmental
dialog about
differentiating,
rebalancing
and renegotiation.



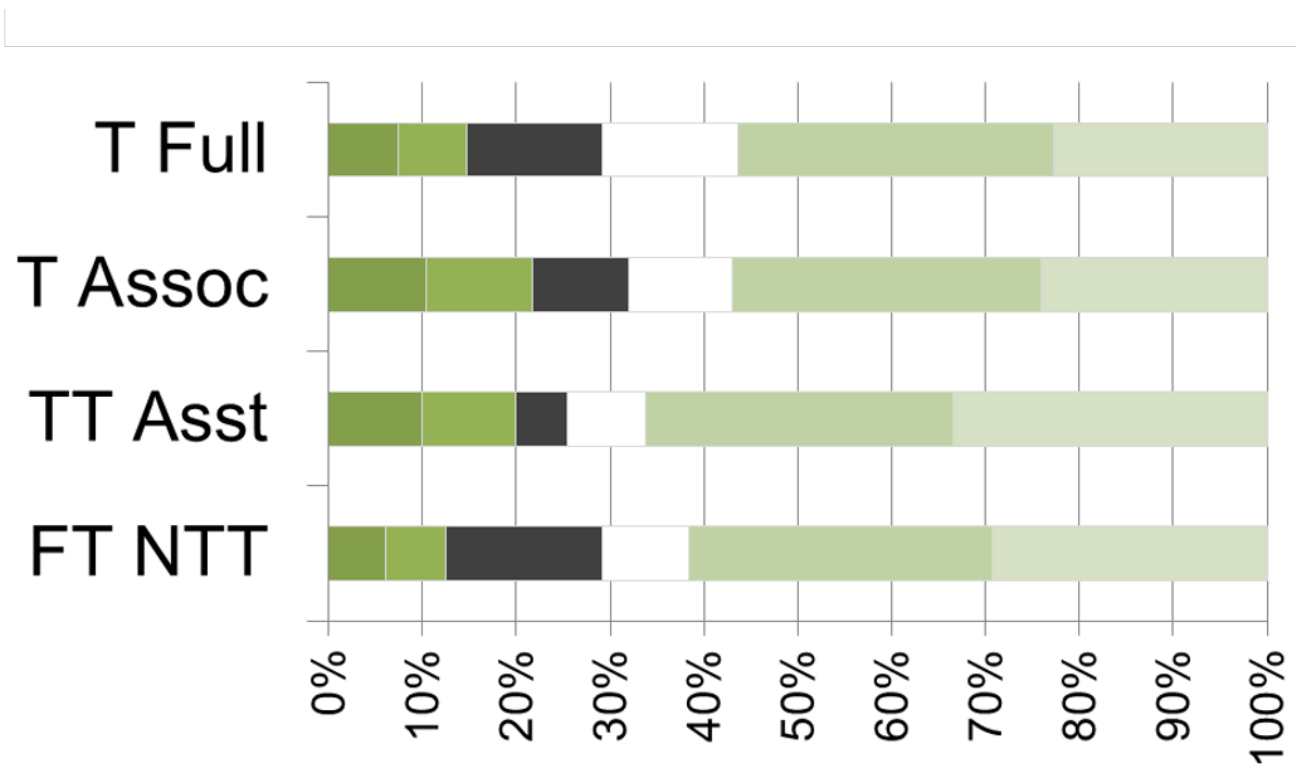


Mentor across the ranks.



Tenured associate professors are more likely than others to be poorly mentored or not mentored at all in their departments.

- Very ineffective
- Somewhat ineffective
- Not received
- Neither/Nor
- Somewhat effective
- Very effective

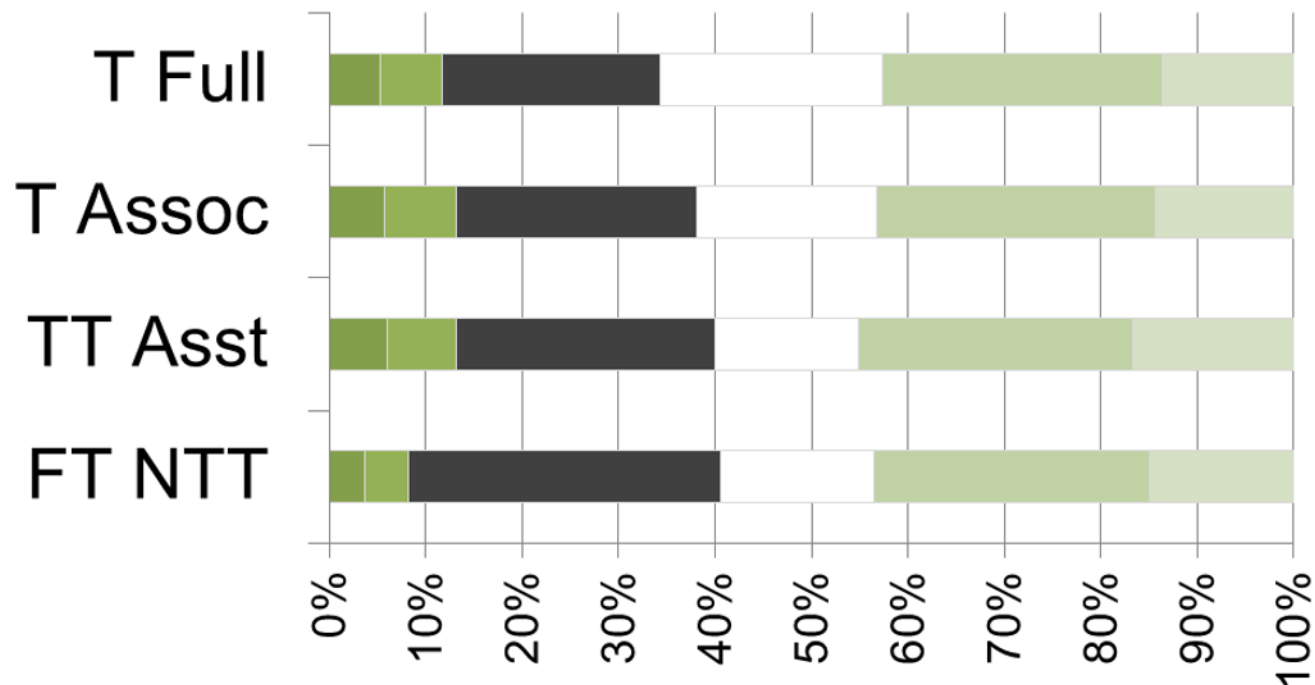


2016,2017,2018: 50 Carnegie R institutions, n=24,247



Effectiveness of mentoring outside department, within institution

- Very ineffective
- Somewhat ineffective
- Not received
- Neither/Nor
- Somewhat effective
- Very effective





Invest in
chairs as
leaders,
not merely
caretakers





There is no such thing as “The Faculty,”
so make changes one department at a time.



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Q&A

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(he/him/his)

1. Write your three key take-aways on a spare sheet of paper.
- 2. Write your name at the top.**
3. Shift your paper to the right. If you don't see your take-aways on that person's page, add them.
- 4. Repeat as often as your table likes.**
5. Retrieve your original sheet.

Insights for Making the Most of Mid-Career

- **Victor DiRita**, Chairperson, Microbiology and Molecular Genetics
- **Jim Dearing**, Chairperson, Communication
- **Chris Gray**, Director, Veterinary Medical Center
- **Malea Powell**, Chairperson, Writing, Rhetoric, and American Culture
- **Terah Venzant Chambers**, Associate Professor, Educational Administration
- **Mark Urban-Lurain**, Associate Professor, Dean's Office in the College of Engineering



BREAKOUT SESSION SCHEDULE

(Refer to your agenda for session details)

- **10:40-10:50 a.m. BREAK**
- **10:50-11:20 a.m. Breakout Session #1**
- **11:20-11:30 a.m. BREAK**
- **11:30-12:00 p.m. Breakout Session #2**
- **12:00-12:30 p.m. Reporting and Wrap-up**



Reporting

- What are some important issues we should highlight?
- Questions still being considered or you would like to talk about?
- Suggestions you have or that you heard that you would like to share regarding issues in the mid-career?



Moving Forward

- Ideas on how the University can support those at mid-career based on issues discussed today?



Wrap-up

- Thank you
- Evaluations

