

One Faculty Campaign FAQ

What is academic freedom? Academic freedom is the collective freedom of the scholarly community to govern itself in the interest of serving the common good in a democratic society. It encompasses the right of faculty to full freedom in research and publication, freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, and freedom from institutional censorship or discipline when faculty speak or write as citizens. Academic freedom is the essential characteristic of institutions of higher education. *Tenure is the only material guarantee of academic freedom.*

Is academic freedom the same as freedom of speech? No. Freedom of speech is protected by the law. Academic freedom is secured only through the tenure system.

What is tenure? Academic freedom is essential to the common good; tenure is the actualization of academic freedom. Tenure secures two ends: 1) freedom of teaching, research, and extramural activities and 2) job security to make the profession desirable to skilled individuals.

Tenure means that a faculty member has a continuous appointment; it is not an indication of professional standing. The probationary period and review allow tenured colleagues to determine whether a candidate is suitable for continuous employment; probationary review is not an evaluation of the distinctive merit of an individual's scholarly profile. Tenure protects and promotes academic freedom. It enables scholars to pursue their pedagogical and intellectual work in the ways they deem appropriate without threat of dismissal. The proportion of tenured faculty at an institution is the measure of its academic freedom.

Is tenure a guarantee of lifetime employment? No. Following AAUP principles, after the probationary period tenured faculty can be removed only for cause and through due process as determined by a committee of their faculty peers.

How much will the proposal cost? A fully staffed tenure-track university is estimated to add between \$2.64 million and \$3.83 million to annual operating costs, based on average 2022 compensation differences, without benefits, between a tenure-track Assistant Professor and an Assistant Professor of Practice or full-time Visiting Professor. Wesleyan's 2022 operating expenses were \$250.8 million and its revenue was \$268.4 million, with an endowment of \$1.61 billion.

Who decides what a "fully staffed" unit is? Each unit decides, in good faith, how many faculty members constitute full staffing. Full staffing means that normal variations in faculty teaching commitments due to sabbatical, leave, administrative and committee service, fellowships, and other normal features of the academic profession are built into the composition of the unit's tenure-line faculty. A fully staffed university is one in which all units have sufficient tenure-line faculty to meet their staffing needs without undue strain or recourse to either short- or long-term contingent positions.