

I would never have applied to John Carroll if the Board's hardship amendment had been in place then. It's embarrassing that the Board keeps insisting--against the faculty, the national professional organization for faculty, and multiple national disciplinary professional organizations--that they have not eliminated tenure when they clearly have. I would not have applied to a university whose Board was so out of step with the norms of higher education and so ignorant about tenure--or worse, so misleading about what they were doing to tenure.

I did apply, and went through the rigorous tenure process successfully with the understanding that both sides had made a long-term commitment. The agreement was: I would teach, research, and serve the University to the very best of my ability and with the liberty of inquiry in scholarship and of intellectual challenge in the classroom that comes with tenure and academic freedom. In return, John Carroll undertook to employ me for the long haul, through the early, middle, and late stages of my career, assured that at each point I would offer to the University the best of where I was in my career: scholarly expertise and enthusiasm, teaching maturity and leadership, advice and service with the long view of the institution's mission.

Now, as a result of the Board's actions, here I am, nowhere near the natural end of my career, with John Carroll having reneged on their side of the bargain. The public statements of the Board have reinforced to JCU and to the national academic community that they either do not understand or do not value the fundamental tenets of university life. This is both a betrayal of my professional commitment to John Carroll and a shameful dismissal of the norms and expectations of institutions of higher education in this country.

Beyond my own case, this will have repercussions as new PhDs discover JCU's governing board has turned their back on basic concepts of shared governance and tenure and, as a result, those new PhDs will not apply for faculty jobs at John Carroll. Also, recent hires at John Carroll will look for new jobs at places that actually understand and respect tenure.

And our reputation, our ability to teach and mentor students, and our community will suffer.