

Office of the President



Founded in 1905 for the  
Advancement of Classical Scholarship, Teaching,  
and Appreciation

March 11, 2021

William Donnelly, Chair of the Board of Directors  
Michael Johnson, President  
Steven Herbert, Provost and Academic Vice President  
John Carroll University  
1 John Carroll Blvd.  
University Heights, OH 44118

Dear Mr. Donnelly, Prof. Johnson, and Prof. Herbert,

We, the members of the Executive Committee of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South (CAMWS, [camws.org](http://camws.org)), write to express our deep concern about the recent decision taken by John Carroll University's Board of Directors to amend the faculty handbook in ways that immediately weaken and effectively eliminate the tenure system at your university. CAMWS is an international organization for Classics students and teachers at all levels, with a geographic range that covers 32 states and 3 Canadian provinces, and we welcome members from far beyond that range. While our closest contact with John Carroll University is with the excellent faculty in your Classical Studies program, we recognize JCU's commitment to the broad base of liberal arts education, in the Jesuit tradition, and we fear that your recent decision threatens the continued success of that tradition. We encourage you to reconsider the Board's decision, for the benefit of your students and your faculty, and also for the future of John Carroll University.

Your institution prides itself on 'inspired leadership – leading not by power... but by supporting those around us'. That is a noble sentiment, but strikingly absent from the decision to lower the bar so drastically for the termination of faculty. Without the protection of tenure, which is such a fundamental feature of higher education, faculty will be constrained in their teaching and research, staking their livelihoods on the decisions of institutional leaders who can claim 'budgetary hardship'. The most accomplished faculty will certainly leave JCU, rising stars will look elsewhere to start their careers, students will suffer the absence of challenging ideas and research, and the reputation of JCU, already in question thanks to this decision, will be damaged further.

Most of us in CAMWS are academics, many of us are administrators, and all of us understand the financial pressures facing institutions of higher education. We nevertheless feel strongly that your response to those pressures by weakening the foundation of academic freedom will in fact weaken your entire university, and not only financially.

For the Executive Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David J. Schenker".

David J. Schenker, President, CAMWS [schenkerd@missouri.edu](mailto:schenkerd@missouri.edu)  
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