

The Board's actions have effectively dismantled the institution of tenure at John Carroll, and no amount of denial on their part changes that fact.

After having earned tenure and promotion to Full professor at my first university, and after moving my family in order to take another tenured, Full Professor position here, means that over twenty years of achievement in my profession have been rendered null and void. Obviously this fundamentally changes my relationship to John Carroll, because the university has fundamentally changed its relationship with me. I had been a serious professional, recruited here by John Carroll with the understanding that my hire meant the university was committing to me --and to my family-- for the long term. I had thought I was coming to a serious university, i.e., one that took academic freedom, scholarship, and its own values seriously.

The Board's decision means that by contrast, my tenure protections have been voided and I am now essentially a gig employee for the university. The Board has revoked entirely its existing commitments to me and to all tenured and tenure-track faculty here. Anyone who joined John Carroll with the understanding that tenure was, in fact, tenure - as it had been defined in the Faculty Handbook and at most institutions in North America -- feels duped, disappointed, and angry right now.

As an accomplished, tenured professor, I would not have come to John Carroll without tenure; I have no doubt that most of my colleagues feel the same way. Moreover, the Board has demonstrated that they don't understand tenure or academic freedom at all, which means that John Carroll is in fact a deeply unserious university, not the university I thought I was joining.

I love John Carroll students and I love teaching them, but that love is now tempered by what is at best an ambivalence toward the institution as a whole. That love is now tempered by the fact that I need to be ready to look for another position -- and a position that is likely not in academia, because tenured positions are scarce. That love is now tempered with deep anxiety and substantial disappointment, which can be seen on the faces of virtually all of my colleagues, even behind our Covid masks.

John Carroll means "promises broken" to me now. It means commitments not honored, people and professionals not valued, faculty not trusted or respected.