From the Old Normal to the Next Normal: Inequities in Faculty Hiring, Promotion, Tenure, and Advancement

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INTRODUCTION

"Knowledge," suggests Simon Marginson, "is the unique claim of higher education. It is at the core of every public and private good that is created in the sector" (2011, 414). But knowledge does not exist in the abstract. The intellectual endeavors that create knowledge "transpire in a world where race, gender, and class are important not only as subjects for investigation, but as structural factors that partly shape researchers and their scientific gaze" (Bonilla-Silva and Zuberi, 2008, 22). Thus, for the knowledge that the university provisions as its unique claim to be representative of the society it purports to serve, then the creators and purveyors of that knowledge—the faculty—must be equally represented at all levels of the knowledge-creation ecosystem. In this brief, we summarize the state of the faculty in American higher education; contextualize this current state within longer-term trends in faculty hiring, promotion, tenure, and advancement; and explore how the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the movement for racial justice in American society have accelerated, disrupted, or stalled some of these trends.

We first briefly describe our overall approach for this paper and our sources of data and evidence. We then discus broad trends in the fiscal landscape of higher education, with a particular focus on public higher education institutions, which enroll nearly three-quarters of the nation's undergraduate students (Irwin et al., 2021, 24) and two-thirds of all faculty members (Hussar et al., 2020, 151). Using these trends as context, we explore, in the following sections, how faculty hiring, advancement, promotion, and tenure has evolved over the past three decades. We then describe the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on these trends, and close, in the final section, with provocations for the American professoriate and the academic leaders who support them as we look ahead to the "new normal" of faculty life. Throughout, we "center at the margins" and emphasize the experiences of faculty belonging to historically marginalized social categories.

METHODOLOGY

The analysis we present below is grounded in an integrative synthesis of scholarly literature, policy briefs and news media, and original data sources. We started by reviewing recently published peer-reviewed papers, books and book chapters, and research briefs and data tables compiled by the Department of Education, the American Association of University Professors, and other education intermediaries to establish the broad contours—a metanarrative—of the long-term trends in faculty hiring, promotion, tenure, and advancement. We then supplemented these materials with qualitative and quantitative data drawn from the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Job Satisfaction and Retention and Exit Surveys, to give voice to faculty experiences through the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, to contextualize the data and the scholarly research in broader public discourses about the academy, where relevant, we drew on reports and articles published by major national and education-specific news-media sources.

In developing the synthetic narrative, we kept in mind principles of equity and criticality as we evaluated the research and the data on which it is premised. For example, when evaluating quantitative statistics disaggregated by racial categories, we paid particular attention to how they might portray the experiences of those holding multiple or minoritized identities (see Campbell-Montalvo 2020, 2021). In doing so, we often read our evidentiary sources "against the grain," inferring meanings from both what is said *and* what is omitted (Rowlinson et al., 2014, 256). In so doing, our goal was to "center the margins" as much as possible and elevate the voices and experiences of faculty from historically minoritized communities. Still, recognizing that "our personal history and perspective, combined with unexamined normative assumptions" (Cancian, 2021, 324) render objective analysis impossible, we acknowledge that despite our best efforts, there are likely important narratives that we have overlooked—our "unknown unknowns"—given the disciplinary, professional, and social histories that we bring to this work.

FUNDING PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

In dollars-and-cents terms, a decision by any university to employ a faculty member is a financial decision that comes with costs and benefits that accrue as increased revenue, prestige, and student enrollments. Any discussion about trends in faculty hiring, promotion, tenure, and

advancement—each of which is, at its core, a financial investment on the part of the university—is incomplete without a broader contextualization within trends in higher education finance. A full discussion of how higher education has been funded in the United States over the course of its history, and the equities and inequities therein, is outside the scope of this paper.[1] However, we include a discussion on trends in higher education funding because it has been a key driver of one of the major shifts in the American professoriate over the past 20 years: the growth of the non-tenure-track professoriate. In this section, we discuss the varied sources of revenues for colleges and universities, and with a particular focus on trends in public funding for higher education and their implications. In the following section, we discuss the implications of these trends for hiring in the tenure track and for racial and gender equity in the academy.

In the United States, higher education is a matter delegated to the states by the U.S. Constitution. As a result, there are 50 systems of higher education with 50 different social, political, historical, and economic contexts, rendering broad generalizations difficult. However, despite considerable variation in higher education funding models across states, as a general rule, state funding for higher education takes the form of operational support through line items in state budgets. These appropriations form an important source of revenue for public universities, accounting for nearly 20 percent of total revenues (NCES, 2020). Private universities generally do not receive operational support through appropriations but do benefit from public investments in higher education in the form of federal and state grant and loan aid directed at students, which are then used to pay tuition and other fees charged by the universities. Regardless of the source and modality, governmental investments in higher education are important sources of revenue that universities can use to invest in hiring faculty members.

There is considerable evidence that state appropriations for public higher education have declined considerably across all types of postsecondary institutions over the past few decades, although there is variation both in source and in amount by state and by level (Long, 2016; Zhao, 2019). In 2020, inflation-adjusted appropriations per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student increased by 2.9 percent nationwide, representing an eighth consecutive year of increase, but

[1] We direct interested readers to the following excellent texts: M. B. Paulsen and J. C. Smart, *The Finance of Higher Education: Theory, Research, Policy, and Practice*, New York: Agathon Press, 2001; R. B. Archibald and D. H. Feldman, *Why Does College Cost So Much?* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011; and H. N. Drewry, H. Doermann, and S. H. Anderson, *Stand and Prosper: Private Black Colleges and Their Students*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.

despite these increases, inflation-adjusted appropriations remained 6 percent below what they were in 2008 and 14.6 percent below what they were in 2001. Moreover, these overall numbers highlight considerable variation across states: appropriations in Arizona in 2020, for example, were 38 percent lower than their 2001 levels, while appropriations in neighboring New Mexico were 32 percent above their 2001 levels (SHEEO, 2021, 42).

There is also substantial variation in how public higher education is funded by institutional sector (2-year community colleges, as compared with 4-year colleges and universities). For example, on a per-FTE basis, although 2- and 4-year public institutions received approximately the same amounts from state and local sources combined, 4-year institutions received a significantly greater share from state appropriations than 2-year institutions, which also received substantial appropriations from local governments (often, but not always, from property tax revenues). Thus, although in the 2019–2020 academic year, public 4-year universities received on average $8,372 per FTE from state appropriations, they received just $19 per FTE from local appropriations (for a total of $8,391 per FTE). In contrast, public 2-year institutions received just $5,446 per FTE from state appropriations, but also received $2,727 per FTE from local appropriations, for a total of $8,173 per FTE (SHEEO, 2021, 24).[2]

The increased reliance of 2-year institutions on local funding is significant for both fiscal stability and equity in the higher education sector, as well as for how these institutions recruit, employ, and retain their faculty workforces. Because 2-year public institutions are reliant on both state and local appropriations, their budgets are more precarious than their 4-year counterparts, which are relatively insulated from short-term local economic shocks. Moreover, because local appropriations are often made from local property tax collections, this funding structure can create inequities within the 2-year sector, privileging institutions in wealthy communities (see Phelan, 2014; Kolbe and Baker, 2019). Additionally, 4-year universities often have ancillary sources of revenue, including from medical centers, capital appropriations (i.e., bond sales), and

[2] The *Digest of Education Statistics,* published annually by the U.S. Department of Education, documents similar trends, although the dollar amounts differ from those compiled by SHEEO due to differences in the ways in which the two publications account for inflation. We use the SHEEO data here because they include the 2019–2020 budget year, whereas the most recent figures in the *Digest* date to 2018–2019. See National Center for Education Statistics, "Table 333.10. Total Revenue of Public Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions, by Source of Revenue and Level of Institution: Selected Years, 2007–08 through 2018–19." In *Digest of Education Statistics*, 2020. Washington, D.C.: Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 2020, available at https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_333.10.asp (last accessed: September 7, 2021).

their considerably larger endowments (see NCES, 2020); as a result, these institutions are relatively protected from the declines in public funding of higher education compared with 2-year institutions.

Within the 4-year sector, there is substantial variation by institution type in how institutions are funded. For example, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) rely more heavily on federal, state, and local funding than their non-HBCU counterparts, with more than half of their revenues coming from federal, state, and local sources, compared with 38 percent at non-HBCU public 4-year universities (Carr et al., 2021, 3). Thus, declining state investments in public higher education may be more salient and harder to overcome for these institutions, which are still struggling to overcome the enduring legacies of racism and white supremacy that fought against their existence when they were founded (Allen and Jewell, 2002; Drewry, Doermann, and Anderson, 2003) and persistently and disproportionately underfunded them over the next 250 years (Harper et al., 2009). For example, HBCUs, like other 4-year universities, use endowment income and bond sales to raise revenues and balance budgets, as discussed above. However, both public and private HBCUs have considerably lower endowments per-FTE than their non-HBCU counterparts (Williams and Davis, 2019, 7), which scholars have attributed to the legacy of the racial wealth gap (Hamilton and Darity, 2017). Moreover, when HBCUs access the bond markets to raise capital revenue, they face higher transaction and underwriting costs than comparable non-HBCUs, which the authors conclude is evidence of racial discrimination in the municipal bond market (Dougal et al., 2019).

TRENDS IN FACULTY HIRING: THE RISE OF THE NON-TENURE-TRACK AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EQUITY

Driven in large part by the decline in public funding (Bound et al., 2019; Ehrenberg, 2006; Sav, 2016), perhaps the most important trend in the American professoriate has been the rapid rise of part-time and non-tenure-track faculty in all departments across virtually all types of institutions. In 1991, American higher education employed 826,252 faculty at degree-granting institutions, of which nearly two-thirds (65 percent) were employed full-time. By 2018, although the academy had grown considerably, employing 1.54 million faculty members, only 54 percent

of those were full-time (NCES, 2019b). Thus, although the academy had grown by 716,361 faculty members over the past 30 years, part-time faculty accounted for 58 percent of that growth. At the same time, the overall share of tenured or tenure-track faculty among full-time instructional faculty has declined over the past 3 decades. In 1993, 72 percent of full-time faculty members were either tenured or on the tenure track (AAUP, 2013); by 2019, only 65 percent of full-time faculty members were tenured or on the tenure track (AAUP, 2021b, 14).

The result of this trend has been a dramatic shrinkage of the "tenure track" in the academy. In fact, over the 35-year period between 1975 and 2011, the American Association of University Professors estimated that 91 percent of the growth in professoriate was attributable to faculty hired in contingent (non-tenure-track) positions (AAUP, 2013, 3). By 2019, of all faculty members at higher education institutions (including those part-time), just over one in three (37 percent) were either tenured or on the tenure track (AAUP, 2021b, 14). The shift in the higher education workforce from secure, tenure-track jobs to more contingent and precarious forms of academic labor has been most pronounced at 2-year institutions, where only one in five (21 percent) instructional faculty in 2019 were on the tenure track, and 60 percent were employed part-time (AAUP, 2021b, 17).

In parallel, the academic workforce has had to confront a relative lack of diversity and its implications for equity in the academy. In 1991, 88 percent of all full-time faculty identified as non-Hispanic white, and only 32 percent identified as female—overall, 61 percent of the American professoriate in 1991 identified as non-Hispanic white male (NCES, 1995). By 2018, the latest year for which national data are available, "only" 69 percent of full-time faculty identified as non-Hispanic white and nearly 47 percent identified as female—overall, 37 percent of full-time faculty identified as non-Hispanic white male (NCES, 2019c). While this progress is encouraging, the academy is still not representative of either its students, only 23 percent of whom identify as non-Hispanic white males (NCES, 2019a), or the country as a whole, only 30 percent of which identifies as non-Hispanic white male (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

Some of the challenges in hiring a diverse professoriate may come from racial inequalities embedded in what has been called the doctoral "pipeline," which result in the inequity observed in the ranks of the faculty. For example, Jefferson and colleagues (2020, 13–15) point out that Black or African American students received fewer doctoral degrees in 2018 than did all other racial or ethnic groups except American Indians or Alaskan Natives; among

those who did, U.S. citizen Black or African American students were least likely of all ethnic, racial, or citizenship groups to receive research assistantships for their doctoral education and were more likely to receive lower wages in the labor market. These findings are noteworthy given research that has suggested that research assistantships, financial support, and higher expected earnings upon graduation are among the strongest predictors of doctoral degree completion (Ampaw and Jaeger, 2012; Zhou and Okahana, 2019).

It would be a mistake to blame inequity within the professoriate on the inequities in the doctoral pipeline alone (see Myers and Turner, 2004, and Monroe and Chiu, 2010, for empirical refutations of this argument), but even if the pipeline were the major causal driver, the responsibility for failing to dismantle those inequities would still lie with the faculty who inhabit the tenure-track ranks and make decisions about which students to admit and how to support them. Rather, research has convincingly demonstrated that the academic hiring process is racialized and structurally inequitable at every step. For example, despite mentions of "diverse" and "diversity" in position statements, job advertisements rarely directly solicit applications from people of color (Taylor, 2020), and faculty hiring networks tend to reproduce, rather than dismantle, broader social inequalities (Clauset et al., 2015). Additionally, the academy has shown to privilege dominant (white) epistemologies and devalue the contributions of racially minoritized scholars (Bernal and Villalpando, 2002; Harris, 2021), thus making these candidates less competitive on "objective" metrics such as journal quality and number of publications, rendering invisible the racialization of the faculty search process (Liera, 2020). Moreover, even when minoritized candidates clear the meritocratic barrier, the "façade of fit" in the tenure-track search (White-Lewis, 2020), undertaken largely by faculty search committees, which can be quite homogenous in composition (Smith et al., 2004), can serve to protect, rather than unsettle, the hegemonic whiteness of the faculty (Sensoy and DiAngelo, 2017).

Looking at these trends together rather than in parallel, we see an academy that, even as it has grown and diversified somewhat, has reduced opportunities for those historically excluded from its ranks to access the most secure and highest prestige tenure-track positions. Moreover, much of that growth and diversification has come in the form of contingent and part-time labor. As a result, we have what Kezar and Sam (2010) call a two-class hierarchy within the ranks of the academy: the privileged few (tenured and tenure-track faculty, more likely to be white and male) and the disprivileged many (part- and full-time non-tenure-track faculty, more likely to be

women and people of color) whose employment is more precarious and who are not covered by the protections of academic freedom. This bifurcation has been read as creating a "separate but not quite equal" status for non-tenure-track faculty (Haviland et al., 2017) that, intentionally or otherwise, parallels the racialized and gender-based hierarchies in American society.

TRENDS IN FACULTY ADVANCEMENT AND TENURE

Career advancement in the forms of tenure and promotion is a complicated issue for a host of reasons. First, we consider the point of entry for tenure and tenure-track positions, as American universities continue to produce increasing numbers of terminal degrees. According to the Survey of Earned Doctorates (NCSES, 2020), U.S. universities awarded 41,296 doctoral degrees in 2000, a number that increased to 55,693 by 2019. This increase in degrees produced must be contextualized within the trends described above, where nearly two-thirds of faculty appointments are contingent appointments. If tenure and promotion are the coin of the realm, then increasing numbers of doctoral degrees and decreasing numbers of tenure-eligible vacancies point to an increasingly competitive tenure-track labor market, with the inevitable conclusion being that the vast majority of doctoral degree recipients will be off the tenure track.

What does career advancement look like for this "new majority" of non-tenure-track faculty (Kezar and Sam, 2010)? First, faculty in contingent positions have less agency over their own work and thus "float along without a professional anchor or career route" (Kezar and Sam 2010, 7). This has important implications for both gendered and racialized inequities in the academy. For example, from 1996–1997 to 2006–2007, the proportion of Ph.D. recipients who were women increased from 41 percent to 50 percent (Kezar and Sam, 2010), but women were still twice as likely as men to be off the tenure track. Thus, before we can consider issues of equity in faculty advancement, we must consider the fact that efforts to recruit a more diverse faculty have been unequal in their distribution across appointment types. If women and faculty of color are less likely to receive a tenure-line appointment, then their career trajectories are immediately affected. Although tenure alone does not assure an upward career path, awarding a tenure-line position does signal an institutional commitment to the long-term success of faculty.

One of the key issues for faculty career advancement is the alignment of faculty work with the existing reward structures (for tenure-track faculty, this is often represented in formalized tenure and promotion criteria). Moreover, we must also consider the alignment of these reward structures with institutional needs. In an ideal setting, faculty reward structures would align with both faculty interests and university needs. Kirk-Jenkins and Hughey (2021) note that women are more likely to be engaged in service work than their male colleagues at the expense of their research; for most universities, institutional reward structures do not recognize service as a critical piece of tenure and promotion criteria. Marginalized faculty are often tapped for additional committee assignments in well-intentioned efforts to be inclusive, but that inclusivity creates an undue burden on those faculty (Lerma et al., 2020). This can lead to situations where, when they present their dossier for tenure and promotion, institutions fail to evaluate their research in the context of the additional service that they have been asked to perform.

Looking at COACHE data from the past several years, it is apparent that faculty workloads have a direct impact on faculty career trajectories. For example, the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Study asks faculty whether they believe their institution does what it can to help faculty who take on additional leadership roles to sustain other aspects of their work. In the years prior to 2020, 44 percent of women disagreed with that statement compared with 34 percent of men. The survey also asks associate professors (post-tenure) when they plan to submit their dossier for promotion to full professor. Among faculty who reported that they did not plan to ever submit their dossiers for promotion to full professor, we see some interesting patterns emerge. Before 2020, roughly equal shares of men and women (~11 percent) reported they would not apply for promotion due to lack of support from their department chair. In 2021, that share increased to 20 percent for women, but remained considerably lower for men. Moreover, 3.8 percent of women reported personal/family responsibilities as a factor for nonsubmission of promotion dossiers prior to 2020, a number that more than doubled in 2020. We note that this pattern did not hold for men.

These findings align with earlier studies using COACHE data, which have found that women are less likely than men to perceive tenure expectations as clear and messages about requirements as consistent (Lisnic et al., 2020), and that women are less likely to report that their departments and institutions are supportive of family-work balance (Lisnic et al., 2019). In

addition, research adopting an intersectional lens has suggested that finding support for family-work balance might be most challenging for Black or African American women (Szelényi and Denson, 2019). While delaying tenure and promotion clocks is a commonly used policy and often cited as a step toward greater support of work-family balance, Kirk-Jenkins and Hughey (2021) suggest that deferring the tenure process for even 1 year can have a deleterious effect on faculty lifetime earnings. Thus, delaying submission of a dossier for promotion to full professor or deciding to not submit one's dossier at all, for example, to prioritize work-family balance, can have more drastic and longer-lasting implications for lifetime earnings.

Black faculty who identify as women are also least likely to report satisfaction with the fairness of evaluations of their work (Lisnic et al., 2019). Their dissatisfaction with evaluations of their work may stem from processes of epistemic exclusion (Settles et al., 2021), which upholds the hegemony of white epistemologies (Bernal and Villalpando, 2002) and devalues the methodologies and scholarly contributions of Black and minoritized scholars (Settles et al., 2020). In practice, this devaluation manifests as the "diversity-innovation" paradox: although scholars belonging to minoritized groups produce higher rates of scientific novelty, their novel contributions are cited by other scholars at lower rates than contributions by gendered and racialized majorities (Hofstra et al., 2020). Thus, already minoritized faculty members are rendered less competitive on "objective" metrics such as journal quality and number of publications, which impinges on their career advancement both with tenure and promotion portfolios and when on the tenure-track job market, as discussed above.

Taken together, there is considerable evidence that women in the academy experience their workplace quite differently than men, and that the academy is both a racialized (Ray, 2019) and gendered (Niemi, 2020) workplace. The impact of these structures on minoritized faculty members' career advancement is significant and cumulative, and it is thus alarming, but not surprising, that woman-identifying and racially minoritized faculty members report greater intentions to leave the academy and lower retention rates (Jayakumar et al., 2009) throughout their academic careers. Additionally, when they do decide to leave their institution, evidence suggests that institutions do less to keep them than their peers. For example, data from COACHE's faculty retention and exit survey suggests that among departing faculty who did not ask for a counteroffer, men were more likely than women to receive one anyway, and among those who did ask for a counteroffer, women were more likely to be denied one.

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THESE TRENDS

Having reviewed the trends in faculty hiring, tenure, and advancement, we now turn to understanding the impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in the context of the already existing inequities in faculty life that we have discussed above. When the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the world in early 2020, its impacts were immediately felt across all sectors and institutions of higher education. In its annual survey of member institutions, the American Association of University Professors reported that 55 percent of responding institutions had frozen or reduced faculty salaries, and nearly one in five had terminated the appointments or denied contract renewals for their non-tenure-track faculty members (AAUP, 2021a, 4). The report cited statistics released by the U.S. Department of Labor estimating that colleges and universities in the United States shed 650,000 jobs across both faculty and staff, 58 percent of which were held by women and people of color (AAUP, 2021b, 12). Thus, although the effects of the pandemic were felt across higher education, those effects were differentially significant in racialized and gendered ways.

Early survey-based research, although not representative of the experiences of all faculty, would serve as the "canary in the coalmine" for the differential impacts of the pandemic on faculty life. In April 2020, Myers and colleagues (2020) surveyed nearly 500,000 scientists in Europe and the United States, receiving full responses from approximately 4,500. While the results cannot be generalized, they are instructive: responding faculty reported a decline in total working hours, from an average of 61 hours per week pre-pandemic to 54 hours per week, with time devoted to research making up a large share of lost work hours.[3]

Particularly troubling was the finding that woman-identifying faculty and faculty with a young dependent were likely to report greater losses in research time; in fact, women faculty with young dependents reported on average the greatest percentage decline in research time (Myers et al., 2020, 881). These findings were broadly supported by other research on the gendered impact of the pandemic on employment outcomes (e.g., Petts et al., 2021; Krukowski

[3] It is remarkable in and of itself that neither of these numbers is below 40, which is considered the "standard" work week in most fields.

et al., 2021), thus demonstrating how the pandemic replicated and magnified pre-pandemic inequities in how woman-identifying faculty spent their time at work (O'Meara et al., 2017) and reinforced cultural expectations about how they ought to spend their time at home (Thébaud et al., 2021; Thébaud and Halcomb, 2019).

These broader gendered trends were borne out by qualitative data collected by COACHE during its most recent administration of the Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey. For example, a woman-identifying faculty member noted that she "worked almost 60 hours a week (with a child at home) to help other colleagues teaching a multisection course.… I probably lost my research program because I did this." Another woman-identifying faculty member noted that she had seen a lot of stress among faculty with young children, adding that "the reality is that the work doesn't go away, and has sometimes increased, the promotion expectations haven't changed, and I will still have no job if I can't raise enough grant money."

As discussed above, the economic fallout of the pandemic was substantially greater for non-tenure-track and part-time faculty, whose jobs are at-will and less secure than tenured or tenure-track jobs and who are more likely to be women and belonging to historically marginalized social categories. Moreover, Black and other minoritized communities in the United States were rendered at greater risk for pandemic-related mortality because of broader systemically racist structures in American society, including reduced access to health care, increased representation in low-wage, front-line "essential" jobs, and the legacy of housing segregation (Poteat et al., 2020). As a result, faculty and students from communities of color were more likely to experience the trauma of loss and grief (Harper, 2020, 156) both from COVID-19 and from the broader racial reckoning arising from the continued police brutality of unarmed Black residents, rise in anti-Asian hate speech, and the physical attacks on Asian and Asian American residents in their communities. Moreover, because faculty of color often pay the "minority tax" of mentoring and supporting students of color (Guillaume and Apodaca, 2020), it is likely that these faculty experienced both greater service burdens (both rewarded and unrewarded) and greater psychic burdens arising from these events than their colleagues.

Experiences shared by faculty members of color in qualitative data collected by COACHE resonate with and underscore these broader themes. As an illustration, a multiracial faculty member noted that "even though we were inundated with virtual teaching and multiple diversity related committee responsibilities, we were successful in receiving a research grant to

conduct much needed race- and COVID-related research," and acknowledged the importance of campus leadership in respecting and understanding "our diversity committee and particularly … me as a diverse faculty member who has been stretched thin with diversity service during our nation's season of racial unrest and virtual teaching due to COVID-19."

As the COVID-19 pandemic stretches into its second year and as institutions begin to reopen their campuses for in-person instruction and residential education, we must consider the implications of the trends described above—declines in state funding, the diminution of the tenure track, and increased service burdens of faculty members from minoritized communities—on the professoriate. For example, as institutional leaders—themselves covered by the protections of tenure—have made decisions about when and how to return to campus, the "new majority" of faculty (Kezar and Sam, 2010), that is, at-will part-time and non-tenure-track faculty, have not received the same flexibility about course modality as their tenured and tenure-track peers. This has led to a situation in which "those compensated the least and receiving the fewest benefits (such as no health insurance) are potentially at greater risk than their more established counterparts" (Kirk-Jenkins and Hughey, 2021, 109).

BUILDING BACK BETTER: ELIMINATING INEQUITIES IN THE NEXT NORMAL

If the last 18 months have taught us anything, it is that it is impossible to predict the future or make bold recommendations with any certainty. No one expected to be in this position 2 years ago. But there is more to the story: During a time where the structures and processes of the academy were tested and shown wanting, faculty, together with administrative leaders and supporting offices such as Centers for Teaching and Learning, accomplished some amazing things. The migration from in-person to remote learning in just a few weeks, despite its concomitant challenges, is not just impressive for professionals in education. We cannot think of any industry that has made wholesale changes to basic operations so quickly or so comprehensively.

With that frame in mind, we do not dare chart a path forward for the academy. Instead, we raise questions and provocations about the *health* of the academy as it emerges from the turbulence of 2020. Aside from the obvious public health issues, the pandemic did not create

new structural inequities in the academy. Rather, it exacerbated existing issues. A romanticized return to the "old normal," therefore, is a sign that we have not learned the lessons of 2020. We worry that the inequities the pandemic magnified and made impossible to ignore will be glossed over by constructions of the pandemic as a "once-in-a-lifetime circumstance." It can also signal to marginalized communities that even though the pandemic put a spotlight on their struggles, the academy still does not have the will to center at the margins and rebuild with their struggles in mind.

First, revisiting the trends in hiring for faculty over the past few decades, we hope that this paper serves as a reminder that the academy was never an equitable workplace, and it continued to be an inequitable workplace during the pandemic. If we collectively ignore the lessons of the past and the pandemic, the academy will continue to reproduce inequality: the next normal will just be the old normal. Thus, we ask: How are colleges and universities actively reflecting on the challenges and lessons of the pandemic? What local plans are in place to consider how each college and university managed through this crisis? What pain points were most salient for faculty belonging to minoritized communities, and non-tenure-track and part-time faculty, and how can we rebuild to mitigate those issues?

Second, the patterns in recruitment and hiring of faculty suggest that the academy has grown and diversified. At the same time, most of the diversification of the faculty has been in the more precarious and less powerful part-time and non-tenure-track ranks. These positions often reflect work that is critical to the mission of institutions but unrewarded in terms of compensation and job security. More importantly, those roles are often built without the sorts of autonomy and agency that faculty value in their work. Finally, these roles typically lack the capacity for faculty to chart a longer trajectory for their careers. Put simply, we have invited marginalized faculty into the academy, but we have done so in a way that further marginalizes them. Thus, we ask: As universities rebuild beyond 2020, to what extent will the new normal ensure that the new structures dismantle these inequalities to create equitable and inclusive opportunities for marginalized faculty?

Third, to explore what the pandemic taught us about our capacity to deal with crises, we refer to the analogy of an engine when considering organizational capacity. Running an engine at or near its maximum capacity is useful in certain situations. When trying to pass another vehicle or towing a heavy load, one may need to push the pedal to the floor. But what if the pedal is

always on the floor? In our collective experience working with COACHE and partnering with hundreds of colleges and universities across the country, we are often told that the pedal is always on the floor. There is always more to do, and always "as soon as possible." For some institutions, it is the drive to increase research profiles. For others, it is about maintaining enrollments to keep the lights on. Regardless of the reason, many in the academy were exhausted long before we moved our classrooms and meetings to Zoom in 2020.

Thus, we ask: What does leadership look like that leaves some room between the pedal and the floor in the new normal? The old model was to keep adding to the engine (while driving it) so that the engine's capacity increased, but it still ran constantly at maximum capacity. What if, instead of constantly increasing capacity, we gave ourselves permission to run slower and healthier? What would the academy look like if, in our mission statements and strategic plans, we replaced the word *excellence* with *health*? This is not to suggest that we should not strive toward excellence but rather to raise the question: Excellence at what cost, by whose definition, and for whose benefit?

Fourth, we note that the vast majority of college and university leaders at all levels—from chair to chancellor—come from the ranks of the tenured faculty. Reflecting on the national trends for terminal degree completion and the faculty labor market suggests that if academic and leadership structures remain the same, then senior academic leadership will remain out of reach for many woman-identifying faculty and faculty from historically minoritized communities. Quite simply, if they are not hired into tenured positions, they are definitionally excluded from the leadership opportunities that lead to provostships and presidencies, which themselves require the conferral of tenure. The oft-quoted "excuse" is that the pipeline does not have enough "qualified candidates," but in that excuse lies the failure to acknowledge the reality that the academy created these structures, and it is the academy that must equitably rebuild them. Thus, we ask: How do we identify leaders within the faculty, and how do we develop them? What does it mean that the privileged few (the tenured) occupy positions of power and privilege that are entirely inaccessible to the majority of their peers (off the tenure track), and about whose lives and careers they make consequential decisions? If we continue to work under the premise that tenure is the key that unlocks leadership opportunities, and we systematically exclude minoritized faculty from the opportunity to achieve tenure, then how can we ever diversify the upper echelons of academic leadership?

Finally, we ask: How are we preparing faculty to be effective leaders? Not everyone may aspire to become a president or a provost, but almost all tenure-track faculty will serve in some capacity of organizational leadership. Yet, to what extent does academic professional development systematically prepare them for these roles? Drawing from the idea of graduate student preparation, where there has been a broad national trend to help aspiring faculty develop their teaching skills, what might a parallel process look like for developing faculty capacities as campus citizens? How can hiring, development, and advancement processes at colleges and universities include enough space for faculty to contribute and grow as campus leaders? As all faculty sharpen their leadership skills, it benefits the institution regardless of whether they rise to department chair or provost, or choose to remain a rank-and-file member of the academic community. Systematic faculty leadership development creates the opportunity to explore and dismantle existing power structures with faculty in the driver's seat. When faculty leadership development is designed with equity first and centering the experiences of the marginalized, it creates the opportunity to collectively design solutions to remedy structural and cultural inequities in the faculty—which may be a blind spot even for the best-intentioned leaders in positions of power and privilege. To be clear, we are not suggesting a module on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Instead, we are advocating for centering equity in all types of leadership development opportunities for faculty and administrative leadership. This raises our final provocation: Might the new normal change if we put as much emphasis on citizenship and leadership in a diverse academic community as we do on scholarship?

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