



Academic issues in US

A brief insight

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- **Question**

Should the University of Melbourne
adopt the US rank and tenure structure?

- **Random selection**

- Yale
 - Virginia
 - Ohio
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- Academic appointments, probation and promotion are province of the Provost
 - Importance of the collegial process for promotion and tenure
 - Tenure is “iron clad” and linked to statement on academic freedom
 - Importance of state legislatures in public universities
 - Significant flexibility in remuneration.
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Some Differences

- Faculty largely industrially unregulated
 - Some cases no written contract of employment or performance standards
 - One university had a performance assessment system which was confidential, not available to the staff member and used in promotion decisions
 - Criteria for promotion and confirmation departmentally determined
 - Provost/ President approved all promotions
 - Academic departments had little discretionary funds, only receiving salary lines
 - Tenure is “portable” between universities.
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- **Standard system**

- Appointment to a tenure track position
 - In first 6 years there may be one or two tenure reviews
 - Criteria for tenure determined at Department level
 - End of 6th year a formal appraisal is taken
 - Recommendation to the Provost or President
 - Tenure = promotion to Associate Professor
 - If no tenure – 7th year to find alternate employment
 - Complex appeals process for not granting tenure on the basis of process, and to the committee or person who made the original decision
 - Between 75% and 90% of persons in tenure track are tenured.
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- **Yale, Princeton and Harvard**
 - All faculty members are eligible for tenure
 - Reviews at end of 3rd and 6th year with a decision made in 9th year
 - Tenure hard to achieve (75% fail)
 - No mandated tenure standards
 - Before a tenure decision is made the Department must compare the candidate to the outcomes of a world wide search
 - Complex appeal system, but rarely used.
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- Inflexibility
 - Ageing academic workforce
 - Long tenure process is problematic and highly stressful
 - Increasingly large number of non-tenured staff engaged not only in teaching but research
 - 9month appointment process
 - Blurring of distinction between tenured and non tenured staff.
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Rank Structure - Standard

Professor	
Associate Professor	50% promoted to Professor
Assistant Professor	75% - 90% promoted to Associate Professor



- Ageing of academic workforce
 - Yale 10% Faculty > 70 years old
 - Impact of technology
 - Declining % US citizens undertaking PhDs
 - Different HR Structures: academic and professional staff
 - Discipline shortages eg medical informatics
 - Federal Regulation of diversity – affirmative action
 - Impact of state based funding on land grant and publicly funded universities.
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