

**EXPLORING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR WOMEN IN  
ACADEME: A FEMINIST EXPLORATION OF CAREER AND CARE**

by

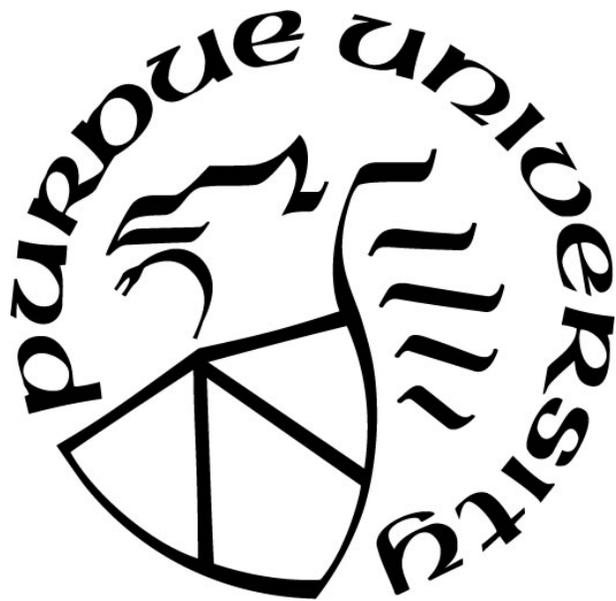
**Ashton Mouton**

**A Dissertation**

*Submitted to the Faculty of Purdue University*

*In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of*

**Doctorate of Philosophy**



Brian Lamb School of Communication

West Lafayette, Indiana

May 2019

**THE PURDUE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL  
STATEMENT OF COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

Dr. Patrice M. Buzzanell, Co-Chair

Brian Lamb School of Communication

Dr. Stacey Connaughton, Co-Chair

Brian Lamb School of Communication

Dr. Felicia Roberts

Brian Lamb School of Communication

Dr. Maria Venetis

Brian Lamb School of Communication

Dr. Laura Zanotti

Department of Anthropology

**Approved by:**

Dr. Bart Collins

Head of the Graduate Program

*Dedication*

*For my parents,*

*Pamela Mouton and Patrick Mouton,*

*Who have always supported me in every task I have set for myself.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would never have been completed without the following people who have been essential to my success. My life is enriched by all of you, and I am grateful for your love, encouragement, every conversation, moment of accountability, and kick in the ass that you all have provided.

First and foremost, I must thank Kurt, my partner in life! I would not have finished my Ph.D. or my dissertation without your love, support, encouragement, nagging, and berating. When I wanted to quit, you said no. When I had writer's block, you told me to get over it. When I did not think my work was worthy, you reminded me that it was. When I needed a break, you reminded me that there were places outside of my brain and my office. You are my rock; you always believe in me when I cannot believe in myself, and that is invaluable. Thank you for helping me, and sometimes dragging me, to the finish line every single day of our lives.

Second, I would like to recognize my family for their unyielding support over the last decade. Dad and Mom, your encouragement and support are always appreciated. I appreciate all the phone calls and the Thanksgiving visits and the love you have both provided throughout my entire university experience. I would not be where I am today without parents like both of you. Missy, Robin, Raya, Macy, Lynn, Wendy, Cody, and Emma, thank you all for cheering me on and reminding me that I am smart when I feel like I am not. It is rare to have such a supportive family, and I am insanely grateful for all of you. Heidi, Trevor, Ingrid, Ross, Ethan, Trevor Thomas, and Eirik, I appreciate all of your support and encouragement along the way! I am very fortunate to have such a wonderful extended family.

Next, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge my support system at Purdue. To all my friends, I have appreciated our coffee dates, online accountability meetings, daily text messages,

trivia breaks, movie nights, movie marathons, homemade guacamole, beer and margaritas, and so much more. You all helped me stay sane and reminded me why I care about academia. In short, you are all my heroes: Ashley Deutsch, Pam Deutsch, Sarah El-Azab, Cynthia Lindley, Jane Natt, Katie Pope, Max Renner, Virginia Sanchez, Jenni Sigler, Jessica Sturgess, Elizabeth Wilhoit, and Lori Wolf. To my committee, you helped me take this project from an idea to a living, breathing narrative. You helped me be more rigorous and write clearer, encouraged me to think deeper theoretically and practically, and helped bring this project to life! Thank you to Patrice Buzzanell, Stacey Connaughton, Felicia Roberts, Maria Venetis, Karen Yehle, and Laura Zanotti for all of your wonderful critiques, suggestions, advice, and comments.

Finally, to my extended support network, I am grateful for all of you: Amber Bruk, Josh (Esteban) and Maggie Andrejko, Richard Bello, Princess Cameron Cermin, Chet Gassett, Jeremy Grossman, Kyle Jonas, Bill Kannel, Tabitha Lindley, Nicole Lozano, Jake Maples, Jeff Martin, Debbie Miller, Jan Morris, Mark Patterson, Marcus Powers, Lydia Reinig, Josh Shutt, Julie Taylor, and Terry Thibodeaux. You have all contributed to my understanding of scholarship, of having fun, of taking breaks, of enjoying life, and of the crazy world in which we live.

Skaal! Salut! Cheers to every one of you!

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## ABSTRACT

Author: Mouton, Ashton M. PhD

Institution: Purdue University

Degree Received: May 2019

Title: Exploring Organizational Structure for Women in Academe: A Feminist Exploration of Career and Care

Committee Chair: Patrice M. Buzzanell and Stacey Connaughton

In 2008, *Women's Studies in Communication* released a special issue entitled "Conversations and Commentary on Redefining the Professor(iate): Valuing Commitments to Care and Career in Academe" where the authors discussed how a lack of support for multiple and competing roles related to care and career responsibilities negatively impacted the careers of women faculty members. Today, women faculty members still experience more challenges associated with advancement, tenure, and promotion compared to their male counterparts and are also more likely to leave academia as leaks in the pipeline to pursue another career. Previous research has demonstrated that these challenges for women in the academy and subsequent leaks in the pipeline are due to organizational barriers rather than individual choices and abilities (McMurtrie, 2013; Slaughter, 2012). As such, this study employs two theoretical frameworks to explore career challenges in more detail. First, structuration theory (Giddens 1979; 1984) is utilized to examine the academic organizational structure, specifically how the duality of structure comes to bear on career trajectory for female faculty as well as their personal care work responsibilities. Structuration theory will enable the researcher to examine multiple levels of analysis within the academic organizational structure: individual, group, organizational, and interorganizational levels of analysis. Second, feminist intersectional theory is utilized to examine how the organizational structure is both gendered and leads to privilege of certain

organizational members based on multiple facets of identity (Crenshaw, 1988; 1989/1993; 1991). Because a feminist intersectional framework allows the researcher to pay particular attention to identity and adds a layer of feminist critique when organizational members are marginalized, it is useful in the context of academe to discover barriers to career and care. Coupled together, structuration theory and feminist intersectional theory enable the researcher to understand what structures enable and constrain tenure/promotion and care needs/responsibilities and to be critical of those structures and who they privilege along the way. Three specific research questions were asked: (1) How is tenure/promotion enabled and/or constrained by the academic organizational structure?; (2) How are care needs/responsibilities enabled and/or constrained by the academic organizational structure?; and (3) (How) do female faculty members exert their agency to transform the organizational structure? Semi-structured interviews (n=49), in combination with document collection (n=433) and logging, were used to assess the organizational structure and the movement of participants through the structure. Analysis of the documents and interviews illustrate rules and resources that both enable and constrain tenure, promotion, and care work for female faculty. The study illustrates that formal policies at the macro level are enforced by rules and guidelines at the micro level (including rules associated with research, teaching, service, extension, and mentoring). There are also resources offered by the macro and micro structures (both formal and optional resources), which both enable care and career work when they are known and utilized, but also constrain care and career work when they are unknown or unevenly distributed. Identity is a major contributor to the experience and enforcement of the rules as well as the accessibility and availability of the resources. As such, it is clear that the organizational structure both enables and constrains tenure and promotion as well as care work.

## PREFACE: “SOMEHOW IT ALL GETS DONE!”

As graduate students, we learn to live by certain words of wisdom that have been passed on by previous cohorts of graduate students: (1) “Remember, you don’t have to read *everything!*”; (2) “You will cry, and that’s okay!”; and (3) “Somehow it all gets done!” While these statements can be comforting to our species as *professoriate*, they are also problematic to our survival. The problems with these phrases are found in their elusiveness, that is, in their lack of concrete meaning. What does it mean, “I don’t have to read everything?” How much of everything do I *not* read? I don’t cry! Why would crying about my problems be okay? And what do my predecessors mean by *somehow* it all gets done?

Perhaps the most problematic phrase of all is the one we also find to be the most comforting: “Somehow it all gets done.” The significance of the problem can be found in the word “*somehow*” because it is a deceitful word that tricks us into believing that our lives are miraculously balanced, that everything can be done at just the right moment, without struggle or sacrifice. If we take a moment to truly examine the phrase, we find that it is a dangerous rhetorical move that blinds us from the reality of “*somehow*.” If we examine the lives of graduate students and faculty members, we learn that the word “*somehow*” actually means exactly those things we hope to avoid: struggle, over-exertion, and sacrifice. In my life, “*somehow*” has become synonymous with large Cokes™ every morning, sometimes Red Bulls™, with staying up late and getting up early, with snacks for meals, or sometimes no meals at all, with weekends in the office, with living states away from my partner, and with losing the essential sleep I need to stay healthy and escape the crankiness I feel every day. More importantly, “*somehow*” equals neglect of the self and of the people we love, calling and visiting home less often, forgetting to remind your significant other just how important she/he truly is, maybe never finding a

significant other or losing the one you have, and struggling with the never-ending dilemma of work/life balance. Then the years continue and the same dilemmas plague us, but now we are not graduate students anymore, but faculty who also are told that “somehow” it will all get done. At some point, we must doubt the phrasing, meaning, and intent of such phrases, and as we struggle with our multiple career and care responsibilities, we should resist the illusions they provide. Therefore, the intended purpose of this dissertation is twofold: it is both the voice of the woman academic as she struggles in the joys and tribulations of managing care and career, and it is also an exploration of the academic organizational structure as it speaks back to the woman academic.

### **Exchanging Terms: Work/Life Balance for Care and Career Responsibilities**

First and foremost, I believe work/life balance is a debilitating concept. How does one begin to separate life from work or work from life? Life is made of our minute-by-minute experiences, and work is inextricably linked to those experiences. We do not stop having a life when we go to work, and we cannot remove work from our life when we go home at the end of the day. Work is everywhere, in the cleaning and cooking, in the maintenance of our relationships, and of course, in our jobs. Thus, work and life cannot be teased out of one another.

However, common perception in the academy is that we can find an intricate balance between work and life. Wieland (2011) writes, “Constructions of work and life privilege particular values and interests” (p. 3). Those particular values and interests stem from a past academy built by an elite group of men rooted in different principles than those we are discussing today. Ashcraft and Trethewey (2004) argue that when we cannot balance our work and life with one another, “dominant discourses of order and consistency may obscure such tensions from view or depict them as a mark of individual failing” (p. 173). Dominant discourses

lead me to believe that if I go to bed hungry, ignore my husband, or miss out on children, it is because I failed to balance work and life, not because the structure is designed to suit others.

I prefer the phrasing care and career responsibilities (terms coined by Townsley & Broadfoot, 2008), as care and career are less elusive and clearer in their separation from one another than work and life. My career responsibilities are those things I must do in my academic pursuits (e.g., reading, writing, conferencing, publishing), in the classes I teach (e.g., preparing lessons, answering student emails, being available for office hours), and in the service I perform (e.g., department meetings, committee work, leadership positions). They include networking and researching as well as the maintenance of my professional image. Care responsibilities, on the other hand, include paying care-full attention to my self, to my husband, to my family, to my growing unborn child, and being away from my career when I need to be present elsewhere. Using the phrasing care and career responsibilities in exchange for work/life balance is a communication strategy I have found to be helpful because it removes me from the realm of failure if I cannot seem to balance out my life in the prescribed ways of the male-dominated academy (Catalyst, 2017; The Awakening, 2018). The line is more distinct between care and career, which is not to say that sometimes career does not bleed over the line and affect our care or vice versa. Below, I discuss four family dilemmas I have faced as both graduate student and faculty member where the lines between care and career become blurred but the consequences for each become more defined.

### **Care and Career Dilemmas**

Below I outline four particular dilemmas I have faced in the eight years of graduate school, and continue to face as a faculty member. As my family is and will continue to be one of

the most important aspects of my life, each of these dilemmas concerns pressing family issues that many graduate students, and faculty members alike, face in their academic careers.

First, I begin the discussion of care and career dilemmas with a moment in my graduate school experience that had a clearly defined answer for me. During my final year of my undergraduate experience, I lost both of my grandmothers suddenly and unexpectedly. These moments of loss impacted my life profoundly, as I realized the importance of end of life care not just for the dying, but also for the living. During my second year in graduate school, my only living grandfather was diagnosed with lung cancer just after Thanksgiving break. Days before finals, I had to ask myself, “Do I stay at school, finish my papers/classes, and gamble on him making it until break?” or “Do I rush home, make sure I can spend those last moments at his side, and gamble on poorer grades and upset teachers?” How will this decision affect my career? More importantly, how will this decision affect my care and his? My mind raced between thoughts about my thesis, end of life care, a paper for Communication Theory, last moments with family members, a project for Feminist Theory, feelings of possible regret, and my classes. *Somehow* it all gets done, right? Not this time. I chose to finish what I could before the plane left, ask for extensions and incompletes, and take off. There is one thing I have learned throughout my academic career; there will always be another paper, another project, another class, more responsibility at work, but family members can never be replaced once they are gone. In the end, I was able to spend two weeks with my grandfather before he passed, time that was invaluable for both of us, and I finished the work I left undone, but in a slower and much delayed manner.

My second care/career dilemma is less traumatic, but the answers have still been somewhat easy to find. As an undergraduate student, holidays were sacred. It was easier to leave schoolwork for my return from feasts, family, and festivities. I followed a simple rule, no

schoolwork during the holidays because holidays were supposed to be about family; however, now that “school work” has become part of my career, it is less simple to leave the work. One of my very first struggles with care and career happened just before Thanksgiving break my very first semester in graduate school. I felt the calling of my care responsibilities – the need to leave all the papers behind, travel back to Texas, enjoy the turkey, and worry about the work when I returned to Colorado. However, I also felt the tensions of career responsibilities holding me back – the fear that I could not finish everything if I went home, the daunting fact that I would not be able to spend the holidays with my family, and the sense of loss at realizing what I would miss sitting in Colorado behind a computer. After many tears and conversations (“You will cry, and that’s okay!”), I realized I did not have to choose one or the other. Rather, I had to find a compromise, a new balance. I brought some work to Texas; I designated two days specifically for care responsibilities for myself, for my family, and for food; and I traveled back to Colorado three days earlier than I would have liked to get back to work. I found a more intricate balance to care and career in those moments, and *somehow*, through a little sacrifice and reorganization, it all got done.

Oddly, Thanksgiving surfaces annually as a challenge to care and career balance. During my time living in Indiana and working at Purdue as a graduate student, the academic schedule combined with the National Communication Association’s annual conference dates prevented my partner and I from traveling home to be with family. For four years, we sacrificed Thanksgiving with his relatives and struggled to reorganize our home and our time to accommodate my divorced parents as houseguests, such that we could salvage some of the self-care and family time associated with Thanksgiving. Even now, as a faculty member, I feel the pull of my career on Thanksgiving Break, as it is still situated right between our national

conference and finals week. The pile of work left undone from attending the conference and the looming deadline of the end of the semester continue to battle the multiple family events my husband and I are expected to attend.

I know what you are thinking at this point; the previous two examples were just single moments, but what about the tensions between care and career that graduate students and faculty members struggle with day-to-day rather than once in a lifetime or once per year? One of the dilemmas I struggle with every single day is paying care-full attention to my husband and my parents as I struggle to finish papers, presentations, projects, lesson plans, and grading. I am sometimes so overwhelmed by all the paperwork and deadlines that I forget that I am neglecting real people who love and care about me, and even as a faculty member, I am still working out how to address this daily dilemma.

Sotirin (2008) writes, “When milestones are achieved in the expected amount of time and research productivity rates are maintained, the lived costs of academic achievement become invisible” (p. 263). When I finished my first semester of graduate school, no one thought about the neglect my family experienced while I was adjusting to the academic life. When I defended my comprehensive exams for my Ph.D., everyone congratulated me on my achievement, but no one thought of the 30 days worth of moments I was unable to share with my partner because, at that time, career had been more important. As graduate students, we continue down this imbalanced path because we are looking ahead to the degree at the end of the tunnel. There can be a marked end to the care and career imbalance if we choose to walk away.

As faculty members, we travel a slightly different path and look down a slightly different tunnel as we embark the tenure track, but the trials and tribulations of balancing care and career remain in a more permanent form. My parents are not gratified by the progress I made this week

on a manuscript when they only want to talk on the phone, and my husband was not fulfilled by the sheer number of papers I graded last week because he only felt my lack of attention. We live in the same house, but sometimes my career dictates that we live completely separate lives. *Somehow*, through neglecting the ones we love and denying our own happiness, it all gets done. Instead of thinking about how much work I could finish in the time I spend on the phone with my parents or eating dinner with my husband, I should be thinking about how much time I am losing with them when I choose to write the paper instead. Here and daily, it is harder to find that intricate balance of care and career.

Finally, I am forced to think about the child we are bringing into this world, who should arrive at the beginning of May. Most days, I only feel the how excited and overjoyed we are about the opportunity to be parents, but there are days, when I suddenly stop and think I am crazy for trying to have a family because how could I possibly nurture a child when I cannot even find the balance between care and career to spend enough time with my husband! I do not want to believe that I could neglect my child to meet a future deadline, and yet, I am routinely doubtful of my ability to be a competent mother because of the pressures of academia. Even now I feel the weight of these pressures because I am concerned about my age and the tick tock of the biological clock, my parents' health situations as they age since my relationships with my grandparents were so meaningful, but also how inconvenient it is going to be to have an infant/toddler while trying to earn tenure. I want to be a successful mother-professor, and I agree with Aubrey et al. (2008) that "ignoring, minimizing, and essentializing pregnancy will only maintain the status quo. Doing gender and doing babies means challenging the status quo; it means actively participating in the (re)construction of the professor(iate)" (p. 195). My first step in addressing this dilemma is a reconstruction of my own thinking, to resist the panic that I feel

about being a mother on the tenure track, and to find my own balance when it comes to care and career.

Ultimately, my choice to have a career as a teacher/scholar is going to distract me from relationships with my parents, my partner, my self, and yes, even my child(ren). Because of this, I choose to believe that there is no perfect time to live the life of an academic rather than the phrasing we usually hear, that there is no perfect time for a woman to have a family while trying to make a career in the academy. Of course, every new addition to my life will make navigating the academy just a little more difficult, but I will choose to view moments with my parents, my husband, and my child(ren) as irreplaceable moments. *Somehow*, by knowing which priorities are most important, and maybe sometimes with less sleep and more caffeine, I will manage to get it all done as a “successful” mother and scholar.

### **(Re)Articulating Voice with/in Relation to Power**

I have always known that there were certain essential things I wanted out of life: I want to continue to be an active member in my family; I want to be a responsible and nurturing partner to the person I love; I want to begin my own family; I want to be a caring and competent teacher; and I want to be a successful scholar. I want it all, and I do not think I should have to choose because the tenure clock has more control over my life decisions than I do. I realize that I have to think about how I pay care-full attention to myself. Like other graduate students and faculty members, I, too, am searching for “validation . . . that [I can] indeed ‘do academe differently’ (e.g., have children while in graduate school, manage marriage and babies on the tenure track) and still be considered successful” (Townesley & Broadfoot, 2008, p. 134). I doubt my abilities to multi-task when it comes to scholarship, teaching, and family, but I refuse to be bullied into thinking I cannot have it all. Now, more than ever, I understand the difference between care and

career responsibilities, and I refuse to be silenced by a patriarchal organization that “define[s] success exclusively in terms of the golden ring of tenure” (p. 138).

I stand my ground through Townsley and Broadfoot’s (2008) integration principle, which “assumes that every individual has work and care responsibilities, that these are equally valid, valued, and rewarded, and most importantly, that their connection radically enhances the performance of both” (p. 138). Varallo (2008) argues, “Burned-out parents and professors do no good to anyone, and individuals working alone will not effect change” (p. 157). Instead of becoming another academic in an ivory tower committed to tooting my own horn, I want to be a courageous scholar and mother committed to the voice and agency of women both in the academy and around the world. We cannot afford to be shy in this endeavor. We must remind everyone of the sacrifices, challenges, and dilemmas embedded in the *somehow* of “Somehow it all gets done.” The aim of this project, then, is to give voice to women faculty’s struggles and joys in managing care and career, an aim that I hope provides comfort and guidance for graduate students and faculty alike.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 2008, *Women's Studies in Communication* released a special issue entitled "Conversations and Commentary on Redefining the Professor(iate): Valuing Commitments to Care and Career in Academe." The authors discussed how a lack of support for multiple and competing roles negatively impacts the careers of women faculty members. Throughout the issue, the authors identify care work and career challenges, which lead to leaks in the academic pipeline for women faculty as they move forward in their careers (Jackson, 2008). In this project, care is defined by multiple responsibilities, including but not limited to, attention to the personal health, relationship maintenance, and the love and protection of children and elderly or sick family members. Career, then, is defined as the trajectory of the tenure-track faculty member (from assistant or probationary professor to associate professor and even through full professor and into administration if so desired).

When studying care and career responsibilities, academia is a unique context for two specific reasons: the practice of tenure and the concept of flexibility. First, tenure is a practice that only academic organizations utilize, wherein junior faculty are considered probationary for several years, depending on the specific practices of the academic institution. Leiter (2017) traces the historical significance of tenure, as it "plays a special role in academic life because of the unique function of colleges and universities in the discovery of truth and the development of knowledge" (n.p.). The success of achieving tenure is supposedly academic freedom, innovation, and increased truth/knowledge. The failure of not receiving tenure means loss of employment, income, and benefits in addition to the loss of potential workplace relationships (Perlmutter, 2008). Additionally, the probationary period has the potential to create high levels of anxiety, stress, and burnout for employees (Gooblar, 2018; Pain, 2010). Given the nature of tenure, it is

not surprising that debate abounds as to whether or not tenure is a process that should continue to be utilized (Leiter, 2017).

Second, the concept of flexibility versus choice is very prominent in academic organizations. Academic institutions are supposedly very flexible for employees (Townsend & Broadfoot, 2008); faculty are able to make their own schedules, plan their own lives, dictate their own course materials, plan their own research agendas, and simultaneously participate in their families. This idea of flexibility is intimately related to tenure though, because choices matter (Slaughter, 2012; *The Awakening*, 2018). Those who do not achieve tenure might have made the wrong choices when it came to balancing their time, engaging in their work, and taking care of their families. The concept of choice essentially means that you can make the wrong choices in how you structure your life, and choice is a way to dismiss flexibility (Slaughter, 2012; Townsend & Broadfoot, 2008). Flexibility frames tenure as a process that is easy to navigate, but choice insinuates that certain actions are unsanctioned and could result in an unfavorable tenure decision (Hallstein, 2008; *The Awakening*, 2018). The promise of flexibility is lost in the rhetoric of choice.

Examining tenure and flexibility critically, we see choice as damaging rhetoric most clearly in care work. Care responsibilities challenge a case for tenure because of perceived or actual inability to balance those responsibilities with their professional responsibilities (Hallstein, 2008; Jackson, 2008). Career challenges are important to examine as well. McMurtrie (2013; see also *Catalyst*, 2017; Maranto & Griffin, 2011) reports that women do not achieve the same success as men in the academy, but this begins early in a career and speaks to barriers, not abilities. The constant tension between career and care for women in the academy is a difficult issue; the outcomes of this struggle are realized in the disproportional number of women leaving

the academy before tenure (Jackson, 2008), in unequal distribution of men and women faculty at the full professor and administrative levels (Catalyst, 2017), and in the challenges of facing difficult personal choices about marriage, pregnancy, childrearing, and healthcare (The Awakening, 2018).

### **Statement of Problem**

The aforementioned care and career barriers are rooted in the organizational structure of the academic organization. Organizational structure refers to the combination of rules and resources in place for organizational members as well as the extent to which organizational members exert their agency against/through those rules/resources (McPhee, Poole, & Iverson, 2014). The current study seeks to explore the extent to which organizational structure constrains or enables career and care responsibilities for women faculty. Because the organizational structure is the focus of this study, structuration theory (Giddens 1979, 1984) serves as the guiding framework. Also, because it is clear that diversity affects the organizational structure (Allen 1995, 2000; Gutiérrez y Muhs, Niemann, González, & Harris, 2012), feminist intersectional theory serves as a second guiding framework (Crenshaw, 1989/1993, 1991). A feminist intersectional lens attends to the multiple intersecting identities of organizational members (e.g., gender, race, class, and sexuality) as well as how the organizational structure privileges or marginalizes diverse experiences.

Previous research has demonstrated that certain rules, regarding sick leave, maternity leave, as well as tenure and promotion can either enable or constrain successful management of care and career responsibilities. Likewise, resources, such as professional development programs, grant writing workshops, access to funds for research, childcare, and stop the clock policies can be beneficial to the success of the career, but interpersonal barriers within

organizations might prevent the utilization of such resources. As such, barriers to tenure/promotion and care responsibilities are embedded within the structure, but are manifest in organizational communication.

It is important to examine the organization from multiple levels of analysis: individual, group, organizational, and interorganizational (Poole & McPhee, 2005). Each of these levels is examined to the extent that they influence tenure/promotion and care needs/responsibilities within the academic organization. In addition, the current study aims to explore to what extent rules and resources enable successful tenure/promotion and care needs/responsibilities, but most of the work in this area has highlighted the extent to which care and career are unbalanced or constrained because of an imbalance, as it is also important to note and celebrate successes within the academic organizational structures.

Because the organizational structure is the focus of this study, structuration theory serves as the guiding framework. Also, because it is clear that diversity plays a role in the organizational structure, as organizational members' identities are implicated in the tenure/promotion process as well as in care giving practices, feminist intersectional theory serves as a second guiding framework. The two frameworks are discussed in more detail in the next section below as well as in the following chapter.

### **Preview of Chapters**

Chapter 2 first reviews the relevant literature on the two theoretical frameworks (structuration theory and feminist intersectional theory), the organizational structure of the academy, and the role of interpersonal communication within the organizational structure. Chapter 2 concludes with specific research questions situated within the theoretical frameworks and based on a critical interpretive approach to communication research. Chapter 3 then explains

the methodology and the specific methods used to conduct the study including my metatheoretical position, the methods used in data collection, and the methods used in data analysis. Chapters 4 through 6 report the findings of the project. Chapter 4 discusses the data that explain the organizational structure and how rules and resources are used to enable or constrain tenure/promotion. Chapter 5 examines the data that illustrate how the organizational structure enables and constrains care work responsibilities. Chapter 6 reports the data that emerged to highlight agency and resistance against the organizational structure and the specific reasons for resisting. Finally, Chapter 7 synthesizes the research questions with existing research on work-life balance, tenure and promotion, workplace stress and burnout, and careers, concluding the project with key findings, contributions, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, I review the literature on care and career challenges for women in the academy. Following, I explain the two theoretical frameworks for the current project: structuration theory and feminist intersectional theory. Because it stresses multiple levels of analysis and communication flow, structuration theory is used to understand organizational structure of the academic organization. Feminist intersectional theory is also used to understand how organizational members' identities are implicated in the success or failures of tenure/promotion and care needs/responsibilities.

### **Women in Academe: Care and Career Challenges**

This special issue mentioned in the introduction illustrates that academia is not an environment that allows women to easily succeed in multiple roles. First, the tenure clock and the biological clock are designed to compete with each other. McAlister (2008) argues that the “culture of academia encourages us to live the life of the mind at the expense of the life of the body, and to keep quiet about the competing clocks that govern them” (p. 218). Moreover, Townsley and Broadfoot (2008) assert, “Total dedication is the expectation in the academic workplace and those who work there must demonstrate that such work is their primary, sole, and uninterrupted focus” (p. 137). For many women faculty, becoming a mother is a danger to receiving tenure because of perceived or actual inability to balance childcare and career. In addition, inconsistent or nonexistent maternity policies may prevent some faculty from achieving tenure or promotion (Aubrey et al., 2008; Gilbert, 2008). According to Gilbert (2008), many institutions still do not have maternity leave policies in place, and Aubrey et al. (2008) assert that

there are still unclear policies in academic institutions about having children, unrealistic expectations from senior faculty members, and doubt that mothers can finish the race to tenure.

Second, the life of the academic hinders the ability for women to perform care responsibilities. This ability has been covered greatly in the work-life literature of organizational communication scholars (for a review of these works, see Kirby & Buzzanell, 2014), but the words care and career are used here intentionally to make an important distinction. Care responsibilities encompass more than balancing time at work and time at home and the blending of those spaces. Care responsibilities encompass healthcare for the faculty member herself, pregnancy and childcare, and care of parents and/or other elderly for ill family members. It is important to give research attention to these two areas because women are more likely to become “leaks” in the academic “pipeline” (Jackson, 2008, p. 226), failing to receive tenure and/or leaving the academy because of other responsibilities as time moves forward in their careers.

However, it is also important to look at structural differences in the career trajectory. According to a special report in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, one area where this is seen is in the gendered publication gap, where men make up more than 60% of the authorship in most disciplines (McMurtrie, 2013). McMurtrie (2013) reports that women do not achieve the same success as men in the academy, but this begins early in a career and speaks to barriers, not abilities: “Their ranks among full professors are lower; their teaching evaluations by students are more critical; they hold less prestigious committee appointments; and, according to a new study, their work is cited less frequently” (n.p., see also Maranto & Griffin, 2011; van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). Importantly, this gender gap is present at the institution where data for this project was collected. In the College of Liberal Arts alone, although more women than men enter

the academy as assistant professors, there are more male associate professors, and at the full professor position, men outnumber women three to one ([University] Data Digest, 2012-2013).

### **Theoretical Framework**

Two theoretical frameworks will be used to guide the current project: structuration theory and feminist intersectional theory. Both theories are concerned with human (inter)action and organizational structures, and both theories have the capability to examine multiple levels of organizing for a nuanced look at structure, communication, and identity issues. In addition, both theories allow for and encourage organizational transformation or praxis. Coupled together, they enable me to understand what structures enable and constrain tenure/promotion and care needs/responsibilities and to be critical of those structures and who they privilege along the way.

#### **Structuration Theory**

Structuration theory was born from Anthony Giddens' (1979, 1984) work on the duality of structure. Giddens (1984) claims that workers are actors that have agency, and the organizational structure is brought into being by the communicative actions of those workers. Poole and McPhee (2005) note, structuration theory "encompass[es] both social structure and human action in a common framework that could explain individual behavior and the development and effects of social institutions" (p. 173). McPhee et al. (2014) distinguish between system and structure where a system is "an observable pattern of relationships among actors" but structures are a combination of "rules and resources that actors depend on" in the organization and "underlie the patterns that constitute systems" (p. 76). As such, people come together through communication; form organizations where rules, policies, and procedures are

developed; those rules, policies, and procedures create a baseline structure; and then people interact with each other within, through, and against the structure to alter it.

McPhee et al. (2014) suggests that organizational communication can be studied through the duality of influences between rules/resources and actors, and these interactions give insight into how organizations, the actors within them, and organizational communication can change and adapt. The authors also assert that structures are observable but cyclically only because they are both “interaction and its outcome” (p. 76). This process is called the duality of structure because a structure is built from communication and interaction between actors in the organization, and then the structure guides future interactions while it is also simultaneously being transformed by those interactions. The structure is built from the communication and interaction that leads to the implementation of rules and the use of resources. Those rules and resources then guide future behavior and interaction. As actors use those rules and resources to (re)produce the organization, they are also changing it. This is known as production and reproduction. As such structures are constituted through communication, but communication is also constrained and enabled through those structures.

Applying this directly to organizational communication, Poole and McPhee (2005) assert that the goal of structuration theory is to study organizational structure and human (inter)actions, focusing “squarely on interaction as the arena in which structuring occurs” (p. 180). As such, structuration theory focuses on the organization as “*systems of human practices*” which are “interrelated by their place in the organizational structure” (emphasis in original, p. 174). At the core of the theory are structures, which are the combination of rules and resources. Rules are both formal written rules and regulations of an organization but also informal routines or principles that guide behavior in the organization (McPhee et al., 2014; Poole & McPhee, 2005).

A resource is anything else that helps to accomplish activities or goals within the organization, such as money, tools, knowledge, and skills (McPhee et al., 2014; Poole & McPhee, 2005). Because of this, structure can be both invisible to the organizational member, but also very tangible. Structure underlies all of our organizational actions as we engage with colleagues, rules, and resources. Yet, structure is also tangible as it constrains behavior through rules and repercussions. The utilization of resources is also a tangible experience of the structure.

Through adherence or resistance to rules and the utilization of resources, actors within the system both produce and reproduce the structure, while also creating space for transformation. Within the organization, every human (inter)action “‘produces’ the practices of which it is part” (Poole & McPhee, 2005, p. 175). Since structures are guided by the rules, routines, and resources that make them, each human (inter)action thus “reproduces the system and its structure” (p. 175). However, these reproductions allow for change, as a “transformation is a reproduction of the system in a new direction” (p. 175). Agency is thus possible through the interactions of all organizational members, but is also simultaneously limited by the structure (McPhee et al., 2014). The changes in the structure can be both gradual as well as drastic. In sum, the system allows for the influence of human action and agency; however, even though human agency is accounted for, Poole and McPhee (2005) contend that meaning, power, and norms are still part of every interaction episode and are also embedded within the organizational structure through those interactions. Any time a rule changes, the whole structure changes even if organizational members cannot (immediately) feel the reverberations.

Since structuration theory is partnered with feminist theory in this study, it is important to note that structuration theory is concerned with power as part of the structure, and it will be a consideration in data collection and analysis. Giddens (1984) considers power within the

container of the organization and uses the term “actions” rather than power. For Giddens, then, power is exerted through communication about rules and resources, policies and procedures in text, technology, division of labor, the hierarchy of the organization, and organizational climate and culture. Power is a natural part of structure because macro level policies are partnered with enforcers of those policies. Organizations inherently contain power structures as part of the overarching structure. Giddens (1979) acknowledges that structures can be transformed through the duality of structure and action.

As such, resistance to power structures is possible. Poole and McPhee (2005) discuss how actions of organizational members can lead to transformations in the structure, and McPhee et al. (2014) explain that these actions can take the form of individual or group agency and/or resistance. Below I discuss power, agency, and resistance in more detail through feminist theory. Giddens (1979; 1984) though never actually mentions resistance, whether passive or active, in his discussions of the duality of structure. Discussions of open resistance as well as discipline, punishment, and/or consequences are rooted in critical theory and feminism. In sum, Giddens and structuration theory as a whole is examining power more implicitly as it operates within the structure.

Foucault (1983/2003), on the other hand, examines power as a more overt means of control and advocates for a poststructuralist viewpoint on organizing. For Foucault, power exists in relations, exercised throughout the body of the organization. Power is not just inherently part of a structure, but it also is a strategic means of maintaining sovereignty within a structure. He draws from Marxism to explain how power is strategically utilized to keep workers obedient and subservient. Power is exerted such that power structures remain stable, and when the balance of power is obscured, discipline is used to maintain and/or reassert power (Foucault, 1977/2003).

Discipline, then, is meant to control organizational members' behavior, and is used in conjunction with surveillance. While some of the discussions of power and resistance in this dissertation are drawn from an influence of Marxism, Foucault, and critical theory in general, power and discipline are used below to explain the discussions of power, resistance, and gender in this dissertation. I draw these perspectives from feminist theory, as discussed below.

For Giddens (1979) structure and action are interdependent and inseparable except analytically, but analytic exploration highlights the potential for transformation as well as the bi-directionality between policy and actors and the mutual influence each has on the other. Giddens' (1979, 1984) structuration theory proposed a way to understand organizations at multiple levels. His theory examined the larger organization being studied, but also how the actors and interactions within the organization respond to and affect the structure. Structuration theory, then, allows the researcher to examine how structures are both the result of interaction but also guide future interaction (McPhee et al., 2014). I use the work of Poole and McPhee (2005) to explain the multiple level of analysis in more depth below.

### ***Levels of Analysis***

First, there is an individual level of analysis. Within organizations, individual identity is fluid, not a stable essence, and as such, different aspects of one's identity come to bear differently in different situations. Also, identity can matter differently with each interaction, and within the overall structure. Poole and McPhee (2005) argue that researchers should replace an essentialist view of identity as a stable or core set of characteristics with a

view of identity as a structure of resources (our beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge; our work experience; our knowledge about ourselves) and rules (norms, routines, and habits

that characterize us) that people can draw on when they interact in social situations. (p. 181; see also Scott, Corman, & Cheney, 1998)

Structuration here also allows the researcher to see where particular organizational situations favor particular identities but also where people articulate their identities in unique ways to push back against the larger structures (Poole & McPhee, 2005). When examining the university, specifically tenure and promotion, the individual level of analysis is the individual faculty member traversing the tenure track with all of her personal rules for care and career as well as her experiences and resources. Because every single faculty member is different, every single faculty member will interact with the structure in a different way. This is duality of structure at the most micro level.

Second, the group level of analysis interrogates how rules and resources are utilized and understood by dyads and groups in interaction but also how individual dyads and groups reject structures (Poole & McPhee, 2005). For the purposes of this study, groups and collections of people constitute this second level of analysis. Thinking through this in terms of the university structure, departments and schools within colleges form the basis of this second level of analysis. The group level consists of collections of individuals, but common collectives that work together within the organization. Departments and schools are homes within the academic organization and therefore have a common experience within the structure. As a collective, a department is still part of the microstructure but can work together to influence the structure.

The third level is the organizational level, which would be the formal and informal rules and resources of the larger organization. Poole and McPhee (2005) claim this is where the formal structure is articulated. Formal structures are bound by a paradox where the structure creates efficiency and coordination through rules and resources, but also becomes limiting and

oppressive because it constrains creativity and interpretation. The formal structure, then, can be a tool or a constraint to members within the organization. Here I examine formal rules and resources that apply to all university employees, specifically faculty, as well as college level rules, policies, and resources.

For the purposes of this study, I examine the organizational level as two different levels: the college level structures and the overarching university level structure. Since tenure and promotion documents are usually published at the university level, it is considered more macro than the college level, which I consider to be a bridge between the macro and the micro structure. In terms of duality, colleges have macro-level power to write and influence policy, but they are also constrained by overarching university policies. As such, colleges could also be considered part of the microstructure, as another collective or group influenced by larger organizational structures.

The interorganizational level is the final level of analysis and would be concerned with structures in an industry or how different organizational structures impact one another (Poole & McPhee, 2005). When examining the university structure, it is important to note that universities are not isolated entities; rather, there are standards across and between universities which include, but are not limited to, how faculty behave, how research is conducted, how service is measured, and what courses should be considered core curriculum. As such universities must converse with one another and to a certain degree adhere to the same standards. Additionally, universities must interact interorganizationally with many different entities (e.g., donors, private companies, governmental funding agencies, accreditation boards). All of these entities influence structure in their own unique way.

Within the field of communication, scholars have focused on how communication is dually (inter)action and structural reproduction (McPhee et al., 2014). As an example, Kirby and Krone (2002) used structuration theory to explore the organizational structure at Regulatory Alliance. By examining the rules and resources of the organization, they discovered that the “discourse of organizational members regarding the implementation and utilization of work-family policies” (p. 51) was not in line with the policies themselves. As with all organizations, policies are part of the organizational structure as rules implemented to guide behavior, but they are also (re)produced through the interactions and utilization practices. The organization offered multiple types of leave at the time of the study: (1) annual leave, (2) sick leave, (3) family and medical leave, and (4) leave without pay. By examining documented materials concerning the leave policies, conducting focus groups, and also follow up interviews with organizational members, the authors discovered that the organizational structure clearly identified competing discourses about the leave policies. Utilization of the policies framed women, mothers, and part-time workers as having preferential treatment and not doing an equal amount of work. In turn, those employees felt as though they were the subjects of discrimination, and they reported being punished for using the leave policies in the first place. As such, official rules are not necessarily the rules that are communicated through social interaction, and just because a rule/resource exists does not mean social actors are able to enact rules or use resources as they are described or printed. In addition, the authors conclude that how these rules are represented and/or enacted through social interaction seems to have a significant outcome on how the organizational structure may be maintained or challenged over time. These sentiments have been echoed from women in the academy (see Aubrey et al., 2008; Gilbert, 2008). Slaughter (2012) argues that this imbalance between policy and utilization stems from policies that favor men’s choices over

women's and the social ramifications and negative perceptions that accompany women's choices to take advantage of policies in their favor (see also Hoffman & Cowan, 2010; Schimpf, Santiago, Hoegh, Banerjee, & Pawley, 2013; *The Awakening*, 2018).

Though this study was not in the academy, it is a noteworthy example of the benefits of using structuration theory to examine macro organizational structures and micro interactions within the organization. It has also been cited frequently when discussing structural barriers for women in the academy (e.g., see Hoffman & Cowan, 2010; Schimpf et al., 2013). A key component to analytically interrogating organizational structure is cyclical examinations of the macro (the larger organizational structure, levels three and four of analysis) and the micro (interactions and decisions, levels one and two of analysis) and how the macro and micro structures impact one another (McPhee et al., 2014). In Kirby and Krone's (2002) study, there were policies in place (rules) that were meant to guide employees' behaviors, but the communication between social actors limited the utilization of policies that were intended to be resources. Moreover, specific employees were at a disadvantage because of their identity status and the communication about the policies; namely the structure came to bear on decision-making abilities that were hindered because of gender and class. As such, structuration theory will enable me to examine the macro organizational structures of academy as they relate specifically to tenure/promotion for women in the academy (e.g., formal policies at the organizational level and legal specifications about those policies at the interorganizational level). Other scholars have utilized structuration theory to discover communication flows, which I discuss in the next section.

### ***The Four Flows.***

In recent years, communication scholars have utilized structuration theory for how it informs the communicative constitution of organization (CCO) and how “ST accounts for the constitution of organized, coordinated systems of interaction episodes and social practices” (McPhee et al., 2014, p. 79). Specifically, the four flows model “embrace[s] the paradox that communication is at once human and organizational” (p. 80) through its four subprocesses: membership negotiation, reflexive self-structuring, activity coordination, and institutional positioning. McPhee et al. (2014) argue, “No single model, from any source, is sufficient without examining these flows” (p. 80). Next, I provide a deeper discussion of the four flows.

First, membership negotiation examines organizational members within the institution, specifically, identities, membership boundaries, position and status. Communication research in this area has examined organizational identification, role-taking and role conflict, self-identity narratives, identity during organizational change and conflict, organizational networks, new worker socialization and assimilation (McPhee et al., 2014).

Next, reflexive self-structuring is based on Giddens (1984) idea about institutional reflexivity through surveillance and power. McPhee et al. (2014) elaborate that communication is the impetus for institutional reflexivity because it is through communication that structure is collected, contained, and steered in new directions. Communication research in this area has examined authoritative organizational re-structuring, the resources needed for re-structuring, the organization as a power container (see also Giddens, 1984), individual human actors as resources within the organization, formal texts and informal interpretations (see also Kirby & Krone, 2002), media interpretations of re-structuring, technology’s role in re-structuring, division of labor and hierarchy, the development and transformation of policies, informal rules about

communication technology, changes in network structure, and organizational climate/culture (McPhee et al., 2014).

Third, activity coordination refers to organizational members who have to coordinate specifically to achieve an organizational goal, which “involves effortful alignment of actors with disparate goals and inconsistent perspectives” (McPhee et al., 2014, p. 87). Communication research in this area has focused on collective decision-making, task representations and protocols, success and failure at activity coordination, and dialectical tensions between control and coordination.

Finally, institutional positioning represents interaction with agents outside of the organization and with other organizations as well as how organizational context includes and involves other organizations. Communication research in this area has examined organizational reputation and legitimacy, external implications for (re)structuring, multi-organizational environments, interorganizational relationships, and social corporate responsibility (McPhee et al., 2014).

As a final consideration about the four flows, it is important to note that even though they were discussed separately to make distinctions, the flows are not independent from one another; rather, communication flows influence each other and exist interdependently within the structure (McPhee et al., 2014). As such, structuration theory is a useful framework from which to conduct research in the academic organization as it provides direction on the multiple angles of organizational structure and agency for which the researcher should pay attention. In the next section, I discuss how structuration theory is enriched by feminist intersectional theory.

## **Feminist Intersectional Theory**

Feminist theories of organizational communication are primarily concerned with gender differences in organizations and also how organizations practice gendering (Ashcraft, 2005). As such gender differences occur within organizations, but Ashcraft also argues that “organizations are fundamentally gendered social formations, and gender is a constitutive principle of organizing” (p. 148). Applying feminist theory in organizational communication research, then, should do more than reduce gender to variables (Buzzanell, 1994, in press). In fact, it is important to note that there is not one single definition of feminism; rather there are several feminist lenses, which can be applied to organizational communication research (see Ashcraft, 2014; Buzzanell, 1994). In general, feminist theories of organizing address issues of power while examining differences in gender or gendered experiences for both women and men (Ashcraft, 2005, 2014; see also hooks, 2004; Wingfield, 2009).

Ashcraft (2005) identifies nine perspectives feminist scholarship takes on organization: (1) identity and relations of power are configured through gender; (2) the organization of gender identity and power relations happens within the workplace, but gender is also an outcome of organizing work; (3) men/masculinity are privileged over women/femininity; (4) domination, subordination, and resistance are fluid systems, and cannot be rigidly identified systems, and cannot be understood through gender alone without considering race, class, sexuality, and ability; (5) gender, power, and organization are ongoing processes (re)produced and challenged daily; (6) “communication is the process through which gender, power, and organization are accomplished,” as it is a “crucial site of control, resistance, and transformation” (p. 154); (7) there are also material realities beyond communication that must also be considered; (8) gendered systems create real world effects beyond discourse that manifest in the material; and

(9) there is a focus on (de)(re)constructing the relationship and distinction between the public and private spheres. Based on these nine perspectives, feminist theory engages “the moral commitment to investigate the subordinates, to focus on gendered interactions in ordinary lives, and to explore the standpoints of women [and men] who have been rendered invisible by their absence in theory and research” (Buzzanell, 1994, p. 340). Importantly, feminist theories recognize that “gender cannot be understood adequately apart from other primary ways of articulating identity and power, such as race, sexuality, class, and ability” (Ashcraft, 2005, p. 154). Intersectionality, then, helps the researcher avoid assuming the dominant group as a place of reference and acknowledges the different social positions of all people based on identity (Allen, 1995). As such, intersectionality is the feminist lens that will guide this study.

Intersectionality originated with Crenshaw’s (1988, 1989/1993, 1991) work exploring Black women’s discrimination and the failure of the law to adequately represent the identity category of Black plus woman. Crenshaw’s (1989/1993) earlier work focused on antidiscrimination doctrine and the legal discrimination of Black women as their needs were filtered through claims of *either* racism *or* sexism. She provides an example of five African American women who were fired from General Motors to demonstrate her claim. Essentially, they were terminated because they had been with the company the least amount of time, but the company itself had not been hiring Black women, specifically, as long as white men, white women, or Black men. The court deemed that they were not being persecuted because of their race (through racism) *or* their gender (through sexism), so they did not really have a case. It was the intersectionality of their identity, however, as both Black and woman, that resulted in the loss of their jobs. The court did not view Black plus woman as a category of judicial significance. Crenshaw argues, “The continued insistence that Black women’s demands and needs be filtered

through categorical analyses that completely obscure their experiences guarantees that their needs will seldom be addressed” (p. 385). In this case, forcing Black women to label their challenge one of racism *or* one of sexism obscured the actual discrimination from view.

Crenshaw’s (1991) later work continues to explore issues of intersectionality, but she became more focused on violence against women, particularly the intersectionality of all women of color in the context of violence. She illustrates that women of color do not fit into structural identity categories from which marginalization is studied and legally represented. Crenshaw argues, “When the practices expound identity as woman or person of color as an either/or proposition, they relegate the identity of women of color to a location that resists telling” (p. 1242). When social support services and legal doctrine fail to capture the multiple oppressions of women of color, it is even more difficult to create solutions for compound marginalizations. She provides an example of a Latina woman who was repeatedly denied access to a battered women’s shelter because she was not English-proficient. The shelter claimed that she could not attend and participate in the support group sessions if she was not able to communicate in English, so they were unable to shelter her there. For this woman, being poor, Latina, and a woman as a combined identity locked her into a situation of domestic violence where she could not access social services designed to help battered women.

Foundational Black feminist scholars extended Crenshaw’s (1988, 1989/1993, 1991) work to look at how intersectionality leads to oppression and social injustice in everyday interactions and institutions, specifically for Black women (Collins, 2009; Davis, 1981; Lorde, 1980/1997, 1984; Roberts, 1997, 2014). Collins (2009) has written extensively on Black feminist thought using intersectionality to describe how race and gender coalesce in increased marginalization for Black women at work and in the family, in controlling images of Black

womanhood, sexuality, motherhood, and in feminist activism. She argues that a white male interpretation of the world and the institutions within it lead to a large scale matrix of domination that can be traced back to the rhetoric of “separate but equal” and the ruling of *Plessy versus Ferguson*: “Historically, in the United States, the politics and procedures of the U.S. legal system, labor markets, schools, the housing industry, banking, insurance, the news media, and other social institutions as interdependent entities have worked to disadvantage African American women” (p. 295).

For Collins (2009) intersectionality is part of a politics of empowerment. She claims those of us within the academy should celebrate knowledge acquisition that validates groups with alternative interests: white women, African American men and women, and other people of color. She also includes sexuality, class, and nation in her discussion of intersectionality recognizing that intersectionality can be extended to other marginalized and oppressed groups. She encourages the use of methods that embrace lived experiences and dialogue as forms of meaning creation. Collins also asserts that meaning should be generated from marginalized groups, and they should be recognized as agents of knowledge about their own situations. Hopefully the narratives in this study provide a space for marginalized voices where meaning is generated from marginalized groups rather than for them.

The goal is activism as well; institutions should be changed to address exclusions and marginalization of oppressed groups. This sentiment is echoed by feminist organizational communication scholars as they strive to make both intellectual and activist contributions to the organizations under study; the goal is praxis (Ashcraft, 2005). Buzzanell (1994) contends feminist critique in organizations privileges the following feminist issues: “women’s economic, political, social, psychic, and biologic oppression; trivialization of women’s concerns, values,

contributions, and language; presentation of alternative viewpoints and ways of knowing as deviant and second class; and women's power to make change collectively" (p. 340). The feminist intersectional perspective provides a rich understanding of organizational life through attention to the gendered organizational member who also experiences race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability, and age simultaneously.

Within the field of communication, these ideas of feminist organizational research are evidenced in Brenda J. Allen's (1996, 2000) research on newcomer socialization for women of color in the academy. Feminist standpoint asserts, "The world looks different depending on one's social location" (2000, p. 178). This lens allows Allen to show how gender, race, and both in combination lead to different social experiences of subordination and domination within the academy that privilege men and masculinity over women and femininity. Allen (1996) gives her own standpoint, through a history of her experiences and an interview with herself. Her narrative highlights experiences of socialization, oppression, and resistance, and she then pairs those experiences with other literature in communication for a rich understanding of these gendered processes in the academy. Allen (2000) expands the previous study, as she provides data from interviews with other faculty women of color. Her interviews provide "examples from numerous individual women to tell a *collective* story, to describe common experiences" (p. 184). Within both articles are examples of black women being treated as both unqualified and also as tokens, mummies, and matriarchs in their roles on committees and in the classroom. This highlights the subordination of women of color in faculty positions. She concludes, "The unique social location of black women in contemporary U.S. society affects their socialization experiences" (2000, p. 203). Only through a feminist lens could she identify gender and race in combination as a site of bias and discrimination in organizational practices. This study is a noteworthy example of the

benefits of using intersectional feminist theory to discover how race and gender in combination lead to marginalization within the organizational structure.

Dhamoon (2011) conceptualizes intersectionality as a form of social critique, as a tool to expose oppression, marginalization, and power based on identity. Holvino (2010) claims that we need to be more mindful of the “simultaneity of race, gender, and class” in organizations as well as committed to exposing narratives at the intersections of race/ethnicity<sup>1</sup>, gender, class, nation, and sexuality. Using an intersectional lens also enables the researcher to satisfy her feminist epistemological commitments to build projects from marginalized standpoints, emphasize the perspectives of the researched, and analyze the data for insight into group similarities and differences as well as to critique systems of oppression (Sprague, 2005).

Allen (1995) argues that race and ethnicity are particularly salient because they are physically observable, and ethnic and racial discrimination are still widespread in organizations. She claims stereotypes are active in organizations and are utilized consciously and unconsciously in assumptions about people, which is then reflected in verbal and nonverbal communication. Racial biases are present in the academic system but race is also implicated in socioeconomic class because of the legacy of slavery and segregation (Allen, 1995; Collins, 2009).

Buzzanell (1994) contends that the university is still a patriarchal system, providing male workers privilege at the expense of their female colleagues. The feminist perspective provides a richer understanding of organizational life through attention to the minority or the invisible. Other critiques of the academic organization have commented on intersectionality issues and

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<sup>1</sup> When I refer to race, ethnicity, or women/people of color, I am relying on Allen’s (1995) explanation of these terms. Race and ethnicity are used “to account for classifications based on real or presumed biological differences (race) as well as cultural differences (ethnicity) among groups.” (p. 144). Women/people of color is a term used to represent predominant minority groups (e.g., African American, Latino/a, Native American) in their collectivity.

have tried to implement principles of intersectionality to improve perceptions of certain organizational members as well as their access to resources (see Gutiérrez y Muhs et al., 2012).

Of course there is much more to know about how organizational gendering in combination with other facets of identity affect tenure/promotion through the enforcement of rules and the distribution of resources in the academic organization. There is much knowledge to be gained specifically by examining how multiple identities influence career and care independently but also simultaneously. Because a feminist intersectional framework allows the researcher to pay particular attention to identity and adds a layer of feminist critique when organizational members are marginalized, it is useful in the context of academe to discover barriers to career and care. Partnering intersectionality with structuration theory provides an opportunity to see how the organization itself is governed by structures that reinforce marginalization and oppression.

### **Research Questions**

Given the research on the academic career and work-life balance, we know that the organizational structure of tenure and promotion challenges some women in achieving their career goals as well as their abilities to maintain the family life they want. In addition, we know that there are several barriers to tenure/promotion and care needs/responsibilities based on individual identity and organizational rules/resources, but a more complete picture is needed of the organizational structure at multiple levels of analysis to understand what specifically is constraining and what enables success in both career and care work. As such, the following research questions will be the initial focus of data collection. The questions are deliberately phrased to examine the organizational structure and how it enables and constrains tenure/promotion as well as care needs/responsibilities, but an intersectional lens will be used to

interrogate how intersectional identities influence tenure/promotion as well as care needs/responsibilities within the organizational structure.

RQ1: How is tenure/promotion enabled and/or constrained by the academic organizational structure?

RQ2: How are care needs/responsibilities enabled and/or constrained by the academic organizational structure?

RQ3: (How) do female faculty members exert their agency to transform the organizational structure?

Given the framework of viewing the organization at multiple levels and the interview methods discussed below, more specific research questions will be addressed as they emerge during data collection and analysis. In the next chapter, I describe my metatheoretical position and the methods to be used for data collection and analysis.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS

### Methodology

To better elaborate on my orientation to research, I begin this section with relevant background information about the researcher. I then provide my conceptualization of communication. Finally, I expand on my metatheoretical positioning as a communication researcher. A discussion of methodological choices follows.

### Background of the Researcher

It is important to note that the questions asked and the procedures used to answer them will at all times be influenced by my subjective (feminist, intersectional) epistemology (Harding, 1987; Ramazanoğlu, 2002). Therefore, as the interviewer and the tool of this academic exploration, it is important to disclose why I have fixated on tenure/promotion, care needs/responsibilities, and the academic organization when there are dozens of problems around the world to which communication scholars can devote their careers. In short, for me scholarship in this area is personal and political, as I have a vested interest in seeing women succeed in the academy. I have experienced the academy as a graduate student at two different institutions, and now as a faculty member, hopefully a more permanent member of the academic community, I am experiencing the illusion of flexibility and the struggles of care and career balance. As someone seeking tenure and further promotions in due time, I also have personal care needs where it comes to family, my husband, and of course, taking care of the self. In this project, and also after, I want to explore more deeply the rules that govern career building and the resources available to help women succeed in academic positions. My work as a scholar will always be framed in light of my experiences with family and research, but even though our experiences

always affect our research, those experiences also help us do better and more rigorous work through increased motivation. These experiences also frame how I come to conceptualize communication in my work.

### **Conceptualizing Communication**

First and foremost, I believe that communication is dialogue. Baxter (2006) argues, “The essence of dialogue is the simultaneous differentiation from, yet fusion with, another” (p. 101). Based on differentiation and fusion, this conception of communication can be understood through three interrelated constructs: difference, creation, and the social between. First, communication as dialogue locates difference at the center and fosters an appreciation and respect for difference (which includes diversity). One of Baxter’s central arguments is that we must embrace difference, as it is present in every interaction, surrounds us in our everyday lives, and is the key to human growth. Second, communication as dialogue allows us to view the (re)creation of reality. Carey (1988) asserts, “Reality is brought into existence, is produced, by communication” (p. 25), from different voices and the “multivocality of dialogue” (Baxter, 2006, p. 101). To embrace difference, then, enables us to view its part in the (re)creation of identity and social reality. Third, communication as dialogue denies that communication is based on individual cognition; rather, communication is found in the social between, in “the joint communicative practices of interlocutors” (p. 107).

Layered onto Baxter’s communication as dialogue, I believe Deetz’s (2010) idea of communication as “politically attentive relational constructionism” overlaps in important ways with Baxter (2006) but also speaks to a larger global and political citizenship. Deetz (2010) agrees that we should embrace communication as difference (Baxter’s first premise), but he moves beyond what is created between interlocutors to what is politically and globally important

about difference. Important to Deetz's argument about embracing difference is what can be politically, civilly, and globally gained by constructing a world that fosters rather than discourages difference.

In addition, Deetz believes that the world is created within and because of communication (Baxter's second premise); however, he uses the term relational constructionism rather than social constructionism

to draw attention to more fundamental relational processes of the person-in-the-world-with-others-moving-toward-a-future/past. Studying the hyphens and hyphenated is central. Experiencing, meaning, the very objects of our world arise out of relations and lose sense outside them. (p. 40)

Moreover, he believes the relations from which the world is created are deeply and inherently political because power is ever-present and because past constructions of the world are inherently part of our identity, experience, and knowledge. Thus, for Deetz, the political is always/already embedded within relationships, or as Baxter (2006) would say, the political is found in the spaces between (her third premise). I overlap Deetz's (2010) assertions that we need to be politically mindful and socially oriented with Baxter's conception of communication as dialogue and difference to show the importance of our constructed reality in an ever-changing globalized and politically charged world.

This definition of communication has important implications for the study of communication in the academic organization. We come to know ourselves and our responsibilities through our communication with different others. Also, career goals as well as career needs and responsibilities are actualized through a communicative process. Importantly, communication is also prevalent in the organizing principles of the academic organization. This

conceptualization of communication also informs the creation and maintenance of an organizational structure, which is built from and transformed through both written policy and dialogue.

### **Metatheoretical Position**

Ramazanoğlu (2002) claims that the researcher's values and beliefs shape the research project from its conceptualization through data production and analysis. Because of this, I believe it is important to clarify my commitments as a feminist researcher from the start. I have a social constructionist ontology, wherein I am "concerned with explicating the processes by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live" (Gergen, 1985, p. 266). Stemming from this ontology is my subjectivist epistemology. I am a subjectivist because I believe the social world is relative, situated, and contextual, and I reject the idea of generalization to large populations from localized samples. Rather, I prefer "local understandings that emerge through situated research" (Miller, 2005, p. 29). Because of my "commitment to the empowerment of women and other oppressed people" (Hesse-Biber, Leavy, & Yaiser, 2004, p. 15), my subjective epistemology is distinctly feminist<sup>2</sup>, which leads me to "assert that women and marginalized groups can possess knowledge" and the research process should make room for their knowledge (p. 11). Marginalization operates differently depending on social position, so my feminist epistemology is also grounded in intersectionality (as discussed by Collins, 2009; Crenshaw, 1991).

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<sup>2</sup> There are multiple brands of feminism and feminist research (for examples of how multiple types of feminism can be applied in organizational communication research, see Ashcraft, 2005; Buzzanell, 1994; in press). In addition, there are several feminist epistemologies, which result in different commitments to women and marginalized populations (see Collins, 2009; Sprague, 2005 for examples of different feminist epistemologies).

I believe there are situated knowledges or partial perspectives (Haraway, 1988/2014) insulated within oppression, at times multiple, simultaneous oppressions, and these intersections come to bear specifically on the knower, the known, and the process of coming to know (Weber, 2004). Concern about gender, but also how gender intersects with race, class, age, and sexuality work within the organizational structure of the academy to create privilege and inequality (see Gutiérrez y Muhs et al., 2012). Weber (2004) argues, “Examining race, class, gender, and sexuality simultaneously forces one to acknowledge the multiple angles of vision that are brought to bear in any social situation” (p. 123). This is relevant in academic organizations because tenure and promotion are structured under a one size fits all model, ignoring and negating the differences inherent in organizational members and their access to and utilization of resources.

Ontology and epistemology are inextricably linked to methodology (Harding, 1987; Ramazanoğlu, 2002). Ramazanoğlu (2002) explains that methodologies link ontology and epistemology with methodological choices, and Harding (1987) claims that methodologies prescribe how research should proceed from the researcher’s ontology and epistemology. Because of my social constructionist ontology and my subjective (feminist, intersectional) epistemology, I am drawn to both the interpretive and critical methodologies, which would enable me to understand and represent the silenced individuals who would not otherwise be represented, but also to dig deeper into certain structures and facets of the academic organization to critique the oppressions that create marginalization for certain organizational members.

The first desire, to understand, is a hallmark of interpretive research (Miller, 2005). According to Deetz (2001), the interpretive scholar believes in the local/emergent nature of knowledge. Deetz (2001) describes the goal of interpretive studies as being “to show how

particular realities are socially produced and maintained through ordinary talk, stories, rites, rituals, and other daily activities” (p. 23). For the interpretive scholar, “communication is considered to be a central means by which the meaning of organizational events is produced and sustained” (p. 24). As such, interpretive scholars “seek to *understand how* meaning is constituted and contested through interaction” (emphasis added, Dutta & Zoller, 2008, p. 6). The second desire, to critique, is the hallmark of critical approaches<sup>3</sup> (Deetz, 2001; Dutta & Zoller, 2008). Critical perspectives of organizational communication help to uncover how communication and organization marginalizes certain people and (re)creates power structures, converging around what Deetz (2001) describes as dissensus: those that “work to disrupt these structurings” (p. 11). Deetz (2005) argues, “Of central concern have been efforts to understand the relations among power, language, and social/cultural practices, and the treatment and/or suppression of important conflicts as they relate to the production of individual identities, social knowledge, and social and organizational decision making” (p. 85). Dissensus is inherent in critical work because it “encourages the exploration of alternative communication practices that allow greater democracy and more creative and productive cooperation among stakeholders through reconsidering organizational governance and decision-making processes” (p. 85). The added layer of dissensus informs the critiques I have of the data collected. Methodologically then, my social constructivist ontology and feminist subjective epistemology directly lead to the methods, or techniques, I will use to gather evidence (Harding, 1987).

Because of this, I am drawn to ethnography and ethnographic methods (e.g., participant observation, interviews, narratives, local/cultural histories) because they allow for multiple perspectives from different organizational members (Bernard, 2011). First, I find the individual’s

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<sup>3</sup> There are many critical approaches to communication research, and feminist approaches are but one approach to critical scholarship. Other critical approaches include, but are not limited to, post-colonialism, post-modernism, post-structuralism, and deconstruction.

perspectives to be extremely important. As such, I am drawn to methods that highlight the organizational member as a knower of his/her own world (e.g., narratives, interviews, open-ended survey questions). Thick description (as prescribed by Geertz, 1994) of a single story or a group of stories can be just as (if not more) telling as the statistics generated from a large group of people. Fisher (1987) claims that stories represent human life through their “communicative expression of social reality” (p. 65). In this regard, a single participant’s experience or narrative can be crucial to understanding. Second, though, it is important to note that some of the differences between stories stem from identity and privilege. Because of these issues, I also turn to critical analysis of the data to help me interrogate my understanding of underlying structures of privilege and disadvantage.

### **Methods**

Because of my orientation to research, I utilized semi-structured interviews to collect data because the interview allows for participant’s to tell their own story. Fisher (1987) asserts that narratives “enrich our understanding of communicative interaction” as they are “stories we tell ourselves and each other to establish a meaningful life-world” (p. 62). Interviews are meaningful to my research specifically because they allow the participant to establish chronology, which helps the researcher determine sequence of events; explaining life events is a meaningful experience, which helps the researcher determine what is important to the individual; and interviews are inherently social, which helps the researcher determine the narrator’s relationship to the other people in their social environment. In addition, I utilized a combination of both grounded theory methods and thematic analysis to analyze the data in order to answer the research questions. These are discussed in more detail below.

## **Data Collection**

Because the current study sought to explore the extent to which organizational structure constrains or enables career and care responsibilities for women faculty on the tenure track, the data were collected from only one research site in order to explore in detail the organizational structure and the policies surrounding tenure, promotion, and care work. The research site, data collection procedures, and participants are explained in more detail below.

### ***Procedures for Data Collection***

Procedures included interviews supplemented with document analysis and logging procedures. This particular combination of methods provided me with more opportunities to attend to participants' meanings of their own lives and situations. In addition, the combination of methods allowed for attention to multiple levels of analysis, including individual, social, and institutional (Sprague, 2005). Interviews were used to gather situated knowledges or partial perspectives, as they can be used to identify the range of experiences (Haraway, 1988/2014). In this regard, a single participant's experience can be crucial to understanding, but Sprague (2005) argues that individual levels of analysis can only lead to individual explanations. Therefore, it is important to note that some of the differences in organizational members' experiences stemmed from location in the organization, as well as privileges and/or resources. For some participants, privilege and/or marginalization was a result of issues of gender, race, age, sexual preference, socioeconomic class, personality, and even (approach to) research, which come to bear on the academic organization (Allen 1996, 2000; Gutiérrez y Muhs et al., 2012). These procedures are described in more systematic detail below.

### *Logging*

A log book was used to keep me on task and enable a reflexive look at the trajectory of the project. Bernard (2011) defines logging as “a running account of how you plan to spend your time, how you actually spend your time, and how much money you spent” (p. 295). My log book contains all the notes from the entire three years of the project. For each double page spread, the left side contains plans for the project, which vary depending on the stage of the project. On the other side of the page, the log book has a record of what was accomplished. As such, the log book contains a physical record of the progress of the project, from the plans that were made, anticipated timelines, to the actual progress that was made and the actual timeline. In addition, the log book can now serve as a glossary of plans, events, and facts about the project where certain notes can be found (Bernard, 2011).

An additional log book was used to note the communication procedures that were used to recruit participants, plan interviews with potential participants, and take notes about the professional life of each participant before and after the interview. This log book also documents interview cancelations, if applicable. During interviews, this second log book was also used for jottings. The primary goal of the two log books ended up being a record of communication with IRB, email exchanges, potential participants, dates of interviews, and documents collected, in other words, the primary means of data collection for this project. These procedures are described below.

### *Semi-Structured Interviews*

Patton (2002) advises that interview questions be derived from observations in the field before interviews are scheduled. As such, the interviews questions were informed by two primary observations early in the project. First, the university hosts the Conference for Pre-

Tenure Women; the programming for this conference and participant feedback helped me to design the bulk of the questions that would be included in the interviews. In addition, exploration of the university's tenure and promotion documents, family/leave policies, resources provided, posted rules and regulations for teaching, research, service, and safety helped me to tailor the rest of the questions (see Appendix A for the full interview protocol).

Once the questions were written, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 49 women faculty members and administrators, the bulk of which took place in September 2016 and April 2017. Bernard (2011) defines semi-structured interviewing as “open-ended, but follows a general script and covers a list of topics” (p. 156). This type of interviewing is best used when you will only get one chance to sit down and talk with someone. Given the busy schedules and competing demands for women in academe, semi-structured interviews were scheduled with willing faculty members as their schedules allowed. According to Patton (2002), the interview guide ensured continuity between interviews, but also allowed more flexibility than a structured interview with a rigid set of questions. Because of this flexibility, I was able to tailor the same interview to specific faculty member's experiences and time availability. Semi-structured interviews also to privilege the participants' definitions of terms, understandings of situations and events, and their explanations of their own behaviors, which is highly important when examining individual career trajectories (Patton, 2002).

At the beginning of the interview, I went over the consent form with the participant and took any time to answer questions about the project, including the information that would be blinded in reporting the data. Additional consent was requested to record the interview audio. All of the interviews were recorded for audio with the exception of two participants who did not want an audio record of having participated. For the two that were not recorded, I took

handwritten notes and then typed field notes immediately following the interview. The audio records were transcribed to give preference to the participants' own words (Bernard, 2011; Charmaz, 2006; Patton, 2002). The transcriptions were annotated with my jottings from the field to capture insights and non-verbal behaviors that were not be part of the recording (Patton, 2002). The project resulted in 963 single-spaced pages of interview data.

### *Document Collection*

Documents created by the institution and institutional members were collected in three phases: before interviewing, during the interviews, and after interviewing. Before I began interviewing, I did an extensive search of the university's website looking for any documents related to tenure and promotion (e.g., Faculty and Staff Handbook, tenure and promotion documents from the Provost, supplemental tenure and promotion documents from colleges and departments). I also searched the university's website for any documents or policies that could be related to care work, specifically clock extension policies, onsite daycare, and family medical leave policies. In total, I collected 56 forms, documents, and webpages before interviews began. These documents were used in part to help me understand some of the rules and expectations the university has for faculty members as well as some of the resources that faculty members have to do care work. The documents were then also used to help me prepare the interview questions.

Document collection during and after the interviews was specifically related to the content of the interviews and the participants' experiences. During the interviews, faculty members would sometimes pull out documents that they have been given by their department head or by the dean of their college specifically related to tenure (e.g., promotion expectations). In some cases, they discussed documents that they had created (e.g., to maintain safety in their lab) or found (e.g, to teach a concept in their course). I always asked if they would be willing to

share these documents with me, especially the documents that were not available to me through the department, college, or university websites. I acquired seven additional documents in this fashion. I also collected the curriculum vitae of each participant in the event I needed to reference their timelines and/or titles and appointments. I was able to find 47 curriculum vitae out of 49 participants through department, college, or faculty member specific webpages.

After the interviews, I listened to all of the audio from the interviews and made a comprehensive list of every document mentioned, website referenced, and all the resources they listed. I then did a search for all of those documents, websites, and resources that I had not already found in my pre-interview search. An additional 323 accessible webpages, files, and forms were downloaded and analyzed as well. In total, I collected 433 documents to analyze and/or inform the data analysis.

### ***Research Site***

The research site was an R-1, research-intensive institution. This specific university was chosen first because they have a wide range of resources available for career development, but there are also programs in place that assist with care needs/responsibilities as well. Second, an R-1 institution was chosen because of the research productivity needed for successful tenure and promotion and for its ability to highlight the rules and resources in place that create the organizational structure.

### ***Recruitment and Participants***

Initially, I planned to recruit every female faculty member and administrator on campus, but logistically, this ended up not being a possibility. Before two trips to the university, I sent the recruit script via email to every female faculty member listed on school and department websites

(See Appendix B for the full recruit script). I recruited from one college at a time, completing recruitment for six of the university's colleges (out of 11). In total, I emailed the recruit script to 439 female faculty members and administrators representing 76 schools and departments on campus.

Of those recruited, I received 10 responses from people I would not be able to interview because they did not meet the parameters of the study, as they were not on the tenure track, had moved to a different institution, or self-identified as male faculty. I received an additional 155 responses from faculty members expressing interest in the study. I received several responses from faculty members who were unable to participate during my data collection periods for various reasons related to career (e.g., because they were attending their national conference, were away on sabbatical, or were working on a grant overseas). In addition, many of the faculty members who responded were worried about social retribution from their colleagues, and after asking questions about the project, eventually decided not to participate.

From the 155 responses, I was able to schedule 57 total interviews. Seven of those potential participants had to cancel because of both care and career related issues: pet emergencies, grade appeal hearings, childcare issues, unexpected meetings, and weather dependent research. In the end, I was able to conduct a total of 50 interviews, each ranging from 30 minutes to two and a half hours in duration. One of those interviews was excluded from data analysis because I discovered during the interview that the faculty member was not on the tenure track. As such, 49 participants are described below and only 49 interviews were included in the data analysis.

This study's participants come from six different colleges and represent 38 different departments and schools on campus. I am unable to list those colleges, schools, and departments

because almost all of the participating faculty members were worried they could be identified, as their experiences are specific and/or unique. At the time of the interviews, 16 participants were assistant professors, 16 were associate professors, and 17 were full professors. Additionally, 12 participants were in administrative roles during the interviews or had served in an administrative role in the past.

### **Procedures for Data Analysis**

To answer the research questions, I utilized grounded theory methods as discussed by Charmaz (2006) for coding and analyzing interviews, observations, and fieldnotes. The codes were used to transform “free flowing texts into a set of nominal variables” (Bernard, 2011, p. 429) or themes that represent the dataset. First, I open-coded transcripts and fieldnotes using NVivo data analysis software, as it is beneficial for managing large quantities of data and being consistent with the rigor of grounded theory analysis (Bringer, Johnston, & Brackenridge, 2006). Where it was possible, in vivo codes, participants’ own words, were used to “preserve participants’ meanings of their views and actions” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 55). The coding scheme remained consistent throughout the review of all of the interviews and field notes.

Second, using Strauss and Corbin’s (1990) constant comparative method, each response was compared to the others to discover trends and differences that emerged from the codes. This allowed me to double check all of the data with the codes that had been identified. This also presented an opportunity to pay attention to similarities and differences that fell along intersectional lines (Collins, 2009; Crenshaw, 1991).

Third, axial coding and thematic analysis were applied in conjunction to determine how the codes were related to one another. Axial coding assisted in developing categories (Charmaz, 2006), and the dominant categories were then labeled as themes (groups of consistent categories

and codes), emerging from the responses. Thematic analysis was used in this stage to order the categories and label the themes as they relate to the theoretical framework (Owen, 1984). The responses were then re-evaluated again using the constant comparative method to determine if identified themes emerged from a majority of the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The categories that consistently emerged from the observations and interviews became the overarching themes explored in the analysis below as they answer the research questions. Outliers and negative cases were also explored in depth at this stage for their potential to clarify categories and themes (Bernard, 2011; Charmaz, 2006; Patton, 2002). During this exploration, it became clear that one category not represented in the majority of the data would still need to be included in the analysis because it was a result of interorganizational changes between the interviews in September and the interviews the following April (e.g., the newly instated Trump administration).

Finally, all themes and outliers were subject to a feminist critique by re-examining all of the data along intersectional lines, paying particular attention to gender, race, class, age, and sexuality (Collins, 2009; Crenshaw, 1991). Sprague (2005) claims that analyzing groups separately can lead to further insights about their social realities. Charmaz (2006) asserts that critiquing our findings is an important part of grounded theory methods because “our preconceptions may only become apparent when our taken for granted standpoints are challenged” (p. 67). The added layer of feminist analysis helped me further highlight inequalities within the academic setting, look forward to feminist praxis, and to provide practical recommendations for how academic organizations might improve the structure for female faculty (Ashcraft, 2005).

In the three chapters that follow, I answer the research questions in the order they were presented in the literature review.

RQ1: How is tenure/promotion enabled and/or constrained by the academic organizational structure?

RQ2: How are care needs/responsibilities enabled and/or constrained by the academic organizational structure?

RQ3: (How) do female faculty members exert their agency to transform the organizational structure?

## **CHAPTER 4: THE INFLUENCE OF STRUCTURE ON TENURE/PROMOTION**

In this chapter, I answer the first research question: How is tenure/promotion enabled and/or constrained by the academic organizational structure? In order to answer the research question, I first discuss formal policies at the macro level followed by rules and guidelines discussed at the micro level (including research, teaching, service, extension, and mentoring). I then explain macro level and micro level incongruities. After the discussion on policy and rules, I examine resources offered by the macro and micro structures (both formal and optional resources) as well as when resources fail to work as intended. In the end of this chapter I discuss excessive burdens placed on faculty members, as fractures in the organizational structure.

### **Formal Policy**

In order to explain how tenure and promotion is enabled or constrained by the structure, I will begin with excerpts from the formal written policies where the university communicates expectations for tenure<sup>4</sup>. It is important to start with the formal written policy because structure is the combination of rules and resources that ground communication and relationships between human actors (McPhee et al., 2014). The duality between the formal written policy (rules) and the human communication that acts in accordance with or in resistance to the rules is illuminated by exploring that duality in stages even though production and reproduction happen simultaneously (McPhee et al., 2014). As such, I begin with the formal policies as communication in text (the macrostructure) and how it governs human (inter)actions.

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<sup>4</sup> Throughout, where policies are discussed, excerpts are provided to give the reader a sense of the overall nature of the policy, but the policies are not copied in full to protect the anonymity of participants.

At the university where data were collected, the formal university policy on academic tenure and promotion<sup>5</sup> states that promotion is dependent on the candidate's contribution to "all mission areas appropriate to their position." This includes research, teaching, and service, where "in most cases" contribution is expected in each area, but the candidate should demonstrate "excellence and scholarly productivity in at least one." In addition, any faculty member who teaches must document "teaching accomplishment." Similarly, for anyone with a formal service appointment, documentation of her "engagement accomplishment" is expected. There is also an expectation that faculty will demonstrate "commitment to active and responsive mentorship" for students and postdoctoral persons. The document then explains that colleges and departments<sup>6</sup>, or even divisions within departments, "may establish more specific criteria" by which research, teaching, service, and mentorship<sup>7</sup> are defined and evaluated.

The university document then goes on to explain in more detail what "counts" for research, teaching, and service. An additional section for what counts as mentorship is not included, presumably because it was a new addition to the formal policy. At the end of the document, there are extended explanations for colleges and departments on the value of interdisciplinary work and impact. However, because interdisciplinarity and impact vary widely from college to college, department to department, and even sub-discipline to sub-discipline, the

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<sup>5</sup> At the time of data collection, the most recent tenure and promotion policy document was collected (dated January 1, 2016). Additionally, the Provost issued a memo on tenure and promotion for the 2017-2018 academic year in April 2017, which was also collected. These two documents are used in conjunction to discuss the formal policy.

<sup>6</sup> At this university, some departments are considered "schools" either in name or size, but in my data analysis, I do not distinguish between the two terms. All departments and schools are referred to as "departments" to protect the anonymity of participants.

<sup>7</sup> Mentorship, as part of the tenure and promotion policy, was drafted in 2015 and then formally added to the promotion policy effective January 1, 2016. As such, it was part of the formal policy before data collection began for this project, but was not part of the requirements for the full professors in the project. All assistant and associate professors are affected by the change in policy, dependent on their timeline.

document encourages colleges and departments to “develop guidelines” by which to assess interdisciplinary work and faculty who have joint appointments. Colleges and departments are also encouraged to “regularly discuss and identify indicators of impact” as these vary widely and also over time. In this regard, the policy document encourages (or produces) organizational communication at each level of the university (departments and colleges). This is a prime example of the duality of influences; the formal policy guides and encourages certain behaviors. Then each year departments and colleges organize around these issues, measure dossiers on their achievements, and those (revised) standards eventually make their way into the formal policy over time. McPhee et al. (2014) asserts that this is the primary means of change and adaptation in organizational structures.

I will use research as an example of how these policies are interpreted at the multiple levels: micro (individual and departmental) and macro (college/university and interorganizational). From the university document, research should be “manifest in a record of scholarly achievement” and “national/international visibility.” This can include but is not limited to refereed publications, external funding, awards, scholarly presentations, and patents. One of the colleges on campus created a document that is “in no way intended to be a set of ‘policies’ or a ‘checklist’” but is meant nevertheless to “extend and refine” the provost’s memo and the official university policy<sup>8</sup>. Specifically related to research, the college asks for refereed publications of “quality” which is marked by “tiers, impact factors, citations.” For invited lectures, candidates should indicate “how selective the invitation was.” The college document recognizes the importance of interdisciplinary work, but asks that candidates make clear their

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<sup>8</sup> This document was provided to me by one of my participants and is not available anywhere on the university website. It is meant to be a set of “guidelines” to accompany formal university policy and the Provost’s Memo on tenure and promotion. It is unclear, however, if this document is the most recent iteration from the college.

participation by documenting “the role(s), contributions, and impacts” that led to “progress and outcome” for which they were solely responsible. As another example, one department on campus created a document whereby they explain “the policies and procedures that are followed” where someone is recommended for promotion<sup>9</sup>. The research section of the department document explains that “emphasis is placed on peer-reviewed scholarly publications,” but acknowledges that evidence of one’s research can be documented in other ways, including but not limited to, conference presentations, awards, grants or other research sponsorship, and the development of new tools.

The purpose of these documents is to communicate a set of expectations to faculty members and also the procedures by which they will be evaluated. The primary university documents (macro level structure) encourage production of more micro policies at the college and department levels. However, based on my textual analysis of the language in the documents and my participants’ perceptions of these documents, what they are communicating is vague at best. As I demonstrate in more detail below, “external funding” is not exactly a clear guideline. The ideas of quality and impact, while illustrative, are also interpreted in multiple ways. Moreover, while colleges and departments have created their own documents to communicate more specifically their expectations for faculty promotion, words like “progress,” “outcome,” “emphasis,” and “sponsorship” are still open to interpretation. Interpretations are also communicative; in meetings meant to assess whether a faculty member should be promoted, the dossier is examined for “progress,” “outcome,” and “emphasis,” to name a few. Examination is communicative, as tenured faculty or full professors discuss merit and qualification. As decisions

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<sup>9</sup> This document was provided to me by one of my participants and is not available anywhere on the university website. It is meant to be a set of “guidelines” to accompany formal university policy and the Provost’s Memo on tenure and promotion for their specific department meetings. It is unclear, however, if this document is the most recent iteration from the department.

are made, more specific metrics become clear over time. As McPhee et al. (2014) note, the implementation of rules help guide future behavior. As university members interpret and enforce rules, they are (re)producing the structure that governs them.

However, based on my interview data as well as previous research on tenure systems, the language is ambiguous on purpose for a couple of reasons. Practically, the first reason is to protect the university. If the policy mandated that all faculty needed 10 peer reviewed articles to achieve tenure, then legally the university would need to tenure all faculty who published 10 articles in peer-reviewed outlets, even if the faculty member has not achieved excellence as defined by their discipline. While this is a consistency issue for the department, the college, or the university as a whole, precedent at each level of evaluation in tenure cases can become the grounds for a legal battle. In fact, Perlmutter (2008) claims, “Nowadays, tenure litigation is so common at some universities that it is considered part of the normal tenure process. If you feel wrongdoing and unfairness were at play, consulting a lawyer experienced in academic case law is a sensible course of action” (n.p.). Since structure is a system of human practice (Poole & McPhee, 2005), radical changes in those systems can lead to resistance and transformation. Lawsuits are a form of resistance whereby the system can be transformed or reproduced in a new direction.

Second, and more importantly, the language is vague to protect faculty because all cases are different. The provost’s memo on tenure and promotion explains that “many examples of excellence in scholarly activity exist and must be recognized.” Setting specific parameters by which tenure is achieved could create standards that are not applicable across colleges, across disciplines, and even across sub-disciplines. For example, just in one discipline, some faculty might be in an area where it is possible to publish more than 10 peer-reviewed articles easily

before tenure and another faculty member might publish only two articles in the same amount of time. The department would not want to evaluate those two faculty members based on the same exact criteria because their sub-disciplines vary so much.

The following three vignettes illustrate the struggle that surrounds specifics in formal policies from both sides of the table:

“To that point [about clear guidelines], I was one, and all the faculty I know they're coming up, all want to know what they have to do to get promoted, and are always told, "Just do good work. We can't tell you exactly what you have to do. There's no certain number of publications. There's no certain amount of money, because every case is different." Now that I've sat on the [college] committee so long, I realize that everyone's different. If you give someone a rule and then say, "That's a checkbox," in a thing like a faculty position I don't think that can really be done because it's the whole person: are you making an impact? Are you getting your information out to the people who need it? Be those other faculty colleagues, be there practitioners in the field, be there those teachers, whatever, whoever those practitioners might be. It is a frustration though because people feel it's so unsure and unsettled. But sitting on the other side I don't know how you could.” (11)

“For example within our college we have documents that really help define expectations for people with primary teaching appointments, research appointments, extension appointments, even on the international side. They're quite well written documents that try as best as possible to summarize what the expectations are for scholarship and excellence in each of those areas. Most people have combinations of those types of appointments so it doesn't prescribe anything exactly but at least it gives assistant professors a better idea of what the expectations are. What does scholarship and excellence look like in each of those areas?” (37)

“There are no numbers for anything like you asked me, whether there is a dollar amount for a grant, how many papers we need to publish. I understand that, because there is a

huge diversity in my department. You can't use the same ruler to measure everyone. Giving a number is misleading rather than helping.” (49)

Participants 11 and 47 are both full professors who have spent years evaluating their colleagues' promotion and tenure materials (packets), and they have seen the variety of accomplishments in packets, and although they understand the anxiety associated with the ambiguity, they acknowledge that specific rules cannot be universally applied. Participant 49 is a newly hired faculty member, and she acknowledges that even in her department, the diversity of packages is too broad for universal guidelines at the department level. There is not a universal template for impact and recognition. In this regard, ambiguity is meant to enable tenure and promotion by not setting overly rigid guidelines.

Despite the fact that all cases are different, faculty members experience real anxiety and stress when they do not have a sense of their progress or achievement. The assistant professors in this study struggle with the ambiguity because they do not know how to measure the work that they are doing, and the guidelines that are given in writing are very vague. In addition, many of the associate professors and full professors also reflected on the fear and anxiety they felt when going for their initial promotion or that they still feel as they prepare for the full professor promotion. As such, fear and anxiety permeates the tenure and promotion process.

The following vignettes illustrate some of the frustration and anxiety surrounding the ambiguity. In general, where there is more ambiguity, there is more anxiety:

“I was going to say not any [rules] that were written, but really not even any that were spoken. The assumption was, when I came in, that we should be working all the time, right? That's what our department head said: ‘Be always writing.’ ‘Get busy early; be always writing.’ G BE BAW was actually his acronym for this thing. ‘Get busy early; be always writing.’ Right? And we knew that we had to have a book and a couple of outside

articles for tenure. That the teaching had to be good and that we had to be of service to our department. And that's it. There was no more calculus than that. I think that there are departments where you know that you have to place like two articles a year and some departments have point structures and stuff. We had none of that.” (9)

“I can't say it was all that clear. I mean, you run around and ask people what I should do, what I should not do, and I think the best advice somebody gave me was, ‘Do what you feel passionate about, so if you don't get tenure you still have a great record and you can go somewhere else. But don't do it because you have to do it for tenure promotion, and then you still don't get tenure, and then you just feel miserable, because it's a waste of your time and life.’” (31)

“So this new department head created this matrix. And it's based on H index, number of publications that you have, number of students that you've mentored. So the numbers, right? How much money did you bring in? Total number of dollars, blah, whatever. But at least it was something, right? And then he has it by research, teaching, and extension. I don't do any extension, so I don't really have to show on that area at all, but I still do a little bit. And then he ranks you. And he comes up with these plots that each little dot is a faculty member. And you can almost track yourself, where you are, so it helps, also to know, because that's transparent.” (23)

For participants 9 and 31, they sought advice from colleagues, and the advice was as vague, if not more so, than the guidelines from the written policy. More anxiety is created when advice dictates that you are “always” working or when the advice hints that you might have to look for another job at some point in the future. While Participant 9 had a concrete verbal recommendation of publishing a book, Participant 31 was left with how to measure passion. Thinking of this based on structure, these two departments are (re)producing the micro structure in the same direction where policies are vague and anxiety is routine.

On the other hand, participant 23 explains a situation where her department head has created a matrix of evaluation. It is reflective of several factors, and faculty can tell how accomplished they are in comparison to all of their colleagues by where they show up on this matrix. The matrix also goes in their file, so any issues are fully documented. In this case, the structure was transformed in a new direction with the matrix.

In addition, it is clear from the vignettes above, that the primary way assistant professors cope with the anxiety and fear is to ask their senior colleagues how to be successful. Associate professors, full professors, and sometimes department heads communicate advice and opinions to junior faculty about how to achieve “excellence” or “national/international prominence.” The advice and opinions about what is needed or expected for promotion are most often passed to junior faculty verbally. These conversations, although labeled as “advice” or “opinions,” become the “rules” junior faculty must follow to get tenure. Rules, whether written or unwritten, are communicative in their instruction and are at the core of organizational structure. In the next section, I provide a demonstration of these rules by topic and discuss more specifically how clarity and ambiguity enable and constrain tenure and promotion.

### **Rules to Achieve Tenure/Promotion**

Since research is often the main focus at an R1 institution, I begin with examples of rules for research, and then I discuss teaching, service, and extension, respectively. At the end, I discuss the new mentoring guidelines. In each of these discussions rules can be as concrete as formal college or departmental policy or as vague as word of mouth, unwritten yet socially enforced rules.

## **Rules for Research**

I highlight only three types of research rules in this section that were predominantly discussed in my interviews. From the 49 interviews in this study, the primary currency on campus is publications, primarily articles and then books, as 47 of the 49 participants in the study were required to publish one or both. In addition, more than half of the participants were required to attain some level of grant funding and/or to set up a trajectory for their research program through funding. Because more faculty were required to publish articles than books, I begin there.

### *Articles*

When it comes to publishing articles, the main concern for departments, departmental committees, and assistant professors themselves is an issue of quality versus quantity. Often ambiguously, verbal recommendations for quantity of articles change if the quality of the publication is higher. The following vignettes highlight the interpretations departments make about the formal written policies with regards to publishing articles:

“So then within the publication area, I look at the quality and the quantity. I don't think it's wrong to publish only one or two papers a year if you're publishing in very, very good journals. But if your papers are average, then you should be more productive than that. Here in this department, I think on average, faculty publish like six or seven a year. I mean, it's very competitive. And so if you want to be at least on the average, you know you have to publish that many. So if you're not, then you're going to be told that you need to be more productive.” (23)

“So the biggest thing we get, we get judged on papers and grants for tenure. Papers are a tough thing to have rules for because you definitely have to publish papers from your lab in order to get tenure but there's such a range of the quality of journals basically so for me

getting a paper in [Journal Names] which are the top two journals I could possibly publish in, one of those would equal like five smaller papers, probably 10 smaller papers. So there's no rule of thumb, even where it's like you should get two papers a year, or five papers a year because it really varies depending on how good the journal is basically. So I haven't really been told a lot and I haven't seen CV's from somebody in my field who's gone up for tenure and gotten it recently because it hasn't happened in a really long time.” (26)

“I have been told that it should look like two publications a year. It would be nice if it were three. I've been told that they should be in both top-tier journals and should have impact, with the recognition that, because most of my work is on [race/ethnicity and population], that the journals in which they would have impact probably don't have impact factors. Like, I was told that, perhaps if I got a grant, I could ease up on a publication, but I'm not expected to be grant-productive. . . . I just know that this year at my annual review I was told that things look good. But I should probably have a pretty productive summer.” (25)

“We just had a long discussion and vote on what journals are considered A journals, as they call them here, or top tier. . . . I was told if you get four top tier publications, you'd probably have a 70-80% chance of getting tenure. If you publish in five, you'd probably get it. You know, assuming everything else is in order. And then I was told if you get six, you've definitely done what you need to do. . . . I think if I did not publish in top tier journals, I probably would not expect to get tenure here. . . . You know, they're kind of publication snobs, to put it nicely, or not so nicely. They want to see that you're publishing in the best of the best journals, and I don't necessarily find that that is necessarily all the good research. You know, good research makes it into those journals obviously. But sometimes you're interested in something that you realize is not going to get into a top tier journal, but it's still something that I find very engaging. And so that'll be challenging because it feels like I have to do the work that they want me to do, in a sense.” (29)

It is clear from the four participants above that each department interprets research excellence uniquely, but in each of the four departments represented, there is a clear communicative pattern repeating about quality of research and quantity of articles.

Participant 23 explains that as a full professor, personally she would rather see good quality articles from top tier journals rather than a bunch of articles, but at the same time, her discipline publishes several articles each year and there is a standard to uphold. The verbal communication is going to push for more articles if you are not publishing enough. Participant 26 is an assistant professor, and while she knows that quality is better than quantity in terms of publication, she still expresses that she would like an example for which she might compare. There is no one else in her sub-discipline in her department, and so she does not even have an example of a successful record to help her prepare. Participant 25, who is also an assistant professor, is discussing opinions from several colleagues and the frustration that comes with contradictory advice. Importantly all faculty are supposed to publish for impact, but in her case, the people advising her recognize that the type of work she does might have impact in outlets that are not as mainstream as someone else's case. So while the advice she is receiving is contradictory, there is also a sense that the advice is coming from people who recognize that her work might not fit a prescribed mold. Participant 29, on the other hand, while she is receiving more concrete advice from her senior colleagues, there is less support for publishing outside of the top tier journals. Some of the work she does is not supported in the top tier journals, and so she is worried that she will struggle to publish or that she will have to change her research program in order to fall in with the prescribed rules. For all of these participants, having clearer guidelines, whether they are written in the department or only passed from colleague to colleague through word of mouth, enables tenure and promotion because the faculty member has

more clarity and direction. Though, at the same time, the ambiguity between focusing on more articles that are less prestigious versus fewer articles with a higher impact can destabilize productivity and constrain tenure and promotion.

Additionally, two of the participants above experienced some ambiguity because their research is on the fringes of their discipline. This problem is not specific to these researchers, as other participants reported that work on discipline specific topics that are not favored (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, social justice) could be problematic when evaluating quality versus quantity. In some disciplines, mainstream publications do not publish certain types of research. Where this fact is recognized (Participant 25's case), departments can follow the guidelines in the university document and in the Provost's memo to support a variety of work; where it is not recognized (Participant 29's case), faculty are put in a position to follow the rules or continue their work, as a gamble with tenure. So far, the structure appears gender neutral, only discriminating based on standards of excellence, as determined by each discipline, and in some cases, sub-discipline. However, the question of specialty journals and quality publications is not gender neutral. Women are more likely to research disenfranchised populations or do research that is considered to be on the fringes of the discipline. If these research programs are already considered less rigorous or of a lesser quality because main stream journals will not accept them, then that places the faculty member at an inherent disadvantage. In Participant 25's case, her department recognizes the challenge she will face placing her work and are willing to evaluate impact in a different way. Participant 29, on the other hand, is worried that the standards have been set in her department in such a way that she may struggle to earn tenure or will have to change her research program. As such, departments that communicatively embrace a variety of research can reproduce and transform departmental policies whereby they enable

tenure/promotion but maintain an expectation for high quality research. Departments that set up stricter standards or do not embrace a variety of research reproduce structures that constrain tenure and promotion.

Outside of the quality/quantity advice, participants reported that their colleagues have opinions on the value of collaborations, and if collaborations are allowed, where you need to be in the author line up. This is the same situation where if collaborations are the norm in your sub-discipline, but are not valued in your department, that could create problems for the promotion process. Additionally, where there is a choice between different types of publication outlets (e.g., journal articles, books, collections), senior faculty express that articles are the preferred or more valued currency. Where faculty choose to write books or do more performative work, rather than publishing articles, they are pushing back on the rules, as they are prescribed by their colleagues. While some departments offer the choice to publish articles or books, there are departments on campus that self-identify as “book departments.”

### ***Books***

These departments have a hard rule, whether written or unwritten, that tenure will not be granted to anyone who has not published a book and generally “some” articles as well. The following vignettes illustrate the issues that arise with the book rule.

“It was made very clear when I took this job and when I was interviewing that in order to get tenure I would need to publish a book. . . . That seems to be really a hard and fast rule. And you actually can see behind you all those red ones that are identical, so I published a commentary on a [topic] last year, I guess. It is in book form but it's not treated as a book because it's not a work of original scholarship. . . . Certainly, the most recent person to get tenure in my department published in a publishing house that is really good in her particular style of writing, but that's not the big classics, which are like Oxford and Cambridge. And I know some schools say, you have to publish with those for

it to count. It has to be one of those specific two publishers but there is no such requirement here.” (5)

“So, basically you have to have the monograph out, the book out, we’re a book department. Preferably between boards<sup>10</sup>. . . . They want it between boards. Mine was between boards when my case went up. In some cases, the variety of cases that I’ve seen, it’ll be in page proofs, or sometimes even copy edits. If you’re getting down to where you say, ‘I have a contract, and I have a date for submitting my manuscript,’ you’re getting into really treacherous, uncertain waters. So, it’s really clear that the expectation is that the further along with the ideal of being published, it being out. Some people, their books are being shipped, or they have their advance copies. And then I’ve seen other people go up where there’s a contract and there’s a manuscript and that’s about it. . . . So, it has to be a university press. I’ve seen someone go down who didn’t have a university press, right before I got here. So, there’s a hierarchy of university presses. So, preferably, the stronger the university press – I mean, I did Cambridge so I was good. . . . Then, you know, there’s disciplinary specifics. . . . For instance, if you’re publishing in [specific topic] and you publish with Oklahoma or Kansas, you’re at the top of your field. But, if I were to publish with Oklahoma or Kansas in [specific topic], it might be like, “Well, why is this with Oklahoma or Kansas?” For instance, I had thought if I didn’t get a contract with Cambridge, I was going to publish with the University of Kentucky, which is a good press. But, I was concerned that it would raise eyebrows.” (8)

“It should be absolutely crystal clear that, for our discipline, you have to have a book and somewhere between three to four journal articles. . . . In order to go up early, your book has to be out and reviewed. Right? If you are on that clock, this has been something that’s been negotiated over the years and since I’ve been here, negotiated down in the sense of less done than when I first got here. Now, people, at the very, very least and this is still debatable within the department, have to have a done manuscript in the sense that it’s in production. Right, so you’ve written every word that you’re going to write but you might

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<sup>10</sup> When publishing a book, the phrase “between boards” is used to reference the stages after final copyediting and page proofing but before the book has been released to the market.

not have page proofs yet. You might not have indexing but it's in production. You're finished writing, editing.” (17)

Based on these vignettes, it is clear that even though producing a book is a hard rule that everyone has to follow, there is some debate on how to define “quality” and “completeness.”

For participant 5, it cannot just be any book, but it has to be a work of original scholarship. So even though she already has one book published, the department wants something original. However, there is no expectation for her to publish in the two classic publishing houses, as might be expected if she were in a different department or working at another university. Participant 8 explains this in more detail. While Oxford and Cambridge are quality presses across disciplines, there is not a formal expectation that you must publish in one or the other to achieve tenure. What is a rule though is that you publish in a press that is rigorous for your subject matter. The other major debate is what “finished” means.

As participant 17 explains, if a faculty member intends to go up for promotion early, then their book has to be in print and reviewed by another scholar in the field, so there would be no argument as to the definition of “finished” in that situation. However, if a faculty member is on the clock and due to go up for promotion, then “finished” can be defined more loosely. Participant 8 explains that her book was “between boards” when she presented her case for tenure. The book did not have to be reviewed, and it also did not have to be in print for purchase. The question then becomes where to draw the line, to which both Participants 8 and 17 alluded. There is a question of whether or not the book will ever be finished if you promote someone on the potential to finish, so a contract with a press would most likely not suffice, but “treacherous waters” does not mean that the person would not be promoted; it just means it would be unlikely.

So the closer to being finished the better in these situations, but in these situations, “finished” is a term that is still up for interpretation.

Interpretation is inherently communicative when it comes to the tenure decision. Advice about the acceptable stage of book production is passed from colleague to colleague through word of mouth. In this way, advice and recommendations are given as rules by which to behave. Then, during review, a departmental committee examines a dossier and discusses the progress on the book. While the formal university policy does explicitly state research must be “original or its equivalent,” it does not specify rules about stages of book production; rather it encourages departments to make these guidelines themselves, which they must do through communication. When someone in a book department also has to have “some” articles, the same rules discussed above apply, but the expectation is generally for a lower number of articles because a book will accompany them. As with the discussion on articles above, the clarity of the interpretation informs the faculty member of expectations. In general, when expectations are clearer, the structure enables tenure. According to the situated knowledges of the participants in this study, book departments overall provided more clarity to their faculty, thus enabling tenure/promotion. The final major currency discussed for establishing excellence and prominence in research was grants.

### ***Grants***

If grants are required for a tenure case, the across the board rule was that they have to be external grants, as in they cannot come from inside the university. Otherwise, the advice/rules surrounding grants focus on both dollar amount and prestige/competitiveness of the funding agency.

The advice varies for dollar amount, as is demonstrated by the following three vignettes:

“My goal is to try to . . . secure half a million dollars in funding [for tenure]. That is not necessarily mandated from anyone, but it's the number that somehow gets passed around between assistant professors. In [college] we all work towards this number. We don't know where we heard this number, but we've all heard this number. We all try to get a half million.” (6)

“You're expected to get one big grant, whatever big means. . . . One rule of thumb I've heard, and I can't remember where I heard this, but it's sort of through the grapevine is that you should get as much grant funding as you were given in startup. So like I was given startup to get my lab running and a rule of thumb I was told was try to get as much of that in grant funding before you go up for tenure.” (26)

“So the metrics for the grants would be the amount. There's a thing floating that you should probably have brought in a million dollars by the time you go up, but nobody says that hard and fast. I don't know if that's urban legend.” (50)

In all three of the excerpts above, the participants have a dollar amount in their head; rather this amount is a hard rule or an urban legend passed through the grapevine is unclear. Yet in these three departments the focus of the communication is on dollar amount, providing the faculty with a target or goal to achieve before tenure, making this rule part of their structure and guiding behavior.

In other departments, the faculty are less concerned with a specific dollar amount and are more concerned with the ability to have a self-sustaining research program with funding that demonstrates a strong trajectory. The following three participants explain the importance of developing a self-sustaining research program.

“But more than anything my department chair's told me it's trajectory. You can start off slow and then as long as you have a good momentum, your case is going to be okay. If

you start off really well and then nothing happens for a few years, that's not going to look good. A trajectory is important.” (6)

“I think in this department what they really care about is that you can get support, you can develop a research group with some funding, that you can get that group to publish. So student papers I think are very good and I think they would override even first author papers. . . . That's the impression I've gotten but I don't know if it's true. People told me that but again I don't know if it's actually true, right?” (44)

“The dollar amount corresponds theoretically to the novelty of the research. . . . Number of dollars also corresponds to how much we can pay the grad students and how much summer support we have. It corresponds to how dedicated we are to that project, or how much time, how many person hours we dedicate to the project. Also how many pubs we are planning on getting out of it. You can kind of count in the budget, we plan on getting six publications out of this project for example, then we multiply that amount by \$5000, \$30,000 so that's how much it would be, so the amount corresponds to the scope of the project. How big it is. How novel it is, and how much work we're planning to put in on it. If it's just a bunch of really small grants, then it looks to them like we're spread too thin and not getting very deeply into a lot of different areas.” (41)

Trajectory and sustainability are not as clearly illustrated as a dollar amount. For these three participants, one grant would not satisfy their requirements for tenure.

Their departments expect them to set up a “lab,” populate that “lab” with graduate students and/or postdoctoral students, and then to ramp up on production from that “lab” over time. As Participant 6 explains, this means that the early stages of the tenure period might be slow to produce, but by the time you go up for promotion, there should be an upward trajectory in outputs from the lab, whether that is articles, as mentioned above, or other outputs (e.g., government partnerships, patents). Next, Participant 44 explains that those outputs should come

from the full personnel of the “lab,” so there is an expectation in her department that she will fund the program, but the outputs should come from her students as well; in her discipline collaboration is valued and solitary work does not influence the discipline at the same level.

Participant 41 provides a summary of this process and the communicative nature of the grant itself<sup>11</sup>. The dollar amount of a grant is more than just money; it directly correlates to your ethos as a researcher and how dedicated you are to your research program. Smaller grants do not establish dedication or trajectory because there is not enough money to maintain personnel and publish; they communicate that a faculty member only explores a topic on the surface level and might not be capable of long-term sustainability for her research program or her graduate students. Larger grants, though, communicate that the faculty member is more dedicated to her work, will hire and maintain a certain number of personnel over time, and has a projection for outputs from the program.

In addition, just as the quality matters for journals and press matters for books, the funding agency matters for grants. Depending on the research program, it might be acceptable for a faculty member to have funding from industry or from commodity boards<sup>12</sup>, but the general expectation across departments is federal funding. The three participants below explain this preference:

“For at least one funding opportunity that has come from outside that is ideally from a federal agency such as NSF, or USDA, or whatever it is, because that takes you to a different level of competition. It's not like you're competing for a few dollars here and

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<sup>11</sup> Note that this is only true in departments that expect faculty to become self-sustaining in running their own labs and funding their graduate students. In departments where faculty do not have labs, high dollar grants are not expected, or where grants are treated as a bonus to articles/books, this analysis is no longer relevant.

<sup>12</sup> Commodity boards are national and state entities that are concerned with research topics surrounding beverages, food, nutrition, and/or agriculture. They partner with local and state governments, academics, and farmers to fund research and community outreach.

there. . . . It's absolutely different. So if somebody has that kind funding, you know they made it.” (23)

“Different sources are valued differently. Maybe this is my opinion, but I'm pretty sure you would get a theme here from others. Federal funding is harder to obtain, so that's kind of a bigger gold star. Even though I have more industry total dollars, I have a federal grant; it has some different value in that way just because of the competitiveness of it.” (27)

“So people say that they value NSF grants more than other grants because they're peer reviewed. Then they value grants where you're the sole PI more than grants when there's other PIs because they think then that you're responsible for more of the ideas behind getting those grants funded.” (33)

Since federal grants are peer-reviewed and are more competitive, they have a higher value, and they communicate that the faculty member has more prominence in her field. In addition, Participants 23 and 33 demonstrate that specific funding agencies are expected in certain departments because of their discipline-specific grants and their competitiveness.

To review, in order to follow the formal written policy for research, faculty must establish “scholarly achievement,” “evidence of national/international visibility,” and a “substantial record of original research.” The ambiguity of these phrases alone does not aid in tenure and promotion except that ambiguity allows departments and colleges to be flexible and understanding of discipline specific rigor and production. Through word of mouth with senior colleagues and administrators, faculty members discover the “opinions” in their department, which over time essentially become the “rules” for how to demonstrate their achievement (e.g., what counts as a quality publication or grant, the necessary staging of a published book, number of articles, dollar amount on grants). The formal policy is the communicative command that

guides all behavior and prompts departments and colleges to have their own written rules about research, but when departments and colleges organize communicatively how they will evaluate ambiguous phrases through more specific parameters, these actions are inseparable from the policy that prompted the communication (Giddens, 1979).

As decisions are made and precedents are established, rules and therefore structure, become more concrete. Clarity in the rules for research enable faculty as they strive toward tenure because their benchmarks are clearer, but ambiguity creates anxiety and fear that can be paralyzing, thereby constraining the ability to achieve tenure. This is true for teaching as well.

### **Rules for Teaching**

As a baseline, all faculty must follow federal guidelines for teaching and student privacy, which include, but are not limited to, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Title IX, as well as safety standards in the classroom, as prescribed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Radiological and Environmental Management (REM), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In addition, faculty must follow university guidelines, which require syllabi, emergency statements, and reporting initial enrollment. These are expectations included in the macro structure, but are outside of the standard rules for tenure.

Additionally, within departments, the most prominent rule is how many classes each faculty member is required to teach. For the participants in this study, course load varies from one class per academic year (3 credit hours) to three classes per semester (9 credit hours multiplied by two semesters). When it comes to tenure and promotion, the most relevant rules are associated with course load but also how classes are assigned to faculty members, the quality of teaching, and maintaining research as a priority over teaching. If a faculty member is going up for tenure/promotion based on a teaching appointment, they must establish excellence in

teaching, which includes innovation in teaching, as well as rigorous scholarship of teaching and learning<sup>13</sup>. For faculty who have a primary research appointment, teaching and time (or perceptions of time) are correlated in the tenure and promotion dossier. In order to illustrate how teaching rules influence tenure and promotion, I discuss teaching assignments, teaching evaluations, and the influence of teaching on research below. I begin with examples of how teaching is assigned from department to department.

### *Teaching Assignments*

Across departments, there is variability in how courses are assigned to faculty, which can impact tenure and promotion. The following two participants explain how they do not have choices when teaching is assigned:

“I don't really get to pick my classes. I get to suggest what I would like to do and then see what happens. Generally, one class a semester. Though, I've always taught a little more than that. . . . But I don't necessarily get to pick what I'm going to do. For instance, this semester I'm teaching a new class. I said, ‘No.’ They said, ‘Yes.’” (6)

“I was scheduled, signed up for graduate class, and I was scheduled to teach something that wasn't in my field. I said, ‘Hey, I think this one, you know, might be a mistake. This isn't my field. This is my colleague [name's] field.’ . . . So like, you know, what's going on with this? Because you know, this is a class that he should take.’ And I was told, ‘He's never taught that, and he doesn't want to do a new prep... you prep that.’ Then, as the semester came closer . . . he got wind of the fact that I was teaching it and decided that he wanted to teach it and took it. And I was very happy for him but I had already prepped it at that point. So it was all of this stuff about protecting him, about this class, and he didn't want to.” (9)

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<sup>13</sup> Of the 49 participants included for this study, only three had teaching appointments. As such, their scholarship on teaching and learning is discussed above in the research rules section, and specifics about their teaching appointments are omitted to maintain their anonymity.

Both of these participants are given the illusion of choice but in the end are assigned the courses that they will teach, even if those courses place a burden on their time. Participant 6 is only required to teach one class per semester, but often is assigned more to teach than her required one class per semester. Participant 9 was the victim of a boy's club scenario where a male colleague's time was being protected by her sacrifice. New preps always take more time than teaching a class again. Situations like these create a structure that privileges the male professor at the expense of the female professor and therefore constrains tenure and promotion for female faculty.

The following three faculty, on the other hand, were granted a certain amount of authority over teaching assignments:

“So far it's been somewhat top-down. What's happened is they've said, like, "Here are three courses, which one do you want to teach?" And when I had the option to teach a course that repeated, I did. But more frequently, it's been like, "We need you to teach these two courses."” (12)

“Yeah, we have a distributed teaching assignment so classes are kind of owned by an area. Then as an area we give a recommendation for... They sort of tell each area, ‘These are the classes you have to cover next year.’ Then the faculty sort of arrange what they think would be a good matching of the people to the classes. In that distribution of classes the service classes are kind of distributed throughout the groups so some groups own particular classes and then you don't ever have an option of teaching them if you're not in that group.” (33)

“In terms of what classes we teach and when we teach them, that's decided in the discipline committees. We have a meeting with the [sub-discipline] group, which I'm in. And we decide who is teaching what, and when. People have their favorite classes that

they like to teach; nothing is assigned to us. We decide as a committee who is going to teach what.” (7)

Participant 12 still has a limited choice in terms of what she teaches, but when given the opportunity, she chooses to repeat classes; however, her requests are not always considered. Participants 33 and 7 have more choices or some level of authority in what classes they teach. Participant 33 has some degree of choice in terms of what courses her sub-discipline teaches, but she will not ever be able to teach a class that is “owned” by another group. Participant 7, similarly, discusses her group, but she is describing a far more open process by which people have a voice in the courses that are assigned to them.

When faculty are given choices over their teaching, they can decide when it is best to take on new preps and when it might enhance their research to teach a new class. They can also choose to preserve their time. The rules in each department guide behavior, whether that is the submission of a preference list that will be ignored or a deliberative, open dialogue about course selection. The entire continuum of choice is communicative about whose time is valued and whose time is not. Where teaching assignments are gendered or biased, tenure and promotion are constrained because of lost time, but where teaching assignments are distributed more equitably, tenure and promotion are enabled. The teaching assignment system can be designed to privilege certain people at the expense of others, whether that privilege is based on gender, seniority, or even sub-discipline.

### ***Course Evaluations***

Once the classes are assigned and the faculty are in the classroom, the expectation is that those classes should be taught at a satisfactory quality and without complaint; however, there is a

high degree of variability in the importance of the teaching evaluation scores from department to department.

The following vignettes show the continued importance of course evaluation scores in departments where they heavily influence tenure and promotion:

“I think the unwritten rule is you’ve got to get high course evaluations. We have to record, summarize them. We don’t even turn in all the numbers or all of the comments. We just give them a summary of the numbers. As a result, those numbers become much more heavily weighted than the kind of qualitative information that’s in the student comments. Often the comments are very insightful.” (43)

“I mean there are some general rules right, so the quality of teaching needs to be up to a standard, right, so if my teaching evaluations are going to be abysmally low, I’m assuming that will really reflect badly on my promotion materials.” (14)

“You know, read between the lines about what people are saying, and it seems like teaching just has to be good, decent, passable. So every semester here, we do teaching evaluations, of course, and then [department] will give recognition. . . . And at the big faculty meeting with the whole department, they’ll put up your name or your picture and say, ‘Hey, great job to these faculty,’ and I think if you get above a certain score on your evals. So out of five, if your average is 4.8 I think, something outstanding, you get a recognition. Then I think there’s a tier below that. But other than that, I think if you get a four out of five, that’s the, “Okay, she’s doing fine. She can teach.”” (29)

Participants 43, 14, and 29 are evaluated to some degree by the course evaluations. For participant 43, her department weighs her evaluation numbers heavily without taking into consideration that the numbers themselves might not be a reflection of her teaching specifically. Participant 14 admits that course evaluations are used in evaluating promotion, and low scores reflect badly on promotion materials. For Participant 29, the course evaluations matter, but only

to measure a minimum threshold and to establish awards in the department. Yet in each of these departments, there are established rules that govern the use of teaching evaluation scores in evaluations of faculty.

For the next two participants, teaching evaluation scores matter, but are given less weight than in the departments mentioned above.

“Teaching evaluations do count. People look at that. It's more like gravy on your overall performance record. You definitely don't want to have poor ones, but having good ones it just kind of adds a little something.” (21)

“I'm really disappointed to know that teaching evaluations can be biased toward women and I'm mentoring someone right now who I think is getting the brunt of that, and I wish I could change it, but I can't. . . . Or, to do peer evaluation. That's what I am suggesting to this junior faculty member I am mentoring now. You've got to do some peer evaluation so that at least there's another record of how the faculty is doing on the teaching. You can't and shouldn't rely just on teaching evaluations, so you've got to do other things to help get an evaluation and to try to help make improvements, or to show that they're working to try to improve the teaching. If there is going to be some other things stacked up against you, you've got to show multiple signs that the person is working hard to improve and to get other feedback on their teaching, not just relying on teaching evaluations.” (37)

Both Participants 21 and 37 explain situations where the expectation for course evaluations is that they will not be too low, but there is not a requirement for how high the evaluation should be. Participant 21 explains how good teaching evaluation scores can help your package, but would not necessarily count against you unless they were below a minimum threshold. Participant 37 is a mentor to an assistant professor, and she is describing a situation where gender bias has left her mentee struggling because of the weight of the negative course

evaluations. Participant 37 explains several method of evaluating teaching that would be less biased and could expand on her teaching record.

In fact, biases on teaching evaluations are well documented (Falkoff, 2018, Flaherty, 2018b; Lazos, 2012; Lilienfeld, 2016; Mengel, Sauermann, & Zolitz, 2018; Ray, 2018). Students routinely give harsher evaluations to women and professors of color because of stereotypes and perceived teaching faults (Falkoff, 2018; Flaherty, 2018b; Lazos, 2012). As a result, African American women are scrutinized more severely by students, colleagues, and administrators, and there is an “unstated requirement to work harder in order to gain recognition and respect” (Davis, 2008, p. 176). Allen (2000) echoes this sentiment, reporting that a Black woman’s credentials are tested more than others. These studies would support Participant 37’s assertion that there should be other metrics associated with quality in teaching other than the teaching evaluation scores. In fact, at the university where data was collected for this project, the Faculty Senate and two specific grant-funded university programs have been working to educate faculty about the biases and measurement issues associated with end of course evaluations.

In this case, the macro structure dictates that teaching must be of quality. As such departments and colleges have established rules about how to measure quality of teaching. Where course evaluation scores are used independently of other metrics and are biased against women and people of color, the ability to earn tenure/promotion is constrained for those specific populations. Where departments are open to changing the weight of student course evaluations in their tenure evaluations, tenure/promotion is more equally enabled.

The following two participants explain the other metrics used for assessing quality teaching:

“Teaching is not emphasized but we expect good teaching. . . . After the third year, or during the third year, I should say, there is an evaluation of assistant professors and

there's a committee that comes in. They come in to your classroom, watch your teaching. . . . Specifically, back to the teaching scores. If someone seems to be struggling in a class, then the committee and their mentor will offer them advice but there's not a specific range. We all know that students ... there's no incentive to even fill out the surveys anymore. Then, if you have one student who doesn't like his or her grade, they can slam you. There's not a particular number that we look for.” (17)

“The biggest thing that informs what I teach is our accreditation body, by far. They tell us what we have to teach to be an accredited program. It's very detailed and lengthy. We get reviewed every six years. We're up for review next month. It's a huge thing, we're having three people, three site visitors come. They look at all of our student work from the last three years. They look at all of our syllabi, all of our exams, everything. It's a big undertaking to get all of this stuff prepared for the site visit. They're here for four days over a weekend. They interview the students. They interview the faculty. It's pretty critical. The standards are very lengthy and detailed, so it's stressful.” (19)

Participants 17 and 19 explain situations where the course evaluations are not important to the dossier, even if they are included. For participant 17, the department recognizes that the scores do not always convey the information implied, and because of this, the department has a committee that evaluates teaching in person for an added measure of teaching quality. Finally, participant 19 explains that teaching evaluation scores do not matter in her department, because the metric they are evaluated on is the evaluation of the accreditation body and making sure everyone in the department is doing their part to keep the department's accreditation. In this department, all teaching materials are retained by the department and kept for the accreditation inspection. This evaluation process is a very different kind of evaluation from the student evaluations used in most departments. In these two departments, the rules have been reproduced

in a new direction based on previous research into the biases of teaching evaluation scores, and the department's microstructure has been transformed to allow for new metrics of evaluation.

### ***Research Before Teaching***

Finally, the third most referenced teaching rule is that teaching should not be your first priority; rather, you should be focused on your research instead. Here, there is a perception of time based on the evaluation scores. The evaluation scores communicate about time spent or wasted on teaching. If scores are too high, then it is assumed that the faculty member is spending too much time on research at the expense of her research.

The following three vignettes demonstrate the unwritten rule that the research program should be a faculty member's first priority.

“So, yeah, when I had my third year review on the way to tenure, I still hadn't had one of my articles come out and the concern was that I was spending too much time on teaching. You know, it was made as a very constructive and supportive critique. But, you know, at [University] it's absolutely clear to me that research comes first. Right? If you're a great teacher, bonus. But, that research comes first. That's definitely the message. We're an R1 institution; that should be pretty clear when you take the job. Right?” (8)

“You know it's funny, they say don't bother about teaching, we don't care about teaching. I don't know if that's the official. Have you heard that? Yeah, because we're a level-one research university, which I think is a real shame. I understand it, and it's so contrary to how I feel about being here. Because that's one of the reasons I'm here, because I think it's a real privilege to work with younger people. But also your scores count, so it's contradictory. Teaching doesn't count, but what are your scores, that kind of thing. You'd better be good, which is fair enough. I think they should be.” (18)

“I was told in my last year review, that my teaching evaluations are too high and that it looks like I'm spending too much time on teaching at the expense of my research

because, clearly, my teaching evaluations are high because I'm doing all this work. . . . But it was really interesting to me, where I was basically told like, "You know, these could go down a little bit. In fact, I think people would be happier if they did. Because then it would look like you're not doing as much teaching as you are doing research." I was like, "This is so strange to me." I was told that, you know, don't worry about your teaching evaluations. We just can't have them drop so much that people are going to raise their eyebrows and we can't, because my courses are service courses to other academic departments. . . . I mean, it's very clear where the teaching is not, the research is the most important part of my job. There's no other thing to the teaching besides your evaluations need to be fine. Fine. Clearly they don't want them too high. They don't want them too low." (25)

Because data was collected at a Research-1 institution, research is privileged; yet universities also serve the students they teach, so course evaluations cannot be too low. Therefore, in departments where the course evaluations hold a lot of weight, they must communicate the Goldilocks Principle (a rule). Teaching evaluation scores cannot be too high, where it is perceived that you are spending too much time on your teaching at the expense of your research, but at the same time, they cannot be too low, where it looks like you are not serving the student body properly.

For Participant 8, her teaching was too high because her article was delayed on publication. If that article had already been in press or in print, the impression that she was spending too much time on teaching might have been alleviated. Participant 18 and 25 echo the sentiment that teaching evaluation scores cannot be too high because this is a research institution, but they cannot be too low either because the scores do count if they are low. Where rules are perceived to contradict each other (e.g., do not worry about your teaching because research should be your main focus, but also you should worry about your teaching because it matters if it

is bad), ambiguity is increased and tenure/promotion is constrained. At the micro level, mixed messages do not make clear guidelines, and unclear rules are hard to follow.

At the macro level, the implicit assumption is that faculty members will teach the classes they are assigned while following the Goldilocks Principle, but they will go up for promotion on the basis of their research. There is an unwritten, yet socially enforced, rule that they will not ask for promotion on the basis of their teaching, which is an option in the university's tenure and promotion policy. The policy dictates that all faculty have the choice to go up for promotion on research, teaching, or service<sup>14</sup>, but if a faculty member chooses not to ask for promotion on the strength of their teaching, they will still document "teaching accomplishment." As noted above, "teaching accomplishment" is most often measured by good (read: definitely not poor and probably should not be great) student evaluation scores, with a few exceptions where department's have acknowledged the fallibility of teaching evaluations or have a different metric by which to evaluate faculty members. Interestingly, while the majority of faculty interviewed expressed concern about the "do not spend too much time on teaching" rule, they unabashedly supported the implicit rule that faculty should be appointed tenure based on their research.

### **Rules for Service**

The third mission area of the university is service<sup>15</sup>. In the university document explaining the guidelines for promotion in areas other than research, to be promoted based on service, a faculty member must be involved in more than "service work," "community volunteer work," and "good citizenship responsibilities." Rather, the university expects that faculty who

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<sup>14</sup> Faculty may also be appointed tenure based on their extension. Extension is a specific appointment reserved for faculty in certain departments and colleges. Extension is discussed in more detail below.

<sup>15</sup> At this institution, sometimes service is referred to as "engagement," but participants do use the terms "service" and "engagement" interchangeably. In the analysis, I will only use the term service.

are being evaluated primarily on service engage in “purpose-driven work” for a local or global, but specific “community or group.”

For the majority of my participants, service was defined as committee work<sup>16</sup>. While many of the participants in the study performed service or committee work at different levels of the institution, they spent the majority of our interview time on service just discussing the micro structure within their departments. Like teaching assignments, discussed above, service assignments are discussed in terms of time requirements, where research production is considered the priority. Since most departments acknowledge that they should protect junior faculty from service, the rules here surround how service is assigned.

For some departments, all service committees are assigned by the department head or through elections whereby the department head notes who is eligible to be elected on each committee:

“So, service, everybody was assigned a committee and so, the fact is the people that do well in committees and are responsible get the more responsible, important committees. There are people that get assigned to committees where they do the least harm. So you know, you just keep them parked somewhere. So, you know, everybody has some assignments, and people can say what they want, but in the end people get any hint we'll use people in the capacity that they are most helpful. The commitment that people, that faculty have towards service varies quite a bit. I mean there are people who really do nothing. Everything you assign them they do lousy, and then there are people who are really good, so...” (38)

“[The department head] puts us on committees, it's top down. My first year I was protected, and then it was like one or two committees, and I would never chair. You know, I chair a committee now. . . . That kind of work builds incrementally. It also

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<sup>16</sup> None of my participants had a service appointment or were interested in being promoted based on service. Therefore, the discussion in this section is based on the required service work of 46 faculty with research appointments and three faculty with teaching appointments.

depends on who you are. Like, by the time you get to that fourth or fifth year, if you're somebody who actually shows up and does work, and you're not just a slacker, we will get put on committees. In some ways if you're good and you do what you're supposed to do, you kind of get punished by being put on more committees, because you actually show up and do the work. . . . I'm not sure how much it's rewarded either. But, then they're happy when it's done. . . . You're volun-told.” (8)

“Well, there are elections every year on committees, and . . . department level, basically we get a ballot that says, these are the committees people are serving on, these are the committees where we need people, so who do you want on these committees, and there's a vote. You're put on committees, and there's an expectation that you engage in the work of the committee. And some committees work more than others, just by the nature of what the committee stands for. . . . There's an expectation that you do it because everybody in the department is busy, so the whole, "I'm so busy. I can't. I don't have time." I think will fall flat because everybody's busy.” (42)

It is clear from the above passages that committee work is assigned based on two criteria: (a) doing good committee work and (b) doing the least amount of harm.

Participant 38 is a former department head, and she assigned committees for the faculty in her department. She noted that some people do not pull their weight, and they are placed where they will do the least amount of harm. This means that faculty members who are not in positions of power, who would be more likely to perform better on committees, are likely assigned more committee work. Participant 8, as a faculty member describes what this is like when you have to serve on committees because you do good work. She uses terms like punished and volun-told to describe this method. For participant 42, there are elections, and while the department head maintains the control of creating the ballots for who is eligible for each committee, faculty have the choice to vote for whoever they want to be on each committee. In

her department, there is an expectation that everyone will do what he or she is assigned; however, it is unclear if eligibility is based on work ethic.

In departments where committee work is assigned whether by the department head solely or through a ballot where everyone votes, the microstructure dictates that all faculty participate in committees, and they should do a good job where they are placed. However, all three participants discuss faculty who do not perform well in their committee work, whether it is because they are intentionally performing lousy, are busy, or are just not good at the work. While poor committee work might speak to inefficiencies at organizing, poor performance on a committee can also be a communication strategy of resistance to service and dedication to research and/or teaching. Despite the motivation to perform poorly, the next iteration of the micro structure rewards poor behavior and punishes those who do solid committee work with an increased time burden. Over time, the micro structure is transformed to continually reward poor behavior with less committee work and punish diligent committee members with more. Communicatively, this is a vote of confidence from the department chair, but simultaneously creates a time burden on research productivity, which as discussed above, should be the primary focus of faculty. Women are also more likely to perform committee work at a higher standard, and structures that reward bad behavior are more likely to punish women faculty in the long run (Allen, 1995; Brown, 2016; June, 2018; Niemann, 2012).

In departments where committee work is not formally assigned, committee assignments are unclear, and assistant professors might feel obligated to say “yes” when multiple people are asking for help. The following three vignettes illustrate the tension junior faculty might feel between saying “yes” and preserving their time:

“As an assistant professor, it depends on who is asking. But if certain people are asking, you don't say no. In other cases you do say no because if you don't, they'll say you're

doing too much service. It's just trying to do just enough so that you're collegial and people see that you're contributing, but not too much. They look down on that too.” (7)

“I wish that time was more explicitly stated. Because I think we evaluate in some ways, relative to time, but we don't talk in those terms. So, 20% or 30%, does that equal eight hours, or I'm director of a center, does that give me a whole day or half day? What are the expectations of my commitment? . . . Am I doing too much service? Would saying no to some of it actually make a difference when I do it?” (10)

“We try to protect our first year assistant professors and not have them do any committee work. Beyond that, again unwritten, there's an expectation that you've been an active member of the department after your first year.” (17)

For these three participants, it is evident that there is a tension between saying yes to service and protecting time for research.

Participant 7 is stuck on a tightrope where she feels obligated to say yes to service when certain people ask because they will be voting on her tenure case, but as with teaching, mentioned above, if she does too much service, that will be perceived as detracting from her dedication to her research program. Participant 10 also struggles with her time commitment to service. She has taken on a bigger service commitment, which could easily take up all of her time, but her appointment is only 20% or 30% service, so again, there is a tightrope between how much time she should be spending on service versus how much time she should be spending on her research program. There is also the question of whether or not time percentages match perceptions of work. Participant 17, understands that junior faculty should be protected from the simultaneous pressure to say yes but to also protect time for research, but at the same time, she stresses the importance that junior faculty need to be perceived as active members of the department. In these situations, women are also more likely to take on more service

responsibilities than their male counterparts (Allen, 1995; Brown, 2016; June, 2018; Niemann, 2012).

In situations where service is not assigned, the amount of *visible* service communicates both a faculty member's loyalty to the department, but also her dedication to research. Similar to teaching, she does not want to be viewed as doing too much service because the perception will be that she is not focused on her research. She also cannot say no to all service commitments because then she will be viewed as not pulling her weight for the department. In that regard, the micro structure creates a situation where service is not measured in actual time commitment, number of committees, or even impact but in perception. Perception is not an objective assessment of "service accomplishment," which is required for all faculty. As such, the micro structure constrains tenure and promotion with uneven distribution of service based on both time commitment and perception of involvement. In a department where all service commitments were evenly distributed and those who underperformed were not rewarded for their behavior, the micro structure would enable tenure and promotion for women faculty.

For the purposes of this analysis, I have only discussed departmental service, but faculty members are also required to do service at the college and university levels depending on their appointment and the expectations of their department. Importantly, this does not include the external service that is expected as a measure of national/international visibility. Because my interview questions were specifically about the university requirements for tenure, very few participants remembered to discuss their external service requirements, which help them meet internal expectations, both "service accomplishment" as well as "national/international" visibility in the field. So in addition to departmental service, faculty members might be serving on other internal committees and initiatives within the university as well as serving in leadership

positions for their professional organizations or as reviewers/editors for journals in their disciplines. As such, protecting junior faculty from service obligations in the department does not mean that they have no service obligations vying for their time.

### **Rules for Extension**

Next, because of the land grant mission of the university, certain departments and colleges appoint faculty based on “extension” rather than research, teaching, or service. According to my participants, extension is considered a hybrid of research, teaching, and service, as they are discussed above, but with the added component of community engagement<sup>17</sup>. Many of the participants in the study had a formal extension appointment, as designated by their college or department, whereby their engagement with the community would weigh heavily in their promotion decision<sup>18</sup>.

Participant 35 summarizes how extension is a hybrid of research, teaching, and service to the community:

“It's not just writing. I go out to help [community participants] if they're having a problem. . . . Yeah, sometimes there are publications. I've developed apps as part of my extension stuff, and then I do the research that informs the extension. I cannot tell a [community participant] this [product] works better than this [product] if I don't know what I'm talking about. That's my being out in the field had to with doing the research to inform my extension program. . . . Extension is teaching for professionals. It's teaching and you could also call it outreach.” (35)

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<sup>17</sup> Extension, as described by the university, is the “cooperative extension” of research and education in order to better serve communities. Faculty with extension appointments, therefore, should (a) conduct research in the local, regional, or state community, (b) educate community participants based on that research, and (c) serve the community through education.

<sup>18</sup> Because extension appointments are grounded in research, all of the participants with extension appointments explained that their tenure/promotion would be evaluated on their research. As such, all participants with extension appointments are included in the 46 participants with research appointments, as mentioned above (in footnote 16).

In order to preserve her anonymity, Participant 35 does research on “products” that will help “community participants” with their jobs. Her research focus is on these products. Because the university is an R-1, she publishes her data on the products in journals respected in her discipline, but she also engages with community participants to demonstrate how the products will make their jobs easier or more efficient. That engagement can be in the form of writing for the community about the products or actual consultation with community participants. As such, there is a teaching component where she helps the community participants learn to use the products and evaluate them. A second level of her research determines the extent to which the products help the community participants. Products that help community participants are a service to the community. All three components, therefore, are needed to do extension work.

However, there is also some confusion between departments and colleges about how extension should be measured in the tenure and promotion packet. It is evident in the following four vignettes that there is also a lack of clarity on the expectations for both quantity and quality of this type of research:

“We have had a lot of talk as a faculty about where the appropriate sources are. The Journal [name] is the primary one to share with our colleagues. It probably wouldn't be considered tier one in other departments, but we do because we're getting it to the practitioners who are using our work.” (11)

“Most of my appointment is extension. Extension means translating my research into practical applications for stakeholders. . . . That's like a cloud, I don't know what is there. I do what I can and try to publish in extension outlets as well so that kind of counts. But I don't know what it exactly means. It's so subjective. . . . I document everything from who calls me, how many emails I respond from stakeholders, not from other people. But like, if a [stakeholder] wants me to do something, or somebody is asking me to do something,

I record that. I have an Excel file so by the end of the year, I say, okay, I responded 20 emails or I received 30 phone calls. They last 30 minutes on average coming from these areas. I have that. I don't think everybody does. I document how many talks. How many people attended the talks. What was evaluation besides the money because that's probably extension. That's something I don't know so I might as well do it.” (48)

“No, officially I do not have to do extension or outreach, but it's kind of expected that you do some of that. Not to the same extent as what I'm going up for, but they are going to want to see some type of outreach associated in my document, which honestly is important to me anyways because the work that I do. Usually I try to bring to the people who are actually going to be using it which is usually [specific stakeholders], and they don't read journal articles. You have to go and get that information to them in slightly different ways which outreach, magazines, or technician magazines or things like that are much more common and likely to get that information to them. Even though technically I don't have to, it's still something that's somewhat expected.” (39)

Participant 11 is focused on the writing and publishing expectation for promotion based on her extension contribution. She explains an outlet that she recommends to junior faculty for where to publish some of their extension research. This is just one person's advice, but many of the issues related to communicating expectations still apply (discussed above under research). There are still questions associated with the writing quality and the impact to the community.

On the other hand, there is still ambiguity and anxiety associated with the extension expectations (rules). Participant 48 is still trying to understand what is expected of her for her extension appointment and where to publish. She has not received formal advice on this topic, so she is documenting everything she perceives could be “cooperative extension” to be safe. Finally, participant 39 is in a department where the majority of the faculty have extension appointments, and so even though she is not formally, according to university policy, expected to

engage with the community in the same way, the departmental expectation is that she will include extension in her promotion documents.

Extension rules mirror those rules above associated with research. Where communication of expectations is clear (Participant 11 and other supportive faculty passing down advice about where to publish), tenure and promotion are enabled; however, where expectations are vague (Participant 48's struggle with what to document) or where extra work is required because others expect a packet to look like their own (Participant 38's experience of having to document extension even though it is not part of her formal appointment), then tenure and promotion are constrained by the structure.

### **Guidelines for Mentorship**

Finally, the promotion policy requires all faculty to have “commitment to active and responsive mentorship” of both students and postdoctoral persons. Based on my interviews, this is a policy that was written in 2015 and was added to the formal promotion policy effective January 1, 2016 (as noted above). Because of the backlash about this policy and the lack of clarity in the formal 2016 document, there was overwhelming confusion about the measure of mentorship. The Provost's Memo in April 2017 encouraged all colleges to more clearly define mentorship for their own faculty. The Provost's request of the colleges was a communicative invitation to provide feedback and determine metrics for mentorship at the micro level. Departments then have a voice in authoring the reproduction of the mentorship policy in its next iteration. This is a primary example of how human interaction and organization at the micro structure can influence the macro structure policies (McPhee et al., 2014).

Because of relevance to their tenure and promotion, only the assistant professors, associate professors, and administrators mentioned mentoring in their interviews as a

requirement for promotion and tenure, and no one could yet clearly describe how it would be evaluated in their department. There are several questions embedded within the following excerpts. The first question is what is mentoring:

“So, now mentorship is kind of a requirement in our promotion and tenure, but not fully defined. Like, this is what a mentor is, and this is what we expect, and this is how you're going to be assessed with that. That's all kind of cloudy. Just kind of exploring where I can get different interactions with undergraduate students outside of a formal classroom setting, was one reason I explored [being a faculty fellow]. I probably won't continue it, because the other thing I was exploring was [program], and I just feel like that structure of [program] allows me to get, what I would consider mentoring, even though someone's not giving me a formal definition that I have to abide by. . . . My work with the undergraduate student on my grant. . . . I view that as much more mentorship than some other interactions, but I think that is a big question mark for everyone. How's that really going to be looked at? I know different schools, and some are handling it very formally. They're actually assigning a group of students to say "You're their mentor." I think that's interesting. Because, is that a mentor?” (30)

“Now on our tenure application, right, we have this new section on mentoring, quote unquote, and we get to talk about this. I'm not really sure what that's going to look like when I go up in 18 months, but . . . So, you know, I'm on however many students' plan of studies, but this is where I would write, you know, work that I do with graduate students where I'm not on their committee per se, but maybe we're working on a project together or something. . . . It's difficult to document because, on some level, some of these students are coming to me primarily because, you know, they trust me and it's not necessarily something I would feel comfortable writing about on a document. So, but it is care work and it does take time.” (25)

According to participant 30, mentoring cannot occur in the formal classroom setting, and so she is exploring different programs that would allow her to mentor students. Her department is not

formally assigning students, which makes it her responsibility to find opportunities to mentor students, but at the same time, if the relationship is forced, she questions if that is a true mentoring relationship. Participant 25 also has questions about what will count as mentorship, and she struggles with some of the definitions that have been discussed in her department. For her, there is a privacy component to mentoring students, and she does not want to be responsible for formally documenting the nature of her mentoring relationships if it will make the students uncomfortable or reveal private information.

In addition to what counts as mentoring, several faculty members were concerned about *who* needed to be mentored for the relationship to count. Because undergraduate students, graduate students, and post-doctoral students have all been discussed by various faculty, departments, and colleges on campus, many faculty were concerned that they would be evaluated based on their mentoring of students to which they did not have access.

“I think I'm a little wary or uncertain about some of the requirements for tenure that seem to be changing. . . . It's a worry in the back of my mind that some of those have changed, like the recent changes saying that the mentorship aspect, which I guess I'm already doing, but it's not clear exactly how that's going to be evaluated. . . . They now have that as part of the official guidelines for tenure, that mentorship is part of the criteria on which you're evaluated. . . . So, I guess that's a concern for me, because I feel like so far my exposure to undergraduates has been somewhat minimal, because I've been teaching a lot of graduate courses.” (12)

“There's the expectation that I will mentor and graduate graduate students [verb adjective noun]. Again, there's no set number on how many that is that I've been told. I would imagine it's maybe three before I go up for promotion and tenure, two to three maybe. There's also the expectation that I will mentor undergraduates as well.” (39)

While the formal policy states “students and postdoctoral scientists,” participants 12 and 39 are both concerned that their lack of access to undergraduate students will cause a problem for them when they are evaluated for tenure/promotion. Participant 39 includes her graduate student advisees in the mentoring category, but when it comes to undergraduate students, she is concerned that she will be expected to advise them as well. Both Participants 12 and 39 implicitly ask if advising and mentoring are the same.

The third and final question associated with mentoring is how it will be evaluated when the packet is submitted: Will mentoring have its own metric, or will it be assessed under teaching or possibly under research? The following two passages explore the communication surrounding this question:

“So mentoring is included within the research component and within the teaching component. So if you mentor graduate students, there's mentoring. If you mentor undergraduate, if you teach undergraduates, you're expected to mentor. So there's always a mentoring. ” (48)

“Well, I think the mentoring now goes into the teaching category, but there is overlap. Research and teaching. The overlap part is to mentor post docs and PhD students, to advance their scientific career, let's put it that way.” (49)

Participants 48 and 49 both seem to agree that mentoring should be documented in either the teaching or research sections of the dossier, possibly both. What permeates the previous six excerpts is that no one really knows how to document mentoring and how they will be evaluated because there is no example to follow.

There are two communicative and structural considerations to discuss in regards to mentoring, especially since the macro policies are not yet fully formulated: (a) the (re)production of the structure, and (b) the gendered nature of mentoring. First, all of the faculty above are

asking questions and communicating about the policy. Structure and action are interdependent and inseparable (Giddens, 1979). Communication foregrounds structure, as human interaction creates rules, which determine structure (Poole and McPhee, 2005). All of the human interaction and communication surrounding this policy will inform behaviors, which will help to write the rules, which will become part of the structure, both in the micro and the macro levels. Structures are the result of interactions, but they will then be used to guide future communication (mentoring) and behaviors (evaluation procedures; McPhee et al., 2014).

Additionally, it is important to note that structure can (re)produce inequities, especially when structure is built on gendered communication practices (Hoffman & Cowan, 2010; Kirby & Krone, 2002; Schimpf et al. 2013). Female faculty already mentor students more than their male counterparts (Brown, 2016; Varallo, 2008), and students also sometimes expect mothering from their female professors while they require less attention from their male professors (Varallo, 2008). Both of these issues could result in disparities if gendered expectations of mentoring become part of the formal policies. If disparities are to be addressed in the formal micro and macro policies, they should be discussed now while departments and colleges are being encouraged to come up with parameters and metrics. Faculty should ask questions about how mentoring is distributed and should discuss biases in evaluation mentoring practices. Time should be accounted for, as students often require more mentoring time from female faculty (Flaherty, 2018a; Varallo, 2008). Male and female professors, alike, should be included in conversations about how to define mentoring. If it is defined at the department level, departments where the majority of the faculty are male might define mentoring in a way where traditional women's mentoring is not counted or valued. Faculty should ask if this macro policy is an

attempt to make mentoring more equitable, and if it is, what is the damage in letting departments and colleges define mentoring on their own?

Finally, consideration should also be given to intersectional identities with regards to mentoring. Many minority students prefer to be mentored by people who understand their experiences. Holvino (2010) would contend that the simultaneity of race and class cannot be ignored when discussing a formal policy on mentoring. In the next section, I discuss in more detail the interplay between the macro structure's formal policies and the micro structure's rules and suggestions.

### **Translating Ambiguity from Macro Formal Policy to Micro Rules and Suggestions**

As you can see from the examples above, the rules are more concrete in some departments, whereas in other departments they remain vague or unclear. Where faculty are being promoted on research or service, the rules are mostly about quantity of products from the research program, quality of those products, and impact of those products on a specific audience. All of the advice and opinions, which become the rules faculty members have to follow are variations of explaining what excellence means in either research or service. When faculty members are being promoted on research specifically, rules associated with teaching and service requirements are mostly focused on how those assignments are made and how much time should be spent on those areas given that research should be the priority. There is also an expectation throughout that faculty will use the advice they are given, that they will follow those directives, as if they are rules or formal policy. As such, junior faculty want to make sure they are seen as a good colleague, and they want to make sure they are not disappointing faculty members that would vote on their promotion.

In all the rules mentioned above, they would ideally be equitable, the same for all researchers. Although there should be variability in expectations to account for the variability in research programs, the rules should be void of favoritism. An objective look at someone's record should look for excellence, national prominence, and impact, as it relates to their subject area. This should be different across colleges, from department to department, and even from one sub-discipline to the next. However, tenure is never an objective look at the record of a faculty member. On some level every person who sits on a department or college committee brings their own experiences and biases into the room. The language of formal policies from the university, from colleges, and from departments can be problematic because of subjective interpretation from the faculty at every level of evaluation in the promotion process.

Two major issues arise because of the ambiguity: (a) favoritism and bias, and (b) power and fear. Because the department promotion committee is the first to assess a faculty member, this is where I focus the analysis.

### **Favoritism and Bias**

Even assistant professors acknowledge that there will be some variability in their promotion case because people have different experiences, opinions, and experiences. This idea is illustrated in the following two vignettes:

“It's really what the composition of that room thinks at that moment. So it doesn't surprise me that one faculty member is telling me, you know, ‘You need to protect your time from graduate students at all costs,’ and another faculty member's telling me, ‘We think it's fantastic that your door's open and we see graduate students in all the time.’ Because there's no uniform formal agreement as to what this should look like. I do want perhaps a recognition from the folks who have not been new for a long time that, when nobody can give you a clear definition or understanding of what it would mean to earn tenure that you kind of have to make it up as you go along.” (25)

“If it becomes how much do you have to do for tenure, how much do you have to do for promotion, there's no rules. There's all kinds of mysterious guidelines where everybody has an opinion, which is very real. . . . That's what adds to the frustration and the pain of promotion and tenure. We have guidelines. They're specifically called ‘guidelines’ from the college and from the university. Then you listen to people and they state them like they're rules. Their opinion is a rule. Yeah, it's not easy to untangle that.” (27)

Participant 25 explains that she receives conflicting advice from different colleagues because of their own experiences and preferences while on the tenure track. The advice she is receiving is about how much time graduate students take from your schedule. The idea here is that research, not teaching, service, or even mentoring, should come before everything else; however, her visibility in the department and with students is also positive because it shows she is an active and engaged member of the department. Both of those faculty members will vote on her, and while one will preference her output aside from students, the other was pleased with her student engagement. Participant 27 expands on this idea that opinions are rules. If that is the case, then how would Participant 25 both follow the rule that she should be available to students but also that she should protect her time from students. When opinions are stated as rules, it becomes impossible to follow the rules from every person who gives junior faculty advice.

As mentioned above and again made clear in Participant 27's explanation, there is an implication that faculty will follow those rules imposed on them through communication. Importantly, when the department committee is evaluating a promotion case, these are the metrics by which the faculty are making decisions. At the most innocent, faculty interpret university, college, and department policy based on their own life experiences, career

experiences, and/or their familiarity of the subject area or sub-discipline. The following three vignettes illustrate this process:

“Some people in the department who have a primary research appointment, they teach very little, they sometimes don't have an appreciation for the other roles, for the teaching role or the extension role, or if somebody only does mostly teaching, they don't have an appreciation, they don't understand what scholarship and excellence is in these other disciplines, so sometimes their view of what is appropriate and what is acceptable, what is scholarship and excellence, they don't really have an understanding of that.” (37)

“Now we are told that extension is just as important, but we don't know how to evaluate an extension package. You know, what do we look for? I mean, they're not going to be publishing science or bringing in asset money, necessarily, so what are we looking for? How many people that, how many workshops they put together and how many people they trained? Well, who cares how many people they train if that didn't have outcome? So all this thing about, how do you measure impact for those people? And even for teaching. Very quietly keep saying, "Scholarship and teaching. Scholarship and extension." Okay, what is that? Do you have to test a hypothesis about your teaching methods? Or is it all based on science, too? I mean, I don't know. It's very wishy-washy right now. . . . We have to follow the guidelines from the college. But each department has its own [department] committee. And of course, it's composed of unique people that think very uniquely at some times, and so the environment that gets created in those committees is probably very different between departments, I would guess. So the way people handle things, the department heads are going to handle differently in each department. That's the tricky thing about going through tenure or promotion, it's not a very straightforward process, you know? And I think that that's the way it will always be, I think, because we're dealing with ... We're trying to figure out. Some people might have different values and they think certain things are more important than others, and that's not going to change. Right? We will all have our own biases and experiences, so we're going to take them with us into the [department] committee.” (23)

“So there is no lack of will, there's just the lack of knowledge, so I don't think people will maliciously try to misunderstand or not try to understand [my sub-discipline], but I just feel like we come from very different backgrounds and sometimes it's hard to even understand what it is you're trying to understand.” (14)

Participant 37 explains that faculty only know the system based on their experience within it. As a full professor and former department head, she has served on both her department's committee as well as the college level committee, so she has seen a number of cases that are not typical in her department. She recognizes because of this experience that everyone comes to the room with an expectation for what a promotion package should look like. If someone is asking to be promoted based on research versus teaching, their promotion materials are going to look very different. In addition, she touches on the idea that within departments, there are multiple sub-disciplines, and sometimes faculty do not understand what a package might look like from a sub-discipline different from their own.

Participant 23 expands on this idea that everyone's career and promotion materials are different. Specifically, her primary appointment is research, so she is illustrating from her own point of view what Participant 27 was explaining. She does not understand how to evaluate impact and rigor in extension and teaching packages. Because of her unique position in a department and based on her own research, her understanding of teaching scholarship and extension scholarship is limited, though she will have to vote on those cases nonetheless. It is clear from the rules mentioned above in the extension section that scholars who are being promoted on their extension have to do science to inform their extension, but Participant 23 does not view their work as science in the same way that she views her own work. Participant 14 then, is an assistant professor in a department where there are three different types of promotion packages based on each faculty member's research area. Her major concern is that the senior

faculty will not understand the work she does or why her publications look the way that they do. Because of this research divide, she is worried that her promotion will be challenged because of a lack of understanding.

Clearly though, if senior faculty are aware that they carry these biases, like Participant 23, then department committees can work through these biases in the department committee and strive to understand their junior colleagues. Real challenges begin to arise when faculty members do not openly acknowledge that they have values and biases based on their own work. When this fact is not recognized, faculty members go into department committees and believe they are objectively looking at promotion packages but forget to allow for “the varying nature of academic accomplishments” because their own biases limit their definition of “accomplishment” to a certain mold. Some of these biases and values are illustrated in the following four passages:

“So now recently this year, there's a new set of guidelines for promotion in the college [name], where extension and teaching have supposedly have become just as important as research. And I say it sarcastically because I know that's not going to be an easy transition. And some people think that it is, and I'm like, laughing out loud, because I know it's not. Because we will always be looking at the money they brought in, the number of publications, what type of journals did they publish, how many presentations did they give? The same old thing, you know? The same type. So of course we need to move it away from that, but it's not going to happen right away and it's going to take a lot of work from all of us to think differently. . . . But anyways, regardless of that, how can I evaluate somebody for teaching or extension if that's not what I'm qualified to do?” (23)

“Yeah, I was trying to show that, ‘Look, our institution says that a profile of research that focuses on community based research and engagement is legitimate.’ And I was serving at that point as the director of [program], so I met regularly with all of the heads of departments, and they all just looked at me and said, ‘Well, I don't care what it says. In my neck of the woods we wouldn't even consider somebody who wanted to go up on

engagement.’ And I said, ‘Oh, so are we posting signs at the door of our department saying check all your engagement activities here because it's not going to be acceptable?’ I mean, ‘Are you saying then that you're the sheriff of the town and to ignore the rules that...’ I mean, how does an institution work if you have mandates at the highest level and further on down you're just saying, ‘Not in my neighborhood.’ And they all just said, ‘Yeah.’ . . . We should be able to establish standards and that was a discussion that went nowhere, and in fact, it was treated with a good deal of hostility. On those issues, just trying to bring a different set of optics to my department just completely shut down.” (1)

“But there are other things that also play a role. It's not just racism, sexism, it's also like power structures that go along with favoritism, so in other words, it is not a fair process necessarily. Let's say the department has different specializations, so a member of this specialization may favor people from that, those kinds of things. People have preferences for certain things, and those preferences that are in people's minds sort of create biases in the judgments and recommendations. Yeah, and liking people, that may also play a role. And you cannot take it away ... I mean it is an important thing in people's judgment. Just think about the political discussion, nobody liked Hilary Clinton. She may have been the most competent candidate, but nobody liked her. And so liking somebody of course plays a role in what people are doing.” (24)

“But this woman I'm trying desperately to get promoted she's going to do well to get a majority. You're supposed to have a majority vote to get out of a [department] committee meeting. They have 10 full professors now. And so that's a 6-4 vote at a minimum she's got to get, and I think she'll get it. I do think she'll get that, but that's the damn minimum. . . . I think it's because she's international in focus. She's global. She does exactly what President [name] would love and the dean would love, global studies. You hear that every time you turn around. . . . These guys don't do that kind of work. They're very U.S. centric and I don't think appreciate cross-cultural type of research and the journals that make sense for her to publish in so that she reaches an international audience, not just a U.S. audience. But they don't care for that too much and so that's part of the problem. And so the journals she's publishing in are not the top three U.S. journals, okay, that they

would love everybody published at least one piece in, and I'm sorry to say she doesn't have anything in one of those journals, that's her weak spot. . . . So I think the major problem is we've got a lot of senior faculty who are not too well acquainted with the nature of the discipline at this time. Our discipline has really gone into so many specialized areas. And each specialty or many of them have their own journal that people of that interest publish in, and so it's not just these top three general journals that matter anymore really for the development of the discipline, but they're kind of stuck on that. And of course any of us would love to have an article in those journals, but just because you don't and you've got in some specialty journal doesn't mean your stuff's shit. . . . She published something in the main [topic] journal in [discipline], . . . which got created and put out its own journal because these general journals wouldn't take work having to do with [topic]. . . . But I think now this journal is getting a better reputation here, but . . . she doesn't have any in any of these top three and that's just I'd say an Achilles heel, okay. It's so easy to point to that, you know. And it's a fact no, she doesn't have a one, well whoo hoo, so what. Well, that's a written thing; we prefer articles in the most prestigious [discipline] journals and she won't have them. So I don't know what's going to happen to her. She's got some books to her credit as well as articles, which will help, but here the bias again is toward articles, not books. These people don't write books, they don't know what a book is. It's really a sustained effort to write a book. It's sustained scholarship, you can whip out a 10-page article a lot quicker you know, and that's what they're all doing and so I guess she gets less credit for having done books. Poor thing. She is not doing anything right according to these guys.” (21)

Participant 23 describes a bias for traditional research even though both the university policy and her college's policy allow for anyone to be evaluated on their teaching or extension instead. She recognizes that while she knows that this is a policy, the department committee will still be looking for the same items in a promotion package that they have traditionally used to make an evaluation. Although there is a formal policy, the people in the department, because of their own biases, will take time to come into accordance with the policy. However, even being aware of a

policy at a higher level might not be enough to convince certain faculty members that scholarship on teaching or scholarship on engagement is acceptable. Participant 1 explains that when she was in an administrative role, she tried to convey that university policy allowed for scholarship related to community engagement, and her department would not allow someone to receive tenure in this way. University policy in this situation clearly states that although departments are allowed to create their own metrics, “where these guidelines conflict, university and college guidelines take precedence.” However, the department level is the first vote on promotion, which means that a faculty member would have to be denied tenure and then file a grievance in the case of a conflict. At that point, collegiality has been ruined on both sides.

Participant 24 expands on the idea that the ambiguity in the language and the meeting of the department committee in general allows the promotion process to re-create systems of favoritism. This tendency could be related to a preference for research over teaching/service as mentioned by Participants 1 and 23, but it could also be more personal, an implicit bias against women or persons of color. Likeability matters, even if it is not recognized. This idea of favoritism culminates in the story Participant 21 is describing from her department. The woman has a lot of publications and a book, but the male faculty in her department do not value books, cross-cultural scholarship, research about women, or specialty journals. It is unclear if there is also an underlying gender bias in the department. What the faculty in the department value are the top journals in their discipline and US specific research, neither of which the candidate has. As such, even though this faculty member has excellent scholarship and impact, she still might not receive promotion from the colleagues in her department.

Favoritism and implicit biases are problematic, but they are also addressable with information and education. I have to believe that academics would want to make the promotion

process more objective, if given the opportunity to do so. However, at its most nefarious, the language can be used intentionally for favoritism. At least 25% of the participants in this study told stories where promotion was directed by self-interest, to help certain friends get promoted, or to push out people that were not wanted for a variety of reasons. The following vignettes are a sample of these stories:

“You know, there's a collegiality component to the promotion and tenure process and if someone is not collegial, is not seen as a team player, part of what you're voting on is do you want this person to be a colleague for your whole career, and if they're not seen as anyone who could really be a colleague then it's a little bit more difficult to vote yes.” (37)

“It shouldn't be, but you know tenure is also, in some ways, it's a popularity referendum. I mean, it is about what's in the portfolio, but- We had a tenure case go bad several years ago, and this person wasn't around at all, and had very very limited interactions, and those hallway conversations, that didn't help. You know, there were problems with the portfolio, but there was also this added layer that happened in those hallway conversations that don't happen when you're actually in that [department] vote.” (8)

“There was a person that did refuse [a teaching assignment] who did not get tenure. So it's really bad to not. Yeah. You don't refuse. But you figure out how to make the best of it.” (50)

“This was a real leak. She was a feminist [discipline specific professor]. When she was hired in [department name], she was told the week she arrived by some senior male colleague, ‘You will never get tenure in this department.’ They hated her because she'd been hired by one of their colleagues who was the head at that time and then became the dean. Over their opposition. And they did not want a feminist [discipline specific professor] of her stripe, right? And she was very forthright, and there was no part of her that was going to dissemble and play the kind of woman that they wanted to be working

with, and sure enough, it came time for her to be tenured, and even though she had a book, she was not voted up by her department. Even a book from a good press. She was not voted up from her department.” (9)

“Most of the time they use the fact that there are no real rules to change the target of where you're aiming for. It's not that there's some rule that says if you have more than five publications a year you will be safe because of course they can devalue certain publications you have or hold up others as being examples of sort of stronger publications. That's why there's really no rules in the sense that there's not a clear number associated with each of those different categories. In general, I would say as someone in a top research department they really just always want you to have more of any of those categories so they tend to say, ‘There is no rule we just want you to have impact. You should strive to have as much as you can.’ Then they tell you whatever you do pretty much is not enough. The reason that there are no rules is so that they can bend them to be whatever they want. For the people that they wanted to keep here they bend them so that you need almost nothing but then for other people that they made the bar too high they just say, ‘That's it, I'm not going to do it here I'll go somewhere else.’ . . . Yeah and I guess I feel like in our department and [University] in general there is like a hesitation to put any rules in writing because they do different things for people all the time to try to convince them to do things they want or convince them to stay or whatever to facilitate the people they like, the people they don't whatever. . . . I know a lot of the research on implicit bias and how that affects women in STEM. I've seen that all happen; it happens everyday here, it happens with respect to what I achieve. When I said there's rules on grants, the rules are the rules for having impact or success in terms of grants, publications, what have you. Basically, I've just had the goal posts moved on me many times so they say, ‘Oh, well you did this that's not very good, that's not good enough, you need to do this other thing.’ Then I do the other thing and they say, ‘Oh, I didn't really mean that was good enough you needed to do this other thing.’ Then now that I've been here long enough, I see that when they say it to the junior men they go back to like, ‘Oh, wait no so you just need to do this.’ Things that were obstacles for me are not going to be obstacles for the men.” (33)

“There are some people in this building who would think that I was treated special because of my identity. I don't see that; I feel that I've worked just as hard, maybe harder than most in trying to come across as being a credible faculty member. There are some people who have commented on the fact that I am only in this position because of the color of my skin. . . . That's definitely what was stated when I first came to [University], that I was only hired because I was African-American. When my first department head left, in his exit interview with me he said, ‘You know, with all the adversity around your hiring, I don't know how you're going to make it here.’ I thought, ‘Well, you know. I'm going to make it here, and I'm going to make it as a tenure-track faculty member, and I'm going to make full one day.’ He didn't see it, and that was even discouraging for him to say, ‘I don't know how you're going to make it.’ He said, ‘I'm just being honest.’” (45)

Participant 37 explains that even if someone has a good record, there is hesitancy in voting for that person if you do not want to be their colleague in the long term. Participant 8 also acknowledges that promotion is somewhat based on popularity, and if you are unpopular for any reason, that could weigh against you. In her story, she explains that there was a faculty member in her department that was never around, an absentee colleague, and so this person was denied tenure. In the hallway, when that person was not around to speak up, the rest of the faculty were commenting on the absence.

Importantly, though, promotion meetings can and have been used to enact social retribution. This goes back to popularity and favoritism, but is more deliberate when it is used as vengeance. Participant 50 explained a situation where someone refused a teaching assignment. It is unclear if this was only once or multiple times, but because of this, the faculty member was denied their promotion. Social retribution can be enacted also for something of which the faculty member is not even aware. Participant 9 explains a situation that happened before her colleague was even hired. Because she was a contested hire, the department used the promotion process to

push her out of the department. They did not choose her, and so they had no incentive to keep her in the department. This is frightening because of how this can be used against essentially anyone with a contested position, including, but not limited to, spousal accommodations. Retribution, then, could essentially be enacted for any reason if a faculty member does not fit the preferred mold: if you are just never present, if their specific research is not respected, if a faculty member chooses to go for promotion on teaching or service, or even if you are a woman and/or person of color.

Participant 33 explained to me how her promotion to associate professor was contested and a heavy percentage of her colleagues voted against her because she is a woman. While her male colleagues have been promoted to full professor with fewer accomplishments, she has been subjected to years of biased treatment from her male colleagues. Participant 45 experienced backlash because her hire was contested in her department. Because of her race, her work was discounted, she was encouraged to switch to a clinical professor appointment, and had several of her accomplishments denigrated because of her race. Because of that, she had to work harder, accomplish more, and develop an even stronger reputation than her colleagues to be taken seriously. Transition.

### **Power and Fear**

Though it is obvious from the data that using the promotion process as social retribution or even to deliberately enact biases against people or types of research, stories of this nature are common enough that junior faculty fear the promotion process will be misused against them. This creates a power structure between junior and senior faculty where junior faculty feel they have to “stay in line.” Junior faculty are afraid to speak up, afraid to be perceived as anything but

a team player. As the three vignettes below illustrate, this can be related to research, teaching, or service”

“They will say it's research dollars. They will say it's publications. They will say it's impact factor of the publications, but they have a hundred ways to say that those research dollars don't count because that money didn't go to your grad student. It went to a different person. That publication didn't count because you collected that data here and not there. That kind of thing, so they have total power in a way that's unwritten and I think, frankly, it positions a person who's going to get promoted to just have to be political and please them all the time. Not everybody who's making decisions thinks this way but there are a few powerful people who want to create a department that replicates themselves and makes their position more prominent and they wield a whole lot of power.” (43)

“Perhaps I could contest that, but I don't feel like I want to. I guess I feel pressured to not say, "Hey, did you notice that I've been teaching a graduate class every single semester, while there are senior, full professors who are teaching two sections of Intro [course] this semester?" And they want to teach the graduate class, and I want it too, but I also want to get tenure.” (12)

“One thing that I've seen is that it's important not to piss anybody off. And that's probably like a given for anywhere, but here it can be particularly delicate. . . . It's like playing a strategy game that I'm not used to playing, and I'm not very good at yet. So who you talk to first seems to matter, and what you say, how you say it, seems to matter. And those kinds of games and politics take a lot of getting used to. I'm still kind of learning what the tacit rules are.” (29)

Participant 43 explains a situation where she is pressured to do the exact type of research that others do in her department for fear that they will nitpick her work. Participant 12, although she has had to create new preps for classes every semester on the tenure track, fears that she will not

get tenure if she speaks up and asks to repeat more classes. Participant 29 explains that she fears upsetting people in her department, and this is related to both speaking up at faculty meetings as well as saying yes or no to service obligations. In every aspect of the tenure packet, junior faculty feel as though their colleagues have the power to damage their promotion changes if they do not perform as expected.

Associate professors and full professors do not feel the same pressures, but they understand that junior faculty feel this way because they have been there in the past. Those associate and full professors who remember the pressures to perform try to be mindful of the power they have over their junior colleagues. The following two vignettes demonstrate this self-awareness.

“When you have tenure you can basically say, in a very nice way, "Fuck off." I'm very, I guess that's an informal rule, careful about my dealings with my untenured colleagues, and to not put pressure, or ask them to unduly do anything, because I'm sensitive to the fact that there's a power differential there. You know, I'm voting on their tenure case and, as much as you may try to forget that and say it's only based on what's in the portfolio, I know how it was as an untenured professor, when I had those interactions with tenured professors. You know, just showing willingness, and showing engagement, and just because I want them to think that I have a strong tenure case.” (8)

“Yeah, and the person that they said, ‘Oh, these two aren't [going to get tenure].’ It was the worst part of the whole process, because the woman that gave me the gossip, who was under me as far as she's going up for tenure now, she shouldn't have been told. She shouldn't have told me, and the guy who told her wasn't even ... It was just a nightmare. It was an absolute nightmare. And it was very difficult for my committee to handle as well, because they couldn't say anything . . . because it's supposed to be private. . . . But it has affected the relationship that I had with this person who's now coming up for tenure, and I know she's afraid that I'm not going to vote for her for tenure, which is ridiculous, because it's all based ... But still, now she's got that pressure on herself.” (18)

Participant 8 explains that because she vividly remembers what it was like to be an assistant professor trying to please her colleagues, she now tries to be sensitive to that relationship, and she tries to remember those pressures when she is voting for tenure cases. Participant 18 lived with years of fear that she was not going to get tenure because someone in her department was spreading rumors about her tenure case, and because the structure allows for favoritism and retribution, this person is now worried that moment of gossip is going to affect her own tenure case. Participant 18 is hyper aware of how junior faculty feel and the things they worry about because she had to worry about her own tenure case for so long, and so going into the meeting where she will vote on her colleague, she is self-aware that biases exist even though the relationship is damaged. Many of the other associate and full professors in the study also mentioned that they are aware of these pressures and try to take them into consideration when they are dealing with junior faculty.

Whether it is recognized or not that the ambiguity of the language and the interpretations of the language are always in some ways biased, and faculty members live the anxiety created from this ambiguity because the structure allows for subjective interpretation. There is a thin line between unrecognized biases and social retribution. As such, faculty feel as though they have to over-perform to ensure there is nothing wrong with their packet, but as Participant 43 mentioned above, there is always something in the packet that can be picked apart if the desire is there to do so. In this way the text, formal policies at the university, college, and department levels, works in tandem with verbal communication inside each department to create a unique set of rules for every single faculty member. As such, every faculty member experiences the structure in a different way through the text to communication interplay.

A lot of the variability depends on department collegiality and the availability of socialization for women. In departments where the majority of faculty support each other, are interested in getting to know each other as both academics and people, and to the extent that their discipline allows collaboration on projects with one another, junior faculty are positioned better to succeed. Departments where the majority of faculty create and maintain cliques, are interested in preserving a “boys club” atmosphere, or hold grudges for various reasons, junior faculty are constrained even before the job formally begins. In supportive and collegial departments, junior faculty learn through open and honest communication with faculty what the specific expectations are and how their department specifically interprets the university policy. They might also learn by example through collaborations and department gatherings. Where natural mentoring relationships are allowed to flourish, junior faculty are better supported. Environments that are non-caring, non-collaborative or cliquish, and/or hostile to women and/or persons of color create atmospheres without role models where faculty are isolated and feel they are pressured to perform without being allowed to ask questions. One of the ways in which departments, and the institution overall, attempt to handle this dilemma is through the provision of resources that would help the faculty member navigate her relationships and obligations easier.

### **Resources to Help Faculty Achieve Tenure/Promotion**

There are both formalized resources built into the academic early routine and also an abundance of optional resources in which faculty can choose to take advantage, if they know they exist. I review formalized resources first.

## Formalized Resources

Every department included in this study now has both a formal mentoring program for assistant professors and an annual review process. It was unclear from the data if these are institutional mandates or if they are departmental initiatives – because there are drastic variations in implementation from department to department and also, if the college is involved, from college to college – but both are widespread practices, if they are not mandated at the university level. The main purpose of both initiatives is to build collegial relationships between senior and junior faculty and to clarify expectations for junior faculty. Because these two processes work together in most departments, I begin with mentoring.

The provost's website acknowledges that one way to have successful faculty members is through mentoring, and the website "encourages department heads" to "assign" a mentor or multiple mentors to each incoming faculty member based on the size of the department and the expectations for tenure. The provost's website goes on to explain that "some colleges" have developed formal policies for mentoring and urges department heads to check with their deans and/or to follow suit. Although the policy is not required across the institution, the development of mentoring programs in each department is highly encouraged by the provost's office. For the purposes of this study, every department included in the study now has a formal mentorship program, but each mentoring program is unique to the department or in the case that the college has a formal policy, unique to the college with variability in the department.

The following three vignettes illustrate the variability in how mentorship policies are enacted and what topics the mentors are supposed to cover in their guidance:

"Assistant professors have mentors that they self-select. It's not assigned but they choose a person that can be in their field or not in their field. Someone doing [research on topic] could pick someone doing [research on other topic], for example, to be their mentor. That

person is to offer them, both informally throughout their time as an assistant professor, and formally, during the third year review process an assessment of their scholarship and teaching.” (17)

“When I did them [as department head], and those were jointly decided by the junior faculty member, the incoming faculty member and the department head; I never dictated who was on their mentoring committee, but usually we'd talk that through and think about what might be the best for them. Who did they feel comfortable with? Who was a good match for the nature of their appointment? Who would do a good job of that? But it was really their choice. . . . I would always suggest to a junior faculty member, a new faculty member, that we have a system where there's at least one person, probably one person from outside the department, so probably three people, one from outside the department to give a different perspective, and then have a system where you rotate off one person every year and you rotate on one person every year, that way more people got to see what you're doing and learn what you're doing so there's more people who know about that when you come up for promotion and tenure. It also allows a junior faculty member to, without any hard feelings, to rotate off somebody who really is not a good match, or doesn't help, or for whatever reason. It's just an obvious you rotate off, and you have somebody who rotates on.” (37)

“The faculty are encouraged to have like three mentors. You have one for research, you have one for teaching, then you have one that, I don't think has necessarily a specified role but some other person. But the idea is to have three mentors now.” (2)

Obvious from the above passages, there are two main questions surrounding the assignment of mentors: how they are chosen and what their tasks are. Mentors are both assigned and chosen. Participant 17's department asks junior faculty to choose someone in the department to be their mentor. This is done without guidance, but Participant 37's department, starting when she was the department head provides guidance as faculty are choosing their mentors. Another difference

between these two departments is the number of mentors. In Participant 17's department, each junior faculty member has one mentor, but in Participant 27's department, junior faculty have three mentors. Participant 2's department also encourages junior faculty to have three mentors, but it is unclear if they are assigned or chosen. The word "encouraged" implies that the junior faculty member has some degree of choice for their mentors. The data suggest that junior faculty are assigned or given the choice to have between one and four mentors. In some departments, the mentors are even referred to as a mentoring committee.

The other question regards the mentor's responsibilities in that role. In participant 17's department, the mentor assesses the junior faculty's scholarship and teaching. The mentors in this department take on more of an instructor role, assessing and then presumably guiding the faculty member on how to improve in those two specific areas. They also report back to the department in a formal third year review process. In Participant 2's department, the three mentors all have a different task: one covers teaching, one covers scholarship, and the third is more general. This process allows the junior faculty member specialized mentoring, where they can have someone with similar teaching assignments or someone who does similar research, but they don't have to find their doppelganger in the department. Similarly, Participant 37 encouraged junior faculty, when she was department head, to choose their mentor's based on the nature of their appointment, and since they are allowed multiple, they can decide, with guidance from the head, who would be best for their needs. They also receive a mentor from outside of the department, which gives them visibility and also would ideally help them prepare their materials in such a way that they are appropriate for the college committee audience.

Another important point that Participant 37 makes is that mentorship is not one-way communication. Both the mentee and the mentor learn from the relationship. The mentee

receives guidance on scholarship, on teaching, on the workings of the department, and in some cases, the workings of the college. In certain departments the mentee also receives formal feedback from the mentor in addition to the informal feedback. On the other hand, the mentor(s) learn(s) in depth about their new colleague. The mentor(s) then become more intimately familiar with the work, with the packet, and with the person. This fosters likeability and investment. This relationship, then, both counters and plays into subjective interpretation and favoritism.

However, the nature of the relationship matters. Where mentorship is more of an advisor or instructor, their word becomes law, especially if they have the power to make formal assessments for the department. Interpersonally, as communication scholars, we know that every relationship is different. This is illustrated in the following vignettes:

“Well I think that they're supposed to meet with me at least once a semester, usually it's more often than that, and usually we talk quite a bit through email, just to check on my progress towards tenure, on the more formal side of it. I don't know if they have any other specific duty they're supposed to do. I guess I'm not sure what exactly they're supposed to do, but it ends up being that usually we go out to lunch, or go out to coffee or something like that at least once a semester just to check in on what's going on, and then, informally, I email them frequently with questions about research, or about, especially when I first got here, more about administrative stuff like, ‘Where do I go for this? What do I do for that?’” (12)

“It was left open to us to kind of define that relationship, just between me and my mentors. What happens is that basically whenever I have some question that has to do, not with my research, but generally with kind of guiding myself through the tenure process. And maybe some administrative things, like how do you fill the form, the [Form Title]. Right so, some questions like what goes in this section, what goes in that section, can I mention this here? So those are the kinds of things like, oh maybe if I'm thinking about publishing in a particular journal and I want to ask them well do you think this journal is prestigious enough, so that publishing in it would be good for my career.” (14)

For Participants 12 and 14 above, they have very strong relationships with their mentoring committees, and the relationship is allowed to evolve based on the needs of the junior faculty and the time the mentor is willing to invest. Formalized mentoring can take many shapes even when the faculty are unclear as to the formal rules surrounding the relationship. They make it work for them, in part because the senior colleagues are also willing to make it work. Other participants in the study were not so fortunate in their mentoring assignments. Some mentors do not actually meet with or even communicate with their mentee, and some of the relationships become more of an instructor-student or even more manipulative. In those cases, participants did not want to talk about their mentoring relationships.

On the other hand, several participants went through tenure and promotion before there were formal policies for mentoring in place. There were not mentors provided to them, if they wanted a mentor, they had to wait for a relationship to develop with a colleague naturally, or they had to actively seek their own mentor and risk rejection. The following passages highlight how mentoring relationships are created naturally without institutional guidance:

“The individual who became the head of [department] and helped us actually form this department under that title, was pretty much my mentor. He and I were both in [other department] here at [University]. I had my PhD there and then I did my first two years of lecture status in [other department]. . . . He was very interested in getting grants that were related to research, and was interested in helping me learn how to do that, how to go through grant writing processes. I had the [topic] background, he didn't have the [topic] background, but he knew how to get grants. I did not get that training as a PhD student, how to write grants, how to manage them. I had no idea. So it really was mentorship, more one on one mentorship, more than anything [University] had to offer. [University] didn't have a lot to offer at the time to help you prepare; you either came with those skills or you didn't. Or you found somebody that would help you.” (2)

“Those kind of grew out of collaborations with other people on campus who are, not necessarily in my department, but do similar research. So we work on similar questions on that research. And more senior than me, so kind of very naturally became my mentor.” (14)

“And I found the most critical person in the department and I used him as a type of mentor. It was not an official mentor, and at that time there was no official mentoring program. And I decided that I needed somebody very critical who would criticize me, and then I will know what to do. And I chose such a professor. I was the first research woman hired. And I was the only one for a very, very long time. . . . I used to be independent, isolated, and I really didn't need too many people around me. I know what to do and how to do it. But of course, I need opinions from outside, what people think, and this is how I chose this mentor. And it helped me because if I would have a question or something, I would go and talk and get advice. . . . But I need this outside view because you know it's more objective than whatever you think, which is more subjective.” (34)

“I'm one of those analytical people that really don't need or want much social interaction, which is part of why I have such a hard time I think. With my colleagues now, [rank] professors, I try to provide that as a supportive mentoring capacity, taking new faculty to coffee or lunch. The woman I stopped talking to in the hall, she's brand-new faculty as of last year and she meant we need to reconnect and I haven't seen her for a while. . . . I probably don't do it as much as some and a couple of my younger colleagues, I know them fairly well.” (11)

Participant 2 developed a mentoring relationship that was mutually beneficial. They both had skills the other person needed, and they were both willing to share those skills with the other person. For her it was mentoring because the other person was also more senior and could help her progress in her career. For participant 14, collaborations helped her find mentors across campus outside of her department. Working with other people on projects helped her to naturally develop a mentoring opportunity. Participant 34 on the other hand, went out and found a

person to mentor her for a very specific reason. She was hired to be a research scientist, and she wanted to find a critical but objective person to evaluate her ideas. Then some mentoring relationships stem from a good climate, where senior colleagues want to take care of the junior colleagues and want to see them succeed, as is evident from Participant 11's account. Even though she is not a social person, she tried to provide socialization opportunities with junior faculty members because she wants them to succeed in the department.

Importantly, these positive mentoring relationships do not always develop naturally. The senior faculty with a skill-set might not think the junior faculty member has anything to offer them. Many faculty members on campus do not have the option to do collaborative work either inside or outside of their department. Faculty might also seek a mentor only to be rejected. Additionally, a "relationship" might develop within manipulative power structures rather than supportive ones. The literature shows that male faculty receive natural mentorship more often, but women, like participant 34 are isolated in their departments. Where there are more women in a department, women are not as isolated, but that is not a promise for naturally occurring mentorship.

As such, mentoring relationships whether they are naturally occurring or formalized through institutions, colleges, and/or departments enable tenure and promotion when they are supportive and help junior faculty advance in their careers. Having a formal mentoring program at the institution is a step in the right direction to supporting all faculty members successful promotion because it not only helps faculty members achieve their tasks, but it also helps the rest of the department become more familiar with their work and why it is important. Mentoring, when formalized, can also create more rigid rules where senior faculty members have the power and position to influence opinions negatively or to enact social retribution if those rules are not

followed. Annual reviews are another method by which departments become acquainted with the work of a faculty member over time and can help them get back on track if they are not progressing as they should be.

At the institution where data was collected, an annual review is where all assistant professors (and in some departments, associate professors as well) submit their materials to the department level committee for evaluation every single year as if they were going up for tenure. Communicatively, this is a resource to faculty members because they receive feedback on their promotion materials, an explanation of where they are succeeding as well as directions for improvement with suggestions for how to accomplish what is expected. Every department has a different process, but it is meant to help faculty format the promotion materials and to get early feedback every year from the department head and the department level committee.

Again, every department has their own unique way of conducting the annual review, but the goal of the process is to give feedback every year to junior faculty on their progress to tenure promotion. The following 3 vignettes illustrate both the process of the annual review and its goal:

“I meet at least once a year with untenured assistant professors, and we have a pretty rigorous third year review process. By the time they come up to their fifth year, they should know what they need to do. Then in the spring semester before the penultimate year, I meet with them. . . . There's a form called the [Form Title] that is the basis of the tenure dossier, and they have learned how to fill that out because we make them do that for the third year review so they've kind of had practice. By the time they actually stand for tenure and promotion, if the process works the way it should and I think I am good at making it work the way it should, they know what we think. If we think everything is ready or if there's any cause for concern.” (4)

“Basically we apply for tenure every year. So that means that I'm getting fairly, fairly regular feedback on my work and knowing what I can and can't, what I should and

shouldn't change. So nothing feels like a surprise to me and that's been really helpful. Because I think that each year I get told, 'Here's where we'd like to see you do more. Here's where...' you know? So it's good. It's a really good barometer to know. . . . Having that structure, I think, has been beneficial because, even though nobody can really tell me what I can do to earn tenure, at least every year a group of people who would vote on it give me feedback about how I can strengthen my application. So that part I think has been really, really helpful.” (25)

“We also write up an annual report every year that eventually turns into that packet. They're very good about looking through and editing. So my colleague next door is just going through this right now, and he's had, I don't know, five people look at his packet before it's even going to the [department] committee.” (44)

Participant 4, as a department head, explains that in her department, she meets with the junior faculty every year to review them, and then there is a formal third year review with the department committee where the junior faculty member has to fill out the promotion form. So in her department, all faculty receive feedback on their progress every year and feedback from the department committee and their promotion form at the end of their third year. From Participant 25's explanation, it is clear that this feedback is helpful to her. In her department the process is different because her full promotion packet goes to the department committee every year. Although she does not know the specifics in her department in terms of what is required to get tenure, the consistent feedback from her colleagues on her tenure application is helpful to her to gauge where she stands. In Participant 44's department, they have an annual report that they submit every year to a group of faculty members in the department. Their annual report structure creates the promotion packet, and although the tenure department level committee does not see the packet before the official decision is made, the packet does received consistent feedback from multiple people.

However, as with mentoring, some departments treat the process as a formality that has to be followed rather than an opportunity to truly help their junior colleagues. As the following two vignettes illustrate, annual reviews do not work when there is a lack of quality feedback:

“I've put in my CV, and that's gone through [the department level] committee, and it's been kind of boiled down to the most inoffensive two or three sentences. What happens in the committee, is that you boil out of it any substance or sharpness or anything that can be really useful to you. And it's usually like three sentences, then it will say something like, ‘We congratulate you on your excellent teaching this year. We encourage you to...’ It can say a lot of things. ‘We encourage you to get your next book manuscript in.’ This kind of a thing. And then you sign it. And that's it. You sit down and there's usually a committee that's working with you, but you usually sit down just with the head of that committee to tell them what you've published that year. But what it isn't, and what it had never been for me, was the kind of thing that I'm telling you, what I would now see as developmental mentoring.” (9)

“I cannot say that that was actually helpful at all. Basically, like you have a typo here, you forgot a date here. Really there was nothing positive, nothing negative, no constructive criticism. I did not find it helpful whatsoever. Even though I had two people look over the document to make sure that I found all those typos but apparently I did not. It really was not constructive at all.” (39)

Participants 9 and 39 both have the same issues with the annual review; their feedback was not constructive or illustrative. Giving a faculty member only two to three inoffensive sentences that are not evaluative, as was the case with Participant 9, does not help the faculty member develop as a scholar. Additionally, correcting the document for grammar and punctuation errors, while helpful, does not help Participant 9 improve research, teaching, or service. Where there is a lack of meaningful feedback, the annual review process does not help junior colleagues succeed, even if it helps them prepare their promotion materials without errors.

In some departments, the mentoring process and the annual review process are formalized together. In this situation, the mentors are tasked with helping junior faculty prepare their materials and then in some cases the mentors present the junior faculty member's packet to the committee or to the department head for the annual review. After the annual review is complete, the mentor or mentoring committee helps the junior faculty member interpret the feedback and move forward or develop. In this way, pairing the mentoring process with the annual review process can alleviate the frustration junior faculty feel with poor feedback on their review. Again, the process varies within every department, but pairing the mentor process with the annual review process is illustrated in the following three passages:

“Officially writing about what your research was for that year to your [Form Title]. You'd have a meeting with the head, and he would say, ‘This is what we think you've been doing, is this correct? Is there anything we're missing?’ And then you would sign it, say, ‘Yes, this is it.’ So he would get that after you met with your committee, and they would discuss and they would write a report and submit it to him. So it went through like two channels, so you were all clear. The point where you met with your committee, they'd say, ‘It's not enough.’ Or, ‘This is good. We need you to do more international work.’ My committee was so incredibly supportive.” (18)

“We have a structure of having the [department] committee look at everybody's documents every year and provide written feedback. Then we also have a P&T mentor who might meet with us more frequently or give us more detailed feedback on, which is communicated through this document and give us comments on the document both in the form of the document and how we're communicating about ourselves and also the activities that are documented in the document. So, you know, ‘Well you should do more of this.’ Or, ‘You've done a lot of that and not much of this. You should switch.’ So that's our formal process, and also meet with the department head.” (50)

“In our department we have a formal mentoring process, they're supposed to meet with their mentors. Then at meetings of our [department] committee, which is basically the promotion and tenure committee here, the mentors report and give their perspective and then people talk about it.” (4)

For Participant 18, her mentoring committee would go over her work with her and give her advice. Their formal report then went to the department head, who would have a conversation with her to make sure everything was in order and that nothing was missing. Because she had a supportive committee that was willing to help her and give her advice, she had multiple people who knew her work and her progress in a very detailed manner because they had formally reported on it. For Participant 50, the mentoring committee does not have to evaluate her, but they are tasked with helping her represent herself in the best way through the formal documents. They also provide advice on how she could do better, actions she could take to develop more. Participant 4's department integrates the mentors into the discussion in the department level meeting for promotion, and they are allowed to give their perception based on their interactions with their mentee.

When this process works as a resource, the mentors know your work better than anyone else in the department and can speak on your behalf to the department committee, whether they have the floor formally or not. In certain circumstances, the mentors even become advocates for your tenure case, more than just representing you, they advocate for you. This is where favoritism can work to someone's advantage because the mentors are heavily invested in the success of the person with which they have been working. Pairing the mentoring process with the annual reviews can create a system where the mentors know the work better and can anticipate departmental biases. Also, since junior faculty are not allowed in the department level committee, having an advocate in the room to defend the packet is a huge resource. Besides

mentoring and annual reviews, the university has a myriad of resources available to faculty across campus.

### **Optional Campus Resources**

These resources can come from with the home department, but there are also a lot of resources at the college and university levels. Participants listed more resources than would be possible for me to report here, but the top three resource categories for junior faculty were time, money, and support.

All junior faculty need time to complete the tasks they have been assigned. Time away from teaching and service helps junior faculty focus on their research. The following three vignettes demonstrate the importance of protecting junior faculty's time, so they can acclimate and push on their research:

“We don't really expect new people to do much in the way of advising grad students. We try to protect them from anything taking up their time for research, so we give them light committee assignments. We never put them on the graduate committee for example, that meets all the time and has a lot of responsibility. And often they can teach multiple sections of the same course, so that cuts down on the number of preps. All this is designed to help them spend time on research.” (21)

“Their first year, they do no teaching. They do no committees. No teaching, no committees and that gets your feet on the ground. Then our load in [department] is very light. We teach one and a half courses a year. The first year there's no teaching. Second year, we ask them to develop their one course. And then the next year after that we might add their half. So we ramp them into it.” (22)

“One of the things they do in this department is that the teaching load doesn't go up until you get tenure. So we only have, we have two classes a year, we hit tenure and then it goes up to three. So I think that the sort of philosophy is put the teaching load on the

more senior faculty who have already taught and can do it and it's easier. So I like that. I know they are changing it; I know people who came in just this year, I think it's after three years, they go up to three classes year, which is kind of rough. ” (44)

In Participant 21's department, they protect their junior faculty from service burdens, and they recognize that service commitments can and do take time away from research. Participant 22 reiterates the idea that junior faculty should be protected from service, but also describes a process in her department where they schedule the new preps for junior faculty to help them acclimate to teaching and to keep focus on their research. They strive not to over-burden their new faculty with teaching assignments. Participant 44's department also protects their faculty from having a teaching load that burdens the research program, but because her department's enrollments are growing faster than the faculty numbers, the teaching load is the only thing they can control to protect junior faculty's time.

Additionally, faculty mentioned resources on campus that would help them save time when conducting their research.

“This department has an IT person, actually two amazing IT persons . . . and one of them built my website. He designed, he worked with me and he built in data collection features in my website because I'm collecting data and I'm posting it. So I was able to integrate my extension with my website.” (48)

“As far as the overall [University] structure, when I write the grant proposal, then the [research and partnerships department], they provide grantsmanship's support services. They do all these seminars around campus telling us pointers for how to make grant proposals stronger, and they host workshops where they bring in external experts on grant writing in stuff for where we can actually go in and hear from them. So we get an outside perspective as well as internal perspective. Then there's [grants management department], which does the budget for us, so we don't have to do that, figuring out how much we need

in salary for ourselves, for the graduate students, and how much this project is actually going to cost, in addition to what our paper budget says. They take care of that. They take care of organizing all of the materials to submit, and then they actually do the physical mouse click to submit the grant when it's done when all the pieces are in place. For example, for NSF they have the system called Fast Lane, and there's all these check marks that we have to tick off before we can actually submit the grant. They make sure all of those check boxes are checked. They make sure all the relevant documents have been signed by the right people, and then they go ahead and they submit the documents. They just make sure that there's no bureaucratic reason for the grant to be returned without review or any administrative reason for the grant to be returned without review. That takes a load off of me, because I don't lie awake at night wondering if that happened because somebody else took care of it.” (41)

Participant 48 received IT help to build her website, which also has data collection features, and the IT person was able to build it to her specifications. Collecting her data online will help her do her research at a faster pace because she does not have to spend the time going into the community to recruit. Participant 41 mentioned two different offices on campus that help with grant writing and submission. Not only do those offices save her time by doing different parts of the writing and submission themselves, but they also give her peace of mind because she does not have to worry that something was missing from the grant.

The second most mentioned category of resources was money. As you can see from the following vignettes, monetary support is used to help with a variety of career-related tasks:

“When I first started, my start up package included money for equipment and supplies. Also, it included support for two graduate students, for two years. That was so I can have two funded RAs for two years. And some summer salary, because we don't get paid during the summer, but we do work everyday anyway.” (7)

“Every year we get a research and travel stipend. So, this year it's \$1500, I think. The cool thing is, I'm delivering a paper in Toronto here in a few weeks . . . but that \$1500 should pretty much cover the cost of that conference. But, if I had another conference where I was presenting, I know that I could go to [the department head] and he would probably give me something. Maybe not enough to cover the entire conference, but he would definitely give me something.” (8)

Participant 7 is explaining her start up package. Every participant in the study received some start-up money, but the uses of the start up were always specified by the department or the college. Many participants used their start ups for equipment, books, and other research related activities to get their research program started. Participant 7 explains that she received a start up package, and her start up package specifically budgeted for two graduate students for two years. She is in a field where she is expected to be grant productive, and when a faculty member has this expectation, they have to pay their own graduate students without departmental support. If she were unable to hire any graduate students until she had her first grant, this would set her research program back significantly. As such, her start up funds give her a buffer of time where she can get her research program going with graduate student support while also applying for grants that would sustain her “lab.”

Participant 8 describes how money is allocated in her department for conference travel, and she also explains that her department head is willing to allocate additional money if the travel exceeds the set amount. However, not all faculty receive travel funds from their departments. Faculty who are expected to be grant productive have to pay for conference travel through their own funding. So Participant 7 would have to use start up funds to pay for conference travel until she was able to bring in grant funding to sustain her research program. To

account for these differences, start up funds for grant productive faculty are much more than start up funds for faculty who are not expected to be grant productive.

Additionally, the university offers many internal grants for which faculty are able to apply:

“I have gotten some internal grants, so from [University]. And I think the system of internal grants is really awesome, at least in my experience. It might be because I'm a junior member, so it might be that. I've been successful because the people who reviewed those applications feel like they need to support junior members more. But I have been quite successful in getting those.” (14)

“I think the main thing that helped me because I have several creative courses and creative curriculum, is grants, internal grants.” (16)

As described by Participants 14 and 16, internal grants can help faculty with research and/or bring creative content into the classroom. Other faculty described that they have co-applied for internal grants with research collaborators or with other faculty in their departments to renovate a course or the technology in their classrooms.

There are also financial resources across the university for faculty advancement:

“[The dean] sent me to a leadership academy. That was paid for by the dean's office.” (31)

“National Center for Faculty Diversity and Development. That's an organization that, NCFDD, for short, they are a private organization, but their mission is basically to give new faculty members tools that will make them productive and successful in their fields and get them to tenure basically. [University] is an institutional member of that organization, and that means that my membership is already paid for, I just have to basically log in with a [University] email, and I can claim all that. . . . They also run what's called the faculty boot camp. That's a 12 week program, it's fairly expensive. It

was \$3500 to participate. I was able to pay for that out of my startup using my discretionary funds. . . . I've carried a lot of those skills forward into my week. . . . Now that the program is over, and since I'm out of the main boot camp program now they've put me into what's called the alumni program. . . . Then once you've had the boot camp, then you are in the alumni program basically forever; you just have to keep signing up for it every semester and you can continue to access all the materials.” (41)

Participant 31 describes a time when her dean financially supported her involvement in a leadership academy, including the expenses associated with the academy as well as all domestic travel to and from the academy. In this instance, she felt like her career advancement was supported by the dean, and this financial support combined with verbal support and encouragement encouraged her to stay at the university rather than leave for an industry position. Participant 41 describes the institutional membership to the National Center for Faculty Diversity and Development (NCFDD) the university supports for all faculty. This membership alone allows faculty to access a myriad of resources for work-life balance and developing daily and weekly routines. In addition, the program also offers a 12-week boot camp where faculty engage with other researches and actively work on developing good practices rather than listening to the webinars. The boot camp is an additional expense, as explained by Participant 41. While she used her start up funds to pay for the boot camp, several of the assistant professors included in the study were able to get funds for the boot camp from their department head or from their dean. In one case, an internal grant paid for the boot camp.

Since time and money are the two most referenced resources needed to accomplish tasks, the faculty also mentioned a few resources that integrate additional time with financial support.

“I think the first semester that I was here I got a teaching assistant who was paid by the department, departmental funds, so that was very helpful, because it was a huge class and so I really appreciated that.” (24)

“So what happens is that, you as a faculty member post the project on the website. And you describe the project, and you describe the kind of student you're looking for, maybe like interests, skills. And then students can go and review those projects, and if they find something they're interested in, they can apply, and that's where they also kind of talk about themselves, what kind of interest they have, what kind of skills they have, why they think they're suitable for this project. Then you can interview them, so I actually met with my potential intern today, and again, sort of you get the chance to talk a bit more in depth about the kinds of things they're hoping to get from this and the kind of things you are planning to get from this. And so, if your goals match fairly well, then I sort of accept the application officially on the website, then we sign a contract and we go from there. They get 500 dollars scholarship for a semester. And they also get some extra sort of tutoring, because they enroll in a course that tells them a little bit about research.” (14)

“This is not in the department, but it's college level. I've applied for several grants and received several grants. So, that allowed me to do research abroad in [country] for my book, which was great. And the [summer grant], I received once of those as well, so that was nice, because it allowed me to free up my summer so I didn't have to get the extra money, and didn't have to worry about that for the summer. So, I did two trips to different areas of [country] to do research. . . . I requested that I have [my research leave] last semester. It's usually in the third or fourth year, and I took it at the end of my second year. That was nice, because I really needed it earlier rather than later, because I need to get my book done and get it to publishers and stuff like that.” (12)

Participant 24 discusses receiving a TA, paid for by the department, which ideally helped with time on course preparation and grading. Financial support, specifically, for students to help faculty members save time on their required tasks, was mentioned by the majority of participants as an important resource. Participant 14 explains a specific undergraduate internship program, which is supported by the university. The university provides the student with a scholarship and

the researcher with a student to help with her research for the semester. Participant 14 explained that she had money in her start up funds to support a graduate student, but because the overhead expenses for graduate students (i.e., money to pay for the student's benefits package) was essentially the same as their salary, it was not a wise use of money. The university sponsored internship program provides her with the student resources she needs but without the high overhead. Participant 12, then, explains how she was able to combine different resources to move forward on her book project. She received multiple internal grants from her college and the university, and with support from her department head, was also able to take her one semester pre-tenure leave. Having the semester off and the summer funded, she was able to make significant progress.

The third most referenced resource was support. As illustrated in the following vignettes, support comes in a variety of forms:

“In terms of administrative support we have here in the department, it's a site called SharePoint, it's like a shared platform where people upload their syllabi, and like promotion materials for example. So whenever you're preparing, so I just submitted my materials for the 3rd year review, and I was able to look at other people's forms on the SharePoint, to see what they put there, so I could get some idea about the kinds of things I need to be talking about. . . . The colleagues who have done this like last year or the year before, their materials are up there so I was able to take a look at them, so that was very helpful.” (14)

“The college putting together women faculty, might not be financial but that was a resource of their support of helping faculty get together.” (11)

“So one of the things we developed from the Advance Grant is something called [tenure success program]. We run it once a month for our newly hired faculty in their first two years and they come and we do a couple things. It's in a power hour, so we bring speakers

in on topics that they need to know. Always a male and female speaker. Always a liberal arts and a STEM speaker. So they learn about formal things. Then we have senior faculty from the different colleges there. So then they can meet with them. The formal speaking is shorter in time. That leaves some time they can meet with senior faculty in their college for the practices or the interpretation of the rules and they can also network with each other. So we make sure that they know. And then we answer their questions. If there's things they want to know about, we'll do it, and then we provide things that we think they need to know and wouldn't know to ask about. Leaves, family leaves, teaching, how to write a grant. We bring the grant writers over and they talk them through that. All kinds of stuff. It's very intentional.” (22)

At the department level, Participant 14 describes a system her department has in place for supporting junior faculty when they are preparing their promotion materials for review. At the college level, Participant 11 explains that her college put together a program for women faculty in the college, so now the women in the college have a venue to come together. This is a support system for women who are isolated in their home department to get together with other women in their college. Two of the colleges represented in this study have women faculty groups for this type of support. Finally, Participant 22 describes an university-wide initiative to support junior faculty on their way to tenure. The program is intentional in representing both men and women and in representing both STEM disciplines and liberal arts disciplines. The multiple levels of support across campus for junior faculty allow the university to communicate its investment in faculty success. Participants feel like the institution wants them to succeed even if they do not feel supported in their home departments.

### **When Resources Fail**

The important thing to note here is that resources have to be known in order to be utilized. Departmental resources (e.g., travel money, semester leave, start up packages, and

teaching assistants) are much easier to use because they are advertised during the interview process, and there are verbal reminders from colleagues and department heads. On the other hand, resources from the college and the university are not as widely known, especially because many of those resources were not available or did not exist when senior faculty were trying to earn tenure. Many of the participants who utilized college and university level resources were informed about those resources from their deans or their department heads specifically. This is a type of support that not all faculty are afforded, especially in departments where the climate is more competitive or caustic. Where there was no communication, the faculty searched for the information on their own; however, new faculty might not realize that there are resources for which to search.

One particular problem with disseminating information about resources was that the communication is provided when it is not relevant. The following two passages explain this problem in more detail:

“Participant 44: I guess that's one thing I've had a hard time with is that when I first got here there was a lot that was offered but I think since then, now I'm kind of at the stage where I'm starting to think of preparing my tenure document in the next year or so. I feel like now there isn't a lot of support being offered explicitly. Like I could go find it I'm sure. But... [long pause]

Ashton: Okay, so what I'm hearing you say then is that those resources that are available, you hear about them all at first but it's not like you can utilize them all at first?

Participant 44: Yeah, or if you do it's not necessarily applicable then.” (44)

“After your first year all of a sudden you're not a new faculty member anymore and the support drops considerably in terms of outreach and programming and things like that. That has been slightly challenging to deal with because I still feel like, even though this is my [#] year, that I'm kind of new and probably still need the support that new faculty get but there's none of that. So I'm not even sure, do I just start going back to the thing that I went to as a new faculty member? Like, is there a way to get back on those mailing lists?

Like, I don't know what to do about that. But I kind of feel in this weird place where I'm not new but I'm not tenured. Yeah, it's like the sophomore slump if I had to compare it to what we talk about undergrads. It's like the sophomore slump. Like, I'm not new, so I'm not shiny anymore, but I'm also not tenured so I still have some fear for my job. . . . So I'm in this weird middle space.” (25)

Participant 44 describes that when a faculty member first begins her job, she is inundated with information, and also a lot of the resources about tenure and promotion support on campus. That information can be lost in the barrage of information or in some cases, it is not yet applicable. Then once a faculty member is settled into the job and really begins to focus on preparation of materials in their second or third year, they are no longer on those listservs. Participant 25 echoes this sentiment. She explains that when she first started there was a lot of programming she could utilize, but now that she is ready to use all of that information to prepare her promotion materials, she no longer receives the explicit invitations. While both Participants 44 and 25 could search for that information, they also have to remember what they are searching for in order to find the programs that would be the most helpful for their stage on the tenure track. Participant 25 expresses concern that going to those brand new faculty seminars might not be the most helpful.

In addition, participants also complained that the resources do not always function as intended or that the restrictions on the resources prevented them from being fully utilized. The following three vignettes illustrate some of the restrictions:

“I applied, the first two years I applied for the [summer grant] and did not, I don't think anybody, from what I've been told, nobody in [college] has gotten one of those in any recent history. After hearing that, I just stopped applying for them. But I did apply twice.” (18)

“I definitely have a start up package that is a pot of money for students and research and equipment. But I will say one thing that was definitely a bit shocking when I first started is that I could only use it within four years. That was a little jarring because I had been informed by other faculty that you get it until you go up or tenure, so like six years. . . . One of the issues associated with that since this pot of money is for students, so if I tell a graduate student, ‘Hey, come do a Ph.D. with me,’ the expectation is that it will take you right about four years. At that point, I couldn't earmark money as spent for this graduate student. Even though it's there set aside for the student, if they went past that four year time point, that money would be gone. I felt very uncomfortable bringing someone in and saying, ‘Hey I can maybe pay you for three and a half years because you've started half a year since I got this money. After that, we're up in the air whether I can actually support you.’” (39)

“They had an occasional one, but they weren't so much workshops, versus one person telling us what they did to be successful. Unless you could live that example, it wasn't helpful. I'm sure there were a fraction of people in the room that could model their progress based on that example, but for somebody like me in extension, who isn't a majority research, it was completely useless. Probably more professional development. The problem is, I suspect from personal experience and from watching a lot of assistant professors, it almost feels indulgent, that you're like, ‘I have to write a grant. I have to go see these students. I have to do things that will get on my P&T document,’ and going to these workshops aren't necessarily things that have an immediate benefit. If they could be done well, I think they would have a better long-term benefit.” (35)

Participant 18 expresses her frustration that no one in her department receives summer faculty grants. The implication here is that there is bias in how those grants are allocated, and the work produced from her department is not valued the same as other departments. If there are university biases in terms of which research programs are more important, then resources will not necessarily be distributed equally to the other departments. Participant 39 explains a restriction

on her start up package. Her frustration is with the time limits places on how fast she has to spend her start up package; if she only has access to that money for four years, then there is no way she could fully support a graduate student for the full time it would take that student to earn a Ph.D. In the current funding climate (discussed in more detail below), Participant 39 is worried that her start up would need to fully fund that student for his/her entire Ph.D. In this case, restrictions on her start up package could delay her research program rather than helping her build the program as the money was intended. Participant 35 explains her frustration with support resources. She prefers that information sessions were more like workshops where there were actionable tasks that faculty could use to be better prepared for tenure. Instead she complains about these workshops functioning as “advice” panels where the person giving the advice is not similar enough that a junior faculty member could emulate them. In addition to the challenges with resources, sometimes there are additional burdens placed on faculty by the structure.

### **Faculty Burdens and Structural Fractures**

Situations arise across campus where resources cannot help a faculty member navigate the rules and complete their tasks (e.g., teaching overloads, too much service, technical burdens on research productivity, and even burdens associated with personal identity). In these situations resources are not available or they cannot be used to solve the challenges. The following two passages illustrate how teaching assignments can detract from faculty research programs.

“I’ve taught new classes every semester that I’ve been here, and I’ve taught a new graduate class every semester that I’ve been here. So, that’s been a lot of extra work preparing. I’ve enjoyed teaching the classes, but it’s a lot of extra work, and a lot of even people in the same department who are going for tenure at the same time have not had to prepare brand new graduate level courses every semester. I’ve repeated one course, but

otherwise, every semester I've taught all new courses at the undergraduate and graduate level. . . . I've taught brand new graduate classes, including courses that didn't even exist before. Like, nobody could say, "Here's a syllabus" or "Hey, this is what we've done in the past." (12)

"I had the carpet ripped out from under me during this negotiation. I will think about it forever. My appointment switched to primary research, a 70/30 split. Again, the numbers are supposedly meaningless, but the department head said, 'Yeah. Let's switch it. I think it'll now perfectly align with your new teaching load,' which didn't change. I quit teaching the labs, but I picked up other things that aren't as intensive. He's like, 'I think it looks balanced.' I'm like, 'Well, shit. There went my negotiation.' Very smart on his part, but there went my card. Yes, I had a primary teaching appointment. I don't feel the obligation to publish in pedagogy anymore, thank God, but now I package my [country] work under teaching. It's hard to do because it's more extension." (27)

Because of the way courses are assigned in her department, Participant 12 has had one or two new preps every single semester she has been working at the university, including courses where there were no resources for her to prep from a model. There are no resources in her department that would allow her to avoid a new prep if it is asked of her, and because she is a junior faculty member, she does not feel like she can ask for repeat classes. Similarly, Participant 27 is struggling with her teaching load. When she was hired at the university, her primary appointment was in teaching rather than research, but because of the values in her department, her research package had to stand up to comparison with her colleagues on research appointments. After she was promoted to associate professor, she negotiated with her department chair to convert to a primary research appointment since that was the work she was doing anyway. The department head agreed to make the change for her, but then did not change her teaching load. There are no resources in her department or at the university level that would allow her to have that

negotiation back, nor are there resources that would help her better handle the same teaching load as her teaching appointment now that she is on a research appointment. For both participants 12 and 27, these burdens are created through the course assignment practices.

Participants 33 and 44 are struggling with a different problem; their department majors are gaining undergraduate students at a higher rate than the departments are hiring faculty.

“We have like maybe 2000 undergrads and 300 grad students. We've grown substantially over time since I've been here. We haven't grown the faculty, even though we're hiring all the time a lot of people, we haven't grown at the rate that we should have to keep up with the load from the students. Everybody in our department is really overloaded, well not everybody. Certain areas are more overloaded than others and there's definitely some people that would be called dead weight, faculty that aren't really pulling their load. Amongst the junior faculty and mid level faculty everybody is pretty overloaded.” (33)

“So one of the problems we have in our group is that ... well, this is a bigger issue in my career here right now, is that we have a major that we support in our department, a [subject] major, which is great. People are really excited about it; it's getting a lot of attention, a lot of the students. It's becoming one of the biggest majors in the department, which we did not expect. But we only have 3.25 faculty FTEs [full time equivalence] to support that major, which is insane, because that's just physically impossible basically to teach enough classes to maintain a major with basically three faculty total. . . . So we're hiring someone right now, but it's still a big issue because it means we have to teach our big intro class, we have to teach all of our major classes, and all of our undergrads want to do research because we tell them this is a grad school focused program so you have to do research. So they all want to do research and so trying to find projects for them tends to fall on the younger faculty. And so that's constantly an issue for sure. I have four undergrads for me this summer; my colleague next door also has four, which is a lot to take on.” (44)

Participant 33 is in a discipline that has to compete with industry jobs, and so in addition to the fact that the students are enrolling at higher rates than they can hire new faculty, they are also losing current faculty to industry jobs. In addition, some of the senior faculty in the department refuse to help with teaching overloads, so the assistant and associate professors who are worried about receiving their (next) promotion are overloaded with teaching because they want to be seen as team players. Similarly, Participant 44's department is struggling to hire faculty at the same rate as student enrollment, but in addition to the teaching overloads, there departmental structure doubly works to burden the faculty because of the expectation that all undergraduate students are required to do research with the faculty.

Next, some faculty experience service burdens that take away from their research programs, but because associate and full professors, in most departments, are expected to help with service, the burdens I am discussing in this section are only burdens on assistant professors. Additionally, those who have service (read: extension) appointments are also excluded from this discussion. As discussed above, the primary method to protect assistant professors from doing too much service is to keep them from doing service altogether or to have them do service that requires very little attention. The following three vignettes illustrate situations where that resource either was not provided or is not available:

“So at midway they suddenly seem to give you a hard time and say, ‘You need to step your game up.’ I remember having a fight with them and saying, ‘That's fine, I will step my game up, but why doesn't someone take over?’ I was in charge of the [committee], and I did it for five years in a row. It's a very, very stressful job. It's dealing with all the undergrads, who are basically like, ‘Blah.’ It's like herding cats, and I said, ‘I've got no problem with it, but I notice no one else in this department has stepped up and taken this off me.’ And they were like, ‘Well we all have to do things we don't like.’ And I said, ‘Yeah, I've been doing it for five years, so take it off me.’ And they did, finally.” (18)

“Right now I am coordinating our program. I'm the program coordinator, so responsibilities such as the teaching schedule fall on me. That doesn't sound so crazy, but it's actually pretty time consuming because it also means I have to find adjuncts to teach courses that we don't have faculty to teach. I have to figure out which TAs might be appropriate to teach courses. I have to do the TA evaluations. Also as program coordinator, I am the main contact for any time a prospective student wants to come see the program or learn about the program or do a campus visit. I'm the person that gets contacted for that. I also maintain the budgets for the program, which means any time a teacher, an instructor wants to purchase anything for the class with course fees, because our courses have course fees, I'm the one that has to fill out the paperwork and receive the products and get them to the right person. I have to attend extra meetings because I'm the coordinator. I have to be the main contact for our accreditation organization, so it's a lot of service work. The reason why I am in that position is because we do not have any tenured people in our program. In the other programs, the other majors, typically a tenured person or a senior faculty would take care of those types of things, but we don't have that in our major and therefore, it falls on the shoulders of the tenure track faculty. We take turns. We alternate each year with taking on that responsibility. . . . I did it two years ago, in my second year, and this is my fourth year so I'm doing it again. . . . I spend most of my time dealing with those types of things. If I'm not teaching, then I'm dealing with a lot of those service responsibilities. So a lot of times I don't get any scholarship done unless I'm at home, maybe, so it's getting harder and harder to do scholarship in my office here.” (19)

“So I've noticed that service requirements seem to vary and I think what they tend to do is with people who aren't maybe succeeding as clearly, they tend to give them more service. Which I think might be to be like, “oh here's a way you can contribute to the department, even though you're not getting funding or students” or whatever. But then it seems counter-productive because then you have all these service things to deal with.” (44)

Participant 18 was assigned a very intensive service commitment early on the tenure-track, and like all junior faculty did not question the assignment. She was not offered protection from

service. However, when she received negative feedback from her annual review, she began to question the burden this service commitment was placing on her research program. Even when she questioned the service assignment, there was resistance because no one else wanted that service commitment. This is a situation where non-caring senior faculty could take advantage of junior faculty wanting to appear as good colleagues for a better tenure vote. Participant 44's department, though, assigns service on the basis of contribution, so if a faculty member is struggling with teaching or with research, they are assigned more service commitments. While this might be understandable for faculty who are no longer doing research after tenure, this policy would work against a junior faculty member who just needs resources on grant writing, for instance.

Participant 19, on the other hand, is dealing with a unique, but serious service burden; as there are no tenured faculty in her program, she has to serve as program coordinator for her entire unit. She was not protected from this service because in her department, there is literally no one there who can protect her within her discipline. While there are senior faculty in her department, because her discipline has accreditation, senior faculty in other disciplines cannot bear the burden for her and the other assistant professors in her program. As a result, this service burden will have taken up two full years of her time on the tenure track.

Third, faculty members experience other burdens on their research productivity that are not related to teaching or service. The following three vignettes just a few of these burdens:

“But the biggest problem, and it is still a problem in this department, was I didn't have a private office until about four years ago. It was awful. I shared an office with an AP staff person and a secretary who talked constantly when I first got here. It was horrible. . . . That's why my door is shut usually. I don't work well with all this other stuff going. I just have a hard time tuning it out. A lot of people put on headphones. I used to do that when I didn't have a private office. Then having to share with non-faculty. There was one point

where I got moved and then there were some grad students who wouldn't shut up in my office. There was a faculty and AP person, two grad students, and you'd try, "Could you please go in the hall?" And they'd act like you slapped them or something. It was awful, and it's still awful for my junior colleagues. The only reason I got this [office] was because now I'm senior enough that this little slip stall, I mean it is the right apparently close to what [University] requires, but this narrowness makes it difficult. Then I'd have to carry my computer back and forth and carry stuff that I was working on. Once I got my private office it was easier to be here. In fact when I had my first office over there, well, the first five years was probably just with another faculty member, so I did have a place I could go sit down and work. There was a woman and there was a man who was on the partial retirement and he wasn't there much at all. When he did come in he did drive me crazy because he'd just sit there and read his stupid email jokes and then he'd want to read them to me. It was like, "Ahhh." . . . I guess I did have to do it, but I always felt like it was taking me so much longer than it should have to do my work." (11)

"In [my sub-discipline], we don't write books; for us it's all journal articles, and we collaborate a lot, because we work with big data sets, and we just simply need the work power. For one person just to do projects on their own is just very very labor intensive. So for us collaborations are very common and it's just very normal. But again for people in [other sub-discipline] it's more likely that there will be a single author, just like do everything by themselves, write a book by themselves, and that's the standard. So those kinds of like discipline based differences, are a bit tricky for people from those different fields to be in the same department that can review each other's cases. Tenure cases. . . . I guess word count matters, in my department. But again because of the [other sub-discipline] part, people are still kind of oriented to the more the better. While in more, lets say, technical disciplines, like [department examples], some of the articles people publish are extremely short. And that doesn't play against them. And my field is kind of on the boundary, so for us, a lot of our top tier journals have a word limit, so if your article is very wordy, it's not going to be published. Like in my department, people seem to be really stuck on single authorship, again because of the contribution from other fields

like [another sub-discipline], where single authorship is viewed as really the target, something that's to be obtained, while for us collaboration is very very common.” (14)

“One of the things that definitely makes me a little hesitant, especially because the pots of money that I bring in are not that huge, is the fact of the really high overhead that [University] charges for grants. It makes it really difficult for me to apply to other unusual funding sources like in industry and things like that because once they hear that 55% overhead – so whatever the project's going to cost you tack on 55% – they just really balk at that and like, oh gosh, that's double the price now. I mean, research is expensive. Not that these for profit companies should benefit, but that's definitely been something that I've run into that makes it hard to convince industries to invest in some of my work.” (39)

Participant 11 is describing her office situation before she was a full professor and had her own office. In all the difference situations where she had to share an office, she was unable to be fully productive because of other people in her office creating distractions. While she was successful in both earning tenure and then becoming a full professor, she admits that her junior colleagues still have this issue with space and distraction causing problems for research productivity.

In a very different situation, participant 14 is struggling with a divide in her department about what kind of research is good research. She is in a department where there are two schools of thought on how to publish. On one hand, there are the book writers that focus on single authorship and detailed content, where more detail and description matters; on the other hand, there are the article writers who collaborate on big data sets and projects, and they have to write articles that are very succinct. Because of this division, there is concern throughout the department that the faculty on the other side of the divide will not be able to evaluate the work and/or will not appreciate the work as scholarship when they are voting on tenure/promotion. Participant 14, then, like many of the other faculty who were in departments where there was a

divide between types of research/publishing methods felt compelled to do the other kind of work just to get tenure even though it is not in her formal training or part of her expertise.

Finally, participant 39 describes specifically how the funding process at the university makes it harder to bring in funding. When you apply for a grant, the university asks you to tack on extra money to the grant to pay the overhead expenses, but at this university, the overhead charge is so expensive that some funding agencies will automatically decrease the grant to pay the overhead or will choose to fund other grants instead to help the money go further.

Related to funding, all of the participants I interviewed in April 2017 after the Trump Administration took office in January, who were required to bring in funding as part of their tenure/promotion evaluation, mentioned another specific research burden related to funding. After taking office, Trump pulled funds from NSF, NIH, and several other major funding agencies. This has a direct impact on every faculty member who is required to bring funding to the university as part of their tenure and promotion because there will now be less money to go around. Additionally, with less money, the overhead costs that the university charges become a bigger problem. The following three participants explain just a few of the issues related to the major cuts in federal funding agencies below:

“Now we're in an interesting phase . . . if federal funds get pulled from NIH and NSF everybody's going to be in a case where there's no funding. How are we then going to think about the tenure? We'd have to then talk as departments and colleges and university to redefine what we look for. It used to be we looked for one or two grants, big grants, except for disciplines that don't do that. Now can we do that? Probably not. So that's something that's going to change. I've been in places where times when it was real easy and times when they only funded a little. It goes up and down but now we could be faced with a huge shift, and so those are the kinds of things that the rule says that you have to be funded. We look at your funding. And as a practice, we try to work with your timing so that we get you into the, go from assistant to associate, if the timing is right just when

you get a grant. So it's not near the end. Because the question that will come up, "Well are they going to be able to renew it?" So you try to help position your colleagues. But that's going to be something that we have to think long and hard about, and how are we going to do that moving forward?" (22)

"Just to add how we're thinking about that, as funding continues to decrease, federal dollars, where your grant ranked in the panel. Okay, maybe you didn't get money, but how close were you? That's going to become important. Well, it is important now. It's going to become a metric, I think, because again, the people that get money are usually the people that have money, not necessarily new or mid-career investigators. If you're creeping up your ranks or if you're really close to that line, it'll have more pull because you tried and you just barely missed the line." (27)

"I was cut a bit. My grant was a top grant and it was cut by 30%. I never had it before. If you're THE TOP grant, you would never be cut so much. Nothing to do but keep going." (34)

Participant 22 explains that the lack of funding in federal agencies will have lasting repercussions on the tenure and promotion process, especially for those faculty who are required to bring in federal dollars over industry dollars. She explains that tenure and promotion committees are not going to be able to have the same expectations as they have in the past because there is just not as much money. She also alludes to how departments, colleges, and even the university as a whole is going to have to take this issue into consideration and possibly revise requirements for assistant and associate professors who will be affected. However, it is important to note that university policy does not change at the same pace as the political landscape, and the practices for evaluation also do not change at the same rate.

Participant 27 then proposed one way the policies could be altered to take into consideration the decrease in funding. She suggests that committees look at the rank of grant

proposals rather than number of dollars. If a faculty member is consistently ranking in the top ten proposals, but is still not being funded, then that is one metric that can be used to make tenure and promotion decisions. Finally, participant 34 is explaining immediate consequences of the funding cutbacks; her grant proposal ranked first out of all the proposals, but they cut her dollar amount by 30%. She described this as an unprecedented event that has never happened in her prior experience, but it is also something committees should take into consideration when evaluating federal dollars and overall funding packages.

The final burden placed on faculty members is a “diversity tax,” as coined by one of the participants. This is not a new concept, as minority faculty members have long been asked to mentor (and mother) students at a higher rate, serve on more committees, and take on diversity initiatives (Allen, 1995; 1996; Brown, 2016; Collins, 2009; June, 2018; Niemann, 2012; Varallo, 2008). The first two descriptions below illustrate how diversity taxes place burdens on women and underrepresented minority faculty members as they strive to earn tenure and promotion.

“Many times because there are so few role models, then more is not expected of you, but you take on more responsibility with those students of color who need the support. Many times you're trying to support students and then each other, and then, in turn, your scholarship may suffer.” (45)

“But I think informally I get a lot of interactions with graduate students mostly because I'm non-white. I mean, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* had an article about this about how underrepresented faculty, in particular women, do a lot of care work with graduate students. So I do a lot of that care work where I have students who are not my advisees who stop by to talk about things, either related to their research or related to their life. . . . But I do a lot of external care work, both with male and female graduate students around issues of equity, feeling like they belong, institutional politics. I'm heavily involved with [a cultural center] on campus and so I see a lot of those students fairly informally. Although I am on several of their committees where we talk a lot about what does it

mean to be nonwhite in this space and identify as [race/ethnicity]. But I do think that kind of like other folks I get asked to represent a lot of times. I can't really speak for an entire community. I can really only speak for myself. . . . Yeah, there's a lot [of tokenizing]. Yeah.” (25)

Participant 45 is explaining generally how minorities are taxed because their research is suffering while they participate in care work for their students, their colleagues, and others, expectations and frustrations found throughout academe (Allen, 1995; 1996; 2012; Brown, 2016; Collins, 2009; Niemann, 2012). The minority faculty member has more responsibilities because they are asked to or need to take care of other minorities to get them through the system (Allen, 2012). In her case, specifically, she felt she must protect and help students who were also minorities. This is invisible work, not recognized, but it takes time away from what some faculty consider more important work (read: scholarship); it is important and prevalent, nonetheless. Participant 25, then, goes into more detail about how students flock to her for advice, care, protection, advice, and help with school, but she also describes how her own department asks her to represent and speak for people like her even though she is only comfortable speaking for herself.

In addition, one of my participants explained that minority taxes exist outside of the university and create burdens on her work because she has to worry about being accepted in society as well. Her earliest memories of the university town are tinged with racism. She struggled to buy a home because of her race, and then after she started, campus police profiled her and did not believe she was a professor; additionally, she experienced racism at the airport when she was trying to take her children to visit family for vacation in her first year. In her excerpt below, she asks students, colleagues, department chairs, deans, and other administrators to think about being in an other's position:

“One of the things I tell people is, "When is the last time you were a minority in any space? Try that. Then, try to do it every day, and see how it works for you." I think it's important because I do it every day to a point where it doesn't even matter, but it's not a privilege for me to be here. It's risky. I think the institutions don't get how risky it is for people of color to take a chance on them because we actually go away with the damage when it's done poorly. We go away with the depression, stress, or the heart disease, and high blood pressure. We deal with all of that in the course of trying to transform and change institutions. If they don't put the resources down, then it's not a fair fight.” (10)

Although some of Participant 10's experiences are not about her identity in the workspace, they are still intersectional moments that affect her work or her time to work in very profound ways. She chose to live outside of town because after her housing issue, she did not feel safe living in the same town as the university. As a result, she loses three hours per day to a commute. She was made to feel like an outsider in a community that should have welcomed her, and these moments could have been profound enough for her to leave. Like participants 45 and 25, her goal is to make the university a better place and to enact change, but she also highlights the consequences of that endeavor on mental and physical health, especially when the university does not recognize the sacrifice, acknowledge the burden, or provide resources to help.

Additionally, it is also important to note that taxes are not only paid by ethnic minorities; rather, there are diversity taxes associated with sexuality and religion as well. The following two explanations highlight these taxes:

“If you're in a minority identity, and I guess I've seen this to some extent. I'm kind of the go-to for queer issues. So, you're kind of doing this informal work, because I'm constantly educating people about it. I'm constantly educating people about "How do you relate to the trans student in your class?" "What are the pronouns that you've used?" You use the preferred name, right? So, in that sense, you're kind of always paying this tax. I guess I've got a queer tax to some extent. But, that being said, I think there's a lot of

people on this campus, women especially, especially women of color, who are taxed in a lot of other ways, in terms of the expectations that are put on them. Or, in terms of perceptions of them. . . . But, you know, you notice it subtly, that queer tax. But, I don't mind doing that because I'm also an activist, and I'm involved in several other activist groups, and I'm about education so I don't mind educating people on queer issues.” (8)

“Being Jewish, that was like my biggest shock. I thought when I moved, I grew up in Cleveland, and I did my undergrad in New York, and I just assumed everybody had the Jewish holidays off, which I don't know where you're from, but where I grew up and the first 20 some years of my life, you had Jewish holidays off. Then I moved to Texas, and realized that wasn't how the rest of the world worked. Then I moved to Minnesota, and then it went back to normal that you had Jewish holidays off. Then I moved here and there were no Jewish holidays off, so I would have to shuffle schedules around, or explain to students that class was canceled, or have somebody guest lecture, or something like that. . . . They're still absences, and there's nothing to excuse a professor for being absent during the holiest day of their year, or the second holiest day.” (35)

Participant 8, like many of the participants above, is involved in transforming the university, in helping students, in mentoring, advocating, and helping. Rather than answering questions about her race and advocating for minority students, she pays a “queer tax.” There are similar burdens on her time even if the issue is different. Participant 35, on the other hand, does not experience the tax in the same way. Because there is not a largely recognized population of Jewish faculty and students, she is mostly alone in her struggles to practice her religion while still completing her job requirements. It is a time burden to make arrangements for substitutes to teach her classes, and even then her absence is still perceived as an absence from work.

### **Structure Enables and Constrains Tenure/Promotion**

Insomuch as the structure assumes all bodies are the same, or mostly the same, there are constraints and burdens on some faculty members more than others. While the language is ambiguous in the packet to provide creative space for faculty members, this assumes that those faculty members have proper support and camaraderie from their colleagues, that their work is understood, appreciated, and tolerated, that they will not experience teaching, research, or service burdens, and that they will not be unduly burdened because of their identity. However, when you deal with real people, who might have subjective opinions about the “right” way to do research, about the “right” way to behave, or about the “correct” teaching evaluation scores, then ambiguity in the macro policy leaves certain organizational members vulnerable to ambiguity, social retribution, higher expectations, and burnout.

## **CHAPTER 5: THE INFLUENCE OF STRUCTURE ON CARE WORK**

In this chapter, I answer the second research question: How are care needs/responsibilities enabled and/or constrained by the academic organizational structure? In short, care work is both enabled and constrained by the academic institution, though the constraints are viewed more or less problematic depending on how optional the care is assumed to be. In order to answer the research question more fully, I first discuss the five types of care specified by the respondents in the order of mentions, from fewest to greatest. Next I explain specific policies the university has in place to enable faculty members to engage in care work, but also how those policies fail to function as intended. Finally, I describe specific strategies women faculty employ to balance care and career responsibilities and how the structure can stress that balance. To begin, I discuss the types of care work specified by participants.

### **Types of Care Work**

There were five types of care work specified by the participants in this study: elder care, pet care, spouse care, self-care, and childcare.

#### **Elder Care**

Elder care was the least mentioned type of care by the participants. This is most likely because the majority of faculty members have not (yet) had to care for an aging family member, but many mentioned that they would or might have to care for their aging parents in the future. The experiences of the participants who did mention elder care suggest that there are two types of elder care experienced by female faculty members. The first is periodic or sporadic, and the second is a situation of ongoing elder care. The former suggests a spur of the moment situation

that must be handled without planning or preparation that may not last for a lengthy amount of time. The following two vignettes provide an example of this type of care:

“My mother was a new widow and she lost her father just a scant year after my dad died, and so there were a couple of moments where she just really needed somebody and of her three children, I was the one in the most flexible work situation. So I accompanied her to Germany to bury her dad.” (1)

“I will say though that at one point in my career when my mother was elderly and ill, and I was living 3,000 miles away, trying to navigate finances and care was quite challenging. I mean, sort of the beginning of that conversation very quickly transitioned into her passing away, so it didn't become sort of a long-term issue. But I certainly could see how it can become all-consuming, because it did, and frankly everything but my teaching went on the back-burner, and the teaching is that you have to show up. Everything else went on the back-burner.” (42)

Participant 1 explains how her mother needed her for support sporadically and for one longer trip. Of course this type of care interfered with her work schedule, but took precedence for a short amount of time. Participant 42 explains a caregiving situation where she was occupied by her mother's care and passing for a period of time during one semester. During that period of time, the caregiving consumed all of her time where she admits the only attention she gave her work was showing up to teach. Sporadic or periodic care might interrupt a week or a semester, but generally is not ongoing. None of the participants in the study needed university support, other than general understanding from their colleagues or department chair, during sporadic and period care events.

Ongoing elder care, though, may last for multiple semesters or might be a more permanent situation, in which case women faculty must find balance between the care work and

their academic work. The following three examples demonstrate the strain ongoing care can place on career:

“My mother is not all that healthy, so sometimes she requires a little bit extra attention, that sometimes in the middle of the work she's called crying. It's like, ‘It's in the middle of the work day mom, I can't deal with you.’ . . . I have started always answering the phone when she calls, because there was one time when she called when I was in a meeting. I didn't answer, because I thought, I'll just get to that later. It happened to be that that was the time that she needed someone to call an ambulance for her. Now I always answer the phone when she calls. I've had to step out of meetings to do that. Then it's so annoying, because she's like, ‘I was just wondering if you watched the television program last night.’ . . . I make her sound like this terrible old person, but...” (6)

“So, my mother died my second year here. So, she died in 2014 in the fall, September. Then, my brother died in 2016 in the spring. Neither one of them were expected. So, it's awful. I wonder what else I could've done. What if I were closer? So, my father now is 75, and I don't have a younger brother to come around anymore. I'm also a surrogate husband to my sister-in-law. I mean, I'm not, but I'm the closest thing she has to him. There was just the two of us.” (10)

“My parents are getting older. They don't actually need me there every day or anything, but I definitely feel like I need to dedicate time to checking in on them, or doing projects for them on the weekends, and so forth.” (30)

Participant 6 has to care for her mother, which is mostly an ongoing support situation. While her mother is not unwell, she could, at any point, need more serious care. Participant 6 remembers a time when she assumed her mother was just calling to chat, and she ignored her because she did not think it would be an important phone call. Now she is haunted by this moment, so she makes sure to answer the phone no matter when her mother calls. She trailed off at the end of this

conversation, but the hanging “but” at the end of her story alludes to a situation where her mother might need very serious care or help from her.

Participants 10 and 30 are both providing long-term care and support to relatives. For Participant 10, she has to care for her aging father, which is ongoing, but not yet serious. She also has to provide a surrogate type of support for her deceased brother’s widow who stays connected to her husband’s memory by maintaining relationships with Participant 10’s family. Participant 30 explains that although her parents do not need her on a day-to-day basis, she still feels compelled to spend time helping them out every weekend. Participants 6, 10, and 30, collectively, illustrate how ongoing care takes a significant amount of time out of their schedules and requires thought for balancing both care and career responsibilities.

Finally, Participant 33 explains how periodic care can and does transition into more permanent care situations over time:

“My father and my mother-in-law are both older at this point and having health issues, and so we deal with that at the same time. . . . It's sort of like dealing with the older children right? It's on demand kind of thing whenever an issue happens you have to figure out how to deal with it. My husband deals more with his mother and I deal more with my father. It just depends on what the issue is: if it's time in a hospital, or my dad's had cancer, my mother-in-law has had a heart attack. It's just you have to deal with it as it comes, figure out whether somebody needs to go and stay with the parent for a while. We both have siblings in our families so sometimes there's negotiation as to who's going to deal with the issue at this particular point in time. It hasn't been a huge amount of load but it's definitely something we have to talk about and think about particularly as they get older and older. . . . I think of it kind of as another child that you're sort of talking about and planning for, and thinking how do we need to arrange things.” (33)

She illustrates how periodic or “on demand” care happens sporadically and you have to adjust as necessary to deal with that issue, but she also describes how as their family members become

older, they must think about the situation from a long-term perspective and how care is going to be handled over time. She approaches the ongoing care situation as if she were dealing with an adult child, and she has a support system where she can negotiate care responsibilities. However, some faculty have the sole responsibility, and this balancing act does take more time from career for those who cannot share responsibility.

### **Pet Care**

Next, pets were discussed as needing care. The experiences of the participants in this study suggest that there are two types of pet care experienced by female faculty members. Most described getting a pet that would be self-sufficient or easy to take care of because they would not have enough time to take care of it themselves, and the animal needed to fit nicely into their already busy lives. The three examples below describe how caring for a pet should easily fit into the lives of faculty members:

“I have a dog, who doesn't need any care at all. She is the best dog in the entire world. She is so self-sufficient. She needs a walk once a day or whatever. That's easy; we do that anyways.” (6)

“Two dogs. One cat. . . . If we got to put some hours on it, like an hour a week of physical effort. I have to file their toenails every once in a while. They're greyhounds and their toenails grow really fast. They're lazy. I don't have to walk them. I have designed my dogs. I do. I have designed my pets, I mean that, to accommodate my lifestyle. They're greyhounds. I didn't get them from the track. I bought them. I'm that terrible person that bought a dog. I love greyhounds because they're bombproof. They're awesome dogs. They don't care if you stand on them. It might break a rib, but if you stand, they don't care. They're free agents all day outside. If I don't go home, they're just out running around. I don't live in town, obviously. . . . I have a big yard. My cat's an indoor/outdoor cat. He goes to the door when he wants outside. He doesn't have a litter

box. These things are free agents. They have a big box of food. I've built my pets to accommodate my life. . . . I do love my dogs more than most people because they don't really want anything. I mean, they want food. They don't want baths. They don't want their toenails done. They just want to exist and kick around. There's something really nice about that. Their vet bills are atrocious on occasion, but life's expensive.” (27)

“I have robots to take care of them. I have two cats who I love but they're... I have a litter robot that's amazing and food robots that are also amazing. I had to get those when I came here, because I just I cannot deal with it.” (44)

Participant 6 describes how her dog is self-sufficient, and the only care the dog actually needs is a walk everyday, which Participant 6 and her family do anyway. In this way, the dog fits nicely into the fabric of their lives without disturbing the career and care balance. Similarly, Participant 27 explains that the hardest part of caring for her dogs and cat is that she has to file the dogs' toenails on occasion, but for the most part, she has engineered her animals to fit into her life schedule. They have a yard to exercise and to use the bathroom when she is not home, and they have access to the house if needed. Participant 44 only has cats, but since she is too busy to take care of them throughout the day and does not want to be bothered with cleaning the litter box, she has robots to do the care work for her. For these three participants, the animals provide more self-care than requiring care work from the participant.

For other faculty members, their pets do not easily fit into their lives and require significantly more care. The following three vignettes show how pets can require tremendous care:

“I have a dog. That's like another thing. Having to take care of my dog. If I got here at seven in the morning I need to get home and take my dog out. But that, those are my choices.” (35)

“But I'm a cliché. I have three cats, two that don't require much care; they get mad when I'm not around much. But I do have a third cat who is elderly and who requires insulin shots twice a day, who is, she's just old. I can't be gone for 14 or 16 hours because of the insulin needs, because she has to get food throughout the day and it's a special food that if the other cats eat, the other cats throw up. She doesn't need round-the-clock care, but I can't go away overnight and leave food and water for her like I could for the other two. It requires that I'm home every day, or that I hire... Last week I had a late night event and an early morning event the next day, so I stayed in [city] and it required that I hired someone to come in and take care of her. When I go to conferences, I can't deduct that from my taxes and I can't submit that to [University]. So I have to pay for someone to come in and care for my animals.” (42)

“Participant 43: As long as [the cat's] healthy and happy and gets petted every day, he's just fine, but if we go away for four or five days, he usually starts with his head sinus and so okay. I pay the price by having to nurse him back to health. But I know he's not going to die. Because he's an indoor cat and he's only exposed to the stuff in our house and it hasn't killed him yet so he'll be fine. Dogs are a different story and we actually got the dogs because we've been traveling a lot. . . . We just both decided that we want to spend more time at home and just enjoying our days. One way to do that is to get puppies. They're a year and a half old now. We've gone through two knee surgeries. Recovering from orthopedic surgery is a six weeks to two month process so they've needed a lot of care.

Ashton: They were puppies and they needed knee surgery so young?

Participant 43: Just about at one year age; it was hereditary. They had this patella that's off to the side and so they're walking along and suddenly the patella goes out of place and they're totally lame. . . . It's pretty common among small dogs. We brought them to [University], and [University] said, ‘When we look at our orthopedic surgery schedule, nine weeks from now, we could do the surgery.’ Having a puppy who's going to be lame for nine weeks, that means having to walk him up and down the stairs. Having to carry him outside and put him in the grass where they pee. We found another surgeon who could do it the next Monday. Then the recovery is a process but manageable. As soon as

one recovered, then the next one got the same thing. I think this morning I called the vet. I think we're on the third knee now.” (43)

For these three participants, it is true that their pets need more care than others, and there is definitely an implication about choices and sacrifices. Pets are seen as an optional component to life. Having to care for a pet is not an excusable reason for missing out on career deadlines or responsibilities.

Participant 35 explains that her dog has to go out during the day, which requires her to leave the office and be home for the dog, but she dismisses this responsibility by labeling it as a choice. Participant 42 explains how her cats are mostly self-sufficient, but she has one cat that requires regularly timed insulin injections to stay alive. When she has to go away for personal or professional reasons, the cat requires care that she has to hire out to another person. If she is unable to go home for professional reasons, she cannot ask for reimbursement from the university because pet care is not seen as a necessity for professional accomplishment. Finally, Participant 43 has three animals that need extra care. The cat requires more care when she has to travel for work, but she claims that she “pays the price” for the travel. The dogs were meant to keep her and her husband home from work travel, but instead have caused a burden on career because they have required so much health care. Again, this care work was dismissed as a choice since the dogs were purchased for the sole reason of helping them stay home more often. With pets specifically, there is an implication that they are all choices, and any care they require should not detract from your work because it was a choice.

### **Care for Spouse / Relationship Maintenance**

Spouses were the third most referenced subjects of care work. Those who did not mention their spouse were either separated or did not have a spouse. When asked about care for

their spouse, most women faculty were dismissive of the question, like they do not have to care for their spouse at all or they would not do it if it were asked of them. Most of the responses to this question were echoes of Participant 38's response: "My husband doesn't need to be taken care of (laughter)." This sentiment comes from the long documented work-life literature that reveals that female faculty members often have two jobs and work double hours: once for their career and then again at home taking care of the house and the spouse. Unfortunately, many of the women in this study still have two jobs when it comes to care and career. The following three examples demonstrate how many women faculty members are also the household managers as well:

"Participant 6: I've a spouse, I have a husband. He doesn't need a lot of care though, he's pretty self-sufficient.

Ashton: Does he help with the dishes?

Participant 6: Oh, yeah. Not every night though. We share the responsibility. I usually just do it all though." (6)

"Well, okay, once I had kids, I quit cooking dinner. Basically, I just resigned from that job. We used to cook together. Pre-kids. . . . Essentially, I think, in our household, I'm still the manager of the household, which is not a job I applied for, at all. I often hear from my friends it's a de facto. You're the one who spends the time while you're pregnant and with childcare so you become the de facto manager of the household. Whether it's appointments or activities or whatever. Still, I manage it because that's just the way it is. I'm just like, I'm not going to fight it anymore." (16)

"He thinks he does a lot more than he does, but I definitely do the line share like at home stuff. I do most of the cooking and most of the cleaning. Not all, right, he does a good amount, but it's most and all of our finances, all of our travel planning. He's just not a planner. He doesn't necessarily require a lot of direct personal care, but our lives together require me to be in charge of it. Whatever that means." (44)

Participant 6's experience is similar to many of the others in this study; she does the majority of the household chores as her second job when she is home from work. She explains that she and her husband "share" the care work responsibilities, but in the very next sentence admits that she usually "does it all." Participant 16, on the other hand, has managed to quit the job of cooking dinner because of the childcare work that has been added, but admits that she is still the "de facto household manager" because of her gender and the natural process of childbirth and spending time with the baby. Participant 44, then, provides insight into what a household manager does besides cooking and cleaning; the manager is also responsible for finances and travel, as well as other time consuming tasks. While these care work responsibilities might not seem like an undue burden, in aggregate, they do take a lot of time, which is a resource that faculty members always need more of for career responsibilities. Time is a commodity that these faculty members with dual jobs are losing.

However, other faculty members acknowledged that care in a relationship is more than just taking care of the other person, as if they cannot care for themselves. Some of the women faculty who were married to other faculty were particularly more specific about how they managed the house and strove to be equal in caring for one another, so that they would not create burdens for each other. The following two vignettes illustrate this dual-career, mutually beneficial care:

"My spouse is pretty okay. He doesn't need much help, no. It's not a problem. He's a faculty in [department] too. So we try to share responsibility, parenting responsibilities equally or as much as possible." (32)

"When we started we were both on the tenure track. . . . We're both [rank], at this point. We both started at the same time. He got tenure before I did. Once he got tenure he was

in charge of taking care of me more until I got tenure and then we went back to taking care of each other equally.” (33)

“My ex was not an academic and required a huge amount of care. My husband now understands the whole flow theory that when you get into a project, you just need to do that uninterrupted for a period of time and he'll bring me dinner and make sure the dogs are walked. Then vice versa, when he has that need, I do that for him. We share. It's not only a high demand job but it's also a job that gives us both flexibility and autonomy over our time. That autonomy allows us to help each other in ways that we couldn't if one of us had a nine to five job.” (43)

Participant 32 explains that because they are both faculty and understand the demands of the job, they share the care work responsibilities at home, particularly when it comes to childcare. Participants 33 and 43, on the other hand, discussed how they and their partners care for each other, taking on more or less of the care work depending on who has the more pressing career demands. For Participant 33, this was a period of time where one had to be more attentive to the other because they were both trying to earn tenure. For Participant 43, this is a regular occurrence, where they both understand the flows of academic life, and they support each other when one has a pressing deadline.

In a similar vein, many women faculty members explained that care work is about relationship maintenance, taking time out for the relationship and not focusing all of their attention on career. Each faculty member who approached care work in this way had different relationship management strategies they employed:

“So, I do things with them [husband and child], some activities or go to a library or what have you. During the weekdays the same thing, I try to be available for doing things together, cooking together. It's not always possible, but I try to do it as much as I can.” (14)

“For the most part, I don't work on the weekends. That's personal and preservation. I, again, started that in graduate school, where Saturdays were my days to be with family and do those sorts of things. I've, very much, stuck with that.” (17)

“My husband and I set aside some time each week to watch a show. We'll go down in the basement of our house with a baby monitor and we'll watch like Game of Thrones or something that we can't watch when the kids are around. It's grown up time. It's time for us to reconnect and bond too.” (41)

Participant 14 makes it a priority each day, to the best of her ability to spend time with her spouse and child doing some kind of activity, whether it is exercise, or a library visit, or cooking. Participant 17 uses weekends for the same priority. Rather than a little time everyday, she blocks off the entire weekend for care work. Participant 41 also blocks time for her husband specifically, away from work and away from their children to reconnect with each other. While each of these participants engages in care work and relationship management in their own unique way, they all illustrate the need to take time away from work specifically for relationship maintenance.

### **Self-Care**

Self-care was the second most referenced care type mentioned by the women in this study, but faculty were conflicted about caring for themselves. Their experiences varied from routine self-care to sporadic self-care to guilt about taking time for the self in the first place. The faculty members who explained that self-care was built into their routine explained that taking time for their physical and mental health helped them be more productive when focusing on

career. The following three interview excerpts illustrate the variety of physical self-care practices women faculty practice:

“I would say the typical day begins at 5:00 a.m. with a workout just to kind of reduce stress, coffee and the newspaper, and then typically I would be at work by around 8:00 a.m.” (1)

“In terms of sort of taking care of myself, I do have a rule to make sure I exercise. . . . I do something at least a couple times a week. . . . For a while I have been doing Pilates, very regularly. So, it's been like six or seven years, I've been doing Pilates. And I was doing it at the co-rec. . . . I really like swimming, so our son takes swimming lessons, and so when we go, again, to the co-rec, he's swimming with an instructor and me and my husband we just swim on our own, so that's usually just once a week. . . . And I also like bicycling, but again that's a seasonal activity right, like the days I don't teach, sometimes I will, after we drop our son to school, I'll take like an hour in the morning, and then go for a bike ride, then I come back home, and then work after that. But again that's only when the weather is nice.” (14)

“I'm never not out of touch, except when I'm running. . . . That's what you have to do when you get over a certain age. Otherwise you just turn into a... Horrible. . . . So I run and cycle. I probably do it three times a week. I'd like to do it four times a week. It's brutal. I do it because my job is also very physical, so I notice if I don't do it, I start to have trouble, and I can't afford to let myself go physically. Plus it's good for you. Plus I'm old and I don't want to get, you know. Just you wait. Just you wait, you'll start running. Of course here I am eating a croissant in the middle of the day.” (18)

Participant 1 begins her day with a workout and then also a mental relaxation routine where she reads the paper and enjoys coffee before starting her workday. Participant 14 engages in purely physical activities to keep her in shape and healthy for both her career as well as her family. She engages in a variety of physical activities, such as biking when the weather is nice, and then in

the winter, indoor Pilates and swimming at the co-rec on campus. Participant 18 runs for mental and physical health, despite disliking running.

Other faculty members focused more on mental health rather than physical health for their self-care. The following two examples illustrate their focus on mental health:

“I still remember when my daughter was less than a month old, maybe weeks old, we got a call from ... Actually my husband’s Department Head at the time thought maybe we needed some help, and the woman who cleaned for them was looking for some business. My husband says, ‘Oh no, I’m sure we can do it ourselves.’ And I go, ‘We’re getting some help.’ So, I have had help ever since, and I recommend it. . . . I remember giving that recommendation to the young faculty members: ‘Hire yourself some help. It’s a mental stress reliever.’ . . . It is self care to me. Yes, I was taking care of myself.” (37)

“So one of the big ways that I do that is through my coach that I hire, and I meet with her usually by phone every other week. She’s been a huge support. I started [with the coach] February 2013. So over four years. Then I’ve done things like go to my swimming class, or I go to a chiropractor every week. I have a physical therapist that I’ve gone to that I like. So usually I pay for the support that I need. As I say, my collaborators and my close friends tend not to be here. So I have some people scattered around the country that I can chat to if I really need to. But I think my coach is like my first line of defense.” (50)

Participant 37 explains that some of the mundane care work chores were causing stress in her life, so she hired someone to help around the house, just cleaning up, and she found that to be a huge stress reliever in her life, so much so that she recommends hiring someone to all new faculty in her department. Participant 50 engages in some physical forms of self-care, and she also has a social support group that she chats with for her mental health; however, she has found that her life coach is her biggest form of mental health support. This coach helps her through stress and managing care and career responsibilities as well. It is also noteworthy that both

Participants 37 and 50 pay out of pocket for their self-care, and hiring help is a viable option for mental health and stress reduction.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, many faculty members claimed that they did not have time for self-care or that they often put self-care lowest on the list of priorities, such that they often neglected their own care. The following two participants explain how easy it is to ignore the self or put the self last behind all other responsibilities:

“In terms of self-care, that's always a challenge, to do that, that usually comes last.” (5)

“Ashton: What did you do for yourself?

Participant 31: Not very much in those days. I think it was kind of bad, like everybody else. Not much sleep to begin with, not much ... other than fed myself I think. But we all survive it.” (31)

Participant 6 explains that taking care of herself is difficult and usually comes last behind everything else in her life (e.g., career, husband, child). Participant 31 explains this tendency retrospectively; pre-tenure when her children were small, she did not really care for herself other than the bare minimum amount of sleep and feeding herself. She survived that period of her life, and claims that now she has earned tenure and is empty nested, so it is much easier to make herself a priority. It is important to note that women can put all of their other career and care responsibilities ahead of their own care, which is one of the factors that leads to burnout, and unfortunately, for those that do not “survive,” leaks in the pipeline (Jackson, 2008; Maranto & Griffin, 2011; McMurtrie, 2013).

Other women faculty members understand they must take time for the self to recharge and to be physically and mentally healthy, but many admit that they should do better about

prioritizing the self or they should do more to take care of the self. The following three excerpts demonstrate this mindset:

“I almost always sit at my desk and eat lunch in front of my computer, either putzing or working on stuff, depending on what the day is. I try to take a little bit of that time to do something for me though. I try not to work during it, but I should go somewhere. I should do something besides sit there all day.” (6)

“I'm a singer. For me, as annoying as it is some evenings to walk out of the house and go to rehearsal, I have two groups that I'm still singing with regularly. I had three I was singing with until I started my PhD studies. I was like okay, at least one of these has got to go away. So Tuesday and Thursday nights are regular rehearsals, and then one of those is my church choir, so that is on Sunday mornings as well. That's my primary outlet. The other is random lots of science fiction reading. That's very much a get lost in something, just sort of sit down and read. . . . The exercise has fallen off again, as well, so that's another one of those things that I know when I'm doing it consistently, even if it's just walking. I haven't run in a long time, arthritis in the knees, sort of put a damper on that. But I'll cycle, I'll do a number of different things and I just, that has not been consistent recently, either.” (28)

“I am an avid exerciser. I have been for 25 years. I'm a runner. I joined a local running group after I moved here, and I met a couple other females that are very avid runners. I just set time for that. We meet three or four times a week, and we do this. I know that helps me as far as de-stressing. It helps me with caregiving. Now, I struggle on the other side of that. I also really prioritize healthy eating, but I feel like in this role, since I started here, that's more of a struggle, because that is something that takes time. So, I mentioned to you how I work on weekends a lot. Well, time I would have for meal preparation, that's kind of what I would do for the week, that gets eaten into. Trying to still work on how I balance that out.” (30)

Participant 6 does make sure to eat lunch every day, but feels like she could do more to separate that time from work and really take a good break completely away from work. Participant 28 takes time for her mental health with singing and reading, but when it comes to physical health, walking and cycling, she has not been very consistent about that. Participant 30 is an avid runner and dedicates time for physical exercise, but when it comes to meal preparation, she allows her work to “eat into” the time she would spend on formal and healthy meal preparation. For all of the above participants, they have a routine thing that helps them be better workers or caregivers or both, but there is something they could do better or more.

Of course, in these narratives, it is clear that the workload does drain the academic, and certain tasks, despite careful planning, can and do fall by the wayside. However, it is possible that the perfectionistic tendencies of the professoriate bleed into self-care as well. The tendency to feel as though we are never doing anything good enough seems to be echoed in these statements about self-care as well.

Finally, women faculty also feel guilty about self-care, as if the self should be less of a priority and career should be more important. Sometimes the guilt is self-imposed, but in some cases, the guilt is a result of judgment from colleagues. Participants 48 and 49 below describe the self-imposed guilt for taking time away from work to engage in self-care:

“I work out probably three to five days a week, so put in four day average. I run, I bike, I went to boxing yesterday, I may go to cross fit. I've always been active. . . . I think because of my personality, I tend to be an active person. I don't think that's a normal trend. I think people tend to get stressed. I know a lot of junior faculty who get stressed about work, grants, research. And they don't do other stuff. They're like, oh no, I need to be writing. Why am I going to work out? Well, I need to work out to write. To me, that connection is very important. I'm now very aware of it. So, I need to be happy. Of course, there are weeks that I don't work out because I'm swamped with work but it's not

everyday. So, I try to be active. . . . I also do some meditation as well when I can or when I can't deal with stuff, then I meditate. But I think it's more a personality. If I don't do things that make me happy, I'm not productive.” (48)

“When I feel stressed out I will do something to relax, no matter the work. I have a hobby for doing pottery. I do feel a lack of time, so I'm struggling with that a little bit, because every day after I'm done with work I tend to feel tired, just lie on the couch and not do anything. That should change. . . . I go to studio, so before I came here I was in New York, and I went to a studio routinely. My last job was a stressful job, as a post doc. It's the same work intensity, but you have less say in your life, so it's even more stressful. I do pottery, and I found that really relaxing, and centers you. I'm trying to do the same thing here. I just moved to town, and I'm trying to find a studio that I like. Trying to see when I have time to do it.” (49)

Participant 48 explains how she has learned over time that she has to be active to be a good worker, and so she cannot compromise on this aspect of self-care. She reflects on observations from colleagues that feel as though they cannot take any time away from work to engage in other activities because there is not enough time. She knows, for herself, that her work is better even if she spends time on self-care. Participant 49 then illustrates this tendency more concretely. She knows that she needs pottery in her life to do better work and to unwind, but she feels the time pressure of taking time away from work and also just wanting to zone into nothing. Both Participant 48 and Participant 49 are actively working against the self-imposed mindset that there is not enough time in the day to care for the self.

Participants 25 and 27, on the other hand, explain situations where their chosen self-care was judged by others:

“When I first started here I was training for a marathon and a lot of both male and female faculty would say, ‘Where do you find the time to train for a marathon?’ I'm like, ‘What

do you think I'm supposed to be doing? Am I not supposed to have free time? Because I'm pretty sure I have free time.' Plus I get up a 4:00 in the morning so, what, do you think I'm going to work from like... No. Like, I can actually still make time to run. . . . So I work out every morning from 5:30 to 7:00. So in some ways it's not as non-negotiable, right? In some ways it's easy to become non-negotiable because nobody's asking to meet with me, but I do think that that's important. . . . I also have an online fitness group of folks that I know where every day we post about our workouts, and through posting about fitness, kind of talk about other things. So I lovingly refer to my job as working in the research factory. Kind of as a little nod to communism and economic exploitation, labor, all sorts. I'll often say, 'went swimming for an hour, long day of meetings in the research factory.'" (25)

"I think it's hard for me to go on vacation. I travel a lot for my job, so I don't... People are like, 'Where are you going to go on vacation?' I'm like, 'To the basement. So you can't find me and there's no cell service.' Just getting away. I love living in the country. I've always lived in the country. Just peace and fucking quiet. Just quiet. Just sit there. Mow the lawn. People are like, 'Why do you like mowing the lawn?' Oh, I don't know, because if I don't focus on that instead of science, I'm going to hit a tree, which is legitimate and really cathartic in some way. You can't think except to focus on that. And when you're done, it's like, I achieved something, obviously, and I didn't think about work. Winning on all fronts. You get a complicated enough yard, mow the lawn. It's almost like an exercise too if you're going to move your arms. Multitasking." (27)

Participant 25 reflects on the comments made by colleagues in her department about having the time to train for a marathon or run everyday, and she pushes back against this imposed guilt through jokes of communism and the research factory, a nod to the idea that academics are supposed to live in the productive mind without regards for the body. Participant 27 also receives judgmental comments about her self-care from colleagues, but instead of asking her where she finds the time, they are guilting her for staying home instead of taking a proper vacation or

proper time away from work. What she considers a nice break from work, hiding in her basement or mowing her lawn, her colleagues do not view as actually taking time away.

## **Childcare**

The final type of care work and most-mentioned in the interviews was childcare. Below are eight excerpts that describe all of the facets of childcare that female faculty face when they have children:

“Someone has to pick up my son from daycare and then we do dinner and bedtime and stuff with him. Then usually by then we're all so exhausted. . . . I try not to work on the weekends or only work when he's napping so that I can spend the time with him that I don't get to spend [while at work]. . . . I have a 15 month old son. He needs a lot of care still. Mostly now just to stop him from walking down the steps and hurting himself, because he's crazy.” (6)

“Participant 8: He likes baseball, he just joined a swimming camp, and he's doing Cub Scouts. I'm torn on the whole Cub Scout thing, but we're going to try it. I mean, it's totally imperialist. It was founded to create good British imperialists to go out and settle the colonies. But, it gets him outside, and has him around male role models. You know, [name] has two mommies, which is fine, but it also gets him around male role models. Yeah, and that kind of getting out into nature, and appreciation for nature. My head's in a book all the time; I forget about those things, so it's a good thing. But, it's time consuming.” (8)

“My son in particular, he's now 10. He's really had to deal with some issues related to race. They do this DARE program in his school. A little black girl raised her hand and asked the cop who leads it about Black Lives Matter, and the cop ignored her. So, my son raised his hand and repeated her question and asked what he thought about it or was he aware of the protest. The cop said, ‘Yes,’ and since then hasn't called on my son. And he wants him to call on him. He wants to have a conversation about it. So, I was having a

conversation with my 10 year old yesterday in the car strategizing. Well, how are you going to deal with this? You can't stomp your feet. You can't make him call on you, but maybe you can tell your teacher. Maybe I can come. People have to intervene in all kinds of ways for their kid" (10)

"The problem with being a mom, if you're at home, a lot of times you're expected to do this or that, you know: 'Mom I need this. Mom I need this. I need some help on my homework.' I couldn't say no." (11)

"Once you have a kid, you may find you really would like to spend some time with them. That happens, you know [laughter]. So that's an interesting predicament. Got to figure out how to spend your time here, here, and here." (21)

"I have to believe that the relationship I'm building with [name] right now and will continue to build with her that there will come a point where she's an adult or a young adult that she will look back and I think that she will be thankful that she had a heavily involved father who is shifting for her what notions of men can do, which I think is great. Then also a mother who was committed to her job and would make time to do both things. Like the other day I took her to the playground. I'm like, 'Okay, we can go to the playground but I need to finish reading these articles first and then we can play. So do you mind splitting your time with me?' She's like, 'Nope, that's fine.' You know, allowing her to see that all of these things can kind of fit together and that you don't have to just choose one." (25)

"Well luckily my daughter is nine years old now, so she requires less care than she used to. Of course that was much more of a problem early on in my career so right now she's fairly self sufficient. I still have to provide some kind of a sitter. I cannot leave her alone at home. But she goes to school so most of her day is taken at school, but I have of course, since she's getting older, she has a lot of extra curricular activities, so I have to provide the taxi service for her [laughter]." (32)

“So we have two very small boys. We use a daycare service, so they're in daycare full time, every week. They're both over at [daycare center] right now. Every day, I will go over there and breastfeed my baby. I use my lunch hour for that basically. I've decided to give up the lunch hour for that purpose.” (41)

The passages above explain how mothers experience the simultaneity of career and childcare. Childcare involves cooking meals and/or breastfeeding, interruptions, the desire and reality of spending time with children, helping children through difficult times in their lives, keeping them safe from harm, helping them to find new experiences, driving them to and from their activities and school, and for the participants in this study, also helping their children think through difficult subjects like race and gender roles.

Participant 16 sums up this simultaneity succinctly: “I think I say crazy because what happens when you have kids and you're in academia, and probably in the business world in general, is you're pulled in every direction” (16). On top of this childcare pull, new mothers, who are most often still trying to earn tenure, also must adjust to their changing bodies, both during and after pregnancy while simultaneously navigating the landscape at work. The following two participants explain how the changing body and hormones impact career:

“Most of my colleagues are male. They remember when they had kids; they're like, ‘Yeah, I know all about getting up at night.’ I'm like, ‘Yeah, but you didn't get up to feed the baby. Like literally feed the baby.’ Your body goes through a whole different thing also when you're a mother, versus a father. My body has changed entirely since two years ago or whatever. I don't think they understand the hormonal changes that you go through, the physical, emotional, all that stuff. I think that's something on top of being a parent that mothers experience that men just don't get, they don't get that. You're freaking exhausted when you're pregnant. You literally cannot think of things that you normally would be able to think of quickly. I think in that way, it's been a little bit more difficult.” (6)

“I’m also pretty stubborn. Even after I had my first child, and was going through the hormonal ups and downs of that and realizing... kind of recovering from the shock of adding this new person to our family and the impact it had on me. I had by then dedicated a good chunk of my 20s to graduate school, so I was not going to quit at that point. I was a post doc; I was not just going to walk away from that career even though my instincts were telling me I should be home with my baby all the time. Taking care of my baby all the time. I talked to some older women who had been in that situation, and they said, ‘Just ride this out, it will get better.’ Actually fortuitously that year, when my older son was born, was 2013, there was a government shut down and I was working at a government lab, and that government shut down actually coincided with the end of my maternity leave. For me, it was three extra weeks of maternity leave I got to spend time with my son. I was able to get over that really tough period where the hormones were really just making me miserable. I was able to persevere through that perturbation of my life and get through it and stay in my field. I know people who were not able to get through that and they actually left the field.” (41)

Participants 6 and 41 eloquently explain how childcare involves more for women faculty than it can for their male counterparts.

Participant 6 describes how the body adapts to the baby’s needs during pregnancy (i.e., often leaving pregnant women feeling nauseous or exhausted). In addition to that, some women experience lapses in memory that affect their day-to-day career tasks. After childbirth, there is always a physical healing process that women must go through; maternity leave is designated time to bond with the baby, but women also need that time for their bodies to physically heal. This is also not something that new fathers experience. In addition to healing, Participant 41 explains that the new mother also experiences hormonal changes post-partum, which can make you feel like you cannot go back to your career. She explains how dedicated she was to her

career, and even with that stubbornness and dedication, the hormones were so strong that she felt like she has to spend all of her time with her baby.

Now that the specific types of care work are clear, the next section will describe the university's role in enabling and constraining care by focusing on specific policies (rules) and resources related to care work.

### **University Policies and Resources for Care**

University policies both enable and constrain care work. In this section of the paper, I will discuss university policies and resources designed to aid employees in performing their care work responsibilities, but I will also illustrate how those policies fail to work as intended. Leave policies are discussed first, followed by clock extension policies (also discussed as “stop the clock” policies). After those specific policies are discussed, I will discuss resources, specifically childcare and daycare resources provided by the university.

#### **Leave Policies**

To begin, the university offers a variety of leave policies to accommodate all faculty and staff with the types of care mentioned above: elder care, childbirth, and childcare. Examples of leave policies offered include, but are not limited to, sick leave, bereavement leave, family medical leave act (FMLA), paid parental leave (PPL), and unpaid personal leave. Eligibility requirements as well as calculations for time off are included in detail in the Faculty and Staff Handbook and are listed and vaguely described on the Human Resources Department website. Participants in this study focused on only three of the above mentioned leave policies: sick leave, FMLA and PPL; however, it is worth noting that several participants took maternity leave in the

past under the sick leave policy, which changed before data collection began for this project and would, under the timeline of the current project, fall under the PPL policy.

At the time of the current study, both male and female faculty were allowed six weeks of paid leave under PPL, pending that they have been an employee of the university for at least one consecutive year. Participants 41 and 9 both describe the current policy:

“I knew that the institution was walking the walk as well as talking the talk about gender equity and about being a family friendly institution. I researched their family leave policies in advance for example. Found out that you do get six weeks of paid maternity leave, so that was a plus.” (41)

“Now you can combine them, I don’t know if you know this, but you can combine them if there's two partners on campus. You can combine them and then one partner can take them both, which is good. . . . And you have up to a year right now to use this time. ” (9)

As explained in the previous excerpts, faculty are guaranteed six weeks paid parental leave, and if there are two parents, both employed by the university, one partner can take the full 12 weeks.

In some departments, faculty are also granted a teaching release for their birth semester.

The following two participants explain how the semester course release works:

“When I first said I was pregnant I thought I was going to have to teach up until he was born. As I was the first pregnancy in a while, once the business office or someone got in touch with HR, they were like ‘Oh no, this is how it goes. You just give them the entire semester off from teaching and give them research and service tasks until the baby comes.’ Because then you don't have weird transitions. Then the semester is covered by FMLA. . . . I was willing to teach until the baby comes but it's better if their professor doesn't just disappear and some stranger shows up for the rest of the semester. . . . It seems like they didn't know that ahead of time because I was the first one in a while for whom that was, yeah.” (5)

“Yes. I was very fortunate and that the first semester after he was born, I had course release for maternity leave but the second semester was to be my sabbatical. I don't regret this at all, but I pretty much gave up my sabbatical to do childcare.” (17)

Participants 5 and 17 were both granted a course release semester to accommodate the birth of their children. Their semester was paid, as they were still required to engage in research and service responsibilities, but the pay came from FMLA. This policy is not clearly explained in the Faculty and Staff Handbook, nor is it explained on the Human Resources website.

In fact, uneven or unclear distribution of the birth semester leave was one of the greatest frustrations from women faculty. When it comes to parental leave, there appears to be confusion in distribution and constraints for utilization of those policies. The two complaints that were repeated throughout my interviews were about maternity leave in the summer and having a teaching release during the birth semester. For many of the participants in the study, these issues came up simultaneously. The following three statements illustrate this frustration:

“I think there's a lot of policies that can be implemented. I mean one of them is leave policy. So the university was great; it gave both men and women six weeks, yay, now we get the same. Now we're equal, except that women are having the babies and you can't use any of the six weeks in the summer. When you're in the summer, you're either paid off of a grant, or something else. A summer salary of some type. No one's going to give you money to not work. If you have a baby in the summer, you're not getting any money in the summer. You also don't get your sick leave, so [University] gives women six weeks sick leave if they have a baby, paid. You can't use that in the summer. Yeah, so my advice to everyone is don't have a baby in the summer. I stupidly did, thinking that would be the easiest thing, but then I just didn't make any money whatsoever. . . . [University] has unwritten rules about teaching release. [University] needs written rules for teaching release, absolutely. It's not. I've looked to try to show someone, and I can't find it anywhere. . . . I think [University] needs better written rules about, especially for the

women to access, not just department heads, but for women to know what they can and can't expect with having a baby.” (6)

“They were trying to get me to come back and teach, you know, during my maternity leave and stuff. You're supposed to get a semester off, and they were trying to get me to assume teaching responsibilities the same semester of my maternity leave. [A colleague] came and told me, ‘Don't let them do that to you.’ She's been very helpful about all that because she's a full professor.” (7)

“Maternity leave, that is a department decision. My department head might not have given me the leave had it not been that I knew someone in another department who had just gotten leave from her head. I kind of had to play that off in order to get leave because it is, apparently, a departmental level [decision]. That being said, after I had my son, I have a male colleague who, they were expecting their first child during the semester, and he did get the same leave that I got, which I'm totally happy about. I think, that's wonderful, but I had to fight to get it. My son was born in the summer. . . . What was going to be disrupted? It was never framed in terms of a nine-month appointment because I'm still an employee and once you've been on for 12 months, you get maternity leave but the key is, it wasn't going to be disrupting my classes, so what was the logic?” (17)

From these three women, it is clear that there are discrepancies in distribution of policies.

If an employee has worked for the university for one consecutive year, they are supposed to be granted six weeks of paid maternity leave, but this policy comes into question when a nine-month faculty member has their baby in the summer. In some cases, it appears this paid six weeks is granted, even in the summer, but in other cases, it is considered illogical since the faculty member is not technically, according to contract, working (though expectations of work do not cease in the summer even if the contract does).

Even more questions arise concerning the semester course release for the birth of a child. According to Participant 17, this is up to the discretion of the department chair, who may or may not decide you should have time off. Participant 6 was not granted a semester teaching release because she had her baby in the summer when she was not teaching anyway, whereas, Participant 17 was able to secure a teaching release for the fall after having her baby in the summer, but only because she had evidence that another chair had granted it for their employee. Finally, in the case of Participant 7, she was given the time off, but then asked to come back from her teaching release before it was over, and might have agreed to return if her mentor had not told her to hold her ground.

The unclear rules about teaching release in the birth semester are even more problematic when faculty then assume, or worse, are pressured, to have their baby in the summer to avoid disruption in their classes or adding burden to other faculty who might have to cover their classes. If a faculty member is able to time their pregnancy such that they cause minimal disruption by having their baby in the summer, then they might also not receive their paid parental leave. These discrepancies are unclear at best and deeply problematic for care and career balance at worst. Participant 6 sums up the problems and the responsibility and potential for transformation the university has in the following statement:

“In general I'm just disheartened at the way this whole country treats women who have children. I think universities are a place where they could really start to make an impact. We want to do all these things. We're doing so much research on how to get women to stay in academia. Why don't we give some benefits to them? . . . I think there's a lot of policies that could change to make the university actually family friendly. I don't know exactly what they are, or whether the university is willing to give, but the current paid leave I don't think is helpful and I don't think that the unwritten teaching release is helpful.” (6)

Participant 6 is right that universities want to keep their female workforce, and while the policies have improved from the past, it is a failure of the university structure to have unclear policies that could affect more than half of your workforce.

Care work policies also have implications for their influence on how employees plan their lives and families. Participant 26 below chose not to change her family planning because of university policy and could have suffered because of it, whereas Participant 40 let university policy dictate her family planning:

“So I thought that the leave policies weren't great for having a baby, and part of that was that I had my daughter 10 months after I got here, so I hadn't worked for [University] for a year yet. They don't give any leave. So you get six weeks of leave, but only if you've worked for [University] for a year, so we didn't get any leave and we happened to be really lucky that it worked out. She was born the beginning of May. . . . So it was on the website, and I don't know, we had sort of been planning anyway. It's hard to decide to wait, I feel like, to make that happen, so I guess we could have waited longer to try and have a baby but we didn't. I knew that that was going to happen but I sort of just thought that the department might have a little bit more flexibility and that we would still get some modified duties, which is not written down anywhere, that's really unclear. . . . So I would like to see [University] have some sort of more formal statement about modifying duties beyond just the six weeks or how the six weeks should go about. Like do you have to juggle everything so that you push all your important stuff before or after those six weeks? Because that's what it seems like a lot of people have to do basically.” (26)

“I did have her knowing that she needed to come by a certain time so that I could teach in the summer to get my summer salary. My husband was like, ‘I don't know, we shouldn't have another one yet,’ and I'm like, ‘This is the last month that we can try and still get, so I can still teach in the summer.’ (laughing). He was like, ‘Okay.’ So there was a couple months where he was like, ‘Let's wait,’ and I was like, ‘Last chance!’” (40)

While Participant 26 could have waited to try and have a baby, she and her partner decided that they were ready for a family, and it was the right time in their personal lives to try. However, her baby was then born outside of the eligibility requirements for parental leave since. She mentions that they were lucky because the baby was born in May, and they were not required to teach over the summer anyway, so in that regard, they were lucky with the timing. However, she also echoes the above discussion about the clarity for the modified duties of the birth semester and after. Neither she nor her partner received any modified duties.

On the other hand, Participant 40 explains that she intentionally timed the birth of her daughter such that the baby would be born in the long spring semester, where she would be granted her paid six weeks, and also where she would be able to come back from maternity leave and be eligible to teach in the summer and receive pay for an additional three months of work. Had she not been diligent about planning or unable to plan, she might have had her baby in the summer and received no leave, no pay, and no reduction in duties.

Despite the current problems with leave policies, it is important to be mindful that the university has greatly improved their policies from the past. While we should be critical of potentially gendered and unclear policies, we should also recognize success. The following two excerpts explain how these policies used to be even more constraining:

“Well, maternity leave was my biggest irritation with life as a female faculty at this university because when I got pregnant for the first time, and I timed it post-tenure, because well, for all the reasons that I don’t need to explain to you, I was shocked to find that we had no maternity care policy at all. And I was shocked that I had not known that before and that there weren’t just banners all over campus and people protesting and how can this thing not be? That there was no maternity leave policy. And I was told this was completely ad hoc and it depended on the departments. My own department head at the time had, for better or worse, been a grad student when he had his babies, and he wrote

his dissertation, as he would tell it, while his baby was sleeping and his wife was working. So in his mind, you didn't really need maternity leave because he had managed to write a dissertation while taking care of a child. So, to him, he didn't see why you would need a semester off. . . . So I got an outside grant and I gave myself a maternity leave. I was always pissed off about that, because that outside grant should have finished half a book, but it got me bonding time with my baby, which I needed. . . . And my next baby, I gave myself a sabbatical. Or I took my sabbatical, and gave myself another baby. So for neither of my babies did I have any proper, actual maternity leave.” (9)

“Participant 13: I think that [University]'s policies regarding parental leave, they've gotten better in the recent past, but [University] was way behind the curve on parental leave. And I think it's no coincidence that there are not a lot of babies in this department. And I blame [University] for that. I also blame the department culture for that.

Ashton: You said you had a child late in life, were you already full at that point, or were you still working on tenure?

Participant 13: I was full, so I got no benefits. I got no time off. But I, in a sense, didn't really need it. So to me that was not an issue.” (13)

Participants 9 and 13 illustrate a time when there was no specified leave if your department chair did not think you needed it, and no release in duties either.

Participant 9 was fortunate enough to be able to plan her children during a grant that would pay her for time away from specific duties and then during a sabbatical post receiving tenure. Participant 13 was in a department that was unsupportive of mothers, and most women chose not to have children or chose to wait until after they received tenure to have children. She also teases at the idea that tenured women do not need the same benefits and time as pre-tenure women. In a sense, this is a truth, because the battle for tenure has already been won; however, in another sense, and the one she alludes to above, the female body during and after childbirth still

needs time for physical and emotional healing. Failing to formally recognize that is as problematic for tenured women as it is for pre-tenured women.

Even though the majority of my participants explained the use of leave policies for parental leave, Participant 20 expressed that she wished she had known about FMLA and all of its applications during a rough time in her life:

“Participant 20: I think it's fair to say that the semester that my husband died, that it often felt like, ‘well I'm here. I've shown up.’

Ashton: Did they offer you a teaching release or time off for the family medical leave act?

Participant 20: No. No one ever discussed it with me. I never skipped a class, and that was partly that I had no family here. So when my father died, I went to New England, and I have had, I have taken time off when my father was sick and when my mother-in-law died because I was the legal person and I had to go to Wisconsin. But no, no one ever suggested it. My experience with my own family was that we were all together, and we were taking care of things. When my husband died, there was no one; if I went home, I was alone.” (20)

This is a prime example of resources being available for someone who has every right to use them, but they are not advertised or clear. At a time when she was caring for her dying husband, she most likely did not have the time or energy to take the initiative and look for those policies herself. Faculty need both time and emotional capacity to research policies that might not even be on their radar in stressful situations. In addition to leave policies, tenure clock extension policies were mentioned by many of the participants in the study.

### **Clock Extension Policies**

While most of the participants referenced “stop the clock” in reference to the arrival of a child, these extension policies can also be used in extreme cases. The formal policy is the Tenure-

Clock Extension Policy, and it grants clock extensions in two specific cases: (a) birth of a child or adoption for either or both parents and (b) “when conditions and personal circumstances arise which substantially interfere with progress toward achieving tenure.” Participants in this study have received clock extensions for both cases.

For the birth or adoption of a child, there is only a form, which has to be signed and submitted by the department head within one year of the arrival of the child. The clock extension is then automatic for one additional year on the tenure clock. The following two participants explain how easy the process is supposed to be:

“You have to submit a form. It took me a long time to find the form, which is shame on [University] for its websites being terrible. It's automatic once I submit it. It basically goes to the provost or whoever and they say yes and send it back to the department head.”  
(5)

“We [she and her husband] did have to the email the department head I think but then it was automatic and just went through . . . and that was very easy.” (26)

If a faculty member intends to acquire a clock extension for reasons other than the arrival of a child, there is a longer process that has to be completed. The faculty member must work with their department chair to submit the request and verify both previous progress and conditions for the clock extension. This means that the department chair must be willing to write a letter, in most cases, explaining that the faculty member has been progressing effectively toward tenure and essentially has not been wasting time. The faculty member then must also present evidence verifying the truth of the condition or personal circumstance. The department chair can include this in their letter to the Provost or can submit documentation with the letter. In any case, once the letter has been submitted, it is the decision of the Provost whether or not the extension will be

granted. Participant 4 explains below her role as Department Chair in the process of Clock Extensions and cases for why faculty might be granted an extension:

“I make sure that everybody knows. All the assistant professors . . . know they can have an extra year, and three assistant professors have gotten an extra year since I came, and for different reasons. One was for a baby, one was because they had a very bizarre Visa process, and then the other one was they had a parent who was very seriously injured. This person had to take off work and figure out what was going on with her dad, and it was really a big mess. I make sure they know. . . . You have to do it within a year. You have to ask for it before the child is a year old. . . . I just sign the form [for the arrival of a child], and the letter that I write [for extraordinary circumstances] isn't... I don't have to go on, and on, and on. I just have to say I've been aware of these circumstances. The person is in other ways making good progress, so it's not like they're just trying to buy time and making something up. It's a real event.” (4)

As department chair, she has the responsibility of helping faculty receive a clock extension if it is needed and warranted. She is vocal about the policies being available and encouraging assistant professors in her department to utilize the resource if they need it.

For additional examples of the policy in use, two faculty members in the study explained personal circumstances surrounding clock extensions:

“I finally divorced my husband, and then my son went to war, and so I was getting divorced, my son went to war, I was up for tenure, oh my God, it was absolutely brutal. My committee was very good about it, and I actually got an extra year because it was so stressful. And they said, ‘We want you to take an extra year to do tenure,’ which I felt was a little bit of an embarrassment, because it made me feel like I wasn't adequate. But they said, ‘No, no, you're dealing with way too much stuff.’ . . . So it was very difficult, and they were very good about it.” (18)

“I'm not sure how much good that policy does, that stop the clock. But I think it has helped some men now. I know one guy who had a brain tumor and he wasn't thinking

right and he got an extra year. I know another man who was working in the attic of the building next door. This was a few years back and he had all of his research stuff up there in the attic, and damned if it didn't come a big storm one day and that roof was not up to snuff and it rained in on his materials and he was up the creek. And he was given an extra year. So men have benefited from that stop the clock.” (21)

So clock extensions are not, in writing, gendered. Anyone can use the extension policy, new mothers and fathers and any male or female faculty member going through extenuating circumstances, pending the department chair is willing to write and advocate for them.

However, there are some issues with enactment of the clock extensions when it comes to new parents, and there are also challenges with interpretation of what the extension actually means when evaluating materials that end up being gendered. The following four passages demonstrate the subjective nature and interpretation of clock extensions when evaluating a packet and call into question whether clock extensions for the arrival of a child help women to succeed.

“I know having a child is not helping. . . . I felt like I was judged particularly harshly that year, when it was supposed to be my stop the clock year. Yeah, so I feel like a lot of people probably look badly on that. Like it's stopping the clock, like it's some kind of gift and it's not. Like I said, it's really challenging to do this job with a child. I know that that's not a good thing. I know that it has not been helpful. . . . Like, the semester I gave birth and was out on maternity leave and everything. My annual review, people were treating it like I had been here that semester. It was very strange. It was very discouraging. . . . I mean, they were saying I didn't write enough papers that semester. My teaching scores need to come up and everything. It was just the review I felt like was the harshest of all my annual reviews. And it was the year that I probably shouldn't have even had a review. I had to submit my document while on maternity leave. I just felt like I was judged very harshly. . . . It was like they just ignored the fact that I was on maternity leave. It was very strange. That was very discouraging.” (7)

“But we have had one woman who took that stop the clock policy. Yeah, and so she toyed with the idea, let me put it that way. She had somebody she trusted that she talked with about this and wanted to know, would that be a risky thing to do. She was going to go up for a promotion. And actually she was advised not to take it, not to ask for an extra year because the feeling is that sure you get an extra year, but then the expectations are going to be higher. You know, it is not going to work to your advantage. Your expectations will be higher and unless you thought in that one year you could just turn out a lot of work, it wouldn't... What you did wouldn't balance off that year, so she didn't ask for it. She did get promoted. . . . And she's the only one who I believe who's ever thought about it. . . . I didn't have any kids until I had gotten promoted and tenured and that's just one way to go, of course, but it's a safe way since I see how people react when somebody wants an extra year.” (21)

“I had an extension on my tenure clock because I had a baby. The way they phrased it to me when I came in is that if you take the extension then that's just like a free pass that you have, that you could use if you wanted to or you didn't want to. But then when it came time, my normal time to go up for tenure they told me, ‘Well no, you have an extension now.’ Because of course somebody else was in power who was a man, they said, ‘Well no, now your actual date is the next year. If you go up at this normal time that you would have that would be perceived as you going up early and then you have to have much more to look tenurable when you're early.’ Right. Because to tenure somebody early they have to be a superstar.” (33)

“Though there was a recent article I read, the stop the clock procedure actually helps men a lot more than it helps women, which I agree with. . . . I don't think it's actually helping women become successful mothers and employees. . . . The gentleman in my department who had a baby, he's Asian. In their culture the grandparents do a lot to take care of the babies. He had both his parents and his wife's parents come over. His wife stayed home with the baby. He had almost a year of grandparent care and then all this other stuff. And he got a year on top of his tenure. He had plenty of time to do a lot of extra work that I

absolutely could not get done. You look at that, you're like, we both were in same situation, but not really in any way. All we did was both had offspring. That's only thing that's the same. Everything else about it was entirely different.” (6)

The above excerpts illustrate the problematic ways in which clock extensions can be and are subjectively interpreted by departments and committees despite the formal policy granting an extra year.

Participant 7 illustrates how departments can and will still ignore stop the clock when reviewing the packet. Fortunately, this was not her formal tenure evaluation; rather, it was an annual review of her packet. It is still problematic that there was no regard for her formal extension in their evaluations of her packet. Even more problematic, Participant 21 describes a department that is still relatively unsupportive of women faculty and also caustic enough to interpret the clock extension as an *extra* year whereby extra work is expected. This specific interpretation of clock extensions is why many women, like the women described in the passage and also Participant 21 herself, opted out of utilizing this policy altogether. Participant 33, on the other hand, filed for her clock extension, but when it came “time” for her to go up for promotion, she did not think she needed the extra year and wanted to go up at her normal time. In her department, this is perceived as going up early. Universities should work to improve the language in their clock extension policies such that committees cannot interpret the clock extensions as early or late because clock extensions should never work against your tenure case.

Finally, Participant 6 highlights the struggle that many women face when using a clock extension. Their male counterparts receive the same extension but inherently experience the arrival of a child differently. Side by side evaluation still favors men who did not experience hormonal changes, breastfeeding challenges, and the physical healing from childbirth. While

offering clock extensions to adoptive parents and fathers is not inherently problematic and has eased the pushback on clock extensions for new mothers, critical scholars should still ask whether or not we are helping the most vulnerable population. Aside from leave and clock extension policies, the university also offers daycare services as a resource to its faculty.

### **Onsite Daycare**

On site daycare was the most referenced resource requested by women faculty who are parents. At the institution where data was collected, there are three specific on site daycare facilities; two are traditional daycare centers that take children aged six weeks to 12 years, and the third is part of an educational program on campus, is operated by one of the academic departments, and takes children aged six weeks to five years. The data below demonstrate that faculty who now have older or adult children did not have the same resources as the faculty with children in daycare now. The daycare facilities on campus have been expanded and improved over time, as the university realized that parents were an integral part of their workforce. However, there are still challenges with the onsite daycare, such that it cannot be used to accomplish the goals of helping parents be both good caregivers and professionals.

For the two traditional daycare facilities, there were two major constraints: the waiting list and the price. The following three participants explain the struggles associated with the long waiting list for the onsite daycare facilities:

“So [the daycare] found out before my mom found out that I was pregnant. So we heard it was going to be hard so we got on the wait list as soon as we found out I was pregnant. We called them I think a month before we wanted to start her and they were like, ‘Oh it's not going to happen; we still have a really long waiting list.’ So we actually started at another daycare for a week and then got in. So we ended up switching her because she wasn't used to the new place yet at all. So in the end we got in just a week later than

planned but it was very unclear. They have a new system now where you can go online and look. It's like you're either red, yellow, or green depending on how likely you are to get into a center; they didn't have that before. I don't know if that helps because you can be green and still not get in the exact week you want.” (26)

“When [name] was born we initially checked into the childcare facilities here and there was a huge waiting list. We decided not to go that way. But, that's something they've improved on, definitely. They just opened this new center. But, it's hell on wheels.” (8)

“I got on a list for the [University] daycare when I was ten weeks pregnant and they called me when my son was seventeen months. My husband is South African. He came and he couldn't work for a while. . . . He stayed home with our son for ten months and then we had a nanny for two months. Then we got him into [daycare center]. . . . It's a non-[University] day care. Then when [the university] called me they wanted an answer within like less than twenty-four hours. . . . My colleague who had a baby like a month after me got on [the list] when her son was eight weeks and they didn't call her until like two weeks before they called me. She just had a nanny for two years and then put him in day care.” (47)

The three participants above had a variety of experiences because making it through the waiting list also depends on demand at the time of the child's birth.

Participant 26 explains the frustration of having to find a back up daycare facility and the rollercoaster of being told that you would not get in only to find out that you did. In hindsight, because they were able to get their child into the center, she did not explain how stressful it was. Participant 8, on the other hand, explained that since the waiting list was filled with stress and uncertainty, she and her partner just decided to go another direction and not wait on the university. Finally, Participant 47 explains how she and her colleague, both, could not get into the onsite centers in a timely fashion and finally had to find another daycare center in town.

The second complaint for the traditional onsite daycares was price. All of the participants who mentioned price echoed Participant 11 when she explained, “The expansion of the daycare center I think has been very beneficial for people. It's still pretty expensive from what I understand, difficult for people to afford it” (11). Participant 13 expressed concerns in her interview that the price on the onsite care centers is high because the demand is high and the waiting lists are long, and she hopes that the new facility will alleviate some of the demand and subsequently the pricing.

The third daycare center, associated with an academic department, “provides child development practice and student teaching experiences for [University] students,” and because of the student involvement, has lower prices and a shorter waiting list. Two participants in the study discussed their satisfaction with this center:

“It's fantastic, but that's another conversation. I can't say enough wonderful things about them. . . . He wasn't always there, and it's made a huge difference him being that close and being... It took me 20 to 25 minutes each direction twice a day. . . . It's an incredible resource. Right, of our time and his. What he's learning is amazing.” (17)

“I used the [third daycare center], which isn't really day care, which I thought it was. I think a lot of new people thought it was. A lot of junior faculty think it's day care, but it's actually a class. So, it only starts once the semester begins and ends before exam week. I remember it was only a couple of hours a day. I don't know what's happening now, but it started at two. So, you didn't have full day care until two. I was like, okay, what am I supposed to do?” (16)

While participant 17 is extremely satisfied with the third daycare center because her son is learning more and is closer to campus, Participant 16 expressed her concerns with the semester structure of the center and the reduced hours of care. Participant 16's child is no longer in

daycare, and from Participant 17's interview, it is clear that there has been a change over time, and the center is now open for a full workday, but the struggles with the semester structure remain since the center's dual purpose is childcare and student learning in a university structure.

Like Participants 8 and 47, mentioned above, many of the faculty involved in this study opted out of onsite daycare either because they did not want to be stressed by the waitlist situation or because they were unable to secure placement for their child in a timely manner. The university does offer counseling on daycare centers unaffiliated with the university, but faculty have to take initiative to inquire. Participant 41 explains how she and her husband utilized this often untapped resource and were able to find a good offsite daycare center because of their initiative:

“Ashton: You said that office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention helped you with the daycare?

Participant 41: During our interview process, we actually went over and met with them. No one from the department was involved in that meeting, so we were able to then broach confidential subjects like if we have a second child, which we didn't discuss when we were in the interview process obviously. . . . ‘Is there on campus daycare’ for example, and they said, ‘Yes there is. There's a very long wait list. You'll want to get on it early.’ They were able to give us candid advice about what the situation was like. They also pointed us to other child care facilities around that we then went and visited, and we were able to find the one that really matched with our values and has worked out really well for us and our kids.” (41)

Participant 41 explained that the office mentioned above is designed specifically to keep faculty happy and retain them as employees. They worked with Participant 41 and her husband before they were even hired to help them plan for their family. She and her husband are still extremely happy with their offsite daycare center.

For those faculty who did not get on the waiting list fast enough or who put their children through daycare before the university had a quality daycare center, they discussed needing to know about daycare centers that were both close and quality. Having to find an outside daycare can increase commute time to and from work, resulting in drains on time for career productivity, and a reduction in visible office hours in order to accommodate the open and close time for the center. Several of the faculty mentioned that there were perceptions that they always come in late, leave early, or are not committed to the job because they are responsible for dropping off and picking up their child at daycare. Aside from daycare, the faculty also listed the academic life and their fluid workspace as a resource when it comes to childcare.

### **Flexibility of Academic Life**

The following three participants explain the fluidity of the job and the flexibility it allows for childcare:

“What I love about my department and the fluidity of these spaces is that I can bring my son here. I can leave him in my office or he can come to class with me. He loves it. The additional piece of it is when I bring him or I bring his friends, I'm actually bringing them into a different space to think about [University] as a college. These things are important when you think about minority children. All of his friends are not minority kids because I live in a predominantly white neighborhood in a predominantly white state, and I work at a predominantly white school.” (10)

“I nursed for 13 months and obviously I came back to work way ahead of that. I understood how lucky I was to have my own office and the flexible schedule that I had because I could close my door at any time and pump, and I brought in a refrigerator at that time,” (47)

“I guess the one thing, they tell you is there's flexibility; that's like supposed to be one of the hallmarks of working here. There's only flexibility if your position isn't so packed full that it can be flexible. I don't think mine ever allowed for the flexibility that... I missed things. I didn't miss a lot of things, but I did miss things. I couldn't do everything. There was flexibility, when my daughter needed me to go on the field trip, to be the parent; I did those sorts of things. I took off [if she was sick]. . . . The secretary who scheduled classes worked with me, so I got my classes scheduled later, so I could take my daughter to the bus because that was important to her.” (35)

Participants 10 and 47 explain how the flexible structure of the academic work space/day has allowed for them to care in unexpected ways. Participant 10 explains that she can bring her son, and even his friends at time, to her office, which allows her to care, but also allows her son to understand the university space for his future. Participant 47 talks about how she was able to increase privacy when she needed it to pump and to keep breast milk in a refrigerator in her office until she was able to take it home.

However, Participant 35 reminds the reader that flexibility is also limited by workload, by career expectations. The academic life is not so flexible that you can ignore your work, and she missed certain things in her daughter's life because she had to make work a priority. She does admit, though, that if there was a major event, or if her daughter was sick, then she was able to take off work or restructure her workdays to accommodate those events. Participant 35's testimony here is important to take seriously, as the illusion of full flexibility can be misleading. Flexibility can mean choosing your sacrifices strategically or having to depend on another person/institution to provide care. In the next section, I examine care and career imbalances to further interrogate how women faculty balance care and career.

## **Balancing Care and Career**

Under the idea of a flexible work environment, the structure offers balance for faculty members, understanding that these women are complete people with careers and also care work responsibilities; however, there is not one right way to create balance in an academic life. Balance is unique and specific to each of the women in this study, and for some, it is unique and specific to the day, the semester, the context, or the situation. In the sections below, I highlight different types of balance: care-first / career sacrifice, career first / care sacrifice, shared responsibility, and integration. Throughout I also discuss where structure does not allow balance, as the structure assumes the female faculty member has a spouse or support system, creates burnout, and allows for resentment from colleagues. First I discuss how some women faculty balance by focusing on care work first.

### **Care First / Career Sacrifice**

First, many of the women in this study claimed that they have a tendency to perform care work first, as a higher priority than career. The following four participants describe why care work is a bigger priority in their lives than career:

“Ashton: Do you feel like work imposes on your time and prevents you from doing your care responsibilities like you would like?

Participant 7: No, because I won't let it. . . . I do not hire a babysitter to pick him up from day care and take him home and keep him so I can work here longer. I just won't do it. I probably get judged harshly for that, I'm sure by some. . . . But it is what it is. I'm sure for some others the temptation definitely is there to have a nanny or a babysitter to watch him so that I can work longer or come into work earlier. But I only see him a few hours a day.” (7)

“You asked if my job is different or somehow affected because I have young children/family and for some reason I didn't have much of a response. Of course it is! The biggest difference is that I have to be more efficient with my time. My hours on campus are very finite. I can't just stay until the work gets done. I have to leave by a certain time (usually 5) in order to pick up my daughter or be home for the school bus and I can't arrive on campus until after the school bus has picked up my child in the morning. This means I can't chat or waste time. I can't work late or on the weekends unless its relatively pre-planned and childcare arrangements have been made. This greatly informs the management of my time.” (19)

“I try to provide for my daughter, that's the most important care, as much as I can, so give her opportunities. More recently maybe that has been at the expense of my research. So I used to, of course, early in my career, I used to spend more hours in the lab and more hours at work and doing research in general. Now that my daughter is older and she can understand and she has activities, I want to provide that for her. . . . So I guess I end up messing up everything, my research and home life. Do nothing well, because I just can't decide. So I live on a day to day. Try to hit all the points every day. . . . So I stay at work everyday, but I don't stay till late at night, and I don't come on weekends. Of course, early on in my career, I would work during the weekends too and maybe do experiments till late at night, which I don't do anymore. So basically I try to break the time into regular business hours and after hours. At least from let's say five to nine is dedicated to my daughter. Once she goes to sleep, of course I'll go back to working, but yeah that's what I'm trying to do. And on weekends, if she has activities, I try to pretend to be a normal mom.” (32)

“I don't work when I get home anymore. . . . If I have to choose between doing something with my child or something I'm not going to choose to look at any papers. There has to be a really big deadline for me to work on the weekend.” (47)

Participant 7 describes the pressure from at least one colleague in her department that she should be working longer days, and one strategy to accomplish that would be to outsource care in the

evenings to another caregiver. She does not want to have someone else care for her small child when her time with him is already limited. While she is committed to working a full workweek, she is not willing to give up evenings at home with her son and makes this work a priority over career.

Participant 19, during our conversation, struggled with the idea that care work would interfere with her career. After the interview, she wrote to me in an email to clarify how her family takes priority over certain facets of her career, specifically, how care work affects her time management and how she balances the two types of work. Similarly, Participant 32 explains that her workday structure is governed by care work for her daughter. Where she used to prioritize career, evening working nights and weekends, now her daughter is the priority, and the career is structured around her daughter's schedule. Finally, Participant 47 just explains that her child is the ultimate priority, and when faced with work or quality time with her child, she will always pick time with her child.

While the four participants above unabashedly choose care work over career, specifically as it relates to childcare, the three participants below explain how sometimes, despite careful planning and even desire to work, you have to make career sacrifices to do care work:

“My mother died of cancer four years ago now I think it was, and she lived in Virginia. I would take off some Fridays. They didn't have me submit it, and I didn't miss a whole lot of work but I was able to go and spend some time with her while she was ill for about, it was about eight months, by the time they diagnosed it. . . . Maybe once a month, so I maybe took off, and not every month, maybe four or five days. I would work there; she had internet at her home, so I'd do that. My siblings... I was in a family of seven, so it we tried to spread it out and there'd be usually at least two of us there.” (11)

“If my son is sick and needs someone to stay with him, it's honestly much easier for me to do it. One, because that's who he wants anyways at this age in his life. Two, my

husband works in [department] here at [University]. For him he'll have 20 meetings with students in a day or something. To reschedule all of those is a lot of work. I can much more easily stay home and either work while he's napping or just work after he goes to bed or not to put as much effort in to that particular task. In that way it's much easier for me to be the caregiver.” (6)

“Well, I guess I would say so when my son was young and I was also on the tenure track, and I wanted to be able to work more and sometimes I resented having to take care of him as much as I did. I nearly lost my mind when there'd be like a three day weekend because I'd have to do more childcare. I think I don't maybe have as many maternal instincts as other people do and so I would have rather had more time to work. It's not that I didn't enjoy spending time with him but I would have liked to be able to do the work that I wanted to do without the load that I had from him.” (33)

While the three experiences above are all different, each of the three participants here experienced career interruption because of care work.

Participant 11 had to make her mother a priority when she was ill and then when she was passing, and this required her to take time off from career. These were minimal interruptions, as she was able to take some work with her, and she had several siblings who were able to help with elder care. Participant 6 experiences interruptions when her young son is ill. She and her husband both have careers, and since her job has more flexibility, she is the one who stays home with illness. Participant 33, though, explains how childcare, in general, was disruptive to her work. She wanted to be at work more, engaging with her research, and she had a small child that needed care. Interruptions to career can be short-term or long-term depending on the care work situation, and the longer or more involved the care work, the more disruptive it can be to the career.

Female faculty who make care work a priority can also experience or fear backlash and resentment from their colleagues or department chairs. Participants 25 and 35 below explain how this resentment is communicated:

“I also get a lot of, like, ‘You know, we hired you to teach these courses, so you can't have any more children,’ kind of as a joke. Yeah, as a joke. Joke [emphasis on the word joke and making air quotes]. I put that in air quotes, for the transcription. The faculty member who said it is... She definitely serves as my biggest advocate in the department. She definitely is an advocate, but she also is very difficult to read and difficult to please. So I often joke that I have no idea if she likes me on any given day. She's just very straight-forward and harsh with her perspective. So I think that I'm a better faculty member because of the feedback she gives me. I've just had to learn to detach a little bit from the delivery method. So she makes jokes about that all the time. . . . But it's still this weird interaction space that I'm not quite sure what to do with. . . . So there's this weird, weird dynamic around that. I've heard this from multiple faculty members that are basically like, ‘You know, it's too bad that you can't do a lot of parenting things until you earn tenure. But your job right now is to do this.’ I'm like, ‘Okay, I actually do a lot of parenting things, so does that mean I'm not earning tenure?’” (25)

“Participant 35: I took off, and that was actually pretty interesting because the [community participants] I work with in the state seem to be a lot more understanding of that than my colleagues here. It didn't happen often, but there were one or two occasions where I was supposed to give this talk up in [city], or somewhere and she just got sick that day. I had to call and cancel. They seemed more understanding than if it was a [University] thing.

Ashton: Did you get push back from people here about things like that?

Participant 35: Not so much push back, but snarky comments and things. . . . Then what happened was I developed a reputation for not getting here until nine o'clock in the morning: ‘Oh, we cannot have a meeting at nine because Participant 35 cannot get here until nine.’” (35)

Participant 25 provides an example of where a joke can be a humorous means of communicating a rule or even a suggestion. If it is a veiled joke, the instructions are clear: you must do the job we hired you to do or there will be social repercussions; however, if it is truly a joke, then the pressure to follow this guideline is still present because of the fear of retribution. Participant 25 also experiences comments about how much parenting she is able to do if she is also doing her job well. While she feels like she is doing a satisfactory job at parenting, this concerns her about the implications for tenure. The question of should she be doing more work and perhaps less visible caregiving remains even if she feels satisfied with her care and career balance.

Participant 35, on the other hand, reflects back on a time when she had to manage snarky comments and backlash from her departmental colleagues because of her childcare. While her community partners were always understanding of her care work responsibilities, the people in her department made her a running joke about when they could schedule meetings because of the perception that she never arrived at work until after nine in the morning. While the focus should be on the accomplishments of the dossier, these perceptions can linger over time, causing the discussion surrounding the dossier to be tainted.

It is important to note that emergencies and elder care result in less resentment than parenting considerations. If the parents in the department ask for special accommodations, then that implicates the rest of the department to help with those accommodations. The following two excerpts are from faculty explaining their perception of parents who prioritize care work over career and collegiality:

“I will say as person who didn't have children herself, that there are some resentment that faculty who don't have children will sometimes share with each other, because I've heard this. People who have kids expect other people to arrange their schedules for convenience. Like well, I can't teach an 8:00 am class because I have to take my kid to

daycare, or I can't come to meeting at 8:00 am because of my kid. Then it's like well doesn't anybody else have a life? If you need a class to be taught in the evening or at 8:00 am, the people that don't have the kids, they're expected to do it.” (4)

“I'm just in a different place in my life than a lot of the younger women faculty. In fact sometimes in the women faculty meetings, we'll almost totally focus on childcare. Where do we get child care? What do we do? What do you do about this? I got this. Well, when you're in it, it's the most important thing in the world. After a while, you don't want to hear about it.” (11)

Participant 4 explains scheduling accommodations that are most commonly requested by parents: no meetings or teaching early in the morning or late in the evening. Practically, parents have a limited window where daycare services will keep their child, and someone has to drop the child off and pick the child up, but these tasks become the responsibility of the entire department when non-parents are asked to accommodate just because they are non-parents.

Participant 11, on the other hand, explains experiential/generational differences that have impacts on both sides. The faculty without children and the older faculty who no longer have childcare concerns can be dismissive of their colleagues who are parents because they do not want to talk about issues that do not affect them; whereas, younger faculty, particularly new parents, are consumed by childcare concerns because it is a huge impact on their career. These types of situations cause tension and divides in the department where resentment easily forms and impacts future interactions.

### **Career First / Care Sacrifice**

Second, several of the women in this study claimed that they have a tendency to perform career first, as a higher priority than care work responsibilities. The following four participants describe why career is or has been a priority in their lives:

“It's not that I'm working all waking hours of the week, but thoughts are of course always somehow related to my research or to my teaching. But there is nothing fixed. I mean, that is life of an academic, you can't squeeze it in nine to five, Monday to Friday.” (24)

“Taking grading to meets and swim meets and baseball games and stuff. I think the first few years here I took about two days off like for Christmas. I took one vacation with my family, so I worked a lot. I worked a lot. It wasn't a good life, but I just had so much stuff to do. Every day I would work some, except for a few holidays. . . . When my kids were growing up, my husband and I chose for me to take over the primary income and he worked at the school, but he was able to be home with the kids.” (11)

“I worked really hard to get here. I am very committed to this work, and this work makes me feel really good and so I am not one of those people, particularly, especially as a mother, parent, that feels that my kid is my number one priority and everything else should be second. So that's created some really interesting dynamics. I will say that before we had [name], we had a conversation and the conversation basically boiled down to: I was like, ‘I am fine having a child. One child. But you should know that I'm not going to be at every soccer game; I'm not going to. I think it's fundamental, I think it's incredibly important for children to see their parents as people and for her to recognize that I have this career and it's important to me. So I want us to just be very clear that I will be a shared parent, but I'm not going to be the only parent and also have a job.’ . . . So it's interesting to me because I feel these weird societal pressures around motherhood and career that I never thought I'd feel. Because I think women academics have an internal complex. . . . I haven't felt this, but my mother and other women that I know have kind of hinted at, ‘Oh, well, family before career.’ I'm like, ‘You can actually do them both.’” (25)

“We had childcare six days a week. . . . We used [daycare] five days a week and then we had a babysitter that came into our house too so that we had six full work days until tenure. That was our strategy. . . . We always arranged our teaching to not be at the same time and so whoever was not teaching was in charge of childcare or sick care I guess at that point. . . . [Long pause]. I think yes in a way that it makes it tricky to balance or juggle because there's a lot of demands to the work. The reason I paused is because you said ‘the caregiving that I want to do.’ I actually would prefer to not do the caregiving and actually be working more. That's how I've always felt. It's not that I want the job to make it easier to do the caregiving; I want it to be easier to not do the caregiving.” (33)

Participant 24 provides a nice summary of how academics tend to live in the life of the mind all the time, even when they are not technically working. For her, it is not that work is a priority; rather, it is that she finds it hard to turn of the thoughts of work. This sentiment was true for many of the participants in the study.

Participant 11, though, explains why she was always working; she and her husband decided he would do more of the caregiving, and she would be the breadwinner in their family. As such, career became far more important than individual accomplishment. She had an entre family to support and tenure to earn if she wanted to be able to support the family long-term. Participant 25 explains how she is dedicated to her career, and before she ever became a parent, there was a very clear conversation that her career was first, and her husband would have to be a very involved co-parent. While she has been pressured by coworkers and family members to put career second to family, she remains firmly committed to her career as her first priority. Similarly, Participant 33 and her spouse are both very committed to their academic careers, and they strategized how they would outsource caregiving responsibilities to maintain the level of work they preferred while raising a child and also trying to accomplish tenure. She was very

clear that this was not a sacrifice on her part; she wanted to clearly articulate that childcare was not sacrificed for the sake of work; rather, this was premeditated so that the childcare responsibilities would be reduced.

Interestingly, Participants 25 and 33, have both received comments about their focus on career over focus on their small children. Both have been pressured to feel guilty by colleagues and family, alike, about their dedication to career. In our interviews, they both expressed that sometimes it was a struggle to resist internalizing the comments about how they were missing out on their children. However, the mothers above, who make childcare work a priority are also chastised, but for not being focused enough on career or for making demands that affect the rest of the department. Mothers, whether primarily focused on career or care work are judged for their focus by their colleagues and families.

While the four participants above decidedly chose career over care work responsibilities, the four participants below highlight some of the care work sacrifices that are intentionally and unintentionally made to maintain a focus on career. Participants 20 and 50 explain how they sometimes sacrifice relationship maintenance or are unable to be fully present for family or partners because of their focus on career.

“For nine years, my husband worked in Illinois, and I did the commuting and drove home every weekend. Okay, I will say that my department said about that, ‘That’s fine.’ And they gave me the Tuesday-Thursday schedule. Not having a Monday morning meeting meant I could spend an extra night in my own bed, and I was perfectly willing to be available late Monday afternoon, but not have to come back Monday morning was a big deal. There was one time when I was on a departmental committee and the male head of the committee would not accommodate that. He would set the meeting for Monday morning. . . . And I explained this is really important to me, and it was clear that in his thinking, real professors lived in town with their wives, and didn’t ask for favors.” (20)

“Sometimes my husband feels that I don't even know he exists. And he's right. Sometimes I don't even know he exists or it's like, ‘What? You want me to talk to you? I've got things to think about.’ I am much more career driven than he is. So that becomes apparent at times. . . . I have two very sweet boys in my house, my husband and my dog, and I should appreciate how sweet they are. And I try to remember that I'm lucky to have these very sweet beings around me that just want me to give them a hug once in a while. So I try to remember to give them a hug.” (50)

Participant 20 explains how she had to give up on relationship maintenance and care work responsibilities during a period of time where an unsupportive colleague would not accommodate a request for meeting times. This could be a result of a situation where she made a fair request, and the faculty member really did have gendered perceptions of work, or it could be a situation where that faculty member resented always having to accommodate care work requests from colleagues. In either case, Participant 20 was forced, for the duration of that committee work, to sacrifice care work in order to fulfill career obligations.

Participant 50, on the other hand, notes the tendency to become wrapped up in the work, such that career takes an unintentional precedence over care work. She concludes this discussion by saying she needs to be more mindful of her “sweet boys,” so even though her relationship experiences disruptions because of career focus, she does try to minimize the interruptions.

Some relationships can persist through the challenges of the career, and some partners adjust more readily to their spouses' focus on career; however, many of the participants in this study explained that tensions from the career led to a divorce, which is consistent with the literature on care and career balance for women academics (Allen, 2005; Mason, 2013; Tracy, 2008). Participants 23 and 27 explain how their focus on career rather than relationship maintenance, over time, led to divorce from their spouses.

“And now I'm divorced, but my husband would always say, ‘You're always working. You're always working. Stop working.’ That kind of thing, you know? And I didn't even notice. I thought it was like, what are you talking about working all day? I just like, I got home from work and now I'm doing something on my computer before I go to bed. It's not a big deal, right? But he felt like I'm always working. Or at least my head was always engaged.” (23)

“Participant 27: Yeah, well, it cost me my marriage. Something always has a price. It has a price. I put that on the list of probably an expense. . . . I got married when I was 22, which was basically like when you're five. Seriously. I'm from Wyoming originally, and the transition of being from that part of the country and going to upstate New York for graduate school at Cornell, it's a major cultural shift. He didn't want to participate. He didn't go to graduate school. He could've, but he didn't want to. It's weird how it starts to divide your paths. You're still in a constant learning environment. He wasn't, which, it just drags. We didn't make a conscious effort to really focus on not letting that divide happen. Then coming here, it just was split down the middle. I am one to think of my career first. It's hard on people. I've spent a huge amount of time reflecting on it. I think people in my family even view me as cold, and maybe hard because I'm so focused on this and doing this well. It's down to all I have. No, I love what I do. I think if you're not in this mix and understand this job, you really won't have a chance to understand its demands” (27)

Unlike Participant 50 above, who makes an effort to disengage when career takes over care work, Participant 23's career focus disrupted her marriage. Her husband's perception of her behavior was that she was always working rather than being fully focused or committed to the relationship.

Participant 27 explains in more detail how her focus on career caused her to sacrifice her marriage. She jointly accepts the blame for her failed marriage when she explains that neither she

nor her husband made an effort to bridge the gap that was being caused by her focus on career. She describes her failed marriage as a price she paid, an expense, for thinking of her career first. She also mentions that her family views her as cold because of her focus. Women should be entitled to have meaningful relationships and careers simultaneously, but women often take the blame when they are focused on career and relationships fail.

Whether there is a lack of committed relational maintenance or a divorce, the four participants above explain how career can distract from a relationship and over time can deteriorate the relationship. The three participants below explain how career can also cause interruptions for parents, whereby care work sacrifices must be made in order to fulfill career responsibilities.

“Because I've read this everywhere, you just let stuff go. I just let so much go, I just don't care. I mean, it's not that important. So what if we don't have vegetables one night. The clothes don't get folded. Or the house is nasty.” (16)

“I remember once as a Department Head when I couldn't go to my son's tennis match when it was regionals or something, and it was one match. He called me as soon as it was over, and he made to the next round, so I could, you know, that wasn't the last opportunity. . . . I do remember one time getting stuck in Germany, you know the flight didn't go or something, and I got stuck an extra day and I was disgusted; I wanted to get home to my kids, but I can only think of a couple of situations like that. It was out of my control; the airplane didn't go and so I couldn't go. Yeah, but you know, you want to get home. It's always one of those when you're traveling especially you want to get home before your kids go to bed.” (37)

“My husband made the claim that I was never around for my youngest son. I had to fight to get my older son here. . . . I'm raising two boys for whom I am the chief caregiver. They're both here with me now. My older son wasn't. Believe me, in some ways, that was harder. It's still pretty tough that he's here now, but he did graduate from high school.

Now, we're figuring out what to do with him next. I'm the emotional compass for the entire family. So, everybody in my house is in therapy. We're doing art therapy right now for the 10 year old because it's been such a difficult time. Me choosing to come here actually kind of split the fabric in pretty significant ways. In some ways, it felt selfish, so it was hard. I've had to struggle with that. But I know for certain, it was the best thing I've ever done professionally, ever.” (10)

Participant 16 explains that certain facets of care work just fall by the wayside based on their level of importance when career interrupts care work. She specifically references care work that is often gendered, such as cleaning the house, doing the laundry, and cooking the meals. When career is demanding more time, these are small care work sacrifices that can be made, so as to maintain relationships with spouses and children. Participant 21 explained (referenced above) that she let go of a lot of these tasks and rather recommends that faculty outsource these responsibilities if possible.

Participant 37, though, explains how certain career responsibilities can cut into meaningful moments with children. She remembers one time when she had pressing career responsibilities and was forced to miss her son's tennis match. Fortunately, she was still able to communicate with him about the match, and also he made it far enough in the tournament that she was able to catch a later match; however, years later she still remembers that she missed this event for her son. She also discussed how conference travel cuts into time with children, and on return, you always want to see your children the same day before they go to bed. In a couple of situations, the most memorable being when she was in Germany, she was delayed at the airport and unable to see her child.

While Participant 37 explains how career can cause small interruptions of events or short time delays for care work, Participant 10 explains how the best career decision she ever made

has had and will continue to have long-term implications for her two children. In order to advance her career, she chose to move her family to another state, thereby splitting the fabric of her family environment. Her husband (now ex-husband) did not want to move to advance her career and her older son chose to stay behind with his father. In order to make the best decision for her career, she had to split her family down the middle, taking only her youngest son with her. She sacrificed her marriage in order to advance her career, but also damaged her relationship with her children who have really struggled with moving to a new environment. Even though her older son eventually moved to be with his mother and brother, there is relational damage that will take time to heal. As such, she is trying to help the family work through their relationship trauma with therapy, and she is also raising two children without a husband for support.

Whether career takes precedence over care work because of a conscious choice, unconscious imbalance, or because career responsibilities are interrupting the care work, burnout can occur. Burnout because of the negotiation between career and care is one of the primary reasons women faculty leave the academy and become “leaks in the pipeline” (Jackson, 2008). Participant 47 explains how burnout can occur for women who are academics:

“I think this job can make you a workaholic because you like it and it's never ending. There's always another paper. There's always another thesis. There's always another something to read, to do. Or something you could be reading or something you could look at. The fact that you perhaps have something and you're like no. I'm like oh I should do blah, blah, blah.” (47)

She illustrates that there is always work to do, and the tendency to always try to do one more thing because you are always thinking of the work can overpower the will to stop working or to enforce breaks.

The women who are committed to care work responsibilities first have self-imposed rules about family time and work time, but still might suffer from burnout because they have too many responsibilities (Jackson, 2008; Maranto & Griffin, 2011; McMurtrie, 2013). Those who focus on career first over care work usually want to work more, whether because of family roles or because they enjoy the work so much that they do not want to stop working, but they might still experience burnout because there is no separation from the work and that can detract from mental and physical health as well as career enjoyment (Flaherty, 2018a; Gooblar, 2018; Pain, 2010). Participants 26 and 29 provide examples of both scenarios, but also how they combat burnout and take time to recover:

“When my daughter was first born I was doing that and I was feeling really burned out because there's just never, well we were sleeping even less then too, but it just felt like I was never catching a break, and any time that she would be sleeping on the weekends I'd be trying to work and get stuff done, and then it was just not good. So I actually almost never work on the weekends now unless there's something coming up that has to get done, but that's pretty rare actually.” (26)

“So ever since grad school, I told myself that I love to learn, which is why I got into this. I'm kind of a dual personality. So I love creative things, and I'm really into music and the arts, but I also really enjoy learning and having stimulating conversations, and being with people who can go deeper with things. And so I really like academia, but in no way, shape, or form is this ever going to run my life. I've seen it get out of hand for a lot of people, and I don't want that for me. So I promised myself when I took this job that I was going to do it my way, and my way being doing what I need to just stay true to myself and what I value, which is family, friends, living, and seeing the world. And if at any point I feel like, ‘Oh, I haven't been out to dinner with my friends in a month because I've had these deadlines,’ then I'm not doing it my way. That's just not the way I want to be. I don't want to be burned out by this. I want to just enjoy, and keep that sort of passion for learning and doing things. And, of course, it's going to be challenging, and I'm not going

to love every aspect of the job, and I don't, but I don't want to dread coming to work or I just don't want this to be it. There's too much world to be stuck here at this desk all the time. . . . So the times where I feel like I'm just drowning in work, and I'm not getting much sleep, and it's deadline after deadline... you know, things are getting done, but I'm not happy, and I'm not putting my best effort into it. . . . That means that I need to get out, and meet people, and make friends, and do those sorts of things, so I do that. So I'll reach out to friends and I'll say, "Hey, what are you doing? It's Saturday, I'm not going to touch my work today. I'm just going to not do anything." I'll do that very, very often." (29)

Participant 26 reflects on how she was experiencing burnout even though she was committed to care work for her new daughter. Balancing care and career was pulling her in too many directions. She learned to recover from burnout by taking the weekends off and trying to rest and recharge for the week.

Participant 29, on the other hand, is a career first worker who loves the academic life in all of its facets. However, she still reflects on times when there are too many deadlines back to back, when she forgets about relationship maintenance with friends, or when she lets her work interrupt her self-care. At times when she is experiencing burnout, she has to separate herself from career for a period of time to recharge as well. Though Participant 26 and Participant 29 have different methods of combating burnout, they are both aware that burnout is a possibility and have a plan for dealing with the taxing nature of the career.

### **Shared Responsibility**

The third most referenced method of balance for female faculty members is through the sharing of responsibilities. For these women, balance is defined as sharing responsibilities with partners or spouses. The following three excerpts illustrate how female faculty members can find balance by sharing the weight of both care and career with their partners:

“A lot of it's negotiation with my partner, and literally keeping a good calendar. ‘I have a CLA meeting Tuesday, you have a faculty meeting Wednesday,’ and just juggling this. Sometimes one of us has to give, and I don't attend a meeting, or I have to skip something to make it work. Because you know, the kid has to be picked up. They frown upon you leaving your child. . . . Over the summer it's a real juggle because you're trying to find camps. . . . We have a family designation [on the calendar], so if it's something that she needs to know about. Like she didn't need to know about this . . . meeting because it doesn't affect our daycare. But, I have a dinner tonight for a departmental program, and she did need to know that because she's going to have to pick him up and take him to swimming. So, I plugged that one into the family calendar.” (8)

“So between my husband and I we have pretty strict schedules so we plan the week where one of us drops her off and the other one picks her up, and so I know what days I'm going to be on pickup and drop off, and so having just a schedule for me is really good... for all of us actually because then we know okay I'm going to be free this afternoon, I'm going to be free until six or not basically, then you can actually schedule things properly. So scheduling is really important.” (26)

“My only support is my husband so he has to donate a lot of his time. So he's tenured now, and so I guess the perception is that he is kind of in the safe zone, and he realized we would have to work on it, so I really pressure him into volunteering a lot of his time. And we have a seven year old son, who's high maintenance. Just because we spoil him. . . . And so yeah, he ends up spending a lot of time with our son, and doing a lot of childcare for me to have time to do my research and sometimes teaching related tasks.” (14)

For each of these three participants, they have a strategy with their partner for how they balance care and career responsibilities.

Participant 8 explains that balance for her is a combination of sharing a calendar with her partner and also sharing responsibilities, so they are open about career responsibilities that might interrupt care work, and they figure out how to share those responsibilities together on a daily

basis. Participant 26 has a very similar process, where she and her husband schedule out each week in advance to accommodate both care and career. Instead of sharing a calendar, they plan out a schedule that revolves around their daughter and career. Participant 14, though, is describing shared responsibilities that change depending on context. When she and her husband were both trying to earn tenure, their shared responsibilities looked differently, but now that her husband is in the “safe zone,” he spends more of his time on care work, and she spends more of her time on career.

Though it is important to note that sharing responsibilities is heavily dependent on the willingness of the spouse to share the workload. Participant 21 stresses the importance of having a spouse, particularly one who is willing to help with the care work responsibilities:

“And the other question you'll have to ask yourself [is] . . . whether and when to have children, and try to time that so as to be as least disruptive of your career. And part of that would depend on your partner, and how much he's willing to help out or able to help out depending on his job, and how much freedom he's got or not got. That's the other big thing for women I think is to try to figure that out because that probationary period is usually kind of your last gasp at fertility. . . . At the very time you've got all this intense pressure on you to perform so that you have enough of a record to get promoted, that's the best time, or the last best time to get pregnant. . . . If my husband hadn't been such an egalitarian soul, I never could have made it. That's the best damn decision I ever made was to marry him. He's just a very, very good husband, and pulling his weight all the time and taking me into consideration when making his own plans and decisions. You know there have been times when I was about ready to pack it in; it was just too stressful, everything. . . . And I don't know, he maybe sensed it or why it happened. But he just jumped right in and he said, ‘You know, why don't you just work on that project and I'll take her to all these [swim] meets.’ And that was a turning point. That made such a difference in my life that I was able to devote myself to research that summer, and yet our child was getting what she needed. . . . Who you pick for a husband is a real important decision. It really is. And if you got one that is on your side, and who considers you as

important, it can just make all the difference. And there's a real tendency to just to take over most of the home related work, and if you take it all on then you just might not have enough time left for a career. So you've got to be willing to delegate things. . . . And when you can delegate something to the husband, that's especially good because they're somebody you love and trust and you don't have any great problem with him taking over some of the childcare. So you have to be willing to let others jump in and help you out at different points in time and not feel like it's just your duty and you've got to do it all. And that's sometimes hard to let go of things. ” (21)

Participant 21 describes here the ups and downs of the career and how taxing it can be on the female body. Though some women wait until they have earned tenure, most women academics have babies while trying to earn tenure, because as Participant 21 says, this is the last “gasp at fertility.” She argues that the spouse is an important consideration, as some are unwilling to help with care work and some are unable to help with are work because of their own careers. She recommends having a spouse is both willing and able to help with the care work responsibilities. She describes how her husband was egalitarian and willing to do his share in the care work for their children, even at times taking on more than his share to keep her in the game when she wanted to “pack it in.”

The spouse is an important consideration, as the organizational structure of academia assumes that women academics will have a second person for support, especially if they have parental responsibilities, whether that person is a spouse, family, or a friendship network. To Participant 21’s point, being able to rely on another person to balance the care and career is essential to avoiding burnout. Participants 30 and 33 explain how the structure assumes the support system for women:

“First, regarding identity. I feel like being childless, at least in the early stages of the P&T process, has helped my progress towards tenure. I don’t believe I would be able to

spend as much time working outside of M-F, 8-5 if I had children at this point. Honestly, most of the women faculty I know in the early stages of tenure are childless, or have very strong support structures for child care (e.g. live-in parents).” (30)

“I think what my experience is more that the men in my department get like sort of pats on the back for being good fathers or whatever for doing things, that it's taken for granted for that the mother would do. It's not so much that I'm judged for what I do or don't do; it's that I don't get any credit for that but that the men will get credit for how they balance it. On top of that generally they mostly have wives that stay at home and so it's like they get, "Hey, you babysat today that's great." That's what annoys me more.” (33)

Participant 30's experience has dictated that women without support structures are still childless while trying to earn tenure because it takes more than a single person to raise a child while also trying to earn tenure.

Participant 33, then, explains the gendered component of the support system. While women are expected to do more care work than their male counterparts, women are judged more harshly in the academic environment for doing either too much or too little care work if they have children. Participant 33's male counterparts are socially rewarded for the care work they do perform, while she receives no social benefits for being a mother. She also mentions that the care work responsibilities for her male colleagues mostly fall to stay at home mothers rather than the academic himself.

The following three examples illustrate the stress placed on women academics that do not have the care work support that they need:

“We don't have any family that lives nearby. We don't have people that we feel like we can call upon for I guess help with family. Anything that has to happen with him we work out between each other. We've talked about this, how it would be amazingly nice if one of our parents lived close by, because they could come over on a Saturday afternoon,

hang out with their grandkid, while we could get some yard work done or something like that. Now it ends up if yard work needs to be done, we'd figure out how either incorporate him into that or keep him occupied so the other person can do that. It would be so nice to have more of a village. Our village is currently two people. It's really small.” (6)

“We're kind of expected to be on all the time. . . . Sometimes I can't go to evening stuff where it's just kind of assumed that you're always available. . . . I mean, it's things like taking visitors out to dinner. Meeting later in the day. Tonight is the qualifying exam. Someone has to proctor it from 6:00 to 9:00, and I said I can't do it. It's things like that. ” (7)

“I was coming here a single parent with a seven year old. I didn't want my only friends to be people that I also worked with because I would need childcare. I go to these conferences, and I didn't know how I would have coverage. In Westfield, I have friends that live in Indianapolis, and it's still about, I don't know, 30 minutes, but it's not an hour and 15 minutes, and they can come and spend the night with my seven year old or pick him up. I felt like I had a sense of community that I wouldn't have here. That community could extend beyond my workplace. Having that barrier, that distinction between the people that I work with and the people that I'm relying on intimately was important to me. Not because people wouldn't offer, but because I didn't want that level of vulnerability or dependency. I didn't want all that intertwined.” (10)

Participant 6 has a husband that is also an academic and is also striving to earn tenure. When they are both experiencing the demands of career responsibilities, they both need a support person to help them manage care and career. In this case, she mentions that they are geographically isolated away from family. Unfortunately, because of the hiring process in academia, a lot of professors who are on the tenure track experience this same geographic isolation.

Participant 7 explains how the lack of a support person results in the inability to perform certain career related tasks that result in resentment from colleagues (discussed above). Finally, participant 10 explains the vulnerability associated with not having a support person and how she had to think critically about a support structure for her child. She understood that she needed an external support structure for her care work because she did not want to risk the perception that she would need her colleagues to help her with her childcare. At the same time, she understood even before her relocation that as a single parent in academe that she would need probably multiple people to help her manage the balance between care and career. She made a conscious effort to separate her support community from her work community to ensure reliable childcare that would not reflect on her career or possibly compromise the care work.

### **Integration of Care and Career**

The fourth and final method of balance for the women faculty in this study was integration of care and career. This was the least referenced balancing strategy, and for the minority of participants who practice full integration, this method meant not trying to actually separate care and career, but combining both into their day to day functioning. The following three participants illustrate how integration of care and career works for their lives:

“Ashton: Did you ever work on your home list while you were at work or your work list while you were at home?

Participant 16: All the time. Yeah, you have to. You can't separate. That's one thing. . . . I'm surprised I didn't become a coffee drinker. I honestly don't know. I don't know because I just felt overwhelmed and run ragged the entire time. To me, it was survival. Basically survival. . . . I think as a researcher, you don't really, ever... I never quit working. Just because you're always observing. I'm always collecting data, in the sense. Even for my class, I'm always cutting out stuff wherever I am. You're always on and I don't know if that's just because of my field.” (16)

“So I'm an integrator of my personal life and work life, which I honestly think is one of the nice things about academia, if you can function that way. If I do need to get something done personally, then I can do that. I'll just, I don't know, work an extra hour on Saturday or something. But it does include the most important things. Typically, when I come in the morning, I make my list; it'll be mostly just research things unless I have something huge that I know I need to get done. If I need to cut my day short, 'cause I know I have zero food in my refrigerator, and I need to go to the grocery store, then I'll do that, and I'll just kind of jot down, ‘Keep an eye on the clock; you have to get out of here at this time for whatever reason.’” (29)

“I guess we're just really workaholics, so much so that we had these two children who when they were younger one day said to us, ‘We don't ever want to be [discipline specific professor].’ And both of us looked at each other and we said, ‘Why do you say that?’ And they both said, ‘Because you work all the time.’ And we had to tell them, I said, ‘We love our work. We work because we love it and we get so much satisfaction from it and may you be so lucky someday as to have a job you love and you want to go to work.’ . . . Not that it took away from anything they did. Lord knows we were always at their sports events and everything, but one of them made the comment. It used to be computers and all were so different from now that you'd get this massive output when you were analyzing your data. I mean, big sheets. And we would take that with us on vacations and sometimes we were working with this other couple and they'd go with us on a vacation and they'd have all this shit with them and the four of us would be... While the kids were out swimming or doing something we'd all be working and we're all working on a book together or something like that. And so they would see that and they thought that somebody had a gun to our head. That the reason we were doing that was because we just had to, because somebody else was making us do it, not because this was something we loved and we wanted to do.” (21)

Each of the women above practice integration of care and career, but all of them have different strategies for managing the integration.

Participant 16 explained that she had “do lists,” which governed her daily actions. The most important items on the “do list” were the ones she tackled that day. This is integration because pressing items on the home do list might be combined with pressing items on work list, and there was no prioritizing between work and home in the ordering of tasks. Similarly, Participant 29 labels herself as an integrator, and daily, she plans for the most important things that need to be accomplished on a list. While she does not have multiple lists, she admits that a trip to the grocery store is just as likely to be a priority on her list as lesson planning and research tasks.

Finally, Participant 21 and her husband are both academics, and she provided an example of how they integrated friendships into research projects and career tasks into family vacations. She explains that they love their kids and they love their research, and so they wanted to be doing both career and care all the time. Once their children explained their perception of the work, Participant 21 and her husband were able to explain to them that they love their jobs as much as they love their family, and they were not being pressured into their work.

### **Structure Enables and Constrains Care Work**

In summary, care work is both enabled and constrained by the academic institution, though the constraints are viewed more or less problematic depending on how optional the care is assumed to be. Of the five types of care, faculty experience more judgment from colleagues when it comes to pet care, self-care, and even childcare whereas colleagues are generally supportive of elderly care and emergencies. Faculty experience more guilt when it comes to self-care. Interestingly, no one in this study mentioned receiving judgment because of spousal care. These pressures stem from the idea of choices detracting from career rather than allowing faculty to be complete people who are enriched when they have both care and career. Care is enabled by

the structure when colleagues and departments are supportive of care work responsibilities and when women faculty acknowledge the burdens they place on their colleagues when asking for care work accommodations. Care is constrained when departments and specific colleagues are unsupportive, judgmental, and critical of different care work.

It is the position of the university and several legal policies that faculty should be enriched both in their care responsibilities and their work responsibilities. As such, several policies exist to help women engage in the types of care work mentioned above. Specifically, policies such as FMLA, PPL, and Tenure-Clock Extension all enable women faculty to perform care work and to still focus on career. These policies are designed to enable women to be better caretakers and professionals; however, these policies constrain care work and professional development when they are subjectively interpreted, frowned upon, and criticized. The university also provides on site daycare as a resource to faculty members to enable them to engage in childcare while also maintaining their career responsibilities. Childcare is constrained though by long waiting lists, expensive pricing, and in some cases hours of availability. Career is constrained when faculty must sacrifice time at work to make longer drives to other daycare facilities and when colleagues are overly critical of truncated face-time.

Because of both the demands of the academic career and the constraints of the organizational structure, women faculty must find strategies to balance career and care responsibilities. The participants in this study have four strategies for balance (e.g., care first, career first, shared responsibilities, and integration), each with their benefits and drawbacks. Some strategies are more likely to help faculty perform better care work but might result in resentment from colleagues. Other strategies might help faculty to focus more on their career, but

could result in burnout or added constraints for those faculty without support systems to help them with the balance.

## **CHAPTER 6: THE INFLUENCE OF FACULTY ON THE STRUCTURE**

In this chapter, I answer the final research question: (How) do female faculty members exert their agency to transform the organizational structure? The final component to explore when considering organizational structure is individual agency and how organizational members exert their agency to push against rules or to ensure they have access to resources (McPhee, Poole, & Iverson, 2014). The interviews gathered for this project confirmed that women faculty members do exert their agency, but not all of them. In the first part of this chapter, I discuss the four specific instances where female faculty were willing to exert agency. At the end of this section, I also discuss the price associated with agency.

### **Agency**

The faculty that do exert their agency explained four specific instances where they felt it was necessary to exert their agency: (a) protection of students, (b) advocacy for institutional change, (c) self-advocacy, and (d) promotion of other women in academe.

#### **Agency to Protect Students**

The first and most common reason female faculty felt they needed to exert their agency was the protection of students. The following three vignettes illustrate how female faculty members feel like they need to protect their students' voices, their anonymity, their rights as workers, and to keep them safe:

“I've found that I have to I guess watch what I say or watch what I do a little more. Because of our lab director – he sits right there [points through the wall because his office is next door] – overall, he's really helpful and he's really great. I don't think he realizes that he's not really my boss and that he's a colleague, and sometimes I really feel like he

treats me like a glorified grad student, because he never remembers how old I am. . . . Like no. This is not how this works. I've had to sometimes stand up a little more. I can't think of a concrete example at the moment. Stand up more than I would want to, to him about things, especially because I feel I'm the only one who's an advocate for our students, because they're all afraid to say anything to him whatsoever. But they'll say it all to me and that's fine. I have to pick and choose what of their battles I'm going to fight for them. . . . Sometimes when I do say things, he's like, 'Oh, no. The students don't think that.' I'm like, 'Hmmm. Okay.' I'm not great at it, but I'm trying to figure out how to, I guess, present their case without saying that they're complaining about it. Say things like, 'Wouldn't it be nice if we had this' or something like that. rather than, 'They hate the way it's done.' That's been something that's been a little difficult for me that I didn't realize that I would have to navigate something like that." (6)

"You know, I mean, I question authority. I'm all about breaking rules if they need to be broken. . . . I encouraged the grad students to unionize. I don't think the university was happy about that. There's always been talk of that. But, this time they look like they've actually gotten further along. I mean, I think that's a fantastic idea. I don't know if it's possible in this state, but I think it's a fantastic idea. I think even the movement to do it, that the graduate students can get some real benefits." (8)

"So I had a woman, female grad student, so we put on some blinds. But I went out of my way to find blinds that don't have a hole when you close. So these were kind of special, but I found them because I didn't want anybody to notice there's lights on at night and knowing that she might be there. Safety concern. And then of course, number one, I was not supposed to buy these blinds. Number two, I was not supposed to put them up myself. And I got yelled at, and I said, 'Okay, you can have the union workers come in, take them down, put them up again.' No, but we have to order them from somewhere else. I was like, 'Go order somewhere else, but I want the ones without the holes.' But they're like, 'Which account can we use?' I'm like, 'You use your own account; I'm absolutely not paying for any of this. If you want to do it, you do it right.' And then it kind of just went away. So is that breaking the rules? Yeah. So you kind of learn. Certain things you just

kind of... as the Chinese phrase goes, kill first and then report to the emperor, or something like that. (31)

Although she struggles with her unexpected role to protect her students' voices and anonymity, Participant 6 feels as though she must push back against her colleague and lab director when his policies for the lab negatively affect the students who work in the lab. The students feel safe communicating with her, and in turn, she feels as though it is her responsibility to voice their concerns. However, she feels like she has to be very careful with how she phrases her concerns and requests because she is already pushing against a power difference.

Participant 8, however, unabashedly supports the students by both vocally and publicly encouraging them to act on their own behalf even when she knows those actions will be unpopular in her department and across the university. She views unionizing as a right and a necessity to protect student worker interests, and she is not shy about taking credit for encouraging the student government in this regard. To her, the benefits the students could gain from unionizing outweigh the consequences she might face for encouraging them to act on their behalf and speaking out for their rights.

Finally, participant 31 felt that it was her duty to protect her female graduate student working in the lab late at night. She wanted to buy blinds for the lab windows so that no one would be able to discern there was a student working in the lab. She did not want anyone to know when someone was in the lab working or when they were done, and turning off the lights to leave. Because of this she requested blinds where light would not penetrate through the window, and when she was met with resistance because of purchasing rules and vendors, she purchased the blinds and hung them herself. She was verbally reprimanded and told to purchase the blinds the correct way, but ultimately, the business office dropped the issue. Many of the

faculty who exerted their agency only pushed back against the structure when they felt like they needed to protect the students under their care, but other faculty members resisted and protested what they considered larger institutional issues.

### **Advocacy for Institutional Change**

The majority of the resistance was minor, but in some cases, female faculty felt they had to push back against the structure because institutional change was necessary. The following three excerpts illustrate larger scale resistance to institutional policies:

“I was involved in some of the anti-racism protests, which, for me was very important. It was against the administration, and I'm a big free speech advocate. I was involved in some of the anti-racism stuff, and some of the diversity stuff, and I'm very involved with the LGBTQ center here on campus. I've never felt like I'm breaking the rules, but I do feel like I am sometimes involved in challenging the administration. There's always concern in the back of my head that there will be some kind of formal, or informal, retribution, that I won't have an opportunity or advancement, had I not engaged in these kinds of public activities. I mean, do I think it's happened? I'm not sure; I don't really think so. Do I think it could happen? Yeah, I think it could.” (8)

“But still, one of the first practices that we changed in the department, feminist rabble rouser that I am, the seminars would be 4:30 to 5:30 on Wednesday and daycare closes at five. And there was always in the back row these women, and we'd have to leave because we had to go get our kids, so we lobbied and lobbied and lobbied and lobbied and finally the department head said, ‘Okay, to get you guys out of my office, we'll change the seminar time.’ So now it's 3:30 to 4:30. Or sometime four to five. So that we weren't put in that situation where we couldn't go to the seminars.” (22)

“So I had a baby at the end of my first year, so you get an automatic extension of a year for tenure if you wanted that. So I put in for that so I have an extra year for tenure if I want to do that. But my startup account also has a timeline to it where I have to spend

that money, and I asked the department head do I get an extra year to spend my startup funds. He was like, 'Oh I haven't heard of that before. So no.' But it really bothered me because I thought it didn't seem fair partly because we had a short, just three years which in terms of hiring people and funding that's a really short amount of time. . . . Each assistant professor has an academic mentor in the department, so I talked to him – he's actually an [administrator] through College [name] so he kind of knows how things work – and he encouraged me to write a more formal letter to the department head saying that this policy needs to get changed and I got three other assistant professors to sign it who had also had babies. . . . So we signed this form and we sent it to the department head, and they actually sent it up to the provost and got that, it's still an unofficial rule now, but they said that now startup can get extended for an extra year if you have some reason for extending your tenure clock, too.” (26)

For Participant 8, diversity and safety for students on campus is an issue she thinks is important enough to go against the administrations. She admits that she is willing to risk potential retribution to stand against racism and to support diversity, specifically the LGBTQ population on campus.

Participant 22 was willing to question authority, but for more personal reasons. She and several other women in her department were not able to be present for department seminars, an event that was important for departmental visibility. After pressuring her chair and petitioning for a change in the time of the meetings, she and her colleagues were able to attend the seminars in addition to caring for their children in daycare. Similarly, Participant 26 felt that she needed to stand up to the administration when she had a baby and ran into administrative problems regarding her start up package. Although she is guaranteed an extension on her tenure clock for having a baby, she realized that her start up package also had a timeline, which was not automatically extended. With the encouragement of her mentor, she wrote a formal letter and had other professors sign the letter listing impacts about how the denial of an extension would hurt

their research. In the end, the policy was changed; however, it is unclear how that will translate across departments and colleges since the extension is still not formalized. An extension is possible, but faculty may only know about it through word of mouth, which can be problematic if department chairs and other administrators are uninformed about the informal policy and deny the request.

Additionally, in terms of pressing for institutional change, some female faculty wait until they are in positions of power to really exert their agency and change the institution for what they feel is a better environment for faculty, sometimes female faculty specifically. The following three excerpts were taken from interviews with department chairs who have made specific policy changes within their departments to correct the wrongs they experienced in the past and to create a better environment for their current faculty:

“You'll see that so much of my current life is shaped by the resentments of the past. So now, when my female faculty and when my male faculty have babies, it has been a cornerstone of my administrative policy that I'm going to get them the maximum time and I'm going to work with them and I will make sure that they have a semester off, and sometimes that means that I go in the classroom to cover for them. So there's another way that I'm not publishing. In fact, next semester, I'm going to be subbing in for one of my people who's pregnant right now, not because the rules say so, but just because I need her courses covered, and I managed to get one covered. I had enough money to pay to hire someone from the outside to cover one course, but then there was something over here so I'm going to do it, because it's really important to me that we create the kind of environment here that I want to belong to, that I'm proud of, and that I would've wanted to come up through. . . . But also, and again, I think this is conditioned by my experiences as a parent. In a department that I think could've been much better at it, I try to really think about their home life, when I'm doing scheduling. So even after they come back, the first semester back, I'm not going to give them the hell semester, right? I'm not like, ‘Well now you're paying me back.’ Right? I'm still a little bit gentle in terms of what I

would sign them up for. And I would say to my schedule deputy, ‘Adam just had a baby, right? Let's make sure that Adam, his first semester back doesn't have anything scheduled before nine’ because I want to think about them. Ultimately, I want them to be happy and I want them to want to stay and I want them to turn down other offers because they know that they're never going to get a work environment as supportive and good as this. So it's not just all-out altruistic. I'm thinking about creating a place... I don't always have a lot of money to throw at them, right? . . . There are other things that we can do to make people want to stay with us, and I'm trying to do all of those things.” (9)

“Well, when I got put in charge of the coffee hour. And it was every single week. That's another thing I changed, as well, we have rotating grad students that are present there to help. . . . I don't think it should fall on any one person, the way it did. I used to call it my coffee seminar. I had to do a certain amount of prep, and it was kitchen prep; it's in the lounge, even. It was really aggravating me. I protested big time. When I was chair, I changed it. That's the first thing I changed. I didn't think professors should be in charge of the coffee hour, period. We have an administrative professional who works with [department], the assistant to the director of the [specific] program. That's something she wanted to do. It gets her out of the office and she likes having coffee and talking to the students and working with them that way. The grad students go in and have coffee. The other thing I noticed when I was in charge of it [as a faculty member], is students, undergrads and grads, would like to have time without a professor there. It's a free way to talk without feeling intimidated. That was a huge argument for me. It was like, ‘no, we shouldn't even be in there. They need to be able to express themselves without feeling like someone's judging their [skill].’ In that sense. I thought that was a real good move.” (16)

“When my kids were little, the [committee], they said, ‘Oh let's meet on Saturday and read all the things,’ and I said, ‘I'm not meeting on Saturday with you because I have my kids, and I'm spending it.’ And so when I was head I did not tolerate stuff like this. Nothing took place on Saturday so you could be with your, with the people that you like. . . . You didn't have colloquiums in at six o'clock when you know that daycare closed at

six o'clock. So I really, I think there was a much more family oriented approach taken, and I think the university did this as well because now you know people have a kid, they get a year to their tenure clock right? So it wasn't just me realizing that's stupid. Also the university saying that this is not how we should operate. But when my kids were little, I did experience this sort of exclusion and you know, well my feeling was, well so what. But then you do it. But I did not let myself get trapped by people who really sort of have no recognition that your life is on a different schedule when you have little kids, and you know when I was head then a lot of people that had little kids, you just try to really avoid these things where you're making them choose between time with your kid and time at work." (38)

The three current and former department heads all made policy decisions in their own departments because of injustices they felt when they were faculty members coming up through the tenure process. Participant 9 makes policy decisions to right several wrongs she experienced as a young female faculty member who was not given leave or paid time off when she had her children: she makes sure her faculty, men or women, receive the maximum time of leave when they have a baby; she does not make them pay her back for this courtesy when they return by giving them a painful semester; and she tries to make sure all of her faculty, whether or not they have had a baby, are happy working for her and have a reason to stay in the department. She admits that this is not altruistic, that it is partially selfish to want to keep her staff from leaving, but these motivations are rooted in the experiences she had as a female faculty member trying to have children while also being committed to her work.

Participant 16, on the other hand, experienced a gendered service task as a faculty member, and she made sure to eliminate the coffee hour as a service requirement as well as gendered service requirements altogether. When she was a junior faculty member, the junior male faculty were tasked with research related service requirements while the junior female

faculty were given kitchen-related service tasks or service tasks specifically related to student organizations. When she became chair of her department, she streamlined service requirements so no longer would the men in her department only receive research-related service and the women only receive kitchen- or student-related service requirements. Also a factor in this decision was protecting the students and giving them a safe space to have coffee and practice their skills without the supervision of faculty.

Finally, participant 38 was unable to make any policy changes when she was a faculty member, though she did resist Saturday meetings and colloquia that were scheduled when she had to pick up her kids from daycare. She was not fully able to make institutional changes until she was chair of the department. At this point, she made sure policies were mindful of parents with small children and even those without children could protect their weekends to be with the people for which they liked to spend their weekends.

### **Self-Advocacy**

The next reason female faculty exert their agency is for self-advocacy. Many of the female faculty interviewed felt self-advocacy was not worth the potential backlash they might experience, that they just try to read the audience and do what is expected; however, there were still several instances of women pushing against negative perceptions of their work or their teaching, challenging interpretations of rules about their own tenure cases, advocating for a raise, and even resisting gendered roles and structures.

To start, Participants 25 and 45 have both had to advocate for the self, fighting against negative perceptions of their work/teaching:

“I’m trying to earn tenure doing research that takes a long time and so, you know? So I will say that I push against that. So when people say, ‘You should be more productive,’ I

say, 'Well, let me explain the type of research that I do and then you tell me what you think more productive looks like within this context.' Not because I want to be difficult, but because I want them to [understand] that research is not a universal, ubiquitous thing, right? It has nuances and some research takes time and all this stuff. I think it's important for them to recognize that.'" (25)

"There have been times with this class that I teach because not all students want to take the class. They can be very resistant. When it comes time for the end of the semester to complete the survey about the course and about the professor, there have been some very harsh comments made. There have been times that I thought, 'Why am I doing this? Why don't I just let somebody else teach it?' I developed it and created it. I've heard some students say, 'It would be better received if it were a white male teaching it, or even a white women teaching it.' Because I'm a person of color, they take issue with that. There have been times I have thought, 'Why not just let it go and get this monkey off my back' at times? No, it's my course; I developed it. I'm going to stay with it as long as I can.'" (45)

For Participant 25, she has to push against the notion that she is not working as hard or as much as her colleagues because she does qualitative work. Her colleagues that do quantitative work have a certain perception about how quickly and how much work can be accomplished in a certain amount of time, but the work she does takes significantly longer and the products are less frequent. She has had to be vocal about the differences in work production to maintain a positive image of her research program. Participant 45, on the other hand, has received backlash on her teaching evaluations for the course she teaches. The students are required to take it, and in many instances the students do not appreciate the content because it is being taught by a woman of color.

Participant 45 acknowledges that the easier path would be to give the class to a white male faculty member who would have better reception with the students, but out of principle, she

cannot just give up on the class when she was the one to develop it. She feels as though the course belongs to her, and so she has had to be very vocal about her course evaluation scores and how the students respond to her and the message of the course. For all of her annual reviews, she has had to include a lot of research about why her teaching evaluation scores should not negatively affect her case for tenure/promotion.

Next, participants 11 and 28 had to engage in self-advocacy specifically as it related to their tenure cases:

“I actually had to push my promotion. I told my head because he didn't want to put me up, that I was going to require, demand a vote. That scared him. . . . Well, tactically knowing, it'd be better to go up and say, you know, ‘She just got this grant,’ than to go up the next year. . . . I mean, it takes a while to have products out of that, but I thought, next year they might expect products that couldn't be developed that soon, so I thought, this is better timing. My department head said, ‘No, you're not ready.’ . . . I went and visited with everyone on the [department] committee with my box of stuff and said, ‘I'm not sure my department head understands what I've been doing, so I wanted to share with you.’ Rather than complaining, I decided to take a proactive stance, and I told my department head that I was going to demand a vote. It didn't get to that because the full professors that were on the committee came and said, ‘Yeah, we got to vote for her to go up.’ . . . Now one person was like, ‘How dare you?’ I thought this was just so outside of normal, and you don't know the vote, but I believe he was supportive. I think he was just shocked that I would do such a thing.” (11)

“The year all the votes were happening for me, the story had always been no news is good news. I pulled out the university policy and I knew both the [department's] policy and the university's policy pretty thoroughly at that point, because we'd been going through the revision kinds of things. I went to the chair of our [department] committee and I said, ‘The verb right there says the person *will* know the outcomes.’ ‘Oh, well that says maybe.’ I said, ‘No, the verb is *will*. There's no ‘might’ or ‘could’ there. The verb is a very definite *will* so stop the pussy footing around. Somebody needs to tell me what's

up.’ That has become more consistent. People now hear at all of the levels. I know some of that was a campus-wide change, as well. But it was like ‘oh, no, I will push if I have to push. We’ll go right down here’ . . . It wasn’t just the [department’s] policy; that was the university’s policy that said that so it was just like okay, we can have this argument if you want to.” (28)

When it was time for her to consider going up for tenure, Participant 11’s chair did not think she was ready, but she thought it was the best time to go for the vote in terms of timing on her research. Her case looked good after just receiving a grant to go up for tenure early, but might look weaker the following year because she would still have the grant, but would not yet have products to show from the grant. Her chair wanted her to wait until the “appropriate” (to him, based on tenure clock timeline) time to go up for tenure instead of going up early, and she essentially chose to be proactive, talking to everyone on the committee about the status of her work and when she should go up for tenure. Although one person on the committee was offended that she broke the chain of command, the rest of her committee was supportive of her case to go up for tenure one year early.

While Participant 28 did not have trouble convincing her chair she was ready for the tenure vote, she did feel like she had to advocate for herself in terms of making the process more transparent. Her interpretation of the policy was that candidates “*will*” be made aware of the status of their tenure case at every level. Her chair’s interpretation was different. After she pushed the issue of semantics, the chair conceded and gave her news at every level about her case. While this does not affect the vote, it certainly has an effect on the stress level and awareness of the candidate as they go through the year long process.

Third, participants 18 and 48 have both had to resist being taken advantage of on committees and for research teams, but in both cases, they also had to come up with strategies to resist being assigned gendered roles:

“You've got to be willing to be brave, and I don't know. I think some people find that difficult. . . . And one of my colleagues said, ‘Hey, I propose this juror constantly, and she never gets picked. I want you to ask why.’ So I said to the chair, ‘So-in-so wants to know why this artist hasn't been picked.’ He wanted to pick another one of his friends. So he got his phone out, he looked at it, and he said, ‘Oh, she's not qualified.’ And I went, ‘Really?’ And he said, ‘Yeah, really. So that's the end of that.’ And I said, ‘I don't know how you can say that, because this woman...,’ and he said, ‘I don't want to hear one more word from you.’ And I said, ‘Are you really telling me that I'm not allowed to talk?’ And he was like, ‘Shut up, zip it, and if you don't like it, you can go and complain upstairs.’ And I went, ‘Oh, okay. I will.’ And I did. It was unbelievable how rude and un-accepting he was for any interference from somebody else, and he was tenured and I was not tenured. Well also I'm fearless when it comes to that kind of thing. I'm sorry, I'm a feminist. I'm not going to take that shit. Especially when I was representing someone else. . . . And the interesting thing was two other women came to me afterwards and said, ‘We're appalled at the way he talked to you. We're appalled the way he treated.’ So I think the individual wasn't asked, but I felt confident enough that I could say, ‘Yeah, I'm not standing for that.’ . . . By the way, at that point, the head of the department was male, and the chair of the department was male. So even though the guy was an ass, I did not feel at all like I was being suppressed as a woman except by this one jerk.” (18)

“And you're going to get the faculty that says, hey, you want to collaborate, and you have to do the whole work. But you're not the PI. I mean, you're going to get senior faculty that you feel obligated to participate because you're a junior. And you don't know what's up, to be honest, and you probably have to say no. So I've had to say no to a few things. . . . But, I don't think they get mad. The thing that's in the junior faculty's mind is these are the people who hired you. So you feel obligated that you have to collaborate. The ideal situation, like this university and this college, people call you. And you'd probably have

to say no, actually. I can't. But you don't say no until you get the grants. . . . If you're a woman, for instance, if you are a woman faculty, and this has happened to me, the PT or the senior faculty say, would you mind organizing the meeting? Well, I'm not your secretary. So I do it once; I don't do it any more. There's things that because you're a woman, you're given, which is unfair. But I try to see the positive side, okay, I know this guy already and I know he's going to ask me so I'm going to have a new strategy for next time. So I don't feel obligated to follow the roles that he wants to give me. I give him a chance. If he wants to give me a role and then next time, I don't take it. Does that make sense? There is this perception that women don't speak up and many don't. But I think I tend to speak up. So I don't think I follow that role. It's in the back of my mind, should I or should I not say it? I'm like, who cares, I'm going to say it. So there are preconceived roles that women tend to fall into because men tend to act stronger. Their characters are stronger. It's something you have to keep in mind all the time. But I've always had to do that so it's not a big hassle. I come from a country, probably my nationality, my influence, where men are dominating . . . so I'm used to dealing with that. Like, no, I'm not going to let you do that.” (48)

Participant 18, during her time serving on one committee, experienced a committee chair that thought he could silence the women on the committee because they were women and ensure that only his own friends would receive invitations from the committee. He dismissed the other candidates because they were women, recommended by women, as being unqualified. Finally, participant 18 stood up to him, and when pushed, he tried to silence her. Although she admits she has never felt silenced as a woman in the academy in any other instance, she was appalled at this situation and complained to her chair, who allowed her to leave the committee and made a note about the behavior of her male colleague. Sadly, she was the only person to stand up to this colleague for his dismissal of women, and does not know how the committee operated once she was assigned to a new committee.

Participant 48 also experiences being assigned gendered roles but in potential research collaborations rather than in committee work. Additionally, she experiences being assigned more work with less prestige on collaborations because of the pressure she feels as a junior faculty member not being able to say no to senior faculty. The first part of her passage discusses the pressures junior faculty feel to say yes to everything asked of them by senior faculty, even if it is an unreasonable request. She admits that once a junior faculty member has their own grants, they are more “allowed” to say no to those requests, but not before. To combat this situation, she was really competitive in applying for grants from her first day on campus to avoid being locked into a situation where she had to do work for someone else. The second part of her passage discusses being in a male-dominated field and how she handles being relegated to women’s work, like organizing meetings rather than actual research roles. She admits that she is not afraid to say no and is diligent about giving everyone a chance to treat her fairly, and if they treat her unfairly, she develops a strategy for dealing with them before they ask again. She wants to appear collegial, but because of her background in a male-dominated culture, she is not willing to let men take advantage of her because they perceive her as being weaker.

Finally, participant 16 had to advocate for equity in her pay because when she was hired, non-white faculty, especially women were offered a decreased salary:

“Beginning in 2014 (feeling empowered perhaps as full prof), I presented my case – for the first time – to several powers that be (head, former head, dean) to receive equal pay. I had done a lot of research and composed what I felt was a well-argued assessment and later heard that my case had been taken to the provost level. I now enjoy more pay than my equals! I can’t know what went on behind closed doors, but I made a case for the loss of equity over time, with respect to benefits too. As an aside, one comment I read over and over in women’s literature for professionals is that we don’t ask for raises. We assume we are being valued automatically. Not so, I learned. And also, timing is of

essence. So maybe that I took action at the time of promotion might have worked in my favor.” (16)

Participant 16 examined the literature about pay scales and equity over time and made a strong case at several levels in the university to bring her pay up to the level it should have been, in comparison with her colleagues. Though she does not know the specifics of the pay increase, she was awarded a significant raise based on other starting salaries at the time of her hire and her merit over the course of time.

### **Advocacy to Promote Women in Academe**

The fourth and final reason women in the academy exert their agency to push against organizational structure is to help other women succeed, whether those women are students, colleagues, or strangers.

“So I been on a mission for the past few years and I got enough support for one woman. It's never unanimous for these women, but I got enough support for her to get out of the department and she got promoted and damned if she didn't get cancer and die the next year. Not her fault, but here I thought I was getting a colleague that was going to work with me and she did. I swear right until almost the week before she died that woman was working to get this other woman promoted, which did happen. She didn't live to see it, but it did happen, so she and I together had this other woman promoted. Now, that woman and I are working to get another woman promoted this year. But often it's a struggle. So I would say I probably don't have a lot of credibility among the guys because of people I've supported, who they didn't think was ready or whatever. But that it's just the way it is. You know I'm such a senior person, I've been here forever okay, and nobody could do anything to me except hate me and they did. I don't care; I don't like them either, so that's why I told you I don't like that many people and they don't like me either I'm sure but so what. I've got my objectives while I'm here. . . . So she and I are in

cahoots to get this third woman promoted. And we are, we're working behind the scenes to get support if we can get enough support.” (21)

“So I have a discretionary account that I use for things that I need, like my printer. Also, I use it to support other women so one of the [sub-discipline] faculty, in another department, wants to move from associate to full and she needs some international travel. I said, ‘You get yourself invited; I’ll support that travel.’ I supported a female graduate student to go to a meeting. I use the money to take women in science, undergraduates, up to a conference in Chicago. I use that money for a lot of different reasons, particularly to support women because in part I got it because of the work I do for women, and so it was that salary savings that’s coming to me and I figured that’s an appropriate use. If I go to DC to work at AAAS [American Association for the Advancement of Science] and NSF, and when I’m doing it for my own benefit, I can use that money to travel. If I need books I can use that money for that. So it’s come in very handy.” (22)

“I also have a specific rule that I will tell you but I have not actually said this out loud to anybody. If it’s a good female student, I will say yes [to research support] no matter what . . . because I want to encourage women to go on and do research. There’s not a lot of options for people for them to work with that they might feel comfortable with. They have to come and express to me that they’re interested in research, and so then I’m happy to structure it however is good for their life. If they want credits I’m happy to give credits; if they want to be paid I’m happy to pay them. I generally don’t do credits and pay at the same time. I just let the students tell me what they want to do.” (33)

In the most extreme case, participant 21 works in a male-dominated field where women are seen as “other.” Her department committee is dominated by men, who do not value the female faculty members’ research programs. Participant 21 came up in this department playing the “man’s game,” only doing the research they appreciated and only publishing in the outlets they thought were valuable. As a full professor, she has looked back over her career and the discipline, and

she acknowledges that her department has not changed with the times as her entire discipline has. Many of the publications her department does not appreciate are highly respected in the discipline as a whole. Because of this, she has an agenda that she has been actively working toward for several years, which is to hire and promote as many women as possible so they might change the tone of the overall department and the department committee.

In less extreme cases, Participants 22 and 33 generally try to support other women in their disciplines, whether that is to encourage their research or give them support for what they need for a stronger promotion case. Participant 22 supports other women in science, both students and colleagues, as well as colleagues in other science disciplines, with money from a discretionary fund that she could just use for her own equipment and travel. Since she is able to make all of the executive decisions for those funds, she has decided that one appropriate use for the money is to help advance women in science. Participant 33 tries to encourage her young female students to be engaged in research, and so when they ask her to participate on her projects, she always says yes if it is a good female student, even if it means she has more students than she planned to have on one project. She also accommodates their schedules and their needs to fit them into her research program. While it is important to understand the specific scenarios in which female faculty feel as though exerting their agency is important, we must simultaneously acknowledge that agency can be, and sometimes is, expensive.

### **Agency is Expensive**

Because retaliation and social retribution are both still commonplace in the academic workplace, there is a cost associated with agency in terms of consequences for those who choose to exert it (June, 2018; The Awakening, 2018). Agentic actions push against the structure, which others want to preserve. This tension creates a loop, wherein social retribution and the subjective

interpretation can be used as punishment to silence agency or worse to delay/deny tenure and promotion (June, 2018; The Awakening, 2018). Below, I have highlighted one example of agency from each of the categories above to provide an illustration of how faculty pay for their agency when they resist the structure.

First, Participant 11 sought to protect students in the university discussions immediately following 9/11 and was silenced and then formally reprimanded:

“I was on the [committee name] . . . and we had a meeting Friday after the 9/11 bombing. There was a whole lot of talk about protecting our students, and our students are all upset by this, and blah, blah, blah. I said in that meeting, ‘We’ve got to remember we have a lot of international students here.’ A lot of the boys in my class were flying American flags in the back of their trucks. The [University] Ag has this big banquet, and they were going to make it all rah, rah, America this, America that. I said, ‘We serve a larger population.’ I got an email from our Dean, but I have not read through the whole thing to this day, slamming me for saying that, slamming me [almost starts crying]. . . . ‘I’ve been hearing stories about you, and what you said today is inappropriate and our forefathers fought...’ That wasn’t my point and I quit reading it. I was associate at that time so I didn’t feel I could ... I don’t know if I would have had I been full, said something to him. I just sent back an email and said thank you. I still don’t forgive him to this day [still almost crying]. I did think when he was going up to the provost office, or wherever he went, of saying something; I thought, ‘They won’t get it.’ They wouldn’t. I said it verbally in the meeting and nobody backed me up. . . . I just said, ‘We need to remember we serve a lot of students.’” (11)

Participant 11 only sought to remind her colleagues not to get worked up so much in nationalism that they then alienated an important part of the student body. Although this interview was conducted more than a decade after the events of 9/11, Participant 11 still feels as though she was unable to protect students that afternoon and was silenced in an unethical way. This is one of those serious moments in a career that can make faculty change their whole perspective of

colleagues, and this moment is still very emotional for her. For years, this moment has impacted her views of when she is allowed to speak and when she will risk speaking.

Second, Participant 1 spent her career working toward both departmental and institutional change, and as a result has experienced a delayed tenure vote, more doubt and resulting work to prove she was worthy of a promotion to full professor, social backlash, and incivility from her department chair and colleagues.

“I think it was foolhardiness. I paid for it, trust me, I paid big time for being outspoken through my whole career. I've been trying to run out of University Hall for probably the last 15 years. I would say my greatest successes have occurred outside of the [department]. Inside the [department] I paid for being bold in every way you can imagine, from getting a delayed tenure vote to being ... As a result, having to do way more to get the second promotion than any of my male colleagues and most of my female colleagues to open public humiliation by my department head, just yelling in faculty meetings. And so why do I keep doing it? Now, I'm an angry woman and I'm not going to stop. I paid the price and what I find ... Kind of a mixed legacy, I want to believe that now that I'm in kind of the sunset of my career that I made a difference being here, so you have to take your lumps ... If you're going to try to change something, you've got to be willing to take some lumps because change hurts and change doesn't come easy.” (1)

Every time Participant 1 was vocal about an issue, she paid for it in social repercussions and delays in her promotions. She also had to work harder than many of her colleagues to get promoted both times. She warns that if you want to make real sustainable change, you have to be ready to take your lumps and deal with the backlash and repercussions that stem from the change.

Third, Participant 27 engaged in self-advocacy, pushing against timelines that dictate when assistant professors should go for associate, and as a result, she has experienced the loss of friendships and social backlash.

“Participant 27: I had a primary teaching appointment, which is a suicide mission, turns out, when teaching is not valued as much as research; it's a hard sell. . . . I had three strikes against me when I tried to, when I went up for promotion. I went up on primary teaching, I was already doing high-risk international work, and I went up early. I was getting divorced at the same time, so it was either burn it all down or just string it out over two years. I thought, "Let's just burn it all down. Let's take that risk." It was salty. There were people that don't like that a junior or assistant professor was doing work in a high-risk country, that I was supposed to stay home and do my job. That language was kicked around. I'm like, ‘What is my job, by the way? What do you do for me, besides I teach all your classes?’ Then pushing to go up early. The reason I did that was actually the department head who hired me wanted it that way. Then the new one didn't. I said, ‘I don't care what you want anymore.’ I had a plan and I'm not deviating. I worked too hard to deviate from that plan. Cost me some.

Ashton: What did it cost you?

Participant 27: Well, the promotion process is the department votes, the college votes, the university votes. At the department level, you have to have over 50%. I had a 50/50 split and the department head made me choose.

Ashton: Made you choose?

Participant 27: Do you want to wait, keep your friends? Do you want to push it and see what happens?

Ashton: You pushed it?

Participant 27: Yeah, social repercussions. Right. ‘Wait one more year, when it's your time.’ I'm sure you know this university has plenty of data that say women go up with a promotion later than men. Language like that. Knowing that and then talking with mentors outside of this department: ‘It's all there. They're just being dicks. Give it a shot.’ Yeah, it was expensive. Yeah. I made it. Well, I paid for it. I bought it. No, absolutely. My understanding, not a single question from the college. . . . This is, again, probably part of the toxic water at this place is that we all get burned in some weird way or some event, and then you just kind of go, ‘It's them, not me.’ I think I did partition it that way a little bit, but it was green lighted by others outside of this tough dynamic here that we don't dwell. Don't dwell on this. Those people are leaving and there's really not that much

they can do to you. Yeah, they could slow down promotion to the next rank, but that's four to five years out.” (27)

As a result of pushing her promotion, something she was advised to do by her hiring department chair, Participant 27 lost the respect and friendship of several of her colleagues. Because they did not like her research and did not like that she was going up for promotion out of turn, she has experienced social backlash from many of her colleagues.

Finally, Participant 44 works in a department that still has a boy's club culture. For now, the men in her department view her as one of the guys because she does not have a family and her research is viewed as masculine. She actively tries to promote the other women in her department – both students and faculty - especially when her male colleagues are discussing women (sometimes specific women) negatively, but she struggles with contradicting them openly for fear of backlash or being labeled negatively herself:

“Ashton: Do you feel like you can speak back?

Participant 44: With the really seniors ... that's the issue. Without tenure, I don't feel comfortable doing it. I think it will get to the point where I will, because it does make me really uncomfortable and it's clearly not okay. Because I don't think that they understand that when they talk that way about women around me to me, I'm like how do you not see me like this, right? If you're not ... it really feels like the switch could flip all of a sudden if I fall below some bar: ‘Oh she's terrible now.’ That's what it feels like, and I don't think they realize that. So, we do have an ombudsman in the department, and so I know my students who had issues have gone to talk to her. I don't know if anything has come of that.”

In this passage, it is clear that Participant 44 is advocating for other women. She has referred some of her students, who have experienced the bias, to the department ombudsperson, and she discusses her female students and colleagues positively; however, she has not yet openly spoken

against or contradicted the negative discussions. She admits that there is a breaking point where she will speak back to more openly advocate for other women.

### **Agency Transforms Structure**

In summary, women in the academy choose to resist structures and exert their agency in four specific ways: protection of students, institutional change, self-advocacy, and promotion of other women. Agency and resistance are key to transforming and (re)producing the structure (McPhee et al., 2014). While agency is not always met with repercussions, these moments have the possibility to result in social repercussions, incivility, denial or delay of tenure and/or promotion to full professor.

## CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

This project began in 2010 the first time I read the 2008 special issue of *Women's Studies in Communication* entitled "Conversations and Commentary on Redefining the Professor(iate): Valuing Commitments to Care and Career in Academe." As a masters student who was applying to Ph.D. programs, I was struck with the challenges I would face, as the authors critically analyzed the multiple and competing roles women academics experience and the negative impacts on career. Structural barriers are often cited for their impact on a woman's career, but I wanted to study structural barriers for women academics holistically rather than in isolation.

Previous work on academe has documented the following: research structural barriers (e.g., Brock, 2018; Donovan, 2011; Fine & Shen, 2018; Jaschik, 2015; *The Awakening*, 2018), teaching structural barriers (e.g., Falkoff, 2018, Flaherty, 2018b; Lazos, 2012; Lilienfeld, 2016; Mengel et al., 2018; Ray, 2018), service and/or mentorship barriers (e.g., Allen, 1995; Brown, 2016; June, 2018; Niemann, 2012; Varallo, 2008), and structural barriers related to care work (e.g., Beddoes & Pawley, 2013; Gilbert, 2008; Manning, 2008; Schimpf et al., 2013; Townsley & Broadfoot, 2008). These obstacles are exacerbated for women faculty of color (Brown, 2016; Gutiérrez y Muhs et al., 2012). However, while acknowledging that each component of measuring a career is intertwined with the rest, previous work has reported on research, teaching, service, and mentorship in isolation from one another due, in part, to the nature of page lengths in academic publishing and also because of the complexities of the issues. to the nature of page lengths in academic publishing. Yet, organizational communication scholars understand the importance of examining the organization holistically as both organizing practices and interactions are important in discovering the enactment of and resistance to structural barriers (e.g., Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004; Kirby & Buzzanell, 2014; Kirby & Krone, 2002; Kuhn, 2012;

Wieland, 2011). Examining these issues in a dissertation provides a unique opportunity to comment more holistically on the academic career and structural barriers in the academy. As such, this study makes several theoretical and pragmatic contributions to organizational communication scholarship.

### **Theoretical and Pragmatic Contributions**

Three theoretical contributions are noteworthy: structurational analysis, intersectionality in communicative processes, and career and care work responsibilities. Given that this work is grounded in praxis, I discuss pragmatic contributions within each theoretical discussion.

#### **Structurational Analysis**

First, this study contributes to our theoretical understanding of structurational analysis. Because it stresses multiple levels of analysis, the use of structurational theory in this project provides a more holistic picture of the academic institution. Since only one university was used in this study, the collective experiences of the 49 participants (from all ranks and the majority of colleges) paints a more complete picture of how formal policies at the macro level and rules (both written and verbal) enable and constrain tenure, promotion, and care work.

First, understanding how macro level policies continuously influence human interaction and linguistic choices in everyday interactions at the micro level provides insight into the institutional logics that determine distinctive cultural processes while simultaneously lessening opportunities for change. The study uncovers the role of ambiguity and concreteness in the delivery of formal policies and rules. In academia, ambiguity is supposed to support diversity in research and knowledge acquisition, but it actually excludes some intersectional identities. Ambiguity in formal policy can be positive for the faculty member, allowing for the breadth of

interest and experience in a faculty member's case for tenure. Ambiguity in formal policy at the macro acknowledges that colleges, departments, disciplines, and even sub-disciplines have different markers of quality, standards of practice, and expectations for time. In short, ambiguity in formal policy allows faculty members to be different while still maintaining "excellence." The data also show that ambiguity at the micro level, regarding expectations, constrains tenure and promotion. When faculty do not have rules (written) or even suggestions (verbal advice) to follow, it is more difficult to identify benchmarks on the tenure track.

Additionally, macro level policies and micro level interactions influence each other simultaneously. Macro level policies encourage colleges and departments to weigh in on the measures for "quality," "national/international visibility," and "impact," vague linguistic choices that contribute to institutional logics. When departments and colleges come together to communicate about standards, they set up rules, therefore influencing the structure. When rules at the micro level result in more formal written policies, meant to accompany the formal macro policy, the rules are more firmly embedded within the structure and therefore harder to change. Incremental change is possible as the institution is (re)created in new directions, but institutional logics of "academic excellence" persist. These logics are not necessarily bad but they do perpetuate systems of quality (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012) and inequality (Acker, 2006) for particular groups, namely women, especially women of color. When rules are not formally written down, but only ever verbally discussed, they invite edits and even resistance due to their impermanence. This study provides evidence that policies change and adapt over time, as actors and external organizations move with, through, and against structures (McPhee et al., 2014).

Next, the holistic view of this study and the use of structuration theory highlights resources that faculty use for both career development and also care work. Resources are

provided where there is a need for support. In most cases, resources at this institution are inherently designed to enable tenure and promotion, as they help faculty complete tasks associated with research, teaching, service, and extension. Resources are also designed to help faculty with care work, especially care work that might influence career (e.g., leave policies, clock extension policies, and onsite day care). There are even resources associated with helping faculty balance care and career responsibilities (e.g., NCFDD). However, the study uncovered two major issues in the dissemination of resources: (a) they must be known to be utilized, and (b) unequal distribution.

To the first issue, universities provide so many resources to help faculty that it is impossible for a single faculty member to know about all of them. Also, dissemination of information about resources is provided to faculty when they are brand new to the university and still trying to navigate the new environment. Bombardment of information makes it difficult to retain information about resources that are most likely not yet relevant to a new faculty member's care, career, or both. Once that information is needed, the flow of communication about resources has essentially ceased, making individual faculty responsible for searching out information about resources on their own. While some faculty are adept at finding resources, others can be overburdened with their career and care related tasks, such that they do not think to check for resources.

To the second issue, the disjointedness between the macro structure and the micro structure make it possible for departments to restrict the utilization of resources through social retribution in the micro structure (e.g., birth semester leave, clock extensions). Unclear guidelines for how to evaluate the time associated with certain resources in the dossier also leave faculty members questioning their usefulness. While the macro policy dictates that these

resources are available in certain situations, it does not specify the weight and specifics associated with evaluation after the resource has been utilized. Within the micro structure then, human communication and interaction dictate the ways in which these policies can be restricted despite the formal policy in the macro structure.

Finally, the complete view of the structure illustrates that resistance and agency are possible and in play in strategic ways. Faculty push back against the micro structure routinely to protect students and to engage in self-advocacy. Some faculty openly resist policies they find to be unfair in hopes of influencing the micro or macro structure and leading institutional change, and some faculty wait until they are in positions of power to enact change. While the changes seen in this study are small, barely influencing the micro structure's rules and resources, macro changes do happen over time. In addition to structuration theory, feminist intersectional theory is also used to understand how organizational members' identities are implicated in the structure leading to success or failure in tenure/promotion.

### **Intersectional Analysis of Structure**

Second, the study takes a feminist intersectional lens to the communicative processes reverberating between the macro and micro structures. It is this feminist lens that allows us to explore the structure for gendered policies or gendered communication leading to the imbalance of rules and resources. A critical examination of gender highlights where rules associated with research, teaching, service, extension, and mentorship might create barriers for women (of color). The study uncovered several structural barriers for career success: (a) department committees and respected journals, might question the quality or even not value certain types of research that are more often performed by women and persons of color; (b) course evaluation scores might include gender or race biases that are not considered with course evaluations carry a

lot of weight; (c) the distribution of service might still be gendered in assignment and also quality of performance; and (d) future mentorship policies might not be able to equally distribute mentoring practices and could place burdens on women (of color) as they receive higher demands for mentoring.

Yet, Intersectional analysis illuminates the communicative and linguistic processes that mutually reinforce and create contradictory possibilities. Ashcraft and Trethewey (2004) claim that tension is “the basic character of organizational life” (p. 171). They assert that we need to build a venue where we can encourage “efforts to live with, not simply to eradicate organizational tension” (p. 172). They discuss an organizational irrationality that insists, “members must find ways of living more or less comfortably with contradiction, irony, and paradox” (p. 172). For better or worse, the 49 women in this study are living “more or less comfortably” with tension and contradiction. Some of the women in the study find ways to exist within the status quo while others resist (e.g., changing her research to cater to senior faculty’s interests and expectations versus teaching a class she developed even though students ask for a white male professor). Some women hold onto memorable moments, good or bad, for the entirety of their careers to help them succeed (e.g., being forced out of her lab and off research teams because she is a woman, being told that she should not contradict the administration when she is trying to protect students) while others seek leadership positions, such that they are able to make changes (e.g., personal sacrifice to career to make sure her faculty can have maternity leave and comfortable schedules and removing gendered service requirements relegating women faculty to kitchen assignments). In all of these moments, women faculty communicate within the contradiction.

The macro formal policies linguistically explain situations where all faculty members can succeed, but micro level interactions create contradictory and tensional situations where women (of colors)'s experiences are not always valued. While comfort with tension might seem counter-intuitive to change, intersectional analysis combined with acknowledgement of tension provides women (of color) with cracks in the structure where they must stand their ground. Transformation of structure is only achieved through resistance and (re)production as it is allowed by the structure (McPhee et al., 2014). Most changes to structure are gradual, but changes can also be drastic depending on the size of the crack in the structure and the volume of the voices involved in the resistance (Poole and MCPhee, 2005). Looking at the structure with an intersectional lens calls upon identity as a collection of rules and resources as well, as every human agent in the structure can draw on their own experiences and knowledge (their resources) as well as their norms and routines for care and career (their personal rules; Poole and MCPhee, 2005). In the tensional organization, where structure impedes progress, women (of color) can and should view identity and agency as resources whereby they might resist the contradictions. Balancing care and career responsibilities is one such contradiction.

### **Care and Career**

In this project, I have advocated for the use of care and career as terms to discuss balance rather than work/life issues (Townsend & Broadfoot, 2008). All of the women in this study engage in both care and career work, and though they do not perform care and career work simultaneously, both weigh heavily on organizational structure. Since the individual (as a collection of rules and resources) is the first level of analysis in structuration theory (Poole and MCPhee, 2005), the organizational structure, therefore depends on the balance of care and career. Using structuration theory and feminist intersectional theory to examine care work and career

highlights where care work policies still disadvantage women. Providing clock extensions to adoptive parents and male faculty has helped to reduce the push back that women experienced when clock extension policies were first introduced; yet extending these policies to everyone disadvantages women who give birth to their child. Because of the physical, psychological, and emotional changes women experience when they are pregnant, give birth, breastfeed, and heal, adoptive parents and fathers inherently experience the addition of a child differently from childbearing mothers. Where fathers are able to utilize the same resources and extensions, the comparison of dossiers is still gendered male. This study supports Buzzanell's (1994; in press) assertion that organizations, including universities, are patriarchal systems, providing male workers privilege at the expense of their female colleagues.

Additionally, separating care and career more distinctly highlights how the structure prevents or hinders balance and flexibility over time. Townsley and Broadfoot (2008) argue, "Job autonomy and . . . short-term flexibility obfuscates the long-term inflexibility of academia" (p. 135) for women who are dedicated to both their career and care work responsibilities. The data show that women faculty must find their own balance, which never equates to a 50/50 split between care and career. Often, women must choose to privilege care over career, career over care, share responsibility with a partner, and/or make sacrifices.

Flexibility is interlaced with the rhetoric of choice. The data illustrate that the institution promotes work/life balance with resources, as if this elusive balance is achievable for all organizational members. If one cannot achieve balance, it is their fault because of their choices. The rhetoric of choice is used to hide the elusiveness of actual balance and flexibility. The idea that we make choices about our own balance and flexibility hides structural constraints and excuses the institution for barriers to tenure. The rhetoric associated with flexibility and choice

places the responsibility on the individual, even when the structure constrains individual success. Slaughter (2012) explains that these decisions are viewed as choices, which can be labeled as incorrect choices by the structure when it comes to tenure and promotion. Hallstein (2008) argues that the discourse of choice “depoliticizes the issue and puts responsibility on to the individual rather than the social arrangements that make this lack of ‘balance’ a social problem rather than an individual matter” (p. 149). Townsley and Broadfoot (2008) assert that labeling care and career decisions as optional choices creates a “win-lose game based on taken for granted assumptions of ideal academic work and the ideal academic worker” (p. 137, see also Acker, 2006; Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). A minority of participants in this study refuse to make choices between care and career as an act of resistance, and instead practice integration of care and career. Townsley and Broadfoot (2008) claim that integration rather than trying to achieve an illusive balance diminishes the discussion of choice and forces recognition that care and career should both be privileged. If enough professors practiced integration, institutions could be forced to respond with new structures, which might yet be “unprecedented, unconsidered, and unimagined” (p. 139). As such, integration of care and career is another means by which resistance and agency might transform the institution and the organizational structure.

Finally, the separation of care and career in this exploration highlights more clearly where care and career overlap through affective labor. Affective labor was not considered in the initial distinction and definitions of care responsibilities and career work. Affective labor is present throughout the data: (a) women employ affective labor in both teaching and mentoring, both as a choice, but also because it is expected of them from their students; (b) mentorship, whether naturally occurring or institutionally mandated can result in affective labor from the mentors; (c) the women who exert their agency because they want to support or promote other

women are inherently engaging in affective labor by supporting other women. In these instances, female faculty are performing their teaching, mentoring, and research related career responsibilities; however, they are also caring for others in the workplace. The original distinction between care and career did not consider care work involved in career practices. Yet, it is clear from the data that some of the women who participated in this study are performing affective labor. Future research should explore affective labor in more detail utilizing the distinction between care and career. In the next section, I discuss limitations to the current work.

### **Limitations**

Four limitations are noteworthy. First, the faculty who agreed to participate self-selected into the study and were invested in the idea of the project in several ways. Some of the participants wanted to share their career successes, brag about the positive climate in their departments, or discuss their department's or college's successes in equity. Others wanted to share bad personal experiences, describe the negative department climate, or were impacted by someone else's tenure/promotion failure. Many chose to participate in the study because they were invested in improving academe for women or were interested in women's issues in general. While all of these situated knowledges (Haraway, 1988/2014) are valued in the current project, it is important to note that self-selection can skew the view of the structure, especially if the faculty member had an agenda for their participation (Chase, 2011; Patton, 2002; Tracy, 2013). However, even though I acknowledge self-selection can be a limitation, I also still agree with Fisher (1987) when he explains that stories from participants represent human life through their "communicative expression of social reality" (p. 65). In this regard, a single participant's interview can be crucial to understanding the overall nature of the structure because their story is situated at the nexus of identity and experience.

Second, many voices are unaccounted for due to fear and censorship. Even though anonymity and confidentiality procedures were discussed before the interview began during the consent process, in almost all of the interviews, there was a “pause the interview moment” where participants stopped to confirm what would and would not be included in the analysis. Even though I assured them that the institution, college, and department; their rank and title; and any specifics about their disciplines, research, courses, and committees would be blinded, the majority of the participants still engaged in some form of censorship because they were worried about social retribution. Of the 49 interviews conducted, 45 were held in the faculty member’s office, and for every single interview where the door was left open at the start of the interview, there was a “close the door” moment to ensure they would not be overheard. Even after the door was closed in some cases, the faculty member would whisper sensitive information just in case it might be heard through the walls. For five participants, there was something they wanted to share with me, but were so worried about being identified, they asked for it to be “off the record;” those conversations were not recorded or included in field notes, and subsequently, were not included in data analysis. In addition, many of the women faculty who emailed expressing interest in the study but ultimately decided not to participate were worried their participation could or would be linked back to them and chose to remain silent for the same reasons. This limitation is not surprising given that retaliation and social retribution is still common in academe (June, 2018).

Third, because data collection was limited to only two weeks, one week per semester in an academic year, many faculty who wished to participate were unable to because of career expectations, the very thing being studied. Five disciplines were involved in their national conference weeks during data collection, so only one or two faculty were available for an

interview because they were not attending the conference. Many would be participants were on sabbatical or were traveling for research and therefore could not be on campus for an interview. The majority of non-participants though just could not find time in their schedule already packed with care and career responsibilities.

Finally, in some regards the data could be richer if the procedures of the study had been different. If I had collected data at multiple institutions, the data analysis could be more specific based on rank, assessing more specifically the assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor experiences. Similarly, I would have been able to talk more specifically about unique practices found in certain colleges or disciplines rather than grouping all of those practices together. Because all of the data was collected at one institution, the study gains insight into the overall structure but loses specifics that could help us better understand structure. In terms of the questions asked, phrasing could have detracted from the richness of the data. Because the questions about resources were phrased to gain knowledge about what was helpful, participants often did not volunteer information about resources that are not helpful or resources that could be added to improve care and career balance. Also, all of the questions were about the university structure, so participants did not talk about external obligations to other academic organizations (e.g., academic journals; local, regional, national, or international associations; governmental organizations) or their external work requirements (e.g., reviewing, editing, presenting, leadership). Below I discuss implications from this work.

### **Implications**

Acker (2006) argues that work organizations should be sites for investigation of complex inequality, but should also be sites for recommendations to alter such inequalities. As such, the present study illustrates four issues that universities should address to improve structure for

faculty: (a) reduction of harmful ambiguity in the micro and macro structures, (b) elimination of gendered policies in the micro structure, (c) increased communication about resources at the micro and macro levels, and (d) reduction of favoritism and subjectivity in evaluation combined with training on implicit bias at the micro and macro levels.

### **Reduction in Harmful Ambiguity**

To begin, universities should take measures to reduce harmful ambiguity. While it is clear from the data that a certain level of ambiguity in formal policy can be helpful to faculty and tenure cases, there are specific instances where ambiguity is intentional and harmful to women (of color). First, the university can write specifically into their clock extension policy how to evaluate a dossier in the case that a clock extension has been used. Departmental committees across campus should not be making internal and competing decisions about a packet being early, on time, or late because of a clock extension. Clock extensions should be evaluated consistently across campus. Additionally, the university can form a clearer macro policy on paid maternity leave. Currently, because the policy is allowable under the discretion of the department chair, there are questions concerning the nine-month appointment and leave during the birth semester or thereafter. Ambiguity could be reduced and utilization would be more consistent with a clearer policy in the macro structure and guidance for department chairs when a faculty member needs to utilize the policy. Finally, universities should take measures to reduce ambiguity in enforcement of “guidelines” and “rules” in departments where clear biases against women and persons of color can be established based on tenure case precedent.

### **Elimination of Gendered Policies**

Second, universities should strive to eliminate gendered policies in the microstructure as well as policies that do not consider intersectional identities. A feminist intersectional lens in combination with an examination of the individual micro structure illustrates that every faculty member experiences the organization differently. Policies that affect intersectional identities differently reduce flexibility and reinforce the rhetoric of choice, therefore reproducing exclusionary practices. Departments can decide on a metric to evaluate “quality scholarship” at multiple levels. If a faculty member is hired for a specialty that cannot be placed in mainstream journals, departments can assess quality in innovative ways. Departments should also discuss a better means for establishing “teaching effectiveness” other than student course evaluations. If course evaluations are to be utilized, they should be combined with peer and self-evaluations of teaching for an unbiased view of teaching effectiveness. Finally, before policies are formalized, departments should acknowledge intersectional identity in mentoring practices as well as the demands students place on certain faculty in mentoring relationships. As colleges and departments converse about the new policy and come up with their own guidelines and metrics for measuring mentorship, the standards will become more permanent and ingrained. Without acknowledgement of these gender differences in mentoring, this is a policy where systems of power might be (re)created.

### **Increase Communication about Resources**

Third, special programs, departments, colleges, and macro level offices can all work together to increase communication about resources designed to aid in care and career work. Instead of only notifying first year faculty about research, teaching, and care work resources, multiple offices can keep faculty on mailing lists until they choose to remove their names from

such lists. Additionally, the university can encourage special programs to contact faculty at regular intervals throughout the academic year about special programming and utilization of resources. The university can also provide department chairs with both training on routinely utilized resources and also a yearly updated list of resources to share with their faculty in research, teaching, service, and extension.

### **Conclusion**

The intended purpose of this dissertation was to both explore the organizational structure of the academy in terms of how it enables and constrains tenure and promotion. In so doing, I have tried to highlight the many experiences of the woman academic, both her joys and tribulations of managing care and career. The conglomeration of these situated experiences (Haraway, 1988/2014) illustrate that while the university has progressed in its inclusion of women faculty and faculty persons of color, many issues still remain. Unfortunately, many of the struggles that women (of color) continue to experience in the academic organization are deeply embedded within a structure that is hard to crack and transform. Jackson (2008) argues, “Unfortunately visionary universities do not materialize spontaneously. Change requires real effort, entailing motivation, dialogue, leadership, funding and sustained commitment. Change requires the real belief that when qualified females succeed, everyone wins” (p. 232). It is my hope that this research will be the impetus for women and persons of color to organize, to create dialogue about structure, identity, care, and career, and to push the boundaries of the university structure until cracks and fissures are workable and transformation is possible.

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## APPENDIX A: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### Example Questions:

1. What does a typical day look like for you?
2. What is your routine when you interact with students?
3. What is your relationship like with your students?
4. What is your relationship like with other academics?
  - a. Male faculty?
  - b. Female faculty?
  - c. In your department?
  - d. Outside of your department?
5. What personal rules govern your interactions with students?
6. What personal rules govern your interactions with other academics?
7. What personal rules govern your academic production?
  - a. Research
  - b. Service
  - c. Teaching
8. What departmental rules govern your interactions with students?
9. What departmental rules govern your interactions with other academics?
10. What departmental rules govern your academic production?
  - a. Research
  - b. Service
  - c. Teaching
11. What university rules govern your interactions with students?
12. What university rules govern your interactions with other academics?
13. What university rules govern your academic production?
  - a. Research
  - b. Service
  - c. Teaching
14. What resources are available to you to help with your academic production?
  - a. Personal resources
  - b. Departmental resources
  - c. University
15. Do you have any care-giving responsibilities, such as personal care needs, child-care, care for a sick or elderly family member, etc.?
16. What rules govern your care-giving responsibilities?
  - a. Personal
  - b. Departmental
  - c. University
17. What resources are available to you to assist with your care-giving responsibilities?
  - a. Personal
  - b. Departmental
  - c. University
18. In which spaces do you often work?

19. What rules would you follow if [scenario] happened?
20. What resources would you be able to utilize if [scenario] happened?
21. What is the purpose of [title] materials?
22. How do you feel you are perceived by your students?
23. How do you feel you are perceived by other faculty?
  - a. In your department?
  - b. What about outside of your department?
24. Possible follow-up (probe) questions:
  - a. Tell me more about [insert].
  - b. Can you elaborate on [insert]?
  - c. Why?
25. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences?

Demographic Questions:

1. What is your gender? (open ended)
2. What is your race/ethnicity? (Open ended)
3. How would you describe your sexuality? (Open ended)
4. What is the total amount of money that your household made before taxes last year?  
(Multiple choice – income ranges)
5. What is your current age? (Multiple choice – age ranges)

## **APPENDIX B: EMAIL RECRUIT SCRIPT FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH FEMALE FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS**

My name is Ashton Mouton, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Brian Lamb School of Communication working on my PhD in health and organizational communication under the supervision of Dr. Patrice Buzzanell and Dr. Stacey Connaughton. I am conducting a study about how the organizational structure at [University] enables or constrains tenure and promotion for female faculty and female administrators.

Your participation in this research would be greatly appreciated. If you choose to participate, please reply to this email, so that can schedule an interview with you. If you agree to be interviewed, I would ask questions about organizational facets of your job, your routine activities, such as rules you follow, resources you utilize, spaces you visit, activities you participate in, verbal and nonverbal communication with others academics, etc.

The interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose to stop participating at any time without penalty. Your data and identity will be kept confidential. I appreciate your consideration in regards to participating in this study.

Sincerely,

Ashton Mouton

Doctoral Candidate, Organizational and Health Communication

Brian Lamb School of Communication

Purdue University