



APUO

ASSOCIATION DES PROFESSEUR(E)S DE L'UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA
ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSORS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

Tenure and Promotion Process: APUO Analysis of Tenure/Promotion Challenges and Opportunities

Summary of April 29, 2015 document submitted by the APUO to
the Joint Employer-APUO Working Group on Tenure and Promotion

Overview - Analysis

- ◆ This discussion document analyzes the key issues regarding the tenure and promotion process from the perspective of the APUO membership. Sources of information include detailed survey sent to all APUO members, feedback from APUO staff, CBC and executive committee

- ◆ Key strengths of existing process:
 - ◆ Criteria for tenure/promotion in current CA viewed as challenging but fair
 - ◆ Peer evaluation – External peer evaluations and DTPC/FTPC evaluation viewed as most reliable and effective way to judge quality of members' work; transparency of evaluations and ability to respond viewed as central to a fair process
 - ◆ Definition of scholarly activities (recognizing a diverse set of outputs as relevant evidence) viewed as crucial
 - ◆ Support from unit chairs and deans (when provided) highly appreciated.

- ◆ Key concerns revealed by analysis include:
 - ◆ Major APUO member dissatisfaction with (and lack of trust in) tenure/promotion processes, leading to member disenchantment and loss of 'sens d'appartenance' to uO
 - ◆ Major concerns about process include: fairness/accuracy/capacity of the Joint Committee evaluation; reasoning and standards employed; lack of weight given to teaching; 'duty to accommodate' in processes; systematic timing delays.
 - ◆ Major concerns about results include: recent drop in tenure and promotion success rates; significant and inexplicable inequalities regarding the success rates of different faculties

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- ◆ Reliability of survey

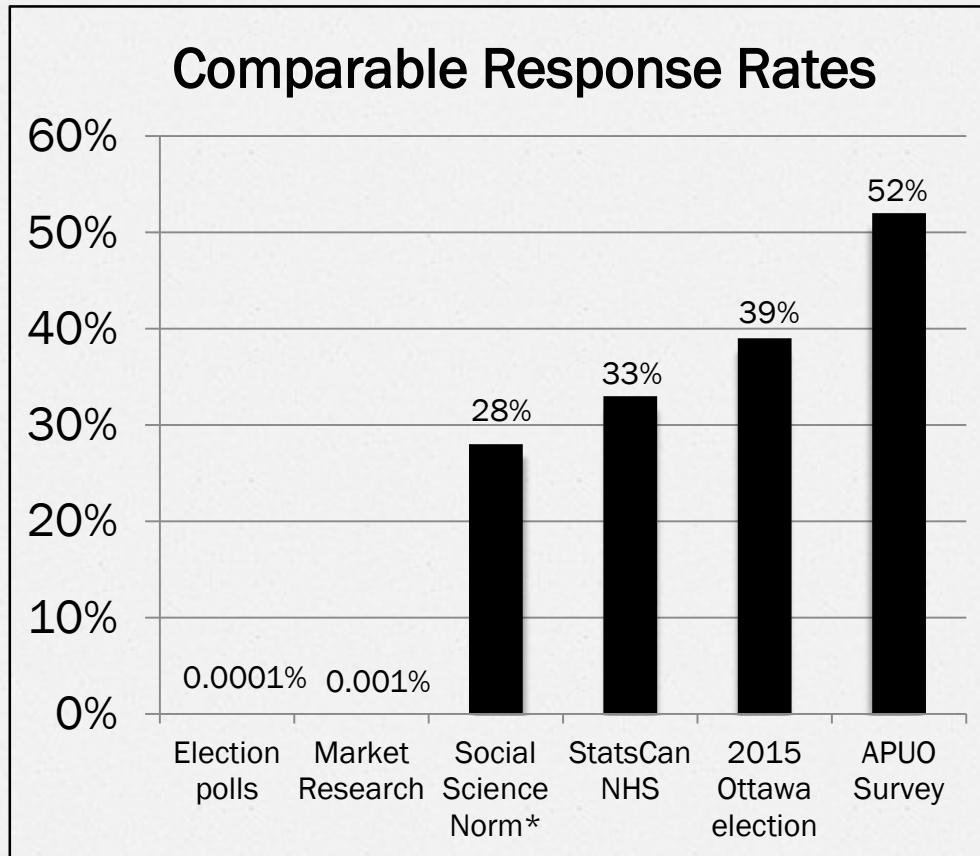
- ◆ Quantitative Findings

- ◆ APUO member satisfaction with tenure and associate promotion process
- ◆ APUO member satisfaction with promotion to full process
- ◆ APUO member perception of support from chair and dean
- ◆ Timing of decisions
- ◆ Success rates

- ◆ Qualitative Findings

- ◆ Key problems of process according to APUO members
- ◆ Key strengths of process according to APUO members

APUO survey results = highly reliable



- Survey was extremely detailed. 90 questions. Avg = ~20 mins to complete.
- Qualitative answers also very reliable. Over 60% of respondents made concrete suggestions on how to improve the process.
- Aggregate of responses highly representative of APUO demographics.**
- If anything, survey biased towards positive view of tenure and promotion as most members who did not receive positive decisions have left.

*Based on population of approximately 1000 individuals, with +/- 5% accuracy.

**For example, APUO membership = 18% Asst, 45% Assoc, 35% Full; Survey responses = 21% Asst, 48% Assoc, 30% Full.

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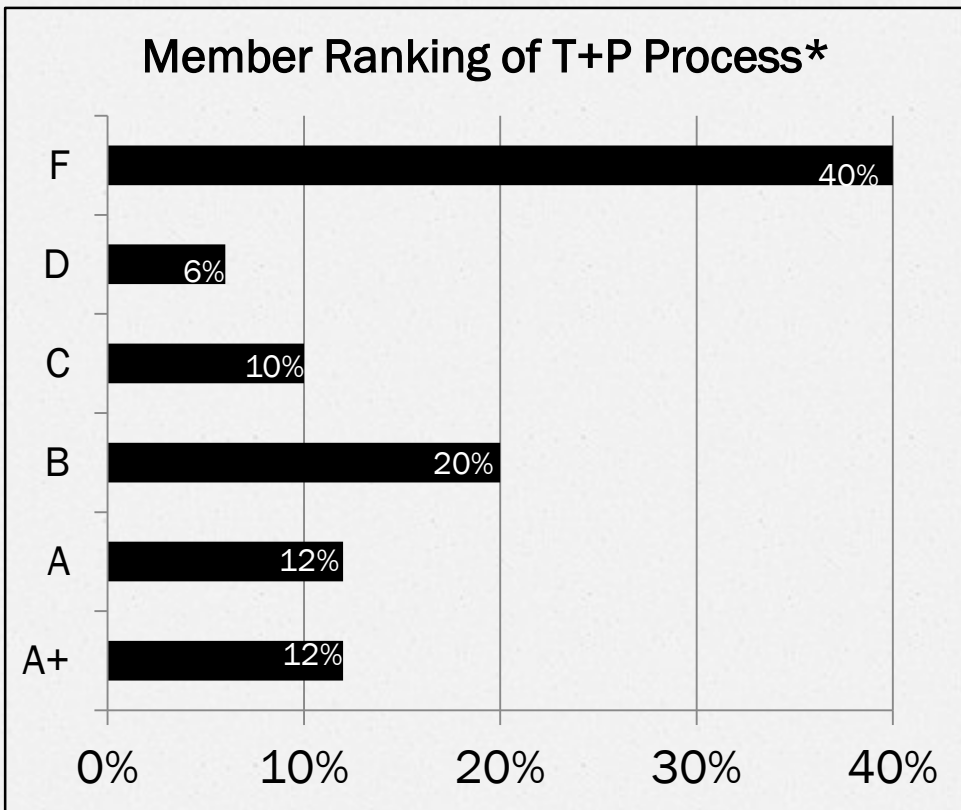
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- ◆ Key strengths of process according to APUO members

- ◆ Potential Solutions

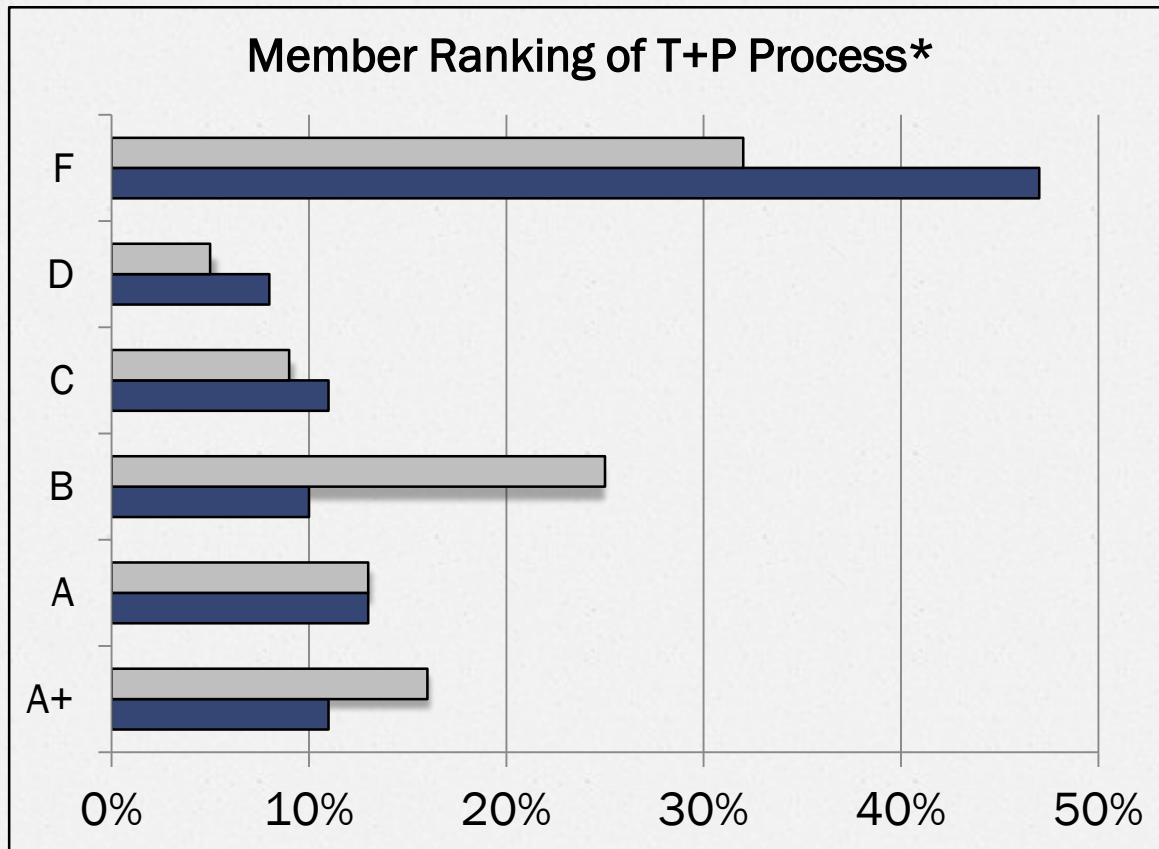
APUO members highly dissatisfied with process for tenure and promotion to associate



- Only ¼ of APUO members rated the tenure process an A/A+.
- 40% gave it a failing grade. 75% rated it as a B or lower.
- 10% gave the process 0 out of 10.
- Over 75% of responses noted multiple major problems.

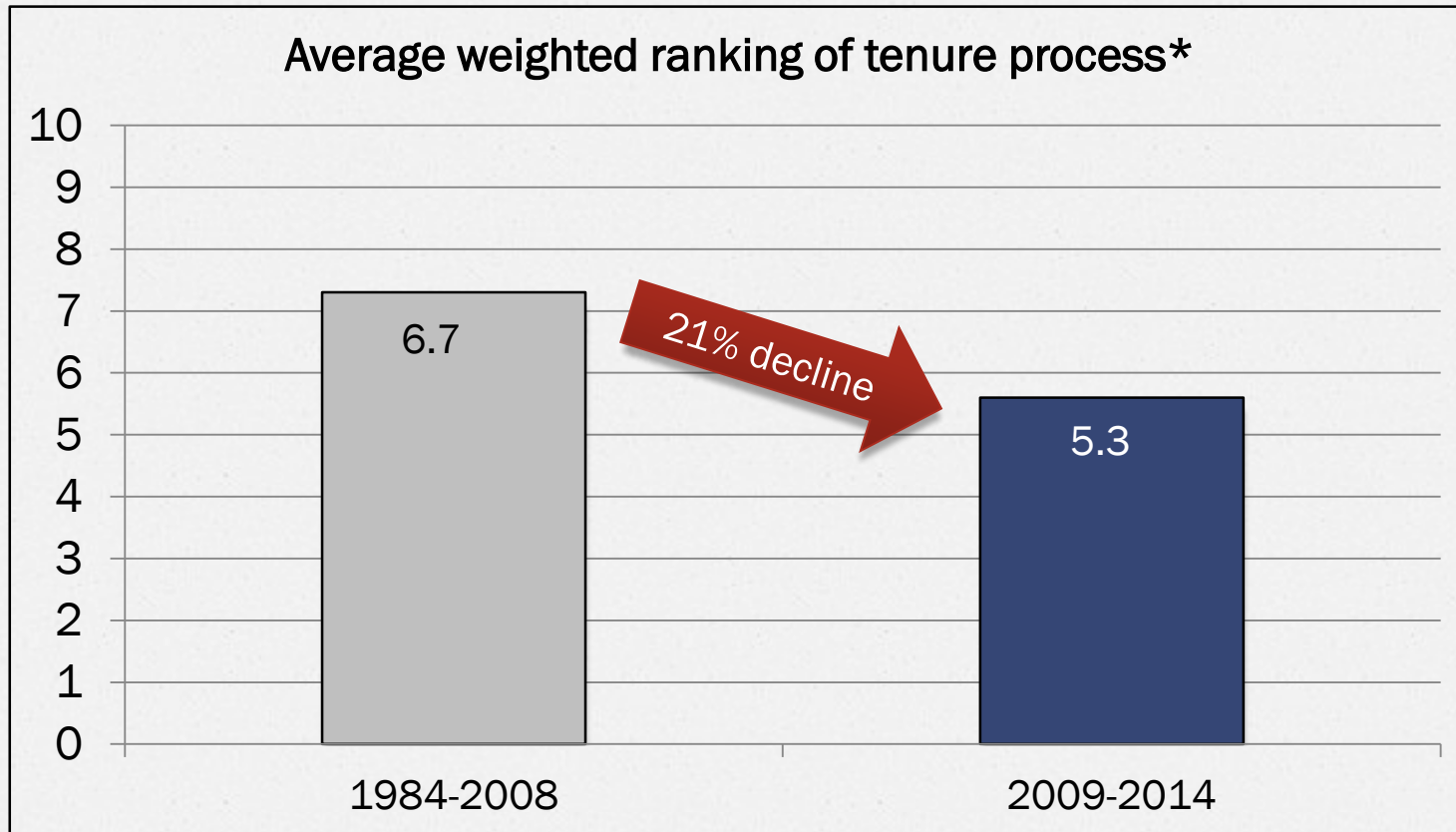
*Source – APUO Survey. Question = ‘Please rank your overall satisfaction with the process’ in reference to a member’s first application for tenure or tenure and promotion (depending on whether they were under old or new system). F = 0-5. D = 6; C = 7; B = 8; A = 9; A+ = 10. Percentages based on 381 responses received from members who answered this question.

Dissatisfaction with tenure/associate process has significantly increased over recent years



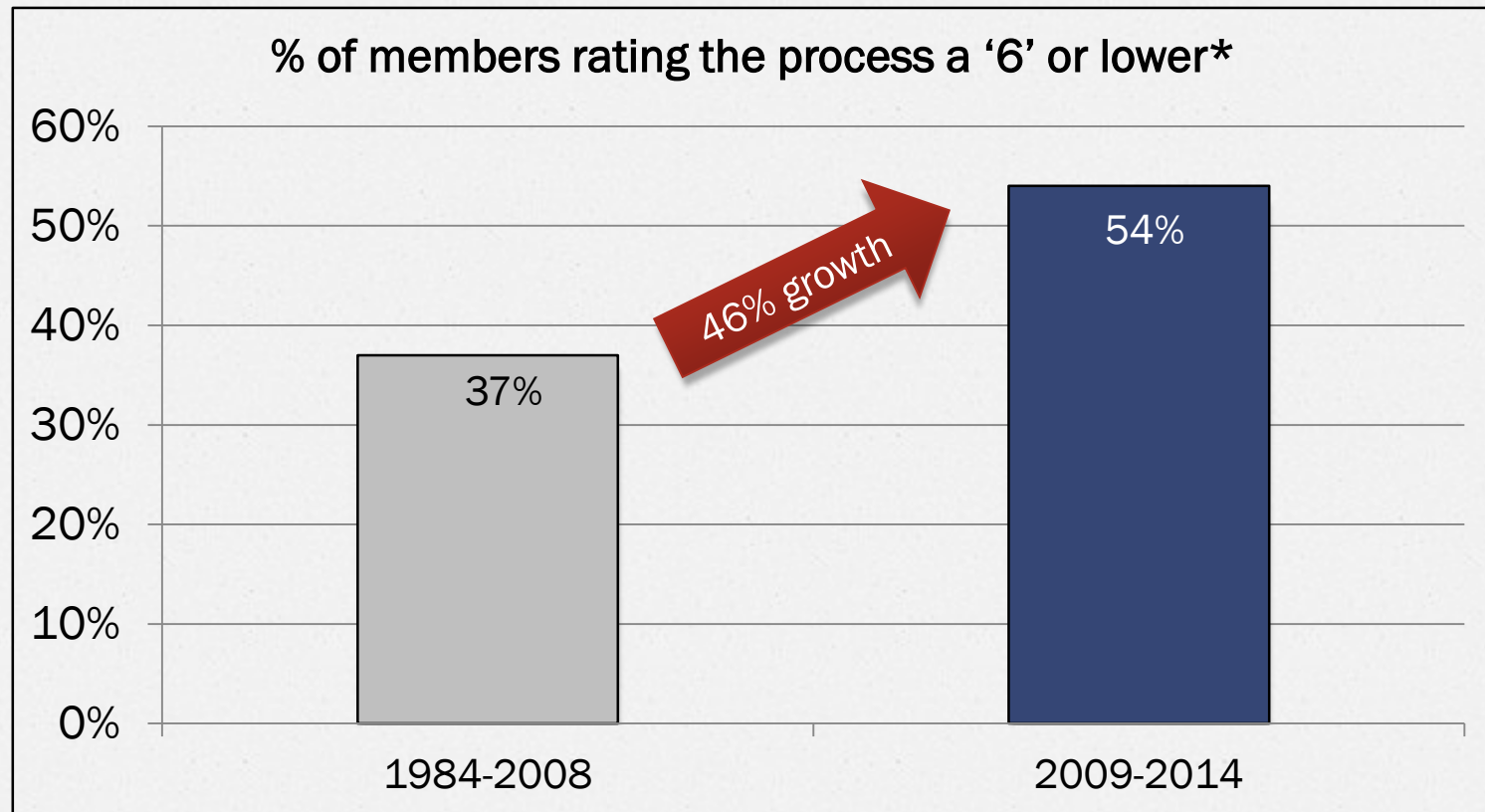
*Source - APUO Survey. Question = 'Please rank your overall satisfaction with the process' in reference to a member's first application for tenure or tenure and promotion (depending on whether they were under old or new system). F = 0-5. D = 6; C = 7; B = 8; A = 9; A+ = 10. Percentages calculated by comparing the 200 responses received from members who applied for tenure (and promotion) between 1984-2008 and the 181 responses between 2009-2014.

Overall member satisfaction with tenure/associate process has dropped significantly in recent years



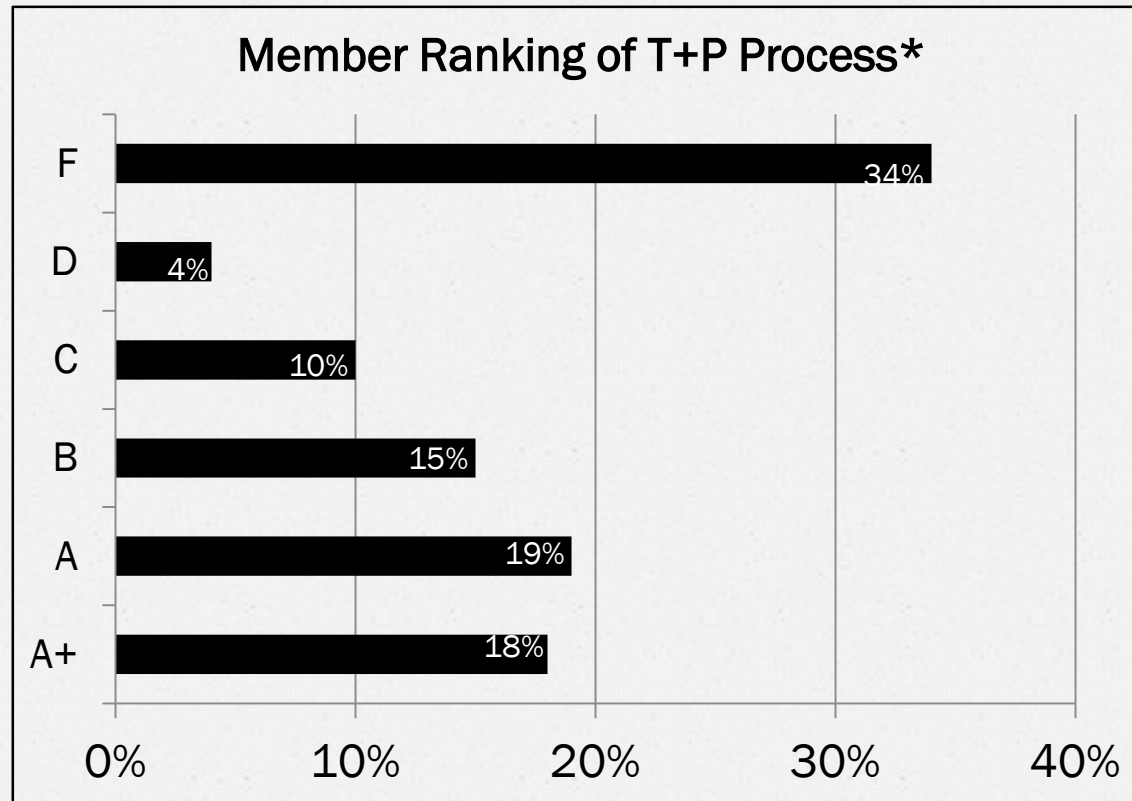
*Source - APUO Survey. Question = 'Please rank your overall satisfaction with the process' in reference to a member's first application for tenure or tenure and promotion (depending on whether they were under old or new system). Percentages calculated by comparing the 200 responses received from members who applied for tenure (and promotion) between 1984-2008 and the 181 responses between 2009-2014.

Percentage of members who are highly dissatisfied with tenure/associate process has increased dramatically



*Source – APUO Survey. Question = ‘Please rank your overall satisfaction with the process’ in reference to a member’s first application for tenure or tenure and promotion (depending on whether they were under old or new system). Percentages calculated by comparing the 200 responses received from members who applied for tenure (and promotion) between 1984-2008 and the 181 responses between 2009-2014.

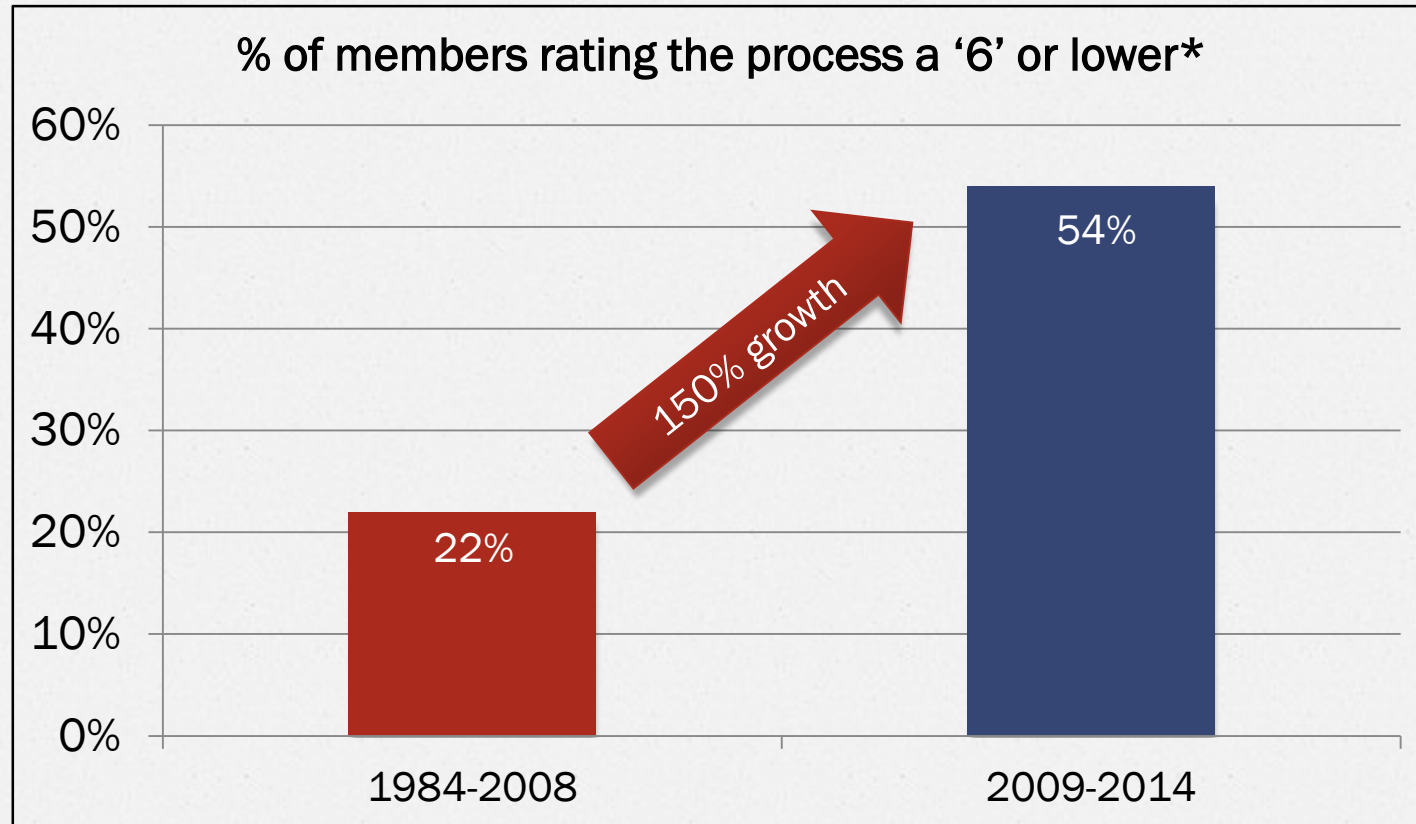
APUO members also dissatisfied with process for promotion to full



- Less than 1/5 of APUO members rated the tenure process an A/A+.
- 34% gave it a failing grade.
- 63% rated it as a B or lower.

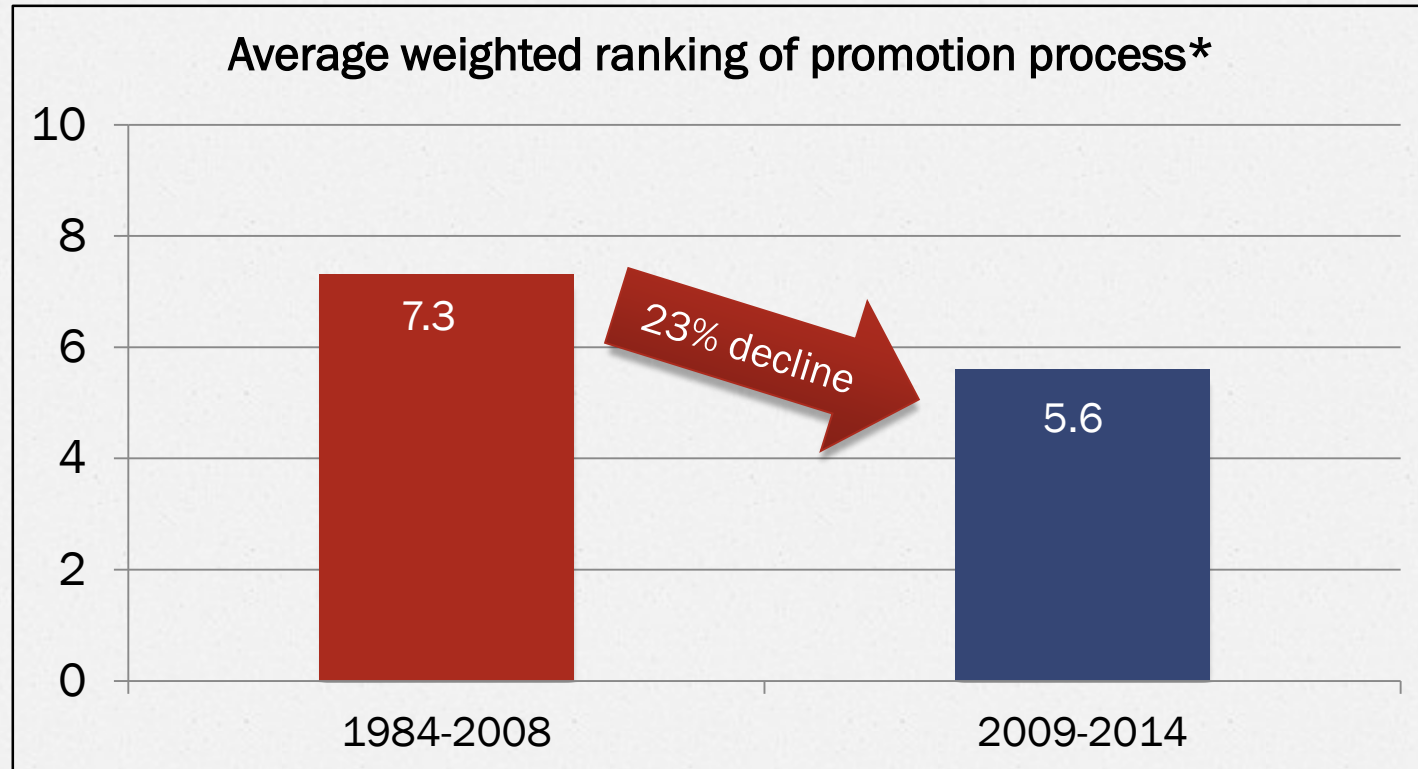
*Source – APUO survey. Question = ‘Please rank your overall satisfaction with the process’ in reference to a member’s first application for full professor. F = 0-5. D = 6; C = 7; B = 8; A = 9; A+ = 10. Percentages based on 125 responses received from members who answered this question.

Breadth/intensity of member dissatisfaction with 'promotion to full' process has increased dramatically



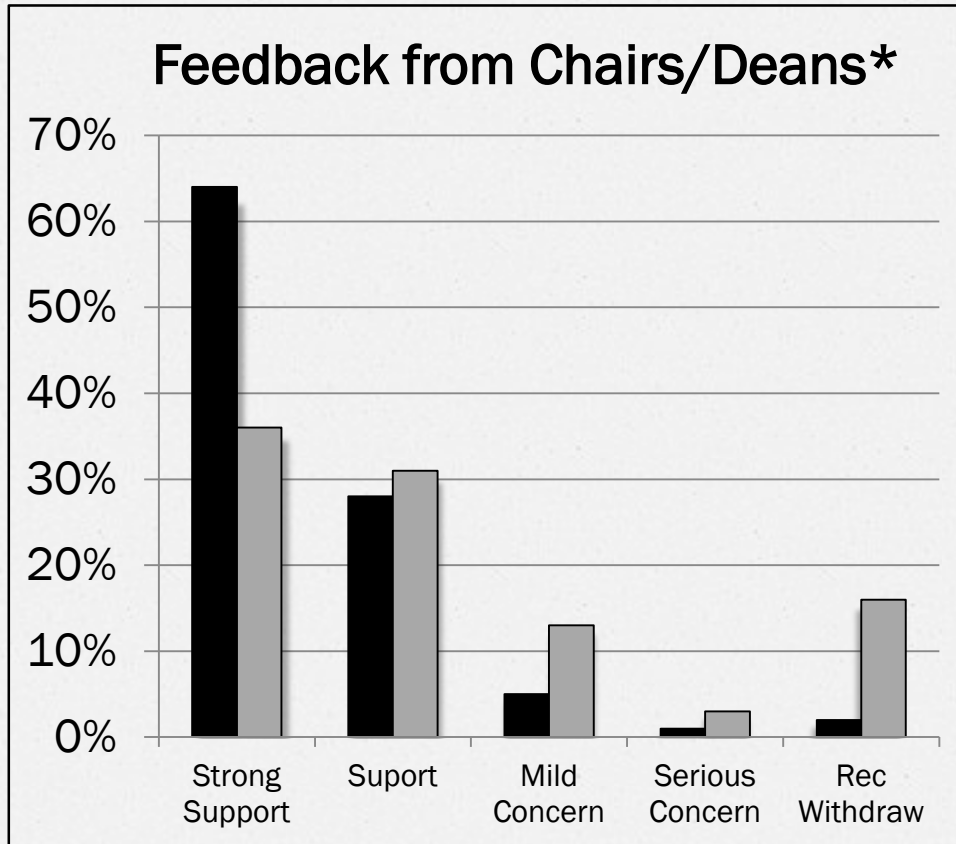
*Source – APUO survey. Graphs based on responses to first application to full professor. Percentages calculated by comparing the 61 responses received from members who applied for full professor between 1984-2008 and the 64 responses between 2009-2014.

Overall ranking of process for 'promotion to full' has also dropped significantly in recent years



*Source - APUO survey. Graphs based on responses to first application to full professor. Percentages calculated by comparing the 61 responses received from members who applied for full professor between 1984-2008 and the 64 responses between 2009-2014.

Members perceive strong support from unit chairs, lower support from deans



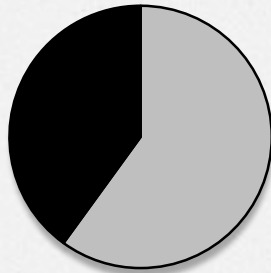
- Chairs perceived as strongly supported in 64% of cases, Deans in 36%
- 40% felt their file was not actively supported by their dean
- Deans actively encouraged members to withdraw tenure and promotion file in 16% of cases
- Perceptions of chair and decanal support relatively consistent between 1984-2007 and 2008-2014 cohorts (perceived decanal support slightly lower in 2008-14 sample)

Chairs
 Deans

*Source - APUO survey. Question = 'What was the type of feedback provided by your chair/dean?' in reference to a member's first application for tenure and/or tenure and promotion (depending on whether they were under old or new system). Percentages based on 381 responses received from members who answered this question.

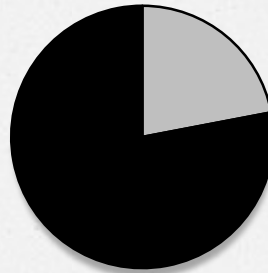
There is a systematic and growing failure to render decisions by the deadline outlined in the CA (April 1st)

1984-2014



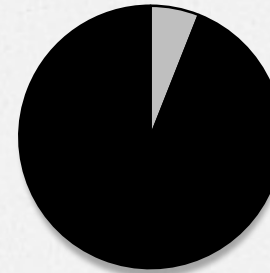
■ On time
■ Late

2014



■ On time
■ Late

2015

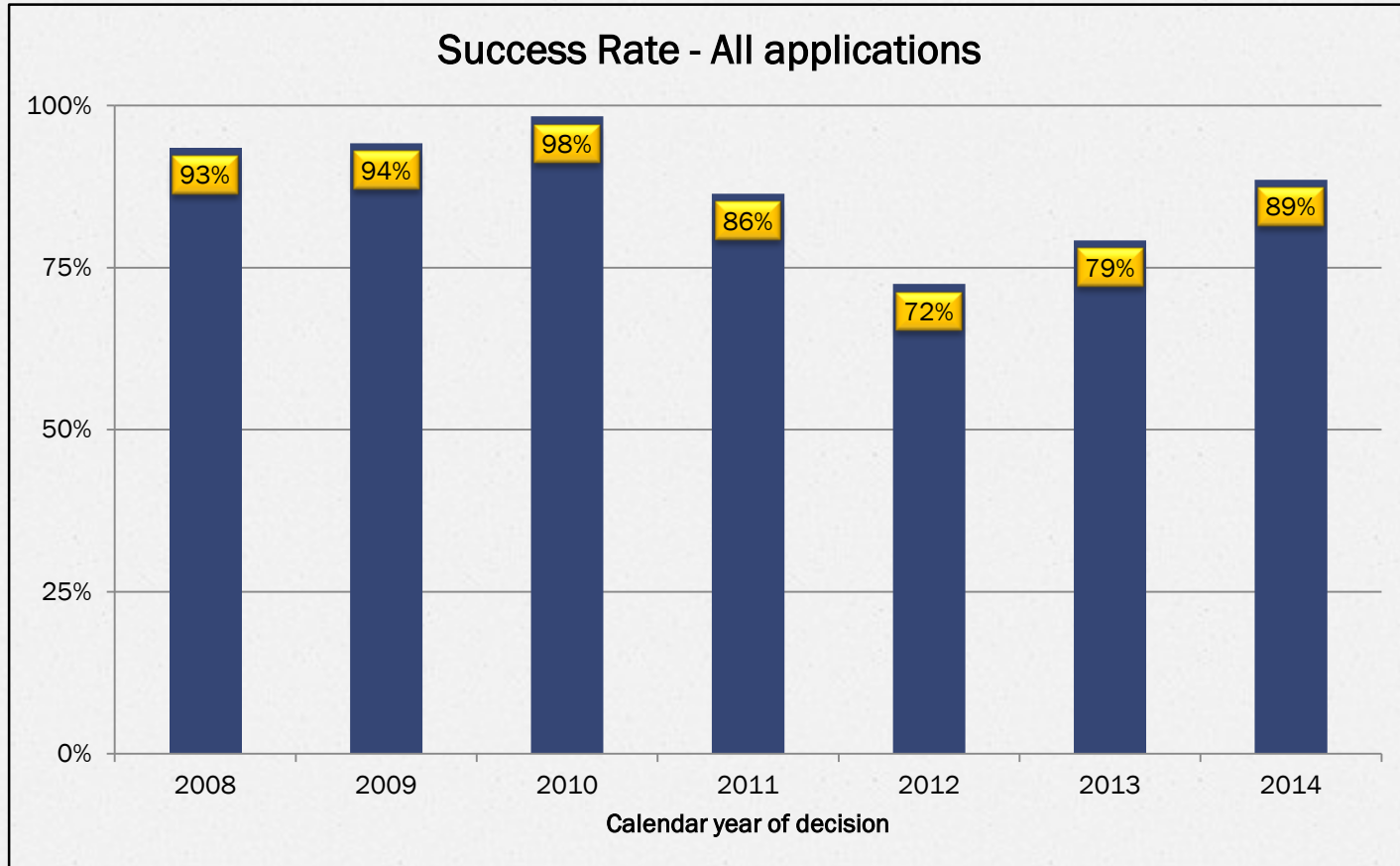


■ On time
■ Late

Note: It is possible to achieve Apr 1 deadline since one or two faculties have much higher 'on time' rates than others

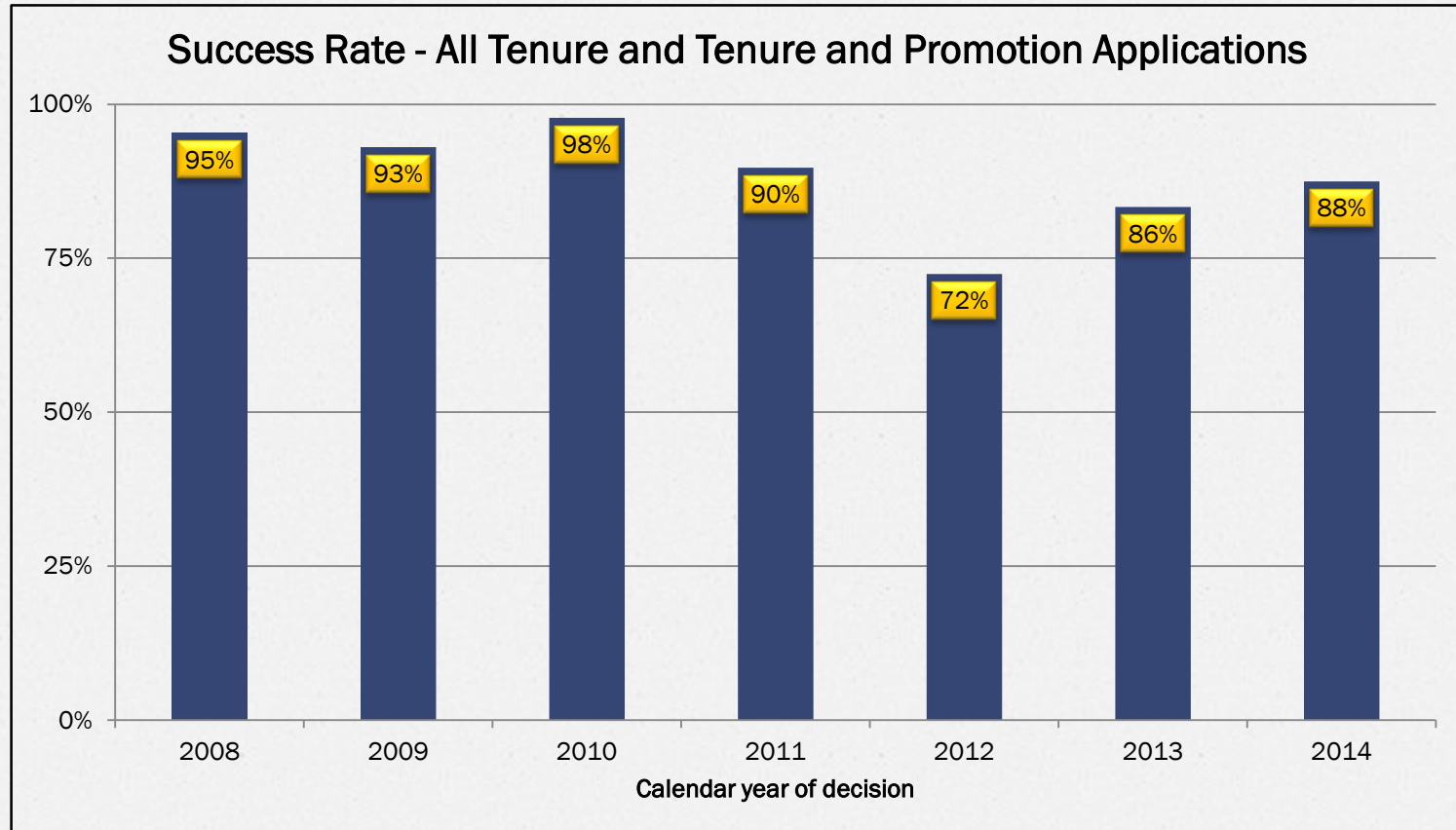
*Source - 1984-2014 = APUO survey. 2014 and 2015 = employer data provided to APUO as of April 29, 2015.

Recent success rates for tenure and promotion applications have been lower than previous years



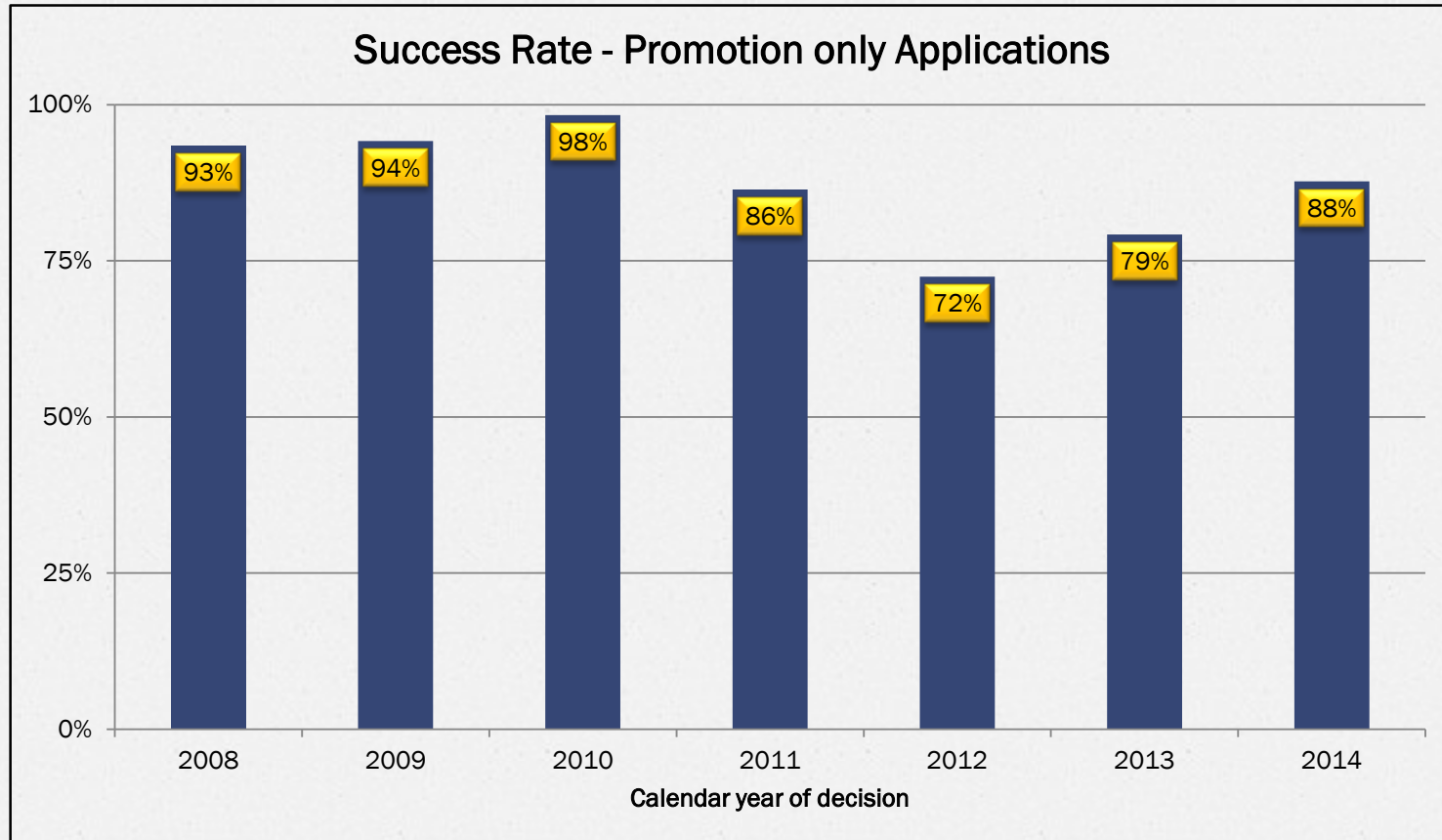
Source: Employer data provided to APUO. Data includes all tenure and promotion applications. Success rate is defined as the rate of applications that are approved without a new application being required (e.g. rejections, deferrals, withdrawals constitute non-success).

Recent success rates for 'tenure' and 'tenure + associate' applications have also been lower



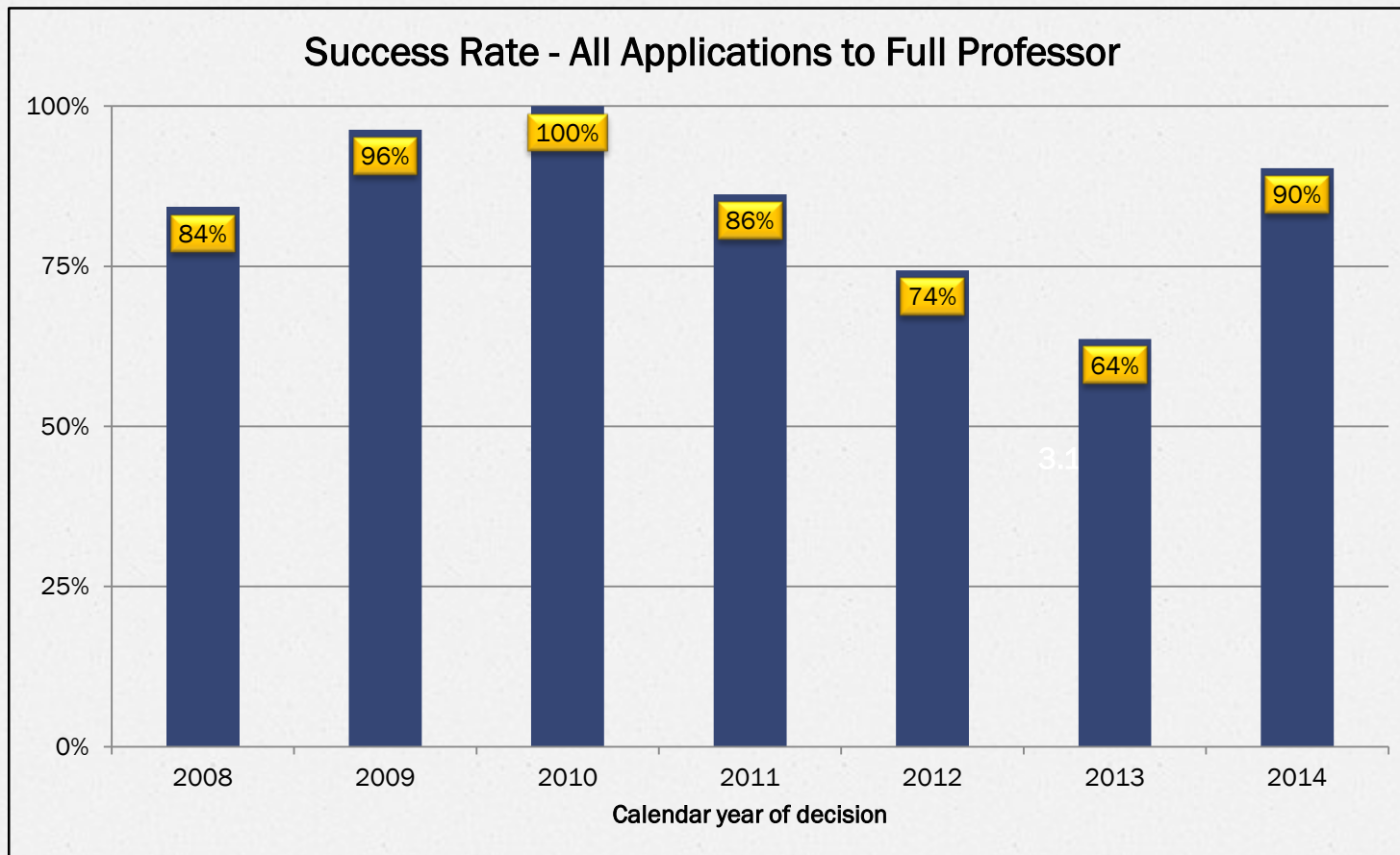
Source: Employer data provided to APUO. Data includes all tenure and tenure with promotion to 'associate professor' applications. Success rate is defined as the rate of applications that are approved without a new application being required (e.g. rejections, deferrals, withdrawals constitute non-success).

Recent success rates for 'promotion only' applications also noticeably lower than previously years



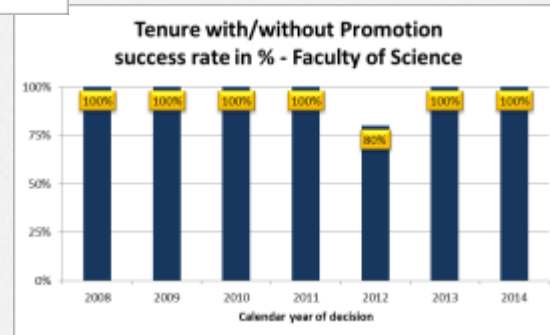
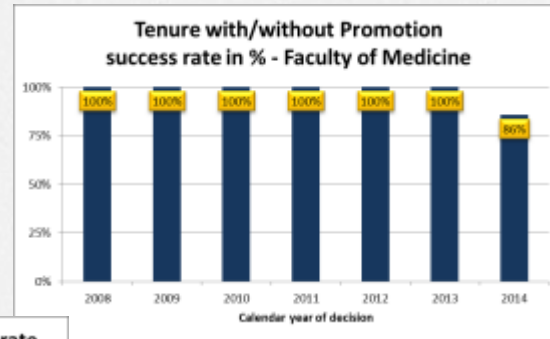
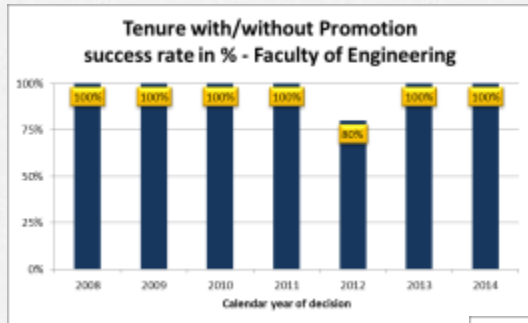
Source: Employer data provided to APUO. Data includes promotion to 'associate' (when separate from tenure application) or 'full' professor. Success rate is defined as the rate of applications that are approved without a new application being required (e.g. rejections, deferrals, withdrawals constitute non-success).

Decline/volatility in success rates for promotion to 'Full' has been particularly notable in recent years



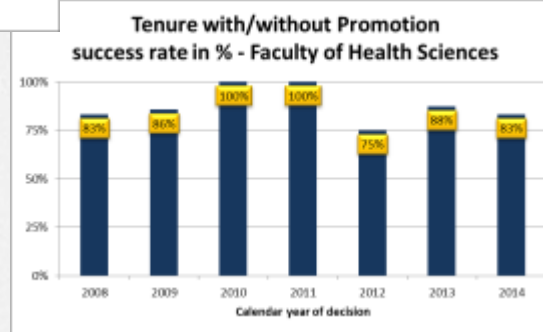
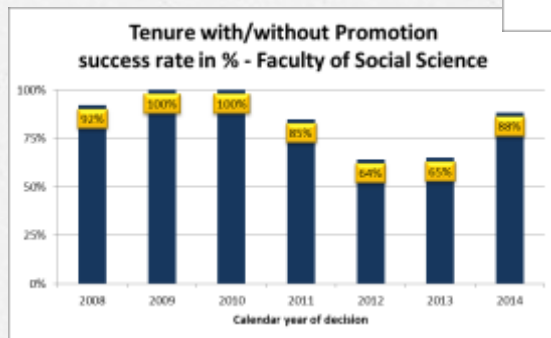
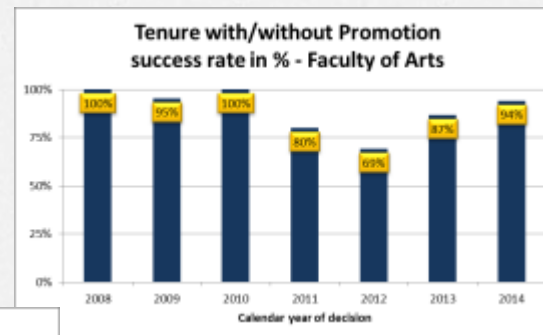
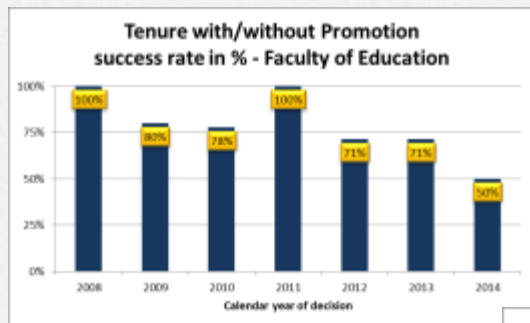
Source: Employer data provided to APUO. Data includes all applications for promotion to 'full' professor without tenure. Success rate is defined as the rate of applications that are approved without a new application being required (e.g. 18 rejections, deferrals, withdrawals constitute non-success).

Major inequality between faculties' success rates: 5 have very high tenure success rates



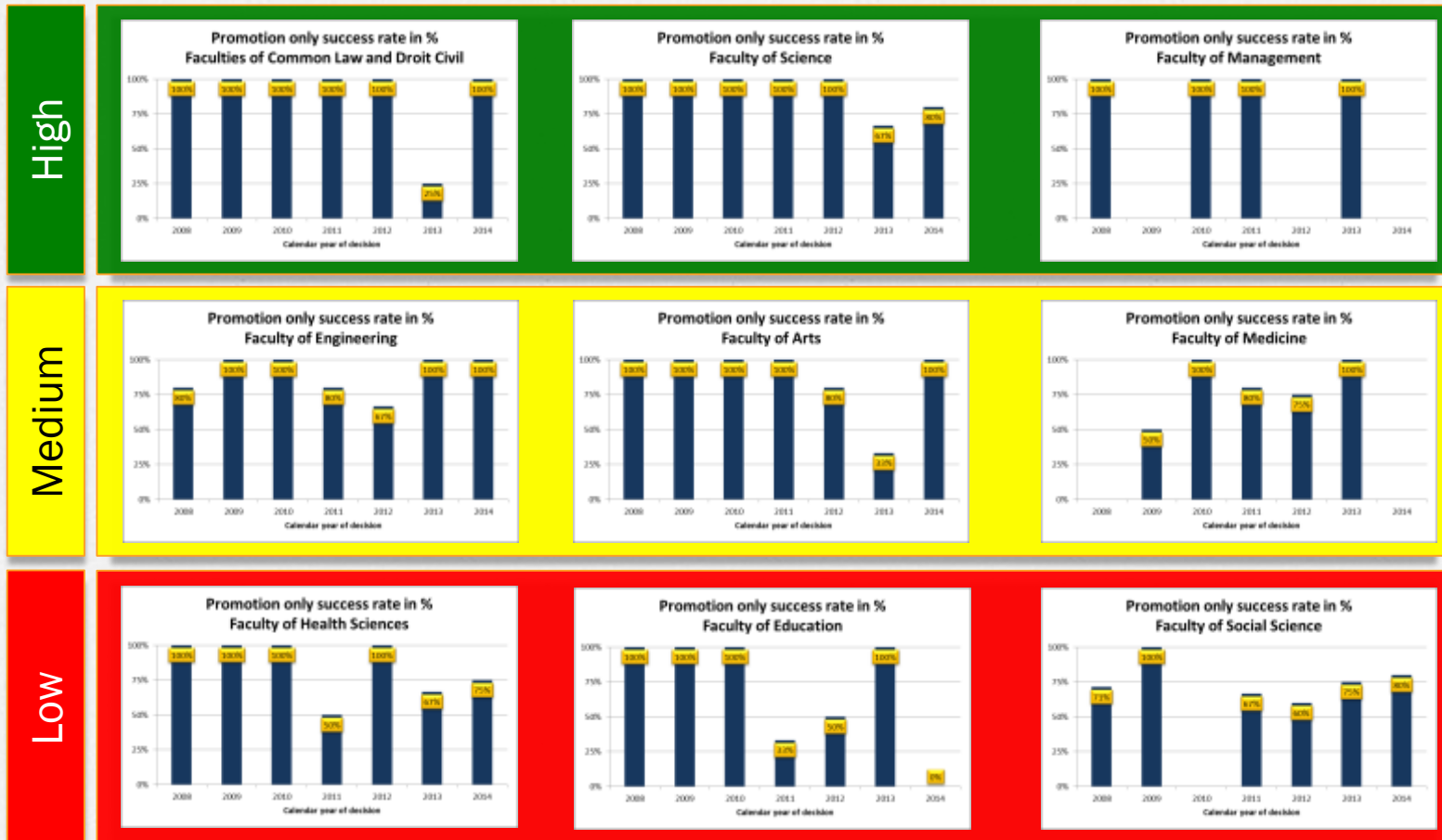
Source: Employer data provided to APUO. Data includes all applications for tenure and tenure/promotion to 'associate' professor. Success rate is defined as the rate of applications that are approved without a new application being required (e.g. rejections, deferrals, withdrawals constitute non-success).

Major inequality between faculties' success rates: 5 have much lower tenure success rates



Source: Employer data provided to APUO. Data includes all applications for tenure and tenure/promotion to 'associate' professor. Success rate is defined as the rate of applications that are approved without a new application being required (e.g. rejections, deferrals, withdrawals constitute non-success).

'Promotion only' success rates also highly unequal and variable between faculties



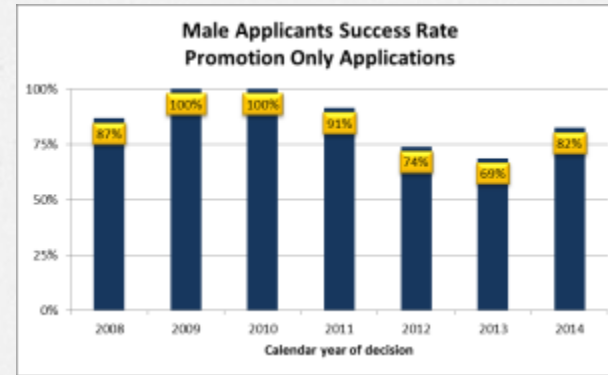
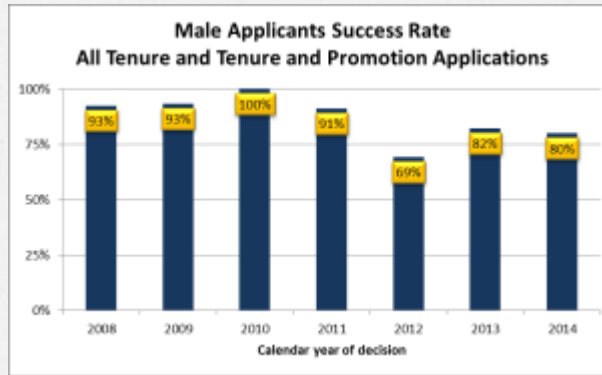
Source: Employer data provided to APUO. Data includes all applications for promotion only (e.g. without tenure). Success rate is defined as the rate of applications that are approved without a new application being required (e.g. rejections, deferrals, withdrawals constitute non-success).

Some gender inequality in promotions exists as well

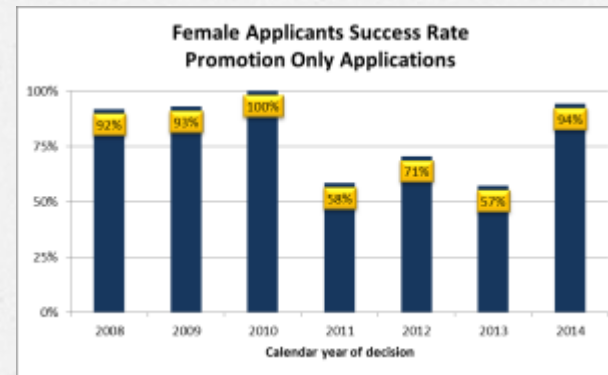
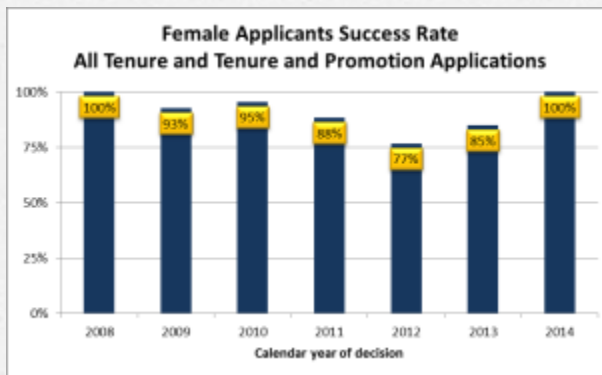
Tenure, Tenure + Promotion

Promotion Only

Male



Female



Source: Verified employer data provided to APUO. Data includes all applications for tenure and tenure/promotion to 'associate' professor. Success rate is defined as the rate of applications that are approved without a new application being required (e.g. rejections, deferrals, withdrawals constitute non-success). 22

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Key qualitative concerns of APUO membership

Violations of the Collective Agreement

- Lack of sufficient reasons (contra fairness and administrative law) given by Joint Committee (JC).
- Illegitimate reasons employed by JC (external funding; successful PhD supervision; overly narrow interpretation of 'scholarly activities'; etc.).
- Formal denials and informal pressure to withdraw/delay applications by claiming an application is 'premature'.
- Explicit announcements and use of 'new higher standards' without any changes to Collective Agreement (CA).
- Significant time delays.
- Failure to apply employer's 'duty to accommodate' in tenure and promotion processes and decisions regarding professors with medical and other conditions (as mandated by provincial law and CA).
- Insufficient information sent to external examiners regarding the specific CA standards for tenure and promotion.

General Concerns

- Teaching not given enough standing in tenure and promotion decisions – teaching and research should be more equally weighted.
- Sense that quantity is valued more than quality in terms of scholarly activities
- Perceived inconsistencies – especially with JC overturning positive recommendations.
- Perceived sense that relationships/interactions with senior administration can influence decisions.
- Unnecessarily stressful process due to lack of trust in fairness of process.
- Loss of productivity and alienation from the U of O as a result of both personal problems with the process and stories of colleagues who have had problems.

*Questions = open questions; 'Please identify any key strengths you see with the current system'; 'Please identify any key problems you see with the system'.

Key qualitative concerns of APUO membership (cont.)

Competency of evaluation of Joint Committee

- Significant concern about competency of JC as final evaluation body. Particular concern about fact that JC is overturning files that were supported at all other levels given that members believe that by its very nature, Joint Committee has extremely limited competence to judge the specific disciplinary norms and standards of each file.
- Willingness of JC to ignore external evaluations; tendency to 'cherry pick' some evaluator comments out of context and ignore bulk of other comments.
- Lack of clarity about standards, inability of JC to apply standards that are appropriate to a specific member's discipline.
- General sense that final decisions should not be taken by JC but rather by committee/s who would be able to make decisions in a more knowledgeable and discipline specific manner.
- Collaborative work insufficiently valorized.
- Insufficient DTPC/FTPC/JC knowledge of articles and requirements of CA
- Concern (in some faculties) that deans exercise too much (negative) influence over process.

Grievance /Resolution Process

- Step 1 meetings not taken seriously by employer.
- Grievance process extraordinarily long and drawn out. Causes extreme stress, negatively impacts health, alienates from University, major negative impact on professional productivity.
- Sense that timing of grievance process used as negotiation strategy.

Key qualitative strengths identified by APUO members

Context

- In general, respondents had much less to say about the strengths of the system than with the problems, despite the two questions being asked in identical ways and with the 'strengths' question being asked first (only 50% identified any strengths, and most answers were much shorter than those to the 'key problems' question.*
- That said, there are certainly a number of elements that APUO members believe are crucial strengths to the current tenure and promotion process.


Collective Agreement process

- Strong sense that many elements of the process as laid out in the CA work well when they are respected.
- Overall sense that the system worked fairly well until 2007 or so.
- Central role for peer review by outside external evaluators viewed as absolutely crucial. Allows for evaluation of quality, not just quantity. Sense that reviewers are objective. Absolutely essential to process.
- Sense that criteria is fairly clear in CA – they just need to be respected.
- CA's explicit recognition that scholarly activity can be demonstrated by many different form, and not just peer reviewed journal articles, viewed as important and justifiable by members.
- The transparency that exists is highly valued (e.g. right to see letters from director, external evaluations, FTPC minutes and recommendation, Dean's letter). However, members also feel that there is significant transparency problem with the JC. Overall, members would like more transparency, however.

*Questions = open questions; 'Please identify any key strengths you see with the current system'; 'Please identify any key problems you see with the system'.

Key qualitative strengths (cont.)

Collective Agreement (cont.)



- Fact that applicants and chairs have right to suggest evaluators viewed as positive.
- Strong sense that in general, DTPC and FTPC judgments are fair, relatively objective and legitimate since these committees are generally much closer to, and more knowledgeable of, the discipline of a given application.
- Some members expressed belief that their dean was also fair in his/her recommendations. Others expressed widespread sense their dean was not fair.
- In general, widespread support for a system that has variety of types of evaluation – including external peer evaluation and committees of knowledgeable colleagues.

Other



- Many members spoke very highly of the mentoring/support they received from their senior colleagues and chairs.
- Some members also spoke highly of the support and mentoring they received from their Deans. They appreciated support, proactive contact around issues, personal and sincere congratulations,
- A number of members appreciated the pilot online submission process.