Dear Provost Strobel and Vice Provost Bakemeier,

I would like to follow up again on the unfavorable university-level tenure decision made in my case. This decision was highly unexpected since I had heard from senior faculty in my group starting Spring 2024 that they were very confident in my case, and did not see any issues. This reversal and denial at the university level has caused substantial damage to my reputation in the field. I believe this decision was based on a process that was not in consistent with both the intent and implementation of Yale’s policies. I share some of the details of the process below, and request your kind reconsideration.

1) **External Letter Writers:** I would like to detail the process related to the candidate providing names of external reviewers or letter writers. As detailed in the instructions, I attempted to provide the names of letter writers. I asked the chair of my committee how to provide the names. I was submitting my complete tenure packet on the Interfolio system that Yale uses and there was no place for letter writers there. That is, I reached out to my committee chair before the packet’s final submission to inquire whether I should be providing my preferred letter writers by email to my chair or to the Dean’s office.

I did not receive a response to this question. However, I did receive responses from the chair to other queries related to my tenure packet in the same time frame. During this time frame for final submission of my packet, I also heard from the staff of the Deputy Dean’s office that my statement was over the word limit, and I was required to shorten my statement. This informed me of the importance and care taken in processing the tenure packet’s element in such detail. I therefore concluded from these varied points of feedback that a decision had been made simply not to allow me to submit names.

More recently, however, I have learned that this was indeed not standard, and that candidates’ choices of letter writers form a crucially important part of the tenure evaluation process. I am therefore concerned that my voice on this important matter was not heard, and taken into account in the tenure process, like is typically done. This is especially important since my work spans multiple methodologies including new machine-learning methods. Experts who can appropriately evaluate my case appropriately in sufficient depth are those who do research in this area, and who are likely to provide a more informed assessment.

2) **Years on Clock:** My record based on my tenure packet submitted in Fall 2024 was represented as a 14-year record. In speaking with senior faculty over time, I heard reference to this representation several times. I view this characterization as inconsistent with my record. I would like to share the following information about my record.

* I completed my doctoral degree in 2010 and started as an Assistant Professor at Harvard that year.
* I have been at Yale since July 2014.
* At Yale, I have had two years off the tenure clock. The first year was a parental leave, including teaching relief, that I had received approval for prior to my promotion to Associate Professor. The second year off the clock was related to the COVID pandemic provided by the university to all faculty on the tenure clock.

Thus, my record can be viewed as either an 8-year record at Yale, or a 12-year record spanning the time from PhD. Characterizing this as a 14-year record would not be consistent with the university providing time “off the clock.”

Did my tenure packet as shared with the University standing committee characterize this as a 14-year record or a 12-year record? Or something else? Most importantly, did it appropriately reflect the two years off the clock provided by Yale? If yes, are senior faculty just ignoring this time off the clock?

Redress:

Sincerely,

Vineet Kumar, Associate Professor at the Yale School of Management

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