

Female Professors Say Harvard Is Not Granting Tenure to Enough Women

BY ROBIN WILSON AND PIPER FOGG

TWENTY-SIX SENIOR female professors at Harvard University have sent a letter to Lawrence H. Summers, its president, complaining that the percentage of tenured faculty jobs offered to women has declined drastically since Mr. Summers took office.

In the 2000-1 academic year, the year before Mr. Summers arrived, women received 37 percent of the tenured offers that the university made to professors in the arts and sciences, the letter says. Since then, the percentage has fallen steadily each year, to a low of 11.1 percent in 2003-4. Of the 36 tenure offers made to faculty members last year, the letter says, only four went to women. And only one of those four women accepted.

Harvard disputes the accuracy of some of those numbers, but acknowledges an overall decline in tenure offers.

Keeping an eye on the number of tenured jobs offered to women is extremely important, female professors say, because—unlike most universities—Harvard tends to grant tenure only to those it hires from other universities, not to those who come up through its ranks.

President Summers said in an interview last week that hiring more women is, in fact, a priority at Harvard. "It's obviously a crucial issue for the university to recruit as many excellent women as we can," he said. But he added: "In light of the disappointing results of the last year, it needs to be a matter of particular concern in searches this year."

'SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION'

A copy of the letter obtained by *The Chronicle* does not include

names but notes that it was signed by senior professors from 17 departments in the arts and sciences. Theda Skocpol, who holds an endowed chair in government and sociology and is one of the 26 signers, said that the plan to write the letter came together in June like "spontaneous combustion." When "word got around about the plummeting number of offers to women," she said, "it just blew everyone's minds."

The problem, according to the letter, is that while academic departments decide whom to hire, Mr. Summers makes the final call on tenure offers, and he has not made it known that he wants the university to seek female candidates aggressively.

Under its previous president, Neil L. Rudenstine, Harvard had a dean of affirmative action who pushed such a goal. That position was eliminated just before Mr. Summers took over.

"We worry about a possible signaling effect for departments," the letter says, "in taking off pressure and suggesting that steady progress for women and minorities is no longer a major decanal concern."

It also says that Mr. Summers's focus on hiring "rising young scholars" may neglect women, whose "research careers tend to peak a bit later than men's careers" because women are more likely to be juggling professional and family responsibilities.

The female professors at Harvard say that, in addition to the downward trend in tenure offers to women, they have been concerned by individual cases that may indicate Mr. Summers is not commit-

ted to bolstering the proportion of senior female faculty members.

Specifically, some professors were upset last spring, when they say Mr. Summers rejected the recommendation of the department of African and African-American studies to grant tenure to Marcyliena Morgan. After Ms. Morgan's tenure bid was turned down, she and her husband, Lawrence D. Bobo—a Harvard professor and a renowned scholar on

the social psychology of race—decided to move to Stanford University.

Mr. Summers said he does not comment on personnel decisions. Ms. Morgan was not immediately available for comment.

In a statement it released to *The Chronicle*, Harvard said that while attempts to recruit senior female professors have been disappointing, "we are encouraged by our suc-

cess at the junior faculty level, where nearly 40 percent of our new hires were women" last year.

"This is an issue that is monitored in connection with every search," said Mr. Summers in the interview. He noted that the university has a \$25-million "outreach fund" to focus on women and members of minority groups in hiring. He plans to meet with the professors who signed the letter on October 6. ■

Professor at New School U. Resigns

A FINE-ARTS PROFESSOR at the New School University's Parsons School of Design has resigned after admitting that he had copied sections of one of his books from a monograph by a professor at the University of Washington.

In his 2002 book, *Structures of Our Time: 31 Buildings That Changed Modern Life* (McGraw-Hill), Roger Shepherd copied portions of *Pietro Belluschi: Modern American Architect* (MIT Press, 1995), by Meredith L. Clausen, an architectural-history professor at Washington.

The plagiarism, which has been the subject of a copyright dispute between the two publishers, was made public in *The Chronicle* on September 14. McGraw-Hill destroyed all unsold copies of his book last year, according to Mr. Shepherd.

Paul Goldberger, dean of the Parsons school, said Mr. Shep-

herd had decided to step down after meeting with administrators last month. "We made it clear that we took this matter very seriously," the dean said. "Frankly, we could not tolerate a faculty member who had engaged in the same infraction that we would dismiss a student for."

Attempts to reach Mr. Shepherd last week were unsuccessful. Earlier he had told *The Chronicle* that he took responsibility for the copying, which he said happened in part because of the actions of a research assistant. Mr. Shepherd called the incident "a tragedy, probably the worst thing I've ever done."

In a statement sent to members of the New School's staff and faculty, Mr. Goldberger and Arjun Appadurai, the provost, called the resignation a "sad occasion." They praised Mr. Shepherd's 30 years of work at Par-

sons, where he once served as chairman of the fine-arts department.

The administrators said that the resignation was effective immediately, and that they were working to find faculty members to cover Mr. Shepherd's classes.

The MIT Press's complaint was not the first about Mr. Shepherd's book. Last year Princeton Architectural Press told McGraw-Hill that material from three Princeton titles had been used in *Structures of Our Time* without attribution.

After the allegations surfaced, Mr. Goldberger, who is also architecture critic for *The New Yorker*, conducted his own investigation. He said he had found another "equally blatant and clear" example of unattributed copying in another section of Mr. Shepherd's book, on Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

—SCOTT SMALLWOOD