

# The Way It Unfortunately Is

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## I. AWARDS

“We no longer reward *wise*,” she said.

“We have prizes for *smart* and *clever* and *big*.

We applaud *generous*, although it rarely holds up when placed on the  
‘Net worth denominator.’”

She left the stage smiling like an emoticon.

Something not quite there, but visible nonetheless.

History and legacy died long ago. Each moment is gone in a flash.

And wisdom, acquired over decades, is seen in a posthumous haze.

## II. PROMOTIONS

Assistant Professors must demonstrate focus.

Associate Professors must demonstrate breadth.

Full Professors must demonstrate breadth and teach others to demonstrate focus.

Associate Chairs must teach others to demonstrate breadth within their areas of focus.

Chairs must teach others with a broad array of areas of focus to teach others to focus on  
demonstrating breadth.

The Dean must be a person to whom this all makes sense and seems important.

## III. POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE

Academic robes cover denim today.

But neither substance nor form seems to triumph.

Empty and noisy have married and are hoping to raise a cognition-free family.

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