In 2009, from more than 45 percent to less than 25 percent. In all, graduate student employees and faculty members serving in contingent appointments now make up more than 75 percent of the total instructional staff. The most rapid growth has been among part-time faculty members, whose numbers swelled by more than 280 percent between 1975 and 2009. Between 2007 and 2009, the numbers of full-time non-tenure-track faculty members and part-time faculty members each grew at least 6 percent. During the same period, tenured positions grew by only 2.4 percent and tenure-track appointments increased by a minuscule 0.3 percent. These increases in the number of faculty appointments have taken place against the background of an overall 12 percent increase in higher education enrollment in just those two years.

Analysis of AAUP data allows us to look more directly at the immediate impact of the current recession on full-time contingent appointments at the institutions supplying data for our annual survey in both 2007–08 and 2010–11. One clear pattern emerges from a review of the aggregate numbers of full-time faculty members before the recession and now: of the 1,095 institutions with tenure-track faculty members, 66 percent increased their total numbers of full-time faculty appointments. This constitutes aggregate growth of 2.7 percent, but the composition of the faculty at these institutions has shifted. The most substantial growth has been in non-tenure-track appointments, which grew by 7.6 percent during the three-year period. Tenured appointments increased by 3.7 percent, but the number of tenure-track positions dropped by 3.7 percent. This means...