teaching-related duties. Graduate teaching assistants may be engaged in activities such as teaching courses, developing teaching materials, preparing and giving examinations, and grading examinations or papers. In an effort to align it with full- and part-time faculty, the category of graduate teaching assistants includes the unduplicated combined total of “primarily instructional” and “instructional/research/public service” and excludes clinical or basic science, medical, and military graduate teaching assistants. Institutional respondents were asked to include graduate teaching assistants who are the instructors of record for a class section, a laboratory section, or individualized instruction sessions as well as those who assist faculty and are not the instructor of record and “floating” graduate teaching assistants who have a role that primarily supports instruction but are not directly associated with one section or a faculty member.

**ELIMINATION OF FACULTY SALARY DISTRIBUTION DATA**

A final change to the 2015–16 AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey was the elimination of data collection on the basis of salary distribution by faculty rank, which for many years has been presented in survey report table 8. The collection of these data was time consuming for institutions, and a data-usage survey recently conducted by the AAUP Research Office found that salary distributions were among the least useful types of data collected in the Faculty Compensation Survey. Faculty and administrators reported that benchmarked salary data sorted by category (sector, control, and region) or peer group is more useful than a national distribution of the percentage of faculty who earn a salary within an ordinal range. For these reasons, faculty salary distribution data will no longer be published in the Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession.

* * *

We hope that the result of these changes is a more useful Faculty Compensation Survey that better reflects the changing higher education landscape. Although we have made progress toward broader inclusion and better conceptualization of reporting categories, more work remains to be done. The AAUP Research Office welcomes comments and critiques, which can be sent to aaupfcs@aaup.org. Please check the appendices to this report at http://www.aaup.org/aries to see whether your institution is included in the Faculty Compensation Survey. If it is, please take a moment to contact your director of human resources or director of institutional research and thank him or her for participating in the survey. We are very grateful for the time professional staff at your institution put into verifying, validating, and completing our survey, and this publication would not be possible without their assistance. If your institution does not participate, please encourage the human resources department or institutional research office to do so and remind them that there is no charge to participate in this survey. Many institutions use these data to address gender and salary disparity among ranks. The survey is also an excellent resource for recruitment of new faculty, who would likely not have accurate information about the average salary and compensation at your institution without these data.

For decades, the AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey has served higher education as the premier tool for benchmarking faculty salaries and benefits. We hope that the broader inclusion of the academic labor force in this year’s report will enhance benchmarking, better secure the economic status of the faculty, and facilitate institutional improvement across the higher education landscape.
Higher education appears to be at a crossroads. Administrators and faculty members must decide whether they will travel down the familiar road, investing resources increasingly in short-term efforts to maintain the status quo, or take a road less traveled, reinventing academic units and institutions with longer-term strategies that produce measurable improvements in instructional quality.

Generally, strategies that facilitate such improvements rest on (1) clarity of institutional mission, (2) strategic use of resources that support student success, and (3) a long-term commitment to full-time tenure-track faculty.

Clarity of Institutional Mission

While the abstract goals articulated in mission statements are often laudable, superlatives alone do not make an institution great. Many of the leading institutions of higher education have achieved sustained excellence through a long-term commitment to growth in areas that align with their core mission. Rather than focus on a short-term “paradigm shift,” these leading institutions often resist the temptation to “reinvigorate the brand” or “realignment” to the latest “disruptive innovation.” A focus on improving, and over time, critical units that enhance instructional quality.

Table A: Breakdown of Expenditures at Two- and Four-Year Public Institutions, 2013–14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2013–14</th>
<th>2014–15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction (31.58%)</td>
<td>31.58%</td>
<td>31.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research (9.80%)</td>
<td>9.80%</td>
<td>9.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service (4.04%)</td>
<td>4.04%</td>
<td>4.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Support/Student Services (14.27%)</td>
<td>14.27%</td>
<td>14.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Support/Auxiliary Enterprises/Independent Operations (19.37%)</td>
<td>19.37%</td>
<td>19.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Services (20.95%)</td>
<td>20.95%</td>
<td>20.95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Salary increases for the years to 1995–96 are grouped in two-year intervals in order to present the full 1971–72 through current year series. Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics; change calculated from December to December. Nominal salary is measured in current dollars. The percentage increase in real terms for the percentage increase in nominal terms adjusted for the percentage change in the CPI-U. Figures for Continuing Faculty represent the average salary change for faculty on staff at the same institution in both years over which the salary change is calculated. Figures for prior years have been recalculated using a consistent level of precision.

Alignment of spending with the institutional mission is crucial because, in the contemporary higher education environment, no institution can excel in every area. Administrators and faculty members must decide where their institution will seek to excel.

The desire to adapt to changes and adopt new educational strategies exerts a strong pull on administrators and faculty members alike, since late adopters may be left far behind in the pursuit of excellence. However, resource allocation is often fraught with peril. Sometimes, in a desire to look better than their institutional peers, college and university leaders wind up in an arms race of spending that is not sustainable and can lead to financial instability.

Over the past half decade, many institutions have drifted away from their core missions, devoting smaller portions of their total budgets to instructional and research activities. As figure 1 indicates, among all public Title-IV-eligible, degree-granting institutions with first-time, full-time undergraduates, spending on instruction now makes up less than one-third (32 percent) of the budget, while spending on academic support and student services remains at 14 percent and spending on research has dropped below 10 percent.

Strategic Use of Services That Support Student Success

As institutions recruit increasingly diverse student bodies that include many first-generation college students, academic support and student services become more critical. These services support instruction and research outside of the classroom in order to help students succeed inside the classroom. Students...
who arrive on campus without the academic training and skills they will need to succeed can benefit greatly from such support, and institutions that invest in student services can save thousands of dollars in the long term and facilitate unit and institution improvement. Recent research shows that colleges and universities that spend more on student services have better student outcomes. Moreover, students at those institutions may have more opportunities available to them in the labor market after graduation.

One notable example of this return on investment is the Supplemental Instruction Program developed by the tenured faculty at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Now in place on hundreds of campuses in the United States and around the world, this program uses peer-assisted study sessions, facilitated by students who have previously done well in a challenging course, to help current students succeed. Through supplemental instructional sessions, students learn valuable skills such as effective note taking, discussion of readings, organizational skill development, and exercises that help them anticipate exam questions. In a major meta-analysis covering more than nine years, researchers found that student participation in supplemental instructional activities was positively correlated with higher mean grades, improved retention, and better graduation rates.⁵ By retaining students and helping them graduate on time, institutions of higher education can generate substantial cost savings in recruitment and helping them graduate on time, institutions of higher education can generate substantial cost savings in recruitment and retaining the long-term economic stability of the faculty.⁶ Academic freedom can attest, institutions succeed when there is a climate that supports academic freedom and tenure. As historical and contemporary research has suggested, institutions that hire and retain high-quality faculty are more likely to exhibit effectiveness.⁷

The four cornerstones of strategic planning and institutional effectiveness are: sharing governance, spurs pedagogical and research innovation, and facilitates research breakthroughs, benefits institutions and communities and serves the national interest. By focusing on the conversion of part-time to full-time positions, we hope to suggest practical ways that units and institutions can save money to offset investment in the faculty. Through conversion, part-time appointments with poor pay and little job security can be transformed into something better: positions with full-time salaries and benefits. While conversion to the tenure track is preferable, we have also estimated the costs of converting part-time faculty (generally full or associate professors) make up approximately 21 percent of tenured or on the tenure track. Tenured faculty (generally full professors) make up just over 8 percent.

Research has found that private institutions, on average, have higher levels of part-time faculty than their public counterparts, as do institutions located in large urban or suburban areas.¹⁰ Institutions with a higher proportion of part-time students have more part-time faculty members, and differences in faculty employment across institutions are related to the portfolio of academic programs.¹¹

**CHANGING ACADEMIC LABOR FORCE**
The tenure system protects academic freedom, facilitates shared governance, spurs educational and research innovation, and bolsters student learning and retention rates. According to one former provost, Sol Gittleman, it “made American universities the best in the world.”¹² Since the mid-1970s, higher education has come to rely increasingly on contingent faculty—those serving in non-tenure-track positions, often classified as part time. This trend has profoundly affected the structure of the academic labor force as well as the quality of higher education. IPEDS data indicate that less than one-third of faculty members are now either tenured or on the tenure track. Non-tenured faculty (generally full or associate professors) make up approximately 21 percent of the academic labor force, while tenure-track faculty (assistant professors) make up just over 8 percent. Figure 2 attempts to place these numbers in historical perspective. Over the past forty years, the proportion of the academic labor force holding full-time tenured positions has declined by 26 percent and the share holding full-time tenure-track positions has declined by an astonishing 50 percent. Conversely, there has been a 62 percent increase in full-time non-tenure-track faculty appointments and a 70 percent increase in part-time instructional faculty appointments. The major portion (70 percent) of academic positions today are not only off the tenure track but also part time, with part-time instruction serving as a last resort for many of the academic labor force and graduate teaching assistants making up almost another 13 percent (part-time tenure-track positions make up about 1 percent of the academic labor force).

In an effort to better understand the rising number of part-time faculty appointments and assess their impact on higher education, the AAUP Research Office began collecting data on part-time faculty compensation in this year’s Faculty Compensation Survey. While these data have limitations, as the preceding article explains, this year’s survey is among the first efforts to benchmark data on part-time faculty pay and make aggregate data publicly available. Survey report table 8 indicates that this year, the average part-time faculty member earned $16,714 from a single employer. In addition to variation at the institutional level, part-time faculty salaries varied by institutional category, with
part-time faculty at doctoral institutions earning $26,321, those at master's institutions earning $14,272, those at baccalaureate institutions earning $14,949, those at associate's colleges with ranks earning $15,056, and those at associate's colleges without ranks earning $9,803.

The decision to reduce the proportion of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty has profoundly affected higher education. As the AAUP noted in its 2003 statement Contingent Appointments and the Academic Profession, the dramatic increase in part-time faculty has created "systemic problems for higher education" that have weakened faculty governance, imperiled academic freedom, and diminished student learning. While many faculty members serving in part-time positions are well qualified and make extraordinary efforts to overcome their circumstances, researchers have found that having fewer resources available. The nature of their work sometimes requires commuting between several campuses, and they often are assigned to crowded group offices—or have no office at all. As a result, part-time faculty may be less accessible to students.

These inadequately supported faculty members are disproportionately assigned to introductory or "gateway" courses that have students who need the most assistance. Such students sometimes need basic instruction in grammar and composition, which requires the kind of intensive, hands-on teaching that is difficult for a part-time faculty member with full-time teaching hours and insufficient support to provide. Evidence suggests that faculty in full-time tenured or tenure-track positions may be better prepared to provide high-quality instruction in these introductory courses, which are crucial for student retention, achievement, and degree completion. Analysis of data collected by the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty showed that full-time faculty generally spend 50 to 100 percent more time per credit hour on instruction, in and out of the classroom, than do part-time faculty.

Although much has been written about the value of tenure as a protector of academic freedom, less is known about the economic value tenure provides to society, institutions of higher education, and students. Recent research has shown that the most year institutions that spend $2,000 more on instruction and $400 more on student services per full-time student are likely to have higher graduation rates. Using a nationally representative dataset, researchers found that instructional spending has the highest return for disadvantaged students. Spending on instruction is also positively correlated with the probability of full-time employment, job match, and salary after graduation, particularly for more disadvantaged students.

Simply put, if the public and policy makers are concerned about student retention, graduation rates, and job placement after college, they must spend additional money on instruction. Faculty in full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty with access to professional development and resources is one of the best tools to improve quality for all students, and particularly for low-income students.

The growth in part-time faculty has profound implications. The voices of non-tenure-track faculty members are as central to higher education today as the voices of their tenure-track and tenured colleagues. We recognize the incredible efforts undertaken each day by part-time faculty members to deliver the best possible instruction with what few resources may be at their disposal at the time. The research presented in this report should not be construed as a critique of the work of part-time faculty. Rather, our aim is, first, to explain why reliance on part-time faculty is not a viable long-term solution for higher education if the United States is to remain a global leader in education and research and, second, to outline alternatives to a permanent underclass of part-time faculty. Institutions should work to rebuild the ranks of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty not just for economic reasons but also because the protections of tenure provide the academic freedom to take risks and to innovate, which lead to breakthroughs in the classroom and beyond.

**FULL- AND PART-TIME FACULTY SURVEY**

Earlier this year, the AAUP Research Office conducted a survey to explore whether a faculty member's status as full- or part-time affected instructional or research activity. In this survey, we compared faculty employed in part-time contracts with faculty employed in full-time positions, regardless of whether the positions were tenure track. Almost all of the part-time respondents were in non-tenure-track positions; full-time respondents were
TABLE B
Effect of Part- or Full-Time Appointment on Instructional and Research Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement: “My appointment type has influenced the way I . . .”</th>
<th>Part-Time (% Agree)</th>
<th>Full-Time (% Agree)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiment with teaching methods**</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiment with course content (source readings, assignments, etc.)**</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach content that might challenge students’ understanding of the social world*</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide critical feedback on students’ graded coursework</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide critical feedback to students in the classroom</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign course grades</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select research topics to study***</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present research at professional conferences***</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish scholarly research (articles, book chapters, manuscripts, etc.)***</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: P<.05 = ***, <.01 = **, <.05 = *
Source: AAUP Research Office.

TABLE C
Effect of Part- or Full-Time Appointment on Willingness to Take Risk and Perceptions of Institutional Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Part-Time (% Agree)</th>
<th>Full-Time (% Agree)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to Take Risk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have undertaken research with a greater risk knowing that the results might take a long time to collect***</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have undertaken research with a greater risk knowing that the results might take a long time to analyze**</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have undertaken research with a greater risk knowing that the findings might not be published***</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of Institutional Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My institution supports academic freedom***</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chief academic officer (provost, chancellor, etc.) supports academic freedom***</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My institution supports the principles of shared governance*</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My institution supports the economic security of faculty***</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My institution has a plan to convert part-time faculty to full-time faculty*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: P<.05 = ***, <.01 = **, <.05 = *
Source: AAUP Research Office.

a mix of tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty. Responses were weighted based on institutional control (public, private nonprofit, or private for-profit). Data presented are from a nationally representative analytic sample of 2,224 full- and part-time faculty members.

To explore whether one’s contractual appointment had an influence on instructional or research activity, we asked a series of questions about specific activities related to instruction and research. Table B presents the items and the percentage of respondents who agreed with each statement. 17

We found that whether a faculty member is appointed on a part- or full-time basis affects nearly all aspects of work, including instruction, research, involvement in departmental governance, extramural activities, and perceptions of administrators or their institution. As Table B indicates, full-time faculty are more likely than their part-time colleagues to experiment with teaching methods (66 to 56 percent), to experiment with course content (57 to 57 percent), and to teach content that might challenge students’ understanding of their social world (48 to 40 percent). The willingness to innovate in the classroom and challenge students with diverse perspectives and difficult content is a crucial component of high-quality instruction. Without the job security that comes with tenure-track appointments and, to a lesser degree, with full-time non-tenure-track appointments, faculty members may hesitate to challenge students by criticizing or calling into question commonly accepted ideas.

Innovation and high-quality research also depend on secure, stable appointments. Major scientific breakthroughs often take years or decades to be translated to a specific product or service. In our survey, we found that full-time faculty were more likely than part-time faculty to select research topics to study (54 to 41 percent), present papers at professional conferences (58 to 46 percent), and publish scholarly research (65 to 45 percent). These findings do not necessarily indicate that part-time faculty do not have the capacity to conduct such research; rather, the results likely show that they do not have the time or resources needed to do so.

Research serves unit, institutional, and national interests. Few corporations are willing to underwrite the level of sustained research needed to produce the scientific breakthroughs that make the United States a global leader in publications, patents, and even pedagogical innovations. A key component of research is the willingness to take risk—sometimes by pursuing topics that may be unpopular, sometimes by investing in projects and experiments that may not yield useful results or may take years to complete. Table C presents findings based on a series of statements with which faculty in part- and full-time appointments were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement. We found that full-time faculty are willing to take greater risks when the results might take a long time to collect (57 to 27 percent) and analyze (55 to 23 percent) and that they are more likely to conduct research when the findings will not be published (32 to 39 percent).

ECONOMIC VALUE OF TENURE

Conventional wisdom has long held that tenure inhibits innovation and leads to lower-risk, higher-reward research that can easily translate to presentations and publications. Recent studies, however, suggest that tenure makes faculty more willing to take on risk and less likely to stick to the well-trodden paths that lead to easy presentations and publications. A 2015 study of more than 6 million abstracts from medicine and chemistry conducted by sociologists Jacob Foster, Andrey Rzhetsky, and James Evans offered strong quantitative evidence that tenure can provide a faculty member the safety to take on innovative projects without having to worry about the potentially career-threatening consequences of failing to produce discernible or immediately publishable results. 18 Specifically, they found that innovative research is more likely to have a high impact than conservative research, but the additional reward does not compensate for the risk of failing to publish. By studying prize-winning scholars in biomedicine and chemistry, Foster and his colleagues were able to demonstrate how occasional gambles can have an extraordinary impact on science, technology, and society.

In preparing this year’s Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, the AAUP Research Office interviewed a number of prominent scholars to gather more information about how tenure might have emboldened them to take pedagogical and research risks, which, in turn, improved their institutions, their communities, and US society.

One tenured faculty member who undertook innovative research that at the time was perceived as risky is Paul Modrich. A professor of biochemistry at Duke University, Modrich studies DNA mismatch repair, a mutation avoidance system that stabilizes the genome by correcting errors in DNA sequences. When Modrich began this line of research, there was biological evidence to support the existence of DNA mismatch repair, but the process was not understood. His research at the time was a “substantial risk” because it would be time-intensive and might not lead to any presentations or publications.

Modrich’s research on DNA mismatch repair enabled him and his colleagues to isolate the cause of approximately 20 percent of all forms of colon cancer, saving thousands of lives. When we spoke with Modrich, he told us that he was inspired to conduct “curiosity-based research” and to pursue interesting questions, even if they are risky, because “you never know where it is going to lead.” His research led to the 2015 Nobel Prize in chemistry.

Tenure does not simply empower faculty in the laboratory to take risks. It also enables them to take risks in finding new approaches to better educate their students. Earlier this year, we spoke with Glenn Platt, a professor of marketing at Miami University in Ohio. Platt helped develop the “inverted classroom,” or, as it is better known today, the “flipped classroom.” A flipped classroom is a pedagogical innovation in which lecture and coursework elements are reversed. Historically, faculty members have lectured to students in the classroom and then assigned coursework outside of the classroom. In a flipped classroom, short video lectures are recorded by the faculty for students to watch outside of the classroom and in-class time is dedicated to exercises, projects, discussions, or other activities.

When Platt and his colleagues began experimenting with the flipped classroom, they were searching for a way to engage students in order to boost retention, improve achievement, and, ultimately, attract larger numbers of majors as well as
more diverse students to business and economics. Platt recalls that this innovative approach was not well received by his colleagues. They would chide him for “watering down economics” or “teaching kindergarten classes,” and they derided the flipped classroom as “a scam to get us out of lecturing.” However, Platt and his colleagues found that students in flipped classrooms reported being significantly more engaged in learning, and unde-

TABLE D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>No. of Part-Time Faculty</th>
<th>% of Faculty in Part-Time Positions</th>
<th>Benefits as % of Total Expenditure</th>
<th>Cost of Each Conversion to Assistant Professorship to Full-Time Instructorship</th>
<th>Cost of 100% Conversion to Assistant Professorship as % of Total Expenditure</th>
<th>Cost of 50% Conversion to Assistant Professorship as % of Total Expenditure</th>
<th>Cost of Each Conversion to Full-Time Instructorship as % of Total Expenditure</th>
<th>Cost of 100% Conversion to Full-Time Instructorship as % of Total Expenditure</th>
<th>Cost of 50% Conversion to Full-Time Instructorship as % of Total Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State University–Main Campus</td>
<td>1,144</td>
<td>34.61%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>$107,325</td>
<td>2.51%</td>
<td>1.26%</td>
<td>$43,954</td>
<td>1.03%</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Leo University</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>87.25%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>$70,487</td>
<td>52.05%</td>
<td>26.05%</td>
<td>$68,572</td>
<td>51.38%</td>
<td>25.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNY Oswego</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>40.07%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>$78,745</td>
<td>10.19%</td>
<td>5.09%</td>
<td>$64,502</td>
<td>8.34%</td>
<td>4.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Average</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>47.19%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>$85,389</td>
<td>16.93%</td>
<td>8.48%</td>
<td>$60,405</td>
<td>9.13%</td>
<td>4.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The costs of converting part-time positions to either full-time instructional or full-time tenure-track positions is based on the most recent data from NCES IPEDS on the total number of part-time instructional faculty and the average reported salary. Benefits costs are based on national estimates and institutional submissions for the corresponding year of the Faculty Compensation Survey. Institution expenditure calculations are based on the total of major expenditure categories reported in NCES IPEDS data for the corresponding year. Estimates of “total costs” should be used with caution in the absence of more detailed financial data.

Source: AAUP Research Office.

follow-up research to determine the freshness of snack foods in high-altitude areas. Intel became interested in the research after finding that its microchips heat up more rapidly at higher alti-
tude. Soap manufacturer Procter and Gamble was interested in how altitude affects soap bubbles. This line of research has also created life-saving breakthroughs. For example, it has informed studies of hereditary paraganglioma, a rare form of cancer that is more likely to form in humans living at high altitudes. When we spoke with Cohen, he admitted that he couldn’t have possibly anticipated the practical implications of his research when he first began it. Reflecting back on his breakthroughs, he acknowledged that it took him nearly “nine years to write his first book” and that without tenure, the research he did on hypox-

At campuses across the country, different methods of improving the current situation have been devised by adminis-

Tenure also provides the opportunity for faculty to conduct research that may yield tremendous social and economic value for society. Such research can be particularly risky for faculty members, for its benefits are sometimes not fully manifest for years or even decades. Indeed, one critique of the tenure system—frequently leveled at public institutions receiving state appropriations—is that it enables faculty members to study meaningless and esoteric topics that have little practical value for society.

Joel Cohen, a tenured professor at Columbia University, studies “hypographic demography,” or how human populations are distributed with respect to altitude—a topic that may seem to have few practical applications. Working with his colleague Christopher Small, Cohen was able to generate realistic projec-
tions for the distribution of nearly the entire human population. The research has proven to have practical value for a variety of industries. Frito-Lay contacted Cohen and Small about

the risk necessary to make the flipped classroom a success.

classes. Most impressive, in Platt’s view, was the increase in student engagement. In Platt’s comment, “Students, including me, became more engaged in learning, and this success was due to the instructor’s teaching style.”

At campuses across the country, different methods of improving the current situation have been devised by adminis-

Tenure-track and tenured faculty around the country are developing a great variety of other pedagogical and research innovations. The digital edition of this report, available at http://www.aaup.org/areas, includes additional brief sketches of research undertaken by tenured faculty members.

The decline of the tenure system, caused largely by shifting administrative and institutional priorities, was worsened by the recent recession. To be sure, the majority of US institu-
tions of higher education are facing unprecedented challenges. However, in order to thrive over the next decade and beyond, institutions must reidentify themselves to the core educational mission. As the AAUP’s 2010 statement Tenure and Teaching: Intensive Appointments noted, “A new consensus is emerging that it is time to stabilize the crumbling faculty infrastructure.”

more likely to form in humans living at high altitudes. When we spoke with Cohen, he admitted that he couldn’t have possibly anticipated the practical implications of his research when he first began it. Reflecting back on his breakthroughs, he acknowledged that it took him nearly “nine years to write his first book” and that without tenure, the research he did on hypox-

droms would represent 16.93 percent of US higher education institutions. Nearly all part-time faculty members to tenure-track assistant professors would represent 16.93 percent of US higher education

track. Part-time positions can be compensated on the same scale as full-time positions or (as is usually the case) on a different scale. For some departments and faculty members, part-time positions make sense, and in these cases we recommend as best practice fractional positions, including fully proportional pay, that are eligible for tenure and benefits, with proportional expectations for service and professional development.

In what follows, we address one common situation: the existence of an institution of part-time non-tenure-track positions, that could usefully be converted into full-time posi-
tions. We look at the cost for an institution of converting such part-time positions either to full-time assistant profes-
sors (generally a tenure-track position) or, as an intermediary step, to full-time instructorships (generally a non-tenure-track position). While it is certainly possible to grant tenure status without changing faculty salaries, and some faculty activists have proposed exactly that, we focus here on the cost of rais-
ing the compensation of faculty in converted positions to the institutional average for that position.

To do this, we must make some assumptions. Faculty salaries vary by discipline, and as the Faculty Compensation Survey demonstrates in survey report table 1, salary differ-
tences between full-time tenure-track assistant professors and full-time instructors exist even at the institutional level. It is reasonable to assume that if part-time faculty are teaching one, two, or even three courses, an institution might not need every one of them in full-time positions to meet current enrollment demand. As we have consistently recommended, any conver-
sion plan that involves consolidating the number of positions must be carried out carefully and over a time period that allows numbers to be reduced through attrition rather than by terminating the appointments of current faculty members. Faculty benefits also have a cost. Fortunately, benefits data are available for many institutions through the AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey. If we know the number of part-time instructional faculty, the average salaries for assistant profes-
sors and full-time instructors, and the average percentage of benefits, we can make a reasonable estimate of total com-
pensation. Additionally, IPEDS can provide data on the total expenditures for major faculty categories.

Table D presents selected cost estimates for the conversion of part-time positions to either full-time instructor or full-time assistant professor position that follow. These estimates illustrate how such conversions might look at Title-IV-eligible, degree-granting institutions that have first-time, full-time undergraduate.

However, as contingent faculty fight for and win greater employment security, often through unionization, it is becom-
ing clear that improved employment security alone is not an adequate substitute for tenure. As the 2010 statement noted, “A potentially crippling development in these arrangements is that many—while improving on the entirely insecure positions they replace—offer limited conceptions of academic citizenship and service, few protections for academic freedom, and little opportunity for professional growth.” These arrangements com-

18 MARCH-APRIL 2016 ACADEME

19 MARCH-APRIL 2016 ACADEME

municly involve minimal professional peer scrutiny in hiring, evaluation, and promotion.” Thus, the AAUP believes that the best way to stabilize the faculty infrastructure is through the conversion of contingent positions to tenure-line positions.

Full-time positions can be contingent or on the tenure track, and part-time positions can be contingent or on the tenure track. Part-time positions can be compensated on the same scale as full-time positions or (as is usually the case) on a different scale. For some departments and faculty members, part-time positions make sense, and in these cases we recommend as best practice fractional positions, including fully proportional pay, that are eligible for tenure and benefits, with proportional expectations for service and professional development.

In what follows, we address one common situation: the existence of an institution of part-time non-tenure-track positions, that could usefully be converted into full-time posi-
tions. We look at the cost for an institution of converting such part-time positions either to full-time assistant profes-
sors (generally a tenure-track position) or, as an intermediary step, to full-time instructorships (generally a non-tenure-track position). While it is certainly possible to grant tenure status without changing faculty salaries, and some faculty activists have proposed exactly that, we focus here on the cost of rais-
ing the compensation of faculty in converted positions to the institutional average for that position.

To do this, we must make some assumptions. Faculty salaries vary by discipline, and as the Faculty Compensation Survey demonstrates in survey report table 1, salary differ-
tences between full-time tenure-track assistant professors and full-time instructors exist even at the institutional level. It is reasonable to assume that if part-time faculty are teaching one, two, or even three courses, an institution might not need every one of them in full-time positions to meet current enrollment demand. As we have consistently recommended, any conver-
sion plan that involves consolidating the number of positions must be carried out carefully and over a time period that allows numbers to be reduced through attrition rather than by terminating the appointments of current faculty members. Faculty benefits also have a cost. Fortunately, benefits data are available for many institutions through the AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey. If we know the number of part-time instructional faculty, the average salaries for assistant profes-
sors and full-time instructors, and the average percentage of benefits, we can make a reasonable estimate of total com-
pensation. Additionally, IPEDS can provide data on the total expenditures for major faculty categories.

Table D presents selected cost estimates for the conversion of part-time positions to either full-time instructor or full-time assistant professor position that follow. These estimates illustrate how such conversions might look at Title-IV-eligible, degree-granting institutions that have first-time, full-time undergraduates.

Nationally, the average estimated enrollment per US institu-
tion is 4,686 students. Approximately 47 percent of faculty, or 267 faculty members on average per institution, are employed in part-time positions. At an average cost of conversion of$107,325 to a 100% conversion, we can estimate a total cost of$43,954. Table D illustrates how such conversions might look at Title-IV-eligible, degree-granting institutions that have first-time, full-time undergraduates.

Nationally, the average estimated enrollment per US institu-
tion is 4,686 students. Approximately 47 percent of faculty, or 267 faculty members on average per institution, are employed in part-time positions. At an average cost of conversion of$107,325 to a 100% conversion, we can estimate a total cost of$43,954. Table D illustrates how such conversions might look at Title-IV-eligible, degree-granting institutions that have first-time, full-time undergraduates.
expenditure, and the cost of converting half would represent 8.46 percent of expenditures. Conversion to full-time instructors would cost the average institution 9.13 percent of total expenditures. Some caution should be used in generalizing from these averages, and there is substantial variation from one institution to another. For example, some institutions employ very few part-time faculty members, and at such institutions faculty might serve by choice or for legitimate pedagogical reasons in part-time positions. At other institutions, most of the faculty are in part-time positions and both the institution and faculty members would benefit from the conversion to full-time positions. In what follows, we give some examples to illustrate how a conversion plan could work at different institutions.

Ohio State University is a major public research-intensive institution serving approximately 65,000 students. With over 1,100 part-time faculty members, approximately 34 percent of the faculty at Ohio State are in part-time positions. Converting the part-time faculty positions to assistant professorships would cost, on average, $107,325 per faculty member. The total cost of conversion would represent 2.51 percent of the overall operating budget by major expenditure categories. If only half were converted, either as an interim measure or because fewer faculty positions would be needed if all were full-time, the cost would be 1.26 percent of the total budget. Conversion of all part-time faculty to full-time instructional positions, at $43,954 per faculty member, would cost 1.03 percent of the total budget, while conversion of half would cost 0.51 percent.

Saint Leo University is a private nonprofit institution with a large online presence and approximately 16,000 students. Its 228 part-time faculty members serve approximately 8,000 students. Its 1,129 part-time faculty members make up approximately 87 percent of the total faculty. With an average cost of $70,487 to convert each part-time faculty member to an assistant professor with benefits, the cost of full conversion would amount to 52 percent of the total expenditures. Converting half of the faculty to assistant professorships would cost approximately 26 percent of the total expenditures. To convert all part-time faculty to full-time instructors would cost approximately 51 percent of total expenditures. The State University of New York College at Oswego is a regional public institution with a large master’s program that serves approximately eight thousand students. Its 1,129 part-time faculty members represent approximately 40 percent of the total faculty. At a cost of $78,743 per assistant professor, it would cost $98,807,491 to convert all part-time faculty members to full-time tenure-track positions and 5 percent to convert half. Converting part-time faculty to full-time instructors would cost approximately 8 percent.

Funding a Conversion Plan
Revenues are rising at US colleges and universities. Recent economic trends have led to a significant increase in the proportion of costs paid with student tuition stabilized among public institutions and declined among private institutions between 2003 and 2013, resulting in increases in net tuition.\(^\text{20}\) At the same time, local and state appropriations are rebounding. Commenting on recent data on endowment returns, John Walda, president of the National Association of College and University Business Officers, said, “Perhaps the most important finding is the rise in longer-term returns, which will be very beneficial to colleges and universities that are seeking to serve a broader variety of students than ever before.”\(^\text{21}\)

We should note that some colleges and universities serve demographically similar student bodies, and the costs of converting all part-time faculty members to full-time tenure-track positions are higher than current costs. Overruns must be balanced together to attract a broader range of students and better align course schedules. Course scheduling is a key but often overlooked area of potential cost savings. For example, faculty members might want to offer a course “off grid” (from 10:30 to 11:20 a.m. rather than 10:00 to 10:50 a.m.) because they believe that doing so will maximize attendance, but off-grid scheduling can have a negative effect by preventing students from enrolling in other courses later in the day. Scheduling problems can negatively affect student retention and achievement. Faculty members should work with departmental colleagues and enrollment managers to maximize seat and space use and make sure that the extra revenue generated from savings is returned to instruction.

Scheduling problems can negatively affect student retention and achievement. Faculty members should work with departmental colleagues and enrollment managers to maximize seat and space use and make sure that the extra revenue generated from savings is returned to instruction.

Athletics: Athletics can be a major source of revenue or a large drain on institutional resources. Conversion of part-time faculty members to full-time status might offer a genuine return that can be directed toward building the long-term security of the faculty through conversion.

It is important to note that many of our proposals should be based on a model of cost alignment and not simply cost containment. Cost alignment is the process of identifying expenditures relative to comparable peers, while cost containment is the process of uncertain the cost of all expenditures. If a specific threshold of expenditure is not crossed. Cost containment may be beneficial as a short-term measure in financially challenging times, but it is generally not an effective way of addressing challenges. It is a way of constraining costs so that both would be net zero, but in the absence of reliable data on both, this is a limitation of our projections. Third, there is a great deal of variation in the use of part-time faculty from one institution to another. For many institutions, the cost of conversion would be a minor investment in a single year or over a period of years. For others, the cost would be more significant. That does not mean that conversion is impossible: slow, steady progress, at an average cost of an additional 2 percent of total expenditures per year, could drastically turn the tide over the course of a decade, improving student success and retention and helping to ensure the economic security of the profession. Faculty members can work with administrators to find additional sources of savings. Possibilities will vary from institution to institution and from discipline to discipline. By directing some of these savings to support the conversion plan can sometimes offer a genuine return that can be directed toward building the long-term security of the faculty through conversion.
The AAUP Research Office welcomes the opportunity to work with colleges and universities to find creative ways to convert the conversion of part-time faculty positions. Providing benefits to all faculty members not only improves the lives of faculty members but also indirectly enriches the lives of their students. Please contact the AAUP Research Office at research@aaup.org for more information or to share examples of other cost-saving strategies to offset the cost of conversion.

CONCLUSION

This year’s Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession highlights the crossroads that higher education has reached. On the one hand, the broader economy has generally rebounded from the Great Recession. During this time, innovations in data management and information technology have enabled faculty to teach and conduct research in ways scarcely imaginable a generation ago. On the other hand, despite such progress, considerable challenges lie ahead for faculty and institutions of higher education. Chief among them is the need to reverse the soaring rates of contingency and rebalance a faculty with a strong core of full-time, tenure-track positions.

The decline of the tenure system did not occur overnight; it can be observed over a forty-year period. If US higher education is to retain its global advantage in instructional and research innovation over the next decade, it will need to commit itself to a full-time academic labor force that can in turn commit to academic excellence.

Our report has sought to demonstrate how the conversion of part-time faculty to full-time tenure-eligible positions can reinvigorate institutions of higher education. If conditions in your department are to change, that change likely will come not from chief academic officers but from the faculty. As the previ-ously cited Inside Higher Ed survey found, only 8 percent of chief academic officers anticipate relying less on non-tenure-track faculty in the future, while 27 percent believe that they will rely more on non-tenure-track faculty. Yet the same survey found that only 15 percent of chief academic officers strongly believe that there is a fundamental difference in perspective between faculty members and administrators. These data suggest that most chief academic officers are willing to look for tangible ways to improve the health and security of the faculty, the institution, and, ultimately, the economic status of the profession.

STEVEN SHULMAN (Economics) Colorado State University, chair BARBARA HOPKINS (Economics) Wright State University ROBERT KELCHEN (Higher Education) Seton Hall University SHARON MASTRACCI (Public Administration) University of Utah MEHMET YAYA (Economics) Eastern Michigan University JOHN BARNSHAW, staff SAMUEL DUNIETZ, staff The committee ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors thank Lynn Letukas for her assistance with weighting the data from the full- and part-time faculty survey.

NOTES


