

Explanation of Statistical Data

FULL-TIME FACULTY. The full-time faculty members reported in the survey are those who meet the US Department of Education's eligibility criteria for full-time instructional staff in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Human Resources survey component.

Institutions are asked to include (a) full-time faculty members who are on the payroll of the institution as of November 1, 2025, and working nine-, ten-, eleven-, or twelve-month contracts; (b) full-time "Primarily Instructional" and "Instructional/Research Public Service" faculty members whose regular assignment has an instruction component (including release time for research), regardless of whether they are formally designated as "faculty" and irrespective of tenure status; (c) faculty members who are working on a reduced load (for example, 0.75 FTE) but who are still considered full-time in the institution's human resources or payroll system; (d) full-time faculty members who are on sabbatical or leave with pay; and (e) replacement faculty members for those on sabbatical or leave without pay, but only if the replacement faculty members are employed full-time.

Institutions are asked to exclude (a) faculty members who are working on contracts of less than nine months; (b) clinical or basic science faculty, medical faculty, and/or military faculty paid on a different scale from civilian employees; (c) extreme outliers, meaning faculty members whose base salary falls well outside the norm for a particular rank; (d) faculty members on sabbatical or leave without pay; (e) replacement faculty members for those on sabbatical or leave with pay; (f) research faculty members and other faculty members who do not have a contractual instructional role, such as research assistant or associate, research professor, postdoctoral research fellow, or research fellow; (g) faculty members on courtesy appointments and other faculty members whose services are valued by book-keeping entries rather than by full cash transactions, unless their salaries are determined by the same principles as those who do not donate their services; and (h) contributed service personnel, or administrative officers with titles such as provost, dean, associate or assistant dean, librarian, counselor, registrar, or coach, even though they may devote part of their time to classroom instruction and may have faculty status.

The academic ranks assigned to full-time faculty members are those determined by the reporting institution. Not all institutions use all ranks, and the definitions vary by institution. Institutions have been instructed to report "teaching" faculty members (for example, "Associate Teaching Professor") at the same rank used in their titles, regardless of their tenure status. Institutions have been instructed to report "visiting" faculty members and those with instructional postdoctoral appointments at the rank of instructor. Instructions for reporting visiting faculty were updated in 2024–25 to ensure consistent reporting and now state that visiting appointments are short-term, non-tenure-track positions held by individuals who ordinarily continue to hold tenured or tenure-track positions at other academic institutions. In the past, the AAUP asked that full-time faculty members with "visiting" in their titles be reported in the category of "instructor," but in recent years it became clear that some institutions assign "visiting" titles to faculty members holding other types of non-tenure-track appointments. In such cases, faculty members should be reported at their named ranks.

"No rank" full-time faculty members meet the other criteria for inclusion, regardless of whether they are formally designated as "faculty." They may have titles such as "artist in residence" or "scholar in residence." Institutions that do not assign faculty

rank are instructed to report all full-time faculty members as "no rank." (See also the definition of institutional category IV below.)

PART-TIME FACULTY. The part-time faculty members reported in the survey are those who were paid per course section and defined by their institutions as employed less than full time. As with full-time faculty members, part-time faculty members are those included in the US Department of Education categories of "Primarily Instructional" and "Instructional/Research/Public Service," regardless of whether they are formally designated as "faculty." Clinical or basic science faculty in schools of medicine or military faculty are excluded. Individuals employed to meet short-term needs (for example, to cover a few weeks of a course) and students in the Federal Work-Study Program are excluded, even if their work has an instructional component.

The course sections for which part-time faculty pay is reported are those meeting the definition of an undergraduate class section in the Common Data Set for 2024–25 (<http://www.commondataset.org/>), item I-3: "an organized course offered for credit, identified by discipline and number, meeting at a stated time or times in a classroom or similar setting, and not a subsection such as a laboratory or discussion session. Undergraduate class sections are defined as any sections in which at least one degree-seeking undergraduate student is enrolled for credit. Inclusion criteria were modified in 2023–24 to include part-time faculty members who taught distance-learning (online or remote) course sections, unless they were paid on a different scale from those who taught in-person course sections. Inclusion criteria were modified in 2025–26 to include part-time faculty members who taught dual-enrollment course sections, unless they were paid on a different scale from those who taught regular undergraduate course sections. Exclude noncredit classes and individual instruction such as dissertation or thesis research, music instruction, or one-to-one readings. Exclude students in independent study, co-operative programs, internships, foreign language taped tutor sessions, practicums, and all students in one-on-one classes." (Also see the notes for survey report table 15 and appendix III.)

SALARY. This figure represents the contracted academic-year salary for full-time faculty members excluding summer teaching, stipends, extra load, or other forms of remuneration. Department heads with faculty rank and no other administrative title are reported at their instructional salary (that is, excluding administrative stipends). Where faculty members are given duties for eleven or twelve months, salary is converted to a standard academic-year basis as determined by the institution. The factor used to convert salaries is reflected in the notes to appendixes I and II.

CHANGE IN SALARY FOR CONTINUING FACULTY. The change in salary reported is for those 2024–25 full-time faculty members who remained employed as full-time faculty at the same institution and at the same contract length for 2025–26. The change includes both promotions in rank and increases (or decreases) due to other factors.

BENEFITS. These figures represent contributions by the institution, state, and local government on behalf of individual faculty members and do not include employee contributions. Benefit coverage represents eligibility regardless of whether the institution contributes to the benefit plan, per Internal Revenue Service guidelines for reporting fringe benefits. Prior to 2024–25, the survey reported only collected data on benefit

coverage (eligibility) and did not separately collect data on benefit participation. The benefits reported in the survey include (a) retirement plan contributions, regardless of vesting provisions, excluding payments for unfunded retirement liability, prepaid retiree health insurance, and Social Security; (b) medical insurance contributions, including premiums for insurance plans combining medical, dental, and other health care, but excluding long-term disability, Medicare, life insurance, and Health Savings Accounts; and (c) tuition benefits available to faculty dependents. As with salary figures, retirement figures are converted to a standard academic-year basis as determined by the institution. Medical insurance contributions are not converted to an academic-year basis. Dependent tuition benefits were collected for full-time faculty as a series of multiple-choice items only (see survey report table 10). In 2023–24, the “Institution is a member of Tuition Exchange” field was changed to “Competitive scholarship programs, such as Tuition Exchange.” In 2025–26, the “Tuition benefit varies based on years of service or other factors” field was changed to “Tuition benefit depends on years of service or other factors.” For part-time faculty, retirement and medical benefits were collected as categorical variables only (see survey report table 16). Not all institutions reported all items. Institutions were asked to provide their best estimate of the data for the entire academic year.

INSTITUTIONAL CATEGORIES. AAUP institutional categories are assigned to institutions by the AAUP Research Office based on the following institutional characteristics:

Category I (Doctoral). Institutions characterized by a significant level and breadth of activity in doctoral-level education as measured by the number of doctorate recipients and the diversity in doctoral-level program offerings. Institutions in this category grant a minimum of thirty doctoral-level degrees annually, from at least three distinct programs. Awards previously categorized as first-professional degrees, such as the JD, MD, and DD, do not count as doctorates for this classification. Awards in the category of “doctor’s degree–professional practice” are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Category IIA (Master’s). Institutions characterized by diverse postbaccalaureate programs (including first professional) but not engaged in significant doctoral-level education. Institutions in this category grant a minimum of fifty postbaccalaureate degrees annually, from at least three distinct programs. Awards of postbaccalaureate certificates are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Category IIB (Baccalaureate). Institutions characterized by their primary emphasis on undergraduate baccalaureate-level education. Institutions in this category grant a minimum of fifty bachelor’s degrees annually, from at least three distinct programs, and bachelor’s and higher degrees make up at least 50 percent of total degrees awarded.

Category III (Associate’s with ranks). Institutions characterized by a significant emphasis on undergraduate associate’s degree education. Institutions in this category grant a minimum of fifty associate’s degrees annually. Associate’s degrees make up at least 50 percent, and bachelor’s and higher degrees make up less than 50 percent, of total degrees and certificates awarded. Faculty members are distinguished on the basis of standard academic ranks (professor, associate professor, and so forth). Associate’s institutions without standard academic ranks should be included in category IV.

Category IV (Associate’s without ranks). Institutions characterized by the criteria for category III but without standard academic ranks. An institution that refers to all faculty members as “instructors” or “professors” but does not distinguish among them on the basis of standard ranks should be included in this category. However, if an institution utilizes another ranking scheme that is analogous to the standard ranks, it can be included in category I, II, or III as appropriate.

The AAUP institutional category assigned to an institution may change after meeting the criteria for another category for three consecutive years; exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN APPENDIXES I AND II. Academic Ranks: PR = Professor; AO = Associate Professor; AI = Assistant Professor; IN = Instructor; LE = Lecturer; NR = No Rank; AR = All Ranks. All institutions that do not assign professorial ranks are listed in appendix II.

Col. (1) Institutional Category—The definition of AAUP institutional categories is given above.

Col. (2) Institutional Control—PU = Public; PI = Private-Independent; FP = Private For-Profit; PR = Private-Religiously Affiliated.

Col. (3) Average Salary by Rank and for All Ranks Combined—This figure has been rounded to the nearest hundred. “All Ranks Combined” includes the rank of lecturer and the category of “No Rank.” Salary averages are replaced by a dash (—) when the number of individuals in a given rank is fewer than three.

Col. (4) Percentage of Faculty Covered for Benefits and Benefits as a Percentage of Average Salary—Percentage of full-time faculty members (all ranks combined) who are eligible to be covered and average total expenditures for full-time faculty members who are eligible to be covered as a percentage of the average salary for all full-time faculty members. RET = Retirement benefits (as defined above); MED = Medical benefits (as defined above).

Col. (5) Dependent Tuition Benefit—F = Full tuition waiver at this institution; P = Partial tuition waiver at this institution; f = Full tuition waiver at specified institutions through a consortium or system; p = Partial tuition waiver at specified institutions through a consortium or system; T = Institution is a member of Tuition Exchange; O = Other (with an open-text response field); V = Tuition benefit depends on years of service; N = None.

Col. (6) Percentage of Faculty by Tenure Status—T = Tenured; TT = Tenure-Track; NTT = Non-Tenure-Track. The figures represent the total number of full-time (FT) faculty members with a given tenure status.

Col. (7) Percentage Increase in Salary for Continuing Faculty—The percentage increase in salary for those 2024–25 full-time faculty members who remain employed as full-time faculty at the institution for 2025–26 at the same contract length. This represents the average increase for individuals as opposed to a percentage change in average salary levels.

Col. (8) Number of Faculty Members by Rank and Gender—The figures represent the total number of full-time (FT) faculty members in a given rank by gender.

Col. (9) Average Salary by Rank and by Gender with Salary-Equity Ratios—Same definition as that given for col. (3) but by gender. Salary-equity ratio is the ratio of women's to men's average salaries, multiplied by 100.

Readers are requested to report possible errors in the published data to the AAUP Department of Research and Public Policy at the email address above.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN APPENDIX III

Col. (1) Institutional Category—The definition of AAUP categories is given above.

Col. (2) Institutional Control—The definition of institutional control is given above.

Col. (3) Part-Time Faculty Pay—NO. = The number of part-time faculty members paid on a per-section basis. MIN. (\$) = Minimum pay for a standard course section, whether from actual data or by policy. MAX. (\$) = Maximum pay for a standard course section, whether from actual data or by policy. AVG. (\$) = Average (mean) pay for a standard course section.

Col. (4) Part-Time Faculty Benefits—RET = The proportion of part-time faculty members receiving an institutional contribution toward retirement benefits. MED = The proportion of part-time faculty members receiving an institutional contribution toward health-care benefits. None = no part-time faculty are eligible to receive benefits; Some = some part-time faculty are eligible to receive benefits; All = all part-time faculty are eligible to receive benefits.

Col. (5) Calendar—The institution's academic calendar.

Appendixes I, II, and III are published with the Faculty Compensation Survey results on the AAUP's website. See <https://www.aaup.org/our-work/research/FCS>.

Any inquiries concerning the data in this report may be directed to the AAUP Department of Research and Public Policy. Email: aaupfcs@aaup.org.

Faculty Compensation Survey Data Submission and Results Portal: <https://research.aaup.org>.

AAUP interactive data website: <https://data.aaup.org>.

STATEMENT ON DATA QUALITY

The AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey collects data from colleges and universities across the United States through an online portal. These data are reviewed through our internal verification process. Whenever the AAUP believes an error may have occurred, we ask institutional representatives to review the specific issues we identify. Nearly all institutions comply with our requests for additional review. If resubmitted data meet our internal standard, they are approved for inclusion in published tables and appendixes. Questionable data without an institutional response may be excluded.

While the AAUP makes every effort to report the most accurate data, the published tables and appendixes may include inaccuracies, errors, or omissions. Users assume the sole risk of making use of these data. Under no circumstances will the AAUP be liable to any user for damages arising from the use of these data. The AAUP publishes additions and corrections to the Faculty Compensation Survey results online and may make modifications to the content at any time.