

Characteristics of Postsecondary Faculty

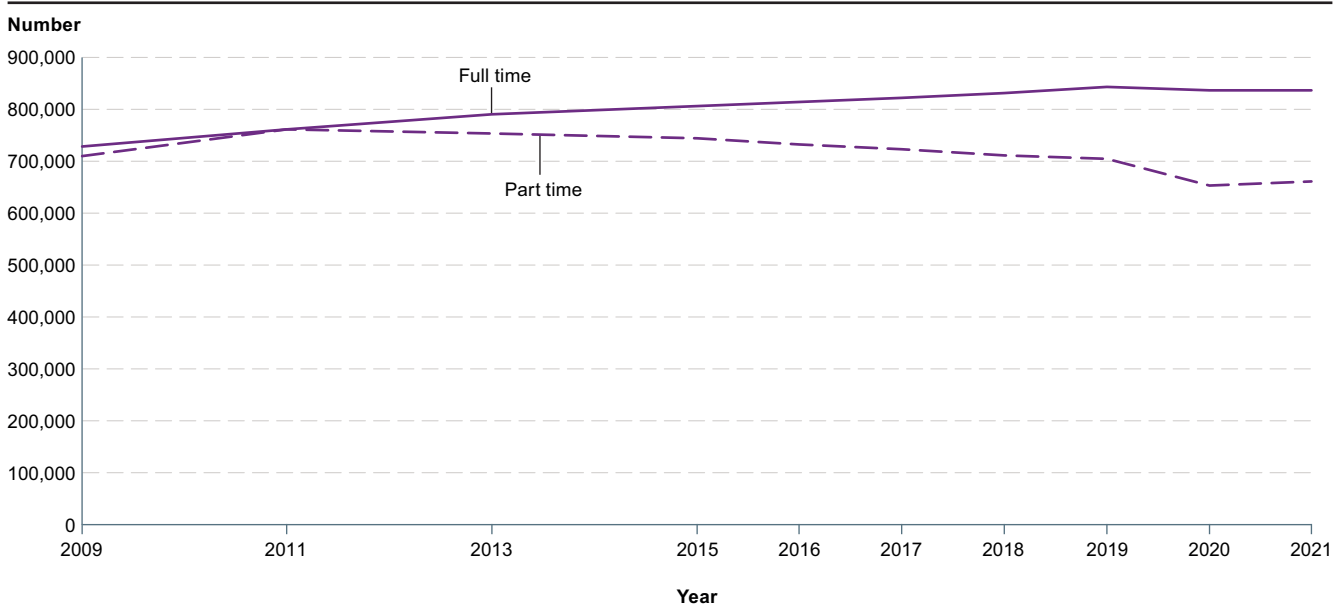
The total number of faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions was 4 percent higher in fall 2021 than in fall 2009 (1.5 vs. 1.4 million). From fall 2009 to fall 2021, the number of full-time faculty increased by 15 percent (from 729,200 to 837,100) while the number of part-time faculty decreased by 7 percent (from 709,900 to 662,100).

Between fall 2009 and fall 2021, the total number of faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions ranged between 1.4 and 1.6 million. There were 1.5 million faculty in 2021, which was 4 percent higher than the 1.4 million faculty in 2009. Over this period, changes in the number of faculty differed by employment

status (part time or full time), by sex, and by control of institution (public, private nonprofit, or private for-profit). Faculty include professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, assisting professors, adjunct professors, and interim professors.

Number of Faculty in Postsecondary Institutions

Figure 1. Number of faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by employment status: Selected years, fall 2009 through fall 2021



NOTE: Data represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Data include faculty members with the title of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, lecturer, assisting professor, adjunct professor, or interim professor (or the equivalent). Data exclude graduate students with titles such as graduate or teaching fellow who assist senior faculty. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been revised from previous published figures.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Winter 2009–10 through Winter 2011–12 and Spring 2014 through Spring 2022, Human Resources component, Fall Staff section. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 315.10.

Characteristics of Postsecondary Faculty

In fall 2021, of the 1.5 million faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions, 56 percent were full time and 44 percent were part time. Between fall 2009 and fall 2021, the number of

- full-time faculty increased by 15 percent (from 729,200 to 837,100); and
- part-time faculty decreased by 7 percent (from 709,900 to 662,100).

In the intervening years, the number of part-time faculty peaked at 762,400 in fall 2011 before decreasing 14 percent to 652,900 in fall 2020. About half of this decline occurred between fall 2019 and fall 2020, which coincided with the beginning of the first full academic year impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The number of part-time faculty in fall 2021 was higher than in fall 2020 but lower than in fall 2019, before the pandemic.

Chapter: 3/Postsecondary Education

Section: Completions and Graduation Rates

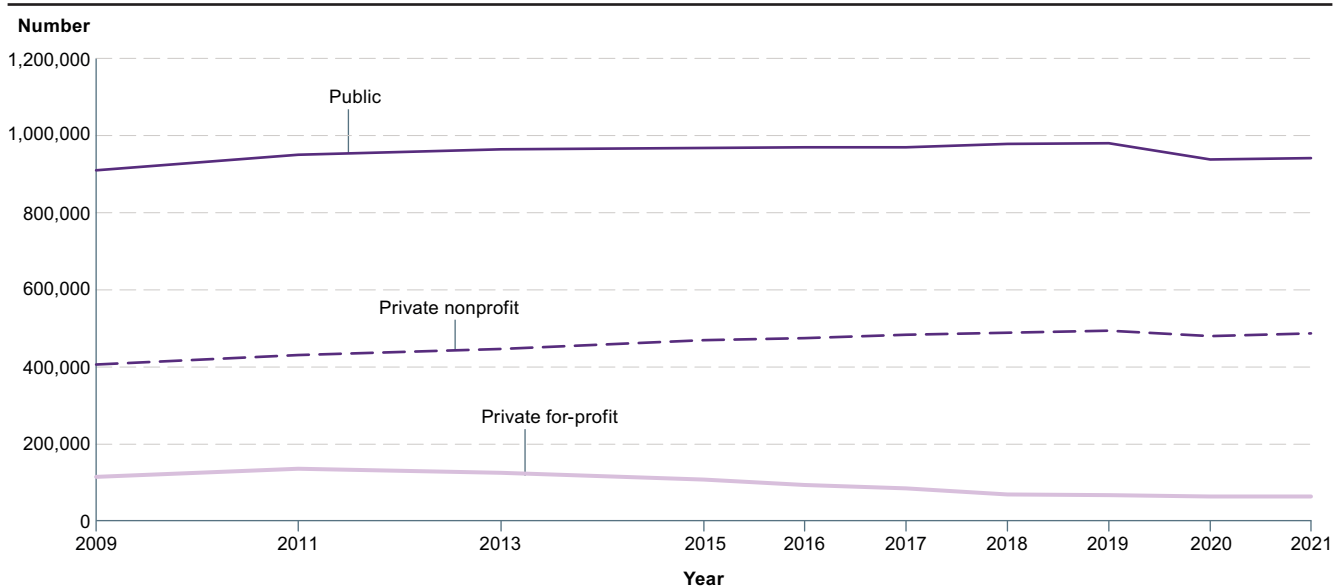
With these changes in the number of faculty, the percentage of all faculty who were part time decreased from 49 to 44 percent between 2009 and 2021.

Between fall 2009 and fall 2021, changes in the number of faculty at degree-granting institutions differed by sex. Specifically, the number of

- female faculty increased by 13 percent (from 678,100 to 766,800); and
- male faculty peaked at 792,000 in fall 2013 before falling 8 percent to its lowest point at 732,400 in fall 2021.

With these changes in number between 2009 and 2021, the percentage of faculty who were female increased from 47 to 51 percent.

Figure 2. Number of faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by control of institution: Selected years, fall 2009 through fall 2021



NOTE: Data represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Data include faculty members with the title of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, lecturer, assisting professor, adjunct professor, or interim professor (or the equivalent). Data exclude graduate students with titles such as graduate or teaching fellow who assist senior faculty. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been revised from previous published figures.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Winter 2009–10 through Winter 2011–12 and Spring 2014 through Spring 2022, Human Resources component, Fall Staff section. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 315.10.

Between fall 2009 and fall 2021, changes in the number of faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions varied by control of institution. Among faculty at degree-granting institutions in fall 2021,

- 63 percent were employed at public institutions;
- 33 percent were employed at private nonprofit institutions; and
- 4 percent were employed at private for-profit institutions.

Between fall 2009 and fall 2021, percentage changes in the number of faculty were smaller at public institutions and private nonprofit institutions than at private for-profit institutions. Specifically, the number of faculty in fall 2021 compared with fall 2009

- was 3 percent higher at public institutions (944,900 vs. 913,800);
- increased by 20 percent at private nonprofit institutions (from 408,400 to 488,900); and
- decreased by 44 percent at private for-profit institutions (from 116,900 to 65,400).

There were fewer faculty in fall 2021 than before the pandemic in fall 2019 across all institutional control types.

The number of faculty in 2021 compared with 2019 was

- 4 percent lower at public institutions (944,900 vs. 984,200);
- 1 percent lower at private nonprofit institutions (488,900 vs. 495,800); and
- 5 percent lower at private for-profit institutions (65,400 vs. 68,800).

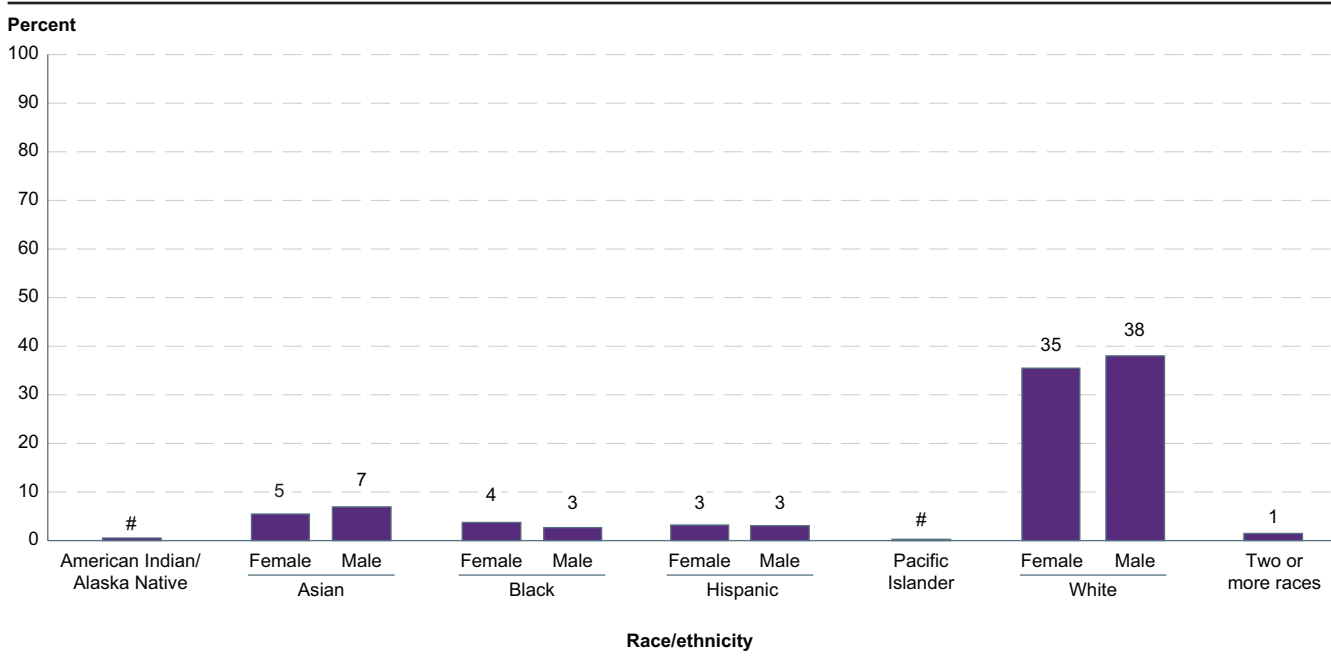
The ratio of full-time-equivalent (FTE) students to FTE faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions was lower in fall 2021 than in fall 2009 (13:1 vs. 16:1).¹ By control and level (i.e., 2-year or 4-year) of institution, the FTE student-to-faculty ratio in fall 2021 was

- 24:1 at private for-profit institutions;
- 17:1 at public 2-year institutions;
- 14:1 at public 4-year institutions; and
- 10:1 at private nonprofit 4-year institutions.²

For more information about how student enrollments have changed over time, see the indicators [Undergraduate Enrollment](#) and [Postbaccalaureate Enrollment](#).

Demographics of Postsecondary Faculty

Figure 3. Percentage distribution of full-time faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity and sex: Fall 2021



Rounds to zero.

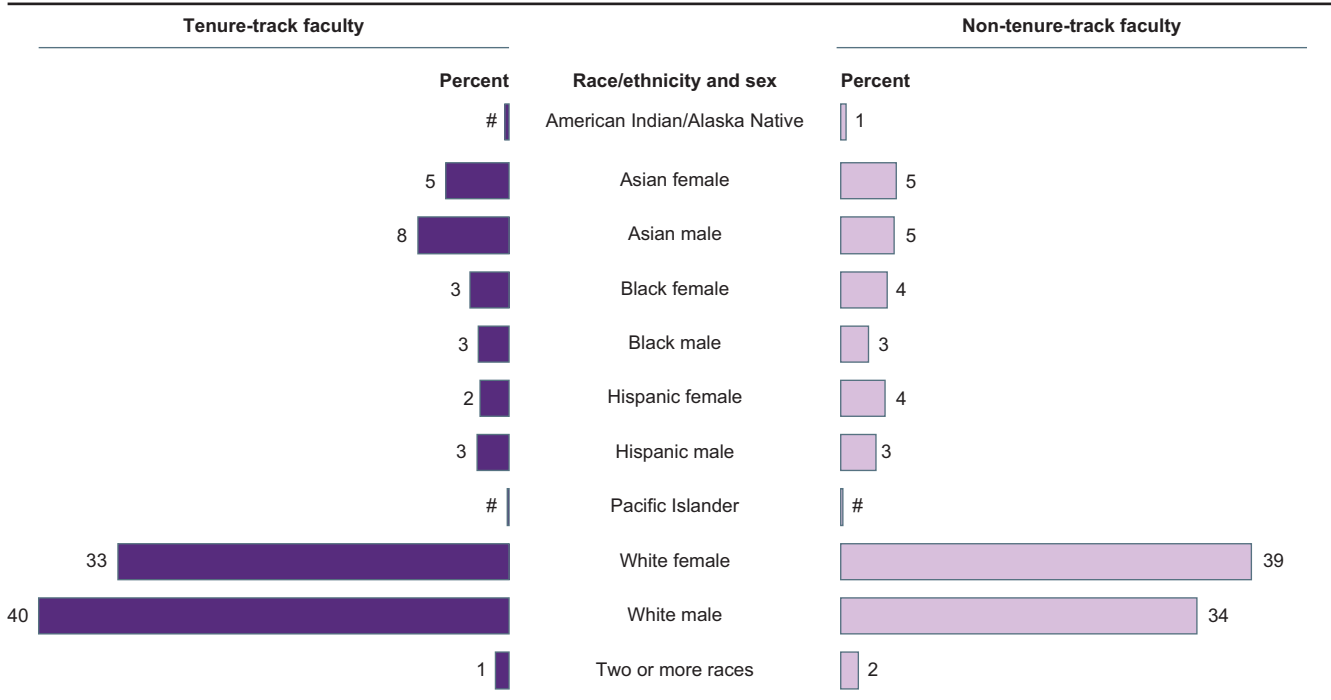
NOTE: Data represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Sex breakouts are excluded for faculty who are American Indian/Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, and of Two or more races because the percentages are 1 percent or less. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Percentages are based on full-time faculty whose race/ethnicity was known. Race/ethnicity was not collected for faculty who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Detail does not sum to 100 percent because of rounding. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Spring 2022, Human Resources component, Fall Staff section. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 315.20.

Considering full-time faculty only,³ in fall 2021,

- 73 percent of faculty were White, specifically 35 percent White female and 38 percent White male;
- 12 percent of faculty were Asian, specifically 5 percent Asian female and 7 percent Asian male;
- 6 percent of faculty were Black, specifically 4 percent Black female and 3 percent Black male;
- 6 percent of faculty were Hispanic, specifically 3 percent each Hispanic female and Hispanic male;
- 1 percent were of Two or more races;
- less than one-half of 1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native; and
- less than one-half of 1 percent were Pacific Islander.

Figure 4. Percentage distributions of tenure-track and non-tenure-track full-time instructional faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity and sex: Fall 2021



Rounds to zero.

NOTE: Data represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Only instructional faculty were classified by academic rank. Tenure-track faculty include professors, associate professors, and assistant professors. Non-tenure-track faculty include instructors, lecturers, and other faculty. Sex breakouts are excluded for faculty who were American Indian/Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, and of Two or more races because the percentages were 1 percent or less. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Percentages are based on full-time faculty whose race/ethnicity was known. Race/ethnicity was not collected for faculty who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Detail may not sum to 100 percent because of rounding. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data.

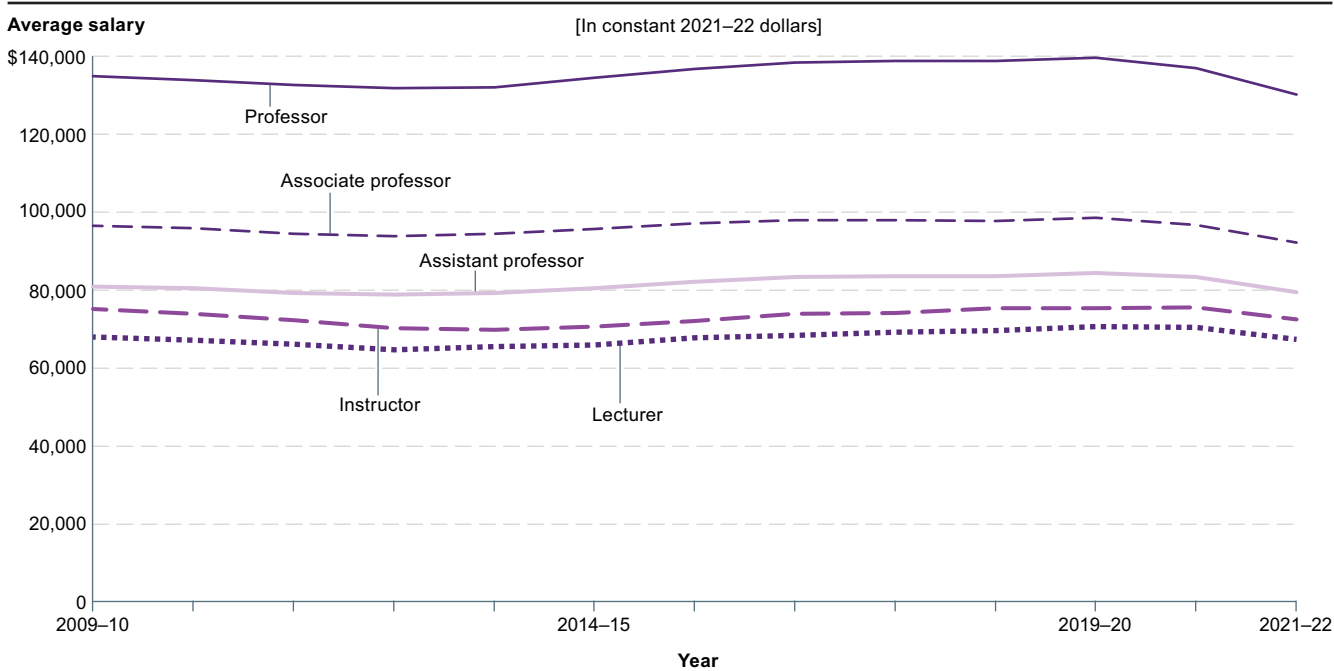
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Spring 2022, Human Resources component, Fall Staff section. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 315.20.

The racial/ethnic and sex distribution of full-time instructional faculty varied by academic rank at degree-granting postsecondary institutions in fall 2021. Professor and associate professor are higher academic ranks, which are usually tenured, meaning that they cannot be terminated without just cause. Assistant professor is typically an entry-level position, which can lead to higher ranks. Instructor and lecturer are typically lower ranks with no potential for tenure. In 2021, White male and Asian male faculty made up higher percentages

of faculty in the higher ranks (tenure-track) than they did in the lower ranks (non-tenure-track).⁴ Specifically, 40 percent of tenure-track faculty were White males and 8 percent were Asian males. Meanwhile, 34 percent of non-tenure-track faculty were White males and 5 percent were Asian males. Other groups made up similar or lower percentages of faculty in the higher ranks than in the lower ranks. For example, Hispanic females made up 2 percent of faculty in tenure-track ranks and 4 percent in non-tenure-track ranks.

Salary and Tenure for Postsecondary Faculty

Figure 5. Average salary of full-time instructional faculty on 9-month contracts in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by academic rank: Academic years, 2009–10 through 2021–22



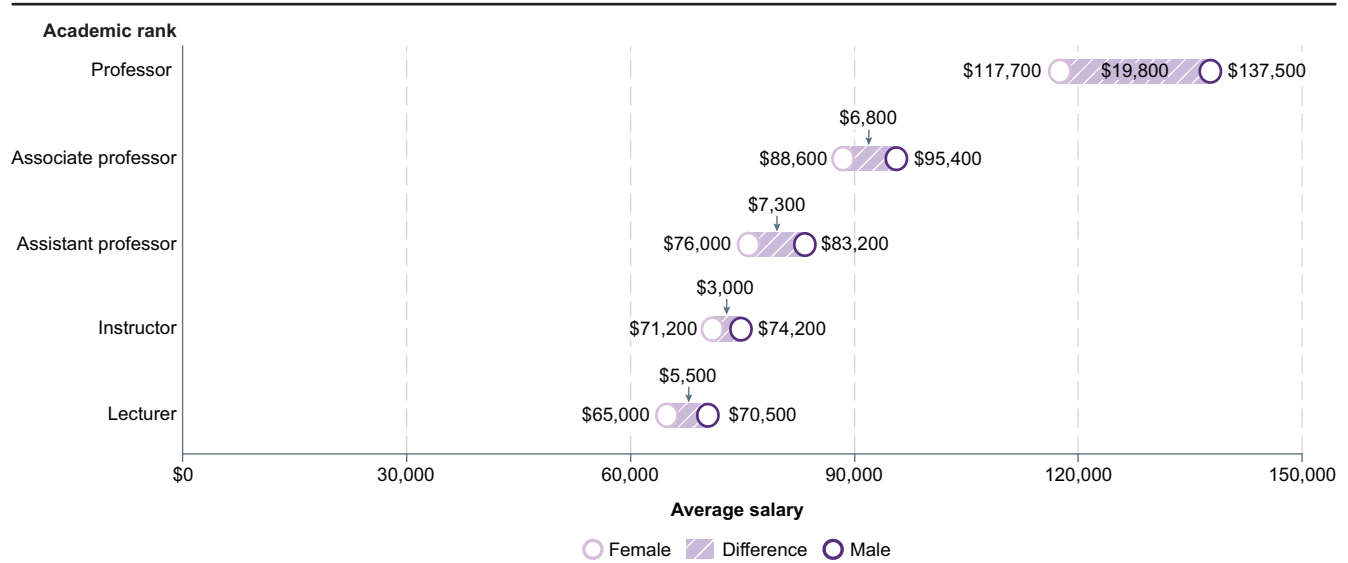
NOTE: Data represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Data exclude instructional faculty at medical schools. Data include imputations for nonrespondent institutions. Salaries are reported in constant 2021–22 dollars, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic year basis. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Winter 2009–10 through Winter 2011–12 and Spring 2013 through Spring 2022, Human Resources component, Salaries section. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 316.10.

In academic year 2021-22, the overall average salary (in constant 2021-22 dollars) for full-time instructional faculty on 9-month contracts at degree-granting postsecondary institutions was \$93,900. By faculty rank, the average salary in 2021-22 was

- \$130,300 for professors;
- \$92,200 for associate professors;
- \$79,400 for assistant professors;
- \$72,500 for instructors; and
- \$67,500 for lecturers.

The overall average salary was 3 percent lower in 2021-22 than in 2009-10 in constant 2021-22 dollars.⁵ More specifically, the average salary decreased by 3 percent between 2009-10 and 2012-13 (from \$97,100 to \$94,200), increased 5 percent to \$98,500 in 2020-21, and then dropped 5 percent in a single year to \$93,900 in 2021-22. Average salaries followed this pattern for all academic ranks, with larger changes (in terms of percentage) for non-tenure-track ranks than for tenure-track ranks in the periods from 2009-10 to 2012-13 and from 2012-13 to 2020-21. However, in the period from 2020-21 to 2021-22, larger drops were observed for tenure-track ranks (5 percent each) than for non-tenure-track ranks (4 percent each).

Figure 6. Average salary of full-time instructional faculty on 9-month contracts in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by academic rank and sex: Academic year 2021–22

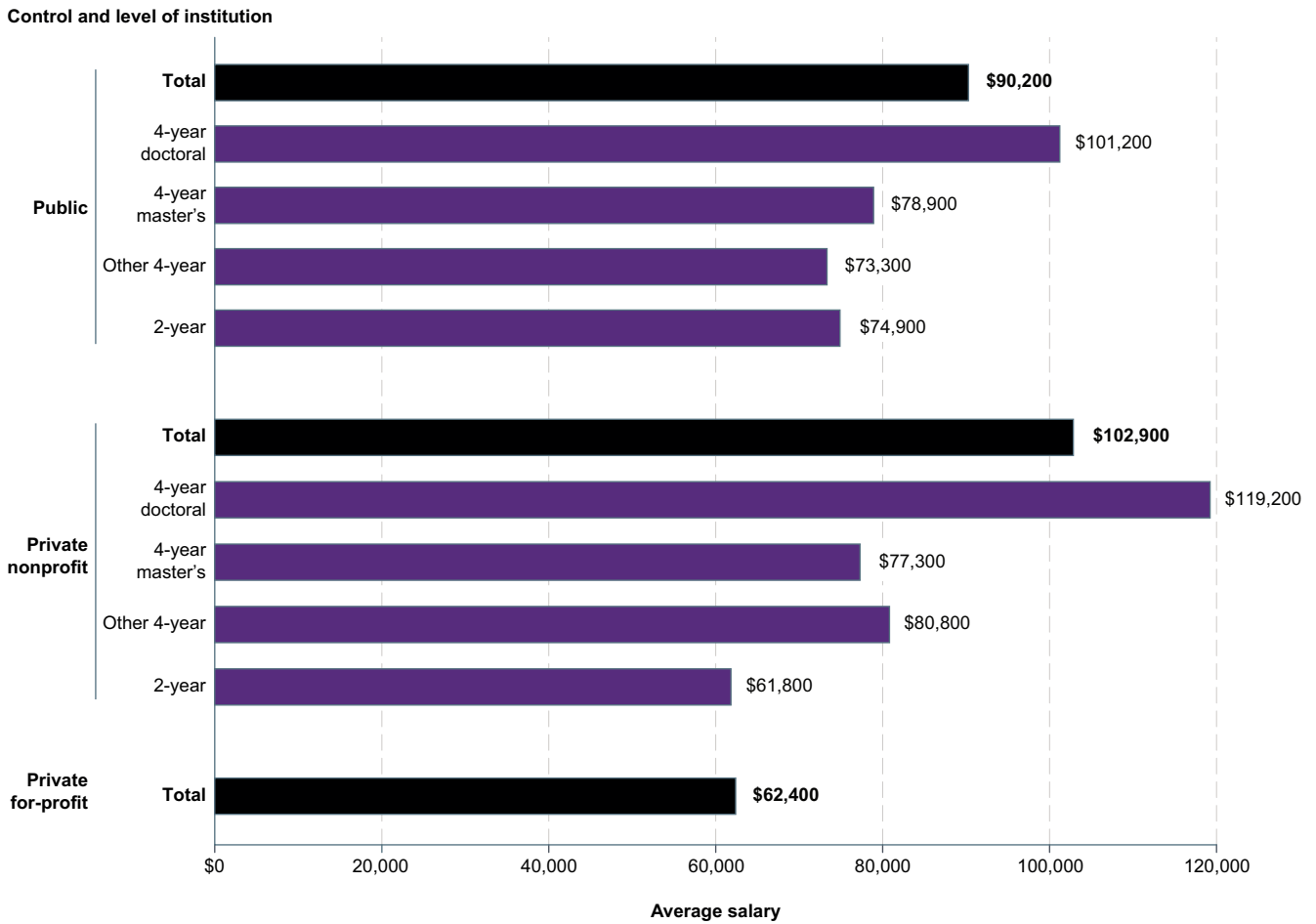


NOTE: Data represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Data exclude instructional faculty at medical schools. Data include imputations for nonrespondent institutions.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Winter 2009–10 through Winter 2011–12 and Spring 2013 through Spring 2022, Human Resources component, Salaries section. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 316.10.

Between academic years 2009-10 and 2021-22, average salaries for full-time instructional faculty also varied by sex. The average salary (in constant 2021-22 dollars) for all full-time instructional faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions was higher for males than for females in every academic year from 2009-10 to 2021-22. In 2021-22, the average salary was \$101,800 for males and \$85,200 for females. In addition, the male-female salary gap for each academic rank in 2021-22 was

- \$19,800 for professors, 1 percent smaller than the gap in 2009-10;
- \$6,800 for associate professors, 4 percent smaller than the gap in 2009-10;
- \$7,300 for assistant professors, 25 percent larger than the gap in 2009-10;
- \$3,000 for instructors, 34 percent smaller than the gap in 2009-10; and
- \$5,500 for lecturers, 15 percent smaller than the gap in 2009-10.

Figure 7. Average salary of full-time instructional faculty on 9-month contracts in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by control and level of institution: Academic year 2021–22



NOTE: Data represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Doctoral institutions include institutions that awarded 20 or more doctor's degrees during the previous academic year. Master's institutions include institutions that awarded 20 or more master's degrees, but less than 20 doctor's degrees, during the previous academic year. Data exclude instructional faculty at medical schools. Data include imputations for nonrespondent institutions. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Spring 2022, Human Resources component, Salaries section. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 316.20.

Faculty salaries also varied according to control and level of degree-granting postsecondary institutions in academic year 2021-22. The average salary (in constant 2021-22 dollars) for full-time instructional faculty on 9-month contracts was

- \$102,900 at private nonprofit institutions, 2 percent lower than in 2009-10;
- \$90,200 at public institutions, 4 percent lower than in 2009-10; and
- \$62,400 at private for-profit institutions, 13 percent lower than in 2009-10.

Among the specific types of private nonprofit and public institutions, average salaries for full-time instructional faculty were highest at doctoral institutions and lowest at private nonprofit 2-year institutions.⁶ Specifically, average salaries (in constant 2021-22 dollars) were

- \$119,200 at private nonprofit 4-year doctoral institutions;
- \$101,200 at public 4-year doctoral institutions;
- \$80,800 at private nonprofit 4-year institutions other than doctoral and master's degree-granting institutions;
- \$78,900 at public 4-year master's institutions;⁷
- \$77,300 at private nonprofit 4-year master's institutions;
- \$74,900 at public 2-year institutions;
- \$73,300 at public 4-year institutions other than doctoral and master's degree-granting institutions; and
- \$61,800 at private nonprofit 2-year institutions.

Endnotes:

¹ The ratios are calculated by dividing the number of FTE undergraduate and graduate students by the number of FTE faculty (full-time faculty plus the full-time equivalent of the part-time faculty, including instructional, research, and public service faculty).

² The student-to-faculty ratio was not calculated for private nonprofit 2-year institutions. For more information on the number of FTE faculty and staff at these institutions, see *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 314.60.

³ Percentages are based on full-time faculty whose race/ethnicity was known. Race/ethnicity was not collected for faculty who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Percentages do not sum to totals because of rounding.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, tables 314.10, 314.50, 314.60, 315.10, 315.20, 316.10, 316.20, and 316.80

Related indicators and resources: [Characteristics of Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions](#); [Characteristics of Postsecondary Students](#); [Undergraduate Enrollment](#)

In academic year 2021-22, approximately 57 percent of degree-granting postsecondary institutions had tenure systems. A tenure system guarantees that, after completing a probationary period, a professor will not be terminated without just cause. The percentage of institutions with tenure systems ranged from 1 percent at private for-profit institutions to 99 percent at public doctoral institutions. Of full-time faculty at institutions with tenure systems, 45 percent had tenure in 2021-22, down from 49 percent in 2009-10. Between 2009-10 and 2021-22, the percentage of full-time faculty with tenure decreased for all types of institutional control. Specifically, the decrease was

- 42 percentage points (from 51 to 9 percent) at private for-profit institutions;
- 4 percentage points (from 44 to 40 percent) at private nonprofit institutions; and
- 4 percentage points (from 51 to 47 percent) at public institutions.

At institutions with tenure systems, the percentage of full-time instructional faculty with tenure in 2021-22 was higher for males than for females (54 vs. 41 percent).

⁴ Tenure-track faculty include professors, associate professors, and assistant professors. Non-tenure-track faculty include instructors, lecturers, and those who were primarily research or public service faculty, as well as faculty without ranks.

⁵ Constant 2021-22 dollars are based on Consumer Price Index (CPI), prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to an academic year basis.

⁶ Doctoral institutions include institutions that awarded 20 or more doctor's degrees during the previous academic year.

⁷ Master's institutions include institutions that awarded 20 or more master's degrees, but less than 20 doctor's degrees, during the previous academic year.

Glossary: Constant dollars; Control of institutions; Degree-granting institutions; Doctor's degree; Gap; Postsecondary education; Postsecondary institutions (basic classification by level); Private institution; Public school or institution; Racial/ethnic group; Salary