

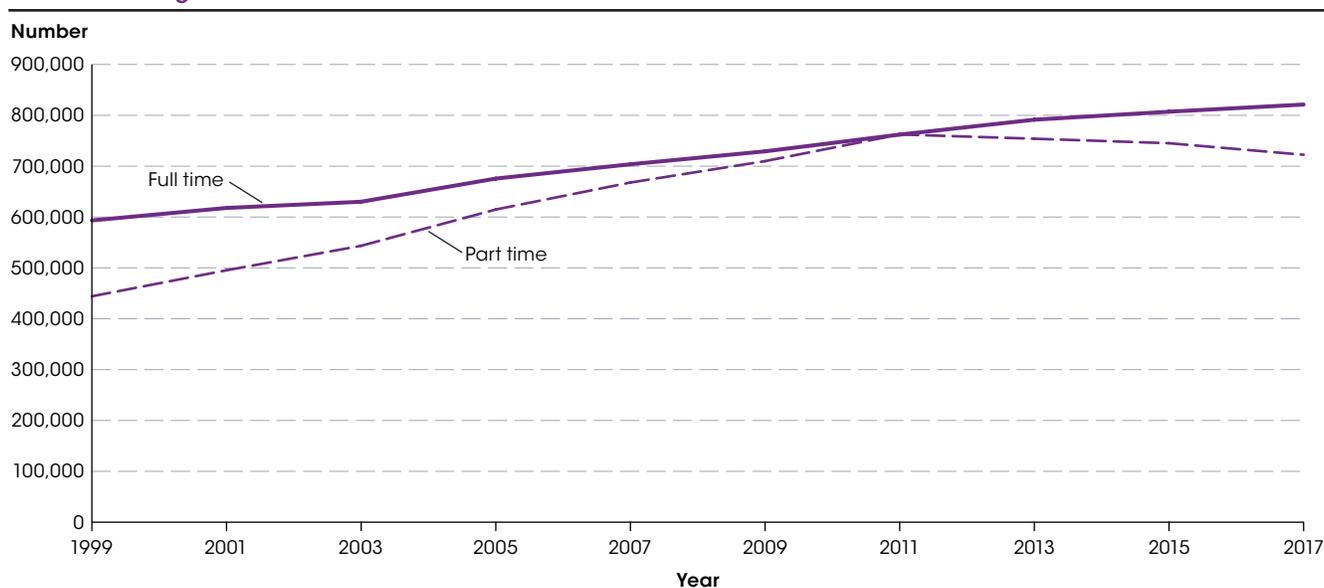
Characteristics of Postsecondary Faculty

From fall 1999 to fall 2017, the number of faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased by 49 percent (from 1.0 to 1.5 million). While the number of full-time faculty increased by 38 percent over this period, the number of part-time faculty increased by 72 percent between 1999 and 2011 and then decreased by 5 percent between 2011 and 2017.

In fall 2017, of the 1.5 million faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, 53 percent were full time and 47 percent were part time. Faculty include professors,

associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, assisting professors, adjunct professors, and interim professors.

Figure 1. Number of faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by employment status: Selected years, fall 1999 through fall 2017



NOTE: Includes faculty members with the title of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, lecturer, assisting professor, adjunct professor, or interim professor (or the equivalent). Excludes 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. Data prior to 2007 exclude institutions with fewer than 15 full-time employees. 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), "Fall Staff Survey" (IPEDS-S:99); IPEDS Winter 2001–02 through Winter 2004–05, Fall Staff survey; IPEDS Winter 2005–06 through Winter 2011–12, Human Resources component, Fall Staff section; and IPEDS Spring 2014 and Spring 2016 through Spring 2018, Human Resources component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 315.10.

From fall 1999 to fall 2017, the total number of faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased by 49 percent (from 1.0 to 1.5 million). The number of full-time faculty increased by 38 percent (from 593,000 to 821,000) from fall 1999 to fall 2017—an increase of 28 percent from fall 1999 to fall 2011 and 8 percent from fall 2011 to fall 2017. In comparison, the number of part-time faculty increased by 72 percent (from 444,000 to 762,000) between 1999 and 2011, and then decreased by 5 percent (from 762,000 to 722,000) between 2011 and 2017. As a result of the faster increase in the number of part-time faculty during the first part of the period, the percentage of all faculty who were part time increased from 43 to 47 percent between 1999 and 2017. Also

between 1999 and 2017, the percentage of faculty who were female increased from 41 percent to 50 percent.

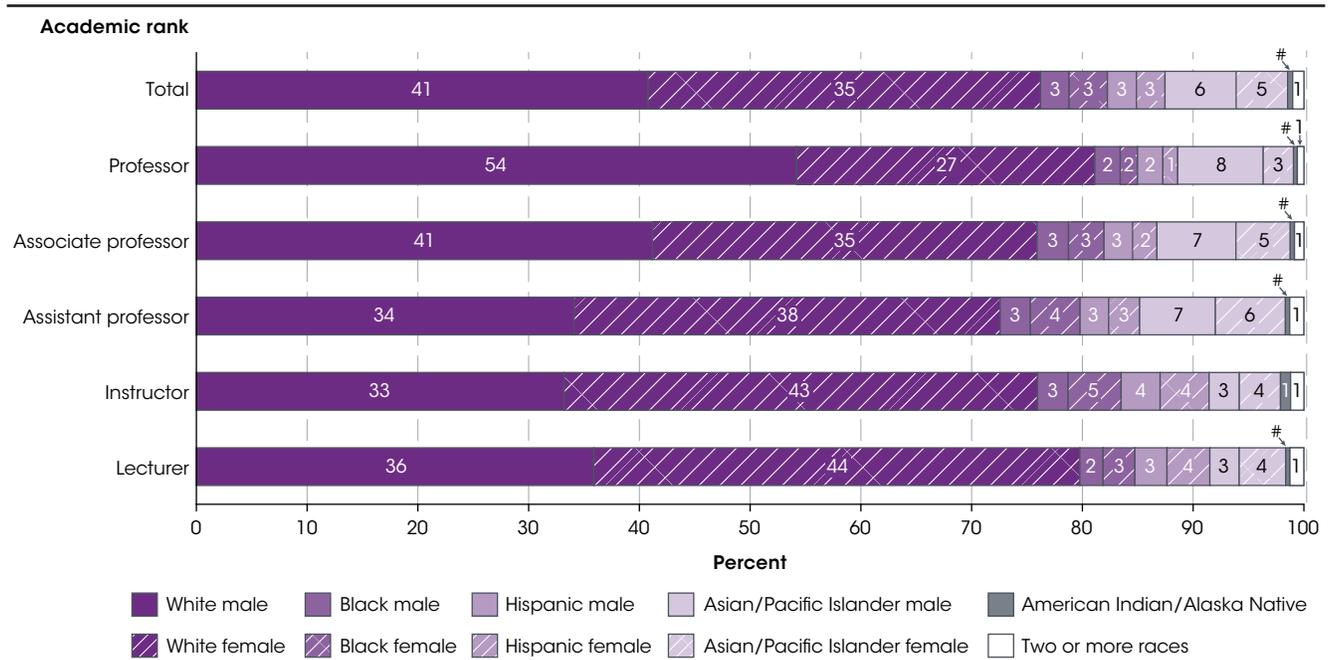
Although the number of faculty increased in degree-granting public, private nonprofit, and private for-profit postsecondary institutions between fall 1999 and fall 2017, the percentage increases in faculty were much smaller in public institutions and private nonprofit institutions than in private for-profit institutions. Over this period, the number of faculty increased by 35 percent (from 719,000 to 971,000) in public institutions, by 68 percent (from 289,000 to 486,000) in private nonprofit institutions, and by 185 percent (from 30,300 to 86,200) in private for-profit institutions. Despite the faster growth

in the number of faculty in private for-profit institutions over this period, only 6 percent of all faculty were employed by private for-profit institutions in 2017, while 63 percent were employed by public institutions and 31 percent by private nonprofit institutions.

The ratio of full-time-equivalent (FTE) students to faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions was 14:1 in

fall 2017, a lower ratio than in both fall 1999 (15:1) and fall 2009 (16:1). The FTE student-to-faculty ratio in 2017 was higher in private for-profit institutions (21:1) and public 2-year institutions (19:1) than in public 4-year institutions (14:1) and private nonprofit 4-year institutions (10:1).¹ For more information about how student enrollments have changed over time, see the indicator [Undergraduate Enrollment](#).

Figure 2. For each academic rank, the percentage distribution of full-time faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity and sex: Fall 2017



Rounds to zero.
 NOTE: Sex breakouts excluded for faculty who were American Indian/Alaska Native 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. Detail may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Although rounded numbers are displayed, 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 2018, Human Resources component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 315.20.

Of all full-time faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions in fall 2017, 41 percent were White males; 35 percent were White females; 6 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander males; 5 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander females; and 3 percent each were Black males, Black females, Hispanic males, and Hispanic females.² Those who were American Indian/Alaska Native and those who were of Two or more races each made up 1 percent or less of full-time faculty.

The racial/ethnic and sex distribution of faculty varied by academic rank at degree-granting postsecondary institutions in fall 2017. For example, among full-time professors, 54 percent were White males, 27 percent were White females, 8 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander males, and 3 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander

females. Black males, Black females, and Hispanic males each accounted for 2 percent of full-time professors. The following groups each made up 1 percent or less of the total number of full-time professors: Hispanic females, American Indian/Alaska Native individuals, and individuals of Two or more races. In comparison, among full-time assistant professors, 34 percent were White males, 38 percent were White females, 7 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander males, 6 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander females, and 4 percent were Black females. Black males, Hispanic males, and Hispanic females each accounted for 3 percent of full-time assistant professors, while American Indian/Alaska Native individuals and individuals of Two or more races each made up 1 percent or less of the total number of full-time assistant professors.

Figure 3. Average salary of full-time instructional faculty on 9-month contracts in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by academic rank: Selected years, 1999–2000 through 2017–18



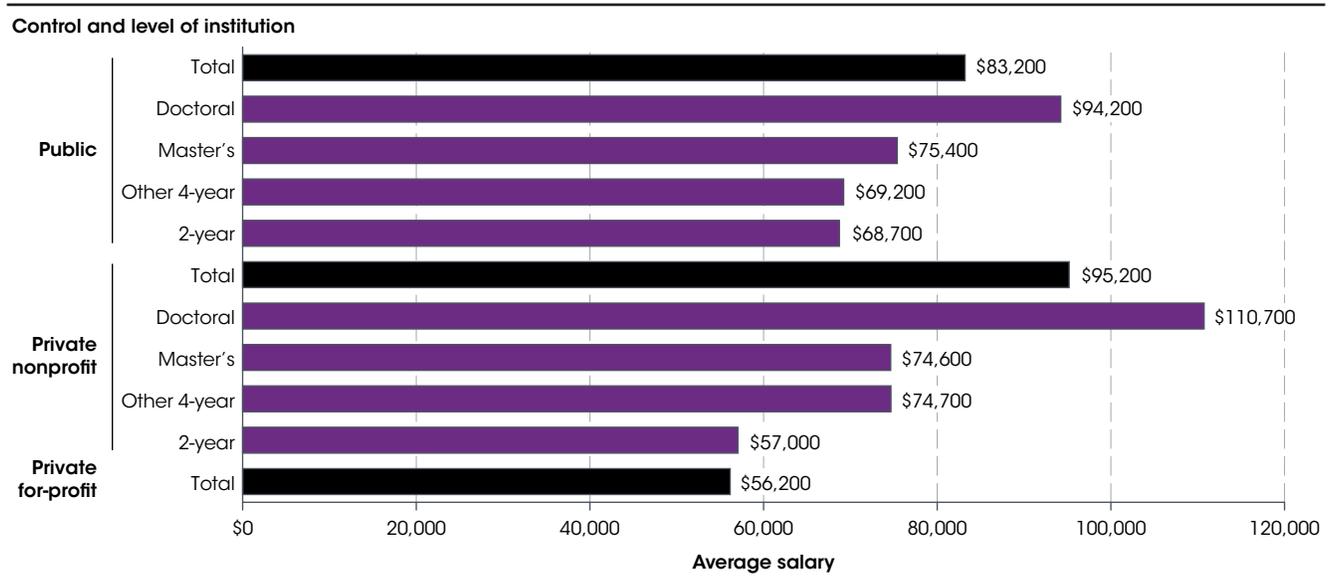
NOTE: Data for academic year 2000–01 are not available. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Data prior to 2007 exclude institutions with fewer than 15 full-time employees. Data exclude instructional faculty at medical schools. Salaries are reported in constant 2017–18 dollars, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). 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), “Salaries, Tenure, and Fringe Benefits of Full-Time Instructional Faculty Survey” (IPEDS-SA:1999–2000); IPEDS Winter 2001–02 through Winter 2004–05, Salaries survey; IPEDS Winter 2005–06 through Winter 2011–12, Human Resources component, Salaries section; and IPEDS Spring 2013 through Spring 2018, Human Resources component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 316.10.

In academic year 2017–18, the average salary for full-time instructional faculty on 9-month contracts in degree-granting postsecondary institutions was \$86,700. Average salaries ranged from \$60,700 for lecturers to \$122,000 for professors. The average salary for all full-time instructional faculty increased by 4 percent between 1999–2000 and 2009–10 (from \$81,900 to \$85,400) and was 1 percent higher in 2017–18 (\$86,700) than in 2009–10 (salaries are expressed in constant 2017–18 dollars). A similar pattern was observed for faculty at most individual academic ranks. The increase in average salary between 1999–2000 and 2009–10 was 9 percent for professors (from \$109,000 to \$119,000), 6 percent for associate professors (from \$79,900 to \$84,900), 8 percent for assistant professors (from \$65,900 to \$71,300), and 7 percent for lecturers (from \$56,000 to \$59,700). The average salary for most academic ranks showed smaller changes between 2009–10 and 2017–18 than between 1999–2000 and 2009–10. The average salary was 3 percent higher for professors and assistant professors, 2 percent higher for lecturers, and 1 percent higher for

associate professors in 2017–18 than in 2009–10. Average salaries for instructors, however, showed no clear pattern between 1999–2000 and 2017–18.

Average faculty salaries also varied by sex. The average salary for all full-time instructional faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions was higher for males than for females in every year from 1999–2000 to 2017–18. In academic year 2017–18, the average salary was \$94,200 for males and \$78,100 for females. In 2017–18, the male-female gap in average salaries ranged from \$3,500 for instructors to \$18,800 for professors. Between 1999–2000 and 2017–18, the male-female salary gap (in constant 2017–18 dollars) increased by 47 percent for instructors (from \$2,400 to \$3,500), 44 percent for assistant professors (from \$4,500 to \$6,500), 37 percent for professors (from \$13,800 to \$18,800), and by 8 percent for associate professors (from \$5,600 to \$6,100). In contrast, the gap decreased 4 percent for lecturers during the same period (from \$5,300 to \$5,000).

Figure 4. Average salary of full-time instructional faculty on 9-month contracts in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by control and level of institution: 2017–18



NOTE: 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. Degree-granting postsecondary institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Salaries are reported in constant 2017–18 dollars, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Spring 2018, Human Resources component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 316.20.

Faculty salaries also varied according to control and level of degree-granting postsecondary institutions. In academic year 2017–18, the average salary for full-time instructional faculty in private nonprofit institutions (\$95,200) was higher than the average salaries for full-time instructional faculty in public institutions (\$83,200) and in private for-profit institutions (\$56,200). Among the specific types of private nonprofit institutions and public institutions, average salaries for instructional faculty were highest in private nonprofit doctoral institutions (\$111,000) and public doctoral institutions (\$94,200). Average salaries were lowest for instructional faculty in private nonprofit 2-year institutions (\$57,000), public 2-year institutions (\$68,700), and public 4-year institutions other than doctoral and master's degree-granting institutions (\$69,200). Average salaries for instructional faculty were 3 percent higher in 2017–18 than in 1999–2000 in public institutions (\$83,200 vs. \$80,600), 12 percent higher in private nonprofit institutions (\$95,200 vs. \$85,300), and 30 percent higher in private for-profit institutions (\$56,200 vs. \$43,300, in constant 2017–18 dollars).

In academic year 2017–18, approximately 55 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 2 percent at private for-profit institutions to almost 100 percent at public doctoral institutions. Of full-time faculty at institutions with tenure systems, 46 percent had tenure in 2017–18, down from 54 percent in 1999–2000. At public institutions with tenure systems, the percentage of full-time faculty with tenure decreased by 9 percentage points over this period; at private nonprofit institutions, the percentage decreased by 6 percentage points; and at private for-profit institutions, the percentage decreased by 60 percentage points. At institutions with tenure systems, the percentage of full-time instructional faculty with tenure was higher for males than for females. In 2017–18, some 54 percent of males had tenure, compared with 41 percent of females.

Endnotes:

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

² Percentages are based on full-time faculty whose race/ethnicity was known.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, 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](#)

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