

Demography of the Faculty: A Statistical Portrait of English and Foreign Languages

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The following report draws on US government data sources to develop a statistical portrait of the population of faculty members teaching English and foreign languages in US degree-granting colleges and universities. Chief among the sources is the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF), a survey that at roughly five-year intervals since 1988 has canvassed a representative sample of faculty members teaching in Title IV—participating, degree-granting, public and private not-for-profit institutions. Information from the NSOPF can be developed for specific disciplinary areas because, unlike other systematic national data sources, the NSOPF asks respondents for their principal teaching field. The NSOPF data presented here come mainly from the study's 2004 administration, the most recent, which asked respondents about their work in the academic year 2003–04. The findings from the NSOPF are based on a sample: questionnaires were sent to 35,000 people, and the survey had a weighted response rate of 76%. The population figures developed for this report are estimates based on the weights the Department of Education assigns to raw responses.

The other major national source of information about the size and composition of the faculty is the Fall Staff Survey component of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The IPEDS Fall Staff Survey is a census of all employees institutions have on their payrolls as of 1 November in the given survey year, including but not confined to employees with faculty status. Unlike the NSOPF, the Fall Staff Survey includes for-profit institutions and counts graduate student teaching assistants. It does not, however, account for employees by the specific disciplinary areas in which they work.

Figures 1 and 2, developed from the 1995 and 2005 Fall Staff Surveys, show numbers and percentages of full-time tenured and tenure-track, full-time non-tenure-track, and part-time faculty members in 1995 and 2005 (excluding graduate student teaching assistants). The numerical quantities are important for understanding the percentage figures. The percentage figures show a dramatic ten-percentage-point decline in the share of the faculty represented by tenured and tenure-track appointments. The numbers tell us that, across higher education considered as a whole, the percentage drop in tenured and tenure-track appointments occurred because of increases in the non-tenure-track categories rather than cuts in the absolute number of tenured or tenure-track positions. (The IPEDS data, of course, tell us nothing about transfers of lines between disciplines, and an aggregate summary masks the varying circumstances of specific institutions or sectors.) The ADE report on the academic workforce also calls attention to the continuing increases in student enrollments since 1975 and particularly from 1995 to 2005 (fig. 3). As student enrollments grow, the part of the faculty teaching off the tenure track grows a lot, while the tenured and tenure-track faculty ranks stay roughly the same size. The tenured faculty becomes diminished in the institution by being overwhelmed rather than by being cut.

Data from the NSOPFs for 1993 and 2004, as seen on table 1, show a similar pattern: a modest increase of 6.2% in the size of the full-time tenured and tenure-track ranks and far larger increases of 34.8% and 21.7% in the full-time non-tenure-track and part-time employment categories. Among nineteen NSOPF teaching fields, English, which at an estimated 84,100 had the largest faculty population on 1993 NSOPF, was third largest on the 2004 NSOPF, at 82,400, and was the only field to show a decline in both its total population and its population of tenured and tenure-track faculty members between the 1993 and 2004 NSOPFs. Foreign languages ranked fourteenth in its total population on the 2004 NSOPF, with an estimated 35,300 faculty members (see figs. 4 and 5).

The 82,400 faculty members who give their principal teaching field as English are distributed across the four major Carnegie institutional types in proportions very different from the 35,300 faculty members whose principal teaching field is foreign languages. Foreign language faculty members are unusually clustered in Carnegie Doctoral/Research institutions, compared with the distribution for the faculty as a whole and especially with the distribution for English. Almost half of all faculty members in English (47.9%) teach in Carnegie Associate's institutions, compared with 24.1% for foreign languages; over two-fifths of all faculty members in foreign languages (43.1%) teach in Carnegie Doctoral/Research institutions, compared with 20.3% for English. In every Carnegie sector the number of faculty members in English is larger than the number in foreign languages, but the faculty populations of the two fields are closest to equal in the Doctoral/Research institutions. Outside the Carnegie Doctoral/Research sector, the number of foreign language faculty members drops dramatically (fig. 6). The small portion in Carnegie Baccalaureate institutions is striking, not only for foreign languages but also for English and the faculty overall. The number of baccalaureate colleges is large—Carnegie Baccalaureate institutions make up 17.0% of the universe of IPEDS degree-granting postsecondary institutions—but they employ only 7.3% of the faculty population, as estimated on the 2004 NSOPF. By contrast, Carnegie Doctoral/Research institutions represent only 7.0% of the IPEDS institutional universe but employ 37.4% of all faculty members (fig. 7).

In four-year institutions, faculty members working off the tenure track, whether full- or part-time, make up about 60% of all faculty members in English and about 50% in foreign languages. In two-year colleges, the figure rises to approach 80% for English and almost 87% in foreign languages. Here, too, the numerical population estimates hold as much interest as the percentage distributions do. Despite the extraordinarily high percentage of faculty members teaching off the tenure track in two-year colleges, the 8,704 English faculty members holding tenured and tenure-track positions in two-year colleges outnumber the tenured and tenure-track English faculty in every other sector. In foreign languages, the 7,829 faculty members holding tenured or tenure-track positions in Carnegie Doctoral/Research institutions form a larger number than the members of the tenured and tenure-track faculty in the other three sectors combined (figs. 8 and 9; please note that these figures only include faculty members in the four Carnegie categories Doctoral/Research, Master's, Baccalaureate, and Associate's and exclude those in institutions classified as Other—theological seminaries; separate medical, engineering, or business schools; and similar specialized institutions).

Limiting the view to four-year institutions, compared with other teaching fields, English and foreign languages rank at the lower and upper ends of the middle in a grouping arranged in ascending order according to the percentage of faculty members holding full-time tenured or tenure-track appointments. Figure 10 shows the different teaching fields and the percentage for each field of the faculty composed of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty members.

Collectively, faculty members teaching off the tenure track have very different degree qualifications from those holding tenured or tenure-track appointments. A doctorate is overwhelmingly the highest degree held by tenured and tenure-track faculty members in four-year institutions; master's degrees are the highest degree held by the majority of those teaching off the tenure track in four-year institutions and by all categories of faculty members in two-year institutions, including tenured and tenure-track faculty members. In two-year institutions, only 11.3% of faculty members in English and 9.1% in foreign languages hold a doctorate. The equivalent figures for four-year institutions are 53.3% of all faculty members in English—but 92.1% of faculty members in tenured or tenure-track positions—and 63.3% of all faculty

members in foreign languages—but 97.4% of all faculty members in full-time tenured or tenure-track positions (figs. 11–14).

In numerical terms, in English in four-year institutions, out of a total faculty population of almost 43,000, more than 18,000 are non-tenure-track faculty members who hold a degree other than a doctorate as their highest degree, of whom over 13,000 are in part-time and over 5,000 are in full-time non-tenure-track positions (about 3,800 of the 18,000 hold an MFA). In foreign languages in four-year institutions, out of a total faculty population of 26,700, more than 9,000 are non-tenure-track faculty members who hold a degree other than a doctorate as their highest degree, of whom over 6,000 are in part-time and over 3,000 are in full-time non-tenure-track positions. Were institutions to convert substantial numbers of non-tenure-track positions to tenure-track, there could be a negative impact for the large population of faculty members whose degree qualifications leave them ineligible for tenure-track positions in most four-year institutions. In four-year institutions, of the more than 36,000 faculty members in English and foreign languages teaching off the tenure track, 9,300 (25.8%) hold a doctorate. (These data are summarized in figures 15 and 16.)

The economic circumstances of part-time faculty members have been a major focus of professional concern. A review of average annual salaries for part-time faculty members shows why. Salary data from the 2004 NSOPF show that in 2003 four-year institutions paid part-time faculty members in English and foreign languages average annual salaries of just over \$12,000; the average for all fields is \$13,015. Only in the health sciences do part-time faculty members receive institutional salaries that can be termed substantial—just under \$35,000 on average (fig. 17). In two-year institutions, the average annual salaries for part-timers are even lower—\$9,265 for English and \$8,485 for foreign languages. (At \$12,295, economics is the teaching field with the highest average annual salary in two-year institutions; the health sciences have too few respondents from two-year institutions to return a salary figure.)

NSOPF data for the 2003 household incomes of part-time faculty members (as distinct from their institutional salaries) add an important dimension to the overall portrait of part-timers' circumstances. Across all teaching fields, part-time faculty members in four-year institutions reported an average household income of \$105,893 in the calendar year 2003. For English, the average household income was \$77,894; for foreign languages, \$87,259. The high was \$182,146 in health sciences; the low was \$71,958 in history (fig. 18).

These household income figures offer some perspective on the way the part-time faculty splits right down the middle on the question of preferring full-time or part-time employment.

In English

- Of all 37,500 part-time non-tenure-track faculty members, 50.1% prefer a full-time position, and 49.9% a part-time position.
- Of the 15,800 part-time non-tenure-track faculty members in four-year institutions, 51.6% prefer a full-time position, and 48.4% prefer a part-time position.
- Of the 4,100 part-time non-tenure-track faculty members who hold doctorates, 46.1% prefer a full-time position, and 53.9% prefer a part-time position.

In foreign languages

- Of all 13,000 part-time non-tenure-track faculty members, 45.2% prefer a full-time position, and 54.9% prefer a part-time position.

- Of the 7,700 part-time non-tenure-track faculty members in four-year institutions, 46.9% prefer a full-time position, and 53.1% prefer a part-time position.
- Of the 2,100 part-time non-tenure-track faculty members who hold doctorates, 51.6% prefer a full-time position, and 48.4% prefer a part-time position.

The NSOPF household income figures become even more revealing when broken out to show the percentage of part-time faculty members whose household incomes fell into various income ranges. Of part-time faculty members in four-year institutions, among all teaching fields, English had the highest percentage and second-highest estimated number with a household income less than \$25,000—14.7%, or 2,528 of an estimated 17,200 part-time faculty members total. Only fine arts had a larger number—2,862, or 9.0% of an estimated base of 31,800 part-time faculty members. Table 2 (for four-year institutions) and table 3 (for two-year institutions) show the percentage of part-time faculty members in different teaching fields whose household incomes fell into one of eight dollar ranges, from less than \$25,000 to more than \$300,000. To give a sense of scale across the different teaching fields, the estimated number of part-time faculty members for each field is provided in parentheses.

The income distributions suggest how members of the part-time faculty may be expected to differ in their situations, preferences, and interests. One aspect of the differences can be seen in figures 19 and 20, which document the responses part-time faculty members give to questions about job satisfaction and about the link, especially strong for English, between household income and level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with salary. In English, in both four-year and two-year institutions, as the household income of part-time faculty members rises, the percentage who say they are somewhat or very dissatisfied with their salary falls, from over 80% (part-time faculty members in English who teach in four-year institutions and whose household incomes are less than \$25,000) to about 40% (those whose household incomes are \$50,000 or above). The percentage of part-time faculty members in English who say they are very or somewhat satisfied with their salary is actually higher in two-year colleges. Even in the lowest household income range, close to 40% say they are somewhat or very satisfied with the salary. In the higher household income ranges, the figure exceeds 65%. Of the estimated 17,200 part-time faculty members in English in four-year institutions, those with household incomes under \$25,000 make up 14.7%, and those with household incomes of \$50,000 and above make up 67.9%. Of the estimated 26,700 part-time faculty members in English in two-year institutions, those with household incomes under \$25,000 make up 10.0%, and those with household incomes of \$50,000 and above make up 65.7%.

The pattern is less clear-cut in foreign languages. For four-year institutions, the lowest household income range has too few cases for the NSOPF to report any information, and part-time faculty members in the highest household income range report the highest level of dissatisfaction with salary. However, about 60% of part-time faculty members in foreign languages reporting household incomes from \$25,000 to \$99,999 say that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their salaries. There are too few cases in the NSOPF sample to report salary satisfaction by household income ranges for part-time faculty members in foreign languages in two-year institutions (fig. 21).

Works Cited

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Fig. 1. Percentage of Faculty Members in Different Employment and Tenure Statuses, All Institutions, 1995 and 2005

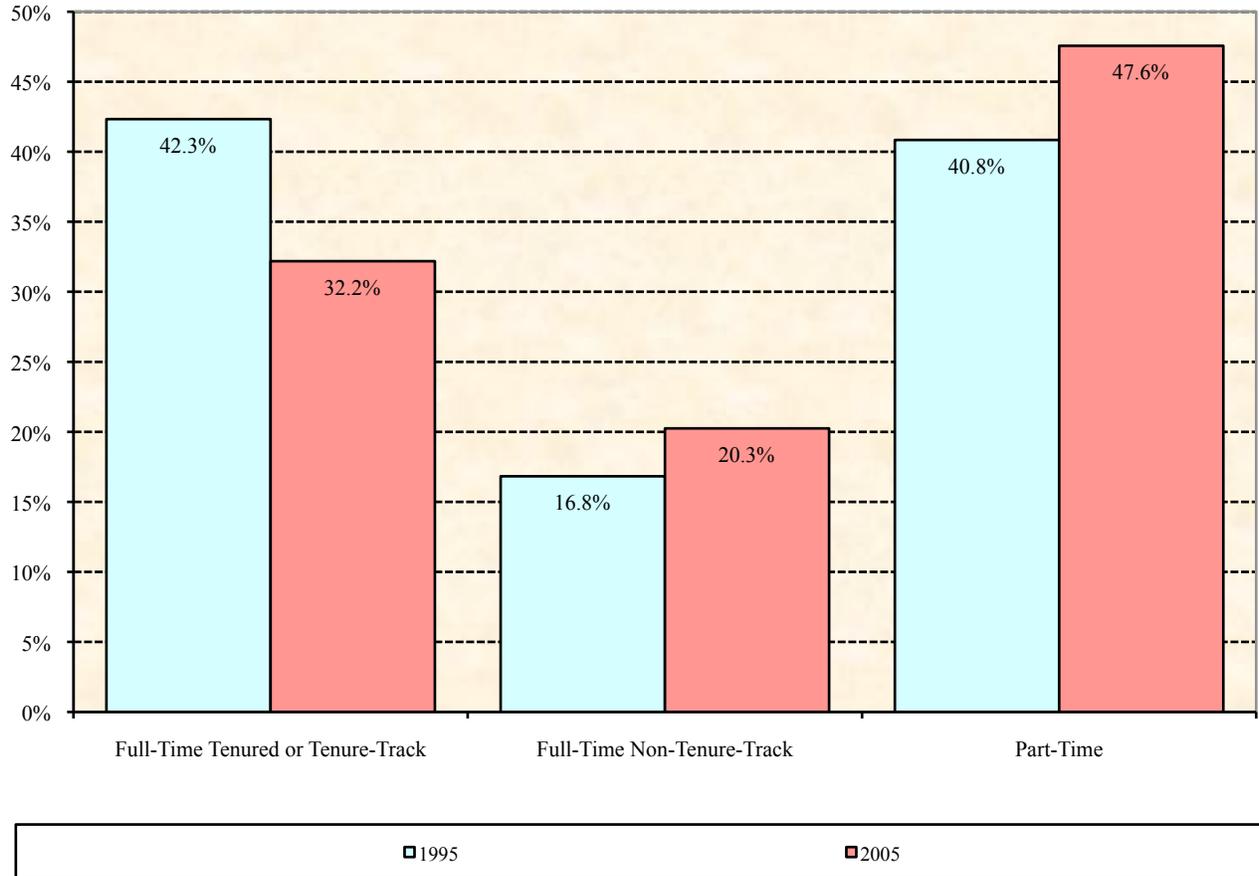


Fig. 2. Number of Full-Time Tenured and Tenure-Track, Full-Time Non-Tenure-Track, and Part-Time Faculty Members, All Institutions, 1995 and 2005

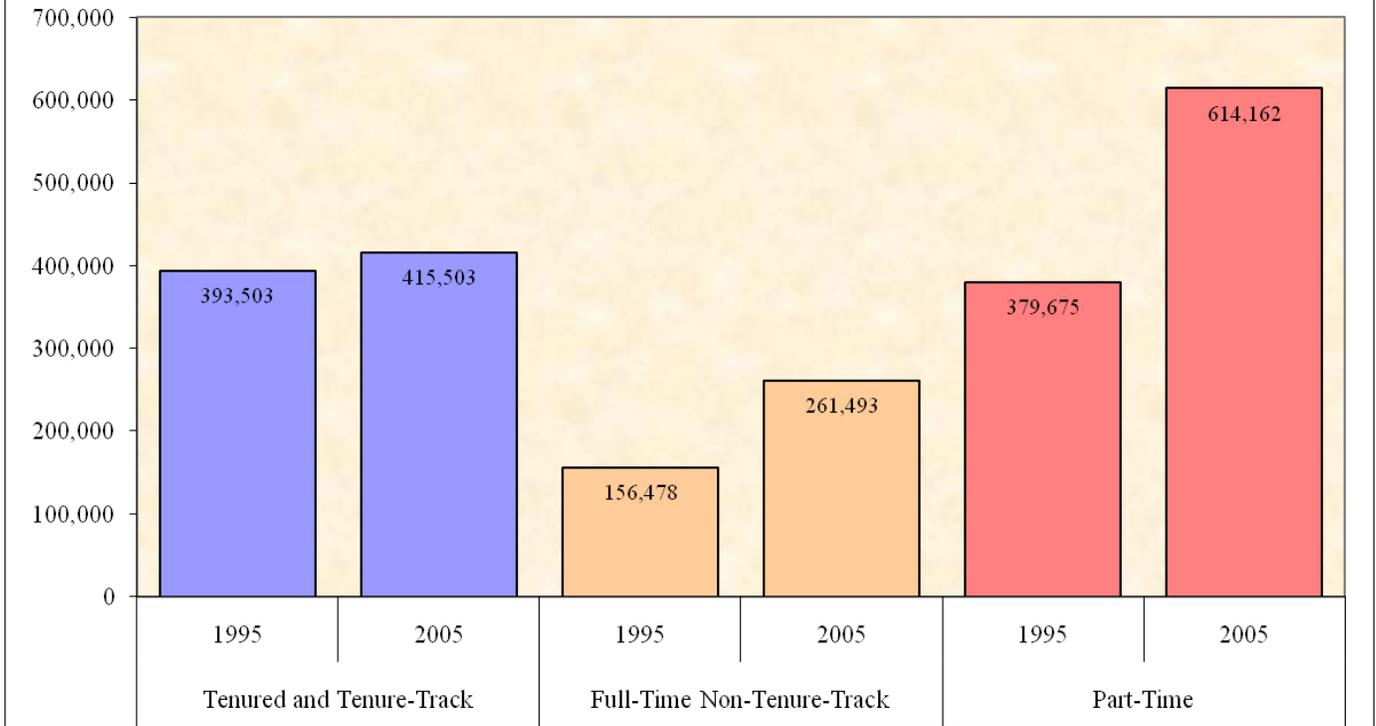
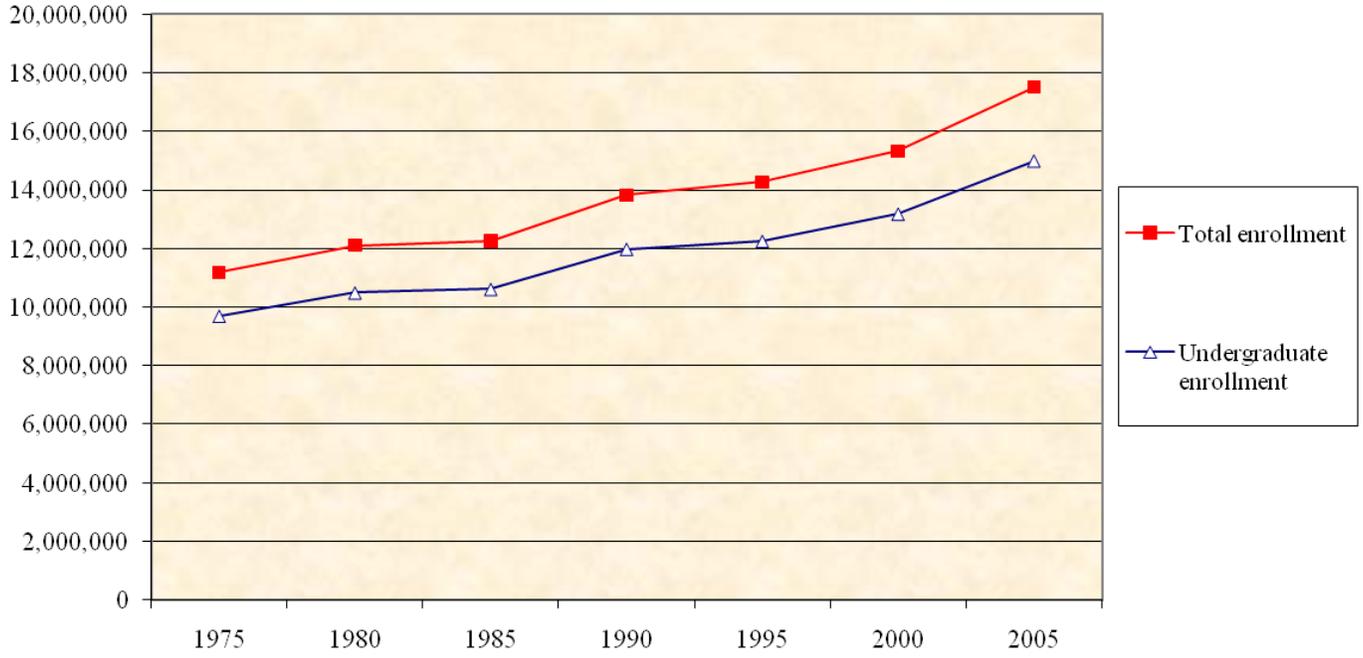


Fig. 3. Total Student Enrollment and Undergraduate Student Enrollment, Selected Years, 1975-2005



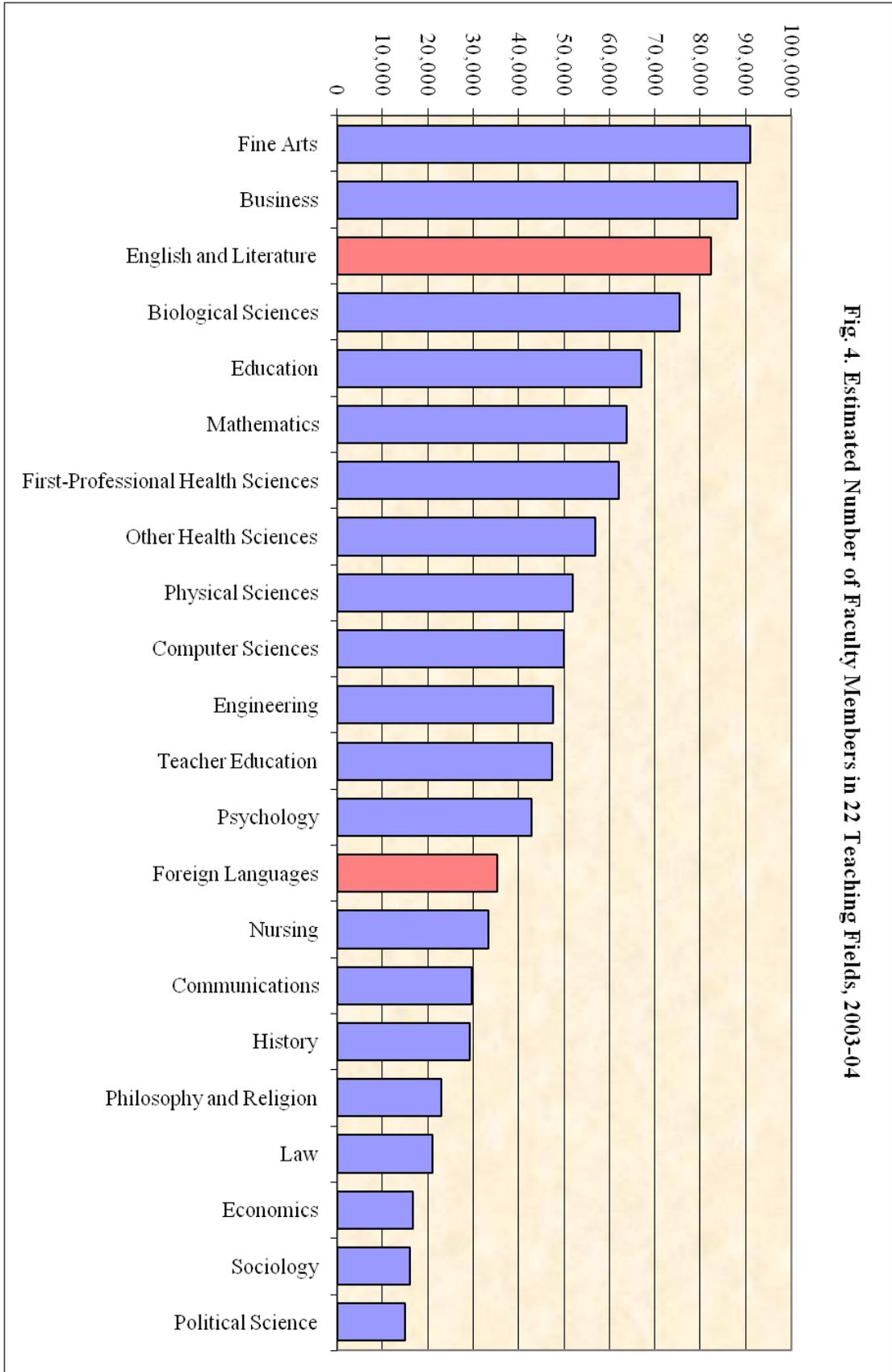


Fig. 5. Estimated Number of Faculty Members in English and Foreign Languages, 2003-04

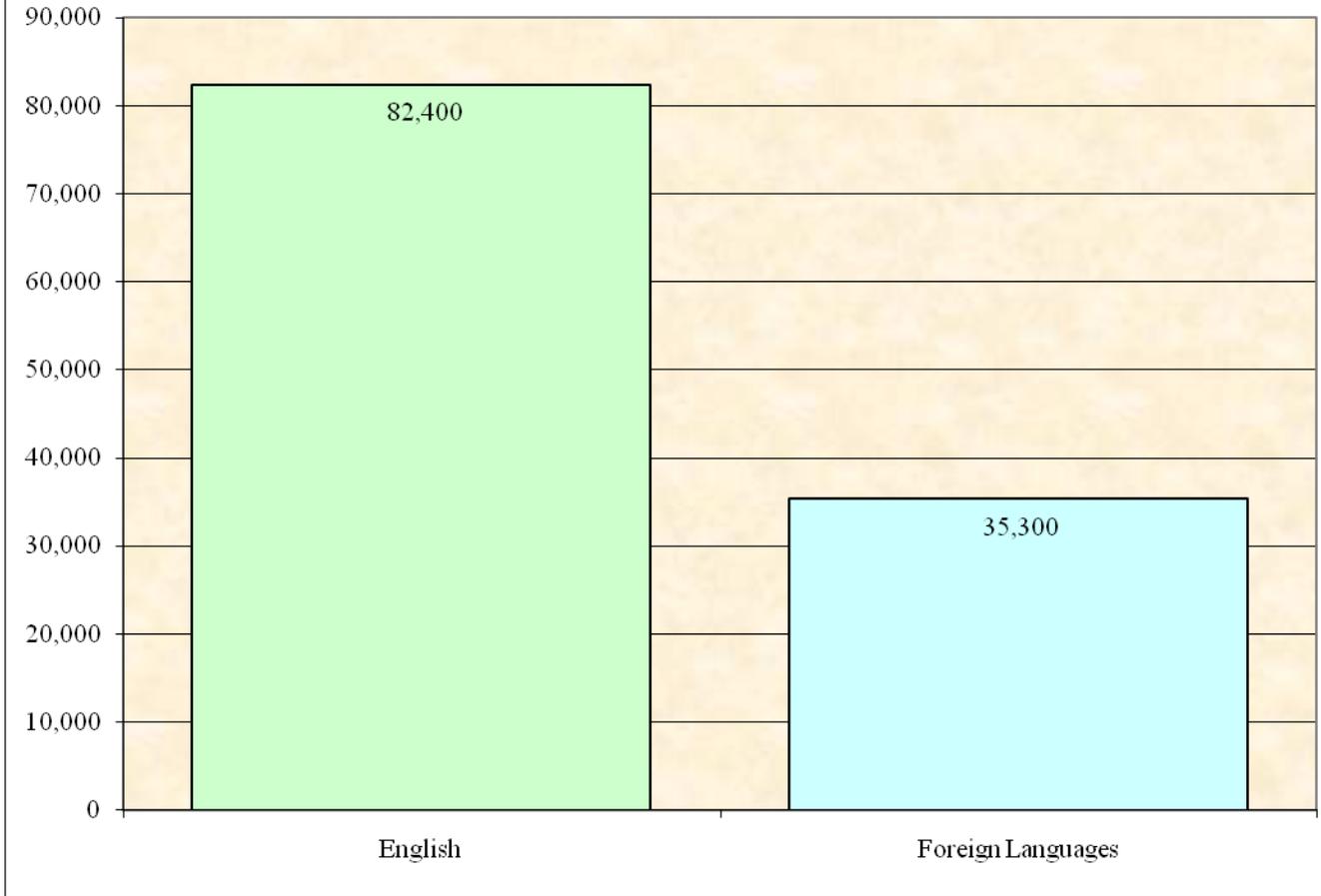


Fig. 6. Distribution of the Faculty Members in English and Foreign Languages, by Carnegie Institutional Classification, 2003-04

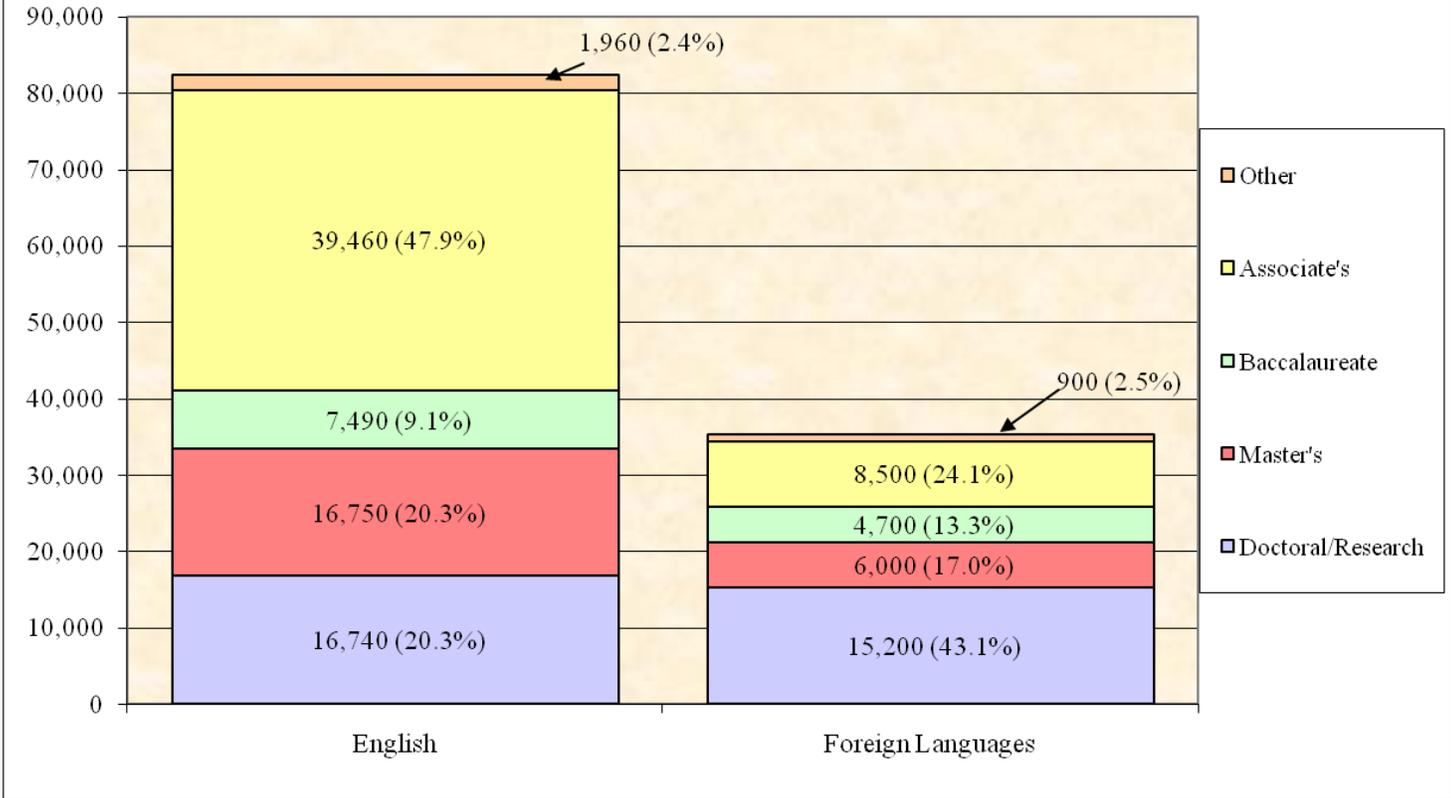


Fig. 7. Percentage Distribution of Faculty Members in English, Foreign Languages, and All Fields, by Carnegie Institutional Classification, 2003-04

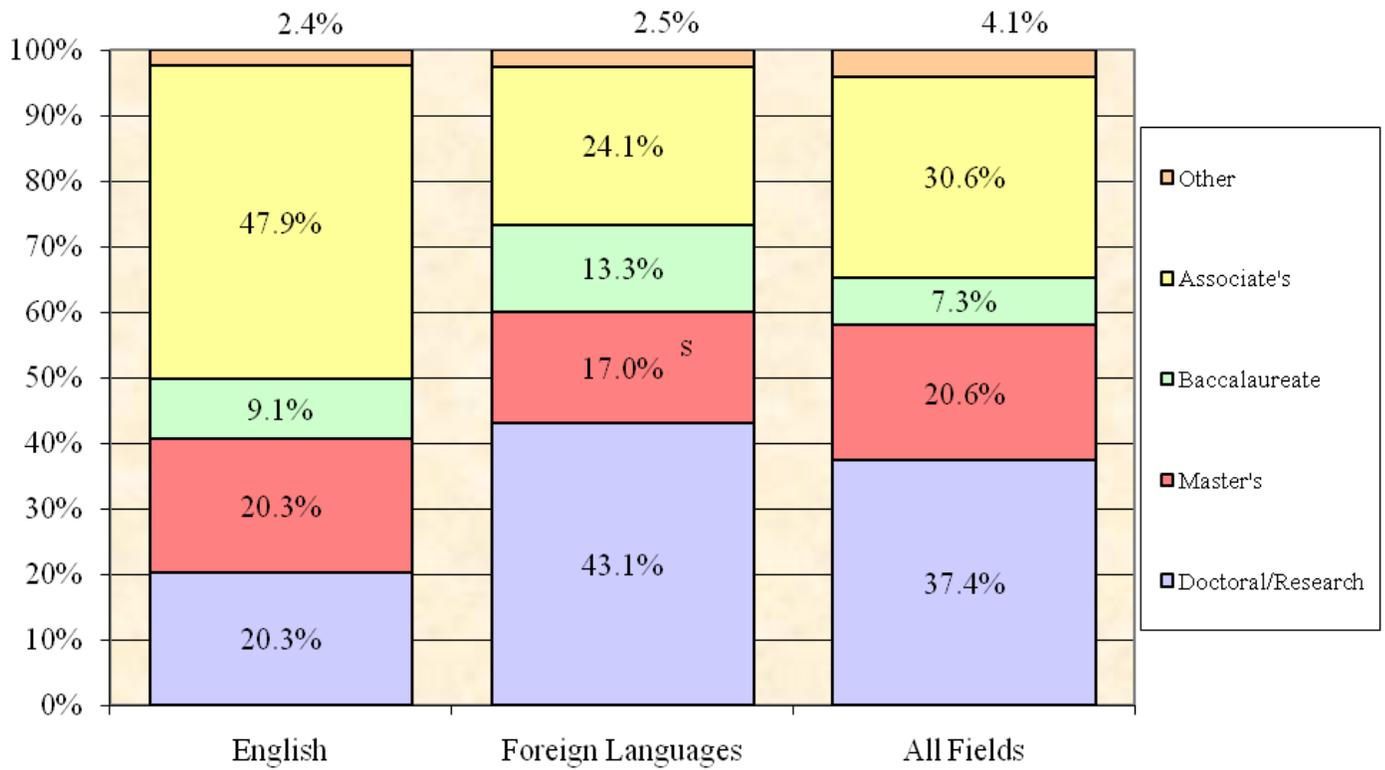


Fig. 8. Distribution of Faculty Members in English, by Employment Status and Carnegie Institutional Classification, 2003-04

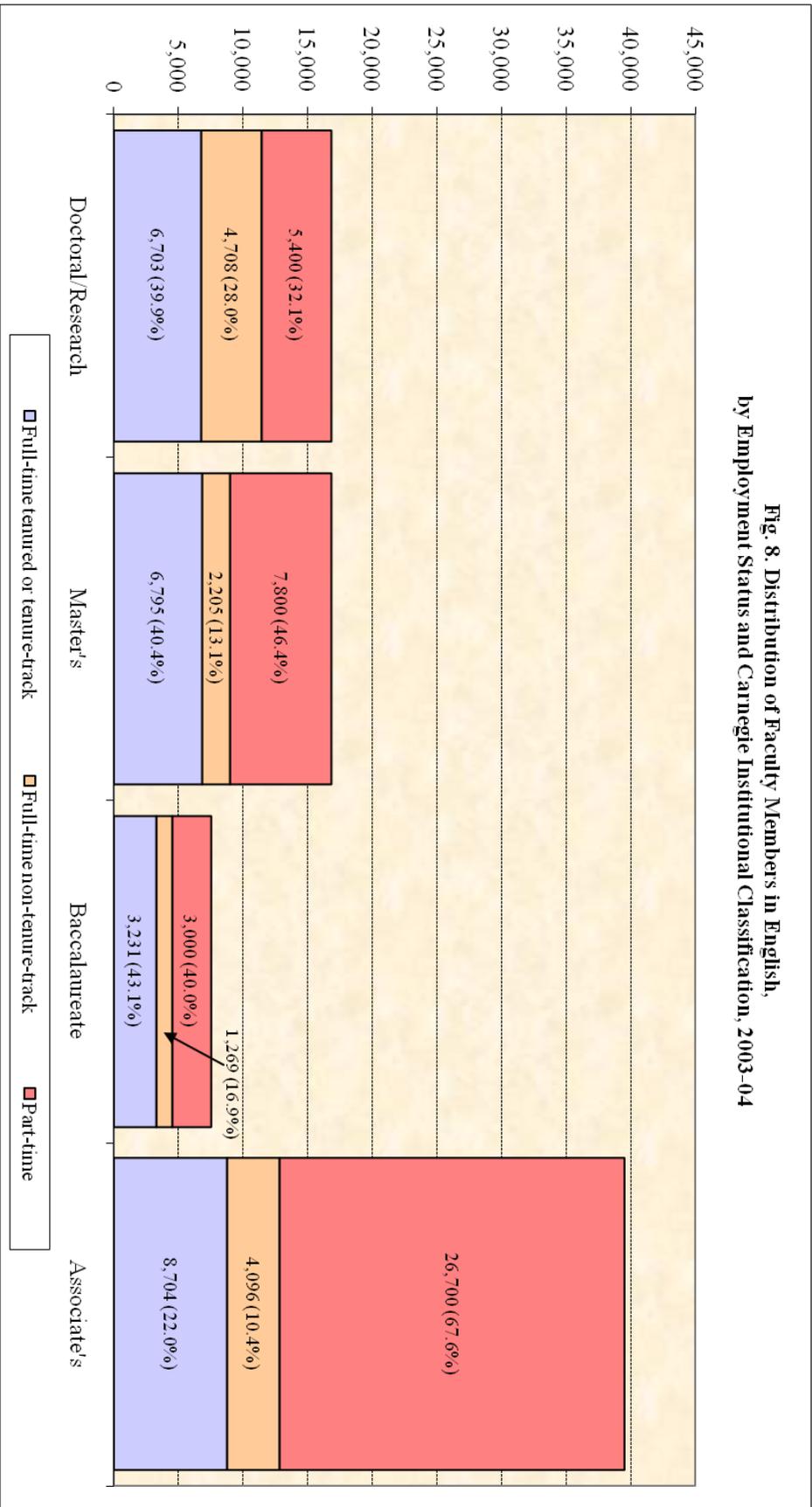
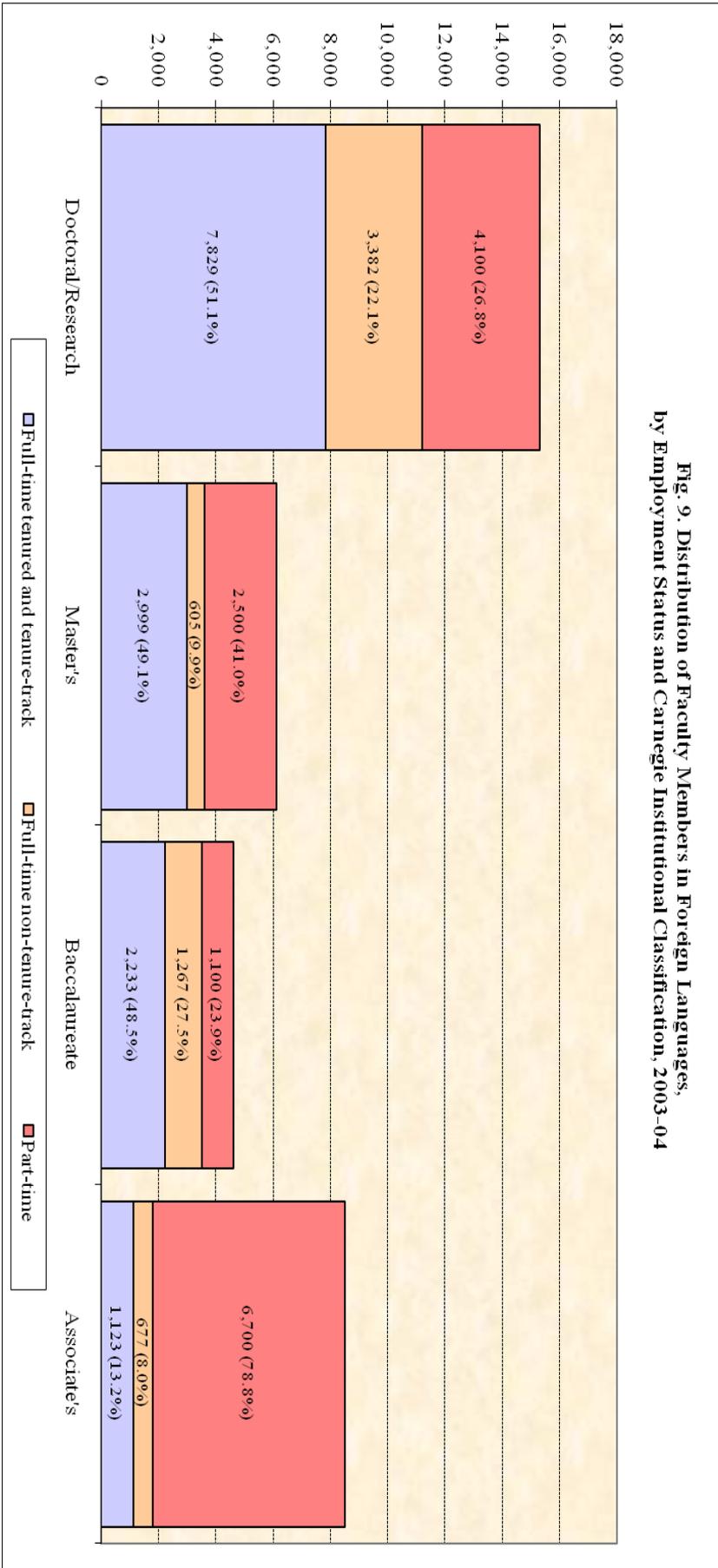


Fig. 9. Distribution of Faculty Members in Foreign Languages, by Employment Status and Carnegie Institutional Classification, 2003-04



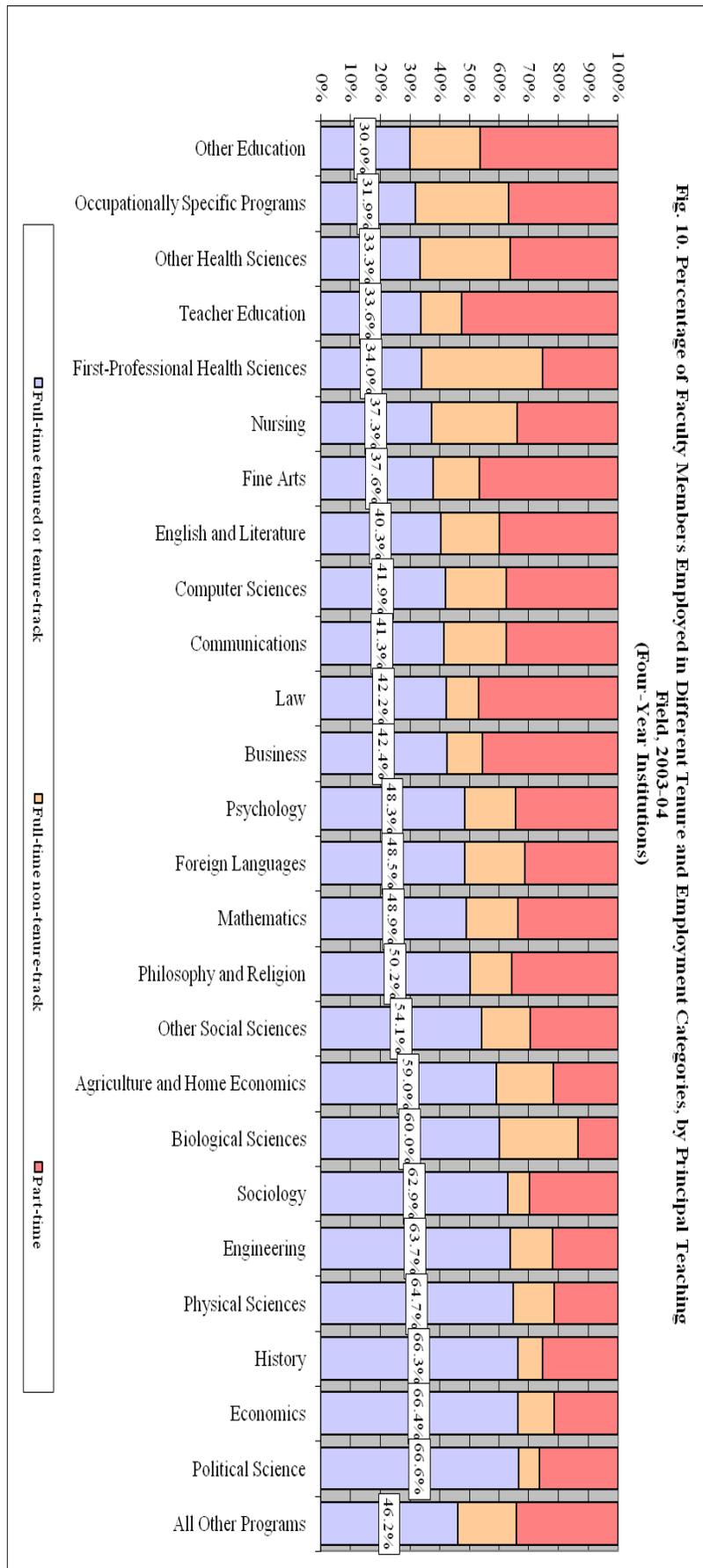


Fig. 11. Highest Degree Held by Faculty Members in English, by Tenure and Employment Status (Four-Year Institutions)

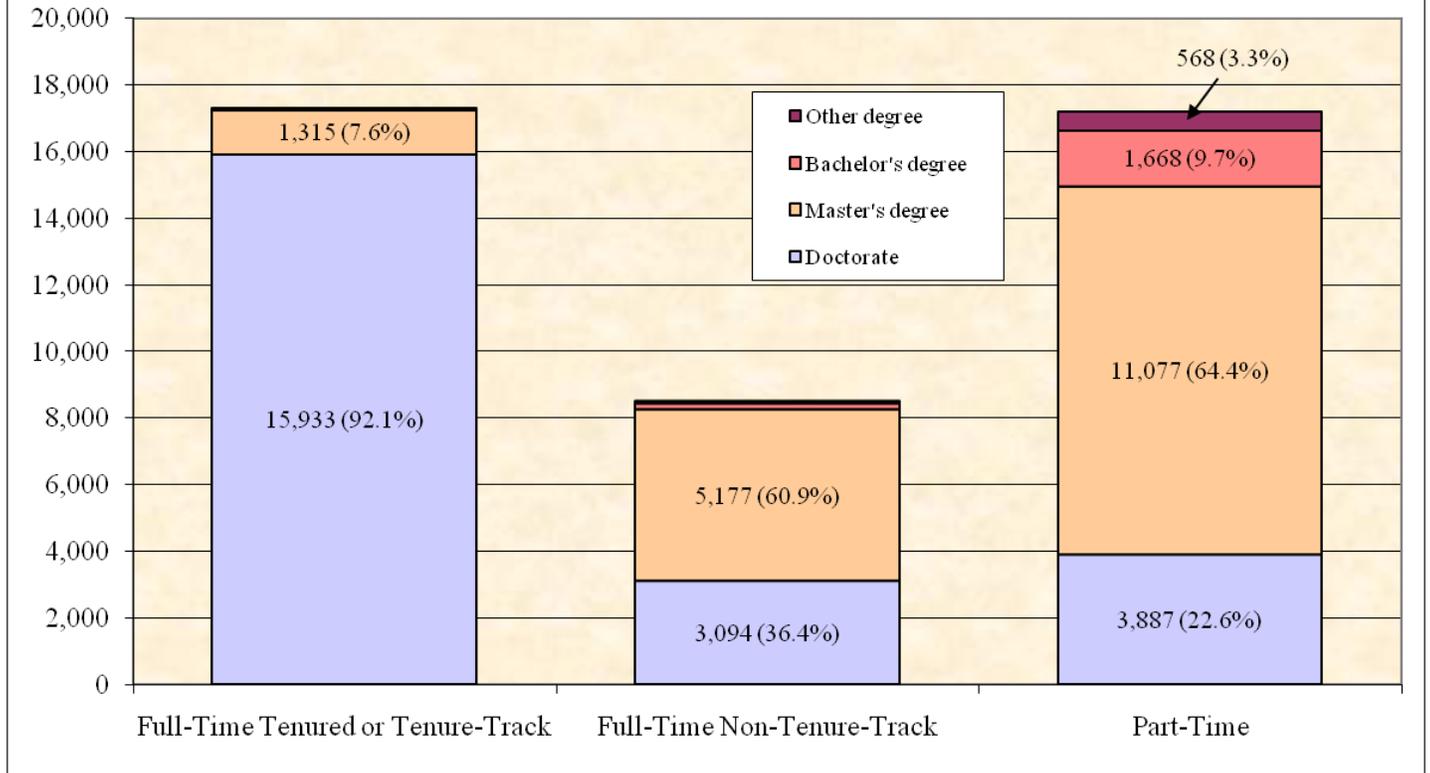


Fig. 12. Highest Degree Held by Faculty Members in Foreign Languages, by Tenure and Employment Status (Four-Year Institutions)

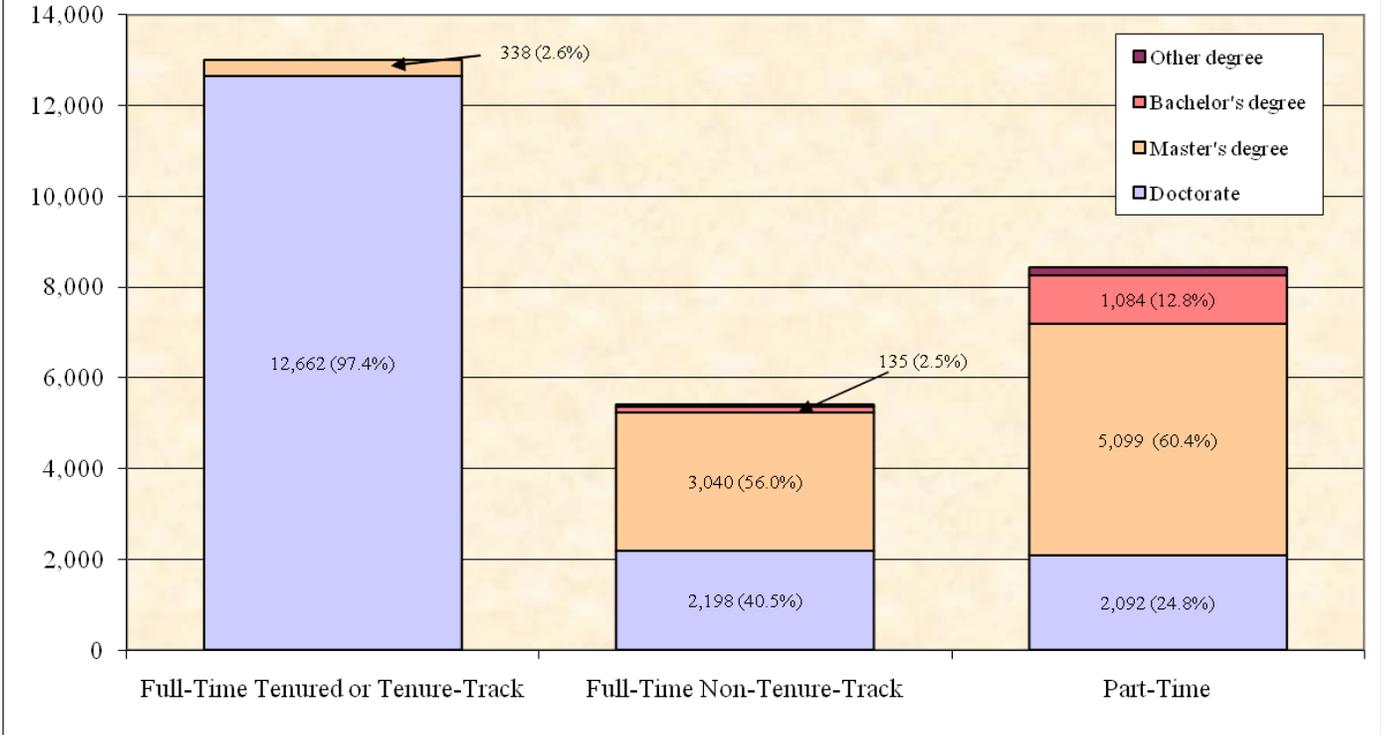


Fig. 13. Highest Degree Held by Faculty Members in English and Foreign Languages (Four-Year Institutions)

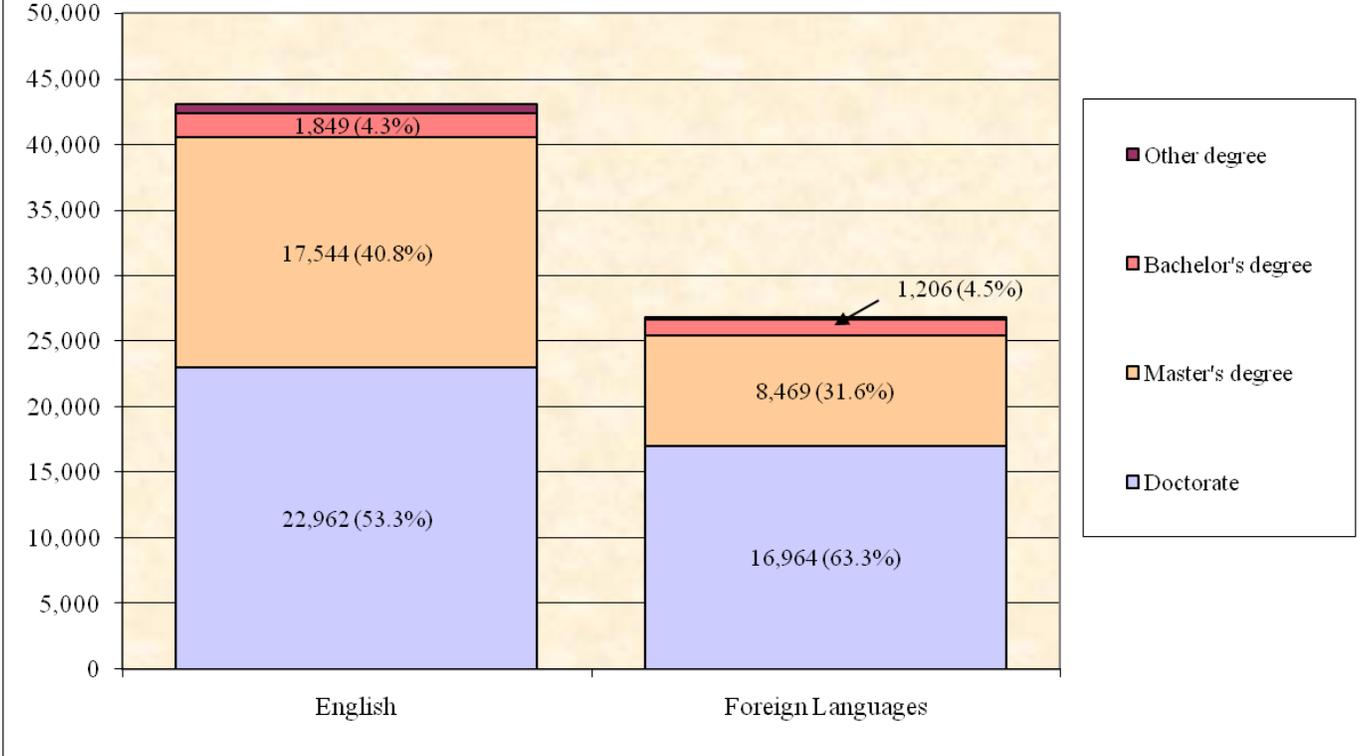


Fig. 14. Highest Degree Held by Faculty Members in English and Foreign Languages (Two-Year Institutions)

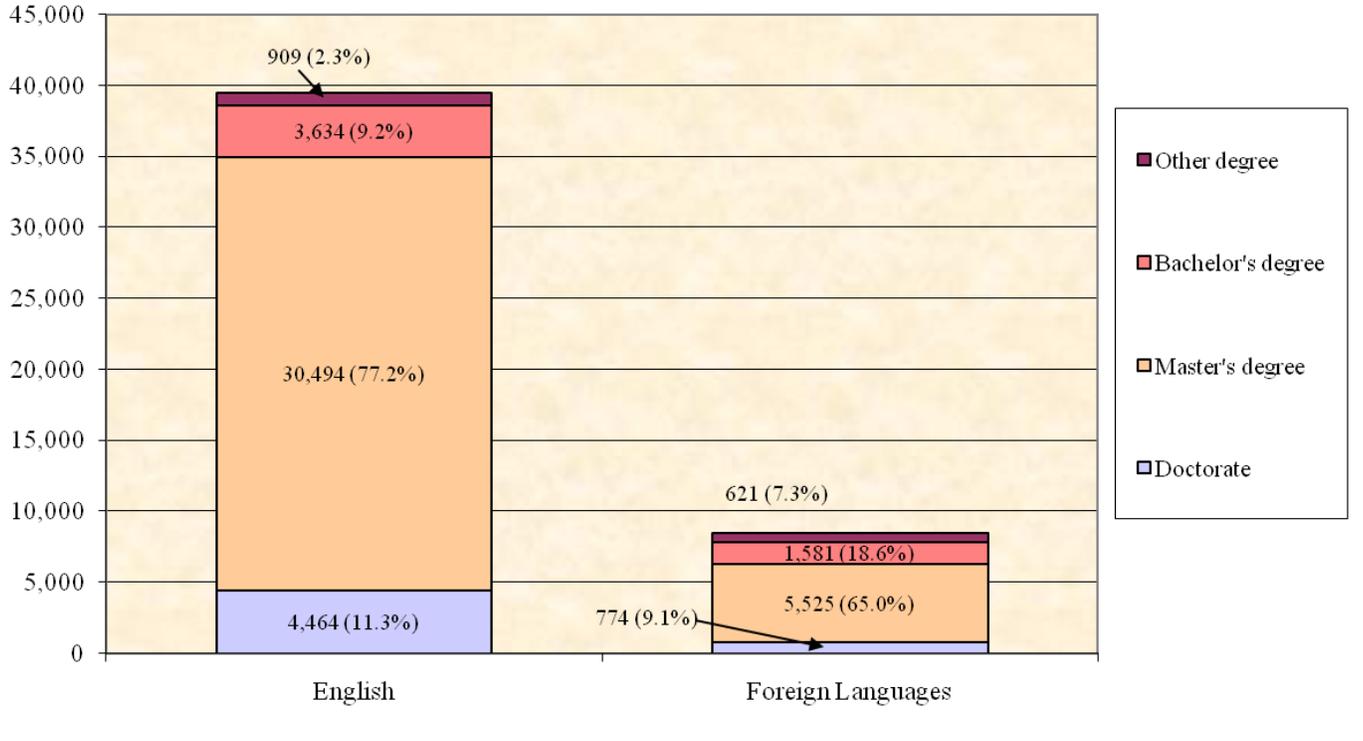
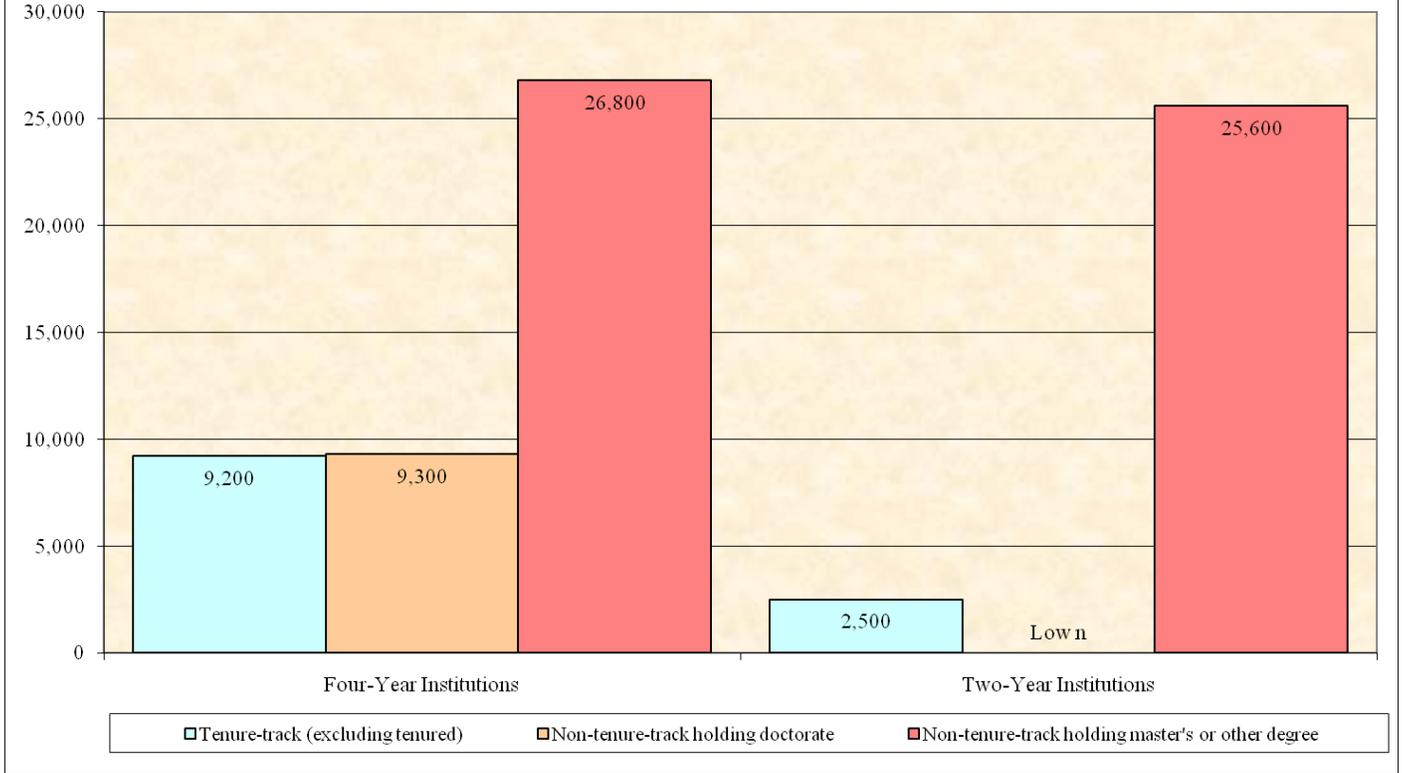
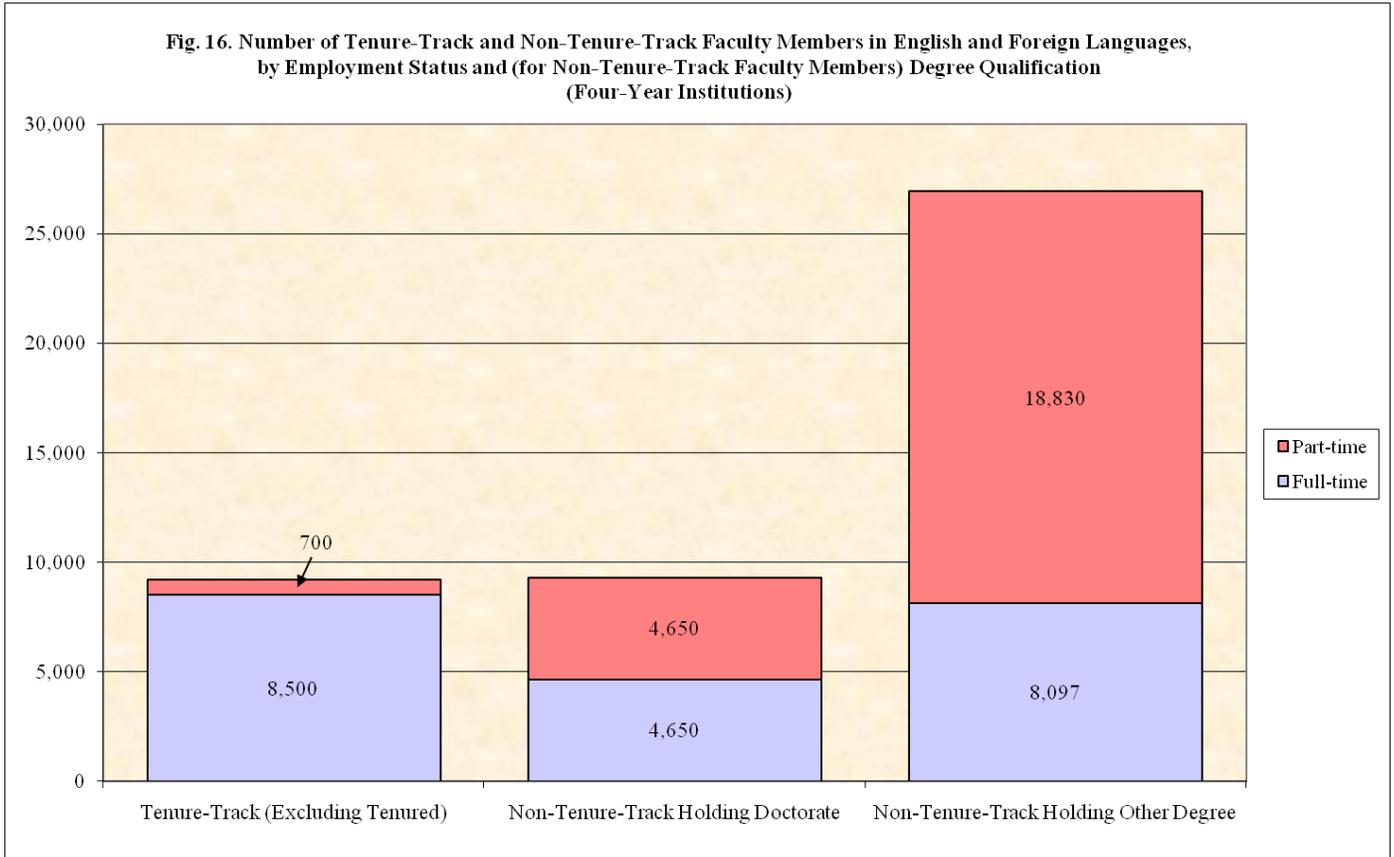
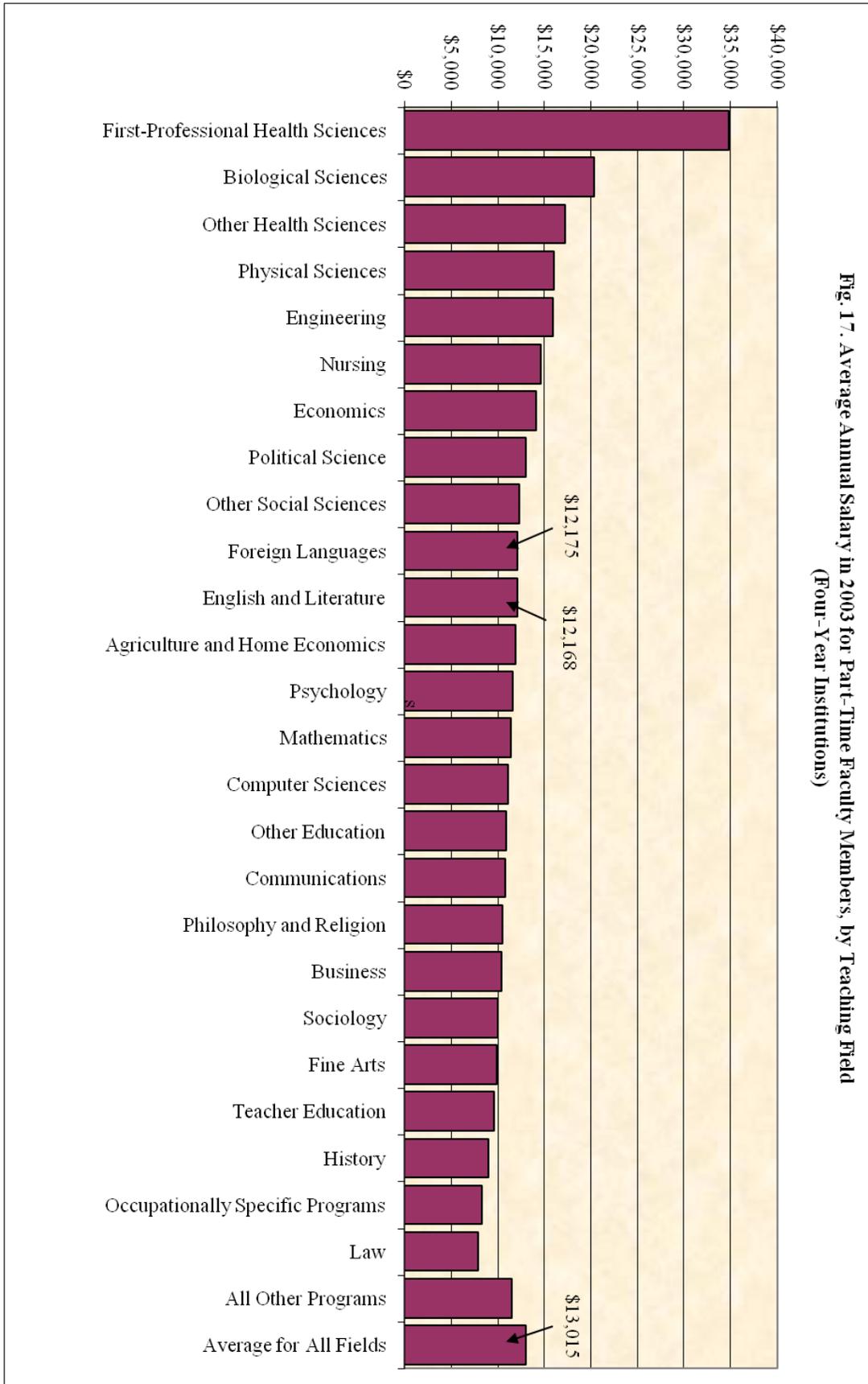


Fig. 15. Number of Tenure-Track, Non-Tenure-Track Doctorate-Holding, and Non-Tenure-Track Non-Doctorate-Holding Faculty Members in English and Foreign Languages, by Type of Institution







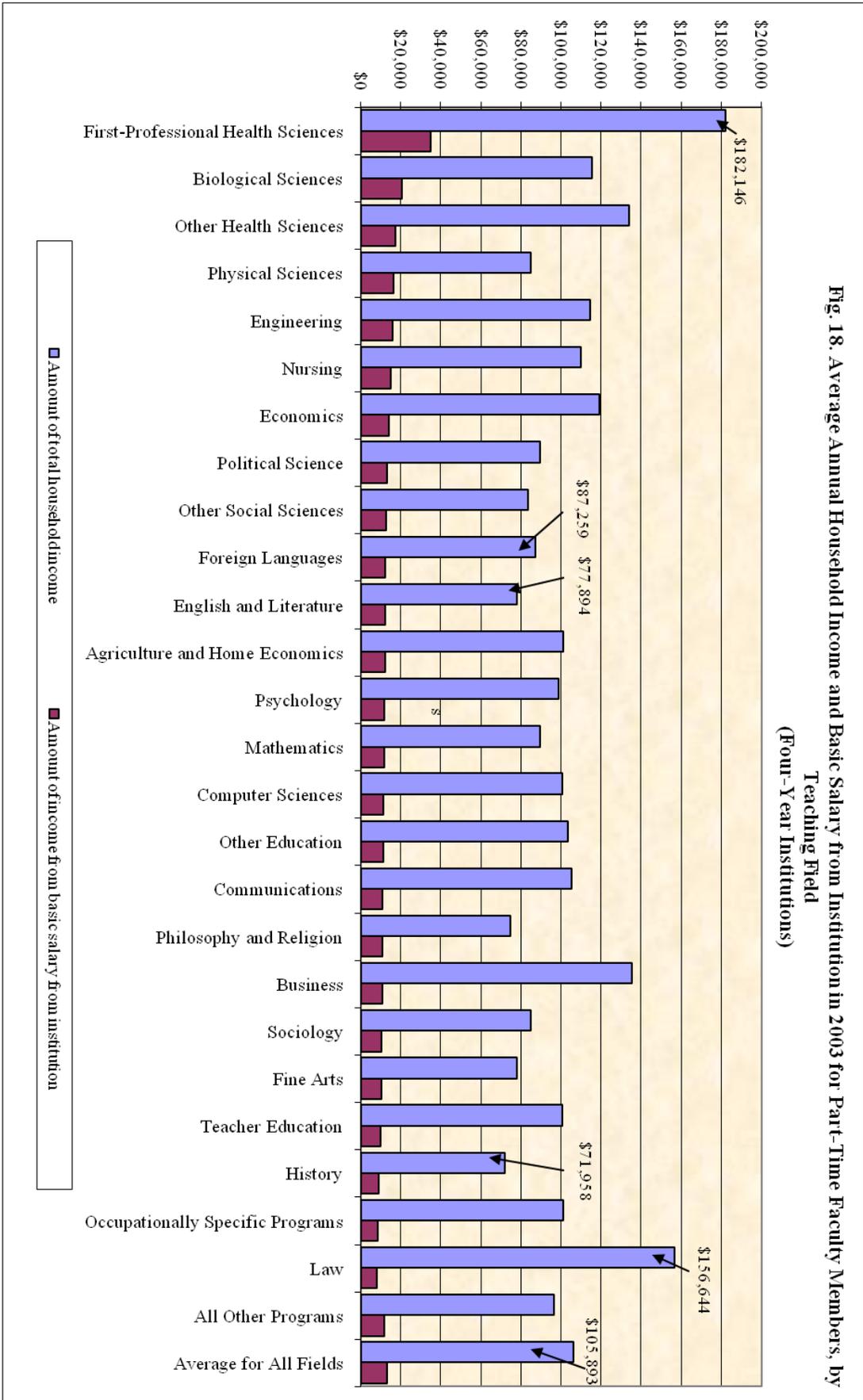


Table 1
Change in the Number of Faculty Members in Selected Teaching Fields, 1992–93 and 2003–04

Teaching Field	Full-Time Tenured and Tenure-Track	Full-Time Non-Tenure-Track	Part-Time	Total
All teaching fields				
1993	437,100	161,600	435,300	1,034,000
2004	464,200	217,900	529,600	1,211,700
Percentage change	6.2	34.8	21.7	17.2
English and literature				
1993	29,100	11,400	43,600	84,100
2004	26,000	12,600	43,800	82,400
Percentage change	-10.7	10.5	0.5	-2.0
Foreign languages				
1993	11,200	3,600	12,000	26,700
2004	14,200	6,100	15,000	35,300
Percentage change	26.8	69.4	25.0	32.2
History				
1993	13,000	2,700	8,200	23,900
2004	15,800	2,600	11,000	29,400
Percentage change	21.5	-3.7	34.1	23.0
Philosophy and religion				
1993	7,300	1,500	4,300	13,100
2004	10,500	2,600	9,900	23,000
Percentage change	43.8	73.3	130.2	75.6
Fine arts				
1993	24,600	8,800	36,800	70,100
2004	30,400	12,900	47,800	91,100
Percentage change	23.6	46.6	29.9	30.0
Communications				
1993	8,300	2,300	10,600	21,200
2004	10,300	5,600	13,700	29,600
Percentage change	24.1	143.5	29.2	39.6
Economics				
1993	8,800	1,400	3,400	13,700
2004	9,800	2,100	4,800	16,700
Percentage change	11.4	50.0	41.2	21.9
Political sciences				
1993	8,500	1,200	3,100	12,800
2004	8,700	1,300	5,000	15,000
Percentage change	2.4	8.3	61.3	17.2
Psychology				
1993	14,600	4,700	17,100	36,500
2004	17,900	7,000	17,800	42,700
Percentage change	22.6	48.9	4.1	17.0
Sociology				
1993	8,600	1,600	4,800	15,000
2004	8,000	1,300	6,500	15,800
Percentage change	-7.0	-18.8	35.4	5.3

Teaching Field	Full-Time Tenured and Tenure-Track	Full-Time Non-Tenure-Track	Part-Time	Total
Biological sciences				
1993	31,100	7,900	12,600	51,700
2004	41,500	17,500	16,300	75,300
Percentage change	33.4	121.5	29.4	45.6
Physical sciences				
1993	25,900	3,900	11,700	41,500
2004	29,500	6,800	15,600	51,900
Percentage change	13.9	74.4	33.3	25.1
Mathematics and statistics				
1993	21,100	5,900	29,000	55,900
2004	23,300	8,600	31,800	63,700
Percentage change	10.4	45.8	9.7	14.0
Engineering				
1993	22,200	4,100	12,700	39,000
2004	26,600	6,800	14,100	47,500
Percentage change	19.8	65.9	11.0	21.8
Computer sciences				
1993	10,700	3,700	15,200	29,500
2004	16,000	8,200	25,900	50,100
Percentage change	49.5	121.6	70.4	69.8
Teacher education				
1993	10,700	2,900	14,900	28,500
2004	12,100	6,100	29,200	47,400
Percentage change	13.1	110.3	96.0	66.3
Other education				
1993	20,100	7,900	22,200	50,200
2004	18,500	14,200	34,300	67,000
Percentage change	-8.0	79.7	54.5	33.5
Business				
1993	32,000	9,700	38,000	79,600
2004	32,000	11,200	44,900	88,100
Percentage change	0.0	15.5	18.2	10.7
Law				
1993	6,800	2,200	14,700	23,700
2004	7,600	1,900	11,400	20,900
Percentage change	11.8	-13.6	-22.4	-11.8

Source: 1993 NSOPF; 2004 NSOPF

Table 2
Percentage of Part-Time Faculty Members Whose 2003 Household Income Fell into Various Dollar Ranges (Four-Year Institutions)

Note: The numbers in parentheses indicate the estimated faculty population on which the percentages are based.

	\$1– \$24,999	\$25,000– \$49,999	\$50,000– \$74,999	\$75,000– \$99,999	\$100,000– \$149,999	\$150,000– \$199,999	\$200,000– \$300,000	More than \$300,000
English and literature (17,200)	14.7	17.4	23.4	18.2	20.5	3.0	1.9	0.9
Philosophy and religion (6,500)	12.9	24.3	23.7	13.5	16.7	5.8	3.1	0.0
Sociology (3,400)	12.4	13.4	31.0	18.6	11.8	10.0	0.0	2.9
Political science (2,900)	11.6	14	17.4	10.5	35.7	6.2	4.6	0.0
Other social sciences (5,500)	9.8	13.4	20.7	25.3	22.9	3.8	4.2	0.0
Fine arts (31,800)	9.0	24.0	26.5	16.1	14.9	6.0	2.4	1.1
History (5,200)	8.8	25.1	25.2	20.9	15.5	3.9	0.6	0.0
Computer sciences (9,300)	7.7	7.4	16.5	18.9	33.5	11.9	4.2	0.0
Foreign languages (8,400)	7.1	14.7	23.3	22.0	20.9	10.1	1.2	0.8
Physical sciences (8,800)	5.0	18.2	24.9	16.8	22.0	10.8	2.4	0.0
Communications (7,500)	4.6	13.6	17.8	25.3	24.2	9.0	1.7	3.9
Biological sciences (8,200)	3.8	12.7	22.0	25.9	14.6	9.2	8.7	3.3
Mathematics (11,400)	3.4	11.3	26.8	27.5	24.5	3.8	2.5	0.3
Psychology (10,900)	3.3	10.3	24.6	19.4	27.5	10.9	3.6	0.5
Economics (2,900)	3.3	13.3	24.7	12.2	22.0	6.1	13.8	4.7
Engineering (8,200)	3.1	7.2	19.6	21.3	31.0	6.4	6.3	5.2
Other education (22,000)	2.5	9.7	21.9	18.8	26.8	15.3	4.7	0.3
Business (29,000)	2.2	4.1	15.7	19.6	27.8	15.8	10.4	4.3
Occupationally specific programs (9,200)	2.0	10.2	24.8	18.7	27.6	11.7	2.1	3.1
Law (8,000)	1.6	3.2	10.6	17.6	27.8	20.2	9.1	10.0
Teacher education (16,500)	1.5	9.6	24.5	21.5	30.5	7.6	2.9	2.0
First-professional health sciences (15,400)	1.4	3.4	9.1	7.3	28.3	14.3	24.4	11.9
Other health sciences (12,600)	0.9	7.8	19.9	19.8	22.2	10.8	12.4	6.2
Nursing (6,100)	0.8	10.1	17.8	20.4	32.6	8.4	9.8	0.0
Agriculture and home economics (4,000)	0.0	14.8	16.7	24.9	29.8	10.5	2.0	1.3
All other programs (12,900)	4.1	12.3	21.2	24.7	23.5	8.1	5.9	0.3

Table 3
Percentage of Part-Time Faculty Members Whose 2003 Household Income Fell into Various Dollar Ranges (Two-Year Institutions)

Note: The numbers in parentheses indicate the estimated faculty population on which the percentages are based.

	\$1– \$24,999	\$25,000– \$49,999	\$50,000– \$74,999	\$75,000– \$99,999	\$100,000– \$149,999	\$150,000– \$199,999	\$200,000– \$300,000	More than \$300,000
Philosophy and religion (3,400)	21.3	17.2	25.3	17.8	15.3	3.2	0.0	0.0
Economics (1,900)	15.7	6.8	15.0	10.4	30.0	22.1	0.0	0.0
Fine arts (16,000)	10.6	32.0	32.0	9.9	12.3	2.2	1.0	0.0
English and literature (26,700)	10.0	24.3	29.3	16.5	15.4	2.9	1.5	0.1
Agriculture and home economics (3,300)	10.0	22.0	28.7	11.5	20.7	6.6	0.4	0.0
Physical sciences (5,900)	9.9	19.3	22.8	20.0	24.0	2.7	0.5	0.9
Teacher education (12,700)	8.9	18.7	22.4	26.3	17.1	5.1	0.7	0.8
Biological sciences (8,200)	8.2	18.4	30.1	14.6	23.4	3.9	1.5	0.0
History (5,800)	8.1	18.7	26.3	26.9	13.1	1.5	3.7	1.8
Foreign languages (6,700)	7.7	23.3	38.5	15.7	9.5	3.5	2.0	0.0
Mathematics (20,300)	7.1	15.5	28.1	20.4	21.2	4.3	2.5	1.1
Computer sciences (16,500)	6.9	17.0	26.8	18.8	24.8	5.1	0.5	0.0
Psychology (6,900)	6.7	26.0	21.0	20.5	16.5	7.5	1.7	0.0
Sociology (3,200)	6.3	17.5	24.2	18.2	29.5	4.4	0.0	0.0
Other education (12,300)	6.1	25.1	28.4	19.0	14.6	2.9	3.1	0.7
Communications (6,300)	5.1	18.0	25.1	17.7	28.0	4.8	0.0	1.3
Law (3,400)	4.6	12.0	29.6	26.1	19.8	5.0	1.6	1.3
Occupationally specific programs (28,200)	3.3	14.4	28.0	23.7	22.1	6.7	1.2	0.7
Business (15,900)	1.9	18.1	24.3	23.0	21.2	7.3	2.8	1.5
Other health sciences (15,400)	1.7	20.8	31.0	22.1	19.4	4.0	1.1	0.0
Engineering (5,900)	1.6	21.7	32.0	23.3	20.0	1.2	0.2	0.0
First-professional health sciences (low n)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Nursing (7,200)	1.2	11.2	21.5	32.3	25.2	7.2	0.2	1.3
Other social sciences (2,400)	1.1	32.0	31.2	10.3	16.8	6.9	0.0	1.7
Political science (2,100)	0.5	10.7	39.3	31.1	18.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
All other programs (6,300)	3.9	16.8	17.7	32.1	25.2	4.1	0.3	0.0