Part-time on the tenure-track: the nexus between policy and utilization

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The National Conversation

• Drago and Williams (2000) explicitly called for half-time tenure-track positions
• An Agenda for Excellence (2004) from the American Council on Education
• Beyond Bias and Barriers (2007) from the National Academies
• ACE / Sloan Foundation Conference (2005) and Sloan Foundation grants
Policy

• Raabe (1997) surveyed 191 institutions for work-family policies
• Leslie and Janson (2005) studied phased retirement
• Sullivan et al (2004) and Hollenshead et al. (2005) surveyed institutions for several kinds of flexible policies
Status of part-time tenure-track policies

• In 1991, 11% of 191 institutions surveyed allowed PTTT
• The proportion in 2002 was still less than 14%
• Research I universities are more likely than other institutions to allow PTTT
Institutional constraints on policy adoption

• Retirement programs (especially the distinction between defined-benefit and defined-contribution)

• Collective bargaining for faculty
What about utilization?

• Drago’s work on bias avoidance suggests that few faculty take advantage of these policies, just as they fail to use policies on tenure-clock extension, etc.

• Caveats about available data
  • Definition of effort in institutional databases
  • multiple appointments, academic-year grant support for teaching relief
“Anomalous Faculty”
Leslie and Walke (2001)

- Mined the NSOPF 1992-93
- Less than 2% of tenure-track faculty were part-time (PTTT)
- PTTT are older than full-timers, and men PTTT are older than women
- Women are over-represented among PTTT
- Most work at four-year institutions
Leslie and Walke (2001)

- PTTT strongly over-represented in health sciences and fine arts; also over-represented in engineering and education; under-represented in social sciences, humanities, natural sciences
- Total household income of PTTT faculty is equivalent to full-time faculty
Analysis of 2004 NSOPF

- PTTT represented 1.9% of the professoriate sampled; extrapolating indicates nearly 23,000 faculty in the US are PTTT:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Institution</th>
<th>% of TT Faculty who are PT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public doctoral</td>
<td>1.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private doctoral</td>
<td>1.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public masters</td>
<td>1.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private masters</td>
<td>1.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private baccalaureate</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public associate</td>
<td>2.93%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Analysis of 2004 NSOPF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Percentage of TT who are</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/Home Economics</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>2.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>1.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>5.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>2.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>2.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>0.99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Institutional Studies

• University of Illinois College of Medicine (Fox et al. 2006)
  – 14% of all tenure-track faculty are part-time
  – Most are MDs, not PhDs
  – Women work part-time to accommodate family; men choose part-time in order to moonlight

• University of Washington (Quinn et al. 2004)
  – Identified 23 part-time appointments (16 men and 7 women)
  – All but one was tenured
PTTT faculty assort into 3 groups

• Step-down towards retirement (Leslie and Janson 2005)
• Accommodate outside interests (consulting, business, second careers) – see Lobel 2004
• Accommodate family concerns (dual-career couples, parenting/elder care)
PTTT at Ohio State

• Ohio State has had a policy allowing part-time tenure-track positions since the early 1990s; impact on tenure-clock and benefits well delineated

• An internal study in 2004 yielded a total of 23 individuals who were truly part-time tenure-track (NB: no data from College of Medicine)
PTTT faculty at Ohio State

- 12 women, 11 men
- 21 tenured, 2 probationary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>N of PTTT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Medicine</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Insights from a Focus Group

• All 23 were invited; 8 attended, all women
• Common themes:
  – Individuals negotiated for themselves
  – Department chairs were unaware of university policies
  – Some chairs resisted
Insights from campus presentations

• Virtually no chair was aware of existing policy, nor were many deans
• Leaders of Faculty Council likewise were unaware of policy
• Presentations to groups in the arts, humanities, Business and Law were well-received
• Presentations to STEM units were met with curiosity, indifference, and hostility

• Concerns expressed:
  – rankings
  – securing external funding
  – ensuring departmental responsibilities are discharged
PTTT in STEM

• In fact, STEM departments have considerable experience with part-timers among their tenured faculty
  – Part-time administrative positions
  – Faculty on partial-year sabbaticals
  – Buy-out of academic-year teaching from grants
looking ahead….

• Utilization will continue to be poor in STEM departments until they embrace the advantages:
  – Attraction of dual-career couples (?)
  – Retention of valued faculty members, especially women

• Because granting agencies drive faculty behavior and departmental norms, they must become part of the solution