

# Faculty Salaries: 2016–17

**By Suzanne B. Clery**

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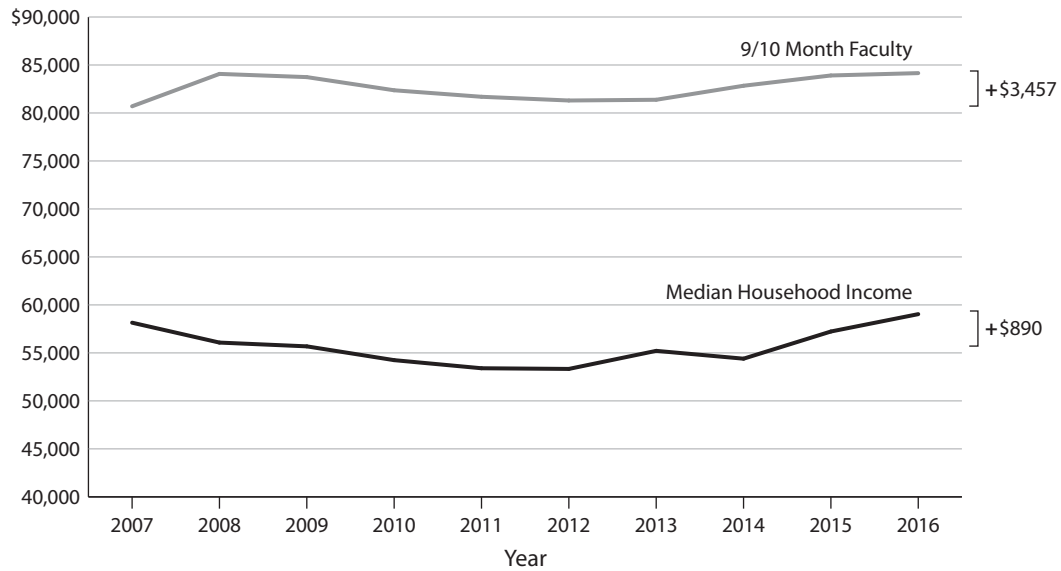
**A**lbeit sluggish at times, some indicators show the United States economy is now in recovery from the Great Recession. Both the unemployment rate and family purchasing power have improved. Unemployment, which hit a high of 10 percent during the recession, is now at about four percent—lower than pre-recessionary levels.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, family purchasing power is now slightly higher than pre-recessionary levels. Although unemployment is down, the workforce has shrunk notably, and is now smaller in size than the pre-recessionary workforce. Additionally, although wages and unemployment have recovered, wealth has not; household net worth dropped by 40 percent during the recession, and only recovered slightly by 2016.<sup>2</sup> Due to the recession's housing crisis, declines in homeownership are largely to blame for families' declining net worth. Notably, many young workers have amassed high student loan balances, which contributes

to the increasing share of young workers living with their parents: one-third, up from one-quarter a decade ago.<sup>3</sup>

Within academe, purchasing power and the workforce recovery has been more robust than that of the nation as a whole. During the pre-recessionary 2007–08 academic year, faculty earned an average inflation-adjusted salary of \$80,696, which has increased by \$3,457 (four percent), on average, to \$84,153 in 2016–17 (Figure 1).<sup>4</sup> Over the same time period, the average median household income, adjusted for inflation, increased by only \$890 (two percent) to \$59,039.<sup>5</sup> And, rather than shrinking, the academic labor force grew from about 539,000 full-time faculty in 2007–08 to about 599,000 in 2016–17.

An institution's finances are affected by a variety of forces, including changes in state budgets and local economies; labor market needs coupled with shifting demands for training,

**Figure 1. Inflation Adjusted Median Household Income and 9/10-Month Faculty Salaries: 2007 to 2016**



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce. "Table H-5. Race and Hispanic Origin of Householder—Households by Median and Mean Income, 1967–2016," *Historical Income Tables: Households*.

academics, and programs; collective bargaining activities; and, changes in institutions' strategies and operations including shifts in management, staffing patterns, and priorities. These forces, in turn, all act to operate on faculty employment conditions and compensation. This analysis examines the distribution of faculty across sectors and ranks, provides historical and current perspectives on faculty salaries, and compares faculty salaries across sectors, ranks, states, genders, disciplines, and collective bargaining status.

Some highlights:

- Salaries of full-time faculty members on 9/10-month contracts employed during the 2016–17 academic year averaged \$84,153 (Figure 5). Faculty purchasing power in 2016–17 scarcely increased, by 0.3 percent over 2015–16, but exceeded that of 1972–73, a prior historical peak, by nine percent. In 2016–17, faculty purchasing power recovered to meet the 2007–08 pre-recessionary peak.
- The state rankings of faculty salaries are generally consistent year over year, with states only shifting by one or two ranks. New Jersey, a perennial leader among public four-year institutions, continued to receive the highest average salaries among faculty members on 9/10-month contracts in 2016–17 (\$107,109, Table 2), followed by California faculty members (\$106,178). Among public two-year colleges, California faculty members continued to receive the highest pay (\$89,420), which was substantially higher than the number two state, Wisconsin, where faculty earned an average of \$80,163 in 2016–17, or 12 percent less than those in California. Faculty members at independents in Massachusetts—the perennial leaders among independents—earned the highest average salary (\$114,243).
- The difference in average 9/10-month faculty salaries between public two-year colleges and public research universities

### Data Sources

This report relies largely on U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Human Resources data. Reflecting 2016–17, NCES collected data from 4,295 degree-granting colleges and universities as part of the annual IPEDS data collection for higher education institutions. At the time of this publication, these data reflect an early, provisional release of the IPEDS data.

This analysis excluded 1,018 seminaries, religious training institutions, for-profit institutions, and institutions that did not submit complete data in time for the IPEDS provisional release, leaving 2,971 institutions in the universe for this publication. Due to reporting universe differences, results reported herein may differ from data reported by NCES.

This report also makes use of data provided by the College and University Professional Association reflecting 2016–17 average salaries in 275 public and 412 independent colleges and universities by academic specialty and collective bargaining status; this report reflects 164,736 tenured or tenure-track faculty members.

continued to widen this year. The difference was \$21,710 in 2016–17 (derived from Figure 6).

- On average, women faculty continued to earn less than their male colleagues. In 2016–17, women earned, on average, 81 to 84 percent of men's salaries at independent and public institutions, respectively (Table 1). However, some women faculty fare relatively well when salaries are compared within rank and sector, where a number of women faculty earn 95 to 100 percent of men's earnings.
- Consistent with the historical trend, in 2016–17, women comprised a larger share of instructor and lecturer faculty positions, 58 percent for instructors and

56 percent for lecturers, while their representation in upper ranks lagged that of men. Additionally, 36 percent of professors and 47 percent of associate professors were women.

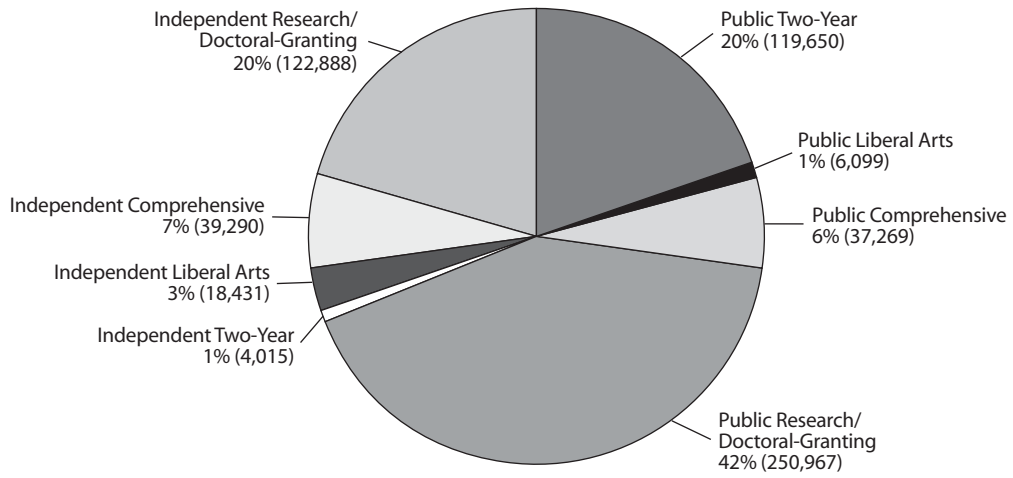
- Averaging over \$100,000, faculty in legal professions, business fields, engineering, and computer and information science earned the highest average salaries by discipline (Table 3).
- Faculty at public institutions with bargaining agreements earned, on average, about \$7,000 more than colleagues at non-bargaining institutions (Table 4). The largest advantage went to community college faculty, where faculty in institutions with faculty contracts earned nearly \$18,000 more than faculty in institutions in the same states without faculty contracts.

### FACULTY COMPOSITION

The nation's 598,609 full-time faculty members are dispersed across sectors, ranks, and tenure statuses. In 2016–17, 69 percent of faculty members on 9/10- and 11/12-month contracts taught in public institutions (derived from Figure 2). Only five percent of all faculty members taught in liberal arts and in independent two-year institutions combined. The largest share of faculty, 42 percent, taught in public research universities; another 20 percent taught in community colleges. As has been the case for some time, 84 percent of faculty held 9/10-month contracts with the remaining 16 percent working on 11/12-month contracts.

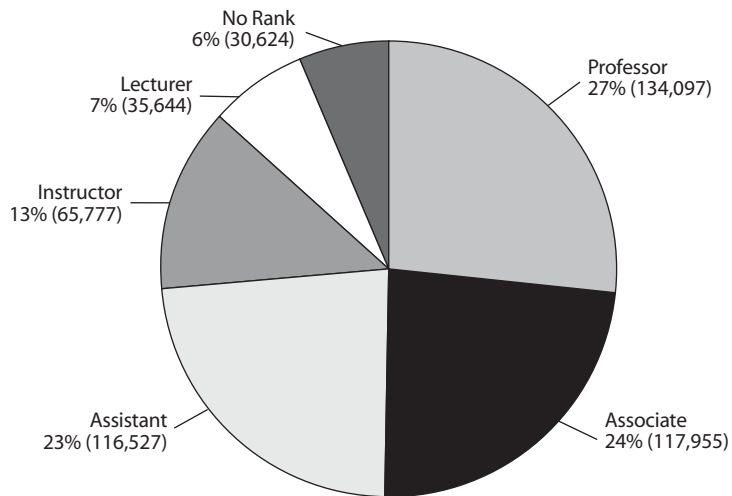
The relative shares of faculty by rank has largely persisted over time; the most noteworthy shift over the past decade was an increase in the share of lecturers from four to seven percent, offset by declines in the other ranks of one percent or less. In 2016–17, one-half of faculty members held either full or associate professor positions (27 and 24 percent, respectively), and lecturers and faculty with no rank comprised the smallest shares of faculty, seven and six percent, respectively (Figure 3).

**Figure 2. Percentage Distribution of Full-Time Faculty on 9/10- and 11/12-Month Contracts, by Institutional Type and Control: 2016–17**



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, *Salary Survey Provisional Data, 2016–17*.  
 Note: Based on 100 percent of NEA's faculty salary universe (2,971 institutions) reporting complete data.

**Figure 3. Percentage Distribution of Full-Time Faculty on 9/10-Month Contracts, by Rank: 2016–17**



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, *Salary Survey Provisional Data, 2016–17*.  
 Note: Based on 100 percent of NEA's faculty salary universe (2,971 institutions) reporting complete data.

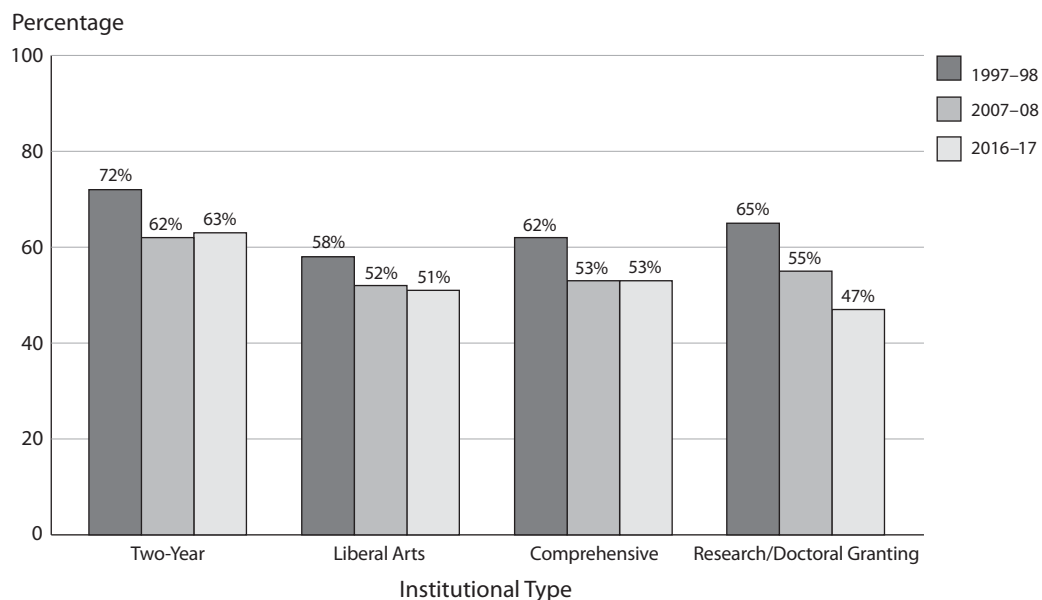
The share of full-time faculty in public institutions with tenure has declined over the past two decades, with the largest declines, as much as 10 percentage points in some sectors, occurring between 1997–98 and 2007–08 (Figure 4). Over the most recent 10 years, the declines in the share of tenured faculty slowed or leveled off, with changes differing depending on institutional type. At public research universities, the share of faculty with tenure continued to decline between 2007–08 and 2016–17, by eight percentage points, for a total 20-year decline of 18 percentage points, from 65 percent to 47 percent. However, small changes (one percentage point) or no change was seen in the share of faculty tenured in the other three public sectors over the recent 10 years. In 2016–17, nearly two-thirds of faculty teaching at two-year colleges had tenure, slightly more than one-half in comprehensive and liberal arts institutions, and just less than one-half of faculty teaching in research universities had tenure.

## FACULTY SALARIES

### Historical Perspective

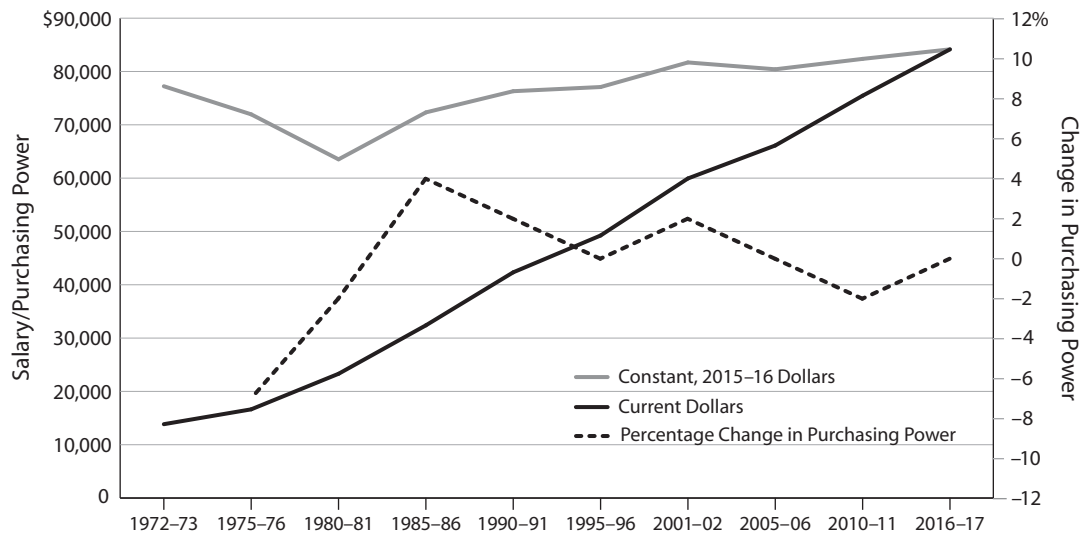
Figure 5 displays faculty purchasing power and the annual percentage change in purchasing power from year to year, since 1972–73. A negative annual change indicates an erosion of purchasing power, a value of zero indicates steady purchasing power, and a positive change indicates a gain. Although current dollar salaries paid to faculty steadily increased, resulting in a 508 percent increase since 1972–73, faculty purchasing power was volatile, with the fluctuations mirroring the country's economy. Negative changes in purchasing power throughout the 1970s and early 1980s reflect the inflationary period of the 1970s and the early 1980s recession, which caused faculty purchasing power in the early 1980s to be lower than the 1972 high. Reagan-era economics combined with oversight of the federal reserve resulted in an economic recovery during the second half of the 1980s, which led to positive changes in faculty

**Figure 4. Percentage of Faculty on 9/10- and 11/12-Month Contracts Tenured, by Institutional Type: 1997–98, 2007–08, and 2016–17**



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, *Salary Survey Data, 1997–98, 2007–08, and provisional 2016–17.*

**Figure 5. Average Salary and Purchasing Power, and Change in Purchasing Power of Full-Time Faculty on 9/10-Month Contracts: 1972–73 to 2016–17**



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, *Salary Survey Data*.

purchasing power nearly to the 1972 level. And, with the tech boom in the 1990s, purchasing power continued to grow until 1995–96 when it neared the 1972–73 high. Faculty purchasing power continued to grow modestly during the second half of the 1990s and, despite a mild recession in the early 2000s, reached a new historical high of \$84,071 in 2008. Then, showing the effects of the 2007 to 2009 recession, purchasing power fell in ensuing years to \$81,300. With the recent economic recovery, faculty purchasing power improved to \$84,153 in 2016–17, or a similar level to that of the pre-recessionary high.

### Salaries in 2016-17

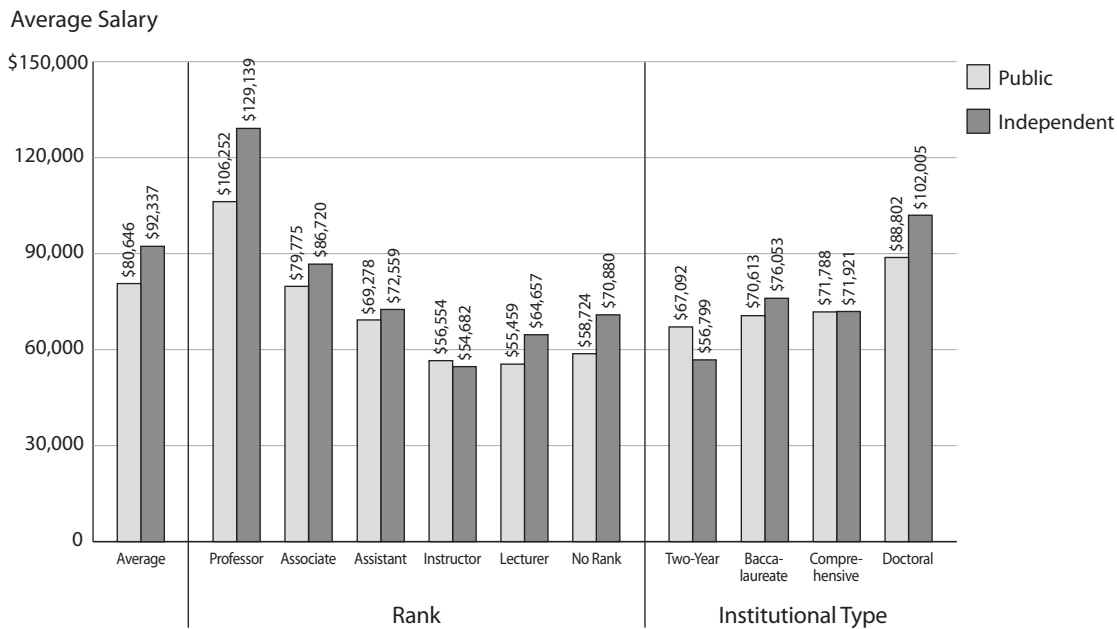
The \$84,153 average salary for faculty on 9/10-month contracts in 2016–17 represents a 2.2 percent increase since 2015–16. Salary differentials exist across institutional sectors, ranks, genders, disciplines, and states. For example, faculty teaching in independents averaged over \$11,000 more than colleagues in public institutions, a 14 percent differential (\$92,337 and \$80,646, respectively; Figure 6).

### Salaries by Academic Rank and Sector

Academic rank is correlated with higher salaries, and the magnitude of the differential between average salaries across faculty ranks persists over time. Among faculty in public institutions, full professors averaged \$106,252 in 2016–17; associates and assistants earned about three-quarters (\$79,775) and two-thirds (\$69,278) of the salaries of full professors, respectively. Instructors, lecturers, and faculty with no rank in public institutions earned slightly more than one-half of the average salaries of full professors.

Except for instructors, faculty members teaching at independents averaged more than colleagues in public institutions. The professor rank showed the largest salary differential with colleagues at independents earning about 22 percent more than those at public institutions (\$129,139 and \$106,252, respectively). The differential between full professors and faculty in the assistant and associate ranks was much larger at independents than public institutions, with independents' assistants earning slightly more than one-half of the full-professor average salary, and

**Figure 6. Average Salaries for Faculty on 9/10-Month Contracts, by Faculty Rank and Sector: 2016–17**



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, *Salary Survey Provisional Data, 2016–17*.

Note: Based on 100 percent of NEA's faculty salary universe (2,971 institutions) reporting complete data.

associates, about two-thirds. The high average salary paid to full professors at independents accounted for this difference. The differential between full and assistant professors averaged \$56,580 at independents and \$36,974 at public institutions.

Faculty salaries at independent research universities averaged about \$13,000 more than that of colleagues at public research universities (\$102,005 and \$88,802, respectively). Faculty teaching at public institutions had a salary advantage only in the two-year sector, where community college faculty earned \$10,293 more than faculty at two-year independents (\$67,092 and \$56,799, respectively).<sup>6</sup>

### Salaries by Gender

Among workers in all industries, women earn about 80 cents to a dollar of men's earnings. A similar disparity exists in academia, yet the gap is not as large and, in some sectors, women's

earnings are relatively close to that of men. On average, women faculty averaged 84 percent of men's earnings at publics, and 81 percent at independents in 2016–17 (Table 1). But, women faculty work in lower-paying two-year institutions in higher proportions than men, while men comprise larger shares of the higher paid research universities' faculty positions, thus driving the overall salary disparity higher. But, within public two-year institutions, women earned 97 to 99 percent of men's earnings, depending on rank. Further, in comprehensive and liberal arts institutions, women earned 95 percent or more of men's earnings, with only a few exceptions. The largest pay disparity was for women professors and those with no rank in research universities who earned between 81 and 89 percent of men's earnings in both publics and independents; the balance of research university women faculty in other ranks generally earned 91 to 94 percent of men's salaries.

**Table 1. Average Salaries for Men and Women Faculty on 9/10-Month Contracts, by Institutional Type, Control and Rank: 2016–17**

Institutional Type and Rank	Average Salaries				Women Faculty as a Percentage of Total Faculty		
	Public Institutions		Private Institutions		Public Institutions	Private Institutions	Average
	Women	Men	Women	Men			
<b>Two-Year Institutions</b>							
Professor	\$ 75,360	\$ 78,073	\$ 65,051	\$ 65,094	53%	57%	53%
Associate	65,119	66,442	68,386	68,764	56	66	57
Assistant	58,117	58,994	55,067	52,067	57	64	57
Instructor	70,180	72,112	51,871	44,033	54	71	54
Lecturer	52,980	53,415	54,996	58,084	56	64	56
No Rank	58,393	60,668	44,438	43,863	56	39	56
Average	65,957	68,186	57,723	54,775	55	64	55
<b>Liberal Arts Institutions</b>							
Professor	88,564	93,396	99,756	101,170	34	38	37
Associate	72,387	76,303	75,867	75,863	44	48	47
Assistant	62,318	66,304	61,020	61,364	48	53	51
Instructor	53,636	59,069	47,395	48,189	51	60	56
Lecturer	56,739	57,065	64,818	64,905	54	59	57
No Rank	49,165	51,642	58,353	60,413	42	52	51
Average	66,843	73,872	73,067	78,656	45	47	47
<b>Comprehensive Institutions</b>							
Professor	89,536	92,601	88,071	90,724	37	37	37
Associate	73,240	75,545	71,728	73,792	46	46	46
Assistant	62,367	64,856	59,593	61,258	52	54	53
Instructor	47,921	48,535	48,892	49,533	62	62	62
Lecturer	52,214	55,182	55,711	60,080	54	56	54
No Rank	56,064	60,565	62,634	67,795	55	46	49
Average	68,256	74,943	68,632	74,798	47	47	47
<b>Research/Doctoral-Granting Institutions</b>							
Professor	113,254	127,209	132,165	153,546	29	29	29
Associate	84,317	89,898	89,008	96,632	44	45	44
Assistant	72,020	78,771	74,479	82,844	49	51	50
Instructor	50,080	52,475	55,782	60,001	60	55	58
Lecturer	54,753	59,423	63,688	70,986	56	55	56
No Rank	53,543	65,973	69,092	80,092	58	48	53
Average	78,290	96,333	87,654	111,464	43	43	43
<b>Average</b>							
Professor	97,942	111,293	117,644	134,718	37	32	36
Associate	76,661	82,554	83,315	89,623	47	46	47
Assistant	66,298	72,385	69,309	76,008	52	52	52
Instructor	56,596	56,980	53,180	56,535	58	57	58
Lecturer	53,941	57,505	61,915	68,043	56	56	56
No Rank	55,340	63,918	66,129	75,343	57	48	53
Average	73,026	87,012	81,309	100,221	47	44	46

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, *Salary Survey Provisional Data, 2016-17*.

Note: Based on 100 percent of NEA's faculty salary universe (2,971 institutions) reporting complete data.



In 2016–17, women comprised almost one-half of the professoriate (47 percent in publics and 44 percent in independents) and were concentrated in the lower ranks at all but two-year institutions. Men dominated the full professor and associate ranks (65 and 53 percent, respectively) while the majority of faculty in the lower-paid instructor and lecturer ranks were women (58 and 56 percent). Continuing a long trend, women faculty were more likely to teach in lower-paid community colleges, while men represented larger numbers in the upper ranks of the better-paying research universities.

### Salaries by State

Historically, faculty salaries vary widely by state and sector, as do year-to-year salary changes. Variations can result from changes in state budgets, replacing senior faculty with less expensive junior members, market demands that can result in shifts in the mix of faculty by discipline, along with the presence or absence of collective bargaining.

Notably, the ranking of faculty salaries by state remains relatively stable with the same sets of states at the top and the bottom. New Jersey, Delaware, California, and Connecticut traditionally hold the top ranks among public four-year institutions. In 2016–17, New Jersey, again, had the highest average salary of \$107,109 with California not far behind averaging \$106,178 (Table 2). Delaware and Connecticut ranked third and fourth and, along with Hawaii, had average salaries over \$100,000 for public four-year faculty. Arkansas, Louisiana, and Idaho appeared at the bottom of the rankings for public four-year institutions, with average salaries just under \$70,000.

Public four-year faculty in New Jersey and Delaware received small average salary increases between 2015–16 and 2016–17, both about one percent, while Connecticut's four-year faculty saw an average decline of about one percent. The 2017 inflation rate was 1.7 percent; thus, purchasing power for faculty in these three states struggled to keep pace

with the previous year. Public four-year faculty fared better in California where the average salary increased nearly five percent since 2015–16. Among the lower-ranked states, such as Arkansas and Idaho, four-year faculty salary increases were larger than the two percent average across states, and the aforementioned 1.7 percent inflation rate.<sup>7</sup> Notably, salaries should be considered relative to local markets and economies rather than comparing them across states, as, in these cases, salary increases appear to be keeping up with inflation.

State rankings among public two-year institutions also remain consistent over time. California community colleges, again, topped the public two-year chart with an average salary of \$89,420, which is significantly higher (12 percent) than Wisconsin, the number two state, at \$80,163. Michigan and Connecticut, also perennial leaders, maintained third and fourth ranks. With salaries ranging from about \$44,000 to about \$45,000, Louisiana and Arkansas placed at the bottom of the ranking for public two-years, as they did for public four-year institutions.

At five percent, faculty in California's two-year colleges saw a relatively large increase in the average faculty salary. Due to large salary changes, several states' ranks change in 2016–17's two-year faculty rankings. With relatively large salary increases, Arizona jumped several ranks in recent years to the number three spot in 2014–15; however, experiencing a large decline over the past year, Arizona's ranking dropped to 17 in 2016–17.<sup>8</sup> Mississippi and South Dakota saw large increases in salaries since 2015–16, 11 and 15 percent, respectively, changing South Dakota's two-year faculty salary rank from 44 in 2014–15 to 29 in 2016–17. However, due to shifts in rankings for states surrounding Mississippi, Mississippi's two-year faculty salary rank did not change markedly and actually dropped from 34 to 36. Yet, given that Mississippi's salary change was well above the rate of inflation (11 percent compared with 1.7 percent), the state's faculty purchasing power increased substantially.

**Table 2. Average Salaries for Faculty on 9/10-Month Contracts, by Institutional Type and State: 2016–17**

State	Public Two-Year			Public Four-Year			Independent		
	Average Salary	Rank	Change from 2015–16	Average Salary	Rank	Change from 2015–16	Average Salary	Rank	Change from 2015–16
<b>National Average</b>	<b>\$ 66,910</b>		<b>2.5%</b>	<b>\$ 85,819</b>		<b>2.0%</b>	<b>\$ 91,950</b>		<b>2.1%</b>
Alabama	54,522	33	2.5	79,175	32	1.1	58,031	43	0.9
Alaska	‡	‡	‡	82,769	26	3.2	52,149	49	5.5
Arizona	63,471	17	-15.2	87,974	16	0.5	64,258	38	-0.9
Arkansas	45,112	47	-1.2	67,445	51	2.3	59,243	40	2.2
California	89,420	1	5.1	106,178	2	4.8	112,367	4	2.5
Colorado	59,783	22	2.0	84,139	23	2.7	88,002	12	1.2
Connecticut	78,630	4	-0.6	100,501	4	-1.2	113,231	2	5.6
Delaware	69,919	12	2.4	103,996	3	1.0	66,070	37	0.1
District of Columbia	‡	‡	‡	76,855	34	20.2	107,129	6	0.6
Florida	59,349	25	0.0	87,473	18	2.8	81,591	21	2.1
Georgia	49,380	44	3.0	78,113	33	2.0	80,198	22	2.0
Hawaii	73,588	8	2.7	100,057	5	3.4	74,407	28	-2.1
Idaho	52,738	35	2.4	68,346	49	2.7	57,999	44	3.9
Illinois	75,892	6	2.4	85,984	20	2.0	96,980	9	2.4
Indiana	51,068	40	1.7	86,811	19	2.1	83,033	17	1.7
Iowa	59,485	23	1.4	92,110	8	0.6	66,191	35	1.5
Kansas	54,368	34	1.8	76,393	38	0.6	52,191	48	1.5
Kentucky	51,772	38	0.3	74,524	40	1.6	58,545	41	0.7
Louisiana	43,738	48	0.7	67,863	50	0.9	85,604	15	4.5
Maine	56,780	31	1.5	76,550	36	2.6	85,956	14	0.8
Maryland	73,073	9	2.8	91,836	9	3.8	85,274	16	6.4
Massachusetts	66,387	14	4.5	96,443	6	3.0	114,243	1	-1.0
Michigan	78,746	3	0.5	89,922	12	3.4	68,099	34	1.7
Minnesota	69,781	13	2.1	88,614	14	3.2	76,512	27	2.6
Mississippi	52,230	36	11.4	71,202	47	1.2	58,154	42	2.2
Missouri	57,970	28	3.2	71,937	45	1.0	82,696	19	2.9
Montana	50,610	41	0.9	71,125	48	3.2	55,117	46	1.5
Nebraska	58,811	26	-7.0	80,264	30	1.0	68,626	32	3.3
Nevada	70,404	11	1.4	88,575	15	-0.8	66,115	36	13.7
New Hampshire	64,275	16	2.6	94,487	7	3.1	105,234	7	13.3
New Jersey	77,811	5	4.1	107,109	1	1.1	112,784	3	1.6
New Mexico	51,801	37	0.5	74,381	41	-0.7	82,744	18	-2.8
New York	74,513	7	0.3	87,710	17	-0.1	103,192	8	0.7
North Carolina	50,246	42	2.6	83,587	25	4.8	87,052	13	-1.0
North Dakota	56,587	32	2.1	74,146	42	4.5	53,863	47	-6.4
Ohio	63,198	18	2.2	84,938	22	2.4	72,771	29	2.5
Oklahoma	48,695	46	-0.3	72,882	43	1.1	71,678	30	0.8
Oregon	70,862	10	1.5	80,245	31	2.5	77,141	25	1.8
Pennsylvania	65,004	15	2.5	90,561	11	3.5	91,638	10	3.3
Rhode Island	59,944	21	-0.1	85,081	21	4.4	109,797	5	0.6
South Carolina	49,900	43	2.6	80,691	28	3.2	60,854	39	1.9
South Dakota	57,817	29	14.9	72,254	44	2.9	57,240	45	2.4
Tennessee	51,138	39	0.5	76,443	37	1.7	82,209	20	0.3
Texas	59,426	24	3.9	81,095	27	-3.2	88,630	11	3.9
Utah	56,979	30	3.5	75,369	39	1.0	77,582	24	-2.4
Vermont	‡	‡	‡	80,448	29	1.9	79,896	23	2.2
Virginia	62,157	19	-1.0	89,216	13	0.2	68,232	33	6.3
Washington	60,616	20	3.3	90,667	10	2.3	76,768	26	2.3
West Virginia	48,708	45	2.1	71,311	46	2.7	51,848	50	0.3
Wisconsin	80,163	2	3.1	76,705	35	2.7	69,517	31	1.8
Wyoming	57,981	27	-0.6	83,966	24	-2.7	‡	‡	‡

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, *Salary Survey Provisional Data, 2016–17*.

‡ Does not apply/no institutions reported.

Note: Based on 100 percent of NEA's faculty salary universe (2,971) reporting complete data.

The difference in the average salary range from the highest to lowest ranked state is \$45,682 in the public two-years and \$39,664 in public four-years. Not surprisingly, the average faculty salary rank is similar in many states, for example, Connecticut ranked fourth among public two-years and four-years; similarly, West Virginia ranked 45th and 46th in the two sectors' rankings. The ranks do, however, differ significantly in a few states: faculty salaries at Idaho's public two-years ranked 35th, while salaries at its four-years ranked 49th, and Indiana's rankings in the two sectors are 40th and 19th, respectively.

In all states except Wisconsin (where faculty earn about \$3,500 more in public two-years), faculty earned more in public four-years than in two-years, but the differences vary widely. In Oregon, four-year faculty have a \$9,383 advantage over colleagues in two-year institutions, while the difference in Delaware has been large for some time, \$34,743 in 2016–17. The average difference across states between the two- and four-year sectors is sizeable, \$22,324.

Among independents, colleagues in Massachusetts, the perennial leaders, received the highest average salary (\$114,243). In 20 states, independents paid higher average salaries than public four-year institutions. Faculty teaching at independents in the District of Columbia had the largest advantage over colleagues at public four-years (\$107,129 and \$76,855, respectively, a \$30,274 difference), while Delaware faculty at public four-years had the largest advantage over colleagues at independents (\$103,996 compared with \$66,070, a \$37,926 difference).

### Salary by Discipline

In 2016–17, faculty teaching in legal professions, business, and engineering fields continued to top the charts with salaries averaging over \$100,000; for the first time, faculty in computer and information science fields also had an average salary of over \$100,000 (Table 3).<sup>9</sup> These fields have led the salary rankings for many years. Similarly, library science, and visual and

performing arts are historically at the bottom of the salary ranks; faculty in a new field this year, personal and culinary services, trail the ranks with an average salary of \$67,442.

### Salary Collective Bargaining Status

Table 4 displays average faculty salaries for public institutions (1) with faculty collective bargaining agreements, (2) without faculty collective bargaining agreements, but in the same states, and (3) in states where there is no presence of faculty collective bargaining agreements. States that do not allow collective bargaining are largely southern states and, given their economies, they tend to have lower salaries than institutions in other regions. Thus, the first two groups are most comparable as a "state" effect does potentially skew the data.

In states where faculty contracts are present, faculty at institutions with contracts earned an average of over \$7,000 more than faculty without contracts, for a nine percent difference (Table 4). Community college faculty in collective bargaining institutions had the largest differential, earning nearly \$18,000 more than their non-bargaining colleagues (\$76,177 and \$58,314, respectively, a 31 percent difference). Faculty at comprehensive institutions with contracts earned about \$13,000 more than those without contracts, or a 20 percent difference. A salary advantage also existed for faculty in research universities with contracts, albeit not as large: \$8,000, or a nine percent advantage over faculty in research universities without contracts. The public liberal arts sector is very small, constituting only one percent of faculty; as such, interpretation of data for this sector should be done with caution given the low number of institutions and faculty represented.

### CONCLUSION

The economic position is positive for many faculty, especially when compared to workers in other industries. Faculty members were not as adversely affected by the recent recession as most workers. Indeed, faculty purchasing

**Table 3. Average Salaries for Tenured and On-Tenure-Track Faculty in Four-Year Institutions, by Discipline: 2016–17**

	<b>Average Salary</b>
<b>All Fields</b>	<b>\$ 78,199</b>
Legal Professions and Studies	136,156
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	112,910
Engineering	104,558
Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	100,404
Architecture and Related Services	89,342
Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences	87,524
Natural Resources and Conservation	87,182
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	86,715
Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences	86,076
Engineering Technologies/Technicians	84,740
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, and Gender Studies	83,121
Physical Sciences	82,954
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	81,999
Transportation and Material Services	81,979
Social Sciences	80,785
Mathematics and Statistics	80,397
Psychology	79,589
Public Administration and Social Service Professions	79,122
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	78,926
Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences	77,597
Philosophy and Religious Studies	77,258
History	75,830
Education	74,767
Theology and Religious Vocations	74,717
Communications Technologies/Technicians and Support Services	74,605
Communication, Journalism and Related Services	74,355
English Language and Literature/Letters	74,118
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	74,055
Parks, Recreation, Leisure and Fitness Studies	73,803
Security and Protective Services (Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting and Related Protective Services)	73,776
Visual and Performing Arts	72,132
Library Science	69,728
Personal and Culinary Services	67,442

Source: College and University Professional Association (CUPA), 2016–17 Faculty in Higher Education Salary Survey Data, Four-Year Colleges and Universities.

Note: Arranged in descending order of average salary.

**Table 4. Average Salaries for Faculty on 9/10-Month Contracts in Public Institutions, by Collective Bargaining Status and Sector: 2016–17**

	States Containing Institutions with Collective Bargaining Agreements		States Not Containing Institutions with Collective Bargaining Agreements
	Institutions with Faculty Contracts	Institutions without Faculty Contracts	
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$ 86,710</b>	<b>\$ 79,558</b>	<b>\$ 73,963</b>
Two-Year Institutions	76,177	58,314	54,939
Liberal Arts Institutions	74,134	75,205	61,884
Comprehensive Institutions	78,430	65,425	64,995
Research/Doctoral-Granting Institutions	95,884	87,870	82,544

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, *Salary Survey Provisional Data, 2016–17*; National Education Association, *College and University Data Analysis System (CUDAS) database*.

Note: Based on 100 percent of NEA's public institution faculty salary universe (1,568 public institutions) reporting complete data.

power increased in recent years to a level higher than pre-recessionary levels, and the magnitude of improvement was greater than that in other industries. Further, while the size of the country's workforce shrunk over the past decade, the higher education instructional workforce grew. Many states experienced increases in faculty salaries over the last year, and the increases were larger than inflation, thus improving faculty purchasing power in many states. Also, in some higher education sectors, women faculty earned well over \$0.90 to a man's \$1.00, while, nationally, women earned \$0.80 to a man's \$1.00. Finally, the erosion of tenure also appears to have slowed in some higher education sectors.

While there are reasons for optimism, concerns remain. The way faculty perform their work has changed in recent years, and these changes are likely to continue. Higher education enrollments are projected to increase by 15 percent through 2025.<sup>10</sup> Increasingly, student enrollments are more diverse than they have been in the past, not only in their academics and demographics, but also in their needs for services, programs, experiences, and activities. This great diversity, combined with a recent focus on ensuring graduates are labor force ready and attain the skills employers need, has

prompted colleges and universities to redesign their programs and offerings, often resulting in changes for faculty. Faculty may be subject to additional duties such as being required to take on more student advising responsibilities, or incorporating foundational skills in their curricula as developmental and college-level courses are combined. Courses that are now in lower-demand fields may be eliminated, thus reducing the need for some faculty in these fields. Course content may be redesigned to support learning of skills or technological expertise needed by employers. And, the mode of instruction can change, with more courses being taught at a distance than in the classroom. All of these activities and changes result in the potential need for faculty to change the way they teach, what they teach, and how they teach, and can add demands on faculty both inside and outside of the classroom.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey."

<sup>2</sup> DePillis, "10 Years After the Recession Began, Have Americans Recovered?"

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Clery and Christopher, "Faculty Salaries: 2007–08."

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “Table H-5. Race and Hispanic Origin of Householder—Households by Median and Mean Income, 1967–2016.”

<sup>6</sup> The two-year independent sector employs only one percent of faculty.

<sup>7</sup> Amadeo, *U.S. Inflation Rate by Year: 1929–2020: How Bad Is Inflation? Past, Present, Future*.

<sup>8</sup> Clery, “Faculty Salaries: 2014–15.”

<sup>9</sup> These data reflect tenured and tenure-track faculty at a sample of four-year public and independent institutions.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Education, *Projection of Education Statistics, 44th Edition*.

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