Tenured, Tenure Stream and Non-tenured Faculty Statistical Report, AY 2010-2011

Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee

The total number of tenured Pitt faculty has remained stable over the previous fifteen years in most Schools (Figure 1). After an early retirement offer in the late 1990s resulted in a decrease in the number of tenured in the Arts & Sciences, Professions and Regional Campuses by 1999, the sizes of the tenured faculty in most units have fluctuated about a stable level or showed a very slow decrease. For the previous five years, there has been a stable number of tenure stream faculty (Figure 2), commensurate to the process of hiring new tenure stream faculty to fill a limited number of tenured and tenure stream positions.

By contrast, the pattern of growth in the number of tenured faculty in the School of Medicine (SOM) continues to be remarkable. The number of tenured SOM faculty has increased steadily from 331 in
2006 to 409 in 2010, while the number of tenure stream SOM faculty has been decreasing from a peak of 241 in 2007 to 203 in 2010. This recent increase in the number of tenured faculty is correlated with an even greater percentage increase in extramural funding (grant awards) received by the SOM (from $195,281,000 in 2006 to $281,453,000 in 2010). This growth strategy continues to serve a short term goal of increasing the prominence of Pitt’s national ranking in terms of extramural research income. However, the projected trends in NIH and NSF extramural expenditures raise a concern regarding the sustainability of this growing tenured faculty. It may be prudent to ascertain that projected SOM financial reserves are sufficient to sustain conservative estimates of the long term salary support commitments to the current SOM tenured faculty base.

The number of full-time faculty outside the tenure stream has shown different tendencies among academic units (Figure 3), which likely reflects the specialized roles served by faculty outside the tenure stream in different academic disciplines. There is a steady increase in full-time faculty outside the tenure stream in the Arts & Sciences, Professions, and Other Health Sciences. At the Regional Campuses, the number of full-time faculty outside the tenure stream decreased slightly in 2010, but has been very stable over the past decade. The number of full-time faculty outside the tenure stream in the School of Medicine appears to have reached a relative plateau in 2008.

The percentage of full-time faculty in the tenure-stream continues to be associated with differences in faculty composition among academic units (Figure 4). There was continuation of a decline in the percentage of full time tenure-stream faculty in Arts & Sciences, Professions, and Regional Campuses in 2010. By contrast, the percentage of full-time faculty in the tenure stream has remained relatively static for the School of Medicine and the Other Health Sciences for a prolonged period. As noted in previous reports, interpretation of these trends will require a careful examination of the specialized roles of faculty outside the tenure stream within each academic division. The two patterns of faculty utilization remain clear: (1) an approximately 67% (but slowly declining) tenure stream faculty composition in Arts & Sciences, Professions and Regional Campuses and (2) a stable 30% tenure stream faculty composition in Medicine and Other Health Sciences.
Trends in the utilization of part-time faculty continued to vary among academic units (Figure 5). Utilization of part-time faculty was stable in Regional Campuses, School of Medicine, and Other Health Sciences. However, the number of part-time faculty in the Arts & Sciences has increased substantially from 310 in 2007 to 393 in 2010. The Professions showed a parallel increase from 132 part-time faculty members in 2007 to 160 part-time faculty members in 2010, which is only a small change from the 144 part-time faculty members in 1996. An assessment of the significance of these trends will require a careful and detailed study of the roles, duties, and full time equivalent hours of part-time faculty within each unit. Increasing enrollment is also an important consideration. The FTE student enrollment in the Arts & Sciences increased steadily during the same period (11,440 in 2007, 11,666.2 in 2008, 12,057.4 in 2009 and 12,184 in 2010). The data in Figure 6 suggest that part-time faculty, and, to a lesser extent, full time faculty outside the tenure, are being employed to maintain acceptable class sizes in the face of increasing enrollment in the Arts & Sciences.
In summary, the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty has remained stable in most major academic units. The marked growth in the number of tenured faculty in the School of Medicine since 2006 is a noted exception, correlated with an increase in extramural funding. The vulnerability of the School of Medicine’s financial commitments to this growing tenured faculty should be monitored. The utilization of increased numbers of full-time and/or part-time faculty outside the tenure stream continues to vary with the academic unit. The net effect of these trends is a continuing decrease in the percentage of tenured and tenure-stream faculty (re: all full time faculty) in the Arts & Sciences, Professions, and the Regional Campuses, but stable percentages in the School of Medicine and the Other Health Sciences.