



CHAPTER 4

“Successful faculty careers are characterized by triumphs in the most demanding realms of teaching and scholarship, seasoned with thoughtful and balanced contributions to the milieu in which these activities take place. Our evaluation and reward systems—including tenure and promotion—ought to cultivate careers of this caliber.”

—Myron Allen, *Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Developing a Quality Academic Workforce to Enrich Learning

A PROFILE OF THE UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL (Core Components 1a, 1b, 1d, 2b, 3b, 4b)

Since the institution’s inception, teaching, research, and service have been overlapping responsibilities of university faculty. Successful student learning depends on the university’s capacity to provide an environment where the academic workforce members can do their best work. (1a) The university expects faculty and academic professionals to be experts in their scholarship and creative activities, and dedicated and effective in their teaching abilities. (3b) The quality of the workforce, continually monitored, is evidenced through a variety of indicators that are consistent with the organization’s mission. (4b)

Keeping pace with the growth in student enrollments, the number of full-time instructional personnel steadily increased from 606 in 1999-2000 to 715 in 2008-2009. Expansion of the university’s faculty was an especially important result of the 2006 legislative session when lawmakers authorized funding for up to 30 new academic positions. (2b)

To serve the varieties of teaching, research, and service needs of the institution, university colleges and programs have five primary categories for hiring academic personnel. (Not included in this list are graduate students, whose roles are described in Chapter 8).

- Tenure-track faculty
- Extended term-track faculty (librarians and archivists belong to this category)

- Extended-term-track academic professionals (AP) of three types: lecturers, re-search scientists, and extension educators
- Clinical faculty
- Temporary and visiting faculty, academic professionals, and research professors

Typically, the university hires faculty at the tenure-track assistant professor level. These faculty hold a terminal degree and are assigned to a specific academic unit. In some cases, faculty have been hired at the associate level and full level, which is the case for the recent hiring of several endowed professors.

Academic appointments in the academic professional lecturer (APL) category represent an institution-specific strategy to provide a highly qualified, committed workforce primarily engaged in activities that extend and support teaching. (3b) In 2008-2009, the number of APLs was 144, which comprised 20 percent of the full-time permanent instructional personnel. After 20 years of hiring in this category, many departments and colleges have fully integrated academic professional lecturers into their culture. They are eligible for professional development leaves that are similar to sabbaticals; they win teaching and research awards; they serve on a wide array of committees at the department and college levels; and they progress steadily through the retention process and the ranks of assistant, associate, and senior lectureships. In addition to their teaching and scholarship activities, many APLs serve important administrative functions. In 2009, for instance, a small number of APLs served in positions of department chair, assistant department chair, and assistant dean, and several served as program directors. (2b)

Table 4.1 demonstrates the breadth of instructional personnel employed. For lower division (1000-2000) course instruction, academic professional lecturers and graduate assistants play an important role. A preponderance of upper division coursework is provided by tenured and tenure-track academics. Using this mix of academic positions for instruction by course level is an effective strategy to draw on individual strengths and more effectively and efficiently fulfill all elements of the university's mission. (1d)

As noted in Chapters 2 and 3, diversity remains a priority yet presents challenges for the university. Women comprise 36 percent of full-time instructional personnel. At the lecturer level, women comprise 57 percent. Through self-reports, faculty and lecturers identify themselves as 81 percent Caucasian, 4 percent Asian, 2 percent Hispanic, 1 percent Black, 1 percent American Indian and Pacific Islander, and 8 percent non-specified. The international population is 3 percent. The university has identified recruitment and retention of women faculty and faculty of color as priority issues in UP 3, illustrating its commitment to continuous improvement. One strategy is for the Office of Diversity and EEO to provide ongoing training to hiring committees about how to diversify the applicant pools for vacant positions. UP 3 identifies the need to examine the subtle barriers affecting retention and promotion among faculty, including how to create a more supportive community on and off-campus. Students will benefit as the university works to diversify its instructional workforce because the workforce will be in a better position to understand the needs of a diverse student body. (1b)

Table 4.1. Percentages of Classes and Credit Hours Taught by Academic Personnel by Course Level

Two-year Average of Academic Years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008

Course Level	Classes by Course Level				
	TD/TT Faculty ¹	Ext. Term Lecturers/Faculty ²	Graduate Assistants	Clinical Faculty ³	Supplemental Faculty ⁴
1000	30%	9%	28%	0%	33%
2000	45%	14%	10%	0%	31%
3000	68%	6%	3%	0%	23%
4000	72%	9%	3%	0%	16%
5000	87%	4%	1%	0%	8%
6000	56%	7%	0%	20%	17%

Course Level	Credit Hours by Course Level				
	TD/TT Faculty ¹	Ext. Term Lecturers/Faculty ²	Graduate Assistants	Clinical Faculty ³	Supplemental Faculty ⁴
1000	35%	12%	23%	0%	31%
2000	46%	19%	8%	0%	28%
3000	67%	8%	4%	0%	22%
4000	72%	9%	3%	1%	15%
5000	86%	3%	2%	0%	9%
6000	74%	4%	0%	7%	15%

Source: Office of Institutional Analysis

¹Tenured/tenure-track faculty

²Extended term academic professional lecturers and faculty

³Clinical faculty include practicing professionals in the health sciences.

⁴Supplemental faculty include those hired on a contract basis, advisors, coaches, visiting faculty, outside agency experts, etc.

STRENGTHENING FACULTY QUALITY

(Core Components 1e, 2b, 3b, 4a)

The university's desire to build a quality faculty begins with its recruitment efforts. Several aspects of the hiring process contribute to continuing excellence and innovation in instruction at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Most faculty and lecturer hires involve a consideration of their teaching record and ability, and many departments encourage the inclusion of both teaching and research presentations as part of the on-campus interview of a candidate. (3b) The university commits in excess of \$3 million annually in start-up funds for new faculty to ensure that they have the support needed to launch a successful career. (2b)

The university strives to cultivate an environment of intellectual inquiry and creativity, provide clear and transparent expectations, and foster an engaging and collegial instructional environment. A critical aspect of this effort is a well-defined and implemented process

for reappointment, tenure, and promotion. The goal of this process is its utilization as a faculty development tool, which can assist with stimulating a successful academic career. Sound advice on reappointment, tenure, and promotion decisions, philosophy, criteria, and expectations are available to faculty on the academic affairs Web site and through orientation materials. The Office of Academic Affairs also provides annual reappointment, tenure, and promotion workshops for untenured faculty and probationary lecturers as well as workshops for new department heads that cover the standards and procedures described by university regulations for the reappointment, tenure, and promotion process. (1e)

Continuous examination of faculty quality, including contributions to student learning, is provided through a rigorous and multifaceted process. Colleges have some latitude in specific details, but they generally use the following practices to ensure fair and consistent evaluation. (1e) Mandatory reviews for reappointment of faculty and lecturers occur during the first, second, and fourth years at the level of the department, the college, and the university. Portfolios typically document each individual's professional contributions, service, and teaching, all aligned to their job description. (4a) Instructors may offer a statement of teaching philosophy and specific reflections on several representative courses, a process that underwrites a focus on encouraging thoughtful approaches to teaching. Information from student evaluations and from faculty peer evaluators is included in the review. Academic personnel providing distance coursework are similarly evaluated and in addition receive feedback from the dean of the Outreach School or her appointed designee. These materials are scrutinized at each level of the process, ultimately providing a thorough accounting of each instructor's teaching, research, and service activities. (3b) A similar, though abbreviated, process is utilized to monitor faculty activities and contributions through a newly-designed post-tenure review process.

Improving salaries

(Core Component 2b)

Salary increases have proven to be one of the most effective strategies for the university to remain competitive in recruitment and retention. While the institution is still catching up to the national market after the compounding salary discrepancies of the 1990s, it has made some improvements in this area. The relative salary declines experienced in the 1990s were largely attributed to the infrequency of raises and the willingness of some units to hire below market. The central position management system implemented in 2000 now ensures that the salaries allocated for faculty positions are commensurate with national averages for the appropriate ranks and disciplines.

Table 4.2 shows how salaries have changed. The first two columns compare average University of Wyoming faculty salaries to the average salaries at other U.S. public doctoral universities. The third column shows the dollar difference between the average assistant and full professor at the university.

Table 4.2. Average Faculty Salaries as a Percentage of U.S. Public Doctoral-level Universities

Academic Years 1999-2000 versus 2008-2009			
	Assistant Professor at UW % of U.S.	Full Professor at UW % of U.S.	\$ Difference between Full Professor and Assistant Professor at UW
1999-2000	90%	74%	\$17,000
2008-2009	96%	88%	\$36,600

Source: AAUP, *the Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession and Office of Institutional Analysis*

The university has taken steps to address salary compression issues by raising salaries in all ranks and providing additional salary increases for senior faculty. In 2008-2009, the average assistant professor at the University of Wyoming earned 96 percent of the average assistant professor at other U.S. public doctoral universities, while the average full professor earned 88 percent. Furthermore, based on a 2006 study of university salaries conducted by Wendy Stock, professor of economics at Montana State University, it does not appear that gender bias is a factor in average salary differences between female and male faculty. The difference is attributable to differences in salaries across disciplines. (2b)

Endowed chairs

(Core Components 2a, 2b)

The Wyoming Excellence in Higher Education Endowment, created in 2006, authorized the establishment of a \$105 million endowment for the university and the seven state community colleges to use for hiring outstanding faculty members. The university receives earnings from \$70 million of the endowment, with earnings from the balance apportioned among the community colleges. The state legislature provided \$2.8 million for initial start-up efforts for the university to recruit top faculty, while allowing the endowment to grow during the first two years after its implementation. This \$2.8 million resource base allowed the university to be more strategic in its efforts to recruit and secure quality faculty, hired to excel at both teaching and research. (2b) The endowment specified that the College of Education receive at least four of the faculty positions. That expectation has been met with two endowed chairs in literacy and two in science and math education. The remainder of the endowment earnings was allocated to the university's areas of distinction. As of fall 2009, the university had hired nine endowed chair positions. (2a)

Other chairs are made available through private donation support. For example, the College of Business hired the Bill Daniels Chair of Business Ethics, and an endowment from the Spicer Family led to the establishment of the Spicer Chair in Environment and Natural Resources—one of the few in the nation devoted to collaborative processes in decision-making. (2a)

“Faculty perceptions of their work environments are important to the institution’s planning efforts, particularly in the retention of its high-quality professors.”

DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING THE ACADEMIC WORKFORCE (Core Components 2c, 5a)

Faculty perceptions of their work environments are important to the institution’s planning efforts, particularly in the retention of its high-quality professors. In 2008, the university administered the Collaborative on Academic Career in Higher Education (COACHE) survey. Of the 159 eligible tenure-track faculty members, 123 participated, which is a response rate of 77 percent, compared to 59 percent of all participating institutions nationally and to 64 percent of the university’s five peer-matched institutions.

The University of Wyoming ranked first among its peers as a place for junior faculty to work, with 70 percent satisfaction compared to 67 percent peer and national satisfaction. The sense of fit, the support of junior colleagues, the short commute to work, and overall family-friendly policies were listed as the best aspects of working at the university. The university’s tenure processes were also rated clear by the majority of respondents. (5a)

The least desirable aspects were teaching loads and the quality of the graduate students. The university also ranked low on satisfaction with opportunities for junior faculty members to collaborate with or establish professional relationships with senior faculty. Interestingly, while Caucasian faculty members responded that one of the best aspects of working at the university was the geographic location, faculty of color ranked this among the worst aspects. (5a)

Along with its planning efforts, the university is using the COACHE results to spur discussion among faculty and departments, to review policies, and to identify areas in need of improvement. (2c) One of the first issues being addressed is the lack of adequate childcare facilities, which was rated important by faculty, yet ineffective. Since the publication of the COACHE results, breastfeeding stations have been created in several campus buildings, and the university has strengthened its commitment to help resolve the lack of childcare facilities.

Creating effective learning environments (Core Components 2b, 3b, 3c, 3d, 4d)

The Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning (ECTL), established in fall 1991, is administered from the Office of Academic Affairs. The mission of the ECTL is to provide leadership, advocacy, support, faculty development, and instructional services for teaching and learning excellence. Formerly known as the Center for Teaching Excellence, the center was renamed on September 6, 2001, to honor long-time benefactor of the university John P. “Jack” Ellbogen. (3d)

The ECTL sponsors a full variety of programs during the course of a year. Programs include technology and teaching workshops, seminars for new faculty and graduate students, fall and spring colloquia events, assessment forums, book discussions, and grant projects. The ECTL also oversees the popular offices of the Writing Center, Instructional Computing Services, and Instructional Media Services. (3c)

In addition to the state funding for the ECTL, it has secured numerous sources of external funding to support its initiatives. For example, a private endowment supports a yearly \$15,000 program for new faculty. A \$360,000 federal FIPSE grant entitled “Connecting Learning across Academic Settings” (2003-2006) supported numerous scholarly projects on general education in the sciences and humanities. A \$75,000 privately funded program entitled the “Kaiser Ethics Project” (2006-2009) supported the efforts of faculty and lecturers in six colleges to infuse the teaching of ethics in their courses. (4d) These kinds of long-term projects involving cross-disciplinary cohorts of faculty and lecturers are helping to develop collegiality, intellectual curiosity, scholarship, and leadership. (2b, 3b)

Supporting discovery and application of knowledge

(Core Components 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d)

Recruiting and retaining highly qualified faculty who are actively engaged in research enhances the educational experience for the students. Equally important, the outstanding basic and applied research and creative activity of the faculty creates new knowledge and new works—the most exacting form of learning that faculty members and academic professionals undertake. In a truly engaged university, these scholarly activities enhance the quality of life and economic activity of the state, region, and nation, and they provide a model for how students direct their own lives and careers. (4d)

The university receives the traditional federal land-grant formula funding from Hatch and McIntyre-Stennis funds. In addition, research and economic development activities in support of the faculty, staff, and students are overseen by the Office of Research & Economic Development. This office links research, technology transfer, and economic development efforts to enhance federal, state, and private sector support for faculty and graduate student scholarship. In FY 2009, extramural support increased for the 24th consecutive year (Figure 4.1) by reaching \$81 million in external funding, a 4 percent increase over the previous year and an 88 percent increase over the last decade. The external funding increase, coupled with continued federal funding, demonstrates a high degree of confidence in the quality of the University of Wyoming’s research programs. It also demonstrates the high caliber of its faculty and staff in their capabilities to successfully secure competitive research funding. (4b)

Over the last 10 years, the university has secured many partnerships in research. For example, since 2008 the university has been the recipient of \$17 million federal and matching state funds for cleaner coal technology research. In 2009 with the state’s support, the university engaged in a \$100 million partnership with GE Energy to create a coal gasification test facility. These long-term research initiatives are vital to providing energy resources to the nation while minimizing the impacts on the environment. Another important initiative is the study of carbon sequestration, which is the ability to store carbon underground to minimize carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere. Most recently, the University of Wyoming received \$16.9 million in federal, state, and corporate funding for the Wyoming Carbon Underground Sequestration Project (WY-CUSP). This project is designed to demonstrate the commercial feasibility of sequestration at the Moxa

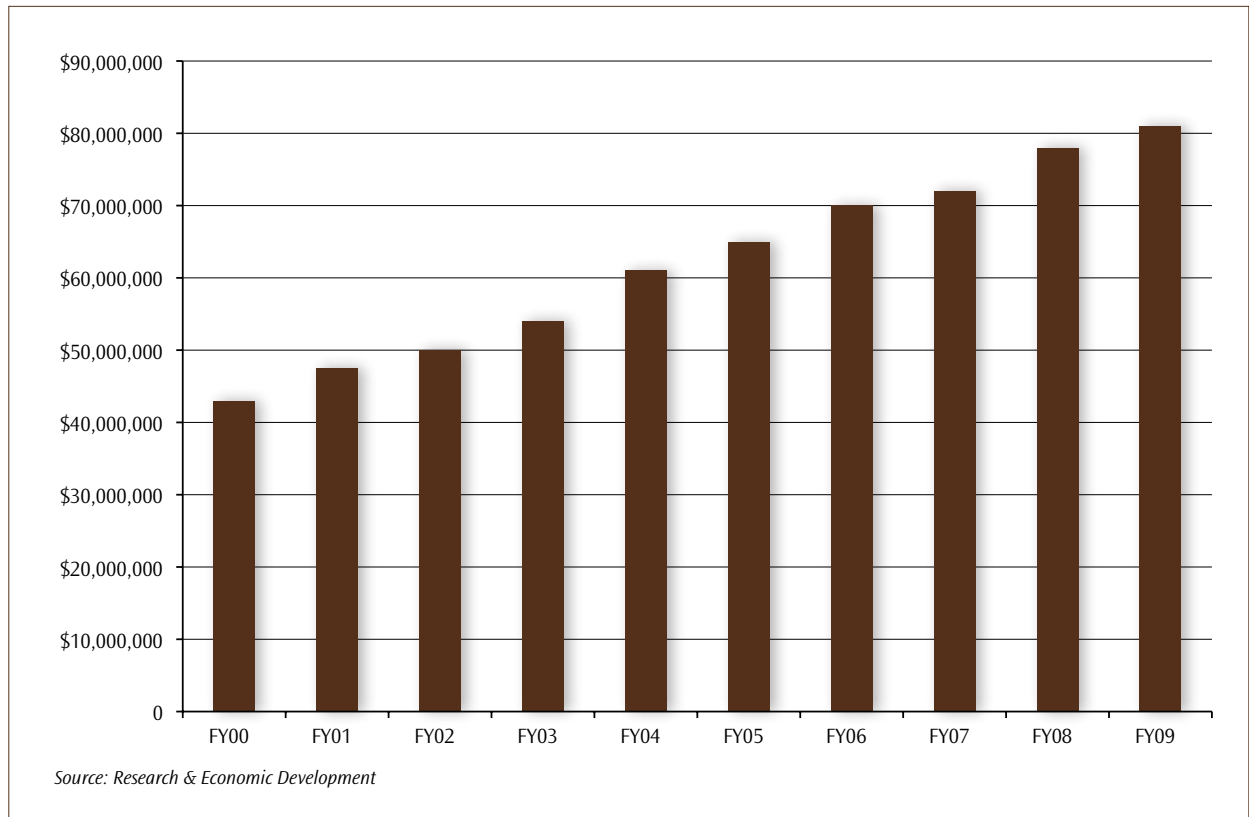


Figure 4.1. Total External Funding, Fiscal Years 2000 to 2009

Arch and Rock Springs Uplift, two major geological structures in southeastern Wyoming. Preliminary results suggest that these two structures have the ability to store Wyoming's current carbon dioxide emissions for many centuries. (4d)

The university provides a variety of opportunities for graduates and undergraduates to gain hands-on experiences in cutting-edge research and scholarship activities. (4a) Many of the university's degree-seeking graduate students are supported either partially or fully with funding. Additionally, according to the University of Wyoming's 2008 Survey of Graduate and Professional Students, 15 percent of the students said they are involved with developing research or funding proposals, and 25 percent of the students have delivered research or teaching presentations at conferences. One of the attributes that separates this university from other universities is the access that undergraduate students have to research faculty. Between 300 and 370 full-time undergraduates were paid monthly from research contracts in 2008-2009, with an increase in these numbers likely for 2009-2010. In fact, the university's research enterprise is one of the largest employers of undergraduate students on the Laramie campus and at the University of Wyoming Casper College Center. Because of the university's small size relative to other public doctoral institutions, students can easily partner with faculty on projects. (4b)

Each spring, the university hosts Undergraduate Research Day and the Graduate Student Research Symposium, programs designed for students to showcase their work to the university community and to highlight their collaborative work with faculty and fellow students. (4b, 4c) In 2009, 293 students participated in Undergraduate Research Day and 225 in the Graduate Student Research Symposium. In addition to student participation, faculty and staff members served as moderators for the sessions and the students' research advisors attended the sessions to show their support of student work. Participation in these two research showcase events has grown steadily over the last three years.

Recognizing faculty through awards

(Core Components 3b, 3d, 4b)

The university has several mechanisms for acknowledging and rewarding excellence in classroom instruction and research contributions. The George D. Duke Humphrey Award is given annually to one faculty member to recognize high achievement in research, teaching, and service. Examples of awards for undergraduate teaching include the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Award, the John P. Ellbogen Meritorious Classroom Teaching Award, the Hollon Family Award for Excellence in Off-Campus Programs, and the Ellbogen Lifetime Achievement Award. (3d) Faculty nominate colleagues for the UW Presidential Speaker Series and the Faculty Senate Speaker Series. (3b) In addition to these university-level awards, all colleges annually recognize deserving faculty for teaching and research.

An indication of the return on investment in faculty is the number of prestigious research awards received each year by University of Wyoming faculty, especially in disciplines where external funding is available. In 2009, five faculty members won the prestigious National Science Foundation CAREER Award: two in geology and geophysics, two in chemistry, and one in mathematics. These awards support junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through outstanding research, excellent efforts in education, and the integration of education and research within the context of the mission of their organization. A notable example of international recognition includes two faculty members who shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with former Vice President Al Gore for contributions to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (4b)

CONCLUSION AND KEY FINDINGS

The University of Wyoming has a rigorous, well-defined tenure, reappointment, and promotion process. Faculty perceptions indicate that the organization makes its processes clear, deals fairly with its internal constituents, and operates with integrity. The creation and expansion of the academic professional lecturer academic position has benefitted the university with increased consistency and continuity for instructional personnel and students. Instructional personnel are awarded job longevity, have well-defined promotion

ladders, and are better integrated into the fabric of their departments. Furthermore, the university is pleased with the level of extramural funding it has earned, including funding aimed at developing faculty. In sum, in the past 10 years, the university has been able to improve conditions for its instructional personnel to help build a quality workforce. Even so, the university is committed to continuous improvement, including further exploration of the impacts of its decisions and addressing ongoing areas of deficiencies identified. To aid in this effort, the following key findings have been identified:

- **The University of Wyoming is committed to increasing the diversity of its faculty.** While many efforts to do so are ongoing, further analysis of the COACHE results and continued administration of COACHE over time may yield new information, assisting the university in its recruitment and retention efforts. This issue is complex and requires ongoing attention. (UP 3 Action Items 34, 35, and 36)
 - **While faculty and academic professional salaries have improved in the last 10 years, the university needs to continue to address faculty compensation to be nationally competitive in attracting and retaining professors.** Specifically, faculty salaries at the upper level tend to remain lower than the national average for doctoral institutions. Collaboration with the state legislature, along with internal dialogue and deliberations, will be essential to make further progress. (UP 3 Action Item 65)
 - **The University of Wyoming has progressively expanded its research enterprise, scholarly output, and creative activities in a dramatic way over the last 10 years.** While extramural grants aid the university in achieving educational quality in both research and in teaching, additional documentation of the impacts needs to be developed. (UP 3 Action Items 67 and 68)
 - **The impact of the hiring of senior-level endowed chairs has not been assessed.** Plans for tracking and assessing the impact will be critical to performing a cost-benefit analysis.
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