



**2016-2017 APSA
DEPARTMENTAL SURVEY:
FACULTY COMPOSITION REPORT**

March 14, 2018

Executive Summary

The 2016-2017 APSA Departmental Survey asked chairs of departments offering degrees in courses in Political Science and Government to report the number of faculty in their departments by rank, including the number of new faculty they hired.

Average faculty size and the proportions of faculty of different ranks varied by the highest degree offered by the department, as well as by the type of institution in which the department is located. The average faculty size of PhD-granting departments was larger than at MA-granting departments, which in turn were larger than the average faculty size at BA-granting departments. Larger average faculty sizes were seen at public institutions than at private ones. On average, tenured or tenure-track faculty comprised 68.1% of all faculty members, with tenured full professors the largest single faculty rank (29.0% of all faculty). No clear relationship existed between the proportion of tenured or tenure-track faculty and the highest degree offered by departments.

The number of reported new hires and the proportion of new hires of different ranks also varied by the highest degree offered by departments and by institution type. As with total average faculty size, the number of new hires was greatest at PhD-granting departments and lowest at BA-granting combined and social science departments. Public institutions tended to hire more new staff members than private institutions in 2016-2017 – 4.6 new public hires to 2.9 private ones. In terms of faculty rank, adjunct faculty made up the plurality of new hires (38.9% of the total), with public institutions hiring substantially more adjunct faculty than their private counterparts. 27.6% of new hires were tenure-track assistant professors.

To review past reports on the APSA Departmental Survey please visit the [American Political Science Association website](#). The *2014-2015 APSA Departmental Survey: Departmental Faculty Size* report can be accessed [here](#). The *2016-2017 APSA Departmental Survey: Salaries Report* can be found [here](#).

We encourage you to read the report carefully, and we welcome your questions, thoughts, and ideas. Please contact us with any specific questions about these findings. We aim to fold in broader questions that members bring to our attention in subsequent reports and data collection efforts. Please contact us at surveys@apsanet.org, or by calling the main APSA office at 202-483-2512.

Rory Jackson
Betsy Super, PhD

Washington, DC
March 14, 2018



About the Data

The 2016-2017 APSA Departmental Survey was administered to 1,233 departments at 4-year colleges and universities offering degrees in courses in Political Science and Government in the United States. The survey was administered online from May 30th to November 9th, 2017. 367 departments responded to the survey for an overall response rate of 29.8%. Departments of social science had a response rate of 12.1% (n =24); BA departments combining political science with at least one other field had a response rate of 24.0% (n = 64); BA departments of political science or government had a response rate of 34.5% (n = 167); MA-granting departments had a response rate of 27.5% (n = 41); and PhD-granting departments had a response rate of 53.8% (n = 71).

Faculty Size (Tables 1-3)

- The mean faculty size of responding departments was 14.7 faculty members. This encompasses all faculty ranks, including contingent and adjunct faculty. Both faculty size and the proportion of tenured or tenure-track faculty varied by institution type and by highest degree offered.
- Average faculty size varied markedly by the highest degree offered by the departments. The average faculty size at PhD-granting departments was 32.9, compared to 20.5 at MA-granting, 10.3 at BA-granting political science departments, and 6.6 at BA-granting combined and social science departments.
- Faculty size also varied by institution type, with larger average faculty sizes at public institutions (19.3 faculty members) as compared to private ones (10.6). However, this difference is to a large extent due to the majority of private institutions being BA-granting political science departments with an average faculty size of 9.4 faculty members. When given equal weighting across department types, public institutions had an average of 18.7 faculty members, compared to 16.7 at private ones.
- **Tenured or Tenure-track Faculty:**
 - The average number of tenured or tenure-track faculty within departments was 10.0 (68.1% of faculty members). On average, departments had 4.3 tenured full professors (29.0% of all faculty), making this the most frequent faculty rank within the departments captured by the survey. On average, departments also had 3.3 associate professors (22.7%) and 2.4 assistant professors (16.4%).
 - No clear relationship existed between the proportion of tenured or tenure-track faculty and the highest degree offered by departments. The highest average proportion of tenured or tenure-track faculty were in PhD-granting departments (23.5 faculty members making up 71.5% of total faculty) and the lowest average proportion were in BA combined and social science departments (4.2 faculty members making up 63.2% of the total).
 - Public institutions tended to have a smaller proportion of tenured or tenure-track faculty (65.8%) than private institutions (71.9%). This is due to private institutions having on average a larger proportion of tenured full professors than public ones. No clear relationship is evident between institution type, department size, and the proportion of tenured or tenure-track faculty a department had.

- **Full-time, Non-tenure-track Faculty:**

- Departments had on average 0.9 full-time, non-tenure-track faculty members (5.9% of total faculty). No clear relationship exists between the proportion of non-tenure-track faculty and the highest degree offered by a department, although the highest average proportion was in BA-granting combined and social science departments. Public institutions tended to have slightly more of this faculty rank (6.6% to 4.5% in private institutions), with this true of public compared to private institutions across all department types.

- **Other Faculty Ranks:**

- Departments had on average 0.9 part-time, non-tenure-track faculty^{*} in 2016-2017 (5.9% of total faculty). This proportion was identical at both public and private institutions. No clear relationship between department type and the number of such faculty exists.
- Adjunct faculty members[†] were the third largest faculty rank within responding departments, with departments employing an average of 2.5 adjunct faculty (16.8% of total faculty). No clear relationship exists between the highest degree offered by a department and the proportion of adjunct faculty they employed. Public departments on average employed 7.0% more adjunct faculty as a proportion of their total faculty than did private institutions. This public-private divergence is most pronounced among PhD-granting departments: 17.3% of faculty employed by public institutions were adjunct faculty, compared to just 5.0% employed by private ones.
- Visiting professors on average comprised 2.3% of total faculty at responding departments, with just 0.3 of such individuals per faculty. No significant variation in the proportion of faculty that were visiting professors existed between different department types. There were more of these faculty in private, as opposed to public, institutions (1.5% of total public faculty, compared to 3.7% of total private faculty).
- On average, departments had 0.2 Post docs (1.1% of total faculty). The greatest proportion of faculty that were post docs were at PhD-granting institutions (1.9% of total faculty). Private institutions, and in particular private PhD-granting institutions, employed the highest proportion of post docs.

New Hires (Tables 4-6)

- 190 departments reported hiring new faculty members in 2016-2017. These hiring departments hired an average of 3.8 faculty members, with the overall number of new hires varying by institution type and by highest degree offered.
- The average number of new hires varied markedly by the highest degree offered by departments. The average number of new hires at PhD-granting departments was 5.4 faculty members, compared to 4.4 at MA-granting, 3.0 at BA-granting political science departments, and 2.4 at BA-granting combined and social science departments.

* Part-time, non-tenure-track faculty are defined as those faculty members employed part-time teaching more than one course per semester.

† Adjunct faculty are defined as those faculty members employed part-time teaching one course or fewer per semester.

- Faculty size also varied by institution type, with the average number of new hires higher at public institutions (4.6 new hires) greater than at private ones (2.9). This pattern holds across the highest degree offered by departments, with the notable exception of MA-granting departments.
- **Tenured or Tenure-track Faculty:**
 - The average number of newly hired tenured or tenure-track faculty within departments was 1.2 (31.5% of new hires). On average, departments hired 1.1 assistant professors (27.6% of new hires), making this the second most frequent new hire faculty rank within the departments captured by the survey. On average, departments also hired 0.1 associate professors (2.9%) and 0.0 tenured full professors (1.0%).
 - No clear relationship exists between the highest degree offered by departments and the number of new tenured or tenure-track faculty they hired. BA-granting combined and social science departments hired the most assistant professors as proportion of newly hired faculty than did other department types
 - With regard to institution type, the proportion of new hires that were tenured or tenure-track faculty was similar at public and private institutions. Private departments overall hired slightly greater proportions of tenured or tenure-track faculty than did public ones (33.5% to 29.9% of total new hires).
- **Full-time, Non-tenure-track Faculty:**
 - Departments hired on average 0.3 full-time, non-tenure-track faculty members (6.9% of total new hires). No clear relationship exists between the proportion of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty hired, the highest degree offered by a department, and the type of institution in which departments are situated.
- **Other Faculty Ranks:**
 - Departments hired on average 0.4 part-time, non-tenure-track faculty in 2016-2017 (9.6% of total new hires). The average proportion of new hires was the same at both public and private institutions. Public PhD-granting and MA-granting departments hired significantly more of these faculty members than private departments – 9.1% to 1.3% and 7.4% to 0.0%, respectively.
 - Adjunct faculty made up the plurality (38.9%) of new hires reported by responding departments. Departments on average hired 1.5 adjunct faculty, with these faculty members making up in excess of 40% of new hires at PhD-, MA-, and BA-granting combined and social science departments. Public institutions hired significantly more adjunct faculty than their private counterparts, with adjunct faculty consisting of 43.1% of new hires at public ones, compared to just 29.1% at private departments.
 - Visiting professors made up 8.3% of reported new hires. BA-granting political science departments hired significantly more of these faculty members (14.3% of new hires) than did other department types. Private departments tended to hire more visiting professors on average, however this pattern did not hold across all department types.
 - On average, hiring departments added 0.2 post docs to their faculty in 2016-2017 (5.7% of new hires). Private institutions hired significantly more post docs than did public institutions, with post docs consisting of 10.7% and 3.0% of all new hires, respectively. PhD-granting departments hired the greatest proportion of post docs, however there was no clear relationship between department type and the number of post docs hired.

Table 1. Faculty by Rank, 2016-2017

	Full Professor, Tenured	Associate Professor, Tenured	Assistant Professor, Tenure-track	Full-time, Non-tenure-track	Part-time, Non-tenure-track	Adjunct Faculty	Visiting Professor	Post Doc	All Faculty
Number of responding departments	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	340	354
Total number of faculty rank	1,511.5	1,182.3	851.5	304	305.5	876	120	56	5,206.8
Percentage of total faculty	29.1%	22.7%	16.4%	5.8%	5.9%	16.8%	2.3%	1.1%	100%
Mean (all departments)	4.3	3.3	2.4	0.9	0.9	2.5	0.3	0.2	14.7

Note: Due to rounding, faculty size percentages may not total 100%

Table 2. Average Number of Faculty by Rank and Department Type, 2016-2017

	All Departments		PhD-granting		MA-granting		BA-granting, Political Science		BA-granting, Combined & Social Science	
n	354		65		42		159		88	
	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%
Full Professor, Tenured	4.3	29.1%	10.9	33.2%	4.8	23.3%	2.9	28.3%	1.6	23.8%
Associate Professor, Tenured	3.3	22.7%	7.4	22.5%	4.5	22.1%	2.4	22.8%	1.6	23.4%
Assistant Professor, Tenure-track	2.4	16.4%	5.2	15.9%	3.5	17.2%	1.7	16.5%	1.1	16.0%
Full-time, Non-tenure-track	0.9	5.8%	1.8	5.3%	1.4	6.7%	0.5	5.3%	0.5	7.9%
Part-time, Non-tenure-track	0.9	5.9%	1.7	5.2%	1.5	7.4%	0.7	6.6%	0.3	4.1%
Adjunct Faculty	2.5	16.8%	4.6	13.8%	4.4	21.6%	1.6	16.0%	1.5	22.7%
Visiting Professor	0.3	2.3%	0.8	2.3%	0.3	1.6%	0.3	3.2%	0.1	0.9%
Post Doc	0.2	1.1%	0.7	1.9%	0.0	0.1%	0.1	1.2%	0.0	0.5%
Average Faculty Size	14.7	100%	32.9	100%	20.5	100%	10.3	100%	6.6	99%
Average Tenured or Tenure-track	10.0	68.1%	23.5	71.5%	12.8	62.6%	7.0	67.7%	4.2	63.2%

Note: n refers to the number of responding departments for each department type. Due to rounding, average faculty size percentages may not total 100%.

Table 3. Average Number of Faculty by Rank, Department Type, and Institution Type, 2016-2017

n	All Departments				PhD-granting				MA-granting				BA-granting, Political Science				BA-granting, Combined & Social Science			
	167		187		49		16		36		6		50		109		32		56	
	Public		Private		Public		Private		Public		Private		Public		Private		Public		Private	
	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%
Full Professor, Tenured	5.0	26.1%	3.6	33.9%	9.2	29.6%	16.0	41.1%	5.1	23.7%	2.7	19.5%	2.6	21.5%	3.0	32.4%	2.2	23.3%	1.2	24.8%
Associate Professor, Tenured	4.4	22.9%	2.4	22.3%	7.3	23.4%	7.8	19.9%	4.7	21.6%	3.5	25.5%	2.8	22.4%	2.2	23.0%	2.3	24.6%	1.1	22.6%
Assistant Professor, Tenure-track	3.2	16.8%	1.7	15.6%	5.3	16.9%	5.1	13.0%	3.8	17.4%	2.0	14.6%	1.9	15.8%	1.6	17.0%	1.6	16.6%	0.8	15.7%
Full-time, Non-tenure-track	1.3	6.6%	0.5	4.5%	1.8	5.9%	1.5	3.9%	1.5	6.8%	0.8	6.1%	0.9	7.2%	0.4	4.1%	0.8	9.0%	0.3	6.9%
Part-time, Non-tenure-track	1.1	5.9%	0.6	5.9%	1.1	3.7%	3.4	8.8%	1.6	7.4%	1.0	7.3%	1.4	11.1%	0.4	3.9%	0.3	3.0%	0.3	5.5%
Adjunct Faculty	3.8	19.5%	1.3	12.5%	5.4	17.3%	1.9	5.0%	4.6	21.1%	3.5	25.5%	2.6	21.3%	1.2	12.8%	2.1	22.3%	1.2	23.7%
Visiting Professor	0.3	1.5%	0.4	3.7%	0.6	1.8%	1.4	3.5%	0.4	1.7%	0.2	1.2%	0.1	0.8%	0.4	4.6%	0.1	0.7%	0.1	1.1%
Post Doc	0.1	0.7%	0.2	1.9%	0.4	1.3%	1.9	4.8%	0.0	0.1%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0.1	2.0%	0.1	0.7%	0.0	0.4%
Average Faculty Size	19.3	100%	10.6	100%	31.2	99.9%	38.9	100%	21.7	99.8%	13.7	99.8%	12.3	100%	9.4	99.7%	9.4	100%	4.9	101%
Average Tenured or Tenure-track	12.7	65.8%	7.6	71.9%	21.8	69.9%	28.8	74.1%	13.6	62.7%	8.2	59.6%	7.3	59.7%	6.8	72.4%	6.1	64.5%	3.1	63.0%

Note: n refers to the number of responding departments for each department type. Due to rounding, average faculty size percentages may not total 100%.

Table 4. Newly Hired Faculty by Rank, 2016-2017

	Full Professor, Tenured	Associate Professor, Tenured	Assistant Professor, Tenure-track	Full-time, Non-tenure-track	Part-time, Non-tenure-track	Adjunct Faculty	Visiting Professor	Post Doc	All
Number of hiring departments	6	17	138	30	25	64	45	25	190
Total number of new hires	7	21	199.5	50	69	281	60	41	728.5
Percentage of new hires	1.0%	2.9%	27.6%	6.9%	9.6%	38.9%	8.3%	5.7%	101%
Mean (excluding departments without new hires)	0.0	0.1	1.1	0.3	0.4	1.5	0.3	0.2	3.8

Note: Due to rounding, faculty size percentages may not total 100%

Table 5. Average Number of New Hires by Rank and Department Type, 2016-2017

n	All Hiring Departments		PhD-granting		MA-granting		BA-granting, Political Science		BA-granting, Combined & Social Science	
	190		59		26		79		26	
	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%
Full Professor, Tenured	0.0	1.0%	0.1	1.3%	0.1	1.7%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	1.6%
Associate Professor, Tenured	0.1	2.9%	0.3	5.0%	0.1	1.7%	0.0	0.4%	0.1	3.2%
Assistant Professor, Tenure-track	1.1	27.6%	1.5	27.0%	1.1	25.3%	0.8	25.5%	0.9	38.5%
Full-time, Non-tenure-track	0.3	6.9%	0.3	5.3%	0.3	7.9%	0.3	9.3%	0.1	3.2%
Part-time, Non-tenure-track	0.4	9.6%	0.4	7.2%	0.3	7.0%	0.5	15.2%	0.1	3.2%
Adjunct Faculty	1.5	38.9%	2.2	40.5%	2.2	49.0%	0.9	29.5%	1.0	41.7%
Visiting Professor	0.3	8.3%	0.3	5.3%	0.2	5.2%	0.4	14.3%	0.1	4.8%
Post Doc	0.2	5.7%	0.4	7.6%	0.1	1.7%	0.1	5.1%	0.1	4.8%
Average Faculty Size	3.8	101%	5.4	99%	4.4	100%	3.0	99%	2.4	101%
Average Tenured or Tenure-track	1.2	31.5%	1.8	33.3%	1.3	28.8%	0.8	25.9%	1.0	43.3%

Note: n refers to the number of responding departments for each department type. Due to rounding, average faculty size percentages may not total 100%.

Table 6. Average Number of New Hires by Rank, Department Type, and Institution Type, 2016-2017

n	All Hiring Departments				PhD-granting				MA-granting				BA-granting, Political Science				BA-granting, Combined & Social Science			
	106		84		43		16		25		1		25		54		13		13	
	Public		Private		Public		Private		Public		Private		Public		Private		Public		Private	
	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%
Full Professor, Tenured	0.0	1.0%	0.0	0.8%	0.0	0.8%	0.1	2.7%	0.1	1.9%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0.1	2.4%	0.0	0.0%
Associate Professor, Tenured	0.1	2.3%	0.1	4.1%	0.2	2.9%	0.6	12.0%	0.1	1.9%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	1.1%	0.0	0.0%	0.1	2.4%	0.1	4.8%
Assistant Professor, Tenure-track	1.2	26.7%	0.8	28.5%	1.4	25.7%	1.5	31.9%	1.1	26.0%	1.0	14.3%	1.0	26.3%	0.7	25.3%	1.2	36.1%	0.7	43.3%
Full-time, Non-tenure-track	0.3	7.6%	0.2	5.3%	0.4	7.1%	0.0	0.0%	0.3	7.4%	1.0	14.3%	0.4	10.5%	0.2	8.5%	0.2	4.8%	0.0	0.0%
Part-time, Non-tenure-track	0.4	9.4%	0.3	9.4%	0.5	9.1%	0.1	1.3%	0.3	7.4%	0.0	0.0%	0.6	14.7%	0.4	15.7%	0.2	4.8%	0.0	0.0%
Adjunct Faculty	2.0	43.1%	0.8	29.1%	2.4	43.2%	1.6	33.2%	2.1	48.4%	4.0	57.1%	1.4	37.9%	0.6	24.2%	1.4	43.3%	0.6	38.5%
Visiting Professor	0.3	6.6%	0.3	11.5%	0.3	6.2%	0.1	2.7%	0.2	5.6%	0.0	0.0%	0.4	10.5%	0.4	17.1%	0.1	2.4%	0.2	9.6%
Post Doc	0.2	3.0%	0.3	10.7%	0.2	5.0%	0.7	15.9%	0.0	0.9%	1.0	14.3%	0.0	0.0%	0.2	8.6%	0.2	4.8%	0.1	4.8%
Average Faculty Size	4.6	100%	2.9	100%	5.6	100%	4.7	100%	4.3	100%	7.0	100%	3.8	101%	2.6	99%	3.2	101%	1.6	101%
Average Tenured or Tenure-track	1.4	29.9%	1.0	33.5%	1.7	29.5%	2.2	46.5%	1.3	29.8%	1.0	14.3%	1.0	27.4%	0.7	25.3%	1.3	40.9%	0.8	48.1%

Note: n refers to the number of responding departments for each department type. Due to rounding, average faculty size percentages may not total 100%.