

University Faculty Work Activities

ISSUE

An examination of faculty work activities at the University of Iowa (U of I), Iowa State University (ISU), and University of Northern Iowa (UNI).

AFFECTED AGENCIES

Board of Regents and Regents universities

CODE AUTHORITY

Chapter 262

BACKGROUND

The Board of Regents receives a biennial report in odd-numbered years on the activities of the faculties at the three state universities. Prior to FY 2005, the reports were submitted annually. Samples of the faculty are surveyed and enrollment data are examined to determine how many hours faculty work, how much time is spent on teaching and research, who teaches students, and related information.

The reports divide faculty into four categories for these reports:

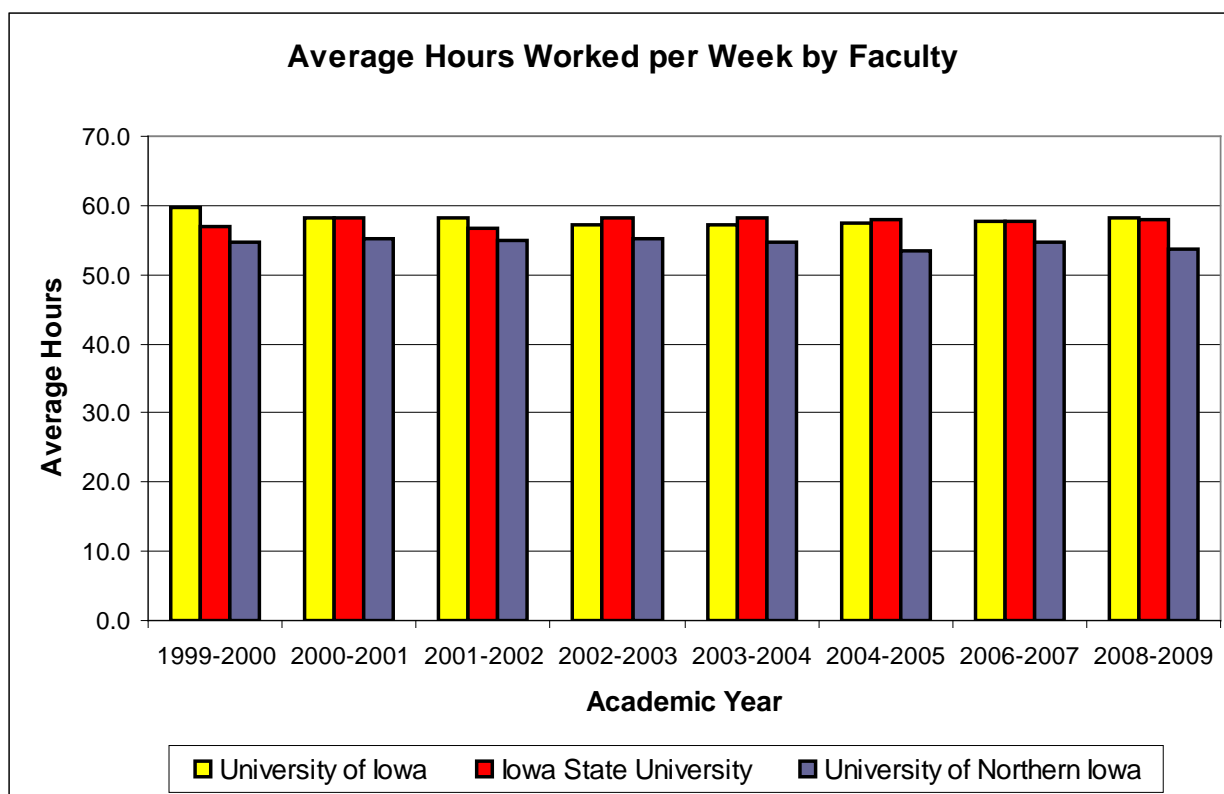
- Tenured faculty – faculty members who have earned tenure.
- Tenure-track or tenure-eligible faculty – faculty members for whom the expected outcome is tenure, sometimes called probationary faculty.
- Nontenure track faculty – faculty appointed on a recurring contractual basis but not eligible for tenure, including adjunct and visiting faculty; and at the U of I, visiting and clinical track faculty.
- Graduate teaching assistants.

CURRENT SITUATION

Hours Worked. Annually, each university surveys a sample of their faculty and staff to obtain data on hours worked. The U of I typically surveys approximately one-fourth of their faculty and

staff; ISU usually surveys a little more than one-third of their faculty and staff; and UNI surveys vary yearly in size from less than half to 100.0% of the faculty and staff. Response rates are reasonably high, usually in the 60.0% to 80.0% range. The surveys are conducted anonymously, and faculty report on a recent specific block of time rather than a projected period.

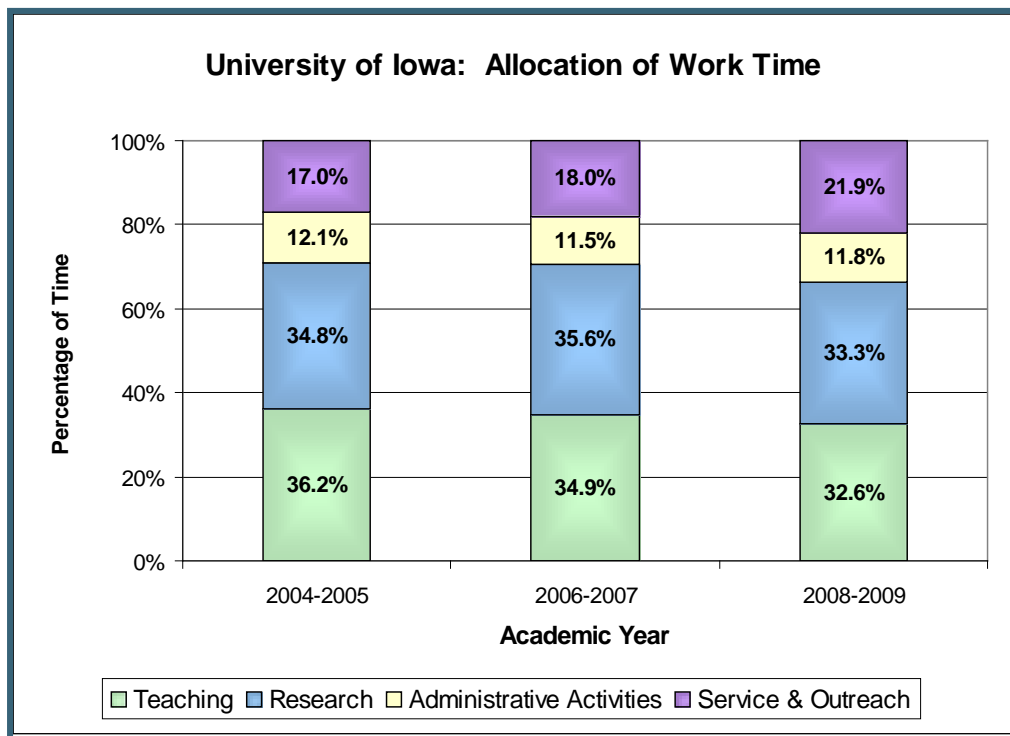
The university faculties historically show minor fluctuations in the hours worked. The U of I and ISU faculties average approximately 58 hours per week while the UNI faculty averages about 55 hours per week. The 2004 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, reported that public doctoral universities averaged 55.5 hours per week and public master's universities averaged 53.3 hours per week which is less than reported by Iowa's public universities. (NCES, 2005: 28)



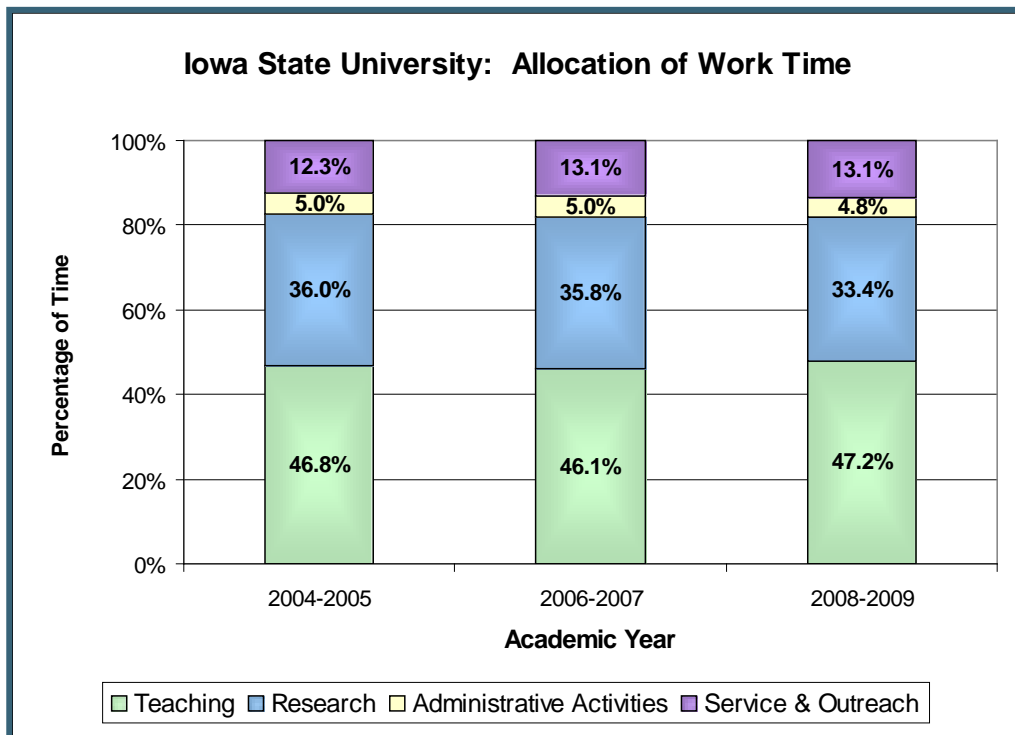
Tenured and tenure-track faculty report average work weeks of approximately 57 to 58 hour work weeks, with tenure-track (probationary) faculty working on average a half hour more per week. Nontenure track faculties tend to work about 5 hours less per week.

Time allocation. There are differences among the universities in how faculty allocates their time to teaching, research, administrative, and service activities. These differences reflect the specific mission of each university. (Changes in data reporting made comparisons with years prior to 2004-2005 inappropriate.)

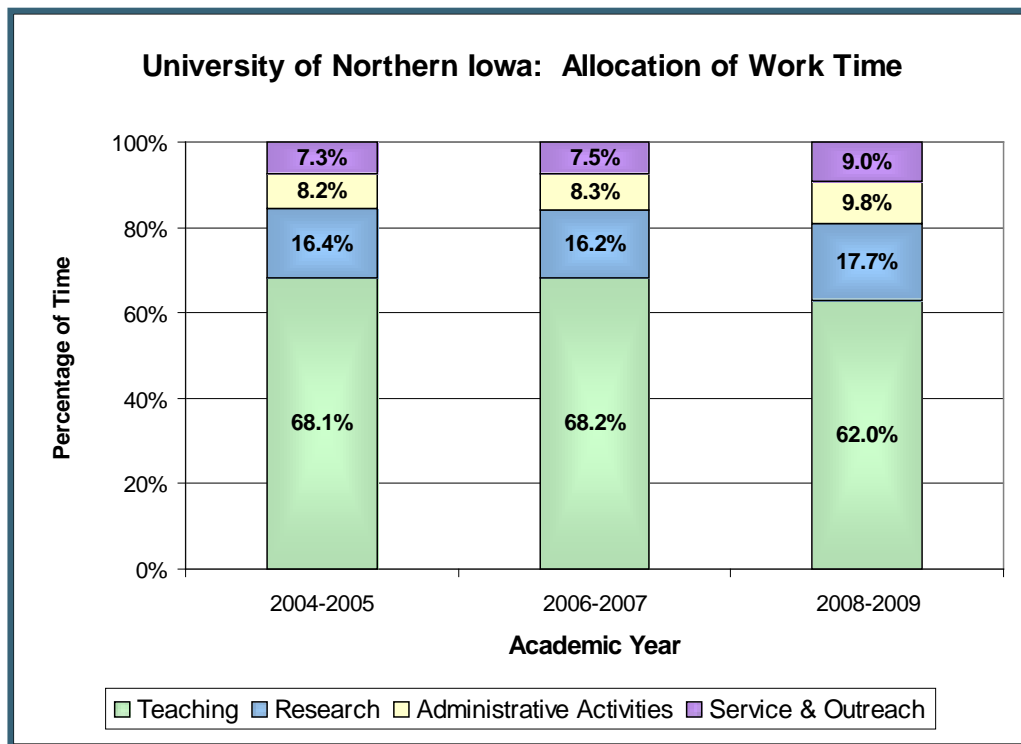
The U of I faculty spend about one-third of their time teaching, and one-third doing sponsored and nonsponsored research. About one-fifth of the faculty's time is devoted to services and outreach, such as extension functions, committees, service with campus and professional organizations, or consulting with community or governmental organizations. The remaining one-tenth of faculty time went to administrative activities.



Iowa State University faculty spends a little less than half their time teaching and about one-third on research. The ISU faculty spends about half as much time on administrative activities and two-thirds as much on service and outreach as the U of I faculty.

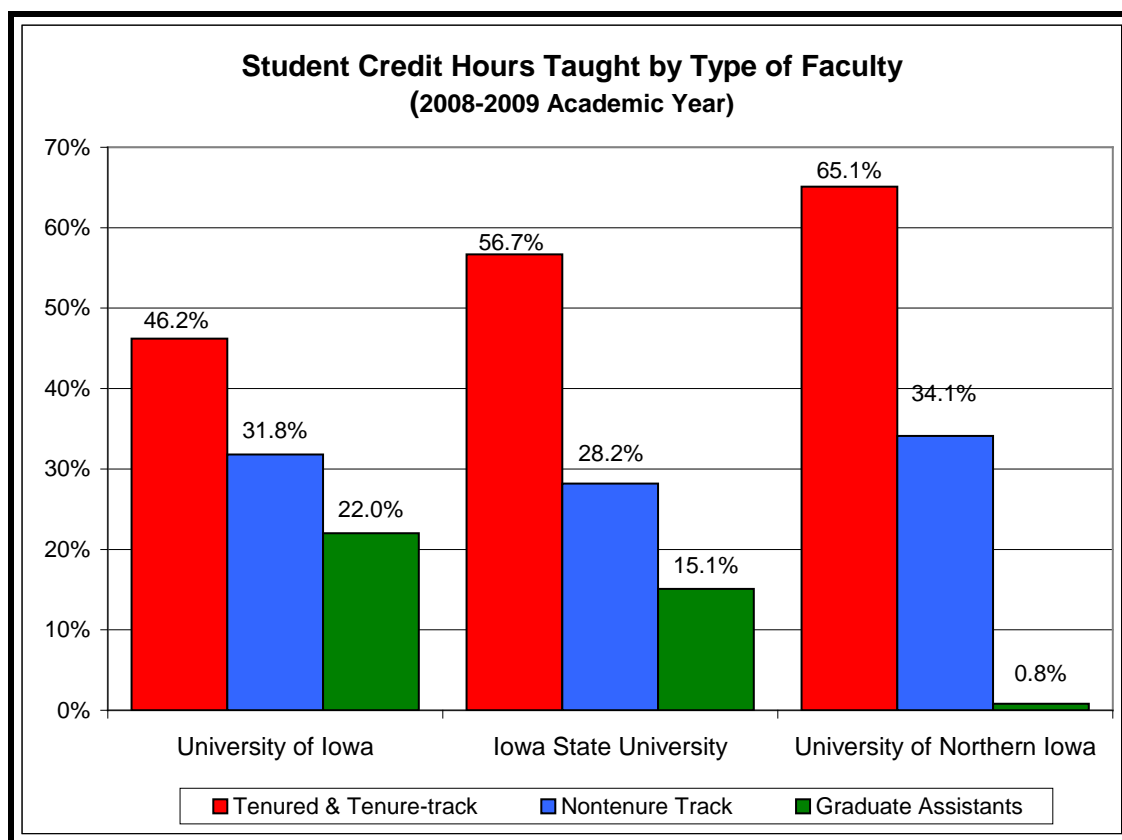


The UNI faculty spends about two-thirds of its time teaching, significantly more than either of the other two universities. Accordingly, UNI faculty spends less than one-fifth of its time on research, about half as much as the other two universities. Less than one-tenth of the faculty time goes to either administrative or service activities.



The reports detail some differences by types of faculty. At ISU and UNI, nontenure track faculty tends to devote a higher percentage of their time to teaching. At all three universities, tenure-track (probationary) faculty devote more time to research. This is understandable since the quality of research and the number of articles published is a major factor in earning tenure. The tenured, or more senior faculty, at all three universities devote much more time to administrative activities than either the tenure-track or nontenure track faculty. Services activities show the greatest variability by university and type of faculty. At the U of I, nontenure track faculty devote almost half their time to service activities. At ISU there is only a small variation in how much time each type of faculty spends on service, while at the University of Northern Iowa, nontenure track faculty spent the least time on service.

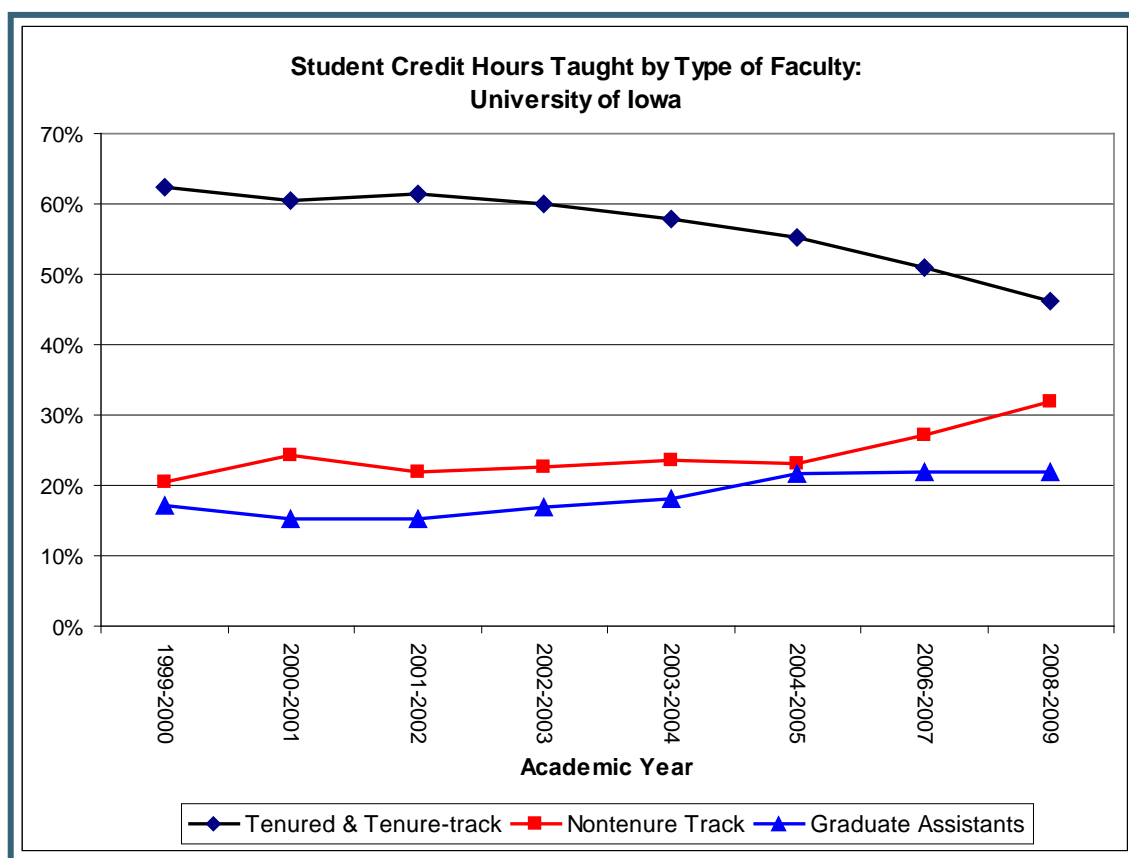
Student Credit Hours Taught. Tenured and tenure-track faculty are what would often be considered the teaching faculty. The following chart shows the proportions of student credit hours taught by tenure and tenure-track faculty, by nontenure track faculty, and by graduate assistants during the 2008-2009 academic year.



The University of Northern Iowa has the largest proportion of undergraduate student hours taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty and the smallest proportion by graduate assistants. The University of Iowa makes the greatest use of nontenure track faculty and graduate assistants by having them teach more than half the undergraduate student credit hours. Iowa State University falls in the middle having just over half of the undergraduate student credit hours taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty.

The next set of charts examines each university over the past decade showing how they became less similar in the use of regular teaching faculty.

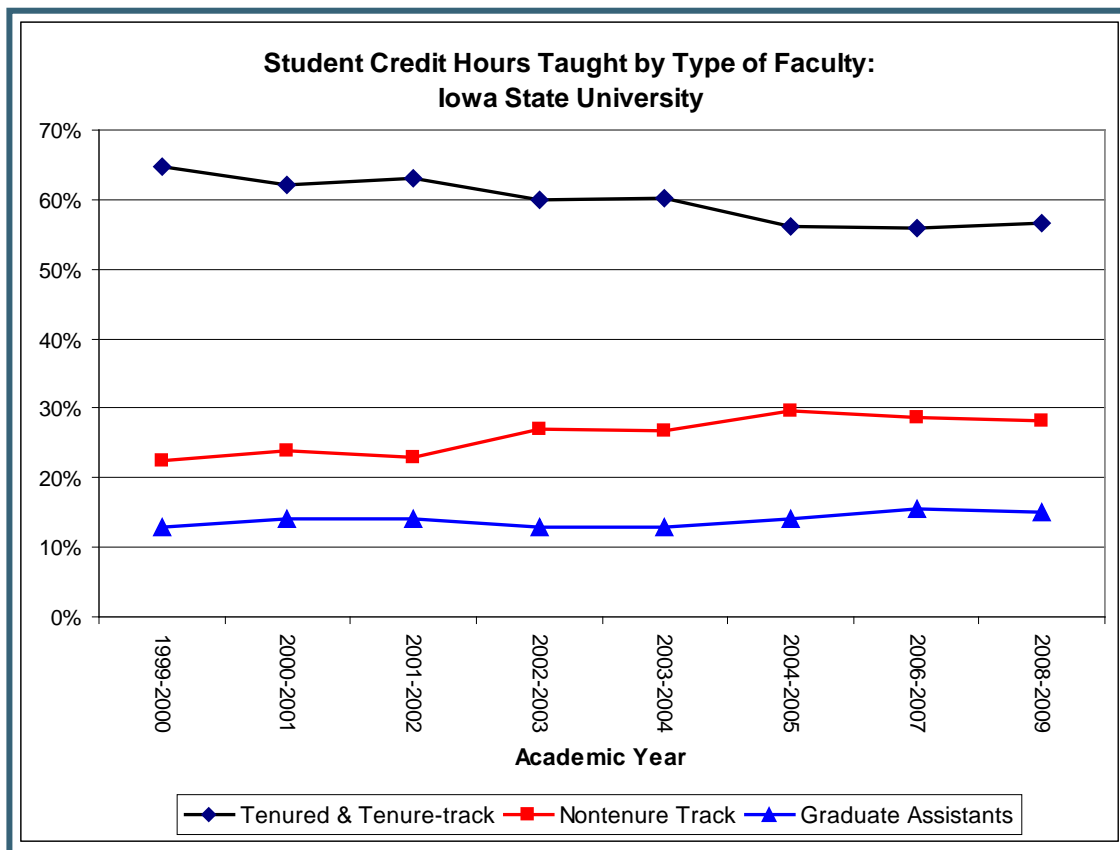
University of Iowa – Over the past decade, the proportion of student credit hours taught by tenured and tenure-track U of I faculty has declined from 62.5% to 46.2%. The proportion taught by nontenure track faculty increased from 20.4% to 31.8%, and the proportion taught by graduate assistants increased from 17.1% to 22.0%.



The colleges within the U of I vary in the proportion of student credit hours taught by type of faculty. The 2003 report was the last report to contain detail by academic area for the percentage of student credit hours taught by type of faculty.

- Tenure and tenure-track faculty taught 60.1% of the student credit hours. The College of Engineering had the highest percentage of student credit hours taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty (89.0%), followed by Public Health (87.7%), Graduate College (87.2%), and Law (85.0%). The remaining eight colleges ranged from 44.8% to 76.4% of the student credit hours being taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty.
- Nontenure track faculty taught 22.7% of the student credit hours. The College of Pharmacy had the largest percentage of credit hours taught by non-tenure track faculty (54.0%) and 53.4% for the “university”. The remaining ten colleges ranged from 11.0% to 36.2% of the student credit hours being taught by nontenure track faculty.
- Graduate teaching assistants taught 17.0% of the student credit hours. Graduate assistants taught the most student credit hours in the Colleges of Liberal Arts (24.2%), Business (10.2%), and Education (9.6%). Three other colleges had fewer than 2.0% of their student credit hours taught by graduate assistants, and six colleges (mostly professional graduate schools) did not use graduate teaching assistants.
- Other staff, such as, military science or professional and scientific staff, taught 0.3% of the student credit hours.

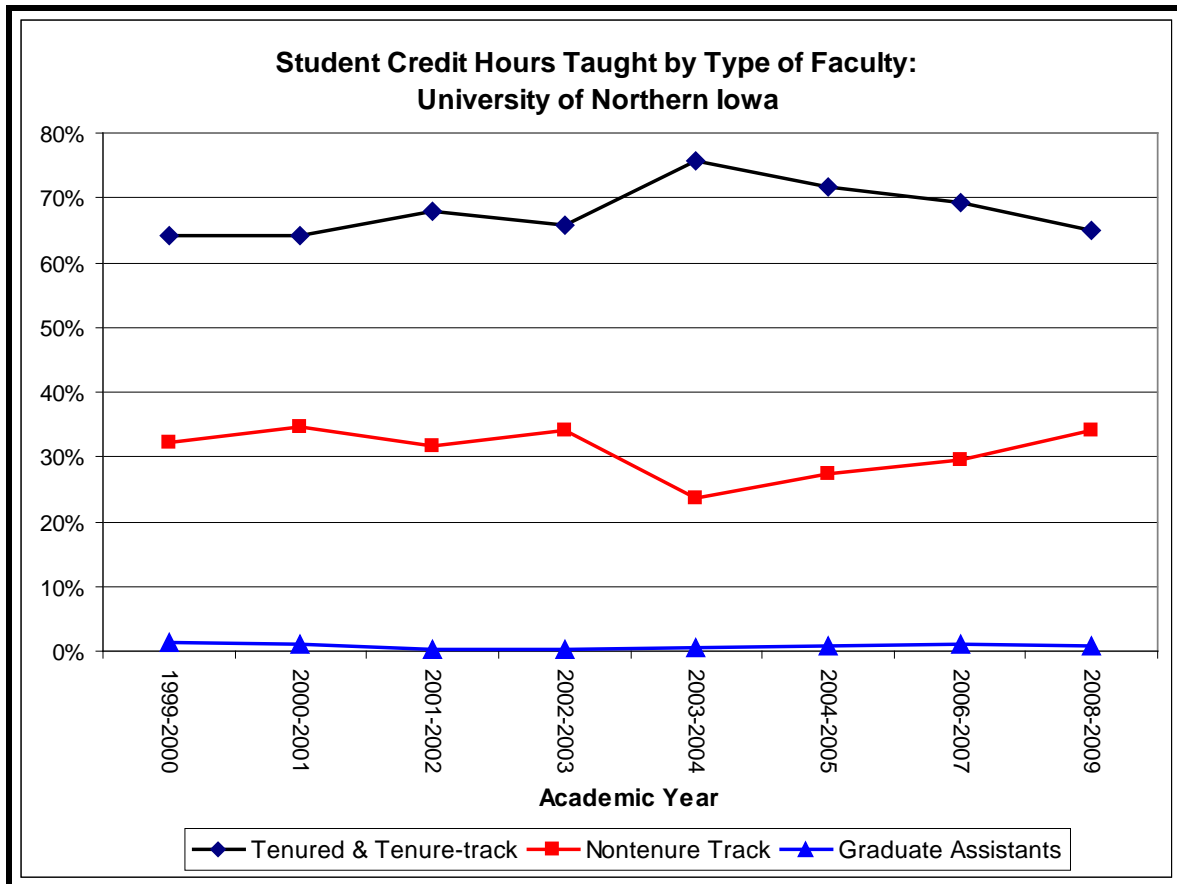
Iowa State University – Over the past decade, the proportion of student credit hours taught by tenured and tenure-track ISU faculty has declined from 64.8% to 56.7%. The proportion taught by nontenure track faculty increased from 22.4% to 28.2%, and the proportion taught by graduate assistants increased from 12.9% to 15.1%.



The colleges within ISU show some similarities to the U of I in the proportion of student credit hours taught by type of faculty. The 2003 report was the last report to contain detail by academic area, as follows:

- Tenure and tenure-track faculty taught 60.0% of the student credit hours. The College of Veterinary Medicine had the highest percentage of student credit hours taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty (95.0%), followed by the College of Agriculture with 89.0%. The remaining six colleges ranged from 51.0% to 75.0% of the student credit hours being taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty.
- Nontenure track faculty taught 27.0% of the student credit hours. The College of Business had the largest percentage of credit hours taught by nontenure track faculty with 42.0%. The remaining seven colleges ranged from 3.0% to 32.0% of the student credit hours being taught by nontenure track faculty.
- Graduate teaching assistants taught 13.0% of the student credit hours. Graduate assistants taught the most student credit hours in the Colleges of Liberal Arts (18.0%), Family and Consumer Science (13.0%), Education (13.0%), and Engineering (11.0%). The College of Design had 6.0% of the student credit hours taught by graduate students, Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine had 2.0% their student credit hours taught by graduate assistants, and Business did not use graduate teaching assistants.

University of Northern Iowa – Over the past decade, the proportion of student credit hours taught by tenured and tenure-track UNI faculty rose from 64.2% to 75.8% in the 2003-2004 academic year and then declined to 65.1%. The proportion taught by nontenure track faculty increased from 32.3% to 34.1%, and the proportion taught by graduate assistants decreased from 1.3% to 0.8%.



The UNI has a different pattern from the two other Regents universities having very few student credit hours taught by graduate teaching assistants. The 2003 report was the last report to contain detail by academic area, as follows:

- Tenure and tenure-track faculty taught 65.7% of the student credit hours. The College of Social and Behavioral Science had the largest percentage of credit hours taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty with 72.6%. The remaining four colleges ranged from 61.0% to 67.3% of the student credit hours being taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty.
- Nontenure track faculty taught 34.1% of the student credit hours. All of the student credit hours taught outside the five colleges were taught by nontenure track faculty. The Colleges of Humanities and Fine Arts and of Natural Science, respectively, had 38.8% and 37.1% of the student credit hours taught by nontenure track faculty. The remaining three colleges ranged from 27.3% to 32.7% of the student credit hours being taught by nontenure track faculty.
- Graduate teaching assistants taught 0.2% of the student credit hours. Graduate assistants only taught for the Colleges of Education and Humanities and Fine Arts, respectively, teaching 0.8% and 0.2% of the student credit hours.

BUDGET IMPACT

It is likely there will be some changes in faculty work activities due to the budgetary changes in FY 2010 and FY 2011. In FY 2010, the Regents Board office and universities' budgets experienced General Fund reductions totaling \$143.9 million. Funding from other Funds increased by \$96.7 million, including \$79.4 million from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The net reduction was \$47.3 million. In FY 2011, total funding from the General Fund increased by \$10.6 million while funding from other Funds decreased by \$56.2 million as the ARRA funds were no longer available, yielding a net reduction of \$45.6 million. The combined FY 2010 and FY 2011 revenues from General Fund and other Funds decreased by a total of \$92.9 million. (This comparison does not include increased tuition revenues. Tuition rates were increased for FY 2011.)

Over these two years, the universities have made changes to streamline and improve efficiencies. While each university has made adaptations to fit its own needs, in general the changes the universities are making that will impact faculty work activities include:

- Reducing administrative expenses, including merging departments to combine and reorganize administration.
- Holding open positions vacant through attrition and retirement, downsizing departments selectively, and reducing teaching assistantships and lecturer positions.
- Increasing class size, increasing teaching loads, and shifting teaching assignments among types of faculty to reduce costs.
- Discontinuing or reorganizing low-enrollment majors and minors, offering fewer elective courses and offering some courses less frequently.

REFERENCES

Board of Regents, "Faculty Activities Reports," 1999-2000 through 2008-2009.
<http://www.regents.iowa.gov/Reports/reports.html#F>

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), "2004 National Study of Post Secondary Faculty," December 2005. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006176.pdf>

STAFF CONTACT: Dwayne Ferguson (515-281-6561) dwayne.ferguson@legis.state.ia.us