The Changing Academic Workplace: Comparative Perspectives

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INTRODUCTION
Introduction

The academic workplace is changing rapidly worldwide. This collection of essays, focusing on Europe and the United States, analyzes some of the changes. The research reported in these articles points to a significant alterations in working conditions, terms of appointment, and remuneration. A growing portion of the profession is part-time, and many full-time academics are employed in positions that do not lead to long-term appointment. The traditional full-time permanent academic professor, the “gold standard” of academe, is increasingly rare. While guaranteed full-time tenured positions remain (except in the United Kingdom) in the countries discussed here, they are no longer as secure. Many within the profession feel that these changes constitute a clear deterioration in the terms and conditions of academic employment. Others see them as necessary reforms to meet the needs of a new century and changing conditions.

Academics are affected by the major trends evident in universities worldwide—accountability, massification, managerial controls, deteriorating financial support from public sources, and others. Research funds are scarcer, and are often tied to applied outcomes and increasingly linked to private interests. These factors have, not surprisingly, negatively affected the working conditions of the academic profession.

These essays explore these changing realities in Western Europe and the United States. There is a remarkable convergence of circumstances evident in these analyses. Countries and academic institutions have dealt with the crisis in somewhat different ways. In the United Kingdom, permanent appointments were abolished, and the binary structure of the higher education system changed. New management arrangements were put into place in the Netherlands. The traditional civil service status of academics in much of Western Europe is currently being debated. A declining proportion of new academic positions in the United States are on the traditional “tenure
track,” with growth taking place in the part-time sector and with full-time non-tenure eligible positions.

Despite these changes, the academic profession remains committed to the university and to the enterprise of teaching and research. The Carnegie Foundation’s study of the attitudes of the professoriate in 14 countries includes several of the countries discussed here (the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden, the United States, and Germany). This study reported declining morale among the professoriate, but a remarkable commitment to the essential roles of research and teaching. A large majority of the respondents, while recognizing growing problems, reported that were committed to the profession, and would choose it again.

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The Deterioration of the Academic Estate: International Patterns of Academic Work

Philip G. Altbach

It is in many ways remarkable that universities everywhere, stemming as they do from common roots in medieval Europe and having similar purposes of teaching and research, have evolved quite different patterns of organization and structure. While academics worldwide teach, and in most cases have a role in research and institutional governance, their terms of employment and working conditions vary considerably. In discussing some of these differences, this essay will address the following questions: 1) How have increased enrollments, diversified faculties, and reduced funding impacted higher education worldwide? 2) What changes are taking place internationally with respect to tenure, academic freedom, types of appointments, and faculty salaries? And, finally, 3) what do the changing, and largely deteriorating, conditions of faculty work ultimately mean for the global academic enterprise?

The professoriate has become a large and complex profession—with at least three and one half million professionals involved in postsecondary teaching worldwide, serving more than eighty million students (Task Force on Higher Education and Society 2000). The professoriate is at the heart of the academic enterprise. Without a committed faculty, no university can be successful nor can effective teaching and learning take place. Yet, despite the great presence of higher education in the technological world of the 21st century, the academic profession finds itself under increasing pressure. Working conditions have
deteriorated at the same time that traditional autonomy has diminished. Increased enrollments have not been accompanied by commensurate growth in faculty appointments or salaries. At present, there are unprecedented changes taking place in the terms of appointment, working conditions, and management of the academic profession. It is an opportune time to look at how the professoriate is changing internationally.

The Context

While the professoriate necessarily works within contemporary realities and within institutional and national settings, it is tied to universal historical traditions. One reason the academic profession is conservative in its views of the university is precisely because of its sense of history. Most universities have common roots in the medieval University of Paris and other European universities of the period (Ben David and Zloczower 1962, 45-84). Centuries-old ideas about the autonomy of teaching and research, the rightful place of the professoriate in institutional governance, and the role of the academic profession in society have salience. Academics have always seen themselves as somehow standing apart from society, with special privileges and responsibilities—as reflected in the idea of the academic profession as a calling. Many of these traditions have ebbed as universities have grown and become more professionalized. But there is still a historical residue that remains relevant.

Higher education is both national and international. There are many national variations in the organization and management of academe. Yet, there is also an important international element. Not only does academe have common historical roots, but contemporary forces are making higher education ever more influenced by global trends. Perhaps more than at any time since the Middle Ages—when universities functioned in a common language (Latin) and both faculty and students were highly mobile, academe operates in a global environment. Now, English is in some ways the Latin of the new era. There is again an international labor market for the professoriate, and more than one million students are studying outside their own countries. New regulations concerning comparability of degrees in the European Union and the ease of communication and the establishment of joint-degree and other collaborative programs among universities in different countries are examples of the increasing globalism in higher education.
Contemporary Realities
The central event of the past half century in higher education has been expansion. In country after country, higher education, once the preserve of the elite, has been transformed into a mass, and now almost universal, phenomenon (Trow 1972, 61-83). This massification has given rise to more diverse and powerful administrative structures and diminished the sense of community among the professoriate. Academics increasingly work in large organizations and are constrained by bureaucratic procedures.

Higher education institutions have diversified. No longer is academe a preserve of the elite. Most academic systems now contain institutions with a variety of missions. Universities themselves now vary more in their level of academic quality. Today, postsecondary education is comprised of a diversity of institutional types—including vocationally oriented community colleges, polytechnic schools, undergraduate colleges, and specialized schools in both the public and private sectors. The traditional ideal, and self-concept, of the professor is no longer valid for the academic profession as a whole. Diversification of institutions has meant diversification of the professoriate as well.

Patterns of institutional control vary considerably from country to country. The United States is unusual for its decentralized higher education system. Throughout Europe, and much of the rest of the world as well, in contrast, academic systems are much more tied to the central government, both in terms of control and financing—and higher education is almost exclusively public. This means that the terms and conditions of academic work, including salary scales (which are often tied to pay scales in the civil service), patterns of appointment and promotion, and others are in many cases determined by government policy.

Professors have traditionally valued their autonomy—the ability to control not only what happens in the classroom but also to determine the substance of their work. Few occupations have enjoyed the freedom of the professoriate to control the use of their time and the focus and range of productivity. In Europe, particularly, the ideals of professional autonomy combined with academic freedom in the classroom and laboratory have been hallmarks of the professoriate and remain primary values of the profession.

Traditionally, very little accountability was built into academic work. To this day, in much of the world, evaluation of teaching remains rare, and tracking faculty performance in research and other academic duties is not rigorous. Moreover, most academics around the
world are not paid based on any concept of merit or productivity, but rather by rank and seniority. Again, this pattern is slowly changing as accountability and assessment become more entrenched. However, the fact is that academics have been trusted to perform at an acceptable level of competence and productivity for centuries without any serious measurement of academic work.

Accountability is now increasingly part of the vocabulary of academic life. As higher education consumes more resources because of expansion, government and private funders demand greater accountability. A culture of accountability has emerged and affected the academic profession. Assessment of academic work is an increasingly common practice, with evaluation of teaching, research, service and administrative work all part of the new academic workplace in more institutions in many countries.

The fiscal constraints on higher education in many countries have had a negative impact on the professoriate. Even in the United States, Britain, and other countries with currently favorable economic climates, higher education has not generally benefited from increased support. Student enrollments have grown faster than the size of the teaching staff. Funds, usually from public sources, have not kept up with the costs of expansion. The working conditions of academe have suffered, with increasing class size and deteriorating facilities. Academic salaries have largely not kept up with inflation or with salaries in related occupations. The financial problems faced by universities in industrialized countries stem from public policies concerning higher education rather than underlying economic difficulties. In Britain, for example, there have been fiscal cutbacks at the same time student numbers have increased. In Germany, students have protested against deteriorating conditions of study caused by inadequate funding.

The fiscal crisis has hit developing and middle income countries differently, with such regions as sub-Saharan Africa especially affected because of the combination of expanding enrollments and economic and political difficulties. India, chronically strapped for funds and with expansion continuing, has for several decades seen declines in the quality of higher education. The transitional economies of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have experienced pressures for expanded access while at the same time facing the chal-
lenges of economic transformation. There are very few countries, rich or poor, in which the economic circumstances for postsecondary education are favorable.

The employment market for academics is in most places unfavorable. While it is difficult to generalize, in most countries problems abound. There are fewer career-track positions available, and this means that new entrants to the profession have a more difficult time obtaining full-time initial appointments. Promotion is also more problematical, and many countries have imposed quotas on promotions to senior ranks. This means that many faculty are kept in poorly paid junior positions characterized by unfavorable working conditions. Although many senior professors hired in the 1960s and 1970s are now retiring, they are not necessarily being replaced by full-time junior staff, causing additional problems for the academic employment market. In many countries, there is a surplus of disaffected doctoral degree holders, many of whom take jobs outside of academe. Some exceptions to this bleak picture exist—for example, fields such as computer science or management studies offer good academic employment prospects. While there are major variations among nations in terms of the academic employment market, there is no country that offers ample prospects for either junior staff or promotion opportunities for senior professors. The professoriate has come in for some criticism—popular magazines such as Germany’s Der Spiegel have printed articles highly critical of German professors. A number of books in the United States have appeared that claim that professors do not work hard enough and have too much autonomy (Anderson 1992, Sykes 1988). However, there is no groundswell of popular discontent with higher education or with the professoriate evident anywhere. Still, the professoriate has lost some of its luster as a profession in recent years although most sociological studies of occupational prestige show that academics continue to rank among the highly esteemed groups in society.

Patterns of Academic Appointments
Academic appointments are at present going through a period of considerable ferment and change. For purposes of analysis, it may be useful to consider systems that have the equivalent of tenure, or permanent appointment of academics, as well as those that do not. Even though permanent appointments are by no means universal, there is considerable stability in academic careers even without formal guarantees. Traditionally, in many countries, academics hired in the lowest
rank after finishing graduate studies were “confirmed” after two or three years of satisfactory performance, without undergoing a major evaluation. Confirmation meant either a de jure or de facto assurance of permanent appointment. Until Margaret Thatcher’s reforms in the 1980s, British universities worked this way. Confirmation as a lecturer did not guarantee promotion, but it did assure a permanent position at that rank.

Now that tenure has been abolished in the United Kingdom, the situation has changed. Current British arrangements are worth examination, since other countries have looked to them as models. The abolition of permanent tenure for academic staff in Britain’s universities had several motivations. One of the key objectives was ending the binary system, with its distinctions between the traditional universities and the vocationally oriented polytechnics, which did not have the right to confer academic degrees and never had a formalized tenure system. The polytechnics were upgraded to university status, and the terms of academic appointments in the reformed system reflected the preexisting practices in the polytechnic.

The Thatcher administration also intended to introduce external accountability into teaching and research, and to encourage competition among academic institutions and individual academics. Measures were introduced for periodic evaluations of both teaching and research and the ranking of institutions. These rankings have implications for budgetary allocations as well as research emphasis (Schuller 1991). Now, British academics at all ranks hold term appointments with periodic evaluation and reappointment procedures. This arrangement is not unlike proposals for post-tenure review in the United States—terms of appointment are generally around five years and evaluation seldom leads to the lost of a position—although there is no longer any guarantee of continuing appointment in British higher education. The professoriate working in the traditional British universities strongly opposed the changes, but in the end the reforms were reluctantly accepted and caused neither major unrest nor disruption of academic life (Halsey 1992; Farnham 1999). In fact, few lost their positions, and academe continued much without major structural change. Academics holding positions at the time of the changes kept their tenure so long as they were not promoted or did not take a position at another university (Evans 1999). Most observers see the abolition of tenure more of a symbolic loss than a practical one.
In the United States, tenure is awarded by specific academic institutions, rather than by government authorities or university systems. At least in the upper tier of the academic system, the American tenure system has one of the most rigorous processes for evaluation and consideration of junior faculty anywhere in the world. The “six-year-up-or-out” process of evaluation provides for careful review of each applicant for tenure. Tenure can be abrogated by the university for reasons of financial exigency, program reorganization, or for other institutional reasons. Holders of tenure can also be terminated for specific dereliction of their responsibilities or for violations of university policy. While abrogation of tenure is quite unusual in the United States, it is by no means unprecedented.

In Europe, tenure has different legal and institutional roots, and it provides stronger guarantees to those who hold it. In much of Western Europe—including Germany, Italy, France, and Spain—tenure is a right granted to senior members of the civil service as a result of their appointments. University professors as well as most civil servants are protected (Mora 2001). Professors are also paid according to civil service scales, and there is little variation in salaries through the academic system. The German Beamte status, for example, provides ironclad job security regardless of financial or other problems facing the university, including program abolition or reorganization (Enders 2001). This status is guaranteed by law. In France, the faculty’s civil service status protects senior academics in all universities. Faculty members can be, but seldom are, transferred from one university to another, but they cannot be fired. Along with the guarantees of employment and other rights, civil service appointments are highly valued in societies where they have traditionally been symbolic of elite status. Not surprisingly, senior academic staff fiercely guard their civil service appointments. Countries with this system have been slow to change due in considerable part to the opposition of the academic profession.

Senior academics still have significant prestige as well as power in society. In Italy, for example, many senior academics serve in Parliament and several have been prime ministers. French professors and secondary school teachers constitute a significant proportion of the national assembly and have traditionally enjoyed considerable influence (Chevaillier 2001).

Tenure (permanent contract) is given to senior members of the professoriate, and appointments to senior faculty positions are carefully monitored and competitively awarded. Senior academics in those European countries with a civil service system have the strongest guar-
antee of tenure and job security—until the age of compulsory retirement—of any faculty members in the world. Certain other academics are given permanent contracts as well. The proportion of academics with permanent contracts varies among European countries. For example, in Germany and Finland, the proportion of tenured staff stands between 40 and 50 percent. In Austria, the Flemish parts of Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, and Spain, between 50 and 60 percent are tenured, in France and Ireland 80 percent, and in Italy 90 percent (Enders 2000, 16). At present, there are discussions concerning abolition or modification of civil service appointments for academics, but so far only the Netherlands, in the mid-1990s, has changed the system. Professors and other academic staff are now appointed directly by the universities, and are no longer part of the state service.

In general, appointment to senior faculty ranks takes place in Europe after considerable scrutiny of the individual. In some countries, such as Germany, appointment to a senior professorship comes only after a national search. The American pattern of promoting a junior academic up the ranks is not the pattern in much of Europe, where there is wide gulf between junior positions and senior professorships. The American system provides more continuity. In some European countries, it is common for a junior appointee to have the security of tenure, but no guarantee of promotion.

Employment arrangements in Japan’s public universities, and many of the private institutions as well, are procedurally somewhat less secure than is the case in Europe, although in practice anyone appointed to a full-time academic job in Japan immediately has a permanent job, usually from the time of initial appointment. As in Europe, promotion up the academic ranks is more difficult, in part because of the rigid “chair” system that permits just one very powerful full professor for each department. While the system is opening up, it has been criticized for its lack of accountability and assessment as well as for the difficulties that faculty members have in proceeding up the ladder of appointments. The Japanese appointment system works, in part because it is so similar to the employment pattern in the rest of society. Faculty members, recognizing the likelihood of lifelong employment as a single university, generally perform as effectively as possible.

In China, much as in Japan, academic staff are given permanent appointments at the time of hiring to a regular faculty position, regardless of rank. They have job security until the age of retirement, and it is highly unusual for any full-time academic to be removed from his or her position for any reason—although there have been a small
number of instances of firings for involvement in dissident political activity. While academic salaries are extremely low by international standards, many Chinese faculty members are given subsidized housing on campus, access to low-cost food, and other benefits. These appointment and employment patterns are typical of China generally, although the situation is slowly changing, both on campus in society, as the economy becomes more market oriented.

The Latin American pattern of academic appointments stands in sharp contrast to that of continental Europe. Tenure, as it is known in Europe and North America, does not exist in most of Latin America. The academic profession is sharply divided between part-time instructors—who are paid a modest fee to teach a course or two, and constitute the large majority of those teaching throughout Latin America—and the minority of full-time faculty. Full-time faculty are responsible for the governance of the university and are appointed and have their contracts renewed on the basis of periodic “contests” in public institutions. Academic posts are publicly announced, applicants are considered, and one is chosen. Renewal of appointment is on the basis of a further “contest,” which is announced and open to anyone. The incumbent may have to compete against other applicants. This system was established as a result of the reform movements of 1918 to ensure the objectivity of academic appointments and a democratic environment in the universities. With the expansion of higher education, the system no longer works well in many countries, and “contests,” which are both expensive and time consuming, are often not held. The actual turnover in the senior academic ranks is in fact very small. Patterns of appointments in the growing private sector in Latin America vary, but permanent appointments are unusual.

Many countries have “de facto” tenure arrangements. Even without formal tenure, most full-time academics spend their careers in a single institution. However, the sort of legal or contractual guarantees that exist in Europe and North America are not the norm elsewhere. In countries such as South Korea, India, and a number of other Asian countries, there is a presumption of lifetime employment for academics in full-time positions, but only limited procedural guarantees. Few individuals are terminated, even when academic institutions face difficult circumstances. In India, faculty members in the undergraduate colleges, who make up the large majority of the profession, do express fear of possible dismissal by management even though few are actually fired.
Academic Freedom and Academic Appointments
In much of the world, there is little legal protection of academic freedom in the form of meaningful employment guarantees. Nonetheless, in a 14-country study, faculty members felt fairly confident about their academic freedom (Altbach and Lewis 1996, 31). During periods of political crisis, academic freedom is not infrequently violated, especially where traditions of autonomy and academic freedom are not well developed. Recent examples include China in the aftermath of the events at Tiananmen Square, Serbia and Croatia during recent crises, and Indonesia (Human Rights Watch 1998). Academic freedom is more precarious at present in Asia and Africa. In much of the Middle East, academics feel constrained from freely expressing their views or engaging in research on sensitive topics. This is the case in some African countries. In Ethiopia recently, government pressure on professors resulted in some dismissals. In Singapore and Malaysia, among other countries, academic researchers, especially in the social sciences, feel pressured not to do research on sensitive topics or to speak out publicly on them. Even in the United States, which has a strong tradition of protecting academic freedom and a recognition of the connection between tenure and academic freedom, there were problems during the McCarthy anticommunist scare in the 1950s. A small number of faculty members were fired for political reasons, and many people feared that academic freedom was being threatened (Schrecker 1986). Academic freedom disappeared in Germany during the Nazi period and was greatly restricted in the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe during the Communist era.

Despite setbacks, in the Western industrialized countries at least, academic freedom is reasonably well observed. Faculty members usually are unrestricted in their ability to conduct research, express their views in the classroom, and participate in public debates on issues relating both to their areas of expertise and with regard to broader social and political issues. Academic freedom is defined more narrowly in many parts of the world than is the case in the United States. Whereas since the end of the 19th century, the American ideal of academic freedom has applied to the classroom, the laboratory, and the public arena, the European concept is more restrictive—stemming from the Humboldtian commitment to freedom of teaching and research within the university and limited to the areas of faculty specialization (Shils
Such differences in definitions and traditions make exact comparisons difficult. Nonetheless, academic freedom is more robust now in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in former Soviet Union and its successor states, than during the Soviet period. The idea that professors require considerable freedom of research and expression in classroom and laboratory is gaining acceptance—albeit frequently violated during periods of political unrest—even in parts of the world where the concept is not entrenched.

In only a very few countries are the terms and conditions of academic appointments linked to academic freedom. The United States is, in fact, one of the very few countries where this is the case. Elsewhere, tenure and other arrangements of appointments fall under the category of employment practices, civil service issues, and other administrative procedures. The fate of academic freedom is not seen as being linked to the terms and conditions of professorial appointments.

If a worldwide survey of academic freedom were undertaken, the result would likely be mixed. In much of the world, there are restrictions on academic freedom, both in the classroom and laboratory and even more in the public forum. In much of the world, progress has been documented, but one might estimate that a third of the professoriate feel some restrictions, and in a few countries, the situation remains perilous. Unfortunately, no one monitors the state of academic freedom.

**Trends in Academic Appointments**

In response to the pressures referred to earlier—budgetary problems, accountability, changing patterns of enrollments, among others—academic hiring is undergoing considerable change. Without question, the most important development is the diversification of the types of appointments made to teaching and research posts. The change likely to have the greatest impact on the profession is the increase in the proportion of academic staff without permanent appointments, even in countries that retain tenure arrangements, and the greater use of part-time teachers. The two major worldwide trends are the growth in part-time appointments and the expansion or creation of full-time, nontenured posts that have specific time limits.

**Part-time Faculty**

In the United States, it is estimated that under half the new hiring is done on the tenure track (see Baldwin and Chronister, Chapter X in this volume). A growing proportion of classes are taught by
part-time teachers (Finkelstein 2000). Latin America has traditionally been dominated by part-time faculty, and despite widespread agreement that greater numbers of full-time staff are needed to improve raise academic standards in universities and create a research culture, little has changed. Part-time teaching is less entrenched in other parts of the world, although the phenomenon is growing as institutions struggle to cope with ever-expanding enrollments and inadequate funding from government.

Part-time faculty bring some advantages to higher education. They are typically professionals who are already working in their specializations and bring practical knowledge and experience to their teaching. This is especially valuable in applied fields where links between theory and practice are central. They may be able to guide students toward the knowledge that will be useful in obtaining jobs after graduation. Part-time faculty are always much less expensive to use than full-time staff. They receive only a modest stipend for their teaching, often an hourly rate of remuneration, and no other benefits. The university has no commitment to them and thus has complete flexibility in hiring. As budgets, curricular interests, and student demand dictate, adjustments can be made in the number and specializations of the part-time teachers. Part-time staff seldom get offices or laboratory space, thus saving scarce university resources.

The disadvantages, often overlooked, are also significant. Part-time faculty have minimal commitment to the institution. They simply teach their classes and leave, which is why in Latin America they are referred to as “taxicab” professors. Part-timers do not participate in research and are not involved in campus or departmental governance. Further, they are not likely to be knowledgeable about current intellectual trends or research in their fields. They seldom have links to the increasingly important world of international scholarship and do not participate in the knowledge networks in their fields. The implications are especially severe for research-oriented universities, where the need for full-time researchers is especially strong, but even postsecondary institutions not much engaged in research will feel the negative implications of an overreliance on part-time staff.

Part-time faculty do not have the opportunity to be fully involved in an academic community. In most universities, existing rules do not permit this, and in any case the time commitments of part-timers preclude such engagement. It is difficult, if not impossible, to build an academic institution or culture on the basis of part-time faculty, nor is it possible to develop a research base.
In a way, academic systems that rely increasingly on part-time staff, including the United States, are becoming “Latin Americanized.” The realities of higher education in much of Latin America provide a disconcerting look into what may lie ahead for universities, and for individual teaching staff, if part-time employment becomes the dominant model. With a few exceptions—such as Campinas University in Sao Paulo, Brazil, which has a high proportion of full-time professors—universities do not produce much research. Universities are able to offer instruction to large numbers of students at low cost. In most of Latin America, tuition is low, or free, in the public universities, placing great pressure on the institutions to keep costs low. The new private universities, which now absorb a majority of enrollments in Brazil and Chile, rely predominantly on part-time faculty in order to save money. Their budgets do not, in general, permit them to appoint many full-time professors. Latin American analysts have pointed out that fully effective universities can emerge only when a critical mass of full-time faculty is appointed, creating a cadre of academics who can build the disciplines, engage in the governance of the university, and attend to the development of both teaching and research (Albornoz 1991).

**Alternative Patterns of Appointment**

The “gold standard” of the American-style tenured or tenure-track appointments is not the norm everywhere. Moreover, as a result of many of the pressures discussed here, there have been debates concerning changes in the nature of academic appointments in some countries.

One of the most dramatic systemic changes in the terms of academic appointments took place in Britain in the 1980s, when the traditional tenure system was abolished for new entrants to the profession (Shattock 2001). The other European country that has seen the most comprehensive change in the nature of academic appointments is the Netherlands, where professorial appointments were taken away from the government and given to the universities, annulling the civil service status of the professoriate (de Weert 2001). This was a significant change in the legal basis of appointments, and it gave more power to the universities to make their own decisions. However, the working conditions, terms of appointment, and working conditions of the professoriate changed very little.
The more predominant trend has been toward the appointment of full-time academic staff not eligible for permanent positions. In continental Europe, this category of appointment has existed for more than a century, and was codified in the German Humboldtian university model in the early 19th century. The German academic system is based on the Humboldtian chair system which, with modifications in recent years, remains the central organizational principle of academic appointments. The chair system is rigidly based on seniority, historically elevating one senior professor within each discipline and a variety of junior staff arranged under the chairholder. Junior scholars hold term appointments and cannot proceed up the ranks at a single university to a professorship. Rather, they must compete for any available openings at other universities, or on the completion of their term appointments, they must move on to a similar position elsewhere.

In Germany, 72 percent of the teaching staff are on limited-term appointments without professorial rank and without permanent tenure. The greater portion have full-time appointments. Nonprofessorial appointees do not, in general, have the possibility of promotion up the ranks to a tenured professorship. Most must complete a second research-based dissertation (the habilitation) and then compete for the scarce professorial positions that become available, but cannot be appointed at the university where they earned their habilitation. These academic employees, many of whom have completed their habilitations, have limited term appointments but their contracts may be extended by the university. They may not, however, be promoted. This forced mobility creates a high degree of instability in the German academic system.

In recent years, there has been a liberalization in the structure of senior professorial ranks. Several new ranks have been added and at least the possibility exists of having more than one senior professor in the same department or discipline. Yet, the system remains hierarchical, with a great divide between the senior professors, who have completed the habilitation and hold civil service rank, and the rest of the teaching and research staff. While there has been some discussion of modifying or even eliminating the habilitation, there has been no change so far in this requirement.

The German system of academic appointments had a major impact in Europe and beyond. Most academic systems in Central and Eastern Europe are directly patterned on the German model. The Japa-
nese national universities also retain the chair system, with a rigid hierarchy of academic appointments although without the necessity to move from one university to another (Arimoto 1996).

Some European countries have also coped with rising enrollments and tight budgets by turning to nonprofessorial appointments. Italy recently started to reform its academic system to cope with massification (Moscati 2001). Expansion in student numbers had caused deteriorating conditions of study, higher drop-out rates, and a growing time-to-degree problem. Teacher-student ratios have ballooned to 1:30, even with recent reforms permitting research appointees (who have limited-term positions) to teach. The tradition that reserved control over teaching and design of courses for senior professors has recently been modified. The ranks of full and associate professors have been expanded as well, especially at the bottom where there are no permanent appointments.

France has tried a somewhat different approach to deal with expansion of enrollments. Rather than stock the universities with temporary staff, the Ministry of Education transferred large numbers of secondary school teachers to the universities to provide instruction in the basic courses. Since both secondary and tertiary teaching staff are civil servants and have similar academic credentials, this arrangement has been widely accepted. Secondary school teachers are accorded considerable respect in society. Moreover, French academic secondary schools provide instruction at a level not dissimilar from that in the first year or two of university. It is possible to shift teachers back to secondary education if they are no longer needed in the universities, since the basic terms of appointment are not dissimilar, and secondary teachers and university staff have both tenure and civil service status. Worldwide, there is a tendency to make junior staff appointments that lack the prestige, job security, and perquisites of the traditional professorship. Often these appointments are not linked to the career track of the professoriate, and the possibility of promotion up the ranks does not exist. There is often a specific term of appointment that may or may not be extended. A kind of caste system has grown up, with the senior professoriate at the top and with growing numbers of proletarian part-time and term-appointed full-time staff below. The proportion of upper-caste senior academics at the top is decreasing, as institutions alter their hiring policies in response to fiscal and other pressures.
Patterns of Remuneration

Traditionally, the full-time professoriate could expect a salary putting its members in the middle or upper-middle class of society. Few people entered the academic profession to reap great financial rewards, but most expected to earn an appropriate middle-class salary. The 1994 14-country Carnegie study of the academic profession found that most academics (except for respondents from Hong Kong) were dissatisfied with their salaries, with large majorities of respondents in all of the countries describing them as only fair or poor (Altbach and Lewis 1996, 10). While academic salaries vary widely, the professoriate in the industrialized countries still commands a middle-class salary. Academic salaries have not, however, kept up with inflation or with comparable salaries in the private sector. For much of the rest of the world, remuneration has deteriorated to the extent that academic salaries no longer provide a middle-class lifestyle.

Across Europe, pay scales for the highest professorial ranks differ considerably by country. In absolute terms, without taking relative costs of living into account, we estimate that the highest salaries are paid in Belgium, Italy, and the Netherlands, followed by France, Germany, and Ireland. Lowest top remuneration is found in Finland, Portugal, and Spain. Salaries in Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom are considered relatively low and/or declining. In these countries, there is considerable discontent among academic staff (Enders 2000, in press). A recent article encouraged British academics to earn extra money by “moonlighting” through consultancies, evaluating manuscripts, and related income-producing activities (Sutherland 2000, 20). In Japan, academic salaries at the national universities seem to be on a par with mid-range European countries, with some of the well-established private universities paying somewhat more. For comparison, the average salary for full professors in American doctoral-level universities is considerably higher than averages for almost all European countries (More Good News, So Why the Blues? 2000, 25). Senior academic salaries in Hong Kong are reputed to be the highest in the world.

Salaries do vary within countries according to seniority, rank, type of institution, and other factors. In Western Europe, it is estimated that the widest internal variations can be found in Austria, France, Germany, and Ireland; in these countries the lowest starting salaries for academics are around half of the highest senior salaries. In contrast,
salary differentials are relatively flat in Finland, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom (Enders 2000, 18). In the United States salary differentials are on a par with those of European countries with the greatest gaps—when instructors and assistant professors are included.

Academic salaries in other parts of the world are, in general, much lower than in Europe, North America, and Australia. Some exceptions exist, such as Hong Kong, Singapore, and a few of the Arabian Gulf states. Yet, even countries with well-developed university systems and relatively high income levels—such as South Korea, Taiwan, Argentina, and Malaysia—have lower levels of academic remuneration. Throughout Latin America, the minority of full-time professors barely earn enough from their university jobs to maintain a middle-class social status. In most of the region, academic salaries for senior professors are frequently only one-third of average levels in Europe, and while the cost of living may be somewhat lower, it by no means fully compensates for the difference. Typically, professors must earn additional income through consulting, additional teaching, or other remunerative activity.

The situation in South Asia is worse, especially for the large majority of teachers in the undergraduate colleges. While Chinese academic salaries are quite low by international standards, most teaching and research staff are provided with housing and other benefits that, to an extent, offset the low pay. Academic salaries in much of Africa, which at one time provided a middle-class life style, are no longer adequate. Indeed, the deteriorating of African academic salaries has contributed to an exodus of the best scholars on the continent. In the transitional economies of Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, academic salaries have not kept up with the cost of living, and no longer provide adequate remuneration. Many have left academe, and fewer of the brightest young people are attracted to the professoriate.

Throughout the world, academic salaries have not kept pace with inflation or with rising incomes in other professions. Even in the United States, where remuneration has grown faster than inflation for the past seven years, academic salaries have nonetheless remained stagnant over the past three decades (Bell 1999, 20). In Western Europe, academic salaries, which were acceptable while a small professoriate served an elite student population, are no longer considered attractive. In the developing world, salary deterioration has perhaps been less serious, but professorial remuneration was never adequate. Wher-
ever academic salaries do not compete with those in other sectors, higher education is hard pressed to attract and retain the best minds and talent.

Increasingly, an international academic job market is emerging, which means that academic salaries and working conditions in one country have an impact in other marketplaces. While no adequate statistics exist, it is clear that there is a substantial flow of academics across national borders—a trend likely to continue. The world of science and scholarship has always been an international one, and the growing use of English as the primary language of academic discourse enhances this sense of an international academic community. European Union regulations requiring degree recognition have eased mobility within the EU. Variations in conditions of academic work—the availability of laboratory and research facilities, salary structures, terms and conditions of appointments, and academic freedom, among other factors—may stimulate academics to seek better positions in other countries.

Patterns of migration are evident, with a trend from the developing countries in the South to the industrialized North. This has caused extreme imbalances in some cases—for example, it is estimated that as many highly trained African scholars are working in the North as in Africa itself, representing a serious loss of academic talent. Likewise, many scientists from such countries as India, Pakistan, and Taiwan, have made their careers working elsewhere. The United States, Canada, and Australia have received an influx of academic talent from Europe, and especially from the United Kingdom.

Salary levels and other issues relating to remuneration have a substantial effect on the academic profession. In China, the government’s effort to make the universities more self-sufficient meant that professors were asked to do consulting and engage in a range of nonteaching activities. Especially at the top ranking universities, academic culture has been affected and professors spend more time and energy on non-university activities. The government’s goal is to encourage the professors to generate a portion of their income instead of paying them more. Latin American professors, even those with full-time appointments, must find additional income elsewhere. The fact is that academic salaries have deteriorated worldwide, and there is no sign of a reversal of this trend.
Conclusion
This essay has presented an overview of the terms and conditions of academic work, and particularly in academic appointments, in an international context. Several clear trends emerge from this analysis:

- There is a gradual change in the nature of academic appointments. The traditional idea of the professor who holds a job for life, focused on teaching and research, and carrying a responsibility for institutional governance, is giving way to alternatives.
- Despite the changes, a commitment to permanent or at least long-term academic appointments remains. However, fewer new full-time, permanent appointments are being made, and new limited-term categories and more part-time positions are being created.
- Accountability and assessment of academic work are slowly becoming part of the academic career. The specific measurement of academic performance, particularly research and teaching, is central. Although these policies have attracted great interest, it is surprising how limited their actual implication has been worldwide.
- The traditional power of the senior faculty over the governance of the university has diminished. More authority now resides with external bodies, governing boards that are no longer dominated by professors, and other arrangements.
- In a few countries, such as the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, systemic reforms have included significant modifications of the traditional terms and conditions of academic appointments and academic work. It is likely that eventually other countries will implement changes of similar scope. For example, whether to continue the civil service status of the academic profession is now under discussion in several European countries.
- The conditions of academic work are worsening. Salaries are not keeping pace with inflation, promotion is more difficult, accountability places more restraints on the traditional autonomy of the profession, and academic facilities in many countries are inadequate.

Even after the reforms, the essential structure of academic appointments is unlikely to be altered in any revolutionary way. The academic ranking system will remain, although new titles and nomenclature are being introduced in some places. The “gold standard” of full-time professorial appointments, with good job security, will remain, although it is likely that fewer academics will achieve this level.
In their organization, higher education institutions and systems and the academic profession are moving in a somewhat “American” direction. The United States, having coped with mass higher education first and with the largest and most comprehensive academic system, has naturally provided a model that other countries have considered carefully. American approaches to accountability—its course-credit system, the structure of academic ranks, performance-based salaries, periodic review of productivity, and other aspects—are often incorporated in plans for the reform of academic appointments in other countries.

Change is taking place, but from the perspective of the academic profession, it is almost entirely negative—deterioration of salaries and working conditions, increased bureaucratization, and decreased professional autonomy. Academics worldwide, when asked about how they feel about their work, are pessimistic. Yet, they feel a strong commitment to the basic elements of the profession—teaching and research (Altbach and Lewis 1996). It may well be that changing circumstances—including the growing importance of accountability and assessment—are a necessary concomitant to the academic institutions that can effectively serve a diversified and mass academic system.

The challenge is to ensure that the academic profession is attractive to intelligent and motivated teachers, scholars and researchers. Paradoxically, at a time when there is universal agreement concerning the importance of higher education for the future of knowledge-based societies, the academic profession finds itself in a beleaguered state.

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A Chair System in Transition: Appointments, Promotions, and Gate-keeping in German Higher Education

Jürgen Enders

In recent years, the traditional system of higher education in Germany has come under increasing scrutiny among politicians and in the public debate, because of its perceived outdated and inefficient structure. As in many other industrial countries, massification and budget cuts have put the system under constraints. The trend toward a knowledge society has paradoxically been accompanied by a loss of social exclusiveness for the academic profession. Demands for accountability and control are growing as are expectations for the usefulness, effectiveness, and dissemination of academic work. A debate is under way over the perceived rigidities of Germany’s highly homogenous higher education system, which has traditionally been subject to dense governmental regulations. Lack of differentiation and competition within higher education, inflexibilities in the current system of public financing and regulation, and concerns over international competitiveness are on the agenda of higher education reform. The conditions of the academic staff and the civil service structure of academic employment are among the most prominent issues raised in the current context. This subject area covers quite a number of issues, each of which is rather important for the future of German higher education.

As will be shown, the role and conditions of academic staff are in many respects crucial for the shape and institutional pattern of higher education in Germany. Attempts to reform the overall structure of higher education thus would involve changes in employment relationships and the conditions of academic staff that are more and more seen
as tools for that reform. The position and role of academic staff in German higher education have three major distinguishing characteristics: a strong connection of the academic estate with the state; an appointments system that serves to counterbalance institutional hierarchies, encouraging a cosmopolitan orientation among professors; and a built-in gap between professorial staff and all other, so-called nonprofessorial, staff. These characteristics have been discussed (and not just recently); they are perceived as major obstacles to overall reforms of the system.

Origins and Overview of Academic Staff
The illustrious history of the German professor as the pinnacle of academia has been analyzed in many studies and even mythologised in histories of the German higher education system. The guild-like origins of the autocratic and autonomous faculties and the Humboldtian ideals of the research imperative, of freedom in research and teaching, and of teaching through involvement in research have often been cited and were influential in the development of higher education systems in other industrialized countries. The freedom of science and research granted in the 19th century by the territorial states to their renewed state universities was institutionally connected to the Ordinarius, the full professor as civil servant. The individual chairholder received the funds from the state that were allocated to his institute in the negotiations over his university appointment. Thus the state bureaucracy was able to keep the universities under control with regard to their staffing and resources. In the early 20th century, the concept of the Ordinarius, which combined the chair with the directorship of an institute, was considered suited to integrating Humboldt’s concept of the university with the requirements of small-scale research and territorial state administration (von Friedeburg 1989).

The traditional German university had only two ranks of academic staff in addition to the professorial positions: the nonregular professor (Ausserordentlicher Professor), who holds a paid post in fields considered less important; and the private lecturer (Privatdozent), who has completed the Habilitation (a second magnum opus after the doctoral dissertation), but holds an unpaid position of limbo status at the university. In fact, until the 1930s there were few provisions for the extended employment of academic staff below the rank of professor.

The situation changed considerably after World War II. The system grew rapidly from the early 1960s onward—in the numbers of students and staff and in the number of new universities. This brought
about an increase in the number of chairs in the various disciplines and fields. Furthermore, the principle of organizing an institute around a professor gave way to larger institutions chaired by various professors. The growing need for support staff in teaching and research and the improved social conditions for higher education during this period also led to the creation and expansion of nonprofessorial positions for academic staff in the doctoral and postdoctoral stages.

Since the mid-1970s, student numbers have risen considerably, but institutions and staff positions have seen almost zero growth—except for the integration into the system of a number of institutions of higher education of the former German Democratic Republic in the early 1990s. The number of students increased from 781,107 in 1975, to 1,438,524 in 1990, to 1,809,797 in 1995. The number of established posts for academic staff in German higher education increased from 63,248 in 1975, to 63,368 in 1990, to 82,519 in 1995 (Wissenschaftsrat 1995, 33). Personnel expansion in higher education took place after 1975 mainly in the area of fixed-term contracts for doctoral staff and research staff through job sharing and external financing through research grants. Such personnel form a relatively flexible reserve army in the field of higher education.

At present, German higher education consists of 337 organizations, of which 91 are universities—including technical universities and comprehensive universities (Gesamthochschulen). Another 60 are specialized colleges for art and music, theology, and pedagogy (Kunsthochschulen, Theologische Hochschulen, and Pädagogische Hochschulen). About 140 are universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen), and 30 are colleges of public administration (Verwaltungsfachhochschulen)—former professional schools that were integrated into the system of higher education at the beginning of the 1970s. In terms of staff, finances, and student numbers, however, universities still dominate German higher education. Academic staff at universities number almost eight times those at universities of applied sciences. Nearly three-quarters of all students study at universities.

At present, academic staff can be divided into professorial positions and the subprofessorial staff. The professors enjoy high levels institutional power, prestige, and autonomy. In many ways, this fact characterizes the relation between professors and nonprofessors in German higher education (Enders 1996, 23). The relatively autonomous and independent status of professors is, in the German case, guaranteed by their appointment as civil servants with tenure. In addition, they are in a privileged position, as a result of the low degree of control
from inside or outside the institution. Teaching load differs by type of institution—8 semester hours per week for university professors and 16 to 18 hours for professors at universities of applied sciences. Otherwise, there is no clear definition of the duties and tasks of professors, their use of time, or the number of hours they must be present on campus. The formal description of the professoriate is uniform, but in practice professors are divided into three salary categories, referred as C2-professors, C3-professors, and C4-professors. There is not only a hierarchy of incomes among the various levels but one of available resources and prestige as well, with the C4-professors at the top. At universities of applied sciences the professoriate is divided into C2 and C3 positions; at universities all three positions can be found.

Recent surveys show that the majority of professors regard their salaries as quite fair, although salaries in comparable positions in private business are considerably higher (Enders and Teichler 1995a). The basic salary for a C2-professor varies, depending on age, between DM 4,600 and DM 8,200 ($2,300–$4,100), for a C3-professor between DM 5,100 and DM 9,200 ($2,550–$4,600), and for a C4-professor between DM 6,500 and DM 10,600 ($3,250–$5,300) per month before taxes. Added to this are supplements depending on family size, ranging from DM 100 to DM 800 ($50–$400). In the early 1990s, the reported gross annual income of professors at universities was less than DM 100,000 ($50,000) for 26 percent of them, between DM 100,000 and DM 119,999 ($50,000–$60,000) for 32 percent, between DM 120,000 and DM 139,999 ($60,000–$70,000) for 16 percent, and DM 140,000 and higher ($70,000 and higher) for 18 percent (Enders and Teichler 1995a, 80-82). At universities of applied sciences, professors' yearly income was less than DM 80,000 ($40,000) for 18 percent, between DM 80,000 and DM 99,999 ($40,000–$50,000) for 35 percent, between DM 100,000 and DM 119,999 ($50,000–$60,000) for 34 percent, and DM 120,000 and higher ($60,000 and higher) for 14 percent.

It must also be taken into account that professors, as public servants, receive abundant old age pensions and special benefits as regards social security insurance. C3-professors at universities often apply for C4-professorships. If they are successful, they improve their salaries as well as their resources for teaching and research. A C4-professor cannot attain a higher formal status. However, each offer of a C4-professorship at another university earns the recipient an automatic salary increase of about DM 1,000 ($500) before taxes. In addition, he
or she can bargain for additional resources—for instance, obtaining another position for a scientific collaborator or the provision of expensive laboratory equipment. After the offer of a C4-professorship, a

Table 1. Academic Staff in German Higher Education, 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Positions</th>
<th>Universitäten (%)</th>
<th>Universitäten of Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professors (C2-C4)</td>
<td>27,100</td>
<td>40,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(28.0)</td>
<td>(36.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-professorial staff</td>
<td>69,600</td>
<td>70,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(72.0)</td>
<td>(63.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96,700</td>
<td>111,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Regular Academic Staff

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Universitäten (%)</th>
<th>Universitäten of Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor C4</td>
<td>12,264</td>
<td>12,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(8.9)</td>
<td>(8.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor C3</td>
<td>8,720</td>
<td>5,774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6.3)</td>
<td>(4.2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor C2</td>
<td>3,585</td>
<td>3,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.6)</td>
<td>(2.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>24,569</td>
<td>31,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17.8)</td>
<td>(21.4)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Universitäten (%)</th>
<th>Universitäten of Total (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Senior) Assistants</td>
<td>15,450</td>
<td>15,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(13.7)</td>
<td>(10.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic employees</td>
<td>93,631</td>
<td>94,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(68.0)</td>
<td>(63.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers with special assignment</td>
<td>4,068</td>
<td>6,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.0)</td>
<td>(4.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>113,149</td>
<td>116,859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(82.2)</td>
<td>(78.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>137,718</td>
<td>148,763</td>
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<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part-time Academic Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Universitäten (%)</th>
<th>Universitäten of Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professors (guest, emeriti)</td>
<td>1,315</td>
<td>1,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.8)</td>
<td>(1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff with teaching commissions</td>
<td>25,910</td>
<td>41,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(34.7)</td>
<td>(43.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate assistants/tutors</td>
<td>47,449</td>
<td>55,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(63.5)</td>
<td>(55.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74,674</td>
<td>98,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 1. Academic Routes to a University Professorship
person cannot apply for another professorship for the next three years.

The institutional division of the higher education system in Germany has clear effects on the structure of academic staff (see Table 1). Since the universities of applied sciences have no right to qualify graduates for and grant doctoral degrees and are mainly engaged in undergraduate teaching with few possibilities for research in the applied fields (and almost none for basic research), only a very small proportion of subprofessional positions are established at these institutions to support research and teaching. In contrast, in universities only around 30 percent of the established positions are professorial and around 70 percent are subprofessional. The actual proportion of nonprofessional staff amounts to 80 percent of all regular academic staff, due to part-time employment and research contracts financed by external sources. Not surprisingly, it is estimated that about four-fifths of the research capacity at universities and two-thirds of the institution’s teaching capacity are provided by nonprofessional academic staff (Enders 1996, 34). Around 90 percent of nonprofessional staff are employed on fixed-term contracts. All in all, about three-fourths of regular academic staff in universities are nonprofessional staff with limited-term contracts while one-fourth are professors and middle-rank academics having unlimited contracts as civil servants or public employees.

The sub-professional staff mainly found in the university sector can be divided into two major groups—assistants and so-called academic employees. Assistants have completed their doctoral degree and are working toward their Habilitation to fulfill the formal qualification requirements for the professoriate. They comprise about 11 percent of all regular academic staff and are on the main track that leads to a professorial position—without, however, any guarantee of success. Assistants have a limited tenure, and after a maximum of six years they must leave their positions and try to get appointed to a professorial position at another university. Assistants are responsible for supporting professors in teaching and research but are supposed to have enough time to work on their Habilitation. The time spent on this difficult and highly specialized qualification differs from discipline to discipline, but on average it takes between six and eight years.

The second group of subprofessional staff are academic employees—the largest group of scholars in German universities, comprising about 64 percent of all regular academic staff. They can be sub-
divided into three groups. The first and smallest subgroup is made up of staff with unlimited contracts as civil servants or public employees, who have typically finished their doctoral degrees and whose duties may include teaching and research. In most cases they do not have the same degree of independence as professors and are not put in charge of lectures or teaching graduate seminars. The second subgroup is made up of the so-called doctoral staff, who are working on their dissertations (Ph.D. theses) and who may have the same duties as the first group but with limited and often part-time contracts. The third group is made up of research staff, financed by external funds, with limited contracts. All these academic employees may work toward a further qualification but not as part of their assignments.

In the early 1990s, the yearly income before taxes of nonprofessorial staff on full-time contracts was less than DM 60,000 ($30,000) for 23 percent of them, between DM 60,000 and DM 79,999 ($30,000–$40,000) for 54 percent, and DM 80,000 and higher ($40,000 and higher) for 18 percent (Enders and Teichler 1995a, 83). Besides these 117,000 nonprofessorial staff (including junior- and middle-rank positions) supporting the professors in research and teaching, there are nearly 100,000 part-time academic personnel. The smallest group is comprised of guest professors and honorary professors who are active in teaching. A further group consists of so-called staff with teaching commissions who are active in teaching on a hourly basis—a kind of contract frequently used to hire external professionals or to integrate research staff into teaching. While these part-time teachers are seen as a welcome supplement to the regular academic staff structure, the situation is more problematic for those part-timers who are employed as tutors or graduate assistants with auxiliary duties in research and teaching. They make up more than half of all part-timers, and a lot of these short-term contracts are supposed to be used for the preparation of a dissertation.

Appointments and Promotions in a Chair System
The timing of major career decisions and the structure of competition obviously vary across higher education systems. The classic German solution is to have a high degree of inequality within universities, in the form of the chair system, and a less-pronounced inequality between institutions. Universities in Germany are certainly more homogenous in standards than those in most other major industrial societies even though discussions about the strengthening of institutional hierarchies have intensified. Differentiation and competition are traditionally, how-
ever, more pronounced among different status groups of academic staff than among institutions, and the success of the individual career is measured more by the outcome of the main career events than by the prestige of the institutions involved, although the latter is not an irrelevant factor. The postdoctoral academic career in German universities encompasses three main events: (1) obtaining the position of assistant, another temporary post, or a postdoctoral fellowship for preparing the Habilitation; (2) attaining the Habilitation and entering the limbo status of private lecturer (Privatdozent), which confers the right to perform the tasks of a professor but is an informal status not combined with a formal employment status; (3) the appointment to a professorship, as the result of a successful outcome of a competition with other candidates for the available position.

When a professorial position is to be filled, an appointment procedure will start that is determined by various strict regulations set by the government to assess the scholarly qualifications of different candidates for the available position and to prevent any parochial promotion. The major steps in the appointment procedure are as follows: the description of the position; the announcement of the position; internal and external review of applying candidates; the selection of three candidates by the appointment commission; the final selection and appointment decision made by the Ministry of Education, which will “call” the candidate; the negotiations between the candidate, the university, and the ministry about salary and resources; and the final appointment of the candidate.

The prerequisites for an appointment differ with the type of institution. As a rule, university-level institutions reward experience in university teaching; a doctoral degree, which indicates competence in research; and at least five years of postdoctoral research, indicated mainly by the Habilitation. At the universities of applied sciences the Habilitation is not a prerequisite for appointment, but at least three of the five years in postdoctoral professional work have to be completed outside academia. Of the above-mentioned three main events in the academic career, the call to a chair is the most important—with elaborate gatekeeping processes leading to a big jump in prestige, authority, autonomy, and job security for the individual scholar.

The second important career event is the Habilitation, which demonstrates a candidate’s qualification for a professorship. Like the dissertation, the Habilitation provides proof of the research proficiency of the candidate. Teaching qualifications are assessed through an inaugural lecture given to the faculty of the university. This lecture is the
last part of the Habilitation before the candidate is granted the venia legendi allowing him or her to teach independently as a private lecturer. This is a rather informal status providing no guarantee of an eventual professorship.

Just as the outcome of the Habilitation in terms of further promotion is open, so, too, are the possible routes for attaining the formal and informal qualifications for a professorship. A variety of career paths may lead to becoming a chairholder, and no single one is particularly dominant. During recent decades, postdoctoral assistantship positions with limited tenure have been added to introduce a sequence of career steps toward the Habilitation and the first call. Various other options exist as well—including positions financed by research grants or fellowships or a composite mix of all these elements.

This career structure has produced a considerable number of stages and procedures through which the scholarly contribution and stature of junior staff can be measured. At each step (doctoral, postdoctoral, Habilitation, private lecturer) new entry and exit options arise due to the contract-track nature of junior staff careers. In the German system, major career decisions are made at a relatively late point in time during an academic career. Furthermore, in the chair system the procedure of filling a vacancy is to rank a set of external candidates to find the best one, rather than judging an internal candidate by a peer review according to absolute standards (Sorenson 1990). This may contribute to high standards in the selection process—assuming that performance can be measured more accurately the longer the candidate can be observed in a competitive environment. Furthermore, the legal enforcement of mobility for the first professorial appointment—by law a junior staff member cannot be promoted to a professorial position within the same institution—contributes to a relatively high degree of institutional mobility within higher education. Results of the Carnegie International Survey on the Academic Profession show, for example, that during their academic careers German professors move from one university to another somewhat more frequently than their colleagues in the United States—a country where institutional mobility is often thought to be higher than in Germany (Enders 1999).

It is, however, not surprising that the entire logic of such a career system can produce considerable opportunity costs at the individual level as well as overhead costs at the institutional level, which has led to various attempts to reform staff structure and to great controversy.
The Debate Over the Nontenure Track
Attempts to change and reform the situation and career perspectives of junior staff in higher education have revolved around three main issues: (1) the dependence of junior staff on the professors; (2) the long period of time spent in relatively unstable positions, resulting in the advanced age of candidates for a professorship; (3) the high in-career selectivity and the insecurity as regards career outcomes.

The first problem with the structure of postdoctoral career stages is an overly long dependence upon the professors. What may serve a useful purpose for doctoral students, who still have many teaching and research skills to learn, eventually becomes a serious disadvantage for postdocs. They cannot freely choose the topics of their research work and their teaching without the consent of their professors. To apply for separately budgeted funds, postdocs also often require formal support from their professors; and in any case, in practice it is a handicap if a research proposal comes from a nonprofessor. Thus, academics in a potentially highly creative and energetic phase of their careers are overly constrained by their formal and informal subordination to professors. This dependence is already visible in the recruitment procedures of professorial and nonprofessorial academic staff. While internal promotion to professor is generally not allowed, up to this point in an academic career local affiliations are rewarded and even indispensable. In contrast to the formalized multilevel decision making for the recruitment of a professor, with the considerable veto power of the ministry, the recruitment of nonprofessorial academic staff is highly fragmented (Schimank 2000). Positions for nonprofessorial academic staff are very often filled by persons whom the respective professor—who handles the recruitment almost alone—knows personally. Promotion ladders for junior staff are thus part of the internal labor market of the respective institution, while tenure decision and further career steps in the professorial career ladder are more dependent on the external labor market. In effect, the opportunities for “sponsored” mobility in junior staff careers are evidently richer, compared to career systems emphasizing “contest” mobility in earlier doctoral and postdoctoral career stages.

When addressing the length of time spent in postdoctoral positions and the age of eventual candidates for a professorship the two effects to be considered are: first, the timing and structure of careers in a chair system, which tend to place the most important decisions at a relatively late point in an academic career; and, second, the fact that
German postdocs who aspire to attaining their Habilitation must spend too many years in achieving this. On average, they are about age 40 when they have achieved this career step and finally become private lecturers looking for a professorship—a period that might take another two to three years (Wissenschaftsrat 1996, 28–31, 105).

Last but not least, on the agenda, are the problems created by the “all or nothing” situation faced by aspiring candidates who have achieved the prerequisites for a professorship. Since internal promotion, in principle, is forbidden, private lecturers have to apply for positions at other universities, competing in an open process of selection with other junior or senior candidates for the available professorial positions. Career outcomes are thus less predictable and less within the control of aspiring academics. The feeling of insecurity over consequences of performance and actions is widespread during this career stage.

Since the 1970s, every 10 years, attempts have been made mainly through legal reforms to define a new staff structure model for the junior career levels and to find a balance between high levels of selectivity and a modicum of stability in subprofessorial academic positions. Particularly during the 1970s, assistants were given a higher degree of formal independence; improved positions for all scholars having reached the Habilitation as well as fully paid positions for permanent teaching staff were established. At the same time, the participation and influence of nonprofessorial members of academia increased. While the expansion of higher education and the overall climate in the wake of the 1968 student rebellion supported the so-called democratic reforms of the 1970s, the reform models were gradually set aside in the 1980s. During this period, efforts were made to increase the direct supervision of junior academic staff once again by the chairs (Kehm 1999, 78). Also, a greater emphasis has been placed on the status differences between the various ranks of professors—differences that had been mitigated earlier by giving more power to the departments. At the end of the 1960s and in the first half of the 1970s, the Habilitation was more or less abolished as a necessary prerequisite for an appointment because of doubts about its usefulness and because of a growing demand for professors. The subsequent drastic reduction in replacement demands for professorial positions—between 1980 and 1985 only 16 percent of those who finished their Habilitation were able to secure an appointment as professor—led to a renewed emphasis on the Habilitation.
Various efforts have been undertaken during these periods through the Higher Education Framework Act and its various amendments to create relatively distinct junior staff positions and career steps (see Fig. 1). Policymakers tried to address problems at the junior career levels by defining typologies of academic staff positions. Academic employees with limited contracts—the most numerous group of nonprofessorial academic staff—were supposed to be working toward a doctoral degree, but not for a Habilitation; academic employees with permanent contracts were to be involved in research and teaching; while the further steps up the ladder were to be taken only by the small number of assistants. However, it proved to be impossible to channel ambitions and careers in this way, and this approach has as yet had little effect on the real shape of staff structure—except for creating a greater internal differentiation of junior staff positions and legalizing the practice of fixed-term contracts. Positions at the same level within the hierarchy with different duties can be found as well as different positions characterized by the same tasks filled by academics who have attained different degrees of formal qualification. This internal differentiation and fragmentation of subprofessorial positions makes it increasingly unclear where the point of transition to a professorial position lies. Within higher education, qualification steps are expected to lead toward becoming a professor; every other final outcome is more or less tinged with failure. The result is patchwork resumés for those who are on the contract track and a serious identity problem for those who remain in middle-rank positions within higher education (Joas 1992).

The prevalence of low job satisfaction among nonprofessorial staff is, therefore, not surprising and is linked mainly to the lack of career prospects and to the dependence on professors rather than to the contract nature of the employment itself (Enders 1996).

A number of measures to speed up the academic career advancement of postdocs and to reduce their dependence upon professors have been discussed lately. In particular, recommendations by the Science Council have focused on these issues (Wissenschaftsrat 1996). It is widely agreed that postdocs should have greater opportunities to acquire separately budgeted funds and to manage research projects independently of their professors. Another area of general agreement is that the long and difficult Habilitation phase reduces the attractiveness of a career in academic teaching. Frequently, highly qualified young
scientists and scholars turn their backs on their higher education institutions as soon as they are offered an interesting job in industry or a position at a higher education institution abroad. In addition, women complete the Habilitation even later than men and encounter serious difficulties reconciling family responsibilities with their professional life—one of the reasons why there are so few female professors. These criticisms of the current qualification procedure for university professors have led to the proposal to introduce an assistant or junior professorship position. An important point is that these positions are to be more independent during the qualification phase. The detailed design of junior professorships—including length of time, employment requirements, salaries, and the junior professor’s position as a member of the institution—are currently being discussed in a working group of the federal ministry. Also on the agenda are the modalities of a first appointment to a chair following a junior professorship—in particular, whether the first appointment should be limited or unlimited and whether exceptions to the general ban on appointing members from within the university are to be allowed. In effect, critical elements are being discussed that might well lead to a shift away from the contract-track tradition to a modified tenure-track model as regards the postdoctoral career stages.

More radical is the renewed proposal that the Habilitation should be done away with. Those in favor of such a change refer to other countries, most of which do not have this, or any similar, qualification step. However, especially in the humanities and social sciences but in medicine as well, proponents of the Habilitation are still numerous. In contrast, many natural sciences will probably substitute the Habilitation very soon with other criteria—especially publications in refereed journals and successful acquisition of separately budgeted funds—to assess candidates’ qualifications for a professorship. Thus, the future might bring a diversification, by discipline, of postdoc career paths to a professorship.

For a number of reasons, these debates have recently become more and more intertwined with questions about the relationship between junior careers and the overall labor market—concerning issues such as the chronic overproduction of postdocs, the loss of attractiveness of the academic career, and mobility between institutions and sectors. Germany is a country in which the doctoral degree has not only a relatively high prestige within society but also a relatively high value on the labor market outside higher education and the research sector.
It seems that various developments have recently undermined traditional notions on the value of the doctorate, leading to heated debates on the status and function of the doctoral degree on the labor market and on the best way to prepare doctoral candidates for their professional futures. In the context of the expansion of higher education and changes in the labor market—especially the stagnation or even shrinking of the higher education labor market and the public service labor market—doctoral training is now being reexamined in terms of a number of issues traditionally raised in the context of graduate employment and work. These issues include the generalist-specialist debate and the growing emphasis placed on general skills and flexibility, the theory-practice debate and the growing demand for knowledge relevant outside higher education, the disciplinary-interdisciplinary debate and the value placed on knowledge from different disciplines, and the national-international debate and the fostering of international mobility and competencies.²

**An Academic Oligarchy under Strain**

All in all, it is fair to claim that the traditional recruitment, promotion, and appointment procedures at German universities have been crucial elements of the whole system. The appointment system incorporates the major reward and promotion policies—professors are appointed for the whole of their working life and other evaluation processes play a less important role. Furthermore, the career structure serves as a counterbalance to institutional hierarchies and parochial promotions. Finally, the academic career structure has resulted in close links between higher education and the state, which has considerable influence on staff structure through setting overall conditions with federal higher education laws, financing established positions, and controlling institutional budget plans. At the same time, institutional self-government very much protects the interests of the professoriate, while other forces, especially institutional leadership, play a much weaker role. Professors have no superiors within their institutions; deans and rectors are primi inter pari and cannot intervene in the core activities of teaching and research. Instead, the only formal authority above the level of the professor is the ministry, which is far away and does not monitor the professor’s day-to-day activities. In addition, the ministry is legally constrained in its authority. The constitutionally granted autonomy over teaching and research that every professor enjoys does not allow the ministry any serious control over a professor’s activities.
While concern over the problems with junior staff careers was and still is one of the major elements of the reform debates, a number of developments during the 1990s might have a serious impact on the position of senior staff and their special privileges. With respect to professors, attempts have been made to bring them under stricter control by the university leadership and the ministry and to deregulate employment conditions and thereby strengthen accountability, flexibility, and performance-related measurements and incentives. The key issues in this context are the strengthening of the position of university rectors and faculty deans, new regulations for academic salaries, and the dedication of resources combined with regular evaluation procedures.

Reforms in the employment and working conditions of professors have been influenced by changes in the public image of universities and professors. A broader context is the recent debates and reform initiatives concerning the overall governance structure of German higher education (Schimank 1995). Professor bashing has become quite popular in the German mass media, in which the former are predominantly seen as spoiled, narcissistic, and lazy employees who bear considerable responsibility for the reputedly bad shape of German universities.3 While a recent survey on occupational prestige has shown that public opinion is still quite positive about academics and scientists (Noelle-Neumann 1999), their bad image in the media has had an impact on recent policy debates.

The traditional combination of close political regulation by the state authorities and an oligarchic academic self-government dominated by professors is increasingly seen as a major hindrance to higher education reform. There is support for a shift toward an institutional arrangement in which performance-based competition for resources and consumers and hierarchical organizational governance gain in importance. This shift reflects the new concept of public management that is currently fashionable in many countries (Brinckmann 1998). As has been shown, in the traditional arrangement of governance, professors enjoyed a very high autonomy in their work combined with a relatively uniform high level of salary and tenure. These features are being scrutinized now with the aim of increasing the competitive pressure and hierarchical controls on professors.

The recent amendment of the Framework Act for Higher Education in 1998 has taken the first steps toward greater competition and differentiation in German higher education by means of deregulation and the creation of performance incentives. A number of measures were
introduced to improve the international competitiveness of the German education system, including the possibility for higher education institutions to award bachelor’s and master’s degrees, support for internationally oriented model study courses, and the introduction of a credit-point system. Especially the introduction of B.A. and M.A. degrees within universities of applied sciences and continued attempts to allow them to offer doctoral training will probably enhance the academic status of these institutions and their academic staff.

The 1998 amendment to the Framework Law left out the employment and working conditions of academic staff. At the same time a consensus has evolved between the federal government and the federal states that the current structure of higher education staff and of relevant civil service law needs revision. The basic idea is to introduce incentives for greater efficiency, improved quality, and increased mobility. Crucial goals for the higher education sector are the redesign of the career path of higher education teachers and creation of a competitive, performance-oriented pay regime, with a view to strengthening teaching in particular. Various proposals have been submitted since then by the German University Rectors’ Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz), the Standing Conference of Education Ministers of the Länder (Kultusministerkonferenz). A working group has been set up by the Science Council (Wissenschaftsrat), and the federal minister set up an experts’ commission in 1999 to draft proposals for how to deal with the various problem areas.

The positions of deans and rectors will be strengthened in many respects, including their formal authority vis-à-vis professors. In this way, higher education institutions will be brought more into line with the usual kinds of work organization in which staff are under the overall control of management. In this context it is worth noting that—despite their strong position within universities—German professors consider their influence on institutional matters to be rather limited and have expressed criticism of the bureaucratic administration of universities. On the one hand, these attitudes reflect the well-known tensions between academics and administration. On the other hand, in international comparisons, German professors show a very low degree of commitment to their institutions—perceiving themselves primarily as discipline-oriented cosmopolitans (Enders and Teichler 1995b). This is a point of concern especially at a time when efforts are being made to strengthen the role and capacities of higher education institutions.
University leadership will be responsible for carrying out regular performance evaluations of academic staff that will determine the resources dedicated to departments and professorships and future salary levels, especially of professors. In contrast to some other countries, such as the United Kingdom, in Germany no nationwide and uniform standards for evaluation have been introduced. Formal staff appraisal or assessment exercises were not common practice in German higher education. Until the early 1990s, only a small proportion of academic staff (mainly professors) were evaluated (some 13 to 15 percent—compared with, for example, over 90 percent in the United Kingdom) (Enders and Teichler 1995b). However, various decentralized efforts are now under way, introduced by the federal states or by higher education institutions. Most of them consist of a composite mix of self-assessment procedures, external peer review, and indicator-based performance measurements. The rise of these evaluation measures will most probably lead to various kinds of posttenure review systems for academic staff that will have an impact on the overall structure of the promotion and reward system. Among other things, concentration on pretenure review at one point in time during the academic career (Habilitation and first call) will be counterbalanced by a variety of pretenure and posttenure elements.

Some other measures relate to the employment conditions of professors. Already eliminated is the permanent dedication of resources to a professorship. From now on, these resources are only committed for five to seven years and have to be renewed according to the results of a performance evaluation. Another measure that might increase competitive pressure on professors in the future is a further transfer of resources for research to separately budgeted funds; this will probably reinforce the role shift of senior academics to project managers and professional grant writers.

Another prominent issue is academic salaries. The current salary system has only one performance-related component, namely the salary increase paid to a professor who is offered—and declines—a chair at another academic institution. The goal is to introduce a flexible salary structure, consisting of a non-performance-related basic salary plus variable performance-related salary components. In practice, a university might envisage standardized performance-related increases for specific functions (serving as rector, dean, head of a department, etc.), for outstanding achievement in research and teaching, for the teaching of subjects in which qualified candidates are difficult to
recruit because of the competition with nonuniversity employers, and for each positively evaluated five-year period of teaching and research experience. In addition, performance-related salary components could be negotiated on an individual basis either to facilitate recruitment or to prevent a scientist or a scholar from leaving.

Modernization of the employment and salary regime in the sector covered by collective agreement at higher education institutions and nonuniversity research establishments is another important goal. The Federal Collective Agreement for Public Employees (Bundes-Angestellten-Tarifvertrag, BAT) is also criticized for not meeting the needs of modern, performance-oriented management. In many areas, salaries under the BAT are not competitive on the labor market, especially when highly qualified personnel are to be recruited. Research institutions and higher education institutions do not have sufficiently effective tools to orient themselves quickly to new topics and implement the necessary structural changes. The Federal Ministry for Education and Research has, therefore, conducted intensive discussions with the research organizations about the need for reform and the priorities of such reform. Currently, further exploratory talks are under way—within the federal government and with the federal states, with the unions, and representatives of higher education institutions—to clarify further details of the crucial goals previously discussed with the research organizations.

For a number of reasons, the formal status of professors as civil servants is currently not really under debate, and the experts’ commission mentioned above will probably not be looking into the question of whether in the future professors should be employees or civil servants. In the case of the German welfare state—with its tradition of granting “tenure” to all civil servants after the junior or training period—tenure for academic staff is still very much regarded as an essential part of overall public service arrangements, and not as the “academic exception”. From this point of view, the high degree of professional and individual autonomy and the absence of strict control by the employer are what make tenured academic staff (i.e., professors) an exceptional case. The issue of tenure is thus not on the agenda of staff-structure reform in Germany. It has, however, been debated at the European level, where arguments have been made removing civil servant status from all public functions that are also carried out within
the private or nonstate sector. Therefore, the civil servant status might come under pressure during the process of further Europeanisation of academic labor markets.

A review of the debates and recent actions concerning the conditions of academic staff indicate considerable flux in the overall climate for reform in this area. It is actually not clear which of the proposed changes will be implemented in the near future or how far they will go. Much depends on the ongoing public debate on the proposed reforms and on the decision-making process in Parliament. A central focus has clearly been the search for a new institutional pattern of higher education: a shift toward institutional differentiation and diversification, a redistribution of power among the relevant actors. The professoriate is on the way to losing a considerable part of its traditional guild power, and a Zeitgeist emphasizing new public management approaches is emerging.

The tenure debate of the 1970s and 1980s concerned the policy of having all staff below the professorial level on fixed-term contracts. Professors were among the groups who argued that fixed-term contracts were needed to motivate junior staff to be productive, to allow greater flexibility in staffing, and ensure a healthy turnover rate of personnel. The catch phrases in that debate were flexibility, efficiency, mobility, and performance—the same ones now being used to argue against tenure for the professoriate itself.

Even though the vocabulary of the “managerial miracle” has become a standard part of the public debates on higher education reform in Germany, it has by no means gone undisputed. Criticisms of the new approach can be reduced to two main points: it is changing the nature of universities and trying to run them like any other non-academic company or firm. It is said that the goal of the managerial approach is to seek a better way of functioning for universities with their self-defined aims and needs, but the new approach is in fact redefining the purpose of the university. Furthermore, it draws its theoretical and practical base from organizations with clear and measurable criteria for their aims, needs, and performance. However, universities are characterized by a multiproduct mission, uncertainty of performance, and a creative organizational anarchy. The new management approach is thus producing a bias toward utilitarian and short-term thinking, clearly defined aims and measurable performances, a “clientilisation” of students, and a “deprofessionalisation” of academic staff.
It is, of course, possible to defend the new approaches against the attacks of their critics, who tend to overlook their function in exposing the shortcomings of the existing system. Not infrequently, criticism of the new ideas is expressed by those who have found their comfortable niche in the organizational anarchy of the university. Actually, the reduction of the university and its scholars to some kind of corporation and its workforce was an artifact of the early “missionary stage” of the “managerial miracle” that gave way later to more sophisticated and realistic approaches. Last but not least, the shift toward new philosophies in staffing reflects new expectations as regards the future role of universities and academics in society. It is not the new staffing philosophy that is changing reality but rather broader changes in the knowledge society that have given rise to the new philosophy.

In any case, it would be misleading to say a uniform approach has emerged in recent debates. Rather, we can observe a number of approaches, based on quite different concepts of academic staff. As mentioned earlier, the media has tended to draw a caricature of *homo academicus* as the “lazy professor” who has to be kept at work by management with short-term incentives and clear sanctions. In another variation the academic tends to be seen as a *homo economicus* easily steered by a cost-centered management that is shaping rules, regulations, and instruments locally for efficient work and output. A more sophisticated version emphasizes the internal differentiation of academic staff and the role of institutional leadership to design the status and tasks of academics according to their strength and weaknesses. However, trust has diminished in the self-steering capacities of academics as long-term and deeply socialised professionals who are symbolically represented by institutional leadership.

**Preliminary Conclusions in Comparative Perspective**

Recent changes in and new challenges for higher education have had a serious impact on the academic profession. For about the last two decades, the academic profession seems to have increasingly been placed on the defensive, and the literature suggests that a sense of crisis has developed. Concerns over the academic profession are clearly linked to the massification of higher education, the long-standing trend toward a knowledge and information society and a society of “life-long learning”. The transition of higher education and the changing nature
and role of knowledge in society seem to be accompanied by changes in higher education and its interrelationship with society that are a mixed blessing for academic staff, their status, function, and role.

As in many other industrialized countries, the transformation from elite to mass higher education changed the shape of the academic profession in Germany—with regard to tasks and functions, the core and periphery of the profession, and the structure of academic careers. Furthermore, the shift from state control to state supervision, from bureaucratic control to the new managerialism in European higher education tends to intensify the pressures on the conditions that will have an impact on academic staff.

The recruitment, promotion, and appointment of academic staff are seen as significant issues in countries, like Germany, where they shape the institutional pattern of higher education. Debates on the assessment and promotion of academics frequently overlook the extent to which the prevailing mechanisms in a given country are interwoven with the overall pattern of the higher education system and its external relationships. The traditional German academic career system, for example, can only be understood, in the context of the relatively homogenous higher education system, in which institutional differences in quality are limited. The German system is characterized by a status-related inequality and competition within a strongly hierarchical and pyramidal academic career ladder. Another type of higher education system, one that showed a more differentiated and hierarchical institutional pattern and emphasized competition among academic staff within the institutional pecking order, might allow for a less hierarchical career ladder and a more collegial approach within the academic profession. Indeed, recent attempts to strengthen institutional differentiation and diversity in Germany have been accompanied by a rethinking of academic careers and appointments—such as the contract track for junior staff, the Habilitation, the legal enforcement of institutional mobility (for the first “call”), the salary structure, and review arrangements for the professoriate. These topics are currently moving targets, and the outcomes are not as yet clear. However, the growing interest in tenure-track design and posttenure review systems indicates a search is under way for a new balance within the academic career system.

An advantage of the classic German chair system could be said to lie in the fact that it allows for a more stringent selection of candidates, since the pool of candidates is bigger and the period during which
the candidates can be observed is longer. However, the built-in tensions between senior and junior academic staff and the vulnerability of the careers of junior staff to cycles of growth and decline in the system have led to many attempts at reform. This reflects the overall problem of finding a convincing compromise between flexibility and stability in a highly selective system that must be able to cope with changes in the overall labor market. Staff structure in Germany came under pressure to establish more regular career patterns during the decades characterized by an increasing stability of careers in most professions in a period of growing wealth and stability of the economy. In contrast, in countries whose higher education systems provide for more regular stages in the academic career concerns have arisen about the growing inflexibility of the system due to the increasing share of internal promotions and of tenured positions. Recent higher education reform debates are clearly influenced by the changing societal and economic conditions. Even though the outcomes of this process are not yet clear it could be argued that the search for greater flexibility and a diversification of employment relationships is gaining ground. The influence of these trends on higher education staffing is visible internationally but might well lead to different solutions according to the prevailing concepts of the academic career ladder as a contract track, tenure track, or regular employee track.

A sense of the proper balance between the autonomy of academic staff, on the one hand, and devices for interaction between higher education, society, and economy on the other differs from society to society and also reflects historical circumstances. At certain times, universities might be inclined to become ivory towers, and at other times the independent and critical work of academics might be endangered. Mechanisms for university staff management need to reflect the prevailing circumstances. In times when efficiency gains and the functioning of universities are in the forefront it might be more important for higher education to reexamine its future role in society. In any case, debates on the conditions of the academic staff cannot be limited by public expectations, ideas on the functioning of modern organizations, or the job satisfaction of scholars. Ultimately, the focus must turn to the question of the impact of the organization of the academic career on the process and outcomes of academic work.

As in many other countries, a crucial element in this process of re-organizing academic promotions and appointments is the ongoing battle over the redistribution of power in higher education, the future
role of the state, the status of the academic oligarchy, and the emerging nature of institutional management. Here again, traditional patterns have to be taken into consideration when looking at recent changes. Societies with a historical tradition of a strong and wise state, a powerful academic estate, and a rather weak institutional management of universities will probably embrace different new models for the distribution of power and the decision-making and managerial structures than will societies where state influence was traditionally at a lower level and institutional autonomy more pronounced. In the German case, it is likely that the most important arena for the future of higher education will be located in a bargaining structure situated between the emerging managerial class within the higher education and science system and a strategy-oriented policy class within the state bureaucracy. Up to now, the traditional character of the academic profession has not been presented with a new model but rather has been left to respond to ongoing changes that will eventually lead to a "new professionalism" within the academic profession or to the emergence of various academic subprofessions that will, hopefully, discover a third way, beyond deterioration and traditionalism, by adapting to new circumstances and the changing environment of higher education.

Notes
1. Estimations in U.S. dollars are based on an exchange rate of 2 DM = $1.
2. We have, therefore, recently launched a study on “The doctoral degree and career: Training, further career and professional success of doctoral degree holders,” financed by the German Research Foundation. The aim of the study is to gather empirical information on the career paths and whereabouts of Ph.D.-holders inside and outside higher education and the world of work. The study is based mainly on a questionnaire survey among a target group of 2,300 doctoral-degree-holders in six selected disciplines (biology, economics, electrical engineering, German studies, mathematics, and social sciences). In order to analyse changes over time, three different cohorts of doctoral degree holders (1980, 1985, 1990) in these disciplines are being surveyed.
3. For example, results of our German survey, which was undertaken within the framework of the Carnegie Foundation’s International Survey on the Academic Profession (Altbach 1996), showed a still...
high degree of job satisfaction among professors. This finding led to a public outcry in Germany as to how professors could be so self-complacent in the midst of such a mess.

4. Another paradoxical effect of recent developments regarding staffing in higher education was observed during the process of German reunification. During this period, for the first time in the history of German higher education, procedures were implemented to evaluate research and teaching institutions in the former German Democratic Republic in an assessment exercise. West German professors played quite a prominent role in these institutional and individual evaluation procedures—thus countering the widespread belief that, in principle, academic work could and should not be evaluated.

References


The Academic Profession in Britain: A Study in the Failure to Adapt to Change

Michael Shattock

In his book *Decline of Donnish Dominion*, A. H. Halsey (1992) describes how the age of “faculty” domination in Britain, perhaps best defined as the period of the highest level of acceptance of faculty priorities, has been eroded by mass higher education and how the academic profession has become fragmented. He quotes Burton Clark’s parallel observation on the American scene—that the upper half of the institutional hierarchy has become segregated from the lower. In the former, Clark writes

we find inner directed organisations in the hands of professors; down the line we observe other-directed organisations that are client driven. In an American context it cannot be otherwise in a system of higher education that simultaneously seeks to function under a populist definition of equality, where all are admitted, and also tries to serve the gods of excellence in the creation and transmission of all rarified bodies of knowledge. (Clark 1987, 265)

This article endorses the belief that the academic profession in Britain is fragmenting and the argument that mass higher education has greatly reduced the faculty’s political standing, but it also suggests that the university system has allowed itself to be downgraded by its own failure to recognise the implications of differentiation and the changed relationship between the state and higher education that has
been consequent on the move not only to mass higher education but also to a new set of political priorities.

The most surprising feature of the British academic profession is the extent to which its structure and many of its assumptions have remained unchanged over a very long period in spite of the growth in the number of institutions, in the size of the system, the changes in funding patterns, and the increasingly explicit priorities of its funding bodies. If we are really to assess how far “donnish dominion” has declined perhaps the most convincing evidence, in a market economy, is how pay levels compare with comparable professions. Two major and authoritative reports have raised serious questions about the levels of remuneration and issues surrounding the recruitment and conditions of work of the academic profession. These are the “Dearing Report”, *Higher Education in the Learning Society*, the report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (Dearing Report 1997) and the “Bett Report”, *Independent Review of Higher Education Pay and Conditions* (Bett Report 1999). These were unquestionably “Blue Ribbon” reports and the government has signally failed to respond to either; its failure to do so must be seen for all its rhetoric about the importance of the knowledge economy as indicating the priority it gives to the longstanding concerns of the academic community.

It is hard to decide when a long-term decline can realistically be called a crisis, but unless the university system can break out of the present constraints the situation will be very difficult to reverse. Since 1981, salary levels of academic staff in pre-1992 universities (that is those institutions that had university status before the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act) have fallen by 18 percent compared with other staff in the public sector and 30 percent with staff in the economy as a whole (Bett Report 1999). In terms of workload higher education has achieved a 6 percent per annum increase in productivity between 1991 and 1995 compared with 2 percent per annum in the service sector generally (Bett Report 1999). Government funding per student has fallen by over 36 percent since 1989, and government continues to seek annual 1 percent efficiency gains in university budgets. Not surprisingly, the numbers of part-time teaching staff are rising rapidly, and this casualisation of staff has become the subject of a campaign by the academic staff trades union, the Association of University Staff Teachers (AUT); morale in most universities is low.
The Context
The transformation from elite to mass higher education came late to Britain and only really took off in 1989. Between 1989 and 1994 student numbers rose by 50 percent, and British higher education began to take in over 30 percent of the age group. This expansion was fuelled by the government’s decision to upgrade the polytechnics to full university status in 1992. There remain, however, some significant distinguishing features between the “old” pre-1992 universities and the “new” post-1992 universities. Staff in the latter group never had tenured appointments and were employed, and remain employed, on a common set of salaries and a broadly common set of terms and conditions of service negotiated nationally by a different trades union, from pre-1992 universities: the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE), which also, as its name implies, represents staff in further education. These contracts and terms of service date from before 1988, when their employers were the local city and county authorities. The contract prescribes maximum teaching contact hours and arrangements for holidays but does not specify any requirement for research. In the post-1992 universities the staff are subject to direction by a management structure that is directly accountable to a lay-dominated governing body.

The post-1992 universities are thus homogenous in character as regards staff employment and salary structures—by tradition as well as legal enactment; staff see themselves as employees of an essentially nonacademic corporate body. By contrast, in the old universities, although salaries are negotiated nationally, the relationship of the senate to the council (the governing body), the significant representation of the senate on the council, and the tradition of academic self-government mean that much of what is prescribed in a post-1992 university contract simply does not appear in a pre-1992 university contract. Contracts in the old universities are normally restricted to the bare legal requirements of employment law, pension arrangements, and permissive arrangements in regard to holiday requirements. What really governs academic staffs’ working lives are the statutes, ordinances, and regulations of the individual universities—in the construction, approval, and amendment of which the academic community plays a dominant role, as members of university senates and councils. The pre-1992 universities have continued to resist any suggestion that national bodies should be entrusted to decide on terms and conditions of service questions, regarding them as properly local issues to be decided at the institutional level and not imposed from above.
Both pre- and post-1992 universities have staff-grading structures that operate across all institutions. The salary scales, while broadly similar, do not cohere at all points. Thus, the grade of professor in the pre-1992 university has in most institutions no salary scale above a nationally agreed minimum figure and no salary ceiling. In the post-1992 universities the highest grade is “principal lecturer”, but heads of departments or professors may be paid higher at the discretion of the institution. Clinical salary scales are concentrated in medical schools in the pre-1992 universities, are considerably higher than nonclinical salaries, and are linked to the salary scales of medical consultant grades in the National Health Service. Clinical salary scales are settled by a national review structure outside the universities, but who actually provides the sum of money involved to cover the cost of the increases has bedevilled relationships between the state and the universities since the 1940s, and appears to be resolved ad hoc in any given year.

Table 1
Academic and Academic-Related Staff Numbers in British Universities, March 1998

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonclinical academic staff</td>
<td>34,700</td>
<td>9,809</td>
<td>30,608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical academic staff</td>
<td>5,016</td>
<td>1,221</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research staff</td>
<td>23,034</td>
<td>3,065</td>
<td>2,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic-related staff</td>
<td>17,677</td>
<td>3,024</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80,427</td>
<td>17,119</td>
<td>32,709</td>
</tr>
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The Bett Report provides an estimate of academic staff numbers in higher education as of March 1998. It should be noted that the
numbers in post-1992 institutions include staff from some 60 nonuniversity higher education institutions, who are paid on the same scales as the post-1992 universities. The actual numbers of staff involved, however, represent only about 10 percent of the total post-1992 sector numbers as the institutions concerned are mostly much smaller than the average size of the post-1992 universities. (See table 1.)

These numbers illustrate important differences between the two groups of institutions. The post-1992 institutions, where staff-student ratios are in general less favourable, are much more dependent on part-time teaching staff. The much larger component of research staff in pre-1992 universities reflects the more research-intensive nature of the old universities. Such staff are almost all appointed on a short-term basis against external limited-term research contracts. But the figures disguise the wide variation in research achievement and external research funding even between the pre-1992 universities. In a situation where 15 universities are awarded 60 percent of the research funding available under the national Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), and 8 are awarded 42 percent it is obvious that the pre-1992 universities are anything but homogenous. The range extends from institutions like Cambridge, Oxford, Imperial College, and University College, London, which have massive externally financed research budgets, very large Ph.D. populations, and an enormous potential for attracting high-fee-paying overseas students, to institutions like Hull, Bradford, and Salford, which are barely distinguishable in research performance from Sheffield Hallam and the University of West England, amongst the post-1992 universities. The last group of staff, the academic-related category, are found only in the pre-1992 universities and comprise library and IT staff carrying out quasi-academic functions in academic and service departments together with professional university administrators who, since the 1960s, have been accorded salary status and gradings comparable to their academic colleagues. No such privileges were accorded education colleges, and no enhancement of their staffs’ position has occurred with the award of university titles.

Concealed behind these figures, therefore, we find a widely differentiated university system, with some institutions being highly research-intensive, highly attractive to well-qualified students whether undergraduate or postgraduate, and significantly better funded both from the state and from industry and commerce while at the other end of the spectrum there are primarily teaching institutions working hard
to attract less-well-qualified, often disadvantaged and, on the whole, older students, in much less impressive locations and with much less-well-furbished facilities. In between, there are universities that have research peaks, often as impressive as any in the top group of universities, but that lack comprehensive research intensity, or universities that are trying to force their way up the research league tables from a low base, or specialist institutions (e.g., in tropical health, education, or oriental and African studies) that have a significant reputation but in limited areas.

Determining National University Salary Levels
In spite of this considerable diversity of institutional mission and the evidence that some universities, particularly those that are the most research intensive, are potentially considerably more affluent and can attract resources from a much broader spread of sources than the rest, the university system has clung to a common salary negotiating system and a common salary grading structure (albeit with the differences between old and new universities described above). There are clearly important cultural factors at work here; there is no evidence that academic staff have shown any inclination to challenge the need for the profession to “hang together” in salary negotiations with the government of the day, even after the merger of the old and the new universities in 1992, when two separate and previously competing sectors of higher education were brought together. These cultural factors have reinforced an unwillingness to break out of a machinery for salary determination that seems to have become a straitjacket for containing the costs to the state of the move to mass higher education. This machinery reflects the ambiguous relationship in Britain between universities, which are legally autonomous, and a state that since the Second World War, has been largely responsible for funding them.

While the machinery has of course evolved over time, the striking features are first how the changes have been much more about form than of substance and, second, the extent to which they have been driven by changes in the structure of government rather than by changes within the university world. It is possible to argue that the machinery worked well for the university system in its early years but much less well in the 1970s and beyond. From 1979, when Mrs. Thatcher’s Government took power, it has served the government’s interests much more than the universities’.
In the prewar years when state funding comprised only about 30 percent of universities’ income there was very little commonality of approach between universities in relation to academic salaries, particularly at the upper end. Lord Annan describes how Manchester was able to attract Rutherford from McGill in competition with Yale and the Smithsonian because they paid a higher professional salary than any other British university. (They were to lose him to the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge at a lower salary just before war broke out) (Annan 1999).

But after the war, when universities became essentially state funded, conscious decisions were taken to reduce salary differentials between universities in order to prevent the smaller universities from being disadvantaged. At the same time the close partnership with government that existed during the war years ensured that academic salaries were kept in line with civil service grades. Academic salary levels were controlled through the University Grants Committee (UGC), which was formally part of the Treasury, rather than the Ministry of Education, and worked in close liaison with the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), which saw itself as the UGC’s confidential adviser on salary questions. The third axis to the triangle was the Association of University Teachers (AUT), which acted much more as a professional body representing university teachers’ interests than as a trades union. The CVCP described the process in a letter dated 4 March 1953 to Kenneth Urwin, general secretary of the AUT. The communication was designed to head off the AUT’s suggestion that lay members of universities’ governing bodies, which were legally responsible for university terms and conditions of service, should play a significant role in salary negotiations:

Negotiations over salaries take place ultimately between the UGC and the Treasury. The UGC consults the CVCP and considers their advice but are not bound by it. The CVCP receives advice from the AUT but is not bound by it, and the vice-chancellors are in close contact with salary matters in their own universities. At no stage in this chain of consultation are circumstances conducive to sharp and sustained antagonism; the direct interest of everybody involved, below the Treasury, is to secure good terms for the staff and therefore good service for the universities. The success of the sys-
tem depends on mutual confidence, on frequent friendly and personal contact between many of the men taking part in the negotiations (CVCP Archive).

This all too comfortable system worked well for as long as university pay could be insulated from general questions of public expenditure and public-sector pay settlements. In 1961 and 1965 university pay had to be referred to national pay bodies, where the universities' case had to be argued on comparability grounds against pay anomalies created by large increases awarded to other parts of the public sector. In 1968 the National Prices and Income Board rejected the universities’ contention for parity with civil service grades and took it on itself to raise threatening questions about differentials to reward academic productivity that would certainly have impacted on the grading structure of the academic profession (NBPI 1968). The CVCP condemned the report as “uniquely disadvantageous to the staffs of universities”, clearly resenting the intrusion.

Changes in the structure of government transferred the UGC from the Treasury to the new Department of Education and Science (DES) in 1964 and removed its authority in respect to university salaries. This necessitated the creation of new machinery under which a University Authorities Panel (UAP) comprising five vice-chancellors and five lay members of university governing bodies, under an independent chairman, (Committee A) made recommendations to a second committee (Committee B) chaired by a government nominee, invariably a senior civil servant, which was required to determine the “quantum” of money to be made available. The UAP negotiated pay with the AUT, now a much more militant body, registered as a trades union, and with a trades unionist rather than an academic as its general secretary, but the real work was undertaken by the independent chairman in private negotiation with the government. This unsatisfactory structure strengthened the government’s role while forcing the universities, via the UAP, to act as its agent in rejecting claims submitted by the AUT on behalf of university staffs. The position, if anything, worsened when, in 1979, the government changed its financial system as a way of controlling national pay inflation. Previously, once a salary award had been agreed, the state supplemented universities’ recurrent grant to enable them to implement it. Now the state cash-limited its recurrent grant allocation so that salary awards had to be paid out of a predetermined annual allocation.
This dealt a severe blow to the rationale of the Committee A and B system because it negated the role of the independent chairman of Committee A and removed the purpose of Committee B. The university system clung to the machinery, however, because it cherished the belief that the strength or importance of the universities’ case could be used to persuade the government to increase the universities’ recurrent grant beyond what had been published in the annual Public Expenditure Statement. The Bett Report in 1999 continues to make this unlikely assumption. The Committee A/B system, therefore, survived until 1987—to be replaced by the present University and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA), which represents all higher education institutions, universities, and nonuniversities, but whose constitution reflects the previous UAP constitution. This body covers pay negotiations for all staff—both academic staff and nonacademic support staff—having taken over the role of the previous Universities Council for Non-Academic Staff (UCNS), a CVCP body that negotiated with trades unions in respect to technician, clerical, secretarial, craft, and manual staffs. UCEA staff are known to favour “single table” bargaining with all the unions. Such a prospect would not be likely to restore the position of academic staff especially in a period when, with low inflation, pay rises are very modest.

On 28 May 1986 the 22d Annual Report of Committee A noted that the 19th, 20th, and 21st reports had drawn attention to the damage caused by low academic pay scales and that as a consequence it had commissioned a report from PA Personal Services, an independent body. This had concluded that:

The clear indications are that the balance has tilted against the continuance of the attractiveness of the academic profession. The adverse factors lower both morale and motivation, and this means that existing staff, who are in a unique position to influence future recruitment, are to an increasing extent disinclined to encourage students to choose the academic profession.

(CVCP Archive)

The Report pointed out that while the public services as a whole had less favourable salary settlements than the private sector, universities had done badly in comparison with the rest of the public sector. Academic salaries had fallen far below the civil service; promotion prospects in universities were poor: some 3.2 percent of lecturers were
promoted to senior lecturer or reader in 1975, 3.8 percent in 1978, 2.5 percent in 1981, and 3.1 percent in 1986. In the wider world, “university lecturers are not held in the esteem that they once enjoyed” (CVCP Archive).

A decade later the salary position has not improved. The Dearing Committee carried out a survey of staff attitudes and found that over 30 percent of academic staff under the age of 35 indicated a likelihood that they would leave the profession. On criteria for pay, the Dearing survey says: “The stark conclusion was that in the eyes of academics, payment systems should reward excellence in teaching, but they do not do so; and that they should reward excellence in research, but that, equally, they do not do so. All academics felt that current payment systems put . . . much too much emphasis on length of service” (Dearing Report 1997, 119).

If one were looking at the British university system entirely from the point of view of the salary and status of its academic staff, it would be very hard to identify what benefits the preservation of university autonomy from the state has brought. Had the academic profession been part of the civil service, as in most other European higher education systems, it would not have had to subject itself to the inadequate machinery for settling pay questions, and its pay would now be much higher than it is. The countervailing argument ought to be framed around the fact that autonomy gave the university system freedom to reshape the profession from time to time to match changing needs. No such reshaping has, however, occurred and the structure of the profession remains very much as it was 50 years ago. It could be argued that the British university system has achieved the worst of both worlds.

**Tenure**

In one respect only did the profession experience a significant change in its structure. It was accepted as a given of academic life in British universities until the 1980s that academics had tenure, from which they could only be removed “for good cause”, which included incapacity, serious dereliction of duty or conduct of an improper or criminal nature. The precise wording of the “good cause” clause varied between different universities’ statutes, but all offered clear protection to academic freedom.

No university statutes made provision for redundancy on grounds of financial exigency although on close examination the terms
of service that staff had accepted on appointment in some universities referred ambiguously to permanency with three months notice to be given on either side. In the period between the 1940s and the arrival of the Thatcher government in 1979 it is rare to find serious public discussion about the merits or otherwise of tenure. The prospect of deep public expenditure cuts, however, brought the issue to the forefront of the minds of senior university managers, not on the grounds of whether the principle remained appropriate, but because of the difficulties that they could foresee if universities, facing severe reductions in income, were unable to cut their expenditure because of an inability to cut their academic staff budget. Since between 70 percent and 80 percent of the average university budget was spent on staff costs, over 50 percent on its tenured academic staff, the situation was potentially explosive. In May 1981 the chairman of the UGC, Edward Parkes, warned the CVCP that the cuts were likely to be so severe that over 3,000 academic posts might have to be lost. Legal advice obtained by the CVCP from a leading counsel confirmed that the dismissal of a member of the academic profession who had tenure, unless on the grounds stated under the “good cause” criteria spelt out in his or her university’s statutes, would be deemed by the courts to constitute wrongful dismissal. Compensation, awarded against the university concerned, could average £100,000, taking figures across the university system as a whole—the size of the figure depending on the potential future employment prospects of the academic staff dismissed. When the actual cuts were announced on 1 July 1981 the House of Commons Education Select Committee took evidence from Parkes, who revised his May figures to an expectation that 3,000 academic posts would need to be lost through normal wastage and 3,000 from actual redundancies. It was clear that with cuts in some universities amounting to over 30 percent these additional compensation costs could lead to university bankruptcies and under the combined pressure of the Select Committee, the CVCP, and the education correspondent of the Times who gave publicity to the issue, the DES was forced to fund a costly early retirement scheme through a supplementary grant to the UGC.

This action, however, brought severe and repeated criticism from the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the House of Commons on the grounds that the DES had been made aware of the potential redundancy costs before the cuts had been imposed and that they and the UGC had taken no action to bring academic tenure to an end (PAC 1982). Subsequently the PAC criticised the UGC for its handling of the
early retirement scheme (PAC 1986). Initially, the government hoped that either the CVCP or the UGC would find a way of persuading universities to amend their statutes and/or their terms of appointment to permit redundancy on the grounds of financial exigency. Neither had the legal powers or the political muscle to do so: the universities themselves could not have reached internal agreement as would be required before petitioning the Privy Council for an enabling change of statutes, even if their vice-chancellors might have wished to (and many did). So in 1987 the government announced that it planned to legislate to appoint Parliamentary Commissioners, a device used in the 19th century to reform Oxford and Cambridge, to amend university statutes to permit dismissal on grounds other than the traditional “good cause” criteria. This was to result in new statutes being imposed on universities that, first, removed the requirement in most pre-1992 universities that a dismissal could only be decided upon by a vote of a governing body, normally with a two-thirds majority, and, second, provided that grounds for dismissal should be changed to include redundancy. The meaning of redundancy is outlined in Statute 29(B) of the University of Warwick:

(a) the fact that the University has ceased or intends to cease, to carry on the activity for the purposes of which the member of the academic staff concerned was appointed or employed by the University, or has ceased, or intends to cease, to carry on that activity in the place in which the member worked; (b) the fact that the requirements of that activity for members of the academic staff to carry out work of a particular kind, or for members of the academic staff to carry out work of a particular kind in that place, have ceased or diminished or are expected to cease or diminish.  
(University of Warwick calendar 1998)

In spite of protests, the 1988 Higher Education Bill, which contained inter alia the provision for the appointment of the commissioners, included no protection for staff declared redundant implicitly, if not explicitly, for being troublesome or speaking out on some unpopular issue. The Bill, however, was subject to an ambush in the House of Lords on 20 May, led by Lord Jenkins, the Chancellor of the University of Oxford and a leading politician and historian, when he put together a coalition of interests—including Lord Beloff, a Tory academic peer,
BRITAIN: FAILURE TO ADAPT

and Lord Peston, a Labour academic peer—which obtained a surprise majority of 156 to 126, catching the government unawares, for a motion to include in the Bill a requirement that academic staff: “have the freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges” (Crequer 1989).

This clause guaranteeing academic freedom was accepted by the government and was subsequently incorporated side by side with the new redundancy provisions in university statutes. The new arrangements were backdated to November 1987, when the Bill had first been published, and applied to all new appointments to university posts and to cases where staff were promoted and had therefore, the Act argued, accepted a new appointment.

It has to be said, however, that the formal impact of the Act has been negligible. Elaborate procedures were required to identify posts that were to be made redundant when an academic department was being reduced in size or closed but have never so far been used. Dismissals on grounds of redundancy without compensation (other than required by legislation) have not occurred because the availability of early retirement schemes, financed more recently by universities themselves, has eliminated the need to impose the new provisions that are in themselves so cumbersome, likely to be legally complex, and expensive, as well as creating a political storm in the institutions. Even where there has been an ambiguity in a staff contract as to how permanent a post was, only one university in respect to one post, has chosen to treat such a member of staff as if he did not have absolute tenure, and in that case the legal and other costs were so high that no other institution has followed its example. It needs to be remembered, however, that while the post-1992 university staff receive the protection of the Jenkins amendment their terms of service permit their employers to terminate their contract on three months’ notice subject to the normal redundancy provisions. This power has been exercised on many occasions since 1992 to reflect falling rolls in particular departments or financial shortfalls in the institutions themselves.

The existence of the redundancy provision has, however, undoubtedly strengthened the case of a pre-1992 university wishing to reduce staff numbers and has been used to encourage more staff than would otherwise have been the case to accept early retirement terms. Continuing budget cuts and the impact of the RAE, which can make it
in a university’s interest to persuade research-inactive older staff to take early retirement so that they can be replaced by younger and more energetic researchers, have ensured that early retirement has become a feature of the British university scene in the last decade. It is perhaps a comment on the morale of the academic profession that the prospect of early retirement is so little resisted by so many staff in the over-55 age group. It can be argued that the use of early retirement schemes has strengthened the top of the university system, but it is also the case that it has weakened the position of academic staff, who can no longer plan, even if they wished to, to continue working until normal retirement age.

The Conditions of Academic Work within Universities

Subject Differentiation

Because for the last 50 years university funding has essentially been driven by student numbers, the growth and decline in the strength of different disciplines have been affected by student demand. Thus, unsurprisingly, business studies and computer science have grown almost exponentially over the last 15 years while traditional science subjects such as physics and chemistry, and more recently certain branches of engineering, have experienced declines. Many universities began by merging their physics and chemistry departments and finished up by closing both because the costs of running them at undercapacity became too great to justify in a period when state funding was declining each year in real terms. At the same time, fluctuations in the national economy have inevitably been reflected in the employment market with the demand for highly qualified manpower becoming highly differentiated between disciplines and skills. Thus universities have found themselves increasingly in competition not only with one another but with industry and the professions for staff in particular areas, especially with academic salaries failing to keep pace with the external market.

One might have expected this differentiation to have had an impact on the structure of the academic profession as a whole, but so far only clinical staff in medical schools have achieved any clear break from the structure of the academic profession general. Even this was vigorously resisted by both the CVCP and the AUT when it was first proposed as a result of the Spens Report in 1948, which recommended a new salary structure for the National Health Service (NHS) that would have denuded medical schools of clinical staff had not a new salary structure for clinical staff in medical schools been agreed (“Spens Re-
port” 1948). A letter from the chairman of the CVCP, on 26 November 1948, to the UGC discussed the CVCP view, which certainly reflected the views of universities as a whole, was that “serious financial discrimination between one subject and another is not inherently justifiable and discriminations if they exist must be kept within reasonable limits” (CVCP Archive).

The UGC, for as long as it was responsible for academic salaries, agreed with this and sufficiently impressed the National Incomes Commission (NIC) when it reviewed academic salaries in 1964 that the Commission said it had been “impressed by the representations made to us on the disharmony and disunity in academic circles which had resulted from the medical differentials and the danger that these unfortunate consequences would be accentuated by any extension of the system of formal differentials” (NIC 1964). In 1970, following the much criticised report of the Prices and Incomes Board, clinical salaries were hived off to a national Review Body for Doctors’ and Dentists’ Remuneration—a unique position for a university discipline that continues to this day, leaving for resolution almost each year how universities are to be compensated for the higher than average pay awards made to their clinical staff.

In no other area has such a differentiation occurred. In all other subjects, although institutions can reward staff differently to reflect market conditions within the incremental salary scales at lecturer or senior lecturer/reader scales or at the professorial level, institutional cultures are highly resistant to reflecting such differentials in terms of gradings: a senior lecturer or reader should be broadly comparable in terms of an institution’s appointment or promotion criteria whatever the discipline. This is now causing severe problems for recruitment and retention in fields where pay differentials in the market place far outweigh the relatively small differentials that can be made within individual scales.

The dangers of the constraints imposed by the inability to pay staff in a pre-1992 university on, for example, a senior lecturer scale unless they satisfy the standard senior lecturer criteria are illustrated by recent research in the field of economics by Machin and Oswald, who in an article entitled “Signs of Disintegration: A report in UK Economics Ph.D.s and ESRC Studentship Demand” conclude:

Few British people want to be economists. . . . We conclude that low pay is probably the main explanation.
Although our data are imperfect, over the last ten years the earnings of academic economists appear to have fallen by approximately 20–30%. It is also widely believed that working conditions have worsened in our universities. Remarkably only 6% of the UK students on current economics master courses say they want a university job. . . . In the short run we expect the quality of UK economics to decline. (Machin and Oswald 1999, 3)

In a letter to the *Times Higher Education Supplement*, Oswald noted that the standard pay for an economist at a major U.S. university on entry to an assistant professorship would be some three times higher than the U.K. lecturer grade at a comparable point (Oswald 2000).

As a consequence, universities anxious to retain or recruit staff are having to resort to strategies to pay people something closer to a market rate in some disciplines. Thus in business schools it is common practice to offer short-course teaching for external business clients at rates that compensate for salary shortfalls on standard university terms. But only some disciplines lend themselves to this kind of solution. Moreover, as the United Kingdom increasingly develops knowledge-based industries, the competition with the universities for staff will grow. This may produce uncomfortable variations in salary structures and gradings within universities, but unless this occurs it is hard to see how universities are going to be able to match student demand in certain fields let alone provide a real research base in the discipline.

These problems are only accentuated by recent research by the AUT, which since 1993 has been warning that “a retirement time bomb is ticking inexorably at the heart of the higher education system”. While this may be slightly overstating the position, the fact remains that the percentage of academic staff aged over 50 has increased by nearly 30 percent between 1981–82 and 1997–98, with particular increases of over 50 percent in the sciences and the social sciences (AUT 2000). If the rate of expansion in student numbers slows down after the recent very rapid rise, this trend toward an older profession is likely to be reinforced in the short term because there will be less need to expand staff numbers. However, in the longer term it will increase the need to adjust salary levels at the more junior levels to attract disproportionately large numbers of replacement staff for those retiring.
The Differing Demands of Teaching and Research

The move to mass higher education and the increasing differentiation of universities in respect to their commitment to research have raised large and as yet unresolved issues in relation to staff rewards. Traditionally, in the pre-1992 universities, staff were expected to spend broadly as much time on research as on teaching, and universities were able to argue that research was integral to the teaching process. The findings of the RAE from 1986 onwards have increasingly raised legitimate doubts about this claim, and the pressures imposed by the need for success in the RAE have raised issues about whether research-active staff are in danger of concentrating on their research at the expense of their teaching. As long ago as 1968, the Prices and Incomes Board raised the question as to whether excellence in teaching was adequately rewarded in universities. Most of the research-intensive universities have taken steps to emphasise the importance of teaching in the criteria they employ for staff promotion, but questions about the validation of claims of individual teaching excellence remain extremely difficult to resolve in comparison with measuring performance in research. It is argued that success in research remains the touchstone for promotion as much in the new universities anxious to build up research as in the old.

The arrival of the post-1992 universities, most of which are much less committed to research, has raised a further range of tensions—some of which can be readily adduced by reference to evidence in the Bett Report that in 1998 the ratio of senior posts (senior lecturers and above) to junior posts was 49 percent in the pre-1992 universities as compared to 27 percent in the post-1992, with a ratio of 1:5 professors to nonprofessors in the pre-1992 universities. Since the appointment and promotion of staff are matters of institutional responsibility there are great difficulties at arriving at a systemwide view of developments. However, there is a strong suspicion that the RAE has, if anything, reinforced the importance of research performance in internal promotions because success in the RAE affects the level of recurrent grant an institution receives. The creation of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), which reviews university teaching, was intended to act as a counterweighting force but seems not to have done so to any significant extent, not least because it is noticeable that the most research-intensive universities, as identified in the RAE, also seem to achieve the highest scores in the QAA assessments. However, the twin external pressures of the RAE and the QAA bear heavily on staff and serve
to add to the inevitable workload implications of the reduction in the overall unit of resource, which has led to a significant worsening in student:staff ratios right across the higher education system.

**Attempts at Structural Reform**

On only three occasions, since the 1963 Robbins Report, has there been any attempt to review the structure of the academic profession on a national basis ("Robbins Report" 1963). One of these, by the national Prices and Incomes Board in 1968, was heavily criticised by the CVCP, although in hindsight some of its recommendations look eminently sensible. It abolished the assistant lecturer grade on the grounds that assistant lecturers were invariably assimilated into the lecturer grade but recommended that every lecturer should serve a probationary period of four to five years (a subsequent National Agreement between CVCP and the AUT settled for three) and went on to say that “Passage beyond probation should be vigorously controlled, instead of being automatic as it is now in many places” (NBPI 1968). (More formality is now involved, but the numbers failing to pass through probation are very small.) It sought to encourage a shift to teaching and suggested special financial support for effective teachers—an idea that has been taken up in a different form by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) some 30 years later. It also suggested clinical-style distinction awards for nonmedical professors—an idea not taken up although the concern in the 1980s about the loss of senior professors to U.S. universities might have been reduced if it had been.

To this day the only further changes that have been made to the structure of the academic profession in the pre-1992 universities has been to replace the previous “efficiency bar” in the lecturer scale by the introduction of two grades of lecturer A and B (but the progression between the two has remained virtually automatic) and the inclusion of two discretionary increments on the top of the lecturer scale and three at the top of the senior lecturer/reader scales.

Two attempts were made by the CVCP to review the structure. The first was begun in 1978. A control mechanism had been imposed by the Treasury, now abandoned, that limited numbers of senior staff, senior lecturers, readers and professors to 40 percent of the total tenured academic staff in any university. The system was then very close to the limit of 40 percent senior to junior staff and there was considerable concern about the number of lecturers held at the top of their scale. A paper was drafted within the CVCP that proposed break-
ing the lecturer grade into three parts with the third extending half way through the senior lecturer/reader scale. The review, however, was overtaken by discussions on tenure provoked by the 1981 cuts and was discontinued (CVCP Archive, file Career Structure of the Academic Profession). A second review led by Professor Brian Fender, later chief executive of the HEFCE, was a much more purposeful affair and resulted in the 1993 “Fender Report”, Promoting People (CVCP Archive). Like the Bett review, it was concerned with all university employees, not just the academic staff, and proposed a single integrated salary spine on which institutions themselves could determine where they would place their staff. Gradings would be controlled by a job classification scheme, and national salary reviews were to be formulated in terms of a percentage increase for a revaluation of the salary ladder and an additional percentage increase for use at institutional level for performance-related pay and nonpay benefits. The committee took evidence from universities in the United States and the Netherlands, from the civil service, and from industry. Taking a human resource management approach rather than an academic view of the system, the committee at least urged that universities should give more recognition to positive performance, whether at an individual or at a departmental level, and it pleaded with the government to relax its strict pay policy regulation on the grounds that “cash limits” would ensure that pay remained under control even if not within public pay policy limits. The Report received little encouragement from government, and in a university system facing yet further budget cuts it lacked the leverage to win wholehearted university approval. The structure of the academic profession remained unchanged.

The Future of the Academic Profession

Historically the university world, or at least its most senior figures, put its trust in the close linkages and common interests that bound the universities to the state while at the same time appearing to give them full operational autonomy. When the university system was small this worked well, and the UGC acted effectively as a buffer between the Treasury as pay master and institutional interests. The universities were misled into thinking that this situation could not change. Yet it did, driven by government reorganisation, the growing size of the university system, and the financial difficulties of the country at large. As far as salaries and status were concerned, the academic profession could not match the industrial muscle of the big educational
trades unions and failed, and continues to fail, to create a constituency of support for their case, which has worsened over the years. While the medical and dental professions have secured an independent salary review body there is no disposition to grant one for university staff as a whole. The NIC and the Prices and Incomes Board were hard-pressed to find evidence of a recruitment problem to the profession, and a recent study undertaken in the wake of the Bett Review has again found no significant overall statistical evidence of academic recruitment problems. However, as illustrated by the case of economics, there are significant variations between disciplines and between perceptions of quality. Moreover, with a much larger system, including the post-1992 universities, the prerequisites for entry to the academic profession are much more varied. The system is so structurally tied to national salary scales and gradings that it appears to be unable to break free to pay substantial differentials in areas of market scarcity.

It is true that the system, particularly in the pre-1992 universities, has moved from the single professorial departmental head to multiprofessorial departments, but it remains the case that British universities cling to a multigraded system. They retain a relish for assessing the nuances of performance that justify promotion from, say, lecturer to senior lecturer or reader to professor as if they were characters assessing social class in a 19th-century novel. And it remains true that academics probably care more for the internal status and career recognition that such promotion gives among their peers than for the very modest increase in salary that it brings. There has been little evidence of academics being interested in taking industrial action to support their case for increased salaries. In 1999, a vote organised by the AUT amongst the 25 percent or so of the profession in the pre-1992 universities that remain its members (as compared to around 80 percent in the 1960s) only 35 percent of AUT members even bothered to vote. A recent article by the president of the Newcastle branch of the AUT summed up the situation only too clearly:

 Readers do not need reminding that academic salaries have fallen, relative to comparable professions by 2% a year for the past 20 years. We are fast approaching the stage when it will be impossible to recruit well motivated staff to teach the next generation of professionals. . . . So what is being done about this sad state of affairs? Well, my union the AUT recently pursued
a campaign of industrial action in pursuit of a 10%
pay claim. According to AUT publicity this was a huge
success. But when members of my local AUT
branch quietly insist on a cold-blooded audit of the
results of last year’s action, words without connota-
tions of zero are difficult to come by. . . It came as no
surprise when motions to last month’s AUT winter
council to restart the action were defeated. Few now
expect a satisfactory pay rise to come from public
sources. (Coleman 2000)

What is of more concern is that because the system has histori-
cally overrated its position vis à vis government it believes that the
problems to be solved are systemic. This ignores the fact that as the
state contribution declines—it is now on average down to about 60
percent of a university’s budget—the university system is increasingly
differentiating itself. The Fender Review, as one of its examples of
changes in Whitehall, drew attention to one part of the civil service
that had been hived off as an agency but that negotiated savings so
that it could free itself from civil service pay scales and pay according
to private-sector arrangements. The Fender Report did not especially
commend this to the university system, yet it is apparent that the lead-
ing universities are trying to work round the present rigid structures
to pay higher rates where the market forces them to do so. The Bett
Review is based on the concept of reinforcing the systemic approach
by bringing all grades of staff, academic and nonacademic, of all insti-
tutions of higher education into a common structure. In this respect, as
in so many others, the Review represents a significant lost opportu-
nity, because it perpetuates an approach that has failed and compounds
it by linking academic salaries with those of lower-skilled staff, where
the pressures of the market are very different.

It would be unwise to wholly jettison the idea of the unity of
the university system, but it should be recognised that this unity is
more a product of organisational factors—the existence of the CVCP
and the UCEA—than of a considered view about what is best for the
academic profession. Mass higher education and the incorporation of
such widely different institutions into one higher education system is
bound over time to change the argument about the need for a common
model. We are returning to the differentiation of the university system
that was apparent in the 1930s, when a differentiation of salaries and
terms and conditions of service was encouraged by the UGC. If universities could only recognise this, and the logic that goes with it, it would perhaps look more plausible to some to take the radical step of breaking out of a structure that is increasingly damaging their interests to introduce long-needed reforms reflective of modern conditions and current demands of academic life.

The danger of a much freer market is how much it might depress the interests of institutions at the lower end of the university spectrum. Here again, however, the universities’ failure to take note of the warning of the report of the Prices and Incomes Board to reward teaching more explicitly is worth recalling. In an elite system it is not unreasonable to expect that students will be well qualified and well supported; universities are funded for research as well as teaching. But in a mass higher education system the demands of teaching are very different, and the British system is still refusing wholly to recognise this. Staff development and training, as an activity, are growing in size and confidence within universities, but it was the Dearing Committee, not the universities, that brought forward the proposal for an Institute for Learning and Teaching—a national body devoted to improving teaching methods in higher education that members of the academic profession are expected to join, paying their own subscriptions. The universities have been penalised for not anticipating how mass higher education changes the external perception of what their priorities should be. The Dearing model of a learning society, if it is to be realised, implies that teaching will form a much more important priority than it has in the past and that the reward systems must be adapted to meet it. Universities’ failure to acknowledge this over many years is symptomatic of their failure to convince the public and the government that they are serving the public interest as effectively as they once seemed to do.

In a much freer salaries market universities at the lower end of the system would not be able to match the salaries paid at the top. But in a competitive situation the highly ranked universities would tend to pull up the salaries of high-performing staff in lower-ranked institutions. If those institutions that were heavily dependent on enrolments rather than research were to give more attention to rewarding teaching, the impact on their recruitment of students might be substantial. There remains much to be said in principle in favour of a unified university salary structure, but in a highly differentiated system, practice as well as principle points in another direction.
References


Coleman, Nick. 2000. All talk and no pay increases. Times Higher Education Supplement, 14 January.

Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) Archive. Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick.


French Higher Education is often viewed from abroad as an oddity. Most of its peculiar features are rooted in a long history of centralisation, in the hands of the state, of decision-making power over almost every aspect of social life. Some of the directions taken during almost two centuries were radically different from those of other European countries. The resulting system has been a model for a number of countries—such as the francophone African countries, which at the time of independence had inherited elements of a higher education system created by the former colonial power. Owing to their cultural proximity to France, Belgium, Italy, and to a lesser extent Portugal and Spain have also been influenced by the French model in some aspects of the organisation of their higher education systems. Similarities that might be discerned in the structure adopted in the Soviet Union for higher education and research did not have much to do with imitation but could better be viewed as “objectively” determined by the choice of a centralised pattern of organisation for the whole society.

Since the early 19th century, the higher education system has been mostly in the public sector. Although institutional autonomy has increased in the recent period, it is fairly limited, compared with other European countries. Control of higher education institutions is distributed among various ministries of the central government, with little involvement of local authorities. The Ministry of Education controls and funds the universities and a large number of other public higher
education institutions. Other ministries control and fund similar institutions, which are often more prestigious than universities. The private sector is small and, apart from a few Catholic universities, consists only of independent schools of engineering and business administration. The most peculiar feature of higher education is the existence, outside the universities, of a strong public research sector and of an “elite” sector of vocationally oriented specialised institutions.

In public higher education institutions, most permanent staff are tenured and enjoy the status of public employees. In the general framework of the Public Employee Statute (Statut général de la fonction publique), they belong to a number of different categories of public employees, each category (called corps) with its own regulations covering recruitment and promotion and its own job definition and responsibilities. In universities, academic staff historically used to be highly stratified in many different categories. During the last two decades, a reform of the statutory framework and an evolution in the practices of the institutions has brought about a more unified structure for the academic profession.

Overview of the System
In France, what is defined as higher education comprises short vocationally oriented programmes in universities, secondary schools, and independent institutions, as well as longer and more general programmes offered by universities and independent grandes écoles. This situation stems from a long tradition of creating a new institution whenever new needs arise. Even before the abolition of the universities during the French Revolution, the state organised the training of the necessary qualified manpower by establishing specialised institutions. Universities—in the usual sense of autonomous, comprehensive institutions—appeared only in the second half of the 20th century and were allowed to offer programmes in most fields of higher education in the following decades.

Today, the higher education sector includes a number of different categories of institutions:

- **Public-sector universities** (87)—including 3 national polytechnic institutes and 3 technology universities. They differ widely in size, ranging from 1,000 to 40,000 students, with an average of 15,000. Altogether, they enrol about 1,400,000 students (in 1998). They offer a large variety of programmes: short vocational “technician” programmes in
IUTs, programmes in engineering and in business administration as well as traditional studies in the natural sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities, medicine and law.

- **Teacher training university institutes** (instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres, IUFM) (28)—formally independent but closely related to universities, with a total enrollment of more than 80,000 students.

- **Private (mostly Catholic) universities** (5) and colleges (14)—enrolling less than 1 percent of the students (about 22,000 students).

- **Higher schools** (écoles supérieures, the most prestigious being referred to as grandes écoles) (ca. 500)—they can be private, public or of mixed status like institutions created and funded by local chambers of commerce. They tend to specialise in a few fields that were traditionally not offered in universities: engineering, agriculture, business administration, architecture. They are much smaller than universities: in engineering schools, for example, enrollments range from less than 100 to 3,500, with an average size of 300 students.

- **Fine arts and applied arts schools**—these are controlled by the Ministry for Cultural Affairs and operated by the state or by local authorities.

- **Independent institutions**—these offer shorter programmes in health and social services (training of nurses, midwives, social workers, special education staff, etc.). Most of these schools are controlled by the Ministry for Health and Social Affairs.

- In France, the higher education system includes two types of programmes organised and taught in upper secondary schools (Lycées), either public or private, by secondary school teachers:

  - **Special preparatory programmes** leading to the grandes écoles are usually highly selective. These classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles constitute the traditional first stage of study leading toward engineering or business schools, the elite track in French higher education. They enrol nearly 80,000 students.

  - **Short vocational programmes**, similar to IUTs, called STS (sections de techniciens supérieurs) and leading to a BTS, or Higher Technician Diploma (Brevet de techniciens supérieurs), with about 230,000 students.

Postgraduate studies and doctoral programmes are offered only in the public universities. Nevertheless, the grandes écoles increasingly seek agreements with universities to take part in postgraduate programmes.
The Structure of the Profession

Historical Perspective

The present situation of academic staff should be put briefly into historical perspective in order to trace the peculiarity of the French traditions and the variety of recruitment practices and careers among the different disciplines. Since the early 1800s, when Napoleon reconstructed the higher education institutions abolished during the French revolution, until the end of the 19th century, there was one institution only—initially named the Imperial University. It comprised both secondary and higher education. In the largest cities there were local branches of the University, called faculties, in charge of higher education. They were managed from Paris by the minister of education, whose title was “Grand Master of the University”. Staff were recruited nationally and allocated to these faculties. There were five types of faculties: theology, law, medicine, arts, and science. In the 20th century until the creation of autonomous universities in 1968, the faculties remained the basic administrative unit of the university sector of public higher education.

Among the different faculties and often within the same faculty, in the various disciplines, careers used to follow different patterns. In the arts and science faculties, the main purpose was to train secondary school teachers. Graduates were recruited by the state through competitive exams and started their careers in secondary schools. Later they transferred to faculties where they would assist professors until they replaced them after spending many years writing a doctoral thesis. The medicine and law faculties trained medical practitioners and lawyers or judges respectively. Permanent teaching staff were recruited initially from an older pool of practitioners working part time in the faculties. For them the doctoral thesis was a less ambitious undertaking and written in a much shorter period of time. These are examples of the differences in recruitment practices in the disciplines—which persisted even after the law was changed in 1984, with a new statute providing for common regulation with regard to academic staff in most of the disciplines.

The rapid expansion of universities in the 1960s and the 1970s was made possible by employing a large number of young assistants on part-time or fixed-term contracts, only a minority of whom could expect to become permanent academic staff. The existing career patterns, which were created in a higher education system with just a few thousand students and a few hundred professors and assistants, were
not workable in a mass system that would soon reach a million students. A complete overhaul of the training and recruitment methods of the profession was called for. In the wake of the 1984 Higher Education Act, the government passed a series of decrees unifying doctoral studies, reorganising careers, and creating permanent positions for nonprofessorial staff.

In the rest of higher education, there are still a variety of terms and conditions for academic staff. The various ministries and institutions have devised their own regulations and career structures, shaped by their technical or administrative circumstances. In the public sector as a whole, however, recruitment procedures and working conditions for academic staff are slowly converging, as a result of a process started by the 1984 act. Most of the institutions under the Education Ministry now recruit staff on the same conditions as universities, and other ministries are also moving in the same direction. The Agriculture Ministry, for example, has recently altered the organisation of its higher education institutions and basically adopted the regulations and procedures set by the Ministry of Education.

In the following discussion we will be limited to the public higher education sector which is controlled by the Education Ministry and employs the overwhelming majority of the country’s academic staff. While concentrating on the public sector, the article will also make reference to the rest of higher education.

The academic profession comprises three broad categories of positions: (1) tenured teaching staff of two different types—“teacher-researchers” (enseignants-chercheurs), and “teaching only” academic staff; (2) full-time or part-time staff on fixed-term nontenured contracts—either young academics waiting for appointment to tenured positions or specialists; (3) and staff employed on an hourly basis.

**Tenured Full-Time Positions**

*Higher Education Personnel*

Staff with higher education status included in 1998 nearly 18,000 professors (professeurs des universités), about 30,000 lecturers (maîtres de conférences), and 1,650 tenured assistants (assistants titulaires). Assistants, initially appointed for limited terms, fought for tenure in the 1970s and succeeded in the early 1980s. The 1984 higher education statute called for the phasing out of this category. No new tenured assistant
positions have been filled since 1984, and positions are closed when they become vacant. Their number has dwindled from about 15,000 in the late 1970s to less than 2,000 at present.

Secondary Education Teachers
Staff mobility from upper-secondary education to higher education has always been common since the Imperial University included both levels of education. However, it is only recently that the permanent assignment of secondary education staff became an important feature in higher education. It started with the creation of IUTs in 1966 and up until the mid-1980s it was limited to around 4,000. From 1986 on, their number grew steadily to the current figure of more than 12,000. Although these staff members are not recruited in the same way as higher education tenured staff, their careers are organised along similar principles—since they are public servants employed by the same ministry. There are two types of secondary teachers, professeurs agrégés and professeurs certifiés.

Traditionally, in some disciplines (arts, humanities, sciences), academic staff were recruited from the ranks of secondary education teachers. The typical career path of academics in those disciplines was as follows: the baccalaureate, then a few years in a preparatory programme at one of the top secondary schools (lycées), école normale supérieure (elite teacher training institution), then the Agrégation (competitive examination for recruiting secondary education teachers), then a period in a tenured teaching position in a secondary school, then appointment to a university as a tenured assistant, and, finally, recruitment as a lecturer or a professor.

This pattern has changed over the last decades: a large number of secondary school teachers are now assigned to universities without any change in their status. They are likely to remain secondary school teachers and to keep the same teaching load and the same career structure. They are designated “teaching only” staff as opposed to staff with university status, who are called “teacher-researchers” in the administrative jargon of French education.

They may request a return to secondary schools when they wish. Some of them try to change their status, applying for lecturer positions after taking a Ph.D.—which is a difficult task owing to their heavy teaching load. Universities may now reduce the teaching load or grant research leave for staff engaged in a doctoral programme, to enable them to complete their Ph.D. dissertation.
However, a few graduates recruited as secondary education teachers actually never teach in secondary schools but, rather, enter Ph.D. programmes (with grants) immediately after their qualification as secondary education teachers. They are rapidly recruited for temporary research and teaching positions, which are the first steps in an academic career at higher education institutions. Most of them have studied at one of the three écoles normales supérieures, elite institutions created in the early 19th century to train secondary education teachers.

Tenured secondary education staff who make up 10 percent of the total teaching staff at universities comprise 40 percent of staff in the short vocational programmes and 25 percent in the humanities departments. The increase in the number of teaching-only staff is one of the most noticeable trends in academic appointments in the last decades. They are mainly employed in vocational programmes and for “nonspecialist” teaching (e.g., teaching of foreign languages outside language departments or mathematics outside mathematics departments), where there is little need to link teaching with research work. This is precisely the type of programme and the sort of teaching that has been on the rise over the period. Moreover, their teaching load is twice that of lecturers, which lowers the instructional costs. Finally, their transfer to higher education was the easy policy option for the education authorities when a demographic downturn released teachers from secondary education at a time when higher education was still expanding rapidly. See table 1, for the number of tenured academic staff in 1985 and 1998.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Higher Education Staff</th>
<th>Secondary Education Staff</th>
<th>Total Staff</th>
<th>Share of Secondary Education Staff (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>40,881</td>
<td>4,041</td>
<td>44,912</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>55,218</td>
<td>15,167</td>
<td>80,145</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% change, 1985–89</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry for National Education, Research, and Technology, Direction de la programmation et du developpement, Notes d’information, No. 85.47 and 98.33.
Staff on Fixed-Term Contracts

Associate or Visiting Staff
Universities are allowed to use vacant permanent positions (for either professor or lecturer) to recruit either full-time associate staff (*personnel associé*) on three-year contracts or visiting staff (*personnel invité*). In the recent years, a new type of contract has been introduced that enables universities to recruit as part-time associates people already employed in the public or the private sector—mainly among professionals, business executives, administrators, or researchers. Visiting professors usually are foreign academics invited for a few months by universities. Associate and visiting staff (who number about 2,500) have the same academic duties and rights as tenured staff.

Temporary Assistants
Temporary assistants (*attaché temporaire d’enseignement et de recherche*—ATER), who number 5,300, are advanced students nearing the completion of their Ph.D.s or having just completed it, who are hired on a part-time or full-time basis for a limited term of one year (renewable twice, with the exceptional fourth year). This position is conceived of as a way of bridging the gap between the termination of the Ph.D. grant and recruitment for a tenured position. Universities can appoint these assistants to fill temporarily vacant tenured staff positions.

Instructors
Instructors (*moniteurs*) are drawn from graduate students awarded a research grant (*allocation de recherche*). Institutions can select a few candidates who will be given a supplementary compensation in exchange for a small amount of teaching (60 hours per year). Their teaching is restricted to first- and second-year programmes. *Moniteurs* are assigned a “mentor” and are required to attend special courses organised in 14 regional Higher Education Teacher Training Centres (*Centres d’initiation à l’enseignement supérieur*—CIES). Research grants are awarded for two years, usually extended to a third year—90 percent of the grantees (*allocataires*) are funded for a third year. Among the 10,000 *allocataires* (an annual flow of about 3,500) 4,000 are *moniteurs*. 
**Foreign-Language Assistants**

Foreign language assistants (lecteur et maître de langues étrangères) are appointed for a period ranging from one to six years. They should be native speakers and hold a degree equivalent to Maîtrise for lecteurs and a postgraduate degree for Maîtres de Langues. There are about 950 of these assistants.

**University Hospital Teaching Staff**

University hospital teaching staff (enseignants hospitalo-universitaires contractuels) are jointly appointed by the head of the medical school and the university hospital. There are approximately 3,600 of such teaching staff.

**Hourly Part-Time Staff**

Universities and grandes écoles employ teaching staff paid by the hour. They are named chargés d’enseignement vacataires and attachés temporaires vacataires. They are hired for one term and for a given number of teaching hours by the head of the institution, after consultation with the committee for recruitment in the relevant discipline. Chargés d’enseignement vacataires should be fully employed outside the university. Attachés temporaires vacataires must be doctoral students under 26 years of age.

Together with permanent university staff working overtime, hourly part-time staff account for a sizable share of teaching. Institutions receive some recurrent funding for employing part-time personnel or for overtime, when permanent staff allocated to them cannot meet their teaching needs. Some disciplines and newly created or rapidly expanding institutions, rely heavily on part-time staff. A few years ago, some universities expended more than half the recurrent funding for instruction on part-time and overtime teaching. The recent drop in student enrolments along with the corresponding decrease in recurrent funding has greatly reduced the hiring of such part-time staff and the flexibility it offered to institutions.

**Higher Education and Research**

Most publicly funded research is organised by specialised research agencies or public corporations distinct from the universities. The best known of these agencies, the CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research), employs about 26,000 people, as compared with the 80,000 employed by universities. CNRS used to run its own independent labo-
ratories, but it increasingly works with universities in funding university laboratories and operating jointly controlled and financed “mixed research units”. Eighty percent of the research units of the CNRS are located within universities. Other research agencies, smaller and more specialised, operate basically in the same way as the CNRS.

Full-time research staff are usually employed by national research agencies like the CNRS, even when they work in university laboratories or institutes. Full-time tenured researchers may take part in teaching on a voluntary and part-time basis but not as part of their statutory duties. Researchers get extra financial compensation for such teaching—for which they must secure formal authorisation. They may also be involved in supervision of research students working in their research laboratories (without any compensation). They may be assigned (détachés) to universities for a few years, in which case they are subjected to the statutory regulation of tenured teachers before reverting to their research position. Although they usually hold the qualifications required to apply to academic positions in universities, they tend to remain at the research agencies.

Out of 26,000 staff employed by CNRS, more than 11,000 are “researchers”, the remaining 15,000 being either “technical” or “administrative” staff. There are two ranks for researchers: chargé de recherche (research fellow) and directeur de recherche (research director), broadly equivalent to the two grades of lecturers and professors in higher education institutions.

Research centres and laboratories also employ casual labour, research students, and young Ph.D.s, who assist permanent staff in research projects—especially short-term projects and contract research. They may be formally hired by universities or research agencies, and their jobs are very insecure—similar to that of teaching vacataires.

Among the most-qualified research support staff (ingénieurs), some employees are very close to research or teaching staff in that they perform tasks that are broadly similar. Although they hold permanent positions and may take part in teaching, they are not considered academic staff.

Student/Staff Ratios
In recent years, student/staff ratios that had been increasing over the last three decades stabilised owing to a halt in the expansion of student enrolments while staff recruitment policies were maintained. This contrasts with the constant deterioration of the ratio of teaching to
nonteaching staff that points to a worsening of the working conditions of academic staff. See table 2, for a comparison of these ratios for 1985 and 1998.

Table 2

Student/Teaching Staff and Nonteaching/Teaching Staff Ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student/teaching staff</td>
<td>19.6:1</td>
<td>20.8:1</td>
<td>22.5:1</td>
<td>19.8:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonteaching/teaching staff</td>
<td>1.19:1</td>
<td>1.34:1</td>
<td>1.51:1</td>
<td>1.52:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Student-teacher ratios vary by discipline and by institution. In 1996, the average student-teacher ratio was 49.2 to 1 for the law and economics sector, 35.9 to 1 for the humanities and social sciences sector, 17.2 to 1 for science and engineering, and 11.6 to 1 for medical studies. Among universities, the distribution of average student-teacher ratios across all disciplines ranged from 50 to 1 in Paris II, which specialises mainly in law, to 9.4 to 1 in Toulouse Polytechnic Institute, which offers only engineering programmes. Among similar institutions, like comprehensive universities, the range is smaller, with ratios from 20 to 1 for long-established institutions to 40 to 1 for newer overseas universities. When the university funding system was altered in the mid-1990s, evening out the ratios among comparable universities became a new element of resource allocation policy.

Gender Distribution

Although the gender distribution is highly skewed in favour of men, in higher education the issue is just beginning to be taken seriously in France. In 1997, among tenured staff, women accounted for 13.7 percent of professors (compared with 9.1 percent in 1987) and 35.5 percent of lecturers (30.8 percent in 1987). The gender distribution varies by discipline and with age. As a rule, the higher the academic position, the more men are found. But the situation is changing fast, and the
overall gender distribution of teaching staff is getting closer to that of
the student population. Since there are presently more female than male
students in French universities, the share of women among the aca-
demic staff will go on increasing. This is especially true of the arts and
humanities, where women account for 70 to 80 percent of the student
body. Quite interestingly, medicine and law, which not so long ago
were considered “male” disciplines, are undergoing rapid change, with
more female than male students graduating and entering the labour
market. The share of female staff is still low in the sciences and in engi-
neering, but this is also a sector where female students are a minority.
Although women are underrepresented in the higher ranks, their share
is steadily increasing—following the pattern in secondary education,
where they are now a majority. This is certainly a consequence of the
dramatic increase in the participation of women in the labour force, as
well as of the fact that, in education perhaps even more than in other
parts of the public sector, young women find it possible to combine a
career and motherhood. (See table 3.)

Table 3  
Women in Academic Positions, 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Law, Public Administration, and Economics</th>
<th>Humanities, Foreign Languages, and Human Sciences</th>
<th>Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering</th>
<th>Health Sciences</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All professors</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young professors</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All lecturers</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young lecturers</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry for National Education, Research and Technology, Direction de la programmation et du developpement, Notes d’information No. 98..33.

Note: Young professors are 35 to 39, young lecturers 30 to 34.

Selection and Appointment of Tenured Staff
Like most top civil servants, tenured academic staff are recruited on a
“national” basis. This means that they are appointed by a state official
(the education minister or the president of the country, in the case of
full professors) at the end of a precisely defined procedure called concours—in which all applicants are “screened” by a national panel, appointed by the minister.

Public employment is regulated by different sets of rules for permanent tenured staff (under the provisions of the Public Employee Statute) and for temporary personnel (hired through “public law” contracts). Litigation related to both types of public employment is settled not in ordinary courts but in administrative courts (tribunaux administratifs) specifically designed to handle conflicts between individuals and the state or other public authorities.

**Teaching Positions of Higher Education Status**

Every year, universities inform the ministry of their wishes concerning new and vacant positions: what type of staff they need, in which disciplines, and whether they would like to keep positions vacant for future recruitment (in which case they will receive funding to employ part-time or temporary staff). The number of positions they ask for usually exceeds by far the number provided by the education budget.

Within the overall limit of the number and type of positions approved yearly by Parliament, the education minister allocates positions to universities. The ministry issues a list of positions for which concours will be organised, specifying the type, the institution, and the discipline. Concours are advertised in official state publications (Journal officiel de la république and the Bulletin officiel de l’éducation nationale).

Before being opened for recruitment, these positions may be filled by tenured staff of the same category working in other universities, which is not considered to be recruitment but, rather, transfer (mutation) and only needs the agreement of the recruiting boards of the university. Upon appointment at a given university, one becomes a professor of the French universities (Professeur des universités) and, while one cannot be transferred against one’s will to another institution, one can without difficulty move to another institution. In 1998, one-fifth of the open professorial positions in universities were filled through such transfers (the proportion rises to one-third in law and economics and to over one half in political science).

The Organisation of the Concours

Every concours ends with an appointment proposal made to the minister or the president of the republic; it is generally endorsed. In the regular recruitment procedure, there are two phases in the concours, one
involving the institution and one involving a national selection panel—the National Council of Universities (Conseil national des universités, or CNU). Members of this council are in part elected by academics and in part appointed by the minister. The council is divided into groups and sections, each section being in charge of a specific disciplinary field. (There are 72 different sections, some of them being divided into sub-sections.) A typical section comprises 48 members, of which 16 are appointed and 32 elected.

The recent period has witnessed frequent changes with regard to whether the institution or the council would take precedence in the joint decision making of these two bodies. Either the institution could first short-list applicants, from whom the CNU would select the most-qualified candidates. Alternatively, the institution would choose its favourite candidate from a national list of applicants previously screened by the CNU. Concerns revolve around the fact that, in the one case, the CNU could make proposals that disregard the specific needs of an institution, whereas in the other case the institution could favour less-qualified local candidates.

In the present status of the recruitment process, the CNU first screens individual applicants for tenured academic staff positions. Candidates for a teaching position in a higher education institution apply to the CNU for “qualification”. Every spring, a list of qualified candidates is drawn up in every academic discipline by the appropriate section of CNU. Qualification is valid for a limited period of time: if qualified candidates are not recruited during the four years following the CNU’s decision, they have to apply again for qualification.

The other phase takes place in the institution. Each university operates recruitment committees (commissions de spécialistes) organised around the 70-odd disciplines making up the sections of the CNU. In small institutions, one committee may be organised for several related academic disciplines. Each committee is made up of from 10 to 20 elected members drawn from the institution’s faculty and of members from other institutions or from other disciplines of the same institution. These committees, in which professors and lecturers sit in equal number, are elected for 4 years and meet as often as is necessary to deliberate on staff recruitment and promotion. Each member has a substitute in case he or she is unable to attend a meeting. During a given recruitment campaign, only those members who have taken part in all the successive sessions of the recruiting board (including interviews)
are allowed to cast their vote at the end of the process. This rule was introduced to prevent members from taking part in the final decision without any knowledge of the candidates.

Only candidates “qualified” by the CNU may apply to vacant positions that are advertised yearly. They apply to a specific position in a specific institution. Applications are processed by institutions in the early summer so that newly recruited staff can start teaching at the beginning of the fall semester.

In a few disciplines (law, public administration, political science, economics, and business studies) a different recruitment procedure (agrégation) is used for professors only. Candidates need not apply first to CNU for qualification and to individual institutions after qualification. Rather, single national recruiting board, appointed by the minister, deals with the recruitment of professors in each discipline. The selected candidates are allowed to choose the university to which they will be assigned, according to their ranking at the end of a series of competitive examinations. This peculiarity explains why so many vacant positions are filled by transfer rather than by recruitment in these disciplines: the lowest ranking of the newly recruited professors, who were not assigned to their first-choice university, subsequently try to move to another institution.

Qualifications of Academic Staff
The degrees and titles formally required for application are statutory and stated in the regulations governing recruitment. Full-time permanent staff, lecturers and professors, are required to hold a Ph.D.—except for associate staff, who may apply for tenure without a Ph.D. a few years after their recruitment. Since 1984, an extra qualification is required for professorial positions: the Habilitation à diriger les recherches (somewhat similar to the German Habilitation), which is obtained after submission and defense of a thesis or a collection of research papers or books.

Contractual staff—moniteurs, attachés temporaires, and attachés temporaires vacataires—are recruited from doctoral students, who have obtained at least a DEA (Diplôme d’études approfondies), a one-year postgraduate research degree. Attachés temporaires must either have completed their Ph.D. or be within a year of its completion.
There is no formal requirement for part-time staff—vacataires, paid by the hour, and associés, on contracts—provided they are already employed. Institutions are forbidden to hire people who are unemployed or retired.

**Teaching Staff of Secondary Education Status**

Initial recruitment of secondary education staff is conducted through nationwide competitive examinations (concours national). Successful candidates are allocated to secondary schools according to the needs of the national education system and to a set of criteria, including their ranking at the end of the contest.

Their recruitment in higher education is treated as a secondment, and there is no particular procedure for it. After being informed by the ministry that they have been allocated secondary teacher positions, the universities advertise the positions they need to fill and process the applications as they see fit. Some institutions refer the applications to a standing recruitment committee. Others organise ad hoc committees, designed for each specific recruitment. Once the choice is made, the university president officially asks the ministry to assign the selected candidate to the institution. There is no time limit to the secondment, and teachers may return to secondary schools if they wish. In exceptional situations, a university dissatisfied with a seconded teacher may ask the minister or the ministry’s regional representative to send the teacher back to secondary schools.

**Tenured Research Positions**

Public research staff are employed by the government in tenured positions authorised by Parliament and allocated by the Ministry for Research to the various national research agencies. Although tenured research staff are not employed by the higher education institutions, it is worthwhile mentioning a few features of their conditions of employment. First, a career in public research is the main alternative to a career in higher education for most Ph.D. graduates. Second, the number of transfers between research and teaching positions is not negligible. Career paths are similar, including prerequisites for recruitment and pay structure, in public higher education and in public research. For this reason and because most research units of the national agencies work in close cooperation with university laboratories (indeed, more and more units are jointly owned by research agencies and universities), transfer between sectors is quite easy. In 1995, 1 in 20 lecturers
and 1 in 10 professors newly recruited by universities came from the various research agencies. There have been recurrent plans by government to merge the two types of institutions and to end this peculiar arrangement of the French research establishment, but they have repeatedly failed. In recent years the stagnation in the number of research positions authorised by Parliament has increased the pressure on research personnel to apply for positions in universities, where the growth of academic positions has occurred.

Appointment of Temporary and Nontenured Staff

Procedures for the recruitment of temporary teaching or research staff on an hourly basis (vacataires) are much less rigorous. Decisions are taken at the institutional level—in practice, at the departmental level—after consultation with the appropriate recruitment standing committee.

The proportion of nontenured staff is higher in universities (about 20 percent) than in other institutions (6 to 9 percent). It is especially high in the medical schools (32 percent). Working conditions for these teaching or research staff on contract, working part time or full time, are more strictly regulated. As they are employed by a state institution, they are required to sign a specific type of labour contract (contrat de droit public) that differs from ordinary labour contracts. Such contracts are regulated by law, and no bargaining takes place between the parties.

To circumvent the rigidity of such contracts, the legal responsibility for employing temporary staff is sometimes transferred to private, foundation-like bodies, called associations. Such bodies are quite easy to set up under French law. This practice, although repeatedly condemned by the Court of Accounts, is common—but less so for teaching than for research.

Evaluation and Promotion

Newly recruited academic staff, like most state employees, are granted tenure (they become titulaire) after a short one- or two-year period of probation. Once they are granted tenure, they benefit from the common public employment statute (Statut général de la fonction publique) and from the specific statute of their category, which guarantees them continued employment, sets their rights and duties, organises their career, and regulates their financial compensation.
Tenure
Periodically, after the numbers of contract staff have built up for some time, unions demand that some categories of nontenured staff be granted tenure without having to submit to the formal recruitment procedures, through a process called intégration. This happened in the past—for example, when nontenured assistants were given tenure en masse in the 1970s. Since then, the ministry has stated explicitly that nontenured positions are short-term ones that will never lead directly to tenured status; they have set age limits for the recruitment of part-time staff or required that applicants should hold a principal employment outside the institution. In so doing, they have made it clear that they did not want to face such a situation again.

Promotion
Each category, in line with the general pattern of the French civil service, is divided into several groups—each group (corps) being defined by a common set of rules concerning recruitment, promotion, pay, working conditions, and duties. Inside a group, there are subgroups or classes (classe), each with a prescribed salary scale. The scale is made up of “stages”, to each of which a level of basic income is attached. Promotion from one stage to the next inside a given class is based solely on seniority, according to a predetermined schedule. Inside a corps, promotion from one class to the next is decided competitively within the limits of the number of vacant positions, partly at the level of the institution, partly at the national level. Transition from one corps to the other is not considered promotion but rather recruitment, all applicants formally submitting to the same procedures as in the concours.

Recruitment to positions such as head of department, dean, director, or even president, although they attract supplementary compensation, are not considered promotions because they are temporary. Terms of office for these positions range from three to five years, and presidents cannot be immediately reelected. Extra compensation, in the shape of bonuses or special allowances, ends with the term of office.

Inside a statutory group, promotion is granted to an individual by means of two different procedures. Every year, a number of promotion opportunities (depending on budgetary appropriations, rate of turnover, etc.) are available for the ministry to allocate to the universities and to the CNU. Academic staff members who meet given criteria may apply to their institution for promotion. If they are not promoted,
their applications are forwarded to the CNU, where they get a second chance. This dual procedure is justified by the fact that institutions tend to promote those who are involved locally in teaching, service, or administration, whereas the CNU tend to promote on the basis of “quality”, usually focused on research quality as measured by quantitative indicators of written work.

There are three classes in the statutory group of professors (second, first, and exceptionnelle) and three in the statutory group of lecturers (second, first, and hors-classe). The proportion in the top class is limited to 10 percent of the whole category at the national level. The overall professor/lecturer ratio is quite stable. In 1989, the ministry agreed with unions on target ratios for the different categories of staff: 60/40 for lecturers/professors, 50/40/10 for second class/first class/special class professors, and 28/72/8 for second class/first class/special class lecturers. The present ratios are 68/32, 53/37/10, and 42/51/7, respectively. Nevertheless, such ratios vary quite a bit among disciplines and among institutions.

Inside a given class, promotion, in the sense of an increase in salary, is awarded automatically after given periods of time that are prescribed by the statutory regulations of the group. About every two or three years, tenured academics progress on a pay scale (i.e., “climb a step on the ladder”).

Staff Appraisal and Staff Development
Whereas secondary education teachers working in schools are evaluated by the headmaster and by the national education inspectorate, those teaching in higher education are evaluated by the heads of institutions. This evaluation is usually rather formal and has a limited impact on their careers.

For staff of higher education status, there is no systematic evaluation of performance either in teaching or in research at the institutional level. Evaluation of teaching programmes in universities, in a process involving students, was first introduced by legislation in 1984, abolished in 1987, and reintroduced in 1977. Universities are allowed to conduct surveys based on student opinion, provided the assessment of individual performance of the teacher is accessible only to the person concerned. Only collective assessments of programmes can be brought to the attention of the senate, the various boards and, the administration of the institution.
Application for a promotion is the only event that can trigger an evaluation of individuals by their peers of the university council, at the institutional level, or the CNU, at the national level. Despite renewed invitations to these bodies to take into account all aspects of an individual’s activity, research performance, measured mainly by number of publications, is still the dominant criterion. In the absence of an application for promotion, no assessment is made of an individual’s performance in research. Formal evaluation of research activity is conducted only at the collective level of the research institutes and departments.

Staff development is not addressed, except on a voluntary individual basis. There are training programmes on offer for which staff may apply, along with funding. There is also the possibility for staff to ask for a sabbatical leave (up to one semester every six years) to allow for a shift in research programme or to get acquainted with a new field or a new technique. These opportunities are not directly related to any type of formal evaluation.

**Employment and Working Conditions**

Tenured staff of higher education status (teacher-researchers) are supposed to spend half their working time teaching and half on research. This explains why their teaching load is half that of staff of secondary education status, who are not expected to engage in research. By statute the teaching duties of staff are defined as time spent in the classroom with students. According to the type of interaction with students and the number of students, classes carry a different weight in the calculation of total teaching time.

Such a quantitative definition of teaching duties creates a number of problems for institutions. Although there are provisions for a reduction or a suspension of teaching duties for academics who are elected or appointed to administrative positions in universities or schools, nothing is prescribed concerning other forms of involvement in teaching—such as, for example, the design or delivery of new programmes in continuing education or distance education or the use of new technologies. Institutions are tempted to disregard this regulation of teaching, but the threat of litigation and controls by the inspectorate maintains interfere with the development of innovative programmes and activities.
Conversely, the fact that staff duties are defined solely in relation to teaching makes it difficult for institutions to regulate the total involvement of teaching staff. Provided they are physically present in the classroom for the prescribed number of hours, academics sometimes consider their obligations to the institution fulfilled, leaving them free to organise the rest of their time. As a result, it is not unusual to hear complaints from students that their only opportunity to interact with their teachers is to approach them at the end of lectures. Apart from laboratory-based disciplines in which academics spend most of their time in their offices or in their laboratories, a continuous presence on the university premises is not expected of the teaching staff. As a result, a significant number of professors or lecturers live far away from the institutions that employ them and spend only one day or two on site. This lack of accountability is obviously linked to the high potential mobility allowed by the national status of staff, which allows them to transfer from one institution to another. This is also related to the practical and legal limits to evaluation of the various tasks they are supposed to perform.

The teaching load of professors, lecturers, and contract staff at the same level (associate professors, and lecturers, and temporary assistants) is set annually at 192 hours. According to the actual length of terms, which varies from 24 to 32 weeks per year, this amounts to an average weekly load of 6 to 8 hours. As there is some weighting of teaching time according to the instructional setting (seminar, lecture, practical work), the weekly teaching load of a professor can be as low as 4 hours. Hours taught in excess of this amount are paid as overtime at a flat rate that does not depend on the basic salary.

The teaching duties of staff of secondary education status amount to 384 hours per year, a weekly load of 12 to 16 hours, exactly twice that of other tenured staff. The rationale for this difference is that, although many of them are involved in some kind of research activity, it is not a part of their formal obligations.

Student assessment and basic participation in the institution’s administration are considered a part of the duties of academic staff. This implies that there is no extra compensation for these tasks: organising and supervising departmental exams, grading papers, holding vivas, sitting on university examination boards (e.g., for baccalaureate, which is formally the first grade of higher education, although it actually marks the end of secondary education). However, heavier administrative responsibilities may be rewarded by bonuses.
Time budgets have only recently drawn the attention of the decision makers in French higher education. The typical attitude used to be that the statute says that professors teach half the time and engage in research half the time, there was no reason to deviate from that rule. In fact, the involvement of staff in different activities is highly variable, as surveys conducted in the early 1990s in several universities have shown. In most disciplines, professors spend more time on administration than do other academic staff. Nontenured junior staff (attachés, moniteurs) spend more time on research than on teaching; they also spend more time on research than do most other categories of staff.

Pay Scale and Current Earnings

Basic Compensation

Basic compensation is based on gross salary, from which some social contributions are deducted and to which general bonuses and allowances are added. Gross salary is calculated by multiplying a monetary amount by an index, specific to each individual’s position and seniority. This amount, the value of an index point, is the same for all public employees and can be altered by the government to adjust the total salary expenditure for the public sector.

Bonuses and allowances that are paid to all staff in a given category are usually included in basic compensation. These include the “residence allowance” (indemnité de résidence), from 0 to 3 percent
of basic salary and the quite modest higher education bonus (prime d’enseignement supérieur or prime de recherche et d’enseignement supérieur), accounting for 3 percent to 6 percent of basic salary. (See fig. 1.)

Supplementary Compensation
A survey conducted in 1989 (Ponthieux and Berthelot 1992) throws some light on the actual discrepancies in academic income among staff whose basic compensation is similar. Academic income is made up of all payments to staff as a result of their activity at the institution. The difference is explained by overtime teaching, other supplementary compensation (such as exam fees or night duties in hospitals) and specific bonuses or allowances attached to responsibilities and functions temporarily held by some staff members. The survey revealed pay differences across the disciplines. Faculty at medical schools stand out in the comparisons because many are entitled to a double salary, as teachers and as members of the university hospital staff.

Table 4
Annual Academic Income by Rank and Discipline, 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Law, Public Admin., and Economics (FF)</th>
<th>Humanities, Foreign Lang., and Human Sciences (FF)</th>
<th>Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering (FF)</th>
<th>Health Sciences (FF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>265,000</td>
<td>245,000</td>
<td>245,000</td>
<td>495,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>280,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ponthieux and Berthelot (1992, 10).
Note: Income equals basic compensation plus overtime plus specific bonuses.

Overtime teaching is quite common: in 1989, 49 percent of academic staff outside the health sector worked overtime with an average of 30 hours a year, leading to a yearly supplementary compensation of about 5 percent. In a few exceptional cases, overtime may raise the salary of individual faculty by up to 50 percent. (See table 4.)

In 1988, a comparative study of pay in the public sector highlighted the relative disadvantage of academic staff compared with other qualified public-sector employees. If their basic salary was established at a level comparable with army officers or top administrative civil
servants, they were far behind in terms of bonuses and perks. In some departments, such as the Ministry of Finance, such supplementary income can double the take-home pay of administrators. In 1989 a series of bonuses were introduced in higher education aimed at making up in part for pay discrepancies and, hopefully, to introduce some kind of financial incentive for academic staff. Three new bonuses were to be awarded on a contractual basis to individuals engaging for a given period in “supplementary” tasks—that is, tasks not explicitly prescribed by the statutory regulations. A research supervision bonus (prime d’encadrement doctoral et de recherche) provides about FF 20,000 for lecturers and up to 40,000 per year for professors. It is the most attractive bonus, being the largest and the most prestigious. It may increase the basic pay by 10 percent. A teaching bonus (prime pédagogique), initially linked to the amount of overtime teaching, was recently reoriented to reward effective work in the designing and management of teaching programmes. The amounts awarded are smaller and set uniformly at the national level but vary with the academic rank. An administration bonus (prime administrative, prime de charges administratives) is awarded to academics holding top administrative positions, partly allocated by the ministry, partly by universities. Its value is set proportionally to the weight attached by the ministry or the institution to the administrative functions. For university presidents, it amounts to 15 to 20 percent of basic salary.

“Outside” Income
Although academics are supposed to secure from their employer permission to undertake outside activity and to declare their outside income, there is very little information available on this matter except in the 1989 survey. It indicates that outside income of academic staff is very unevenly distributed, across positions, disciplines, and regions. Broadly speaking, Paris and the southern part of France account for half the number of academic staff and more than 70 percent of total outside income, when the other half get less than 30 percent.

In most disciplines, except law and medicine, lecturers and professors have comparable outside income. Law, economics, and business studies are the sectors in which outside income is higher and most concentrated among a small number of people, while medicine is the sector in which it is more evenly distributed. The largest part of
outside income comes from publications royalties but professional income is not negligible, especially in medicine and in law, where professors are entitled to a private practice.

In 1999, the Parliament voted into law an act on innovation in public higher education and research institutions that reveals a change of attitude toward outside income of academics involved in collaboration with industry, in research and development, or consultancy. Subject to authorisation by their universities, all academics will be allowed to work as consultants or scientific advisers with firms or agencies, within stated financial and time limits.

Social Security and Social Benefits
Basic health insurance is similar to that of other workers but it is managed by a separate fund called Mutuelle de l’éducation (MGEN), which also offers optional supplementary insurance.

Family benefits are, contrary to the situation of private-sector employees, paid by the Ministry of Education itself. Staff get the same basic allowances and benefits as other employees, but there are some supplementary allowances specific to public employees.

Retirement pensions are also funded directly by the state out of its regular budget. Pensions are, for the time being, better in the public sector than in the private sector. The basic pension after 37 years and six months of employment is equivalent to 75 percent of the basic salary before retirement. There are tax deductible supplementary pension funds for public employees, but their use is not widespread.

Comparability of Academic Staff Salary
The income level of academic staff is easily comparable with that of the public civil service of which it is a part. Professors are paid at the same level as army generals or high court judges, as far as basic salary is concerned. What creates differences among public employees is the bonus system, which is both highly variable and almost secret. As specific bonuses may reach 10 percent of basic income in higher education, they frequently amount to 50 percent in some administrations, such as the Finance Ministry. Disclosure and adjustment of these bonuses between the different branches of the state administration has been on the agenda for decades without much progress being recorded.

Comparability with income levels in the private sector is difficult to assess. The tradition of secrecy is very strong in the French business community. One way to estimate discrepancies in pay is to look at
transfers between the higher education sector and private industry. They exist only in a small number of sectors where universities have a hard time keeping highly qualified staff. The computer industry and the medical sector are known to offer academics opportunities for private employment. In these specific fields, possible solutions to avoid the brain drain are more generous compensation of staff, as in the medical schools, or more open opportunities to secure outside income, as in computer science and the high-tech sector. On the whole, after allowing for such specific adjustments, the general feeling of academic staff is that their pay level is adequate. However, no systematic survey has been conducted on this matter.

**Current Issues**

Working conditions of academic staff have been affected by the growing number of students and by constraints on resources. One problem area was the availability and quality of teaching, laboratory, and office space. Until the end of the 1980s, the situation deteriorated with the rapid increase in student enrolment. In the early 1990s, a vast building programme (University 2000”), jointly financed by the state and the regions, was launched. The situation improved greatly in many institutions, with the exception of institutions in Paris that are expected to catch up with the rest of France in the next few years.

Working conditions are also affected by the number and qualification of support staff. The ratio of nonteaching to teaching staff has steadily deteriorated over the last decades. If the number of academic staff has grown over the period at the same pace as that of students, the number of administrative and technical staff is lagging. Academics complain of spending more and more of their time at tasks that could be performed by qualified clerical or scientific staff. The qualification structure of administrative staff, in particular, is inappropriate: the increased autonomy of institutions and departments has created the need for more qualified administrators that has not been met by new positions at the appropriate level.

Now that the period of rapid growth has come to an end, there are worries about career perspectives of research students and junior academic staff. Forecasts of the demand for Ph.D. graduates are difficult to make, owing to possible shifts in students’ choice of subjects and uncertain future policies in education and research. The number of tenured positions opened each year depends on government higher education policy and on the turnover in existing positions. Policy shifts
have been frequent in the last decades. Eventually, the current slowdown of student enrolments will translate into a decrease in the overall number of new positions. This decrease will be offset for a while (until about 2005) by a higher turnover, as the large number of academics recruited in the 1970s will reach 65, the age of compulsory retirement.

At the level of the disciplines, the demand for new academic staff is governed by the age structure of the faculty and by shifts in student enrolments. As a consequence of the prevailing principles of open entry and free choice of subject for students, big shifts in enrolments are possible, as happened, for example, in recent years in psychology or in sports. This is likely to induce swings in the recruitment needs of academic staff as disciplines get more or less popular with students.

In some disciplines, prospective demand for Ph.D. holders should also include public and private research job openings. Private demand is highly volatile and depends on the state of the economy. Recruitment for public research jobs (which has been an important factor in the 1970s) has declined in recent years, and is likely to remain so. The number of researchers in the CNRS, after a period of growth in the late 1980s, is now stable. The administration of CNRS has tried to induce researchers into applying for university positions, thus increasing competition for new Ph.D.s.

The increase in the number of teaching-only staff in higher education is also a source of concern. In the last 15 years, the number of secondary school teachers seconded to higher education institutions has increased fourfold. Teaching-only staff now represents nearly 20 percent of tenured academic staff. This was partly the outcome of a short-term education policy: excess staff from secondary education, where enrolments were falling, were transferred to higher education, which was still growing. Nevertheless, there are fears that this also indicates a deeper evolution of higher education, away from the tradition of teaching based on research.

Conclusion
After the deep regulatory changes of the mid-1980s, the statutory framework of academic staff seems stable at present. Neither recruitment procedures nor the system of tenure were being discussed in the late 1990s. French faculty enjoy a high level of individual and collective freedom.
The independence of professors has been recognised as a constitutional principle by the constitutional court. Any regulation introducing elements of administrative control over their career or setting limits to their academic freedom can be brought before administrative courts that have the power to reverse decisions made on recruitment or promotion by administrative or academic authorities. In matters such as setting standards, designing curriculum, organising teaching, and expressing ideas in the classroom and in publications academics, individually or collectively, enjoy great autonomy. The only constraints that may be brought to bear on individual faculty results from collegial decisions made by peers.

The priority of present higher education policy of the government is to strengthen the autonomy of the institutions. Universities are expected to develop their own policy. They are asked to innovate and improve quality of research as well as of teaching. This might involve a transformation of the present incentive structure (possibly limiting the amount of overtime teaching by permanent staff). University heads have long insisted on teaching performance being taken into account, alongside with research, in the recruitment and the promotion processes. The main change in the financial conditions of academic staff has been the introduction of bonuses in order to create incentives and recognise the various tasks performed by academic staff. This was paralleled by attempts to introduce evaluation of the various activities at the institutional level. Despite the fact that such evaluation is still very limited and not linked to some sort of performance-based salary, it is perceived as the most threatening by academic staff; they were accustomed to broad individual autonomy and to distant checks and controls.

Because of the statute and traditions, however, universities find it very difficult to mobilise their human resources and to design better incentives for their staff. The national framework of employment and the weight of the discipline-based bodies that decide on the individual careers of academics explain the very weak ties that exist between them and the institutions in which they work. The great individual autonomy of the faculty conflicts with the autonomy of the institution and prevents urgently needed changes. The question is how to implement an institutional policy of quality improvement when the activity of the essential actors cannot be assessed and encouraged at the local level. How can departments be restructured in times of decreasing enrolments when disciplinary allegiance turns colleagues into enemies.
While other countries contemplate abandoning the civil service status of academics, the question is not seriously debated in France although it is part of the platforms of some right-wing political parties. Every step that might be taken to increase the decision-making power of the universities on issues concerning tenured staff is feared by academics and fought by their unions on the basis of academic freedom and the mission of public service assigned to universities. The only incentives available are the various bonuses that universities can pay to their staff. These are fairly small in amount and, owing to the egalitarian culture of the French public service, spread over a large number of people, which limits their effect.

However, despite many changes in their condition, it seems that the majority of French academic staff are quite satisfied with their present situation, contrary to periods in the recent past where there were frequent demonstrations and open conflicts. This contrasts with a growing discontent among the heads of institutions and many analysts of higher education, who see in the rigidity of the present legal framework an obstacle to adjustments to the more momentous changes that the whole sector is about to experience. The present quietness might turn out to be the calm that precedes the storm.

Note
1. The so-called public scientific and technological corporations (établissements publics à caractère scientifique et technologique, EPST) are: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, CNRS, with more than 11,000 full-time tenured researchers in the natural, human, and social sciences; INRA, with 1,800 staff, in agricultural research; INSERM, with 2,000 staff, in medical research; IRD, with 850 staff, for development research; INRIA, with 300 staff, in computer science research; and a few smaller institutes, with less than 200 researchers.

Reference
Pressures and Prospects Facing the Academic Profession in the Netherlands

Egbert de Weert

Historically, the power to appoint the professoriate in the Netherlands has resided with the Crown. Although the boards of trustees of universities, originally comprised of mayors and other public officials, were free to submit candidates, they were unable to exert much influence on the process. Right after the Napoleonic period ended in 1815, the secretary of state convinced the king that high-level civil servants like professors should be appointed by the king himself and not by any lower agency. Clearly, the central government had acquired a taste for power from the French example. Thereafter, the Crown regularly vetoed a nomination or carried out a decision against the advice of the board of trustees, a practice the Dutch historian Huizinga denounced in his writings:

It creates the uncomfortable feeling that the interests of science are not in safe hands with the Ministry, and that secondary purposes and preferences, harmful to an objective decision in the interest of science, will have their effect precisely where every personal preference should be excluded: in the Hague. (Huizinga 1951)

Later ministers tried to avoid conflicts regarding professorial appointments and sought to establish a board of trustees that mirrored Dutch society, with its pronounced political and religious diversity. However, the composition of the board was restricted: women could not participate, nor those who were politically to the left of liberals (De Jong 1982). Although formally these restrictions no longer exist, they continue to have quite an impact on the culture of academe, especially as far as the
exclusion of women in the top leadership of the organisation is concerned.

It is remarkable that such a system could survive the democratic movement of the 1970s and that not until 1987 did universities get the power to appoint professors without interference from the central government. At that time it was felt that the administrative and legislative framework for universities was no longer adequate for meeting the future demands on the system. Universities were expected to operate more in accordance with market developments. In order to facilitate such a shift, governmental steering would no longer be detailed and directed at the level of the disciplines but would become more global and directed at macro issues. This approach, known as “steering from a distance”, entailed increased institutional autonomy and responsibility in exchange for more accountability in terms of quality control, output productivity, and effectiveness. Moreover, universities are increasingly operating in a market-driven environment in which relationships with customers are predominant. The emphasis on relevant (contract) research and the idea of the entrepreneurial university are cases in point. The objective of Dutch higher education policy of devolving responsibility for managerial decisions from government to the institutions—enabling them to respond to the rapidly changing demands of society—is strongly advocated in HOOP 2000, the governmental planning paper on the further development of higher education (Ministry of Education 1999).

In the context of Dutch higher education’s policy of increasing the autonomy of institutions, two issues in particular are central: first, the evolving employment relationships in higher education and, second, the new governance structure at Dutch universities.

The first issue involves a move away from employment patterns associated with the public sector toward a more hybrid form incorporating private-sector elements. Legally, academics are civil servants falling within the framework of public employment. Academics do not constitute a profession in the strict sense, but as Neave and Rhoades (1987, 213) put it, “academia is an estate, whose power, privileges, and conditions of employment are protected by constitutional or administrative law. Their employment is a ‘service’ relationship, not a contractual one, and it is regulated by public law”. Terms and conditions of “service” are settled unilaterally, and academics are supposed to be loyal to the state in return for job security, usually on a lifetime basis. The last few years have witnessed a transition from this public-
sector model to a contractual employment relationship, according to which academics acquire the legal status of employee and their working conditions are regulated by contracts of employment under private law. This implies that in substance the obligations of staff are settled bilaterally between the universities, as the legal employers, and the employees—either on an individual basis or, as is often the case, through collective bargaining between the representative bodies. Thus, while a “service” relationship provides a culture in which the independent academic can experience the research and training responsibilities with little organisational constraint, a contractual relationship provides a labour contract between employer and employee that has certain inherently hierarchical undertones.

The second major issue facing the academic profession has to do with the new law on the university governance structure, which dates from 1997. This law enables universities to change the organisational structure quite radically as far as the management of teaching and research are concerned. This new governance structure means a shift from the traditional collegiate structure in which deans were elected for a fixed period of time as primus inter pares toward a management model with deans as professional managers. These managers have increased budgetary responsibilities and a delegated authority for staffing matters—including appointments, personnel assessments, and so on. This changing university governance structure tends to transform the traditional task-oriented organisation, in which academics have a large amount of professional autonomy, into a market-type organisation, which stresses the managerial aspects of teaching and research.

These two issues, which will be discussed at greater length later in this article, form the context in which the current debate on academic appointments in the Netherlands must be considered. From this process of transformation a “clash of cultures” is emerging between “traditional” and “modernistic” concepts of the academic profession. Opponents of these developments have argued that the emerging “hybrid” structure is incompatible with the basic assumptions and beliefs in the university. The discussion about meddling with the civil status, which is connected with lifetime employment (tenure), and disputes over professional autonomy and academic freedom have to be considered in this context. Supporters of the changes see the advantages of such a hybrid organisation in terms of the synergism between formally separate organisational units; they consider transforming the authority relationships between management and academics as a nec-
necessary condition for the modernisation of employment relationships. Whether these changes are viewed as for the good or the bad, it is quite clear that they are challenging the traditional hegemony of academics in the educational and decision-making processes of institutions, and the conditions under which they have to perform their tasks.

There are other factors that do have an impact. One is the demographic factor, as academic staff are predominantly male and aging. Another factor is the level of funding and resources which becomes an issue in the tension between tenured staff and (mainly junior) staff employed on temporary contracts who have few career prospects and low salaries. The gender inequity is also of great concern, as the proportion of female professors is quite low relative to other European countries. All these issues, which will be touched upon in the following pages, are considered part of the overall changes taking place in the academic profession at Dutch universities.

The Basic Elements of Dutch Higher Education

Higher education in the Netherlands consists of two sectors, the university sector and the sector for higher vocational education (Hoger Beroepsonderwijs, or HBO). The HBO sector constitutes an important part of higher education, with 60 quite large institutions providing a wide range of vocationally oriented courses, with a standard period of study lasting four years. At present, there are in all about 450,000 students in higher education, 63 percent of which are in the HBO and 37 percent in universities. The total number of university students has decreased slightly in the last decade, from about 175,000 in 1990 to 160,000 10 years later. The HBO, on the other hand, has experienced a continuous growth in number of students and consequently contributes considerably to the phenomenon of mass higher education.

Besides the universities and the HBO institutions, other institutions are considered part of higher education, namely those with “university status” such as the several institutes for theology and the university for business administration. In addition, the Open University provides both university and HBO degrees through distance learning, with a number of support centres around the country.

This article concentrates on the university sector, which consists of 12 universities—8 of which provide teaching and conduct research in a wide range of academic disciplines in the arts and sciences. Three universities offer courses mainly in science and engineering sub-
jects, and one specialises in agricultural sciences. The size of these universities varies considerably due to the age, prestige, and range of arts and sciences they teach. Despite the claims of individual universities and despite a few attempts to rank universities, the differences in terms of status and academic standing are negligible. There is a tendency for universities to stress their distinctive features, but while most universities aspire to belong to the top universities in the world, profiling occurs to a surprisingly limited degree. Basically, universities can be viewed as comparable in terms of academic quality and standards.

As for the distinction between the private and public sector it is sufficient to say here that some universities are private in status and are based on a denominational affiliation. However, they are funded by the state under similar conditions as those pertaining to public Dutch universities. To be sure, there are differences in legal status between staff of public and private universities, but at present these differences are negligible as basically the same legal regulations apply to both sets of universities.

A clear relationship between enrolment and funding does not exist. Due to financial cuts in the 1990s the decline in the number of academic staff has been greater, relatively, than the decline in student enrolments. After reaching a peak in 1993, the number of full-time academic staff declined from 23,700 to 21,702 in 1996. In 1998 this increased slightly, by 1.3 percent, to 22,043 (VSNU 1999a). The current funding model, a form of capacity funding, was designed to provide universities with the financial stability that will enable them to counterbalance the declining intake. In this system the teaching capacity will be degree dependent rather than sensitive to student enrolments. A method of funding that is fully independent of enrolments may seem quite attractive at a time when the number of students is declining. On the other hand, capacity funding on the basis of expected output and on quality assessments may bring back the uncertainty. Funds allocated on the basis of the number of graduates means that the more diplomas an institution delivers the more money they receive, but institutions will be penalised in the case of dropouts. It has been calculated that under this plan only 13 percent of the funds will be allocated on the basis of new entrants (Koelman 1998, 136).

With regard to the research function of universities, there has been a tendency in the last decade to separate teaching and research and to concentrate most research in research schools and institutes. The research schools are considered independent organisational units
with responsibilities for budgets and for personnel management. The
minister stipulated that sufficient funds should be allocated to the re-
search schools by the hosting universities. Most research trainees, who
are involved in research in the course of their doctoral degrees, are
employed at these schools. The research institutes, which are based
within particular disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields, have also
their own budgetary responsibilities and are increasingly dependent
on contract funding.

Research funding is split into three compartments. The first
compartment (or stream) consists of the basic budget from the Minis-
try of Education, Science and Culture. The second stream pertains to
the Dutch research councils that distribute governmental funding for
research, on a competitive basis. The third stream refers to all other
externally funded grants (contract research). In the total research ex-
penditure of universities, the ratios of these compartments are 71.3
percent, 8.3 percent, and 20.2 percent, respectively (Hackmann and
Klemperer 2000). The last few years have witnessed a stronger focus
on specific research areas. To increase competition and strengthen the
practical relevance of research, the previous minister attempted to shift
a substantial part of first-stream money to the research councils. Al-
though this policy failed, a more directed and programmatic research
policy by the research councils, research institutes, and university man-
agement has become apparent. Moreover, the present minister intends
to support innovative research through targeted budget allocations.

The distinction between these three main sources of funding
suggests that research is embedded in a system with several levels.
University management is but one of the actors determining what ac-
tivities have to be carried out in the workplace. Other important deci-
sions are taken by agencies such as the Ministry of Education, Culture
and Science; the research councils; and other research subsidisers. For
universities, such a multilevel structure does not facilitate rational de-
cision making. All these actors have their own policy objectives with
respect to the employment conditions and appointment system of the
professoriate.

Developments in the Academic Profession
(a) The present structure of the academic staff encompasses a
number of functional categories. The core of the academic profession
consists of three ranks: professor (hoogleraar), university main lecturer
(universitair hoofddocent, UHD), and university lecturer (universitair docent, UD). The title professor is a general one, and although there are some special cases—such as ecclesiastical and endowed professors—these ranks are all considered part of the professoriate. The three ranks stand in hierarchical relation to each other and represent an employee career ladder with increasing qualifications and responsibilities. Professors, UHD, and UD are all charged with teaching and research duties. In the past, the proportion of the task components for each of these ranks was centrally determined (normally 40 percent teaching, 40 percent research, and 20 percent administration), but universities have gradually received greater freedom to determine the task components for individual staff members. A combination of research and teaching, however, remains the principle.

In addition to these main ranks, some other categories can be identified. One is the category “other academic staff”, consisting of research and teaching associates who are employed at universities or the affiliated research institutes. Their tasks are concentrated either on teaching or research duties. This category also includes the increasing number of “postdocs”, whose duties are predominantly in the field of research.

The other category consists of research trainees (assistant/onderzoekers in opleiding, AiO/OiO). These positions, created in the mid-1980s, can be considered in the context of postgraduate training leading toward a doctoral degree. Research trainees receive research training and supervision but are at the same time supposed to contribute to the research output of faculties or research institutes and have teaching obligations (in the case of AiO) up to a maximum of 25 percent of their total working time. They have a temporary appointment for a standard four-year period (with a maximum of a single one-year extension), and because of this appointment they are treated as members of the academic profession. Finally, there is the category of student assistants, who have a contract relationship with their universities. The relative distribution of these different staff categories is presented in table 1.

Table 1 shows that the total number of academic staff peaked in 1994, declined thereafter, but has increased again slightly in 1998. The fluctuations are mainly due to changes in the categories “other academic” and research trainees. Since the 1990s, there has generally been a proportionally stable distribution between the categories professor, UHD, and UD + “other academic” of 1:1:4; because of growth in
One explanation for the relative decline in the number of research trainees since 1994 is that the employment conditions are considered less favourable compared to other employment sectors and fewer young people aspire to a research career. Some (technical) universities seek to counteract this by putting research trainees into a higher rank and calling them “junior researchers”. Other universities have introduced a new category of scholarships instead of research trainee. Although the holders of scholarships are doing the same kind of work as research trainees, and are also working for their doctoral degree, they are not considered formal employees of the university. The emphasis is on the student character of the category rather than on the employee status. Financial reasons are the underlying motivation since universities are not charged for the redundancy payments of scholarship holders when they leave the institution, an obligation universities do have regarding research trainees. This practice has been much criticised as evidenced by the waiver clauses in the United Kingdom to relinquish redundancy rights. The so-called zero-appointments are another new type of position referring to mostly young, unemployed academics who wish to obtain experience in research or teaching without an ongoing employment status. Those with scholarships and zero-

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<th>Table 1 Composition of Staff Categories</th>
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<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>Other academic</td>
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<td>Research trainees</td>
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<td>Student assistants</td>
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Source: Based on figures from VSNU (various editions of WOPI).

Note: The numbers are in full-time equivalents.
appointments constitute “invisible faculty”, with limited prospects for advancement or employment stability.

**Academic Appointments and Careers**

As was noted earlier, the appointment of professors by the Crown was abolished in 1987, and since then universities have recruited and appointed their own academic staff, including professors. In a public procedure, candidates are normally invited to submit applications. A selection committee may select some of them for interviews. It is also quite common to fill vacancies with internal candidates. However, an open competition is compulsory for vacancies at the level of *universitair docent* (UD) and higher. The recruitment and appointment of staff have been further decentralised toward the faculties, with the exception of professors—for which the procedure is as follows. First, faculty boards establish a selection committee that composes a job description and a personnel specification. Second, faculties at all other universities in the same discipline are asked to inform suitable candidates of the post and are consulted about possible candidates. Third, following advice from the selection committee, faculty boards recommend one or two candidates to the board of governors, which ultimately takes the final decision and appoints a candidate. In practice, the board of governors rarely deviates from the recommendations of the faculty board.

In order to facilitate the international recruitment of staff, some faculties have started to adapt Dutch academic ranks to the American ranks of (full) professor, associate professor, and assistant professor. There remain differences, however, especially as far as employment conditions are concerned.

The academic career structure is determined predominantly by the research assessment system. In the past it was more common to promote a staff member to a higher rank on the basis of seniority. This resulted in a top-heavy structure, given the low mobility of academics in the Netherlands. Gradually, this automatic system disappeared, and promotion now occurs on the basis of individual assessments. These assessments focus mainly on research capabilities, publications in refereed journals, and contacts in the research world—a practice that is also followed in the recruitment of new staff. The possession of a doctoral degree is a standard prerequisite for UHD and professors. It is assumed that those who are good at research will be good at teaching, an assumption reflecting the strong Humboldtian concept of higher education—according to which research and teaching are strongly intertwined. This corresponds with the finding in the international survey conducted by the Carnegie Foundation, in which faculty were asked
to indicate whether they preferred teaching or research. Although faculty lean toward research in most countries, the Netherlands led in this respect, with 76 percent stating a preference for research (Altbach 1996). This is not surprising as research output is all that counts, and an academic’s career prospects are determined by the research output.

There have been some recent attempts to break through this unilateral emphasis on the research assessment system and to reward other qualities of academic work. Due to the increasing demand for teaching evaluations, some universities have begun to require specific qualifications regarding teaching skills and teaching experience as part of the selection criteria. A further step is to introduce measures that enable staff to concentrate on either teaching or research rather than the standard division of 40 percent teaching and 40 percent research. A model designed by Utrecht University, for example, is designed to create greater possibilities for a differentiated career path within teaching or research. The basic idea is that teaching and research tasks are equally important for the attainment of institutional objectives and that these task components may exist in different proportions in the responsibilities of academic staff and in the workload of individual members of staff. Thus it is possible for an individual to concentrate exclusively on teaching or research for the duration of a previously arranged period.

Another way to break through the dominance of scientific research arose from criticisms on the prevailing research assessments. These assessments are based on a one-sided emphasis on publications in international refereed journals and entries in citation indexes as the most important indicators of academic quality. Consequently, the applied and technologically based fields of research are placed at a disadvantage as they use other standards. Apart from this, there is a general reexamination under way of the traditional distinction between basic and applied research and the dominance of the basic natural sciences model (Rip 1997). Recently, the protocol for the research assessments has been changed in the sense that every research group is requested to formulate a mission statement. This includes a formulation of the character of the research (basic versus applied) as well as the objectives of the research group in terms of outcomes, dissemination, design and clients. During peer reviews, evaluators are explicitly asked to take into account context-specific assessments (Verkley 1998).

The experience so far teaches that it is quite difficult to move away from the dominant reward system that creates academic reputations. However, with teaching assessments becoming more rigorous
and other qualifications being considered, the shifts just mentioned may have an impact on personnel issues. There is a tendency to include other than purely academic qualifications in academic recruitment. Other qualifications, especially for senior university staff, include managerial abilities and the capacity to attract external research funding. Generally, contacts with the world of professional practice are considered increasingly important. In advertisements for academic positions, increasingly the ability to operate in the world outside higher education is mentioned as an asset. Obviously, this is more relevant in fields with a stronger market orientation—such as engineering and business studies—but even in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities attempts are being made to strengthen the relationships with professional domains.

A Diverse Profession

The rapidly changing environment for higher education institutions and the implications for the traditional features of academic staff have been the subject of extensive research in the last decade (De Weert and Van Vucht Tijssen 1999; Farnham 1999; Enders and Teichler 1997). One issue is whether the profession has a monomorphic character or has to some extent become more diversified. A basic division between a core group of permanently employed, secure, relatively well-paid academic staff on the one side and peripheral groups of casually employed, insecure, poorly paid staff on the other. It is estimated that in European countries between one-fifth to one-half of all academic staff are on a nonpermanent basis—with a median of about one-third (Farnham 1999).

At Dutch universities, the number of full-time academic staff on temporary contracts has fluctuated slightly in the last decade: from 24.1 percent in 1990 to 22.8 percent at the end of 1998. Divided by functions, there is a clear rift between the three main academic ranks and the lower positions. Of the total number of the three main ranks (professors, UHD and UD), 7.6 percent hold nontenured positions, compared to 7.5 percent in 1990. Especially the UDs comprise a relatively larger part of temporary appointments, namely 11.7 percent against 4 percent or less for the ranks of professors and UHD.

By far the largest categories employed on a temporary basis are at the bottom of the academic hierarchy. Virtually all research trainees are on temporary, four-year contracts, and in the category “other academic staff” 60 percent have temporary appointments. They con-
stitute the underclass of the academic profession as they have limited career prospects within academe in terms of tenure-track appointments. Especially the postdocs experience the temporary contracts without long-term prospects as a major problem (Crum and Bal 1998). This problem has been recognised by higher education policymakers, as will be discussed.

The gender inequity is a particular concern. Although in the lower categories of research trainees and “other academic staff” women are relatively well represented, in the two highest academic ranks they are poorly represented. The Netherlands is amongst the European countries with the lowest proportion of female professors (5.4 percent in 1998). Women comprise 8.2 percent of all UHDs (VSNU 1999a). These figures indicate that for most women in academe the glass ceiling remains. Apart from the mechanisms behind gender disparities, explanations are sought in employment practices such as the reluctance to take into account in the assessments that more women work part time. As Portegrijs argues (1998), research output is determined on the basis of a full-time appointment with little adjustment for the part-time factor. Other explanations emerge from the university culture, which is predominantly masculine, and from a gender bias in review procedures (Adviesraad 2000). Although the claim of gender bias is hard to prove, Brouns (1999) shows some evidence of the role of gender as a factor in the award of research proposals and casts doubt on the composition of review committees. According to Brouns, these decision-making structures work out badly for women’s academic careers. Whatever the impact of these and other factors, it is quite clear that greater efforts must be made to encourage the recruitment and retention of women in the higher ranks—not only as a matter of justice but also because of the waste of so much talent.

The growing segmentation between the “have” and “have-not” groups has increasingly attracted the attention of government, research councils, and universities. The problem has two sides: the aging of the professoriate and the limited career prospects of junior staff. About 68 percent of all professors are 50 years of age and over, and a large number are expected to retire at the same time. The present academic structure is characterised by a top-heavy structure as the current contraction in numbers in the higher academic ranks leaves limited room for career development, especially for younger staff. In fact, as a result of this situation, the academic profession may be less attractive to students who see better employment opportunities elsewhere. In the last few years the number of vacancies for university places has
exceeded the number of candidates, particularly in science and engineering subjects. The central question, therefore, is how to boost the careers of young people, and particularly women, in science.

Recently, a number of initiatives have been taken to retain young promising academics for the university. Apart from the practice of recruiting research trainees from abroad, research councils have launched some research programmes that provide a longer-term perspective for talented researchers. For example, postdocs financed by the KNAW (Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences) have a three-year employment that after evaluation can be extended for another two years on the condition that the university guarantees a permanent position thereafter. Such a guarantee invites universities and faculties to pursue systematic personnel management. Another example is the initiative of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to make funds available for universities to appoint young professors to positions from which the sitting professor will retire in a few years. At present, universities are thus able to attract young professors in subject areas that are confronted with an aging professoriate (in chemistry, the humanities, psychology, biology, and mechanical engineering). This temporary double staffing is intended to ensure that when the senior professor retires there will not be a shortage of suitable replacement candidates. In a similar vein, funds have been made available to enhance the academic careers of women in the higher academic ranks. This program, called Aspasia, invites women to submit research proposals that, if accepted by the research council, will result in an offer of a permanent position by the university. Although the number of places available is quite limited, these examples illustrate the Dutch way of improving the careers of young people and women in the profession.

A further aspect of fragmentation of the academic profession can be seen in the growing number of part-time professors as well as endowed professors, especially when they are appointed not on the basis of academic qualifications but on the basis of other merits. A number of these professors are sponsored by industry, which views the links as a way of gaining societal recognition. However, within the university such positions have a connotation of frères ennemis and raises questions among traditional academic staff. The standard prerequisites for becoming a professor involve lengthy periods of training and scientific work, whereas for endowed and sponsored professors these qualifications apparently are waived. As they do not stand out scientifically, the proliferation of these professors may violate the scientific stan-
dards of the university and lead to a further “diluting” of the academic profession (Lorenz 1993; Boot 1998). For young academics, this practice is quite discouraging as it appears that many people who are less qualified academically are becoming professors (Ginkel 1999).

The increase in the number of endowed professorships points to the changing position of Dutch universities, which are moving in the direction of increasing collaboration with important socioeconomic sectors. The development of strategic alliances with industry in order to achieve synergy in basic and applied research areas reinforces the current tendency to expand the number of professors on a part-time or dual basis. Some consider this trend to be part of an increasing dependency of researchers on external constituencies. Köbben and Tromp (1999), for example, present several cases in which conflicts arose when research outcomes did not match the expectations or the interests of the principal client. They show how easily the scientific freedom of researchers can be compromised in such situations. In particular, when publication of results is frustrated by clients, this is interpreted by some staff as an assault on academic freedom and integrity.

These developments show how the nature of the academic profession is changing and that there are different views on the role of academics in their connections with the external world.

Terms and Conditions of Service

From Civil Servant Status to Contractual Relationships

This section discusses the changing legal conditions of employment relationships in the Netherlands. As mentioned in the introduction, two main types of employment relationships can be distinguished, the civil or public type and the private or contractual type. In the first type, academic staff have the legal status of civil servants and are public officials; their employment conditions are set unilaterally. In the private type, the substance of staff obligations is settled bilaterally between employers and employees, either on an individual basis or through collective bargaining.

The Dutch system is undergoing a transition from a public to a contractual type of relationship. In 1988 the then minister of education, while discussing the public character of higher education, stated that universities should not become private enterprises as they serve a general interest in the field of education and research. On personnel matters, such a concept means there is no room for something like a collective labour agreement (VSNU 1988, 18). In other words, employ-
ees in a labour organisation characterised by a “service” relationship are by definition civil servants, who have no rights to collective bargaining. Institutions have thus gradually received greater freedom in determining terms and conditions of service. In this process, three main phases can be identified.

The first phase concerns the process of sectoralisation. Until 1989, the central government through the Ministry of Internal Affairs determined basic salaries and working conditions for all those employed in the public sector. Sectoralisation implies that the responsibility for those employed in the public sector shifts away from the minister of internal affairs (as is the case for those working in the educational sector) to the minister of education. Only pensions and social security rights remain within the remit of the minister of internal affairs.

In the second phase, a further decentralisation toward the universities has taken place. The earlier adage that terms and conditions of staff will be determined by the minister, “unless otherwise stated”, was reversed in 1994. The point of departure is that institutions are allowed by law to determine the employment conditions of their personnel, with the exception of primary and “protocol” issues. The latter include procedures for job evaluations, salary scales, and annual pay increases, which are decided for the educational sector as a whole; redundancy entitlements and other social security issues; and standard working hours. All remaining conditions—such as pension facilities, bonuses, teaching load, sick leave and sick pay arrangements, maternity leave, recruitment, and appointments—are determined by the institutions.

The third step is the minister’s decision to devolve responsibilities for the primary issues—including salary negotiations. One of the main arguments was that this would enable institutions to facilitate their role as legal employers. The outcome of this process is that governmental regulation has been replaced by an institutional framework in which universities sit at the bargaining table to negotiate with the trade unions about pay, salary increases and conditions of service. The universities are represented through their intermediary body, the VSNU (Association of Cooperating Dutch Universities) as the official employers’ association. This means that the entire package of terms and conditions of service (with the exception of pensions and social security regulations) has become the subject of negotiation, resulting in a collective agreement that will be binding on all parties. Although
quite similar, universities and research institutes have their own separate agreements. In many ways, the social partners agreed on the basic philosophy of de-volving responsibilities from the central government to the institutions, although in several phases there were different viewpoints on the pace and possible consequences of the process. The minister was reluctant to let his authority slide, but the belief that through this process institutions would be better able to cope with external constraints and utilise instruments for modern personnel management—such as the introduction of reward systems—appeared to be decisive. Another argument was that decentralisation would contribute to the improvement of the quality of teaching and scientific research. The trade unions generally favored this development and expressed their views that institutions were better bargaining parties as they were more sensitive to the special needs of academic staff. Trade unions regarded the institutions as partners in opposing governmental attempts to cut the higher education budget. For institutions with lump-sum funding, collective agreements on pay impact directly on their budget. Institutions are directly responsible for the salary demands of their personnel, rather than being able to shift these over to the government.

Overall, however, institutions have expressed the desire to take responsibility and to act as employers. One of the most prominent advocates of this change, the late Jankarel Gevers, chairman of the Board of Governors of the University of Amsterdam, stressed on many occasions that modern employment relationships are not compatible with a “foreign” and distant official regime, but rather require personnel management that is attuned to the special circumstances of higher education institutions. Due to these changes, personnel matters are no longer handled separately but can be combined with other issues in an integrated management model.

Remuneration
Salaries have been one of the major issues in the negotiating process. Unions continue to argue that wages have not kept up with other parts of the public sector and with the private sector. Employers in higher education have focused their bargaining tactics to this end and have attempted to mitigate budgetary constraints set by the government. It is worthwhile to add that the expenditure for the educational sector as a whole in the Netherlands amounts to 5.4 percent of GNP, whereas the OECD countries expend a mean of 6 percent. There is no evidence,
however, that this low level of public funding has resulted in a reduced quality of education.

Although the wage differentials between the public and private sector are not unambiguous, the salaries earned in the public sector have generally remained below those in the private sector. This relates especially to the higher-level positions. Herwijer (1999) estimates that wages in positions requiring an academic degree are 7 percent higher in the private sector than in the public sector. Within the public sector, salary differences do occur. For example, due to a new salary system, medical specialists in large public hospitals earn almost twice as much as their colleagues in academic hospitals. This difference is even more acute as specialists in academic hospitals are confronted with more complex and intensive medical conditions and treatments.

The current earnings of academic staff are based on the public sector’s 18-part grade structure. Each grade has an associated fixed salary scale, with between 9 to 12 annual increments. Salary increments are provided to most staff automatically, although legally institutions have the possibility of withholding them from poor performers. The structure is such that academics in different grades may have equivalent salaries—for example, increment number 7 of grade 11 equals the first increment of grade 12, but those in higher grades will attain a higher salary in the long term.

To give an indication of the gross monthly salaries of academics, we have taken the mean of the amounts in each grade per month—professors are divided into two main grades, A and B. Of the total group of professors, 53 percent are in grade A, with a mean monthly salary of $4,908. The other 47 percent are in grade B, with a mean income of $5,753. The distinction between grades A and B is not very pronounced. Originally grade A was intended as the normal scale and B the exception, for a candidate with particular market value. However, no criteria for this distinction have been developed. Sometimes candidates are promoted to grade B when they meet the required qualifications, and sometimes appointment to a higher grade occurs if a B position is included in the budget.

Almost all UHDs are grade 13 or 14, with a mean monthly salary of $4,207. The UDs are 88.5 percent in grades 10 to 12 with a mean salary of $2,975. The junior ranks are mostly in grades 10 and 11, with a mean salary of $3,306. Finally, the salary of research trainees falls within that of grade 10, which increases over the years, from $1,052 in the first year to $1,878 in the fourth year. The salaries for research
trainees are generally considered to be too low and not in correspondence with salaries in the market sector. In order to attract more candidates, the technical universities have increased the salaries for trainees or offer allowances and fringe benefits—such as computers and other research facilities, special courses, and extensive opportunities to attend conferences. The variations in reward systems, on the basis of supply and demand factors, are part of a broader tendency to introduce differential pay schemes according to market differences.

(c) Modernisation of Employment Relationships

The fixation on pay overshadows some other important matters that have been crucial in the bargaining process, issues that have been classified under the term “modernisation of employment relationships”—which refers to the management of institutions as flexible corporations. This flexibility includes the liberalisation of rules governing the selection and appointment of staff, individual service contracts, the ability to dismiss staff, and the casualisation of academic employment.

It is noteworthy, however, that the present collective agreement limits the possibilities for temporary appointments. It says that temporary appointments should last a minimum of two years, with a maximum of two subsequent extensions. The fourth appointment is automatically on a permanent basis. Such an agreement prevents academics from being shifted from one temporary contract to another without any long-term prospects, but it may also motivate universities to dismiss temporary staff at an earlier stage.

An intriguing question remains as to what should be determined nationally and what should be left to the local, institutional level. The covenant signed by government, employers, and trade unions prescribes that negotiations at the national level include: salaries, function appraisal schemes, working hours, social security, and “all that employers and unions decide among themselves”. In different employment sectors collective bargaining is being eroded in favour of agreements at the level of individual firms or specific employment areas. This is not only occurring in the private sector, but also in public services such as the health sector, where agreements are targeted to specific professional groups. In higher education, similar trends are becoming apparent at least in countries where institutions are able to employ and manage their own staff without interference from the state. For Commonwealth countries, a trend can be identified that is moving away from uniformity in dealing with staffing issues toward the de-
vising of methods and systems that allow for individual, subject, or market differences. There is also a trend away from national salary structures applicable to all institutions toward greater institutional flexibility (Schofield 1997).

Although there will always be tension between what will be decided nationally and locally, there are good reasons to leave as much as possible to be decided at the local level. Local agreements permit more freedom of action and responsiveness to external developments and allow approaches to be tailored to specific local circumstances. At the individual level, for example, à la carte reward systems are being developed, whereby personal and variable employment contracts are drawn up. Individual staff can choose from a variety of conditions such as maternity leave, pay bonuses, computers, and other fringe benefits. This variety seems more attractive to institutions than uniformly imposing an “ideal” structure and work pattern across the board at all institutions.

It would be an oversimplification, however, to adopt the view that personnel policies are matters solely within the area of responsibility of the individual institution. On the contrary, collective agreements will continue to play an important part in determining working conditions. As Willke (1998) argues, remuneration is not an objective quantity but will always be based on a negotiating process. While it is possible to negotiate on an individual basis, the transaction costs would be extremely high—not only because of the high number of individual staff but also because of the socially sensitive character of remuneration. Therefore, collective negotiations with recognised trade unions over salaries and conditions of employment will be very efficient, with the possibility of economies of scale. Moreover, collective negotiations allow a more efficient response to signals from the market (Willke 1998).

Additionally, a multidimensional agenda would facilitate an acceptable agreement for both parties in their respective priority areas. For example, employers have stressed the importance of greater flexibility in employment relations and performance-related pay, whereas trade unions see the general level of wages as one of their priority areas. It is not a zero-sum game, but a compromise over a few central issues. In the Dutch agreement one of these issues is the number of standard working hours—currently 36 hours a week. Dutch academics seem to work a longer, not shorter, week relative to colleagues in other countries according to the Carnegie study (Geurts, Maassen, and van Vught 1996; Altbach 1996). Other issues include education and
training facilities in the context of career development and provision of maternity leave. These issues are handled within the collective framework for regulating the employment relationship (VSNU 1999b).

The Debate on Tenure
One aspect of the modernisation of employment relationships concerns the civil service status or tenured system of the academic profession. Higher education management takes the position that if they are legally able to act as true employers—and this has essentially not been disputed—then the logical consequence would be to abandon the civil service status and replace it with private employment status. The transition to an employer model would then be complete. The trade unions, obviously, oppose the abolition of this public status because staff would no longer enjoy the protection of a lifetime contract but would be left to the whims of the market. A final decision has been postponed, but the issue is a central one on the political agenda. We use civil service status within the context of the concept of tenure, although it is acknowledged that tenure may mean different things in different national settings, with an enormous variety of processes (Tierney and Bensimon 1996). Although civil service status is commonly understood as a lifetime job, under present conditions this is not by definition guaranteed. If a particular position becomes obsolete or is no longer wanted, individual members of staff cannot claim another post. Under this scheme, departmental reorganisations and budget reductions constitute legal grounds for dismissing staff because of redundancy. For example, the large-scale reorganisation process in the 1980s resulted in a reduction of traditional academic staff positions by over 30 percent. Even a professor no longer has a lifetime job from which rights can be derived, although dismissals for this group entail lengthy, time-consuming procedures and incur substantial costs due to compensation payments.

Nevertheless tenure has certain rigidities and legal implications and has thus come under attack—especially from those who advocate the development of entrepreneurial, market-responsive educational institutions. One such view, expressed by Winsemius (Winsemius 1999), is that universities should abolish permanent appointments and only offer temporary contracts. As compensation, professors should be better paid, especially if they teach a useful, profitable course. Critics of the tenure system argue that professors who received tenure a long time ago may lose interest or may not be willing or able to invest in new developments. If tenure occurs around age 30, a long career
path of 35 years lies ahead until the compulsory retirement age of 65 years. Requirements may change and institutions, faced with financial and technological developments, may decide that the rigidities imposed by a tenure system extract a high price. Under a term-contract system it is much easier to dismiss incompetent or unproductive professors. Moreover, if the tenure system does not recognise mandatory retirement, institutions are legally in a difficult position if they attempt to pension off older staff.

Another argument in favor of appointing professors on a contract basis rather than in a tenured position was put forward by the rector of Nijmegen University (Blom 1999). Blom argues that current appointment procedures are so time consuming and cumbersome that the best candidates may give up and quit. Temporary contracts do not require long hiring procedures, enabling universities to hold on to the best candidates. Such a view fits better in a market-type environment in which organisations have to compete for highly qualified staff. For the group of academics to which this situation applies, tenure apparently has little economic value.

Defenders of the tenure system have cast doubt on claims of the rigidities and ineffectiveness imposed by the tenure system. As McPherson and Schapiro (1999) argue, the highly specialised nature of academic production gives rise to the need for long-term job security. Those who wish to invest their time and effort in new and original areas of inquiry have to concentrate over the long-term in a specialised field. This is quite risky for those on temporary contracts. Tenure functions as an incentive for academics to invest in long-term and speculative research and teaching projects. A strong efficiency rationale for tenure is given by Dutch economist Bomhoff (1999), who argues that the justification for tenure rests on informed judgment and incentive. The university administration relies to a considerable degree on incumbent academics to judge the quality of junior staff. If academics thought they were vulnerable to being replaced by more highly skilled outsiders, they would be less likely to encourage the promotion of able junior academics. Especially if budget cuts are being made, academics could be expected to protect themselves by excluding high-quality newcomers from academic life. On the other hand, tenure creates an incentive for academics to reveal their true judgments about the abilities of junior staff and to hire the best candidates available (for a similar argument, see Carmichael 1988).
Some of these efficiency claims are hard to test, such as the investment of academics in long-term projects or faculty infighting. Dnes and Seaton (1998), however, found no empirical evidence in the U.K. data in favor of the Carmichael hypothesis. The 1988 Reform Act on academic tenure did not cause incumbent academics to consolidate their hold on senior posts. Neither has it hindered the importance placed on academic performance, nor the promotion of younger, less-established academics (Dnes and Seaton 1998).

Rather than thinking about tenure as an all-or-nothing proposition—either valuable for all forms of employment relationships or inefficient and costly—some alternatives are being explored that maintain the beneficial elements of tenure while allowing for more institutional flexibility. One option is to let faculty choose between tenure and term appointments. The latter choice may be more expensive as institutions would have to offer attractive employment conditions as compensation for giving up tenure. This would also be attractive for part-time professors who keep their jobs in industry. Another option recently introduced at a few universities is to reduce the working hours of staff older than 55 years under attractive salary conditions and use the hours available to attract young staff in additional permanent positions. This policy has the advantage that the experience of older staff will not disappear from the university, but a rejuvenation of the academic staff population can be stimulated. Participation in this option is completely voluntary, but those who agree with this procedure are obliged to retire at the age of 61.

A third option is to link tenure to some kind of assessment procedure. Although the systems for posttenure review that were introduced in several American states have not yet come to the Netherlands, there are changes regarding the management of research and teaching that may help such an option to emerge.

Management of Teaching and Research
The devolution of the responsibilities from government to universities can be conceived of as a lever for change at the institutional level. Traditionally, personnel management at the institutional level has been concerned with administering personnel matters like appointments and salaries. This had the bureaucratic purpose of ensuring that institutions met their legal obligations. This attitude is gradually changing, and institutions are increasingly seeking to integrate personnel issues into their overall strategic management. There is a growing awareness
that the recruitment, deployment, retention, and reward systems should require a strategic and active approach both at the central administrative level of the university as well as at the middle-management (faculty) level.

This change of perspective has been reinforced by the modernisation of the university governance structure, introduced in 1997 (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 1995; Boer and Huisman 1999). The purpose of the new structure is to invest deans and the university executive board with clearer managerial authority. It is intended to adapt institutional structures and integrate managerial and administrative processes into a single system—an approach considered a necessary condition for more decisive and efficient governance of universities. Important for the position of academic staff is the appointment of deans as professional managers, possessing budgetary responsibilities and a delegated authority for staffing issues. The departmental unit has ceased to exist as an organisational entity in an administrative sense. Instead, the dean has a central role—with executive powers over research, teaching, finance, and management issues. It is expected that the new professional deans will play a central role regarding all important staffing issues and have the authority to determine the contribution of academics they deliver to the teaching and research programs (Cohen 1996).

The new governance structure implies a shift from the collegiate model toward an integrated management model with deans as professional managers. The philosophy is to tilt the university toward a more product-oriented, professional organisation with a greater emphasis on the achievement of institutional and departmental aims and objectives. An important element of this change is to assign clear and tailor-made responsibilities for teaching and research to deans, who delegate further responsibilities to course directors with responsibility for the organisation of the curriculum, and research directors with responsibility for the organisation of research. These directors and deans are the “problem owners” (Fruytier and Timmerhuis 1995) who have personal responsibility for results at all levels and for the quality of the academic staff and their teaching and research. The responsibility for personnel management appears to be a central element in this change. Academic staff are the capital for institutions, and attention to and feedback from them are of crucial importance. At the same time, researchers and teaching staff should not merely pursue their own goals but
should also keep in mind the goals of their own unit in relation to the larger organisation.

It is premature to assess the extent to which this shift from a task-oriented organisation in which academics have a large amount of professional autonomy to a type of organisation emphasising the managerial aspects of teaching and research brings about a “clash of cultures”. It certainly puts pressure on academe as a professional work community and constrains its traditional freedoms regarding research and teaching. Several academics have expressed their concern about this development. Especially the hierarchical modes of decision making at the central management level of the university regarding the designation of programmatic research areas and research potentials are abhorrent to them. This criticism is not only being voiced in the humanities and social sciences but, increasingly, in the sciences and engineering (Timmerhuis 1999). Academics in these fields see university managers as figures who want to be influential on decision-making processes and claim authority regarding the funding of research.

This changing context of the academic profession will not necessarily result in widening breaches between academics and management. Much depends on their respective attitudes. Deans, followed by course and research directors, have to bring about a structured provision of courses and research—an objective requiring the involvement of academic staff for carrying out the various tasks. An intriguing question for future research concerns the basis on which the availability of academics is being determined. Tensions may occur between the claims of the professoriate and the framing of imperatives set by management. It has been questioned whether the present system of academic ranks and chairs, based on criteria derived from research performance, is still appropriate or whether this should not be replaced by a more flexible system that acknowledges different task components.

An alternative system is not to hold to specific functional levels where all staff are involved in teaching and research at vertical competency levels but to create horizontal “task packages” that encompass a broader domain than teaching and research. Teaching staff, for example, can be charged with different kinds of tasks such as curricular development, organisation of project groups, contract activities, developing and implementing information, and communication technology in the teaching process. Research staff may function as the manager of one project and at the same time be involved in carrying out another project or participate in interdisciplinary projects. An impor-
tant element in this concept is the link with basic qualifications and performances in the fields of teaching and research (Vucht Tijssen 1998). The model gives an impetus to human resource management, whereby agreements concerning task assignments and results, staff assessments and appraisal schemes, as well as merit pay constitute the core components. Promotion according to seniority is, at least partially, replaced by promotion based on proven qualities. Such a differentiation of academic tasks may facilitate the employability of academics over a broad range of tasks, and this enables them to develop their professional qualifications. This approach reinforces the need to enhance training and staff development. The present collective agreement provides facilities for career development through further education and training.

These changes are in their prenatal stage, and several elements such as staff evaluation and performance-related pay have not been worked out yet at most Dutch universities. However, they create a climate in which staff are not immune to regular checks on their actual performances. This does not eventually have to lead to decisions regarding dismissals. A regular check, if properly carried out, may be beneficial to all those working in universities as personal interests and personal career developments can be taken into account. At the same time, a functional differentiation in tasks may provide new opportunities for what Boyer called a “reconsideration of academic scholarship” (Boyer 1990), according to which teaching and applied and fundamental research are equally rewarded. Academic careers in this rethinking would not merely be organised vertically, through the prevailing research culture, but also horizontally, by adopting different task components at different moments in their careers. This approach is still being discussed, but potentially a movement in this direction would provide a challenging perspective to the academic profession.

Epilogue
Dutch higher education is experiencing the transition from a centrally governed system to a hybrid system that encompasses market elements. It is attempting to get rid of the traditional certainties associated with the civil employment status in favor of a more dynamic employment relationship containing private-sector elements. The changes in the employment status as well as the shifting authority relationships regarding the management of teaching and research are not welcomed by all who work in universities. For some, a diversification in the profession is considered a negative development, whereas it challenges
others to make academic work more interesting and professional. Although it would not make much sense to judge these changes from a traditional (privileged) position, these changes do require a critical analysis of their outcomes. Much will depend on the approach taken by those who are in management and on the qualities of academic leadership. Moreover, privatised higher education will have certain limits as the notion of civil society is so firmly rooted in Dutch politics that this will prevent such a conversion to occur. Universities will remain public institutions, established by law and deriving from this their legal personality.

For universities it is increasingly important to attract and keep a well-motivated and well-qualified staff as they have to compete with other employment sectors for labour. Salaries and conditions of service play an important role in this. Particularly the problems regarding the underclass of the academic profession, in employment status and career prospects, require a more active personnel management. In particular, more measures are needed that will enable women to shatter the glass ceiling. Universities will benefit from being attractive employers, with a flexible and open system of appointments and career assessments. Nobody wants to go back to a system of appointments behind closed doors, a practice against which Huizinga fulminated so fiercely.

References


Italian university professors are involved in a process of change that is affecting the entire system of higher education as never before. For reasons that will be discussed in the following pages, they have been compelled to adjust to changes in their professional condition and, more importantly, to rethink their role in the university and in society in general.

For decades, higher education in Italy managed to resist external pressures by means of a number of adaptations and adjustments that were able to preserve, relatively unchanged, the role of academia. Perhaps the clearest example is the open-door policy, which was adopted at the end of the 1960s to meet the social demand for a generalised opportunity for access to the education system. At the time, a substantial number of professors argued that academic standards would decline sharply due to the inadequate cultural background of the newcomers to higher education. Individually and spontaneously (without the help of any formal, collective strategy) these professors sought, through more rigid and rigorous courses and exams, to select out a large percentage of students, especially in the first year.

In more recent years (the mid-1980s), the government attempted to change the operation of the university system through a number of laws intended to adapt the Italian system of higher education to that of other countries in Western Europe—such as, introducing the department, a binary system with a professionalising first-de-
gree level, the credit system of evaluation, and in general giving more autonomy to the individual university and more teaching duties to the academic staff. All these measures were basically not implemented by academia.

In the last few years, it seems we are facing a real process of change inside the Italian academic profession in terms of working conditions, especially in recruitment procedures. This article will try to analyse the reasons for this new trend and how the process of change is affecting academicians.

The Structure of Higher Education in Italy
The Italian system of education has always been centralised and basically organised directly by the state through the Ministry of Public Education. Private schools—run mostly by the Catholic Church—always represented a minority sector at all levels, but particularly among the high schools. At the tertiary level, the university was the only kind of institution, and until recently, students had no alternative but to follow a single path leading to the only degree available (the laurea). As is well known, Italy has a number of rather old universities, some of them going back to the 12th century, that have been able to operate through the centuries while keeping to their original purpose of elite training. Almost all but a very few have always been state universities, meaning that they were financially entirely supported by the state and have been under the direct control of the Ministry of Public Education. In the 20th century, only two Catholic universities and four private lay universities were created. These institutions had a certain degree of autonomy but were still required to follow the curricula established by the ministry in all disciplines, have their degrees officially recognised, and receive a substantial percentage of their budget from public money.

In modern times, the number of universities increased rather slowly—in part because the entire structure of the education system was meant progressively to select the student population in order to direct a substantial part of it directly to the labour market after the compulsory and the secondary level. Only those who were supposed to belong to the ruling class and needed to receive training for a future in the leading social and economic positions had the opportunity of attending university. For a long time the rather weak and backward state of the Italian economy also justified the light social demand for higher education.
Only in the 1960s did the booming economy and the drive toward social mobility through the achievement of professional success create a new strong social demand for higher education. As has already been mentioned, the demand for access to the university grew suddenly throughout the 1960s, pushing the government to adopt a general open-door policy. At that time, an active student movement and the social unrest and political turmoil of the period combined to create strong support for all egalitarian proposals for change. It was thus impossible to introduce any kind of diversification of university tracks and degree levels. Short cycles, for instance, were proposed and defeated in Parliament.

In the 1969–70 academic year there were 3,538 full professors and 12,307 assistant professors in the entire university system. Only 5,000 assistant professors were in charge of a course since, in principle, assistant professors were not supposed to have direct responsibility for a course but rather were expected to participate in seminars and other peripheral teaching activities related to courses offered by full professors. In the same year, there were 681,731 students enrolled: 117,059 of them were “overrun students” (students who had been unable to complete their courses within the standard time periods), and 56,414 of whom obtained the laurea. The teaching staff-student ratio was 1:38.2 (or 1:79.8, in the case of assistant professors in charge of courses).

During the 1970s, the increase in the number of university students justified an increase in the academic staff, which followed a two-step procedure. Initially, many temporary positions were created at different levels. Universities were allowed to hire, on a year-by-year basis, a number of professors responsible for one or more courses (professori incaricati, similar to the French chargée de cours) and to give two- or four-year fellowships at the postgraduate level to young scholars. Some 7,000 professori incaricati were actually enrolled during the 1970s, together with 8,000 young fellowship holders (called contrattisti and assegnisti) with no direct teaching duties.

Consequently, in the academic year 1980–81 there were 8,122 full professors, 16,411 assistant professors (9,291 in charge of a course), and 7,095 professori incaricati—for a total of 31,628 (plus the 8,000 young scholars)—and 1,047,874 students (among whom there were 267,560 overrun). In the same year, 74,118 students graduated. The teaching staff-to-student ratio was 1:33.1 (or 1:42.8 in the case of assistant professors in charge of a course).
In the 1980s, a number of changes were introduced in the Italian system of higher education: for example, new universities were created and short cycles introduced with numerus clausus admissions, with the aim of providing an alternative to the traditional track. The academic profession underwent a substantial transformation that resulted in the creation of three positions conceived of as steps on a ladder: from the bottom up we now had researchers (former assistant professors), associate professors, and full professors (or chairholders). The reform law (no. 382, passed in 1980) made all three categories stable ones—that is, with tenure—and organised a series of evaluatory exams to transform the large majority of former temporary positions (professori incaricati and young instructors and fellowship holders like the contrattisti and assegnisti) into either researchers or associate professors. Law no. 382 also established limits on the total number of staff in each of the three categories, setting a ceiling of 16,000 for researchers, 15,000 for associate professors, and 15,000 for full professors.

As a result of these transformations, as of 1990 there were 11,693 full professors, 17,258 associate professors, and 15,509 researchers. In the same year student enrollments were 1,291,991. The law prevented researchers from taking responsibility for teaching a course so as to allow them to do research, increase their scientific productivity, and thus to progress in their careers. Consequently, the academic staff-to-student ratio grew to 1:44.6 (if you include researchers the ratio would have been 1:29). As of 1990, there were 87,714 graduates (including, for the first time, 3,678 graduating from the short cycles).

By the end of the 1990s, (the 1999–2000 academic year) the number of academic staff had increased, and there were 12,918 full professors, 18,091 associate professors, and 19,017 researchers—for a total of 50,026—facing 1,676,702 students, for a ratio of 1:30. At this point, in fact, all researchers were officially entitled to have teaching responsibility. It is also worth noting that 37.5 percent were overrun students and that 140,128 graduated in the year 1998.

The growing pressure of the aggregate social demand for higher education has had some impact on the Italian university through the years. The number of students has increased steadily in the last 40 years, even before the introduction of the open-door policy (which was mostly a consequence and not the cause of the increasing enrollment). The registration rate of the 19-year-olds was 25.8 percent in the academic year 1969–70 and reached 43.3 percent in 1995–96 (3.1 percent of
which were in the short-cycle courses). The productivity of the system has declined steadily, both in terms of the time it takes for students to get a degree and in terms of dropouts. Students take an average of 7.5 years to graduate even in some degree courses that are intended to last four years. The percentage of overrun students is constantly growing: from 20.8 percent of total enrollments in 1969–70, to 37.5 percent in 1998–99.

The number of dropouts has also increased since the 1960s, growing from 14 percent to 25 percent (in the 1970s) and reaching an average of 28 percent only in the first year of enrollment, with differences among fields of studies (the lower percentages being recorded in medicine and the higher in political science). The dropout phenomenon is related to some extent to the kind of upper-secondary school attended by students, since the better results are obtained by those coming from

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Source: Italian National Committee on University Evaluation.
the lycee and the worst by those coming from the vocational schools. All in all, the percentage of students reaching the degree, although slowly growing in recent years, is still lower than in the 1960s and does not exceed 40 percent of the enrolled. As an example it may suffice to remember that in 1994–95 new entrants into the university system numbered 311,665 while dropouts amounted to 208,027 units (equal to 66.7 percent of the entering class).

It should be said that the level of productivity varies not only across disciplinary fields but also across the 62 universities scattered throughout the country. In fact, the Italian system of higher education shows some significant differences between central and peripheral universities in terms of quality of academic life. Likewise, university size varies widely—from a student population of 6,382 in Bergamo (Lombardia, in the north of the country) to 5,054 in Potenza (Basilicata, in the south) to 157,151 in Rome—“La Sapienza”. The majority of the student population (more than 55 percent of the total) is concentrated in the 9 large universities located in the major cities such as Rome, Milan, Naples, Bologna, Torino, and Padova, with an average of 60,000 students per university, while the other universities have an average of some 11,000 students. The size of a university, and especially of the faculties (and consequently in terms of class attendance in first-year courses), has a direct impact on system productivity.

The Academic Profession in Italy

Social Characteristics

The academic career has traditionally been considered as appropriate for the social elite of the country. The reasons for this attitude are related to the historically high social prestige of the profession—one that has progressively been declining over the years, while maintaining some standing at the very top of some disciplines connected with the liberal professions (lawyers, physicians), or in some small towns and peripheral universities. On the other hand, the social origins of academicians confirm the popular image since the highest social strata are heavily represented. Academic staff members have fathers belonging to the upper classes (high-level public and private managers, members of the liberal professions, entrepreneurs): 49.4 percent in the early 1990s, but 55.0 percent in 1958 and 52.0 percent in early 1970s. On the opposite side, 5.7 percent of academicians had fathers belonging to the
working class in the 1990s, 11.0 percent in the 1970s, and 6.0 percent in 1958. The large majority of mothers belong to the nonprofessional category.

Looking at the educational level of parents (their “cultural capital” in Bourdieu’s words), one can find a very high percentage of fathers with university degrees—71.8 percent, which is extremely high in comparison with the level of education in the general population (in 1997 10.9 percent of the total labour force had a university degree). As for the mothers, their level of education is lower, but still 49.0 percent of them hold either a university degree or a “diploma” of upper-secondary school (Bourdieu 1984).

Women in the Italian professoriate comprise just about one-third of the total. In 1998–99, there were 1,483 women out of 12,986 full professors (11.4 percent), 3,968 out of 15,121 associate professors (26.2 percent), and 7,587 out of 19,090 researchers (39.7 percent). Women are more concentrated in the humanities and less in the natural sciences, economics, law, and the social sciences.

But the important difference between genders relates to the pace and length of academic careers. It is well known that women have a more difficult, slow-paced, and short academic career than men, probably because of a combination of a male-oriented attitude in academia and of a self-restrained behavior of the female academicians, who are more inclined or compelled to combine academic duties with other outside (private) roles (Facchini 1997).

The average age of the Italian academic staff is rather high particularly because national competitions for entering academia and pursuing a career have been organised in a very bureaucratic and cumbersome way, which prevented them from being held every two years as the law required. Consequently, the average age for researchers is now 44.7 years, for associate professors 54.6, and for full professors 59.6. It is predicted that during the period from 1998 to 2010, 39 percent of full professors, 27 percent of associate professors, and 6.1 percent of researchers will retire. Obviously, this situation calls for a quicker process of recruitment at the lower level (researchers)—something that at the moment remains to be implemented.

As in other countries, academic staff members have always enjoyed a certain status, with specific guaranties. The first and most important of these is the stability of their academic positions and the nontransferability to a different university without their personal agreement. As for their professional activities, the law guarantees complete freedom in teaching and research. Academicians are “public servants”,
and thus state employees. Three years after promotion to the upper rank, academic staff members have to be evaluated (by a national committee) on the basis of their teaching activity and scientific production, in order to be confirmed in their new position. They may request transfer to another university (that has offered them a position) only after spending three years at their original university. Academic staff members can be fired only for very serious reasons having to do with their behavior in their professions (verified false assertions) or in their activity as citizens (corruption, embezzlement, and the like).

They have the same social security and welfare benefits as other public servants with some exceptions—for example, a delay in the age of retirement, which is set at age 65 for all other public servants (as described in note no. 2). A special benefit is the possibility of enjoying a leave of absence—paid by the university—for one year in every five years for the purpose of study and research (provided that there would not be any negative impact on the teaching and research activities of their departments). They have to be temporarily relieved of their academic duties in the event that they are elected to Parliament or assume other public positions at the local level or in other public administrative positions. Their academic duties can also be cut back if they undertake managerial duties in research centers. All these time periods are valid for the career path as well as for the determination of pension level.

**Working Conditions**

The full-time / part-time alternative has a rather peculiar impact on Italian academia. First of all, one has to bear in mind that all full and associate professors can chose between full-time and part-time status even if they are and remain tenured. The part-timers cannot become rectors, or deans or heads of department, and their salaries are 40 percent below that of full-timers of the same rank. The law defines some professional activities external to the university as not compatible with full-time status. These incompatible activities are limited to long-term and on-going professional work at a private or public company and to entrepreneurial and commercial involvements. All other professional activities are permitted, including professional work as a lawyer and outside work with companies, consulting activities, and the like, with no time limits. In fact, this rule, if combined with the one fixing minimum teaching responsibilities (internal and external to classes and including regular courses, seminars, exams, student orientation, counseling, and the like) at 350 hours per academic year, allows acad
emicians to undertake a large range of external professional activities while maintaining their full-time status. It should also be remembered that the culture of evaluation is just emerging in the Italian academic world, and consequently the concept of “individual freedom” is still broadly interpreted. As a result, only a minority of academic staff members chose part-time status, which would mean accepting a 40 percent reduction in salary. In a study carried out in the late 1980s, 34.4 percent of the sample chose part-time status, with figures varying 48.3 percent in medicine to 12.3 percent in the natural sciences.

Our research shows that the situation has recently changed in a very interesting way. A few years ago a new rule made the area of consultancy with all public agencies and organisations compatible with full-time status. As a result, the total number of academicians choosing part-time status decreased substantially. The present breakdown of part-timers is as follows: full-professors 8.2 percent, associate professors 7.0 percent, and researchers 7.2 percent.

The workload for academic staff members was established by the 382/80 law, which defined some minimum standards for teaching with respect to full professors and associate professors. The teaching load has been established as not less than 250 hours per year for full-time professors (plus 100 hours for administrative and organisational duties) and not less than 250 for the part-timers (who are freed from organisational duties). Researchers, who are prevented from having direct responsibility for a course, may devote a maximum of 250 hours per year to teaching activities. In practical terms, many professors teach more than one course, since the law established only minimum teaching duties, and courses are assigned within each faculty. A great confusion arose over the definition of “teaching activities”, which included organisation and preparation of courses, exams, student orientation, and all other possible academic work, with the exception of research. The other practical problem relates to the lack of any serious control over academic staff, since at the end of the academic year staff members submit a report of their activities in a process that relies on the professional honesty of the professoriate.

How academic staff members operate in practice can be detected from their self-evaluations. The study mentioned earlier found that at least one-third of the sample spent no more than 30 percent of their time on research activities, more than one-half spent from 30 to 60 percent of their time on research, and only 15 percent more than 60 percent of their time. As could be expected, there are differences in terms of time devoted to research between full professors (only 8 per-
percent of whom devoted more than 60 percent of their time on research) and researchers (28.5 percent of whom dedicated more than 60 percent of their time on research). Substantial differences are found across disciplinary fields: academicians in the natural sciences are more dedicated to research activities than are those in the humanities, economics, and the social sciences, followed by those in law, engineering, and medicine.

It should be noted that more than half the entire sample dedicates less than 30 percent of its working time to teaching, and only 4.5 percent of staff members dedicate 60 percent or more of their time to the same activities. More precisely, associate professors are more devoted to teaching than are their colleagues. Interestingly enough, about 20 percent of researchers admit that they spend more than 50 percent of their time on teaching in spite of the law then in effect that strictly limited their teaching involvement. It is possible to infer that full professors are more involved in research activities, and thus some of in their teaching duties need to be assumed by researchers.

Organisational and administrative activities are to a greater extent assumed by full professors (although the amount of time spent in this area does not appear particularly onerous); while professional activities performed within the university are very rare (with the exception of fields such as medicine).

Academic and nonacademic staff receive an entry salary at each level and automatic increases every two years according to percentages set by law and revised from time to time through negotiations between the government and trade unions for technical and administrative staff members. Academic staff members have part of their salary determined by their full-time/part-time status (a 40 percent differential). Full and associate professors’ salary progression is divided into eight two-year steps with an increase of 8 percent of the basic salary; the salary of associate professors amounts to on average 74 percent of the salary of full professors; and the salary of researchers is about 70 percent of the salary of associate professors. With recent increases, the gross average annual salary (including insurance, pension fund, and the like) for full-time professors is 175,350,000 Italian lire (U.S.$89,693); for full-time associate professors 129,117,000 Italian lire (U.S.$66,044); and for researchers 90,434,000 Italian lire (U.S.$46,258).
**Professional Organisation**

In recent years, academic associations have largely lost their impact. In reality, they never had significant power even when the general political atmosphere in the country was very favourable to trade unions (during the 1970s). The reasons for this weakness might be found both in the traditional individualistic attitude of academics as intellectuals and in their growing professional interests outside the university. Unions, for their part, did not consider academics a special category of employees and thus were unable to develop an effective approach toward them. In contrast, the same unions have had considerable appeal among university technical and administrative staff members.

Inside the Italian university there are no associations of administrators due to the civil service status that unifies all members of academia, including university rectors. On the other hand, there is no tradition of the presidency of university being given to “lay” members coming from the outside. The recently created Italian Rectors’ Conference (CRUI) has only some vague characteristics of an association of administrators.

**The Ongoing Reforms of the System**

It is a well-known fact that the Italian system of higher education has for years experienced delays in the process of modernisation—a process that in several other countries began during the 1960s (Cerych and Sabatier 1987). The reasons for this delay were many and involved both the way the university conceived of its own role in Italian society and the implicit and explicit demands made by society on the university. Italian cultural tradition saw the university as being devoted more to social class organisation (reproduction of the elites) and to the organisation of the state (training of the civil service) than to economic development and the related need for professional skills. As a consequence, the “value sciences” played a more dominant role than the “managerial sciences”, and the university was kept strictly separated from society in order to avoid undue influence of the latter over the independence of scholars and researchers (Moscati 1991b).

The peculiar path of economic development in post–World War II Italy—heavy dependence on the more powerful economies of Western Europe, and an impressive growth of small and middle-sized companies—did not require a large amount of highly skilled labour forces nor a strong national research base. Thus, the pressure from economic sectors on the university was initially weak and specific needs were
slow to be defined. The student movement of the late 1960s was ideologically oriented against capitalism and in favour of egalitarian ideas borrowed from the union movement in the industrial sector. The impact on the university was to prevent any structural changes (such as the creation of short cycles, proposed by the government) while introducing greater liberalisation of access and a simplification of curricula.

**The First Period of Reforms**

A real season of reform projects began only in 1987 with the creation of a Ministry of University and Scientific Research signifying the new relevance given to higher education by the government, which had at last begun to worry about the growing backwardness of the country vis-à-vis other European countries.

The two main lines of structural reform proposed by the government to modernise higher education were the differentiation of training opportunities after secondary school and the decentralisation of the entire higher education system by granting increased autonomy to the individual universities.

A law passed in 1990 (no. 341) created short cycles (lauree brevi and diplomi universitari) in universities, as a parallel path to the laurea. Admissions were regulated by the numerus clausus. We can now say that only in medicine and in engineering has this new university path had any notable success. Besides the difficulty in finding the relevant professionals in the labour market, short cycles were opposed by some groups on the grounds that they would create a second-rate type of studies, penalising those attending them. (This reaction exemplifies the idea of equality that pervades an essential part of the national culture.) Within the university, professors expressed the same concerns, fearing that they would have to teach in second-class institutions (Moscati 1988; Moscati 1993).

Independence and the right of self-government for every single university are expressly laid down in the Italian constitution, but they did not exist in practice until very recently. All organisational details have traditionally been imposed uniformly by the central authority, not only by means of law and regulations but also via circulars and replies to requests through which the ministry made known its own interpretations of existing laws.

Only in 1993 did the government partly change this approach—stating that from then on the Ministry of University and Scientific Research would every year give a lump sum to each university according
to certain parameters. It was up to the university to decide how to use this money. This measure represented the first real step toward university autonomy, and it is worth noting that it was never debated but was simply imposed on the university milieu. Since it was an administrative act operating outside the university it started to take effect immediately. In contrast, all other reforms presented by the government and passed by Parliament without any real debate inside the university were never really implemented, which demonstrates the crucial role of academia in such matters and its independence from the outside world.

The Second Period of Reforms

Learning from this experience, in 1996 a new university and scientific research minister (who for a couple of years was also in charge of the Ministry of Public Education) started a new period of higher education reforms based on proposals elaborated by an ad hoc group of university professors and submitted to the university community for discussion. In addition, the media system and the Internet were also used to disseminate the government’s provisional schemes and the first drafts of decrees or laws.

The minister’s general strategy of reform was to pursue several initiatives at once in an attempt to introduce medium-sized innovations that together would eventually modernise the entire system. This “mosaic strategy”, as it has been called, was intended to be implemented within a reasonable span of time and possibly with less resistance from academic vested interests than might have been the case with a broad reform project of the entire higher education system.

The main components of this strategy were increasing the productivity of the university, the effective diversification of higher education into three levels of courses leading to degrees, the introduction of a binary postsecondary system, the adoption of an evaluation system of university performance, and the introduction of a credit system into all curricula.

Increasing university productivity means a reduction in the number of overrun students and dropouts. The effort here would be to devise and carry out measures to increase student performance without introducing the numeros clausus that is strongly opposed by many sectors of society. The measures would include a better linkage with
secondary schools. Preparation in the last two years of secondary school, counseling and tutoring during all university courses, as well as a better student/teacher ratio are the components of this policy.

Transforming the structure of the university courses is the most striking aspect of the project, since the new scheme includes a first three-year level leading to a first degree, then a second two-year level (intended as a way of specialising), and a third three-year level leading to the Ph.D. The basic innovation is the dropping of one year from the first four-year level, at which time a number of students decide not to go on with their studies but rather to enter the labour market. It has been difficult to convince academicians that this does not mean a lowering of the quality of postsecondary education. In fact, the consensus that emerged in academia was to view the two levels as parts of a single path, thus increasing the length of studies for all. However, the goal of the reform is quite the opposite—namely, it attempts to reduce the age at which degrees are granted. This approach of structuring university courses derives from a sort of agreement taken by the ministries of education of four nations (France, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy) in Paris during the celebrations for the 800th anniversary of Sorbonne University in May 1998. This proposal is now being adopted by a number of European countries.

The introduction of a binary system of tertiary education is also under way with the creation of a professional track that to a certain extent follows the German Fachhochschulen or the French I.U.T. models, and will be administered at the local level by each region. This track will represent an alternative to the university for a number of students who are slated for jobs at the intermediate, fairly highly specialised level.

The evaluation of teaching activities, as well as of research and administrative operations, will represent another rather striking innovation in the Italian university. The very concept of autonomy had always meant complete independence of teaching (and, by extension, of all other academic activities). This Humboldtian idea for a long time prevented any kind of coordination of instructional programs—in the name of freedom of ideas. Supporting the innovations are the need to adapt university programs, at least in part, in response to requests coming from the outside world and to criticism about the external activities carried on by many members of the academic staff. All universities are now required to set up an evaluatory group made up of internal and external academic members and university administrators. The
group evaluates university performance (research activities, teaching duties, and administrative organisation) through the production of a yearly report that is made public and submitted to the National Committee for the University Evaluation, created by the Ministry of the University and Scientific Research. This committee will assess the university reports and visit individual universities to give advice and support for the improvement of academic performance. So far this move, in part modeled on the French and British systems of evaluation, has produced mixed reactions that, all in all, are not as negative as one would have predicted.

Finally, a credit system is on the verge of being introduced, in keeping with a general European trend that has led to the creation of the European Transfer Credit System ETCS to promote the exchange of students among countries and the progressive unification of university degrees in Europe. This innovation has created some suspicion and doubt in academia based on a fear of adding heavy new professional burdens.

All these pieces of the mosaic strategy are meant to reduce differences between the Italian system of higher education and that of the other European partners. In general, this approach seems to be working to build support for the innovations, due to the general positive attitude toward the European Community that can be detected all over the country. There seems to be genuine support for the reforms even in a domain as conservative as the university milieu.

The Impact of the Reforms on the Academic Profession

All the reforms that have been outlined above are parts of a comprehensive project to modernise the higher education system, which in the Italian case means increasing harmonisation with the main European partners. In a way, the present situation is reminiscent of the one the first Italian government faced upon unification of the country in 1861, when it was building the new system of education and looked to French and the German models. This time, too, it seems a case of keeping up with an evolving situation to reach a stage that other, more “central”, countries have already achieved. At present, the process implies a critical reexamination of the main tasks of the university both inside and outside the higher education system and, consequently, a change in the roles (and, more precisely, in the rights and duties) of the academic staff inside the university.
As has been suggested before, the beginning of the process of change coincided with the growing social demand for higher education—namely, in the form of student numbers. This trend began at more or less the same time in many European countries but produced different responses in terms of adaptation and transformation of the higher education systems. In Italy—as has been discussed—the only measure taken (the adoption of an open-door policy) instead of easing tensions only made the problems worse. In fact, the society failed to deal with the real implications of the new pressure on the academic institutions. Public opinion, the political elite, and academia as a whole did not realise the impact of economic competition among nations and the growing relevance of higher education for modern economies, which were the underlying factors of the “vocational drift” in the leading higher education systems. Thus, in Italy, the implications of these trends were largely underestimated or completely neglected. Among the inadequately addressed issues were the following: the growing contradiction between external and internal functions of university research, the rise of a new distinction between the teaching and research loads, and the new horizontal diversification among higher education structures that evolved to meet the changing needs of the economy and of new “customers”, while maintaining the traditional task of training political and economic elites.

Possibly, all these issues arising from the new functions modern societies were giving to the university became more problematical for academia in Italy than elsewhere in Europe. This may be attributed to the fact that the task of solving the problems was postponed—which magnified the difficulties and also to certain cultural traditions relating to the university in this country. University professors were accustomed to enjoying a unique condition of independence from outside appeals and control. As a consequence, they were inclined to disregard the economic implications of their teaching and research activities, at least as members of an institution. (In some disciplinary areas, their outside professional activities might be quite significant.) More specifically, they were encouraged (by the absence of any kind of controls) to concentrate less on their teaching activities and more on research or outside professional consulting. Professors were also not required to participate in institutional governance or to take an active role as members of the university because of the lack of any sort of institutional policy.
The new wave of reforms was directed at this habit. Government proposals in fact implied the end of the independence of the university from society, but at the same time they granted new autonomy to the individual university from the ministry. Another change is the new relevance of the economy for the curriculum in terms of responsiveness to labour market needs. As mentioned earlier, the reforms include the introduction of performance evaluations of individual academic staff members and of institutions (departments, institutes, and universities).

All in all, for the Italian university milieu the process of change seems to be moving toward an Anglo-Saxon model. Some academic and administrative staff have labeled the changes as an “Americanisation process” that would mean a betrayal of the fundamental and noble purposes of the university. This attitude can be explained in part as a way of protecting a number of vested interests, in part as deriving from the fear of having to change ingrained professional habits, and in part as an expression of a deeply rooted perception of the role of the university and of the academic profession.

Academic Recruitment and Career Structure

Recruitment Procedures before 1980

In the Italian university academic appointments have traditionally been structured around the degree of centralisation of the system and the vertical organisation of academic power. It is worth remembering that the French system of education was based on the French Napoleonic model and thus gave the ministry, through laws, the right to organise and implement policy concerning the entire education system. The goal was supposed to homogenise the system at different levels of society and therefore ensure equity throughout the country. However, as is also well known, Italian academia is characterised by a particularly high degree of faculty authority in a form that has been likened to that of the medieval professional guilds (Clark 1977; Clark 1987; Neave and Rhoades 1987).

The system can be seen as experiencing an ongoing and unstable search for a balance between two powers: a systemwide authority represented by political and bureaucratic structures at the national level (namely, the government and the Ministry of Education) versus a faculty authority (very much overlapping with that of the scientific disciplines at the national level). The combination of these two power centers
is reflected in the professional identity of academicians, who are part bureaucrats and part “baroni”—once they reach a certain level in the academic hierarchy (Giglioli 1979).

The formal structure of the academic profession in Italy was for a long period of time the one Burton Clark brilliantly described in the mid-1970s (Clark 1977). At the bottom there were some semiofficial and unpaid positions represented by the “voluntary assistant professors” (assistenti volontari) who had supplementary and auxiliary roles outside the formal structure of the university but whose duties resembled those of the official assistant professors (assistenti ordinari). The former were appointed directly by a full professor without any public competition; the appointment was accepted by the university administration and had to be renewed every year. At the beginning of the 1970s there were 17,735 assistenti volontari and 8,388 assistenti ordinari in the Italian university (Martinotti 1972). A similar type of position was the professore incaricato (teacher in charge of a course), without tenure, who was appointed every year by the faculty, at a relatively low salary. Although anyone could be nominated professore incaricato, in practice a prerequisite was, as with full professors, the acquisition of the libera docenza.

The libera docenza, which no longer exist, was a degree awarded by the Ministry of Education—or better, by academia through the ministry—having the same meaning as the German Privatdozent and operating as an informal but effective qualification like the Ph.D. in Anglo-Saxon systems. In contrast to the Ph.D., it was granted in a national contest in which candidates were examined by a five-member commission nominated by the National University Council—an elected academic self-governing body with the role of buffer vis-à-vis the ministry—from among full professors in each discipline. The extensive misuse of this title for careers and benefits outside the university explains why the libera docenza came under heavy criticism for many years and was eventually abolished. At the time (late 1960s) there were 17,407 professors having this title—11,264 in medicine alone—but only 6,114 of them were actually giving courses in a university (Martinotti 1972, 183).
Guild Power and the National Competition for Academic Appointments

Full professors are the chairholders who exercise the real academic power in the Italian university. Traditionally, attainment of the academic top rank involved action at the national and local level. As described by Martinotti, the procedure went this way:

Whenever a vacancy occurs in a given university a national competition (the so-called concorso) is set up and five full professors are elected to constitute the selection committee. These five men are themselves elected by a national constituency composed of all the full professors in a given discipline. . . . The committee, after having examined the scientific publications of all candidates, designates three possible chairholders, in rank order. . . . The faculty where the chair is vacant, or any other faculty, can then call one of the three designated scholars, within the following two years. (Martinotti 1972,182–93)

In practice, all steps in the academic career were built around the concept of patronage: for a young scholar just starting out it was a matter of gaining the patronage of a full professor in order to become, first, a voluntary assistant, then an ordinary assistant professor, then getting the libera docenza and thus obtaining a teaching post as a professore incaricato, and finally getting a chair and becoming a full professor. At that point a role change occurred, and the task of the new full professor was to amass enough power to be able to bestow patronage on young scholars and colleagues lower down the academic ladder.

The relationship between the patron (or the maestro) and the young scholar who had been nominated a voluntary assistant professor was a particularly unpleasant and offensive one, since the latter found himself without a salary or any clear vision of his own duties and rights and completely dependent on the goodwill of his master. The scarcity of official, salaried positions has been explained as due to the insufficient financial resources provided by the government (in terms of the percentage of the state budget devoted to education).

Yet this does not seem an entirely satisfactory explanation. In fact, the power of the full professor or master extended beyond individual cases to exerting an influence on the distribution of resources from the ministry and within the university. In particular, it was vis-
ible in the obtaining of assistant professor positions and in the influencing of the relevant selection committee, either by managing to become head of the committee or by exerting pressure on the other members through a sort of reciprocal exchange of favours. Since these cases involved public contests (concorsi) for filling civil service positions (the ordinary assistant professors) it is not possible to see them as the general process through which a professor will assign a job in the institute he heads to someone he knows and whose work he appreciates for its scientific quality. Instead, these cases were examples of the particular universalism that characterises many aspects of Italian academic life (Martinotti 1972, 185).

A broader example of the same phenomenon may be seen in the creation of networks of institutes and departments for the distribution of assistant professorships and even full professorships within the same “school of thought”. This organisation of academic authority generally operated through a group of academicians connected with one leading figure and organised around one center—a university in a big city—and a group of satellite universities, to which a member of the group would be sent to speed up his career. This strategy was suggested by the guidelines of the concorsi, which have already been mentioned. The faculty in which a place was vacant could call one of the three scholars the selection committee had recognised as eligible for the position. Faculties in other universities could call the other two eligible candidates within two years. Thus, it was convenient in many cases to send one member of the group who was among the three designated candidates to a peripheral university belonging to the network, with the plan of bringing him or her back to the network center after the three years of probation.

This network organisation has been very effective especially in some disciplinary fields, namely medicine, and reveals not only the personal power of the baroni but also the way the disciplines, much more than the universities, organised academic appointments in Italy at that time. It should also be rather evident how crucial a role is played by the concorso for academicians’ careers. The concorso was said to be “the real testing ground where the power and prestige of the feudal lord is brought to bear” (Martinotti 1972, 186). It is not surprising therefore, that for a rather long period of time the attempt to modify the way academic life worked had two targets — conditions at the lower level of the academic career and the workings of the national competitions.
Recruitment and Career Procedures after 1980

During the 1970s, a long-term debate developed over the higher education system, influenced in part by the student movement, which in Italy not only lasted much longer but was much more effective and pervasive than in other European countries—France and West Germany included. The result of that decade of struggle and debate was a law, passed in 1980, intended as the long-desired law of university reform. The law (no. 382) represented a real change in the existing structure of the university system and of its actual operation. Besides the introduction of the department, the Ph.D. level, and the “school of special studies” (in anticipation of the short cycles), the law reorganised the academic career structure (discussed earlier).

Targeting the most negative aspects of the system, the law abolished the problematic position of the assistenti volontari and introduced the academic department. With their more horizontally distributed roles and responsibilities, departments were supposed to counteract the vertical organisation of the academic power structure that was represented by the institutes, which are dominated by a few (sometimes just one) leading figures, or maestri. To counter undue exploitation of young scholars at the beginning of their careers, tenure was granted to almost all existing untenured staff—such as holders of temporary contracts and fellowships or untenured professors (incaricati). This measure went from one extreme to the opposite one. The en masse admission of untenured staff filled up the three sections of academia that had predefined ceilings. As a consequence, recruitment from the outside became almost impossible, which put at risk an entire generation of young scholars (Moscati 1991a; Moscati 1991b). Nonetheless, a measure of power distribution was kept alive through the national competition for academics (the concorso), which was now divided into three stages (researcher, associate professor, and full professor).

In the 1980s, the prospects for actually implementing the new rules were examined, and the results were not at all satisfactory. The effort to fight against the power of the baroni concentrated a lot of attention on the election procedures for the selection committees. To avoid personal biases in the selection of candidates, members of a committee were first chosen in each field by all full professors in that field, who then chose the nominees4.

Afterwards, as a second step, the members of the committee were selected through a drawing procedure from among those chosen in the first stage. As one can see, the lack of reciprocal trust was perva-
sive in academia at that time. The competitive selection of researchers was handled for the individual university by a three-member committee (one internal and two external to the university having an opening), appointed by the ministry.

Besides this concern for universal procedures, holding national competitions for all places requested by all the faculties in the system within each discipline turned out to be an unmanageable task for the central public administration (the ministerial bureaucracy). As a result, instead of holding competitions every two years (as required by law) the ministry fell into the rhythm of one every four or five years. The distribution of places was still in the hands of the ministry, which tried to balance requests from the faculties with its own financial resources.

(2) University Autonomy and Recruitment Policy

The real turn toward autonomy for individual universities started with the 1993 government decree that gave effective financial autonomy to the university through annual lump sum funding without restraints and specific limits. This measure meant that each university had to correlate all decisions on hiring new staff members (both academic and administrative) to its financial ability to pay their salaries.

With the same goal of giving more autonomy to the individual university, between 1997 and 1999 a number of legal proposals were introduced and debated. The proposed bills contained new rules for the academic career and specifically for recruitment procedures. A first government bill gave greater power to individual universities over hiring new associate professors and full professors, while still maintaining a universal dimension that was clearly a remnant of the old centralised model. Competitions were designed in two stages: first, each year special five-member commissions of academics would have been elected in each disciplinary field to evaluate candidates for the competition, in this way creating a national list of qualified members; second, in each university that had an official opening, the respective faculty would examine the qualifications of candidates who had passed the national qualifying examination, selecting the one who would best fit in the available place.
The proposed system was considered too simplistic by some. Others saw similarities with systems in other countries—for example, Germany’s. A number of different alternatives emerged from the parliamentary commission in charge of reviewing the government’s proposal and proposals from various groups of academicians.

One point under discussion was the national lists of qualified candidates, which in the governmental proposal would have included 50 percent more names than the number of openings created by the universities in a given year. Some considered this difference too large, others not large enough. The time period of qualification validity (eight years in the government’s proposal, six in that of the parliamentary commission) was also discussed. But the crucial point of the debate focused on the second stage of the competition, namely the composition of the commission that would have to choose among the qualified candidates. The plan calling for all internal members was considered to be too local and “parochial”. An alternative suggestion was a commission of 5 professors, 2 designated by the respective faculty from among its own members, and 3 chosen from a group of 10 drawn by the Ministry of the University from academicians in the same field at other universities. The mechanism became even more complex in the case of the commissions for associate professors, for which a combination of full and associate professors were to be chosen.

The confrontation between supporters of university autonomy and decentralisation of decision making and those who want to keep some sort of disciplinary control at the national level went on for months, spawning ever more complicated suggestions for mechanisms of evaluation. In the end, a law was passed in Parliament (no. 210) in July 1998 that abolished the qualifying examination and the creation of a list of qualified professors.

(3) The Present Situation of Academic Recruitment and Career Structure
The law that is now in force establishes that the ministry will set up two periods each year during which universities that want to create an opening (and are financially able to) are entitled to announce the opening officially and ask for an academic commission to be formed. The commission will be formed by the ministry and comprised always of one member of the faculty (or of the university) that has created the opening plus one full professor and one associate professor from other universities, in the case of competitions for researchers; in addition to
two associate and two full professors from other universities, in the case of competitions for associate professors; and four full professors from other universities, in the case of competition for full professors. All the external members of the commissions have to be elected at the national level by members of the same disciplinary field who are at the corresponding rank in their careers.

Competitions are based on two written exams and an oral one for the researchers, a teaching performance (a lesson given before the commission to demonstrate teaching ability), and a discussion of the candidate's scientific work, for the associate professors; on an analysis of the scientific production and teaching activity together with other university service work, for the full professors.

The commissions nominate the winner of the researchers' competition. For competitions for associate and full professors the commission will indicate three eligible colleagues among whom the faculty will chose the one to be invited to “cover the place” (the vivid expression for the process of entering into a new position). The other two may be invited to join another university within three years; after that period they will have to start the competition again. As before, the winner is allowed to move to a position at another university only after three years.

As one can see, while individual universities have lost the right to choose their new staff members, the universal dimension has been reduced with the cancellation of the qualifying examination. In a way, the delicate balance of power between the local faculty and the disciplinary field has been saved. This unstable equilibrium seems in fact to represent the essence of the process of changing the university system in Italy. It is also worth noting that a proposal to hire only candidates from different universities would have avoided the risk of so-called “incestuous recruitment” (Eustace 1988; Fulton 1993). On the other hand, the mixed composition of the commissions led to an informal agreement by which in most cases of the three eligible candidates the local university kept the right to choose its own.

In practical terms, the financial constraints come into play as it is much less expensive for an university to retain and promote one of its own members who is eligible for a higher position than to hire a new associate or full professor. The latter would cost an additional full salary, while the former, being already in the payroll, would only cost the difference between the previous and the new salary.
All in all, the mechanism now in operation seems to reproduce the old dynamics inside the disciplines. Individual universities have less power to develop their own policies than was intended when the drive toward autonomy was initiated. In a way, they may have only succeeded in acquiring the limitations of budget constraints; this might be a positive outcome for the national debt but hardly seems as benign from the universities’ point of view. Moreover, shifting their allegiance from their discipline to their university and related structures—such as institutes or departments—has not been an easy transition for Italian academicians. In this area, the role of the government seems substantially reduced vis à vis that of academic institutions and staff.

The Legal Condition of University Professors

The new autonomy of universities, the reforms in curricula and course structure, innovations in career structure and hiring procedures—all these measures required a revision of the professional rights and duties of academic staff.

Since the last assessment of this matter, some 20 years ago, new proposals and bills have been submitted to Parliament but never seriously discussed. In November 1999, a law was passed on the legal status of researchers, and a bill on the legal condition of the professoriate was presented by the government to Parliament. While demonstrating the relevance of the topic, these two documents have some basic contradictions that are worth examining.

The law on researchers redefines their official role as a third tier of the academic profession. The implications of this change are not purely formal: in fact, it means the official recognition of their teaching activities, the right to be responsible for a course, and the right to participate in the decision-making process in faculties and departments, as well as to be elected to some positions of responsibility—with the exception of the positions of faculty dean and university rector. The same law also states that associate professors are entitled to be elected to all university offices except that of rector.

The bill on the legal framework of the academic staff redesigns the academic career into two tiers, or ranks—professors and full professors—with a third, temporary rank of researchers. In addition, a special emphasis is placed on teaching duties for all staff members (full professors, associate professors, and researchers)—with an increase in compulsory teaching hours (from 350 to 500 per year, 120 hours of which...
are to be dedicated to class time, meaning two courses for all professors). Teaching activities are included (together with the traditional scholarly work) in the evaluation process, to which all academicians have to submit every four years to be eligible for career advancement. Rules for the evaluation of performances will be defined by the National Committee for University Evaluation and will be valid nationwide. But career mobility is rather limited by the numerus clausus established for the top rank specifying that full professors not comprise more than one-fifth of the total academic staff.

Teaching responsibilities can also be assigned, on a temporary basis, to persons outside the university through private agreements. At the same time, the distinction between part-time and full-time status has been erased since part-time status is abolished: as a consequence, outside activities can be engaged in only if they do not conflict with academic duties and are authorised by the rector.

The age of retirement for full and associate professors is fixed at age 70. Retired professors are eligible for those teaching activities covered by private contracts. Researchers have an earlier mandatory retirement age (fixed at 67) and are evaluated every two years. Finally, all roles of responsibility and management inside the university are restricted to full professors.

Comparing these two bills, a number of contradictions immediately become self-evident. The most striking and comprehensive conflict seems related to the career structure of academic staff. While the change from three to two tiers might seem designed to reduce differences inside the academic staff, in real terms the intent was to regulate the hiring of young scholars in stable positions and distributing the teaching burden between the two tiers of associate and full professors and the staff on limited-term contracts.

Obviously, the critical issue goes beyond normative rules and has to do with the need to improve the productivity of the higher education system and to cope with the reduction in financial resources. This is not a unique problem since it is one that has been confronted for quite a long time in a number of countries. In the Italian case the dilemma is perhaps greater since the inefficiency of the system is rather serious and, as discussed earlier, has long been neglected. Thus, at this time, the effort to improve the university’s productivity and reduce the dropout rate and the number of overrun students must be combined with the reorganisation of courses (which involves international relations at the European level) and adapting to the reduction of pub-
lic money allocated to higher education. The situation is particularly unfortunate because it seems practically impossible to implement any kind of structural reform without investing some extra resources in the process.

On the other hand, if teaching is to receive new and necessary attention it seems essential to increase the number of teachers and to stimulate the teaching involvement of those already on the job. In fact, with another specific bill the government has tried to stress the importance of teaching, giving incentives for all kinds of initiatives that will be tried inside the university—in particular, innovation in teaching techniques, use of technology in education, adult education, teaching evaluation programs, and counseling and tutoring. All these new activities, if assumed by the academic staff members in addition to their normal duties, will made them eligible for salary increments, to be established by each university according to its budget—to which the ministry will contribute a not so impressive sum.

While this incentive program represents a real novelty for academia, it will need strong support within the university world in view of the long tradition in the other direction.

Conclusion

Alternatives

A number of years ago, comparing several systems of higher education through a by now rather famous “triangle of co-ordination”, Burton Clark put Italy very close to the point representing academic oligarchy in contrast to other systems closer to market-based or state authority models (Clark 1983, 143). In fact, the evidence on what happened after that book was published in 1983 seems to reconfirm that the Italian professoriate has been able to resist state pressure as well as market enchantment. In the end, with all the strains and the unfair, often shameful, set of internal conditions, academia has been able to remain largely independent of external pressures and in some cases has even performed brilliantly in terms of scientific research and in the production of first-class students and scholars.

But the Italian professoriate is now going through a real professional crisis—mostly because it is facing, perhaps for the first time, a real challenge for which it has no preparation. A number of contradictory alternatives have been placed before academic staff members because of demands emanating from society and the economy (the “outside world” that was pushed aside for such a long time). These
alternatives can be rephrased as follows: first, academic staff have long enjoyed generally stable positions (tenure for all), but now there are solid (economic) reasons to reduce that stability and to create temporary positions. A new flexible and less expensive policy will be based on the creation of several new positions in the academic track (keeping stable the total number of existing tenured positions) and on the hiring, on a temporary basis, of teachers and researchers from the outside world. Second, professional autonomy was always granted and respected, but now as pressures increase in support of institutional solidarity, greater identification with the university than with the disciplinary field means less individual autonomy. Third, interest in research and external professional activities is increasingly conflicting with the growing pressure (and burden) of teaching duties. Fourth, freedom of doing research of one’s own choice is more and more frequently thwarted by the need to consider the interests of the funders of that research. Finally, the professoriate’s pride in being “the profession of the professions” (Perkin 1969), dedicated to training the elite, is now confronted with the reality of becoming part of mass higher education.

All these are not so much alternatives as problems—problems that revolve around the challenge to the academic profession of balancing contradictory ends and purposes without losing the professoriate’s essential professional identity. Quite possibly these are problems academics in all modern societies have faced or are going to face sooner or later. The Italian academic profession has now reached the point of no return—not an enviable position.

An Uncertain Future
The present situation in Italian higher education can be seen as focusing more specifically on the issues of recruitment and career structure. The unstable balance among the state, the market, and the academic oligarchy has played out in developments over the last 30 years. First there was, a period—1970s—of easy entry into the profession, with careers structured around the length of time in the profession (that is, the seniority rules that applied to all public servants). This was succeeded by a period, after law no. 382 was passed in 1980, during which tenure was extended to all staff members and the numerus clausus rule applied to all tiers as ways of protecting young scholars from exploitation by the powerful baroni. Finally, there followed a period—the one we are now facing—of internal change with some new rules
regarding evaluation of teaching and research performance and an emphasis on recruitment involving a first level of temporary employment.

One can see the introduction of an initial period of probation as a consequence of economic constraints; but it may also be interpreted as a sign of the new power of the baroni. It remains to be seen whether the appeal of the profession can survive these rules of entry: how many young scholars will be willing to serve for years in underpaid positions and an uncertain future?

More broadly, it will be of interest to survey the consequences of the structural reforms of courses and of competitions for career advancement on the academic staff. Structural reforms imply a high degree of cooperation among staff members. This way of relating to other colleagues in fact represents a more general constraint on individual self-identity, which will now be based on allegiance to the institution rather than the discipline as before.

In future, competitions for career advancement will favour local candidates (inside each university)—thus reducing geographical mobility and in the end penalising quality.

All these changes will affect the role and the relevance of the academic staff. Whether the pendulum of power will swung in favour of the academic oligarchy or not will depend mostly on the effectiveness of the changes or, better, on whether there will be real or merely cosmetic change in the Italian higher education system (Capano 1998).

Notes
1. Data are drawn from research carried out by Pier Paolo Giglioli in the 1970s (Giglioli 1979) and Roberto Moscati in the 1990s (Moscati 1997).
2. The mandatory retiring age for academic staff members hired before 1980 is 72 years and for those hired after 1980 67 years (plus three years without teaching duties while still on the university payroll for both categories).
3. An established rule for academic competition implied a three-year period of probation for the winners during which they could not accept a position at another university. After that period a national committee would assess the scientific production of the winners and would reconfirm them in their positions or ask them to improve their productivity in quantity or quality within an additional one- or two-year period.
4. Thus the number of members on the committee (five, seven, or nine) was related to the number of candidates at the national level.
5. As has been said, the recruitment of researchers was initiated at the local level taken by the individual university according to its own scientific needs and financial resources.

References


The Academic Profession in Spain: Between the Civil Service and the Market

José-Ginés Mora

Currently (and on into the foreseeable future), the situation of the academic profession in Spain is the result of profound changes produced by the legal reforms of the higher education system that started 15 years ago and the remarkable growth of the higher education system in recent decades. Today, the growth of the higher education system has stopped and the legal reforms have been fully implemented. Consequently, the academic profession in Spain has come to the end of an extremely dynamic period, though it is already facing new challenges.

A Changing System of Higher Education
In Spain, as in most other Western countries, growth in the higher education system has been dramatic over the last few decades. Satisfying the increasing demand and solving the problems created by that growth have monopolized the efforts of people in the system during this period. Moreover, along with this rapid growth, a major transformation of the legal framework of Spanish higher education was also instituted. Both rapid growth and legal changes have marked the higher educa-
tion system during the last two decades and, consequently, have affected the situation of academic staff and perceptions of the academic profession.

The Legal Framework
Higher education in Spain consists almost exclusively of universities. There are 48 public universities; the 16 private institutions enroll only 6 percent of the total number of students. We will focus our analysis on public institutions. There are three basic types of university programmes: short-cycle programmes (diplomatura), which are more vocationally oriented and run three years; long-cycle programmes (licenciatura and engineering), which last five or six years; and doctoral programmes, which add two years of course work and require the preparation of a research-oriented thesis after a long-cycle degree. All public universities and departments are formally research-oriented and offer doctoral programmes. Consequently, it is expected that academic staff in all universities have research responsibilities. This is an important defining characteristic of the academic profession in Spain that, as we will discuss later, has important consequences in workload, status, and promotions.

The current structure of higher education in Spain was established in 1983 by the University Reform Act (Ley de reforma universitaria, LRU). This act brought a number of changes to the legal framework of Spanish universities, which until then had been wholly regulated by the central Ministry of Education—following the typical Napoleonic model of regulating higher education (García-Garrido 1992; Mora 1997; Sanchez-Ferrer 1997). Two changes introduced by the LRU are relevant for explaining developments in the academic profession: universities became autonomous entities and direct responsibility for universities was transferred from the central government to the 17 autonomous regions.

Under the new legal structure, power over the universities is shared by:

1) the central government, which decides general and legal matters concerning staff, the laws governing universities, general guidelines for the organization of academic programmes, and financing of national research programmes are all decided at this level; (2) regional governments, which are responsible for financing public universities and planning higher education in the region; (3) universities, which make decisions on internal organization, curricula and syllabi, poli-
cies for tenured staff (restricted by the general rules for civil servants) and nontenured staff, organization of teaching and research, and internal budgeting; and (4) academics, staff and students, in whose hands internal power in the universities resides, without the influence of external bodies—collegiate bodies, with is a considerable proportion of nonacademic staff and students, make decisions on the smallest detail of academic life.

The capacity of any system to adapt to changing conditions depends on the importance of the change, but also on the rapidity of this change. When the pace of change is as fast as it was in the case of the Spanish higher education system, appropriate solutions to each problem are not easy to reach. This is the case with the current legal structure of higher education in Spain. Despite a thorough process of decentralization and autonomy, problems have not been fully resolved and conflicts among the four levels of decision making are relatively frequent. Personnel matters are a good example of such conflicts. The central government decides on general personnel policies (basic structure, workload, and salaries). Yet, although regional governments are responsible for financing universities and indirectly for the payroll in public universities, the employees in these universities are in most cases civil servants whose salaries and working conditions are set by the central government. In addition, universities can establish their own personnel policies, such as the number of staff in each category or the actual workload of personnel. In fact, decisions taken by universities are made by the staff through their collegiate boards. Eventually, decisions made by universities on staff numbers and decisions made by the central government on salaries have direct implications on the costs that regional governments have to face. It is obvious that such a complex four-level structure of decision making on university personnel issues must be a permanent source of conflict and discord. Fortunately, though these conflicts are permanent, they are less virulent than one might expect of such a potentially conflictive structure.

**Growth in the Higher Education System**
The growth in the number of higher education students in recent decades has been dramatic. Since the 1960s, growth has almost doubled each decade (see table 1). The Spanish higher education system has become a mass system, with increasing proportions of people enrolling in higher education institutions. The gross enrolment quota for 18- to 23-year-olds (the typical age group for higher education) was 41 percent in 1998 (Mora et al. 2000). However, the increase has slowed in
recent years due to the remarkable reduction in the size of the youth
cohort reaching higher education age. It is relevant for our discussion
that Spain today has the lowest birth rate in the world. Despite an ex-
pected increase in the rate of demand for higher education, the total
number of students in higher education institutions will decrease in
the near future. This decrease will not stimulate an increase in staff
numbers for many years.

Table 1. Growth in Student Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total (thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>1,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>1,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>1,579</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Consejo de universidades (various years).

During the 1970s, when the dramatic increase in the number
of students started, an enormous group of young people became teach-
ers at the universities—with very low salaries, but with reasonable
prospects for promotion in a fast-growing system. After Franco’s dic-
tatorship, the first educational law passed by the democratic govern-
ment (the LRU) focused on the university system, since it was consid-
ered the area most in need of drastic reform.

In 1982, there were 41,600 academic staff in Spanish universi-
ties. In 1999, this number had risen to 77,800. This means that since the
LRU was promulgated, the number of academic positions almost dou-
bled but the pace of increase in the number of tenured positions has
been even faster. This rapid growth has generated many tensions in
universities during the last few years and at least two negative conse-
quences. For one thing, the recruitment process has not always been as
rigorous as desirable for maintaining the required quality level of aca-
demic staff. Although quality standards in the selection process were
always formally observed, there is a sense that in a more stable period
some individuals would not have passed the selection process. It is
likely that this was the case with only a small percentage of tenured
staff, but the doubts about the process have had a negative effect on opinions about the whole group. The second negative effect is the homogeneity in the age of academic staff. In the current situation, the youngest academic staff have reduced opportunities for promotion due to the bottleneck caused by the scarce number of retirements and new positions.

The Legal Structure of the Profession
The legal structure of academic personnel changed after the LRU. Formerly, tenured academic staff were members of national bodies with civil servant status. Appointments to a university position were made at the national level in a process in which the university with the vacancy was not involved. For instance, when a university had an available position in the category of catedráticos (the highest rank of professors), a public call was made for applicants to the position. Only catedráticos from other universities were eligible to present their candidatures. Seniority in the national body of catedráticos was the main qualification for being selected for the vacant position. When no one from the national body applied for this vacancy, an open competition (oposición) among several candidates with the legal qualifications was held to cover the vacancy. The selected candidate was appointed as a member of the national body of catedráticos and sent to the university with the vacancy. They did not become formally staff of this university, they always kept the status of members of the national body, though temporarily serving in that specific university.

The new catedráticos were placed at the bottom of the ladder, the start of a long pilgrimage from smaller universities to other more prestigious universities: at that time, starting in a university in the Canary Islands and ending up in Madrid or Barcelona was a regular career path for many academics. In addition to catedráticos, a second group of adjunct professors followed the same path. The rest of the staff were assistants with temporary positions and very poor labor status.

The internal organization of universities was extremely hierarchical. Departments did not exist, and the basic unit was the chair, which was occupied by the catedrático. Each catedrático presided over his or her own chair with respect to all teaching and research issues and was in charge of all the people working under the chair. The second rank of tenured staff (adjunct professor) developed a subordinant function under the chairs. Although the legal status of nontenured staff
was not so different from their current one, their direct dependence on the chair made their career position too closely linked in a personal relationship with the chairholder.

The LRU deeply changed the situation of academic staff. Departments, with several professors working together and sharing teaching and research activities, took the place of the former individual chairs. Professors became members of a particular university instead of members of national bodies, and they could only move to other institutions through open competition. A new structure of professorships and nontenured personnel was established. At the same time, a substantial increase in resources allowed successive and massive recruitment for tenured positions in universities. A reasonable increase in academic staff salaries was instituted, making an academic career more competitive from an economic point of view.

The developments over the last several decades and the legal changes implemented during the 1980s have reshaped the structure of academic staff in Spain. Their effects were similar to that of an earthquake in the traditional structure of Spanish universities. The hierarchical system based on the individual power of the chairholder, and the excessive influence of the national guild of chairholders collapsed. Old academics claim that the profession has lost prestige and social recognition. This is probably true but it is mostly due to the simple fact that the number of professors has grown enormously as a consequence of the move toward a mass higher education system. The current situation of academic staff is considerably more open and better adapted to university needs. Nevertheless, new conflicts as well as unresolved old problems are turning up, especially related to selection mechanisms. Recently, open discussions have begun on academic staff working conditions, in particular on selection and appointment procedures.

New Conflicts after the Changes
The Spanish constitution of 1978 recognizes the autonomy of universities, which was implemented by the LRU. A later decision of the Constitutional Court interpreted that autonomy as a prerogative of the university community (i.e., teachers and students as in the medieval universities) instead of as a privilege of the institution itself. This interpretation of the Constitutional Court (at that time composed mostly of professors) has had at least two perverse effects. On one hand, it has not allowed the existence of external bodies such as the boards of trus-
tees in American universities that represent the interests of the community, because external boards would be against this peculiar interpretation of autonomy. On the other hand, it has given excessive power to academics, who fully control the institutions. Consequently, the autonomy of academics is very high but accountability is less adequate than is desirable. There is a general agreement among experts on the need to make legal changes in order to strengthen the accountability and responsiveness of academia to social needs. It is very likely that the central government will soon propose a reform of the LRU with those aims.

Spanish universities were a typical case of the Napoleonic model, according to which universities were a part of the state and academics were civil servants belonging to national bodies. The LRU changed the model in that it transformed universities into autonomous institutions, but it did not change the status of academics. Academics, at least those in stable positions, are still civil servants and members of national bodies. There is a deep contradiction between the status of academics and university autonomy. For instance, candidates for tenured positions in one university are selected by a committee composed of members of the national body of professors, which is composed of members from other (perhaps competing) universities. In brief, the selection of personnel in one autonomous and independent university depends on decisions undertaken by members of other universities—something inherently contradictory.

There is also another relevant consequence of retaining civil service status for academics. Salaries and working conditions of academics are fixed at the national level for all the members of the national body of professors. Commitment to work, higher productivity, or better results cannot be negotiated and compensated at the individual level because the same rules apply for all members of the national body. How, then, can different levels of performance be compensated? In the case of Spain, the solution adopted by the LRU was to allow academics to engage in “market” activities in addition to their duties as “civil servants”. Academics are allowed to take on extra activities such as continuing education courses (sometimes in another university), contracting for applied research work or consulting, and organizing other activities more or less related to their field. There are rules establishing some limits on these activities, but they are not too restrictive. This mix between “civil servant activities” and “market activities” among Spanish academics has had some contradictory consequences. On the one hand, it has been a stimulus for most active aca-
academics and has promoted entrepreneurial activities that are satisfying social demands not being met by the institutions themselves. These activities can represent a substantial increase in academic salaries. On the other hand, the system has several shortcomings. First, institutions do not benefit (at least, not sufficiently) from academics’ activities. Such activities may even be carried out at other, competing, institutions. Second, in many cases this system compels academics to look for extra earnings outside the confines of academic life—thus running the risk of becoming too involved in such “market” activities at the expense of their “civil servant” activities, which are their main research and teaching duties.

Probably, the most relevant trait of the academic profession in Spain is this combined status within one individual: first, and more predominantly, the civil servant working for one university and second, in the case of the most active individuals, the professional working in the marketplace. Whether this mechanism to compensate academics will eventually benefit the universities and the higher education system is as yet unclear. Nevertheless, this author believes that a reform that removes the civil servant status of academics would be more consistent with the autonomy of universities and would allow institutions to negotiate salaries and working conditions in order to develop institutional identity and individual initiatives. However, this perspective is shared by only few experts. Most academics and governmental officials would oppose such a change because the civil servant culture is deeply rooted in Spanish society in general and in academia in particular.

The Academic Staff Ladder

Tenured Staff

There are two main types of academic staff—tenured and nontenured. Tenured staff have the legal status of civil servants, and nontenured staff have an administrative contract with each university. This contract establishes a special type of labor relationship between employees and public institutions that is less restrictive for the employer (i.e., fewer rights for the worker) than the standard labor contract. The distinction between civil servant and non-civil-servant staff is the most relevant one in Spanish universities, affecting not only tenured positions but also academic and social status, salaries, additional benefits, and so on. With the exception of a few professionals who have part-time positions in universities as teachers in specific fields, a nontenured staff position is considered to be a provisional situation for people start-
ing their academic careers. Obviously, the objective of the majority of nontenured academic staff is to eventually obtain a civil servant position.

There are three categories of tenured staff, all of them have the status of civil servants. They can be full or part-time positions. Nevertheless, regulations discourage people from holding part-time positions to such an extent that less than 5 percent of tenured academic staff work part time.

**C-Professor**

This position *(profesor titular de escuela universitaria)* would be comparable to academics with tenured positions at an American university. Only a long-cycle degree *(Licenciado* or Engineer) is required for holding this position. Consequently, they can only teach in first-cycle programmes traditionally taught in *escuelas universitarias* instead of faculties, which explains the name of this category. They have full autonomy in organizing and performing their teaching duties and establishing course content. No previous experience is required for this category, though most of these staff have previously held nontenured positions. In theory, they do not have research duties.

**B-Professor**

This category *(profesor titular de universidad and catedrático de escuela universitaria)* could be considered equivalent to an associate professor at an American university, although in Spain this is the most standard professorship for tenured academic staff. A doctorate is required but no previous working experience in universities is needed, though it is rare to find a B-professor without previous experience in a university or at least in a research institute. They have full autonomy in teaching or developing research programmes.

**A-Professor**

This position *(catedrático)* may be considered equivalent to a full professor at an American university, though a smaller proportion of tenured staff attains it. This group is the most prestigious from an academic and social point of view. They must previously have held a position as a B-professor for at least three years. Their rights and duties are similar to B-professors, though only they are eligible to be rectors.

Although C-professors do not necessarily have a doctorate, many of them are preparing their doctoral theses or doing research in order to be promoted to B-professor. This happens frequently when
they fulfil this requirement. It is rather more difficult to be promoted from a B-professor to an A-professor. Promotion is basically a question of available positions at the top level. There is a rule of thumb (that in some universities is even included in the internal bylaws), which is that the ratio of B-professors to A-professors should be three to one.

There is no formal hierarchical structure in departments, and so all professors with civil servant status are free to develop their teaching duties. Nevertheless, only A- and B-professors are also free to develop their own research projects. In spite of this, informal hierarchical relationships are frequently present among the different ranks of professors. Internal rankings are even more relevant for the nonacademic world and for students, who have special regard for A-professors alone.

**Nontenured Staff**

**Intern**

This category (becario) are not in fact university personnel, because from a legal point of view they are graduate students who are supported by grants. Central or regional governments provide these grants as part of their research programmes. This position is increasingly becoming the first step on the university ladder. Most interns are enrolled in doctoral programmes and are preparing their theses, collaborating on research teams, and possibly assisting in laboratory work with students or in practical lectures. Some interns remain in this position even after finishing their doctorates—especially in fields that are more saturated or have fewer opportunities for jobs outside the academic world (such as natural science or the humanities).

**Assistant**

This position (ayudante), which has several subcategories, is for recent graduates starting their academic careers. They have some teaching responsibilities—giving some lectures or helping in laboratories. This category was designed by the LRU for training future professors or researchers. Consequently, this is a full-time position, and the main goal is to collaborate on research projects. Nevertheless, because they are “nonefficient teaching personnel” (in view of their reduced teaching duties), universities consider assistants to be “too expensive”, and are reluctant to develop this type of position. The number of assistants has decreased dramatically, and in some universities they have completely disappeared.
Associate
This category (asociado) was established by the LRU as a way of incorporating experts and specialists from the nonacademic world into university teaching. Obviously, the doctorate, a typical academic degree, is not required for this position. The post was basically designed to be a part-time position compatible with another job outside university, though the possibility of a full-time post was also considered by the LRU. The appointment is always temporary, although it may be renewed. They have teaching duties only—from three to eight hours per week of lectures, depending on the contract. Because they do not have any other duties, their salaries are relatively low. Regrettably, this fact has distorted the laudable goals for this type of staff position. Several years ago, universities started a policy of hiring young people with no expertise at all as associates. This was a way of obtaining cheap and flexible labor to cope with the increasing numbers of students. Since many of the “false associates” (i.e., not the experienced professionals that they are supposed to be) are interested in an academic career, they are doing research and working on their doctoral theses. In fact, they are acting as assistants at a lower cost to the institutions and with increased teaching duties. The number of full-time associates (a status that should be the exception) has increased remarkably. By law they are not allowed to hold other jobs, this being contradictory to the objective of this type of position. It is impossible to know the exact proportion of “real associates” (i.e., not interested in an academic career) and “false associates” (i.e., preparing or having finished their doctorate). Nevertheless, of the roughly 28,980 associates, 8,143 hold full-time positions and 7,908 have doctorates. At the very least those in full-time positions must be “false associates”.

Associate Doctor
Looking for a partial solution to the problems mentioned above, the central government recently created a new category: the associate doctor. The new category is a full-time position for those holding a doctorate. The salary of this new position is considerably higher than that of the rest of the associates and equivalent to the first categories of professors. To reach this position, current full-time associates with a doctorate will have to pass a test that has not yet been specified. The contracts will be “administrative” and not regulated by the common labor law. Nevertheless, after passing the test they will have a contract that may be renewed indefinitely.
In addition to these main categories of nontenured staff, positions such as visiting and emeritus professor are also available. Another nontenured category is the interim professor. People who fulfill the legal requirements for the position of professor (A, B, and C) but who do not have tenure can provisionally occupy these positions. Interim positions last from the moment the professorship is endowed until the vacancy is eventually filled by a tenured professor. The total number of these positions is declining as the system becomes more stable. Nevertheless, this category has some relevance in the promotion process because when departments appoint somebody as an interim professor they are indicating who their favorite candidate for the tenured position is to the external selection panel.

Table 2 presents academic staff data in the Spanish higher education system in 1999. Data have been broken down into the categories mentioned above. As we can observe, more than half of the academic staff is in tenured positions. Associates, the most heterogeneous and problematic group, account for 37.2 percent of academic staff. At the moment, the recently created category of associate doctor has no members.

Table 2. Distribution of Academic Staff by Categories, 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenured Academic Staff</td>
<td>A-Professor</td>
<td>7,130</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B-Professor</td>
<td>23,484</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C-Professor</td>
<td>10,568</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total tenured</td>
<td>41,182</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-tenured Academic Staff</td>
<td>Interim A-Prof.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interim B-Prof.</td>
<td>1,221</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interim C-Prof.</td>
<td>1,197</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>28,980</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>4,648</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emeritus Prof.</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visiting Prof.</td>
<td>213</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total non-tenured</td>
<td>36,700</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>77,882</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Consejo de universidades (1999).

Table 2 presents academic staff data in the Spanish higher education system in 1999. Data have been broken down into the categories mentioned above. As we can observe, more than half of the academic staff is in tenured positions. Associates, the most heterogeneous and problematic group, account for 37.2 percent of academic staff. At the moment, the recently created category of associate doctor has no members.

The Doctorate: The Key Step on the Academic Ladder
Obtaining a doctorate is the main objective of people starting an academic career. This degree enables people to be eligible for the highest ranks of academia and is the key for reaching a stable and prestigious
Positions that require a doctorate (A- and B-professor and emeritus) make up 41.4 percent of the total number of academic staff. In the rest of the positions (where only a long-cycle degree is required), there are also many individuals with a doctoral degree. By rough estimate, more than 13,000 people are in positions that do not require a doctorate. A small portion of them are professionals with another job who are teaching as associates. Nevertheless, most of them are expecting promotion or a more stable position. In the case of C-professors (with tenure and a reasonable salary) promotion may be important, but in the case of associates (with a yearly contract and low salaries) promotion is critical.

To obtain a doctorate, students (many of them interns, assistants, and associates) must enroll in a doctoral programme and pass a number of courses over a period of at least two years. Upon completion of the courses they must present a dissertation (not yet the doctorate dissertation) that must be approved by a board of three doctors. After receiving the so-called “research sufficiency”, they can start an original piece of research work, under the supervision of a doctor (normally, an A-professor). This research should lead to the presentation of a doctoral thesis. The duration of this period can vary tremendously depending on the commitment of both the candidate and the director—but less than three years is rare. The thesis is presented to a board composed of five doctors who must be experts on the subject of the thesis and at least two of whom must come from other universities. Although it is unusual to reject a thesis in its presentation, this is not just a formal act. Theses are sometimes informally rejected in prior discussions, and candidates are asked to make improvements. The presentation of the thesis is followed by a public discussion, which is considered as the first relevant scientific act of the candidate and which in some ways affects his or her academic life during the following years—including the possibilities for promotion.

In Spain, academic titles are not used outside the academic world, and even in professional fields this degree is not especially relevant. In practice, having a doctorate is only useful inside academia. Consequently, the market for people holding a doctorate is very limited. Now that the growth of the higher education system has stopped, the major market for people with doctorates has almost vanished, and they are looking for jobs outside academia. The lack of specific labor opportunities for doctorates is transforming the types of students attending doctoral programmes. These programmes are becoming some-
thing similar to lifelong learning courses for people (many of them adults with jobs) interested in a deeper knowledge in some fields or in refreshing their knowledge and skills.

**Women on the Academic Ladder**

Women account for one-third of the academic staff in universities, and their numbers are increasing, going from 24 percent in 1982 to 33 percent in 1997. Women are considerably underrepresented in engineering, but this is precisely the field in which the increase has been the most dramatic (almost tripling in just a decade). The increase in the proportion of women in the academic profession is a part of the increasing participation of women in all types of public activities in Spain, as well as a direct consequence of the massive entry of women into higher education as students (in greater number than men, since 1983) and as graduates (currently, almost 60 percent of higher education graduates each year are women).

The proportion of women varies considerably by academic rank: 11 percent of A-professors, 33 percent of B-professors, 41 percent of C-professors, and 47 percent of assistants are women. There are two possible explanations for this decreasing percentage at the higher ranks. The first and probably the most influential is age since the massive entrance of women into the ranks of academic staff has been a relatively recent phenomenon. Consequently, the average age of female academic staff is considerably lower than that of the men. As positions on the academic ladder are closely correlated to age, the age difference between genders would explain the different positions on the academic ladder. A second explanation could be the existence of some type of discrimination. In theory, discrimination is not possible in the public sector (including public universities). It is not easy to estimate to what extent the facts contradict that principle, though there is a general feeling that “active” discrimination does not exist. Nevertheless, some type of self-selection of women avoiding the most competitive world at the top of the academic career is likely. Competition for reaching a position as A-professor may be harsh, and fair play is not always the norm. Many people, and not only women, do not want to take part in these confrontations mainly when they have already a comfortable position.
The Academic Ladder

Entry into the Profession

In a period of rapid growth and changes across the whole university system, access to an academic career has changed, and continues to change. Current access conditions are extremely different from those of ten years ago, when vacancies were numerous. On the other hand, there are enormous differences by field (some fields are more saturated than others) or university (entrance to new universities is normally easier). Therefore, despite the common structure of academic staff in all public universities, the procedures for entry and promotion on the academic ladder depend far too much on time and place. Consequently, the following paragraphs provide only a general picture of the main traits and most common norms and practices for training and promotion in Spanish universities.

There are three ways to start an academic career—as an intern, assistant, or associate. Professors hire interns for research projects, paid by project funds or by a public grant (for a limited period of time). The grants are relatively small (about $10,000 yearly). Internships are becoming the most common way for people to start an academic career. Assistantships are the regular path for starting an academic career. Assistants have a small teaching load and give practical lectures or do laboratory work with students, for a reasonable salary. The main goal of an assistant is to work on research projects and complete the doctoral thesis. After finishing the dissertation—normally after at least five years as assistants and one year at another university—they are eligible for a tenured position if there are vacancies. As we have mentioned before, associates were established as a way to attract experienced professionals to university teaching. Nevertheless, associates became a cheaper alternative to assistants but with greater teaching duties. In the currently saturated situation, many young people remain as at the assistant or associate level for several years after finishing their doctorates. Nowadays, it is becoming common to find people at these levels with an excellent curriculum vitae that only a few years previously would have ensured rapid promotion to a tenured position.

There is no formal process for reviewing the performance or capacities of assistants and associates, although an informal process is initiated for new staff. To develop their academic careers, starting with work toward the doctorate, new staff need to enter into an informal agreement with a professor (normally an A-professor) who will be the thesis director, which is equivalent to being a tutor. Doctoral candi-
dates also have to attend courses given by other professors in the department, who will be informally assessing them. Depending on the success of these informal contacts the career of the new entrant will progress more quickly or slowly.

**Progressing up the Ladder**

The basic system for promotion to a tenured position is similar for the three categories of professors. When there is a vacancy in a tenured position or a university decides to create a new position, a public call for candidates is put out. The call is open to everybody who satisfies the academic requirements for the position. A selection board composed of five members is appointed to pick the best candidate. The university appoints two board members, following the recommendations of the corresponding department. The other three professors are appointed in a random process from among professors in the same field at other public universities. The board holds a public session where candidates present their merits for consideration by members of the board. After closed discussions, the board then recommends the appointment of one (or none) of the candidates.

Until now, in a period of very rapid growth, the competitions for professorships (especially in the case of B- and C-professors) have not been widely contested. Few candidates from other universities participate due to the disadvantaged position of external candidates. However, the proverbial reluctance of Spaniards to move to other cities is a factor that should be considered as well. This situation is now rapidly changing, and stiff competition for these positions is becoming the norm. The number of candidates for each vacancy is increasing, especially in the case of A-professorships.

Universities create new positions following departmental requests. In many cases, departments only make these requests when they have a qualified internal candidate who has a reasonable chance of obtaining the position. Second, departments appoint two out of five members of the selection board. If there are no internal disputes, the local candidate (i.e., the favorite of the department) has a better chance. It is obvious that this selection procedure, while in many cases fair, conceals a dangerous leaning toward endogamy.

What is the reason for this trend toward endogamy in universities? Departments are run by their staff, who decide when and how to promote members. In the absence of external controls or incentives to maintain and improve the academic standards of the department,
there is a natural tendency to promote close colleagues instead of bringing in new people who may destabilize the internal status quo. Currently, the promotion process for academic staff and its frequent malfunction are burning issues, and everybody is conscious that the current system needs to be revised. There are two basic camps on this issue. First, there are those who believe the solution is to make the process fairer by reducing, for instance, the number of internal members on the selection board. Second, there are others who defend a more radical change (Mora 1999; Mora 2000). They think that the way to run universities and not just the promotion process must be changed by introducing external controls and incentives to promote competition for the best staff. In a more competitive context, universities with panels composed of internal members, with the advice of external and anonymous referees, will look for the best candidates.

Academic Staff Assessment
The individual activity of academics is evaluated by means of several different mechanisms with regard to teaching or research activities, tenured or nontenured staff, with or without effects on earnings, and with direct or indirect effects on promotion (Mora and Vidal 1998).

The teaching activities of tenured professors are evaluated by their universities every five years. Because of the lack of reliable standards in the assessment of teaching, all professors (with extremely rare exceptions) are assessed positively. Only cases of clear misbehavior produce negative evaluations. This mechanism has become an additional method for rewarding seniority since professors receive a permanent salary increase for each positive assessment.

In most universities, students do a yearly review of each teacher and each course. Overall results of the survey are published, but only the assessed teacher and the university itself have access to individual data. This survey has two positive effects: first, universities detect problematic cases involving a teacher’s lack of teaching ability or by some type of student-teacher conflict; second, this survey influences teachers’ attitudes, stimulating them to fulfill basic teaching duties and in many cases affecting how teachers handle these duties. Whether these assessments should influence promotions or working conditions of academic staff still under debate, although some universities do take these results into account in the promotion process.
National panels composed of experts for each group of disciplines are in charge of the assessment of individuals’ research activity. Every six-year period, professors may present their most relevant publications to the corresponding panel in the hope of receiving positive assessment. In contrast to the evaluation of teaching activities, this evaluation is relatively strict, and “research periods” are frequently evaluated negatively. Consequently, positive assessment has become a symbol of prestige among academics, even over and above formal categories of professorships. Nevertheless, the most important effect is that many universities have established a certain number of positive assessments as a prerequisite for promotion to higher positions among tenured professors.

Proposals for research projects requesting public funds at regional, national, or European level are evaluated, and only those reaching high standards of quality are financed. Being lead researcher in such projects is well looked upon among academics and in some universities is even a formal pre-requisite for promotion.

Probably the most critical and serious process of assessment in the course of an academic career is the oposición, the public competition to gain a tenured position or to be promoted to a higher position. Both teaching and research activities are assessed with obvious consequences for promotion and salary.

There is no formal mechanism for evaluating nontenured staff. In principle, their teaching and research activities come under the supervision of tenured staff who act as informal assessors. Only those whose performance has been good are likely to have the support of professors and consequently a smooth start in their academic careers. Nevertheless, cases of misbehavior are possible because this process is informal and based on personal decisions instead of established procedures.

As can be seen, academic staff in Spain are frequently assessed through several diverse mechanisms. Problems do not arise from a lack of assessment. The problem is what to do with the assessment results in a system where most staff are civil servants, tenure is strong, and market incentives are in their infancy. Negative assessments of tenured staff reduce the chances for further promotion and prevent increases in salaries for productivity but do not negatively affect their current positions. Incentives are so rare that, from an economic point of view, a
relaxed academic life probably has the best cost-benefit ratio. Fortunately, the integrity of most academics, rather than any assessment process, creates the trust driving academic life.

**Working Conditions and Earnings**

The working conditions, salaries, and the promotion of academic staff in Spanish universities depend on too many actors. This is probably the main problem that academics face. First, the central government establishes the salaries, status, general duties, and rights of academic staff. Second, universities set the number and type of positions in each department and specific rules for the recruitment of new staff and their promotion (limited by general rules established by the central government). Third, although the regional governments do not play a formal role in regulating the working conditions of academic staff, they are in fact extremely important in defining staff policy in universities. Because the regional governments finance universities, university staff policy is quite dependent on financial arrangements with the regional governments that eventually (though indirectly) have to cover the payroll. Currently under discussion in several regions is the issue of establishing salary increases to staff employed in the universities under their patronage.

Unions have a marginal role in defining the working conditions of academic staff. Their main influence is at the central level, where public-sector unions discuss the working conditions of civil servants. Working conditions for all types of civil servants, including tenured university staff, are discussed comprehensively. Obviously, in negotiations, in which the interests of two million civil servants are discussed, the specific case of academics is not a major issue.

**Teaching Load**

Civil servants (like other employees in public institutions) have to work 37.5 hours per week, but this rule is in fact a formality for academics because there is no control on working hours, which may allow some academics a relatively relaxed life. Nevertheless, surveys show that the commitment of most academics to work is on average very high, and real working hours by far exceed established minimum levels (INE 1991).

Rules on weekly teaching hours are explicit in norms promulgated by the central government. The number of teaching hours per week teacher is extremely important for the whole higher education
system. The number of positions available in each department depends on the total number of teaching hours that a department needs to provide. These hours are covered first by tenured staff (in some departments even this may exceed needs) and the rest by nontenured staff. Thus, the yearly contracts for nontenured staff depend closely on the teaching hours available. The close link between teaching hours and the number of academic positions was justified during a period of fast expansion during which the main concern was to cater for the increasing number of students. Nevertheless, it is time to think about more flexible alternatives without the negative effects of the current system. Ironically, students are the group most damaged by this close link. Spanish students have too many hours of lectures. Programmes requiring students to attend 30 lectures per week are relatively commonplace. Academic programmes (designed by academics themselves) have been expended irrespective of real student needs since this has been the best way to increase and guarantee jobs. Therefore, breaking the rigid link between teaching hours and positions is urgently needed—not only to ensure greater flexibility in staff issues but also to improve the learning process.

A- and B-professors have to teach 8 hours a week (this is equivalent to 240 hours a year), which is a comparatively high teaching load. C-professors without formal research duties have 12 hours of teaching duties a week. Nevertheless, most universities require C-professors to teach 8 hours as do other categories. Associates and assistants teach between 3 and 8 hours a week, depending on their type of contract. These figures refer only to lectures given in the classroom. Tutorials or other teaching activities are not included in these totals. Departments ascertain that teaching duties, including tutorials, are carried out. The commitment of academic staff to basic teaching duties may be considered good, though their interest in improving their teaching skills or in introducing innovative ways of giving courses is more questionable.

Standard courses include between 30 and 90 hours of teaching per year, and thus academic staff have to give at least three different courses to fulfill their teaching duties. Nevertheless, in fields with lower demand or in universities with a higher number of academic staff, the teaching load is in fact lower than formally regulated loads. In a few universities the number of teaching hours can be reduced depending on individual research performance.
Research

A- and B-professors have to dedicate part of their work lives to research, although there are no clear rules on research duties for academic staff. Assistants, a category defined by its training nature, must assist in research activities while they are preparing their own theses. The other categories (C-professors and associates) do not have research duties, although since research is the main criterion for promotion a high proportion do engage in research. Whereas teaching activities are strictly controlled, research is a more independent activity. In the case of the lower categories, research is the mechanism for promotion and thus many people try to be active researchers. In the case of A- and B-professors, commitment to research may vary from very strong to nothing at all. Although some surveys show reasonable research productivity among tenured academic staff, it is likely that these surveys are biased because the more productive academics are most inclined to respond.

Management

A trait that defines the academic profession in Spain is the involvement of academics in managerial issues. After the LRU, universities became extremely representative in governance structure. Countless managerial positions at all levels of the university structure are occupied by academic staff: from coordinator of a “teaching unit” (a group of related courses) to rector. Most individuals in these positions receive reduced teaching hours and a salary increase. Besides, management of Spanish universities is so “democratic” that managerial duties are spread out among all academics. An excessive proportion of working time is unavoidably spent on activities such as meetings and bureaucratic matters.

In Spanish universities other scholarly activities such as planning and offering special courses, consultancy, community service activities, and so on are considered in addition to regular academic activities and normally include a bonus for the people involved. These activities can be very important for many academics. For instance, continuing education (which is becoming an important focus in universities) is organized according to market criteria. This means that students pay the full cost of the programmes and teachers involved in these courses receive extra fees (Mora and Vidal 2000). The participation of academics in these activities is obviously varies greatly and depends on individual initiative.
Generally speaking, the commitment of academics to work is quite high. Teaching loads are relatively high and teaching activities are controlled. Managerial responsibilities are unavoidable in a collegial system. Only commitment to research is more erratic. It is possible to find people with a very high dedication to research, as well as people with no involvement at all in this field. Reducing inefficiencies would require a more flexible workload, allowing different work patterns based on the interests of both institutions and individuals. However, the civil servant status that implies common rules for all does not facilitate flexibility in working load.

Tenured Staff Earnings

In addition to basic salary, which is determined exclusively on rank, academic staff earnings consist of seniority bonuses, productivity bonuses, reward for holding a university office (for individuals with an executive position), and participation in contracts (for individuals with research or consultancy contracts).

Bonuses

Civil servants receive a seniority bonus (trienios) for each three years of service, even if these were spent in different positions or departments. These sums are not large ($570 per year), but do reach a significant amount for the most senior staff. At the beginning of the 1990s, the central government established a system of rewarding productivity in order to promote the commitment of tenured academic staff to both teaching and research. Additionally, some regional governments are currently discussing the possibility of establishing additional incentives based on the same concept. There are two types of productivity incentives—one for teaching and one for research.

Tenured professors receive a productivity bonus for each five-year period of teaching for which they receive a positive assessment. These bonuses become a permanent increase in their salaries. As we have mentioned before, the system has become an additional way of rewarding seniority because all professors are positively assessed. The number of positive assessments is limited to six. The value of each bonus depends on rank: $2,000 per year for A-professors, $1,600 for B-professors, and $1,400 for C-professors.

Professors receive a permanent research productivity bonus after a positive assessment of each six years of research activity. Here, too, there is a limit of a total of six positive assessments. The economic
value of these bonuses is the same as in the case of teaching activities. Nevertheless, because assessment criteria are more rigorous, bonuses are considerably less frequent. Using data from a group of universities, we have estimated that, on average, A-professors receive less than two research bonuses, B-professors less than one, and very few C-professors have even one bonus. As we have mentioned above, the scarce number of research bonuses has converted them into a significant sign of internal prestige and a key to promotion.

Financial Rewards for Management Work
Academics elected and/or appointed to managerial or academic office in universities receive an extra amount of money, along with a reduction in their teaching duties. The monetary compensation for these positions is not high, but given the heavy involvement of academics in the management of universities, these rewards affect a considerable proportion of academics (mostly A- and B-professors). The rector, acting as the president of the university, receives a yearly increase of $19,000, a dean $7,000 while the director of a department receives an extra $5,000. Considering that these positions require high commitment and slow down professional careers, rewards are very low. This fact has negative consequences on the system because these incentives do not encourage the best people to become involved in university management.

Participation in Contracts
The LRU established that academic staff can deal with public or private institutions for special services such as giving special courses, consulting, applied research contracts, and so on. The university itself signs these contracts, receives the funds, retains a part as overhead, pays for the costs, and pays the academics involved as agreed in the contracts. These extra earnings mainly affect academics working in market-oriented fields, where more energetic individuals can double their earnings. However, even fields in the humanities may have the opportunity to participate in special courses or continuing education programmes, which are quite common in Spanish universities. In any case, there are no data on the real impact of these activities on the earnings of academics.

Table 3 presents a summary of academic staff earnings. We have not included earnings from holding a university office or participation in contracts because they only affect a portion of academic staff and oc-
cur very irregularly. The figures are based on gross salaries converted to dollars using the purchasing power parity rate. Net salaries, obviously depend on taxes and eventually on personal and family situations, but the average professor may have an income tax rate of around 25 percent, which is low by European standards. In the last column, we present a rough estimate of the average salary of professors. We have based these calculations on real data from the real payroll in five universities that are fairly representative of different structures and situations. Consequently, this average is a reasonable approximation of the average earnings of Spanish professors, if earnings from other activities (contracts or university office) are not taken in account.

Nontenured Staff Earnings

In the second part of table 3, earnings of nontenured staff are shown. Salaries for associates and assistants depend on the type of contract. They do not receive seniority or productivity bonuses, but if they eventually become civil servants the years spent in these positions are taken into account when calculating the bonuses that they receive as civil servants. As can be seen, salary differences between tenured and nontenured staff are significant. The hypothesis that nontenured positions are provisional and will not last for long has traditionally justified these differences. These conditions were easily accepted while the rapid growth in the number of students meant an increase in the number of available tenured positions. However, in the current stable situation, the status of nontenured staff who face scarce opportunities for promotion is becoming a serious problem for the system.

It is difficult to draw conclusions about whether or not academic staff salaries in Spain are adequate. For one thing, we do not know the real salaries since extra academic activities (and in Spain many activities are so considered) are remunerated on top of basic salaries, in some cases by other institutions. Thus although basic salaries are the same in all universities and fields the real earnings may be very different depending essentially on the competence and energy of the individuals. In this sense, the system works properly, and the most active individuals may receive substantial economic compensation. The mechanism is stimulating dynamism and the introduction of market forces in higher education. Earnings do differ by field. In fields that are linked only to basic research, extra activities are naturally less frequent. In this case market-oriented incentives do not work as well, and many hard workers in basic fields receive inadequate salaries. While we do
not have consistent data on the level of satisfaction of academics with their earnings, we observe that claims concerning salaries are not a frequent theme of discussion among academics. There is perhaps one reason for this: those who are more active make money from their other activities and those who are less active feel that their basic salaries are commensurate with their commitment to work.

### Table 3. Yearly Gross Earnings of Academic Staff by Categories, 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Each Seniority Bonus</th>
<th>Each Productivity Bonus</th>
<th>Average Total (estimated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A-professor</td>
<td>41,400</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>56,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-professor</td>
<td>30,300</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>42,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-professor</td>
<td>25,600</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>32,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Doctor</td>
<td>31,200</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>25,700–3,700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>19,500–16,300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data provided by universities and from Official State Gazette, 15 November 1998. Figures in the last column are estimates based on data provided by a number of universities.

*In U.S. dollars, converted by the purchasing power parity conversion rate.

*Earnings from research contracts and university office are not included in this estimated total.

### Conclusion

For the last couple of decades, Spanish universities have enjoyed a very dynamic situation—one that can be considered to be very positive for both the quality of the system and for the working conditions of academic staff.

Both people governing the universities and academic staff are accustomed to a situation where growth was the norm and the number of academic positions was always increasing. This situation has changed dramatically now that the number of students has leveled off and the higher education scene is shifting very quickly. At the moment, more positions will not be needed if academic staff policies do not change, abandoning the general rule that links academic staff numbers to the number of lectures given. Moreover, vacancies due to retirement are very rare because a relatively young population occupies most of the professorships. The result is a growing number of young people in
nontenured positions—many with excellent qualifications from national and foreign universities—who are becoming a potential source of conflict and tension in universities.

How to solve the issue of nontenured staff is a basic problem currently facing universities. On one hand, it is not feasible to keep such a high proportion of academic staff in such a precarious situation. On the other hand, it is not advisable to maintain and indefinitely increase the number of civil servant staff, bearing in mind the rigid nature of this status. Future reforms under discussion are looking to establish new positions with the same status, rights, and duties as apply to other workers. This would enable many people to improve their professional situations, without the universities having to create professorships with civil servant status.

The recruitment and promotion of tenured academic staff are also being challenged. The mechanism for selecting professors, which is highly influenced by the university itself, has produced a tendency to favor local candidates. Blunt public discussions on university endogamy have even reached editorials in the national newspapers. While this inbreeding is not the central problem of Spanish universities that many people seem to think, it is in fact something that should be corrected by developing a fairer system of selection. Promotions among different levels of tenured positions are also under review. The three current categories of professors do not adequately correspond with the real merits of academics. A continuous career with some type of productivity assessments that would be reflected both in salaries and position would be preferable to the current system.

Changes in the situation of academic staff aimed at increasing flexibility and efficiency require changes in the law and a new consideration of the legal status of academics. The new central government has included in its programme reforms in the legal structure of higher education. The new regulations will address the problems with respect to academic staff that we have described in this article. In spite of the fact that the problems and their causes are well known, it is likely that solutions will be the result of political compromises among political groups and lobbies (especially of academics) that will not attack the root causes: a dynamic academic profession looking at the 21st century but still organized under rules inherited from the early 19th century.
References
Higher Education and Academic Staff in a Period of Policy and System Change

Berit Askling

This article was written in a period of transformations in the Swedish higher education system. The last decade of radical system changes implies quite new political, structural, and economic frames of reference for the academics in higher education. In addition, and in response to these changes, the regulative framework for the academic staff members concerning such issues as appointment, promotion, and working conditions has recently been thoroughly reformed (in January 1999). This restructuring of higher education is related to general political and economic changes in Sweden that are increasingly complex and difficult to overview (Bauer et al. 1999; Sörlin and Törnqvist 2000; Westling, Angsmark, and Blomqvist 1997; Westling et al. 1999).

Since the end of the 1980s, all higher education institutions have grown considerably. With regard to student numbers the growth of the higher education sector has been almost linear. The expansion is a deliberate attempt by the government, with references made to the needs of the future “knowledge society”, to increase the number of graduates in the workforce (still at a lower level than in many other developed countries) and, in addition, to cope with the high unemployment rate during the 1990s'.
The expansion, in combination with expectations on adjustments to the new demands of internationalisation and new information and communications technologies, is nowadays to be accomplished within an institutional framework of extended autonomy, reductions in state funding, and increased dependency on additional funding. The devolution of state authority to the institutions entails more profound institutional governance and management and a strengthening of the institutional leadership, factors that also contribute to a quite new framing of academics’ sphere of action (Askling 1999; Askling and Kristensen forthcoming; Bauer et al. 1999; Haikola 2000).

The purpose of the article is to discuss the academics’ work and professional roles in this period of policy and system changes. The article opens with an overview of the structure of the Swedish higher education system, then moves on to give some descriptive data on the composition of the academic staff, working conditions for academics and recent changes in institutional governance. These data form a framework for discussing how recent and current changes affect the academics and their professional autonomy and also the academic profession in the future. To clarify, in a Swedish context the term higher education institutions means universities and colleges; academic staff means all categories of faculty members at universities and colleges.

The Swedish Higher Education System
From a Binary to a Diverse Structure

The higher education system in Sweden was founded on the ideals of state ownership and uniformity (Sörlin and Törnqvist 2000). From the end of the 19th century until the mid-1940s, higher education in Sweden was provided at the two old universities of Uppsala and Lund, at the city university colleges of Stockholm and Göteborg (the two largest cities), and at a small number of specialised professional institutions of higher education in the fields of medicine, economics, and technology. These institutions had in common that they covered undergraduate education and graduate education and that they were provided research facilities on a permanent basis. The two universities were responsible for training almost all kinds of upper-level civil servants in the schools, church, and judicial systems, while the other categories of institutions met the more “modern” demands on professionally oriented preparation and more applied-oriented research (Liedman and Olausson 1988; Blomqvist 1992).
As a result of investigations by a series of central government commissions, followed by governmental or parliamentary decisions, higher education expanded in the decades that followed. The university colleges of Stockholm and Göteborg became universities in the 1950s. University branches were established in four middle-sized cities in the 1960s to meet at least some of the growth in the number of students at that time. With regard to research facilities, in their early years these branches relied heavily on their “mother” universities. Two new universities were established, in Umeå in 1965 and in Linköping in 1975. Higher education and research was established in Luleå in the 1970s.

Due to an extensive reform in 1977, almost all tertiary institutions and programmes in the field of nursing and education were transferred to the higher education sector, integrated into the Swedish higher education system (högskola) and made subject to a common higher education ordinance. Former teacher education colleges were used as the base for the creation of regional colleges. At the same time a number of colleges were also established in other parts of the country. The purpose of the reform was to stimulate regional development and to support the recruitment of students from nonacademic backgrounds. Already in the 1960s, adults over the age of 25 were eligible for higher education if they had five years of work experiences and met the specific entrance requirements of a given programme. The 1977 reform turned this experiment into law. Another purpose was to reduce the status differences between the various kinds of postsecondary education programmes and thus, hopefully, reduce the social stratification between more and less prestigious programmes within the higher education system.

A further purpose of the reform was to unify all institutions within one system and to get a grip on the expansion by overall planning of all study places (which implied restricted admissions and a numerus clausus system). When this restricted admissions policy was put into practice, the average age of new students admitted rose to 23 years (Blomqvist, Jalling, and Lundequist 1996). The new admissions rules gave, in the long run, priority to older, “nontraditional” students. However, not just the expansion but also the graduates’ students “usefulness” on the labour market was a concern for the reformers. Therefore, the entire undergraduate education system was organised in vocationally oriented programmes, corresponding to the sectors of the labour market.
The 1977 reform brought about an extensive remodeling of the higher education sector. Higher education was to fulfill two principal goals. The first one was to complete youth education, and the second one was to provide lifelong learning for categories of learners that were not included in the first group (Bladh 1999). The binary structure with regard to research facilities, kept within a framework of structural uniformity, lasted until the beginning of the 1990s. At that time, the government introduced a more flexible system. The former university branches applied for and received university status, which also meant that a certain amount of permanent research resources was allocated to these institutions. In addition, some of the colleges applied for the right to award doctoral degrees within particular fields of knowledge. They also prepared strategic plans for their own future development and are also active in raising external funding for research. Since 1999, all institutions, even colleges without the right to offer doctoral degrees, may appoint professors, without applying for permission from the National Agency, an intermediary evaluative body directly under the government.

Thus, the lines in the former binary structure (between universities and colleges under the common label “higher education”) are getting blurred. However, despite recent changes in structure and functions, Swedish higher education retains deep-rooted notions of uniformity and nationwide equivalence, which reflect its traditionally close relationship to the state. The devolution of state authority, in combination with the extensive expansion, will eventually challenge these ingrained notions of uniformity in structure, organisation, and regulation. However, the political message is still that the notion of nationwide equality should be kept; at present, this is accomplished by national evaluations of programmes and disciplines. Another political measure, strongly supported by the student unions, is that there are no student fees. It is a deeply rooted principle that state-run education is free of charge.

Waves of Expansion
The number of students increased from 16,000 in 1950 to more than 305,000 in 1998. Throughout this period, the growth in the number of students has varied greatly. In the 1950s, the number of students doubled, and by the end of the 1960s, there were over three times as many students as at the start of the decade. At that time a large num-
ber of undergraduate programmes and also disciplinary courses—particularly within the former faculty of philosophy—had unrestricted enrolment. This expansion was met by the appointment of young staff members. Despite rising pressure on the central admissions system from potential students applying for a place, the number of students was kept at an almost constant level during the 1980s, quite contrary to the general trend in most other European countries.

At the end of the 1980s, a new period of expansion commenced that has continued throughout the 1990s. The relative increase in number of students in recent years is almost of the same magnitude as during the 1960s. Between 1990 and 1998, the number of students in higher education increased by 58 percent. At the large universities, the increase in student numbers is about 50 percent, at some of the colleges the numbers of undergraduate students have more than doubled. Admissions are still centralised, and the number of applicants who meet the formal entrance qualifications is far larger than the number of available places. Student admissions are regulated according to a quota system that gives students of different categories an equal chance. Apart from students coming straight from upper-secondary schools, the student population includes a relatively large proportion of mature students—that is, students who have previously acquired various amounts of working experience. Therefore, in the total population of regular students there is still a large proportion (about 50 percent) of so-called nontraditional students.

Table 1
Expansion in Student Numbers, 1989–1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1989/90</th>
<th>1997/98</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate education:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- First-year students</td>
<td>47,000</td>
<td>64,510</td>
<td>+ 36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Registered</td>
<td>164,000</td>
<td>306,000</td>
<td>+ 86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Exams</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>34,648</td>
<td>+ 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- First-year students</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>3,703</td>
<td>+ 61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Active</td>
<td>13,100</td>
<td>20,268</td>
<td>+ 55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ph.D. exams</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>1,883</td>
<td>+ 83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Licentiate exam</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>+ 103%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures in table 1 describe the expansion during the 1990s. The increase in student numbers also implies an increased variation in entrance qualifications and background knowledge among the students. It is worth noting, with reference to the theme of this article, that during the same years, the total expansion in academic staff was 17 percent (Westing et al. 1999). The student-teacher ratio increased from 10:1 to 15:1. This is still a reasonable figure compared to the situation in many other countries (Altbach 1996; Blomqvist, Jalling, and Lundequist 1996).

A Changed Relationship to the State
In the early 1990s, the belief in Sweden as a welfare society was seriously and openly questioned, even by prominent Social Democrats. The unemployment rate increased, and it was obvious that Sweden was a part of the international community and economy. It was also obvious that the global transition from an industrial to a “knowledge” or “postindustrial” societal order had a bearing on Swedish society and the country’s future progress.

In 1993, an extensive reform initiative was set into motion. The major aim of the reform was twofold: to reduce the centralised governance of higher education institutions and to improve the quality of teaching and research. The main change at this time was the shift from state governance through regulations and input control to state governance through control of outcomes and an extensive decentralisation of decision-making power to the institutions. The reform was launched by the minister of education as a reform for freedom, competence, and responsibility and appealed strongly to all academics in higher education. However, the reform measurements mainly affected the institutions’ new status as rather independent authorities, something that involved institutional leaders and top managers much more than it did staff members.

A new resource allocation system for undergraduate education was introduced. The former input-based system was replaced by an output-based one. Resources were based on number of students and estimated examination rates and not just on a fixed price tag per enrolled student. The intention was, of course, to put the institutions under pressure to “produce” more. The institutions have responded in the expected way and increased their commitments in order to increase their income. The institutions are not subordinated in the same way as
before the reforms to the planning and regulative measures of the government or its intermediary bodies. The former National Board of Universities and Colleges was closed down and replaced after a trial period by the National Agency of Higher Education. The agency will act as the extended arm of the government and will concentrate its activities on evaluation, control, assessment, audits, and similar activities.

Renewal of Programmes and Courses
In addition to the expansion, the institutions were also challenged by the government to use their widened sphere of action for improving curricula in undergraduate and graduate education and to create new programmes and courses or combinations of already existing ones. In general, the institutions have responded to the appeals and prepared a substantial number of new, often interdisciplinary, programmes and courses.

One reason for this responsiveness is the new resource allocation system (see next paragraph) that was introduced in 1993. This system makes the institutions more dependent on attracting “good” students who will finish their studies on time. In addition, in the negotiations with the government, the attractiveness of the available programmes and courses, evident in the admissions rate, is used by the institutions as an argument for the allotment of new study places. In this respect, the element of competition between the institutions is getting stronger. Right now there is a downward trend in admissions rates, at least partly for demographic reasons. The flow of information and publicity from the institutions directed toward prospective students has steadily increased, as has the more or less open competition between institutions.

Economic Restrictions and Reliance on Additional Funding
In the 1990s, there were substantial economic restrictions within the public sector in general. In 1995, the government decided to reduce funding for higher education. These budgetary savings did not fully affect the finances of the institutions until fiscal year 1997. The cuts in state funding were more significant than appeared at first glance. The institutions are nowadays also responsible for new categories of costs (such as rent for premises), which earlier were covered by separate funding. Over the last three to four years, state funding is estimated to have actually declined by between 15 and 20 percent (Kim 1999; Westling et al. 1999).
Universities and specialised institutions now face a situation in which permanent funding for research has been reduced and they (through their researchers and research groups) have to compete on the national and international funding markets. The individual researcher is today more dependent on his or her success in applying for funding. The institution is becoming more dependent on their successful researchers, who are able to attract research grants. The institutions also rely on external funding from private companies. This kind of funding for specially commissioned education programs and for applied research and commissioned investigations has increased considerably in recent years. In this area, the institutions are also dependent on the success of their staff. Thus, market-sensitive criteria for assessing the “usefulness” of individual staff members have been introduced.

The Humboldtian Ideal
A characteristic feature of Swedish higher education policy is the perspective that research ought to be located at universities and specialised institutions within the higher education system (and thus also connected to undergraduate education) and not located in separate research institutes. Ever since the late 1970s (following the 1977 reform) it has been the explicit policy of the government and the academic trade union that all undergraduate education be linked (in one way or another) to research. In 1977, when all postsecondary education was integrated into a common higher education system, the inequality between institutions with regard to permanent research facilities and proportion of doctoral degreeholders was consequently also integrated into the system. So, despite a common higher education law and higher education ordinance that regulated all kinds of activities in a uniform way, the system was in fundamental aspects still binary.

Currently, as was mentioned earlier, a college may apply for the right to offer doctoral degrees and establish research within one field or another. The National Agency has to certify their qualifications and make a recommendation to the government, which takes the formal decision. Thus, although the binary division is getting blurred, the unequalness between the two major categories of institutions, with and without permanent research resources, is still evident in many respects. As one example, at the colleges not more than 30 percent of academic staff holds a Ph.D., while the corresponding figure at the universities is about 60 percent (Sörlin and Törnqvist 2000).
(a) The Academic Profession

Some Basic Data

There are four main categories of academic staff: professors, senior lecturers (universitetslektor), research assistants (forskarassistent), and junior lecturers (adjunkt). Due to new regulations of graduate education, the doctoral scholarship position (doktorandtjänst) has been more common than in the past. For professors, senior lecturers and research assistants, a doctoral degree is required. For the junior lecturer (adjunkt) position a doctoral degree is not demanded. In total, the proportion of junior lecturers within the higher education system today is 28 percent, that of senior lecturer also 28 percent, professors 11 percent, part-time teachers 5 percent, research assistants 6 percent and other categories (teaching and research staff) 22 percent. All appointments are entitled to a pension. This means that there is no need for a formal tenure application in order to get a guaranteed pension. Around 90 percent of professors and most lecturers have permanent, tenured posts, as opposed to categories of researchers, who, because of current regulations can hold their posts for a limited period of time. From 1999, professors are no longer permanently tenured—hitherto a major (at least symbolic) feature of their academic freedom. As of 1999 professors have the same employment security as other employees.

The expansion in the 1960s entailed massive new recruitment of young teachers and researchers. Since then the rate of recruitment has fallen off, which has led to the current situation of aging faculties. Most senior and junior lecturers were born in the 1940s. The age distribution among academic staff indicates that in the coming ten years, almost half of the present generation of professors and senior lecturers will retire, and their positions will have to be filled.

There is little parallel with the Anglo-Saxon system of “mobile” career ladders for academics, where the varying reputations of institutions encourage some individuals to move from one institution to another during their professional working lives. Geographical mobility is low in the Swedish higher education system (mobility is low in the labour market, as a whole). Few Swedish academics apply for positions outside their institutions once they have attained top positions within them. Thus very seldom in their academic careers are they publicly scrutinised and reviewed by their peers. The majority of professors and senior lecturers are appointed at the universities in which they once took their doctorates and even their first degree. However, this situation might change.
Not until the 1990s, as part of their extended authority, were institutions allowed to establish and fill all types of posts and to decide on salary levels after negotiations with the local trade unions. Since the deregulation of 1993, institutions are freer to establish their own staff management policies. Already, the new universities and those colleges that receive some permanent research resources are increasingly preparing active recruitment policies and trying to attract young scholars by offering higher salaries, more time for research, etc. Relative to other professional groups, Swedish academic faculty have seen a positive development in their salaries. Compared to other parts of the public sector, higher education has been rather privileged in not being subjected to the same budget cuts, as has been the case for primary education, health care, and social welfare.

The Professoriate

The close alliance with the state, one characteristic of the Swedish higher education system, also implies that the academic corps (from the beginning totally dominated by the professors—i.e., the chairholders) was closely allied with the state administration (Svensson 1987). The academics looked upon themselves more as civil servants than as autonomous professionals. The professoriate was made up of higher civil servants, whose activities were strictly regulated by ordinances. Within this framework, however, there was considerable room for autonomous decision making. With reference to the hegemony of influence and prestige, the dominance of the professors continued until the late 1960s, when students claimed their right to take part in decision making and, a few years later, the 1976 Co-determination Act was put into effect.

Professors are regarded essentially as research workers. The professorial tradition originated in Germany, where the distinction between the holders of chairs and other academic staff was—and still is—much more sharply drawn than in the Anglo-American tradition (Scott 1991). As late as the 1950s, the professors, together with readers (docent), comprised the absolute majority of academic staff. The number of lectures a week was low and students spent most of their time studying on their own (Strömholm 1994). Teaching was mainly provided in the form of lectures in auditoriums, and assessment of students was focused on exams. During the expansion in the 1960s, the number of professors was kept at an almost steady (low) level, thereby preserving the tradition of the professor as the chairholder of his or her discipline. This historical predisposition to regard professors
as mainly attached to science and scholarship and at a distance from undergraduate education was reinforced during the 1960s and 1970s, when funding for research increased. The function of professors was seen as managing research groups and supervising graduate students.

With regard to the appointment of professors, the whole procedure is aimed at keeping a high level of quality control and, in addition, allowing for a fair and objective treatment of all candidates. The reciprocal independence of the state and the autonomous professors, a characteristic heritage from the oldest Swedish universities, has been protected through a highly formalised and rigorous referee system. All documents are public. However, the cost in terms of time in the referee procedure is fairly high. From advertising a post to appointment, the timespan might be as long as a couple of years. The procedure also tends to give priority to traditional academic criteria, as defined by members of the appointment board and the referees.

Several steps have been taken to reduce the time-consuming rigidity of this appointment procedure. The lengthy procedure has also inhibited the institutions from matching the expansion in the number of study places with new academic appointments and therefore puts a heavy teaching burden of overtime on existing staff. Many faculty boards and departments now try to take a more active part in recruiting new professors by encouraging possible candidates to apply, thus exerting a kind of “head-hunting procedure” before the formal appointment procedure takes place. Following the new agreement of 1999 (see below), promotion from senior lecturer to professor will be based on individual competency development and not on the availability of vacant posts. By such a procedure, the number of professors will be doubled within a few years.

The Differentiation of Staff
The university lecturer position (universitetslektor) was established in 1959. At that time, several measures were taken for increasing the efficiency of the growing mass education system, and in particular for shortening the total time students spend studying. “Throughput” became a buzzword. The lecturer had his or her main teaching duties in undergraduate education, thus allowing professors to do research and take part in graduate education. One can say that this university
lecturer post represented something quite new in the higher education context—a compromise between a traditional schoolteacher and an academic researcher/lecturer (Idahl 1995).

Thus, the expansion in student numbers was accompanied by a differentiation of the academic profession and a division of labour between categories of academic staff. It was also easier, for formal reasons, to meet the demand for teachers by appointing senior and junior lecturers, rather than having to go all the way to the government, ask for permission to establish an additional chair position, and then go through all the formal steps in the very slow and lengthy appointment process. In the wake of the expansion in the 1960s and 1970s came another measure that had also been a predominant and permanent feature of higher education in Sweden: the modularisation of courses and programmes. In order to increase the efficiency and in particular to shorten the total time students spent studying and increase the pass-through rate, the studies were divided into courses and each course was given a credit point. (This point system also formed the basis for the student aid system.)

The university lecturer position introduced an uneven and unfamiliar specialisation of duties within the academic university-based profession, with the stipulations on teaching tasks expressed in hours of teaching (although the formal requirements for lecturer positions focused primarily on research qualifications). Since then, this split in the academic profession has been looked upon as a problem and has led to discussions about how to overcome the separation of duties between the two senior academic positions. As promotion in the higher education system has been based mainly on research qualifications, the lecturer position created almost a cul de sac situation because of its heavy teaching load. A long-lasting consequence of the introduction of the lecturer position was that two different careers were established in the higher education sector, one for teachers in undergraduate education, with just small opportunities for doing research and the other for researchers, with few teaching duties at the undergraduate level. With the university lecturer position, the academic staff at universities became more like the staff at the incorporated colleges (where senior and junior lecturers predominated). Not until the 1990s, one can say, did a counterdevelopment take place at the colleges. They are now allowed—and even encouraged—to establish professorial posts.
The junior lecturer position (universitetsadjunkt) is a purely teaching post with no formal requirement of the doctorate. It has the same kind of formal rights as the earlier mentioned posts. Through the expansion during the 1960s, a large group of students at universities and specialised institutions were offered positions as junior lecturers in their own departments. Often such an appointment was looked upon as an opportunity for a promising student to pursue the doctoral programme at the department at the same time and eventually attain the doctorate and the “proper” academic position of lecturer or professor (Lennartsson 1995). However, many of them never did manage to complete their own doctoral studies and had to remain in junior lecturer posts, which were purely teaching posts. Today, the junior lecturers constitute nearly one-third of the teachers at the undergraduate level within the humanities, natural science, and social science faculties at the universities, and as much as 68 percent of the total teaching corps in the colleges. Besides, despite the general statement that all undergraduate education should have research connections and that, in principle, all academic staff should have a doctor’s degree, a number of junior lecturers have since then been appointed. It is tempting for an institution to make such appointments as the junior posts are cheaper (lower salary and higher teaching duties).

Power and Influence
In successive steps since the 1960s, the professors’ collegial influence was reduced, mainly in congruence with the growth of corporatisation in Sweden that opened the way for personnel organisations to take part in decision making (Ruin 1991). From one point of view, one can say that the professoriate kept its exclusiveness during the expansion, as lecturers accomplished the bulk of the teaching. From another point of view, the same period can be looked upon as the time when the professoriate lost its privileges of status and authority. In the 1977 reform, the formal influence of professors was radically reduced in all decision-making bodies to the advantage of other categories of academic and nonacademic staff, students, and representatives of society in general and of the vocational fields. Demands for democratisation had come from students (in 1968). The new decision-making structure, which was took effect in 1977, added to this development through the establishment of new, more professionally oriented boards for undergraduate education (with representatives from academic staff, administrative staff, students, and
external interests). These boards were responsible for the overall design and content of the programmes and implied that the authority of the professoriate on disciplinary issues at the undergraduate level was broken.

In 1993, academic staff members regained some of their earlier influence in institutional decision-making bodies, with one significant exception: on the university boards, the external representatives make up the majority of the board and are appointed by the government. In all other decision-making bodies, academics are in the majority. (The students are also represented in all decision-making bodies in the institutions.) However, the academic influence is nowadays counterbalanced by a new management approach: the rector and the institution’s governing board have the legal authority to make all decisions. This development has been strongly opposed by some prominent scholars who regret this loss of academic autonomy (Rothstein 2000).

The Teaching-Research Dilemma
For the academic profession, the separation of teaching and research, laid down by the establishment of senior lecturer positions, has been a constant problem. As was mentioned earlier, the main portion of undergraduate teaching is carried out by junior and senior lecturers, leaving professors free to concentrate on research, graduate instruction, and (not least) on research administration. At the same time, the ideal of integration of the two aspects of the profession is strongly advocated by the government and the university teachers union SULF (the Swedish Association of University Teachers), a union within the Confederation of Professional Associations (SACO). The higher education law also stipulates that all undergraduate education shall have a scientific base. On the other hand, until very recently, the academic career has been solely determined by qualifications in research. For ambitious scholars this meant that teaching duties were a hindrance for qualifying for advancement—which explains the strong preference for research over teaching among Swedish academics.

In 1996, the government initiated an investigation, one of the purposes of which was to propose measures for upgrading teaching and managing tasks as qualifications for academic appointments (SOU 1996, 166). Part of the investigation was an interview-based study with 25 senior academics. All respondents expressed a holistic view of the academic profession, arguing for one profession encompassing all types
of tasks, instead of a division into separate specialisations. When the results of the investigation, in accordance with Swedish tradition, were circulated for comments from higher education institutions and other stakeholders, the proposal that research, teaching, and administration be more equally valued was generally supported by the institutions. In an interview study with 77 Swedish university teachers in 1995, Bauer et al. (1999) found that the respondents strongly supported academic values within the Humboldtian tradition. Whether primarily teachers or researchers, a large majority say they prefer a combination of teaching and research in their personal mix of professional activities. Different arguments are mentioned: they like both tasks, consider them to be mutually inspiring and enriching, believe higher education has vital links with research, appreciate the contact with students and also the ability to temporarily leave one task for the other, etc.

The long struggle of university lecturers for the right to use part of their time for research has led to a kind of official opinion about the necessity of a teaching-research connection and to a protection of Humboldtian ideals. Therefore, at least from these studies, it would seem that professional identity among academics in Swedish higher education implies a balanced combination of teaching and research.

Working Conditions and Job Satisfaction
In 1991 (as part of a governmental commission), a questionnaire was sent to 2,000 academic teachers. The questions considered working tasks, satisfaction, and opinions about undergraduate education, in particular its status and quality. The overall outcome of the survey was that faculty members were satisfied and engaged in their work, had a positive view of their students, and worked hard, although they were not satisfied with salary and other material conditions. They appreciated their freedom, their independence, and their opportunities for development. They were interested in professional development, and expressed a readiness for quality work (Westling et al. 1999). The overall findings from this survey are similar to the ones reported in the Carnegie study a couple of years later (Blomqvist, Jalling, and Lunderquist 1996).

A similar although less extensive study at Lund University recently found that the workload has increased considerably—from 40 to 50 hours a week, when compared to figures from the 1991 study. When asked to compare their current working conditions with the situation in 1991, more than 5 percent of the teachers responded that their
workload was too heavy, and 45 percent said they felt stress in their work. However, at the same time most teachers declared that they were still satisfied with their jobs.

In 1997, the teachers union (SULF) published results from a survey among a sample of its members (Persson 1997). This survey indicated that the workload varied between the different categories of academic staff, from 48 hours a week for junior lecturers to 53 hours a week for senior lecturers, to 57 hours a week for professors—substantially more than the stipulated 40-hour week. The study also indicated that the workload had increased in recent years.

A sharp growth in student numbers, renewal of the programme and course structure, curriculum development, devolution of authority from the state to the institutions (in many cases accompanied by a corresponding devolution within the institutions to the faculty boards and the departments), combined with greater dependency on external funding has brought about a complex of functions and activities for all categories of academic staff. Today, from many institutions it is reported that university teachers are experiencing stress and symptoms of burnout.

A New Agreement
On 1 January 1999, new rules and regulations for employment, recruitment, and promotion and a new agreement on work hours came into effect. The new regulations can be looked upon as a response to the altered preconditions for higher education in the 1990s and also as deliberate attempts to cope with identified shortcomings of earlier regulations. In the negotiations preceding the new agreement, SULF, the teachers union, has been an engaged and persistent actor.

One important reason for the introduction of a new system relates to the decentralisation policy. Despite the extensive stepwise deregulation since the mid-1980s, manifested in the 1993 reform, appointments and promotions of the academic staff were still mainly centrally regulated. The devolution of authority to the institutions in the early 1990s created a strange combination of local responsibility for internal matters and continuing state control over one of the most strategic of internal matters, namely staffing.

Another reason for the government to take an initiative in these matters had its roots in the long-standing discontent with the division between research and teaching tasks. As research qualifications played (and still play) a predominant role in appointments to academic posi-
tions, lecturers who were interested in an academic career must “buy” their freedom from at least part of their teaching load to get time to do research. This state of affairs tended to consolidate the negative attitude toward teaching.

A further reason for a new framework for staffing issues relates to the current age structure of academic staff. The present wave of expansion, in combination with the predictable need for replacements in a few years, makes it necessary for institutions to prepare a policy for their own staff recruitment. Such a policy must also, it is argued, be sensitive to current efforts to support promotion of female academics. In short, the new appointment and promotion system from 1999 includes the following elements:

1. A new career ladder was introduced from junior lecturer to senior lecturer and from senior lecturer to professor. The new regulations explicitly stipulate that equal attention has to be paid to both research based and pedagogical qualifications. A single career track is being established in which promotion is based on successive assessment of individual teaching and research competence, and not confined to situations when regular posts are to be replaced or new posts are established. The new regulations also allow junior lecturers without the formal doctor’s degree to be promoted. The union, SULF, has declared its opinion that talented junior lecturers ought to be promoted to senior lecturers.

2. A more even distribution of duties between the various categories of staff is also intended to allow teachers and researchers to be engaged in both teaching and research. As more formal credit is given to the applicants’ pedagogical skills and experience, it is necessary to work out appropriate methods for continually assessing the teaching skills of academic staff. This gives the heads of departments a new—and powerful—supervisory role over academic staff.

3. The new regulations demand a more systematic approach to staff management issues. As the individual academic is guaranteed a right to obtain professional development, there is, accordingly, an obligation for the institution to offer it and also an obligation for the individual staff member to take part in it. In particular, the right of all staff members to get time for individual professional development is defined. For professors this might imply a reduction of the right to get time for individual professional develop-
ment. By tradition, professors have had the right to sabbatical leave for one semester, normally every five years. Earlier, this right was explicitly stipulated in the regulations, but from 1999 this right has been replaced by the general right for all staff members to get professional development and time for research.

The Gender Issue
There are big differences in the distribution of women and men among teachers and research staff in almost all positions in the higher education system. About 10 percent of professors are women. Today, equal opportunity for women (gender equality) to make a research career is highlighted as a central policy objective. Each institution is responsible for preparing its own strategic plan for how to recruit more women to posts as professors. Challenged by the government, most institutions have prepared equal opportunity plans with a view to even out the gender imbalance. These plans include such measures as information drives and programmes to make better use of women’s experiences. In their annual reports, the institutions also have to inform the government of measures they have taken and on the extent to which they have reached their goals. A few years ago, the government established 32 particular professorships, 73 research assistants, and a large number of doctoral scholarships—with a view of promoting gender equality. (Efforts have also been made to increase the proportion of male students in women-dominated programmes, however, with little success.)

In 1997, the study of research funding by the Swedish Medical Research Council (MRC) made the gender inequality obvious. In this study, two researchers within the medical and natural sciences showed that women had to be about 2.2 times more productive than their male colleagues to be as successful in securing financial support (Wennerås and Wold 1997). While the discrimination shown in this study by no means comes as a shock—several studies in Sweden and elsewhere had already shown the same discriminatory pattern—the impact of the study was tremendous and has been seen as a turning point in gender policy. It strongly supported the view that the “absence” or underrepresentation of women within research and the difficulties they face in their careers (with regard to grants, positions, salaries, etc.) are due to discriminatory structures operating within higher education institutions and not due to the women themselves. It also supported the acknowledgment
of gender issues as a problem not only of equal opportunity, but also as a problem of academic knowledge production, its quality, and its strategic management.

During the next decade, many professors and senior lecturers will be recruited from among persons who have held the position of research assistant. It is, therefore, relevant to compare the distribution of women in this group with the present distribution of women professors to see likely future trends. When comparing the figures for 1986–87 and 1996–97, one can see that the proportions of men and women have become more equal—most of all in recruitment—which means that during the next decade there might be a breakthrough for female academics.

Individual and Collective Professional Autonomy
New Models of Institutional Governance

Although the state is the paymaster, institutions themselves now have a more independent role as employers than previously. They are nowadays considered state authorities with rather heavy responsibilities of their own for such issues as internal organisation, economy, staffing, and physical premises. The devolution of state authority and the radical reduction of state regulations in combination with a stronger dependence on external markets for additional funding create the need for measures to strengthen the institutional leadership and the executive capacity at the top. In the Swedish institutional context, with its continental tradition of procedural academic leadership, such a concentration of executive power at the institutional level is an unfamiliar element. What we can notice today is confusion about how to handle the traditional collegial decision-making procedures at a time when a more executive and managerial style of leadership is expected (Askling and Henkel 2000).

Some rectors have begun to build senior management teams around themselves, introduce vice-rector positions, or form advisory groups with a predominance of academics. At some of the universities, mainly the large comprehensive universities, strong centrifugal forces have been released when the deans found the sovereignty of their faculty or school being threatened. A delicate question is whether the power is to be concentrated at the top of the entire institution, in the rector’s office, in the faculties (schools), or in the deans’ offices. Evidently, demands for more pronounced academic leadership challenge ingrained notions of collegial academic leadership (Askling, Bauer, and Marton 1999; Haikola 2000). From the perspective of the individual academic staff
member, this concentration of power—either at the institutional top or at the top of the faculties (schools)—is often interpreted in terms of an increase in bureaucratisation, irrespective of whether these so-called bureaucrats are academic colleagues or administrators. This kind of bureaucratisation implies a certain form of transparency of academics’ work. In particular, the new elements of accountability, assessment, evaluation, and control—despite the still humble introduction of these kind of procedures—contribute to the negative attitudes to “bureaucratisation”.

To the impression of a growing bureaucratisation (in terms of a concentration of power to executives—either they are academics or not) must also be added the tendency (at least at the large universities) to create special support units, often staffed with highly specialised academics (teaching/learning centres, research policy centres, quality development centres, evaluation centres, and centres for external affairs). Such units form a new kind of interfaculty network organisation crossing the traditional hierarchical academic line structure (faculty-department-basic unit). They also offer another career for senior academics who found, sometimes to their own surprise, that they like this kind of qualified administrative work even more than doing research. Besides, the units illustrate another trend—namely, that the traditional division between academics and administrators and between academic tasks and administrative tasks has become an oversimplification. Such cross-cutting (interfaculty or interschool) units are looked upon with scepticism by many academics who object to the amount of resources spent on these new bodies before the all too small remaining part of the resources are allocated to the departments and basic units (“where the real work is done”) and that in any case institutional policies and “solutions” rather than the academics’ own values guide what decisions are taken.

Moving away from Collegial Decision Making
Formerly, at the universities, the ideal university leader was a collegial coordinator who was elected by his (and more seldom her) colleagues and who could claim authority in the capacity as a member of an autonomous community of academics in accordance with the tradition of primus inter pares. The leadership was mainly ceremonial and procedural and looked upon as a kind of “community service” that circulated between the faculties of medicine, theology, etc.
Today, the influences from such ideas as “new public management”, universities as corporate enterprises, adaptive universities, entrepreneurial universities, learning organisations, and the like call for more executive leadership and careful individualised selection of leaders at all levels (Askling and Henkel 2000). In addition, the government’s recent measure to appoint external representatives as the chairs of the university boards means a further step away from the collegial decision-making model. Against this development many prominent academics have objected strongly (Gustavsson 2000; Nybom 2000).

Obviously, in many respects institutional autonomy has increased, and within the institutions individual autonomy has decreased. Academic freedom has changed. It is now a freedom for the governing bodies of the universities and colleges and for the institutional leaders. For the individual faculty members decentralisation and deregulation have curtailed academic freedom. Rights and obligations concerning such issues as work duties, salaries, and promotion have become less uniform, less clearly defined, less transparent, and thus also less predictable. The individual academic is subjected to more ad hoc decisions at the local level (Dahl 1998). However, this curtailed academic freedom gives a space of action for individual initiatives.

In many parts of the higher education system the devolution of authority in combination with the economic restrictions and the concern for quality, expressed by many external stakeholders, evidently have brought about an awareness of routines and costs and a responsibility for collecting feedback information, which can be looked upon as a broadening of professional responsibilities. However, more common is the sense of having to face a further loss of professional autonomy (in addition to the reduction in professional autonomy brought about by the 1977 reform’s state-regulated study plans of the line system). Accordingly, among the academics there are mixed views concerning the 1993 reform and its freedom appeal. Many academics are highly critical of the many references to market models of quality and the use of market metaphors.
Toward an Evaluative Culture
As central planning and strict regulations formerly were considered a guarantee for nationwide equivalence in grades and degrees, there was no tradition of external assessments and evaluations when, in the early 1990s, the deregulation movement was introduced. In this respect, the higher education system was rather closed and nondynamic.

In the 1990s, the institutions acquired greater scope for creating their own policies concerning staffing issues. For the individual academic this means that more individually based incentives are possible. Within the framework of national collective agreements, there is a fairly large place for local and individual agreements. The difference between lowest and highest payment is almost 10 percent within the various categories of staff. Such variation in salaries based on individual competence and value on the academic market is a new feature of the Swedish public sector.

Besides payment, academics can be rewarded in other ways. An example of academic rewards is to get a reduction in teaching loads for doing development and quality work. A kind of promotion leads away from teaching to administration, and to posts as director of studies, vice rector, and so on. However, as such tasks are often very time consuming and therefore hard to combine with research work, this kind of promotion is sometimes perceived more as a form of “temporary compulsory service” to the academic community than as a valuable promotion. To make these kinds of duties more attractive and to demonstrate that they are important and demanding tasks, an additional remuneration is often offered.

According to the principle of individually determined arrangements, factors such as the individual’s portfolio of skills, performance, and professional contributions will play a more significant role in determining personal salaries than they have today. Pedagogical qualifications as formal criteria in promoting staff also give institutions incentives to notice the importance of pedagogical issues. Most institutions have established prizes, often in the form of travel scholarships, for excellent teaching. Consequently, faculty members are more exposed to assessments and evaluations of their professional qualifications and performance.

Let’s look at the various kinds of assessments of individual and collective performances that are put into action today. The individual academic can take the initiative to the following kinds of assessments:
1. A person can apply for a professor position, when such a position is announced. Originally, this was the major assessment procedure and it affected staff academics who took the chance (or risk) of applying and competing for a professorship. Previously, the assessment focused solely on research production; now equal attention has to be paid to teaching qualifications.

2. Academics can apply for promotions when they feel ready to be subjected to an assessment of their qualifications. This procedure was earlier restricted to those who applied for readerships (docent) but under the new agreement is meant to be a more common event.

3. Academics may apply for research funding at one of the research councils, etc. Such initiatives have become more and more important for the economic well-being of the departments and, as the financial restrictions continue, more and more competitive in character.

In addition to assessments that arise from individual initiatives to advance in one’s career, faculty members will also regularly submit to assessments under the new agreement. Department heads will evaluate individual staff members (based mainly on students’ course evaluations, etc.) In the course of routine staff management with regard to decisions on promotion, salary, and working conditions. This assessment will examine all kinds of qualifications (research, teaching, professional development, and administrative work).

In accordance with the government’s proposal of stricter national evaluation programme, to be undertaken by the national agency, the institution and its academic staff as a collective will be subjected to assessments and evaluations in the following areas: audits of institutions and their leadership and evaluations of programmes, courses, and research activities.

Thus, for the individual academic, the new model of institutional governance and the new agreements have changed (i.e., reduced) the individual’s autonomy. Although the devolution of authority was welcomed by academics as an appeal to their professionalism as academics, the increase in institutional autonomy is now more and more experienced as a decrease in individual and collective professional autonomy (Dahl 1998; Nybom 2000). The institutions were released from
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a system of firm regulations, but the academic staff as a collective and also as individuals are now more exposed to assessments and evaluations as part of state governance and institutional management.

The Academic Profession(s) in the Future
In the 1970s, the Swedish higher education system was used very deliberately for creating the modern welfare state in accordance with a rational model of manpower planning. With a centralist model of state governance it was utilised as a tool for regionalisation, vocationalisation, and democratisation. Now, in the 1990s, higher education is used as a tool for helping Sweden in the creation of the knowledge society. In contrast to the earlier periods, the institutions now have room for formulating their own missions and strategic plans and taking their own measures.

From the early 1990s and onward, two distinct developments can be identified in the higher education sector, namely toward a differentiation, variation and diversity, and at the same time toward homogenisation. Both affect working conditions for faculty (Bauer et al. 1999).

The new frames of the higher education system will probably stimulate a differentiation of universities and colleges. The expansion has given rise to a complex pattern of adjustments and responses within the system. Every institution can profile itself and also try to offer something that is different from what other institutions offer—however, not to such an extent that the notion of national equivalence in degrees will be called into question. The entire system is moving toward increased variation between institutions and between faculties and departments concerning students, programmes, teaching responsibilities, research activities, and as well as sources of funding. Such a variation might open the way for a more outspoken hierarchy between institutions, which can be nourished by such new and, in the Swedish context, unfamiliar vehicles as rankings in newspapers and magazines.

What we also see is a differentiation in power and prestige and also in economic preconditions within the academic community. Scientific fields have highly differentiated power, status, and finances—and nowadays this differentiation is enhanced by the increase in local agreements concerning working conditions, salary, and other kinds of incentives. The institutions are now freer to make individual arrangements, to allow for individually based promotions. This will make it
easier for academics to be promoted, but on the other hand it will make them more dependent on the staffing and promotion policy of their own institution and department.

Obviously, there is also a trend toward national homogenisation with regard to institutions as well as academic staff duties. An active endeavour to overcome the binary separation between research and teaching is evident, both at the system level and at the individual level. References to the Humboldtian tradition played an important role when a number of colleges applied for university status (and claimed that research and teaching ought to be accomplished within the same institution). Similar references were also used when the new agreement was prepared (and the corresponding claim that research and teaching ought to be integrated in all posts). Compared to the situation in some other countries that have seen a trend toward a differentiation of academic roles (Bauer and Henkel 1997; El-Khawas 1995; Fulton 1996), Swedish academics continue to offer strong resistance to a separation of roles and a tendency in the opposite direction (i.e., a striving for a strengthened integration of teaching and research) (Bauer et al. 1999; SOU 1996, 166).

However, there is growing sentiment against this policy of homogenisation among distinguished academics and politicians (Sörlin and Törnqvist 2000). How long can the notion of uniformity be kept, when almost everyone knows that reality is much more diverse, it is asked. There is a need for a thorough debate on how to differentiate the system, it is claimed. Not the least for economic reasons, it is now time for Sweden to prepare a master plan à la California, it is argued. Sweden cannot afford having its limited resources for research spread out over all regions, there is a need for concentration and, thus, also for differentiation. And, by analogy, successful researchers cannot divide their attention between teaching and research.

Thus, as the state steps down from its former role as the provider, guarantor, standardiser, and legitimator, the field is open for differentiation, variation, and also for hierarchies to become more evident both between institutions and between faculties and individuals.

So, what we have is a powerful transformation process, which might bring about a shift in both “rationale” and “rationality” of higher education and the academic profession (or professions). The expansion in student numbers, the economic restrictions, the devolution of authority, and the expectations of strong and more managerial leader-
ship, in combination with the new agreement, is changing the working conditions of Swedish academics to such an extent that the academic profession itself might be changing.

Notes

- A cynical comment is that the higher education system is used as a temporary storeroom for unemployed young people (Westling et al. 1999).
- Since January 1998, the rector is no longer chair of the university board. That position is now held by one of the external representatives.

References


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Higher education in the US is characterized by enormous size, egalitarianism and diversity of student body, the importance of private institutions, decentralization and autonomy, use of other-than-taxpayer originated revenues, and aggressive marketing (Johnstone, 1991). The diversity, scope, and success of US higher education have propelled it to emerge as a highly competitive, versatile, and powerful institution. These features and characteristics have enabled it to play a vital role in setting the tone to global higher education schemes toward which many countries are increasingly gravitated.

The US academic landscape is currently undergoing major changes under the influence of complex social, economic, technological, and demographic developments. The manners, values, and norms of the academic profession have been under considerable pressure recently to conform to changes wrought by these developments. The major theme of this article is confined to the changing academic profession.

The magnitude, impact, and ramifications of these forces on faculty work-life are as diverse as they are numerous. A multitude of stakeholders has joined the debate on higher education. Accountability and assessment of the academic profession is a frequent discussion topic. A number of tenure reform initiatives are now well underway. The use of post-tenure review is becoming more common. Non-tenure track appointments are now a growing trend of faculty employment.
The balance between teaching and research continues to be a major issue of debate and discussion. Faculty prerogatives in governance, leadership and authority are under pressure.

Now, more than ever before, the stake in higher education appears high, as we usher in the information era. Technology has greatly influenced the business of delivering higher education and has brought with it an array of issues pertinent to the academic profession. Recent advances in technology have begun to influence scholarship, knowledge creation, and the packaging and delivery of courses and programs. The role of faculty in these fast moving developments continues to evolve and develop.

**Forces challenging the US professoriate**

The forces that currently challenge the US higher education are numerous, varied, and complex. Among the primary factors that have significant relevance and pertinence to the changing academic workplace, we contend, are assessment and accountability, financial pressure, governance and power, and technology. These are discussed below.

**Assessment and accountability**

Increased scrutiny from outside the academy is a growing trend in the US. The list of higher education’s critics is long and growing: governors, state legislators, state higher education officers, the staffs of the nation’s principal charitable foundations, members of Congress and their staffs, federal officials responsible for student financial aid, trustees and regents with direct fiduciary responsibility for individual institutions. The critics’ collective charge—that too many of those inside the academy, especially faculty, believe themselves to be exempt from the need to be more efficient and productive—is seen as a direct challenge to academic traditions and governance processes where the balance between teaching and research are taking on a sharper edge. A number of external constituents expect the academy to become more—not less—accountable to its customers and clients (Zemsky and Massy, 1995).
Several of the assessment and accountability criticisms of the academy emanate from the business and entrepreneurial communities, which perceive the academy to be resistant to the many changes that have swept across the corporate sector. For example, Richard J. Mahoney (2000), former chief executive officer of the Monsanto Company, argues that colleges and universities “can derive enormous benefit from the experience of Monsanto and other companies that have ‘reinvented’ themselves during the past decade” (p. B4). Some critics of higher education also seem to be resentful that the faculty in the academy enjoys a secured job while the rest of the business world is undergoing reform, retrenchment, and downsizing. The heightened scrutiny of higher education has intensified in recent years as the cost of higher education escalated and consequently led various constituents to demand a more value and improved service for their money. In particular, there is a growing interest in issues of faculty productivity and efficiency, including workload policies, research output and the quality of teaching and advising.

The complaint that professors do too much research and too little teaching has been prevalent for almost a hundred years. When William James wrote about “the Ph. D. Octopus” shortly after the turn of the century, he pointed to the increasing preoccupation of professors in the emerging universities with specialized research, graduate students, and doctoral programs. Since then the protest of too much research, has been a perennial battle cry of the American reformer seeking more emphasis on undergraduate program and on their general or liberal education components in particular. The 1980s and early 1990s have seen a strong resurgence of this point of view inside and outside the academy (Clark, 1997).

A certain degree of “faculty bashing” rhetoric has found its way into policy debates on faculty worklife issues. Several recent unfavorable reports criticizing US higher education in general and faculty in particular have intensified the attack on elements of the academic community that were generally considered sacred. Whether warranted or not some of the assertions set forth by critics of higher education include that faculty have neglected their teaching duties and responsibilities, unfairly apportion much of their time to research while only a few of them make substantial contribution to their field, and are in general under working (Clark, 1997; Levine, 1997).

Attacked on various fronts by a number of major social, economic, and political forces, US higher education institutions have grown less resistant to the demands of their critics. As the pressure from the
external environment has grown, US colleges and universities have gradually begun to address the concerns of their various constituencies and beneficiaries. Addressing the concern among critics to focus more on the provision of better teaching, numerous institutions have undertaken reviews and evaluations of undergraduate instruction. In an effort to respond to the demands of these external pressures, university leaders, managers and administrators have begun to address the concerns about the quality of teaching and learning with varying degrees of commitment and zeal. Mechanisms to enforce assessment of and accountability among faculty have yielded mixed results thus far. As these efforts are complicated by issues of academic freedom, US institutions continue to juggle to accommodate the conflicting interests, roles, and responsibilities of the faculty and constituencies such as legislators, trustees, students, and the general public.

Financial pressure
Higher education in any society is a costly enterprise. It is labor intensive and maintaining a highly skilled professoriate requires a significant commitment of financial resources. Higher education also requires large numbers of other kinds of professional, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers—not to mention books and periodicals, many square feet of classroom and office space, expensive machines and equipment, and living facilities for students (Johnstone, 1991).

Faculty salaries represent a major expenditure item for colleges and universities. The average salary for full-time faculty in 1996-97 was US $50,829 (US Department of Education, 1998). According to a recent report obtained from a survey of 1761 institutions, the salary for all institutional types and professional categories averaged US $58,352. There is however persistent and widening gap between salaries at public and private independent institutions, between faculty at research universities and those at other types of institutions, and between women and men (Academe, 2000).

As of 1996-97, some 4,009 US accredited higher education institutions offered programs to approximately 14.3 million students at and above the associate degree level. This included 2,267 4-year colleges and 1,742 2-year colleges. Of these, public 4-year, public 2-year, private 4-year, and private 2-year institutions totaled 614, 1088, 1653, and 654, respectively (US Department of Education, 1998).
The US higher education system is a multibillion-dollar enterprise that employs approximately 2.7 million people. The total revenue for all institutions in 1995-96 amounted to US $198 billion dollars. The sources of revenue, which vary considerably by institutional type (i.e., public vs. private) include state, federal and local governments, tuition, endowment income, private sources, and sales and services. Total revenues for public and private institutions for FY 1995-96 were US $123.5 billion and US $74.5 billion, respectively. While the major source of revenue for public institutions continues to be state governments (35.9%), tuition is the major source of funding for private institutions (43.0%) (Digest of Education Statistics, 1998).

The state of financing affects all segments of the US higher education system albeit differentially. In good times, especially in the 1960s, US institutions were built in large numbers with a wide variety of programs; institutions hired more faculty members to fill in the expanding positions and programs. A number of major initiatives in research were launched. During periods when economic situation showed an indication of a downturn, tightening of college and university budgets followed. These actions had a resounding impact on the campus community—faculty, students, non-faculty staff, and administrators feel the effects of such actors.

When confronted with the prospect of reduced revenues—whether from declining federal support, diminished state appropriations, or reduced net tuition income—most colleges and universities respond by tightening budgets, deferring non-recurring expenses, and postponing the hiring of new faculty and staff (Zemsky and Massy, 1995). Given the unparalleled economic growth the country has enjoyed in the 1990s, these problems do not seem to appear of concern to most US institutions—at present.

In some institutions where the budget constraints were especially problematic, not only were decisions made to terminate academic programs, and/or downsize administrative staff, but also to forcibly retire or fire faculty. Even after the economic situation improved substantially in recent years, the trends in faculty hiring have followed a somewhat different path. A number of institutions opted for more part-timers and non-tenure track faculty that would limit their financial commitments as well as enable them to be flexible and more responsive to the economic and financial trends in the external environment.
In a financially tight academic environment, faculty hiring sometimes had to be deferred, in which case the incumbents had to carry extra loads of teaching and supervision. On certain occasions, faculty promotion and pay had to be frozen, and programs had to be consolidated or even eliminated. When resources for research activities become limited and faculty is forced to do more teaching, the scholarly output upon which promotion is based can be affected. It is also the case that financial exigencies tend to promote a more centralized form of administration, which is often contrary to the norms and culture of faculty autonomy and academic freedom.

The exact impact of financial difficulties on the overall state of any institution is not simple or straightforward to discern. Their ramifications on higher education institutions and on the academic profession, are not exceptions.

**Governance and power**
The three-fold pattern of governance in US colleges and universities involving an institution’s trustees, faculty, and president has depended in the past on a large measure of external public confidence and internal institutional loyalty, mutual trust, professional commitment, and impartial judgment. However these qualities, together with the pattern of shared governance they have supported, now show signs of strain (Rhodes, 1999). Entrenched power, a complicated governance structure, and the weight of tradition have helped to protect academic perquisites during difficult periods. But the professoriate itself has not articulated its own ethos (Shils, 1975). This has resulted, some would argue, in a decline in authority and power among faculty at US colleges and universities.

The federal and state governments, courts, and other governmental and non-governmental institutions have influenced academic governance and authority in various ways. The federal and state governments wielded force through their support to the institutions, that forced the managers and administrators to slowly encroach into implicitly and explicitly demarcated boundaries of the faculty. The courts—often reluctant to engage in internal academic affairs—have ruled cases both in favor of and against the interests of the professoriate. The Supreme Court decision to abolish the compulsory retirement age is one of the more profound examples of rulings that favor the interests of faculty.
The plethora of legislative and regulatory acts promulgated has complicated the governance and management of colleges and universities. Fear of litigation, government withdrawal of support for non-compliance, and public disapproval have meant that a number of US institutions have reinforced their management and governance bodies that oversee these issues. This consolidation of management bodies is perceived by some as an infringement on various traditional academic governance and management domains.

As the encroachment on traditionally established governance and authority considered to be faculty prerogatives catches pace, the shift in faculty allegiance away from a single institution has become more pronounced. The shedding of allegiance to one’s institution for the sake of one’s discipline or profession has prompted the leadership of US institutions to take more charge. Some observers believe, this has meant tempering, limiting, and eroding the prerogatives of the faculty that were once bestowed upon them with utter confidence, respect, and responsibility.

**Technology**

Advances in technology—particularly information technology—have caused significant changes in the way US academic institutions function, the manner in which faculty and students interact, the ways in which teaching-learning process is conducted, and the means through which faculty conduct research. A growing number of courses that are being offered by US faculty are posted on the Web or are accessed online. Students confer with their professors online and chat with their colleagues via online discussion groups. They submit their assignments and exams via e-mail. The advent of these technologies as much as they are sometimes considered to have simplified the workload of faculty, in reality have diversified it—in some occasions sliding into the complex territory of intellectual property in an increasingly fluid information and technological world.

Ikenberry (1999) holds that the advent of new technology and the ability to minimize the barriers of time and distance, coupled with the surge in demand for learning in the new information age, have stimulated the emergence of new learning providers. To borrow a concept from the corporate world, the “barriers to entry” have diminished. One need not invest vast sums in bricks and mortar; one need not necessarily build an accomplished faculty or a vast library. Significant investments are still required, but they are of a different kind.
This capacity has enabled a number of entrepreneurs, institutions, and companies to venture into the business of exploiting the knowledge market that has been hitherto dominated by traditional higher education institutions. While some are engaged in developing course materials, others have established new institutions that have targeted clientele remotely and virtually. Some of these virtual institutions enroll several thousand students. It is important to point out that numerous traditional universities and colleges are currently beefing up their effort and commitment to join the bandwagon of the growing electronic-based institutions and to increase their market share, improve their revenue, capitalize on their already available resource and established brand, and overcome the threat of being left behind.

In a traditional college or university, the individual faculty member is the primary unit of investment, the principal means of delivery, and the main guarantor of academic quality. These fundamental assumptions are now being challenged, and the traditional academic culture is likely to be the main object of transformation (Ikenberry, 1999) which is currently under the assault of information technology driven by e-mail, the Internet, CD-ROM, satellite and cable technology.

The expansion of the university’s functions to provide broader access to high-level continuing education through information technology poses a number of challenges for accreditation, for quality control, for the integrity of the university and its relation to its own academic staff, and for the ownership of the intellectual property represented in courseware (Trow, 1997). As regards to the intellectual property, a number of disputes have already been noted between employing institutions and those faculties that joined the expanding virtual delivery system of higher learning.

There appears to be some anxiety due to the expansion of IT in the areas of instruction that is feared may dampen the faculty market. Schuster (1995) described the phenomenon regarding the growing technological revolution, being widely perceived as having profound implications for academic staffing in the US in the future and that it may sharply reduce the demand for faculty. As William Massy and Robert Zemsky (in Trow, 1997) put it

Using IT for more-with-less productivity enhancement requires that technology replace some activities now being preformed by faculty, teaching assistants, and support personnel. With labor accounting for 70 percent or more of current operation cost, there is simply no
other way. Faculty will have to re-engineer teaching and learning processes to substitute capital for labor…. Failure to substitute intelligently will undermine educational quality and thus negate productivity gains.

We are at the earliest stages in IT developments, that have already impacted virtually all segments and aspects of society. The unprecedented developments in IT have already made a growing impact on higher education institutions in mode of student application, enrollment, courseware development, instructional delivery, means of instruction, curriculum development, courseware propriety, faculty-student interaction, publication, and promotion. Even though the effects of these developments may be felt differently by different institutions the long-term consequences on faculty appear to be difficult to gauge.

Key policy challenges

The U.S. professoriate currently faces a number of significant policy challenges in the areas of faculty employment and faculty worklife. Current policy debates fall in several areas and have led to a significant amount of discussion and deliberation inside and outside the academy. Key areas of policy debate include: faculty recruitment, promotion, and retention; faculty roles and functions; tenure policies and non-tenure track appointments; evaluation and post-tenure review; and academic freedom and autonomy. Among the key policy questions with which US faculty, administrators, and other campus constituents are grappling are:

- Can the academy continue to effectively recruit and retain talented young people to faculty jobs?
- What constitutes an optimal academic career and how can institutional promotion policies facilitate effective career development for faculty?
- What is the current status of tenure policy and are reforms necessary or desirable?
- What is the significance of the growth of non-tenure track and part-time faculty appointments and does this growth present any particular concerns or problems?
- How is the academy responding to calls for increased accountability among faculty?
• What impact do current reforms regarding faculty employment policies have on academic freedom and autonomy and on faculty roles and functions?

Numerous other relevant questions as regards to the state of academic profession may be raised. We, however, confine the discussion to major critical issues under five subheadings.

Faculty recruitment, promotion, and retention
During the expansion of US higher education in the 1960s the academic profession benefited substantially. Those obtaining their doctorates during this period found ready employment. Rapid career advancement could be expected, and inter-institutional mobility was fairly easy and common. In order to retain faculty, colleges and universities lowered teaching loads. Salaries and fringe benefits increased. Access to research funds from external sources increased substantially (Altbach, 1997).

As of 1995-96 there were a total of 931,706 faculty involved in teaching and/or research at US colleges and universities (US Dept of Education, 1998). Of these more than 72% held full-time positions. In the same year, 50% of the faculty at public 2-year colleges were employed full-time compared with 71% at public 4-year colleges and 72% at private 4-year colleges (Digest of Education Statistics, 1998). Some exceptions aside, the proportion in full-time faculty is generally higher at public 4-year colleges than private 4-year colleges. Public 2-year colleges, however, provide the lowest proportion of full-time faculty employment.

By Fall 1995, the proportion of women faculty was 39.6%. While 46.8% of the women faculty held part-time positions, only 34.6% of them had a full-time faculty position (US Department of Education, 1998). Among full-time instructional faculty, 85% were white (non-Hispanic), of which women account 34%. In fall 1992, the white part-time faculty were 88.3%, of which 44.6% were women (US Department of Education, 1996).

One of the most fundamental policy challenges facing U.S. colleges and universities relates to the recruitment, promotion, and retention of talented individuals as faculty members. Rapidly changing economic and labor market forces make it difficult to attract the “best and brightest” to academic careers. Identifying the factors that matter most in the selection and promotion of faculty has also become
more challenging. For example, Lewis (1998) presents an interesting analysis of the role that merit plays in the recruitment, promotion, and retention of faculty in U.S. colleges and universities. He notes:

Needless to say, although it is obviously more difficult for those lacking merit to get ahead in academia in the 1990s than it was in the 1960s, this does not mean that the principle of merit has become the norm or the standard, or that the beneficiaries of a tight labor market are the most meritorious. There is no denying that in a buyer’s market it is difficult for junior faculty to find and retain positions. Who is to say that the meritorious are the ones to get the rare opening and hold on to it? Although academics extol excellence in research and teaching, the principle of merit has long been, and continues to be, indifferently applied. (p. xiii).

In a study detailing the characteristics, demographics, attitudes, and work experiences of full-time faculty who were in the seven years of their academic career, Finkelstein, Seal, and Schuster (1998) identify a number of important changes taking place among the “new generation” of academics in the U.S.

The new generation of academic career entrants is readily distinguishable from their senior colleagues. First, they are more diverse demographically than the previous generation, most dramatically in terms of the substantial increase in the proportion of women (40.8% versus 28.5%). Second, greater racial diversification is evident (16.9% minority versus 11.7%). Third, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of non-native-born faculty among new entrants (16.9% versus 11.5%). Fourth, in terms of their academic program affiliations, a considerably larger proportion of the new entrants hold appointments outside the traditional liberal arts (51.0%) compared with their senior colleagues (44.9 percent) (p. 39).

By fall 1995, professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors and lecturers accounted for 28.9%, 22.7%, 23.5%, 12.1%, and 2.3% of the academic rank, respectively. Women made up 17.8% of the professors, 31.8% of the associate professors, 43.6% of the assistant professors, 50.4% of the instructors, and 54.3% of the lecturers. The white (non-Hispanic) faculty constituted 89.6% of the professors, 87.1% of the associate professors, 80.2% of the assistant professors, 82.7% of the instructors, 81.8% of the lecturers (US Department of Education, 1998). The profile for part-time faculty is quite different. As of fall 1992, 8.6% professors, 6.0% associate professors, 6.4% assistant professors,
57.2%, instructors, and 12% lecturers had part-time positions (US Department of Education, 1996). These figures however vary significantly by institution type.

Data on national origin (citizenship) indicates a sharp rise in the number of faculty members who are not native-born U.S. citizens. When institutional type is factored in, we find that by far the largest influx of foreign-born faculty—including naturalized U.S. citizens and both permanent and temporary residents—has occurred at research universities, amounting to a substantial and rapid increase. Looking at country of birth, regardless of current citizenship, one finds that India (8,307) and the United Kingdom (7,616) are the two leading sources. Both China (5,308) and Japan (2,331) have sharply increased their representations; both are countries of origin for larger numbers of new faculty at US institutions than for senior faculty (Finkelstein, Seal, and Schuster, 1998, pp. 33-34).

With regard to the preparation and career entry patterns among new faculty, they note:

Compared with their senior colleagues, the new generation entered their academic careers from a more diverse educational background (as seen in the sources of their highest degrees) and with a more varied work history both within and outside higher education. Most significant is the finding that a large segment (about one-third) of the new generation is more likely than their seniors to have entered into “temporary” or “term” positions that do not offer a foothold on the traditional academic career ladder (p. 63).

A recent study of faculty recruitment issues conducted by Trower (2000) provides a number of insights concerning the emerging values and preferences of the next generation of aspiring faculty members. She reported the following findings from a survey of some 2,000 doctoral students from elite US institutions:

Factors of most importance in deciding whether to accept a faculty position include: having institutional support for one’s research; quality of the academic department; quality of the institution; and the number of courses taught and course preparations required.

• When given a choice of a tenure-track vs. non-tenure track faculty job, slightly more than half of the respondents indicated that they would accept the tenure-track offer, while approximately a quarter said they would choose the non-tenure track offer.
• The most important factors that respondents would take into account in considering a non-tenure track position are the geographic location of the institution and the balance between teaching and research.

• Nearly 90% of respondents believed that tenure-track faculty positions “command more respect” than non-tenure track positions.

• Approximately two-thirds of respondents agreed that tenure is vital to protect academic freedom.

A number of faculty in the US belong to unions, although this remains geographically limited and almost exclusively a phenomenon of public sector institutions. Total US faculty covered by collective bargaining agreements in 1997 was 250,716, representing approximately 26% of all full-time and part-time faculty. Two states, California and New York, account for 48.8% of all unionized faculty. The ten largest states for faculty collective bargaining account for 89.9% of all unionized faculty. Total collective bargaining agreements for 1996 were 487 of which 70.6% were at 2-year colleges (Hurd and Foerster, 1997).

Faculty roles and functions
While there is no uniform definition of what constitutes the role and function of a faculty member, a typical full-time faculty member at a U.S. college or university divides his or her time among a range of teaching, research, and service activities, in addition to other activities such as consulting and professional development. This however varies tremendously by institution type, propensity/motivation of the faculty, expectation and mission of the institution. An analysis of NCES data by Layzell (1999) on faculty activities indicates that the percentage of time spent on these various faculty activities varies by institutional type, with faculty at 2-year, liberal arts, and comprehensive institutions devoting a higher percentage (70.1%, 64.8%, and 61.1%, respectively) of their efforts to teaching than do their faculty colleagues at research or doctoral universities (45.2% and 53.2%, respectively). Conversely, full-time faculty at research and doctoral universities spend a higher percentage of their time on research activities (31.0% and 23.3%, respectively) than do faculty at comprehensive, liberal arts, or 2-year colleges (13.6%, 9.6%, and 4.7%, respectively). The research function of US institutions is concentrated at research universities. The majority of US faculty at non-research universities devotes their energies
primarily toward teaching. Relative percentage shares for administration, professional development, consulting, and services are somewhat similar across institutional types.

Fairweather (1996) attempts to “set straight the nature of the faculty position (occupation) and the variation in faculty work by type of institution” (p. xii). He notes the pressure administrators and institutions face to shift the emphasis on research to pay more attention to teaching and service. In Scholarship Reconsidered, Boyer (1990) on the issue of faculty role and function stated that “Today, on campuses across the nation, there is a recognition that the faculty reward system does not match the full range of academic functions and that professors are often caught between competing obligations.” While academic institutions routinely demand that teaching—which is considered relegated by many professors on behalf of research—be given more emphasis by faculty, their yardstick for gauging scholarship has however been composed of limited variables other than teaching—research and publishing.

Examining the relationship between teaching and research is a long-standing and fundamental part of the study of US college and university faculty. The dynamics of this relationship have generated an interest among public policy makers and parents (Braxton, 1996). Boyer (1990, 1997) argues that the best approach to resolving this long-standing issue is by diversifying the definition of scholarship in which he suggested that the work of the intellectual life include not only the scholarship of discovering knowledge but also the scholarship of integrating knowledge, the scholarship of applying knowledge, and the scholarship of teaching. The challenge remains on the implementation of these far reaching proposals.

While there is some variation in the career trajectory of a full-time faculty member at a U.S. college or university, a somewhat typical path involves the completion of a doctoral program (which may include a research and/or teaching assistantship); work as a probationary faculty member at the assistant or associate professor level; the achievement of tenure; and possible later promotion to full professor. Models of the academic career have been developed by a number of researchers (see Light, Marsden, and Corl (1972) and Baldwin (1990). The Light, Marsden, and Corl model identifies three stages of an academic career: the disciplinary career, the institutional career, and the external career (Chronister, Baldwin, and Bailey, 1992, p. 386). The Baldwin model, based primarily on concepts from the research litera-
ture on adult and career development, conceptualizes the academic career into four stages: career entry, the early academic career, mid career, and late career (Chronister, Baldwin, and Bailey, p. 386; Baldwin 1990).

**Changing Patterns of Faculty Appointments**

Tenure is a fundamental feature on the landscape of the U.S. academic profession. As Chait and Trower (1997) observe: “Colleges without tenure are a rare breed. Almost all research universities (97%) and public four-year colleges (99%) offer tenure” (p. 1).

Despite the prevalence of tenure in U.S. colleges and universities, a number of institutions are engaged in a range of modifications to traditional tenure policies. A 1996 survey of some 280 U.S. colleges and universities revealed that the most frequently reported modifications to traditional tenure practices were the development of post-tenure review processes, the creation of long-term (multi-year), non-tenure track appointments, and the development of “stop-the-tenure-clock” provisions that permit faculty to stop the tenure clock for one or sometimes two years (Trower 1996, p.2). Other changes to traditional tenure policies reported in this survey included adjustments to the probationary period (increased length, increased flexibility, more restrictive, etc.), the imposition of a tenure quota, changes in early-retirement packages, inducements to forego tenure, and modifications to financial exigency policies or related layoff policies (p.2).

Over the past decade, many US colleges and universities have undertaken a number of strategies designed to meet institutional needs for flexibility in faculty staffing, of which non-tenure track appointments are one of the more popular (Chronister, Baldwin, and Bailey, 1992). Overall, some 52% of all full-time faculty are tenured, a figure that has remained nearly stable during the period from 1975 to 1995. A growing number of faculty appointments are being made on a non-tenure track basis. The percentage of full-time faculty working on non-tenure track contracts rose from 19% in 1975 to 28% in 1995 (Leatherman, 1999, p. A14); during the same period, the percentage of tenure track faculty declined from 29% to 20% (NCES, 1998).

Faculty who hold non-tenure track positions frequently face a number of challenges. For example, non-tenure track faculty appear to feel less secure and less sure about their positions and their work than do their tenure-track colleagues (Chronister, Baldwin, and Bailey, 1992). Non-tenure track faculty also are “more likely to be oriented to teach-
ing as their primary career orientation, to be more committed to their interaction with undergraduates, and to be less committed to national disciplinary associations than their tenure-track colleagues.” Even more significant to policy makers and academic administrators, non-tenure track faculty tend to be “more pessimistic about the future than tenure-track faculty.” Regarding this point, Chronister, Baldwin, and Bailey conclude that “Their assessment of their situation is regrettable, but seems realistic, given the peripheral status and expendable nature of non-tenure track appointments at most higher education institutions.”

At present, there are no systematic or dramatic changes to tenure policies and no outright abolition of tenure at eminent U.S. colleges or universities. However, a number of modifications to traditional tenure have emerged at U.S. institutions in recent years, including extended probationary periods, changes in standards for dismissal of faculty, incentives to forgo tenure and revised promotion and tenure policies and standards to allow for more varied approaches to faculty careers (see Rice, 1996; Boyer, 1990, 1997) and to foster closer links between faculty work and activity and institutional priorities.

Post-tenure review
In recent years, a number of constituent groups, including trustees, students and their parents, and the general public have expressed concerns about such issues as faculty workload, the lack of attention to teaching and undergraduate education, and overall faculty performance, especially among tenured faculty. Critics of the academy assert that “deadwood” faculty are a common occurrence in a number of institutions. Among the policy responses to concerns about faculty performance issues at U.S. colleges and universities has been the development of various forms of post-tenure review. Licata (1998) observes that post-tenure review “usually means a systematic, comprehensive procedure involving significant peer review that is aimed specifically at assessing performance and nurturing faculty development; requiring that improvement occur if necessary and mandating sanctions if a reasonable improvement plan is not accomplished…[M]ost policies require a periodic review of all tenured faculty, usually at five-to seven-year intervals…[O]thers require a review of selected faculty, triggered by some event, usually unsatisfactory annual review” (p. 3). Currently, some 37 states have “established systemwide policies, have policies in place within selected institutions, or currently are considering and/or developing such policies.” (Licata 2000, p. 1).
Despite the growing popularity of post-tenure review policies, Licata (1998) describes a number of significant challenges that remain to be resolved, including:

- a high level of faculty resistance, because post-tenure review is seen as an unnecessary process or as a means to destroy protections accorded by tenure;
- additional time and effort required to carry out the process, particularly for peers, chairs, and deans;
- unevenness in application of performance criteria across units within an institution;
- uncertainty about what constitutes a reasonable improvement plan and what attendant resources should be provided; and
- lack of empirical data on policy effectiveness and the opportunity costs involved (p. 6).

Looking ahead, it is not entirely clear as to whether the current momentum regarding post-tenure review will continue. If it does, there will likely be a number of policy implications regarding the ways by which the work of tenured faculty is monitored and assessed.

**Academic freedom and autonomy**

Academic freedom is the term used to express the freedom of the faculty to teach and conduct research without undue interference and fear from within and without institutions. The term is also used to reflect the freedom of academic institutions to operate freely with out fear and intimidation by external forces. Basic principles of academic freedom ensure the right of the faculty to teach, undertake research, and communicate unduly uninhibited. According to one observer, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) 1940 Statement of Principles and Interpretive comments on Academic Freedom and Tenure is “perhaps the most widely known and endorsed statement of academic freedom in the United States” (Poch 1993, p. 10). The 1940 Statement “identifies four basic academic freedoms to which college and university teachers are entitled: the freedom to research, to publish the results of such research, to teach, and to communicate extramurally” (Poch p. 11).

The extent of the autonomy an academic institution enjoys influences the mechanisms that guarantee academic freedom. The autonomy of an institution is often determined by various factors such as the control of the institution (private vs. public), its affiliation (sectarian vs. secular), its financial benefactors, the propensity of the institu-
tional leadership, and the reputation of the institution. In spite of these differences in control and designation, Ben-David (1972) holds that the governance of these various types of institutions, including those belonging to the states and the churches, is, however, highly standard-
ized.

Recent reforms in faculty employment policies in many higher education institutions have led to questions about the possible erosion of academic freedom and autonomy among U.S. faculty. For example, Altbach (1997) notes the interplay between accountability and autonomy as follows: “The academic profession has traditionally enjoyed a high degree of autonomy, particularly in the classroom and in research. While most academics are only dimly aware of it, the thrust toward accountability has begun to affect their professional lives. This trend will intensify not only due to fiscal constraints but because all public institutions have come under scrutiny” (p. 14). Despite the potential impact of increased forms of accountability on faculty autonomy, Altbach notes the faculty still retain a great deal of independence in their work: “If autonomy is the opposite side of the accountability coin, then one would expect academic autonomy to have declined significantly. But, at least on the surface, this has not yet occurred. Basic decisions concerning the curriculum, course and degree requirements, the process of teaching and learning, and indeed all matters traditionally the domain of the faculty have remained in the hands of departments and other parts of the faculty governance structure. Most academics retain the sense of autonomy that has characterized higher education for a century” (p. 14).

Recent policy discussions of tenure in U.S. institutions underscore the value faculty place on autonomy and on faculty-administration relations. As McPherson and Schapiro (1999) note: “Much of the current debate about tenure centers on issues of authority in the management of universities. To what extent should members of the faculty have a voice in determining such key institutional issues as: Who should teach and conduct research? What subjects should be taught and investigated? How should the work of teaching and research be conducted, including such issues as class sizes, teaching loads, and research expectations?...It is useful to think of academic tenure as a set of constraints on the discretion of managers (the “administration”) over various aspects of the academic enterprise” (p. 92).
Future policy issues
A number of observers, such as Fairweather (1996) and Chait (1998), note that reforms in various aspects of faculty employment and worklife policies at US colleges and universities are likely to be undertaken in the near future. They observe that these reforms can emanate from external sources such as federal or state policy makers or from colleges and universities themselves.

Looking ahead, the U.S. academic profession will need to address a number of important policy issues in the coming years. Key questions that face the professoriate include:

- What tenure reform initiatives will be advanced and by whom will they be brought forward?
- Will the growth of part-time and non-tenure track appointments continue and with what consequences?
- Will the balance among teaching, research, and service remain constant or change?
- What will the faculty’s role in shared governance be in future years?
- What impact will advances in technology, including distance education and the influx of new forms and providers of teaching and learning have on the role and activities of college and university faculty?

In the area of tenure reform, Chait (1998) has identified three possible modifications to traditional tenure:

(1) tenure by objectives, a reconfiguration of the probationary period; (2) post tenure-reviews that focus more on departments than on individual performance; and (3) codification of academic freedom without tenure. (p. 5)

A tenure by objectives (TBO) approach would enable a tenure-track faculty member to work with his or her department chair and other faculty colleagues to prepare a written work plan that “described performance-related goals to be achieved over the course of the probationary period” (p. 7). Under such a system, “the precise mix of teaching, research, and service could be varied and weighted to reflect the tenure candidate’s interests, the department’s needs, and the institution’s overall priorities” (p. 7). The probationary period could be extended as long as the candidate appeared to be making progress toward negotiated goals and objectives.
Instituting post-tenure reviews that are department-based instead of individually-based, according to Chait, might help to address concerns about the cost-benefit ratio and “the unrealistic and contradictory expectations of faculty and policymakers” (p. 16) of the latter approach. Under a department-based post-tenure review system, “the review of tenured faculty would be embedded in the larger context of comprehensive departmental assessment, to be performed roughly every seven years, by both internal and external peer experts” (p. 16). Such reviews would focus on department-level standards and criteria. As a result, “individual post-tenure reviews would be the exception, not the rule, activated only by a peer determination that a departmental colleague’s performance was unsatisfactory” (p. 19).

Attempts to codify academic freedom without tenure, a complex and sometimes controversial notion (see Byrne 1997), represent an effort to assure that the growing number of part-time and non-tenure might enjoy the same protections for academic freedom that their tenured colleagues do. Regarding these efforts, Chait observes:

Even if one were to agree for the purposes of argument that any assurance of academic freedom without tenure is imperfect and not as robust as an assurance with tenure, the fundamental problem persists: Most faculty today do not have tenure, and that fact seems unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. The academy thus has at least two choices, which are not mutually exclusive: to champion the virtues of tenure and urge the creation of more tenure-track slots; to devise the best means possible to assure the academic freedom of faculty without tenure (p. 22).

Since it appears likely that policy conversations regarding tenure reform will continue to generate a fair amount of controversy, it will be important for all parties to have a full understanding of the complexity of the policy issues at hand. As McPherson and Schapiro (1999) note, “...we believe that it is important to get beyond thinking of tenure as an all-or-nothing proposition, which is either valuable for all types of institutions in all circumstances, or is simply wasteful. A more nuanced understanding both of what tenure is and of where it should be applied is called for” (p. 97).
The use of non-tenure track and part-time faculty appointments appears to be growing steadily and will likely continue. Given this trend, U.S. college and universities will likely grapple with a myriad of complex issues related to concerns about academic quality, employment security, governance, and academic freedom in the years ahead.

Regarding the balance between teaching and research, Fairweather (1996) argues that the current role that research plays in the life of U.S. institutions and their faculty might need to be altered in future years to meet emerging needs and challenges. He notes:

The emphasis on research characteristic today of many academic institutions has served the United States well. American colleges and universities, particularly their graduate programs and research productivity, are highly regarded worldwide. Yet the fit between a research-based postsecondary model derived from the needs emerging from World War II, especially the evolution of research to meet criteria relevant mainly to the internal academic world, and contemporary societal needs no longer seems adequate. Research is a necessary part of the American system of postsecondary education and a vital part for meeting the challenges of the future, but is not sufficient to meet the growing number of education and training needs required to meet the challenges of the global economy (p. 185).

The increasing influence of external forces on the academic profession will likely result in significant discussions about the faculty role in governance and related issues regarding power and autonomy. Concerns about efficiency and productivity of academic issues will undoubtedly raise questions about who really controls the academy and whose voices are most influential in policy formulation, especially with regard to academic affairs.

Unprecedented recent advances in technology have enabled many outside traditional colleges and universities to explore the potential of the knowledge market. As a consequence, with new online institutions enrolling many thousands of students, universities and colleges are no longer the only major knowledge centers and providers of teaching and learning.

The significance of these transformations on faculty life, as in other segments of society, has been remarkable and far-reaching. The immediate and special impact of the role of technology on faculty has already appeared to make its mark on the role of the faculty in knowledge transmission, faculty marketability, and intellectual property, to
mention some. Given the remarkable pace of technological advances, it will be foolhardy to project predictions where these developments may lead as regards to the future of faculty and the profession.

George Steiner wrote of the world of “the absolute scholar” as “a haunting and haunted business,” a place where “sleep is a puzzle of wasted time, and flesh a piece of torn luggage that the spirit must drag after it” (Clark, 1997). As the modus operandi that formulates the business of the scholar transforms by persistent evolutionary and revolutionary forces, unleashed inside and outside academe, change in the characteristically resistant enclave of the faculty appears to submit to terms of these powerful unyielding forces. Even though it is a risky task to speculate where the changes that currently shape the academic profession in the US, might ultimately lead, there is an overwhelming accord that the US academic profession is under heavy pressure to reform.

The various reform efforts to align the US professoriate to the unrelenting forces of change that are hard at work may be characterized at once comprehensive and superficial, controversial and consensual, and consequential and trivial. It is fair to say that the robustness, the diversity, uniqueness, and maturity emblematic of the US higher education system, will empower the academic profession to confront the current challenges and dilemmas that it currently faces.

References


Academic Freedom: International Realities and Challenges

Philip G. Altbach

In many parts of the world, academic freedom is under attack. A prominent Egyptian sociologist was arrested for “defaming” Egypt, a Hong Kong academic pollster was warned by his university’s vice chancellor not to publish polls critical of the region’s chief executive, and academics in Serbia have been routinely arrested for opposing the regime (Landler 2000, Sachs 2000, Agovino 2000). Indonesian academics who took part in the democracy movement that succeeded in toppling the Suharto regime were occasionally jailed or fired by the Suharto government, which never had been much committed to freedom of expression in any case (Human Rights Watch 1998). In Malaysia and Singapore, some topics are simply taboo for research and publication due to government pressure. Academic freedom is by no means secure worldwide.

Academic freedom is at the very core of the mission of the university. It is essential to teaching and research. Many would argue that a fully developed higher education system cannot exist without academic freedom. At the beginning of the 21st century, there is considerable cause for optimism about academic freedom. After all, the countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union, as well the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, have achieved reasonable levels, although as yet not always the full range, of academic freedom. Most countries and academic systems at least recognize something called academic freedom and express a commitment to it. Yet, academic freedom is far from secure, and those concerned the core values of the university need to be ever vigilant. A global reassessment is needed.
While there are now few countries in which professors are completely under the thumb of repressive authorities, a more common pattern is one of occasional government crackdowns amidst a general atmosphere of constraint. Indeed, the threats, current and potential, are sufficient to warrant heightened awareness and positive steps to ensure that academic freedom can flourish.

And yet, surprisingly, academic freedom is not high on the international agenda. The topic is seldom discussed at academic conferences, and does not appear on the declarations and working papers of agencies such as UNESCO or the World Bank (Burgan 1999, 45–7). Those who are responsible for leading and funding higher education are far too concerned with finance and management issues. More attention needs to be given to the mission and values of the university, for without academic freedom, universities cannot achieve their potential nor fully contribute to the emerging knowledge-based society.

Elusive Definitions
Academic freedom seems a simple concept, and in essence it is, but it is also difficult to define. From medieval times, academic freedom has meant the freedom of the professor to teach without external control in his or her area of expertise, and it has implied the freedom of the student to learn. The concept was further defined with the rise of the research-oriented Humboldtian university in early 19th century Germany. The Humboldtian concept enshrined the ideas of Lehrfreiheit and Lernfreiheit—freedom to teach and to learn.

These concepts of academic freedom gave special protection to the professor within the classroom and the parameters of the field of expert knowledge of the professor. From the beginning, the university was considered a special place, devoted to the pursuit and transmission of knowledge. Academe claimed special rights precisely because of its calling to pursue truth. The authorities, whether secular or ecclesiastical, were expected to permit universities a special degree of autonomy. Academic freedom was never absolute, however. In the medieval university, both church and state exercised some control over what could be taught in universities. Professors whose teachings conflicted with the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church were sometimes sanctioned, and loyalty to the civil authorities was also expected. Nonetheless, greater freedom of expression existed in the universities than elsewhere in society.
In the German university of the early 19th century, academic freedom was expanded as a concept as research became part of the academic mission. The professor was given almost absolute freedom of research and expression in classroom and laboratory. But academic freedom did not necessarily extend to protection of expression on broader political or social issues. Nor was it considered a violation of academic freedom that socialists and other dissenters were not eligible for academic appointments.

As the research university idea crossed the Atlantic at the end of the 19th century, the concept of academic freedom was expanded. By the early years of the 20th century, the American Association of University Professors had defined academic freedom within the classroom and laboratory as encompassing all issues, not just those within the field of scholarly expertise. The AAUP also linked the concept to special protection of expression outside of the university. Professors were considered valuable social critics, and they were accorded special protections of speech and writing on all topics. In Latin America, as a result of the university reform movement of 1918, a very broad definition of academic freedom came to be applied to the entire university community—to the extent that civil authorities were forbidden to enter the property of the university without the permission of the academic community. The concept of the “autonomous” Latin American university was born at this time.

Today, there is some confusion about the proper definition of academic freedom. Generally, the broader New World concept has gained acceptance within the academic community. But nowhere has academic freedom been fully delineated, and nowhere does it have the force of law. In some countries, both university and civil authorities assume the narrow Humboldtian definition. Elsewhere, within academe and outside, the broader New World ideal prevails. There is no universally accepted understanding of academic freedom.

Controversy has arisen concerning whether the claims of academic institutions and individual faculty for special rights and freedoms bring obligations as well. For example, some have argued that universities should not take overtly political stands or become enmeshed, as institutions, in political debates or movements. It is claimed that institutions, and to some extent individual academics, have a responsibility to remain out of direct conflicts in order to provide the best objective analysis. This issue is especially salient in developing countries, where the academic community was often involved in struggles for independence and where a tradition of political engage-
ment evolved. In Latin America, for example, professors and students actively participated in the struggles against military dictatorships and sometimes supported leftist movements in the 1960s and 1970s, often bringing the wrath of the regime down upon the university. In such countries as Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, large numbers of professors and students were jailed, forced into exile, or even killed by repressive regimes. While no one would condone repression, some have argued that academic institutions should keep aloof from partisan politics, making a distinction between the right of individual professors to speak out on political or social issues and the concept of institutional neutrality (Ashby 1974, pp. 73-87). In the United States, there were debates during the 1960s concerning whether universities as institutions should take stands on such issues as opposing the war in Vietnam. No one opposed the right of individual faculty or students to participate in antiwar movements, but many felt that the institution itself should remain neutral. The issue of the appropriate role for universities in social and political spheres remains an unresolved part of the debate about the role of academic freedom.

There has also been considerable debate over the influence of political or ideological ideas on universities. In the United States, critics of “political correctness” have charged factions within academe of imposing their views on academic departments or disciplinary associations, violating as a result the norms of academic freedom (Kors and Silverglate 1998). The intrusion of partisan politics or sometimes ethnic issues into academic appointments, university elections, and publication and research, is evident in many countries in Latin America and South Asia, and by no means unknown in other parts of the world. These pressures, usually emanating from within the universities themselves, threaten academic freedom. The intrusions introduce extraneous conflicts and non-meritocratic factors into the process of academic governance, teaching, research, and affect relations among academics. Such conflicts are often not seen as in relation to academic freedom. If academic freedom means the free pursuit of teaching and research, as well as decision making on grounds of solely academic criteria, the intrusion of political or other factors into decision making is a concern.

Many have argued that the freedom conferred by academic freedom creates a reciprocal responsibility (Shils 1991, 1–22; Poch 1993; Russell 1993). Those entrusted with teaching and research in higher education, it is claimed, have a special obligation to dedicate them-
selves to truth and objectivity in all their scholarly work. These critics argue that academe and politics should not be intertwined. Universities are not political institutions, and those involved in the academic enterprise need to recognize that academe’s survival depends on its ability to keep an appropriate distance from partisan politics. Others have a more absolutist view of academic freedom, and feel that faculty members should have the right to participate in any activities they deem appropriate, and that representative bodies of the faculty may similarly be engaged. There is as yet no consensus and as a result there are considerable debate about the appropriate limited to academic freedom.

Academic freedom also needs to be reconsidered in the era of the Internet and distance education. Are professors entitled to academic freedom in the cyberclassroom? Does the cyberprofessor have the freedom to design and deliver a course without external restriction from sponsors (often profit making companies), especially when development costs may be high? Who owns knowledge products developed for Internet use? These are questions that impinge on traditional ideas about academic freedom, and need to be answered as higher education moves to new modes of delivering knowledge.

Historical Precedents
Academic freedom has a long and controversial history. For centuries, church and civil authorities placed restrictions on the academic community in terms of teaching, research, and public expression. The Catholic Church forbade the teaching of theological and scientific doctrines in the universities that were contrary to accepted doctrine. Martin Luther, a professor of theology, found himself in conflict with church officials because of his theological views and was removed from his professorship. It was only later, when some German universities in areas that had turned Protestant became sympathetic to his views that he was able to resume his academic duties. As the result of many struggles, and especially following the rise of the research university in the early 19th century, freedom of expression gradually expanded, and professors were given more latitude in their teaching and research.

But academic freedom has always been contested terrain—even in academic systems with strong historical traditions. Academic freedom was effectively obliterated in Nazi Germany despite the fact that its modern ideal was a German invention. Not only were direct restrictions placed on what could be taught in German universities during
the Third Reich, but tenured professors who did not conform to the new ideology as well as professors who were Jewish or known to be politically dissident were fired. Few voices were raised in protest in Germany against these developments, and both the German professors’ organizations and the student unions supported the Nazi suppression of academic freedom. In many cases, the universities themselves implemented the changes. During the 1950s Cold War–era anticommunist hysteria in the United States, academic freedom was challenged by governmental authorities seeking to rid the universities of alleged Communists. In some cases, such as in public universities in California and New York, a number of professors were forced from their positions by state regulations. In others, investigations “exposed” leftist professors, leading to firings or forced resignations. Some universities protected their faculty members in the name of academic freedom, while others gave in to outside pressure and fired professors. While only a few faculty were actually fired during this period, academic freedom was imperiled in an atmosphere of repression and many academics feared dismissal. These examples show that even in countries with strong academic traditions and commitments to academic freedom universities can suffer serious consequences.

The Latin American academic tradition also contributed an important concept to the debate about academic freedom. The idea of university autonomy enshrined in the Cordoba Reforms of 1918 has long been a powerful force in Latin America (Walter 1968). What originated as a student protest resulted in a significant reform of the universities not only for Argentina, but for most of Latin America. Many of the continent’s public universities are by law and tradition autonomous. This has implications for relations with the state as well as for academic freedom—the autonomy ideal provided significant protection for professors and students during periods of political unrest in Latin America. The protection has not been complete, especially during the era of military dictatorships during the 1960s and 1970s, but has nonetheless been a central part of the continent’s thinking about higher education.

In countries that experienced colonial rule, academic freedom is less firmly rooted historically and less well protected. The colonial powers—whether British, French, Japanese, or others, feared unrest from subject peoples (Ashby 1966). Thus when universities were established in the colonies, while otherwise modeled on the metropoli-
tan home university, they were generally not permitted freedoms that were allowed in the metropole. As it turned out, these fears of unrest were justified, since intellectuals and students were often in the forefront of struggles for independence. The universities in formerly colonial countries have often had to struggle to build commitments to academic freedom. Governments have been quick to interfere in academic affairs in order to maintain stability. Traditions of unrest die hard, and universities, especially in developing countries, remain centers of dissent, and when conflicts arise, academic freedom is sometimes forgotten.

**Contemporary Realities**

With more data, it would be possible to create a “world academic freedom barometer” as is done for human rights, corruption, and other issues. Such a mechanism, while useful, would be quite difficult to develop due to the problems discussed earlier of defining academic freedom. The following survey may serve as the first step in such a comprehensive accounting.

**Severe Restrictions**

There are a few countries in which academic freedom is nonexistent. Perhaps the most egregious example is Burma, whose universities have been closed for several years and are only now beginning to reopen, but under conditions of severe restrictions and with no academic freedom. The military government closed the universities in response to student political activism, but the regime did not trust the academic community generally. In countries with unstable governments, universities are closed from time to time, usually to combat student unrest, but also to limit criticism by the faculty. Regimes that are willing to shut universities down are also likely to place severe restrictions on academic freedom of faculty—especially on their freedom to speak out on social or political issues but including views expressed in the classroom and in the course of research.

Iran is an interesting case in point. Oppositional ideas and movements have emerged from the universities, especially the University of Tehran, for decades. Students and faculty provided leadership opposing the Shah. Now, the academic community is calling for a liberalization in Iran’s theocratic regime, and conservatives in the government and among Islamic religious authorities see the universities as a threat. The professors are caught in the midst of a power struggle
in society, and it is unclear how the university will be affected by external forces.

In countries in which the universities are considered to be an integral part of a governmental apparatus that is itself repressive, restrictions are built into the academic and political system—rather than being caused by social unrest or political crises. Countries such as North Korea, Syria, and Iraq are examples.

**Significant Limitations and Periodic Crisis**

In a much larger group of countries while a measure of academic freedom is present in many scientific fields, significant restrictions exist. The involvement of professors in activities viewed as antiregime is not tolerated. Penalties for transgressions can be severe, and include not only loss of academic jobs, but sometimes prosecution and imprisonment. Certainly China, Vietnam, and Cuba are examples of such countries. Restrictions on academic freedom are an integral part of university life, especially in the social sciences and other fields that are considered politically or ideologically sensitive. But even in these countries, the universities generally enjoy an academic environment similar to that in other countries with greater degrees of academic freedom in most fields. Participation in international scientific and scholarly networks is permitted, and in most disciplines, teaching and research are only minimally inhibited by government. At times of political tension, such as during the Tienanmen Square crisis in China in 1989, governmental repression is dramatically increased. Indeed, the Chinese universities were kept on a tight leash by the government for years after Tienanmen, reflecting the historical importance of the Chinese universities as centers of political dissent (Hayhoe 1999). After all, the Chinese Imperial government was toppled in considerable part by university-based demonstrations a century earlier.

Some Islamic countries fall into this category of countries. An absence of democratic traditions in society, potential political instability, and intellectual struggles between fundamentalist and secular forces in the universities combines to create tensions between academia and government. With a few exceptions, there are few universities with strong traditions of academic freedom and autonomy. This makes the professoriate more vulnerable to external pressure. In Egypt, Algeria, and some of the Arabian Gulf states, academics who support fundamentalist groups may face arrest or other restrictions. In Sudan, which has had a profundamentalist regime, dissident views from the other side engender repression. The recent arrest of a respected Egyptian
sociologist was seen by many in the academic community as punishment for his oppositional views.

**Tension in the Context of Limited Academic Freedom**

A still larger group of countries might be characterized as relatively free, especially within the classroom and with regard to research in fields that are not considered to be politically or ideologically sensitive by the state. In general, these countries express a commitment to academic freedom, but serious difficulties are still arise from time to time. The limits are seldom clearly articulated, and the penalties imposed for violations of the restrictions are often unstated and not fully understood by most in the academic community. Testing the limits of academic freedom in these countries may be dangerous, and the fact that limits are perceived to exist creates a significant chilling effect among academics.

Government authorities may impose fairly harsh penalties, often without warning. The Ethiopian government, for example, recently jailed a number of professors at the University of Addis Ababa for indeterminate reasons but that had overtones of political repression. In many countries, it is clear that antiregime sentiments, expressed in the classroom or in public discourse, may cause problems. In Serbia, student opposition to the Milosevic regime has created repression in the universities as the government seeks to maintain its control (Secor 2000).

There are many countries in which a considerable degree of academic freedom may exist for most scholars most of the time, but where a political or other crisis may create severe difficulties for the universities and for academic freedom, creating a general atmosphere of general unease for many academics. Much of Africa and a number of Asian countries find themselves in this situation. Countries in this category include those who governments are weak and have little legitimacy, in which academic traditions are not well established—often as a result of colonialism—and whose universities tend to be dependent on the state for support. Nigeria, which has a large academic system and periodically enjoys a considerable degree of academic freedom, often faces restrictions, especially during rule by military officers. Smaller African countries with weaker academic traditions in general have less academic freedom. In Asia, Cambodia, emerging from decades of repression, is slowly rebuilding its universities. Academic freedom will be difficult to establish because of the instability of regimes, dependence on a few sources of funding, and the almost total
destruction of higher education during the Khmer Rouge years (Chamnan 2000).

The challenge of instituting academic freedom under conditions of political instability is considerable. Universities are very often centers of political and intellectual dissent, and regimes are reluctant to allow institutions the freedom and autonomy that may contribute to instability. The academic community itself, unused to academic freedom, and sometimes engaged in political struggle, is often not in a position to create academic freedom, or exercise the self-discipline involved.

Academic Freedom with Limits
In some nations, there are restrictions on what can be researched by professors as well as on the freedom of public expression by academics. Although resisted by many, these restrictions are widely accepted in the academic community. Sanctions for violating the often unstated norms can range from mild rebukes by administrators to loss of jobs or, in rare cases, prosecution in the courts. Singapore and Malaysia are countries that have long had informal bans on certain research topics and the expression of oppositional views. Ethnic conflict, certain religious issues, and local corruption are among the topics deemed inappropriate for academic research, especially if research findings might raise questions about government policies. Academics must also watch what they say in the classroom on sensitive issues since the penalties for violating these norms can be serious. In Singapore, the former prime minister, Lee Kwan Yew, would occasionally come to National University of Singapore faculty meetings to dress down individual academics for their writings and to encourage the faculty to work in what he defined as the national interest.

Many countries have such restrictions on academic freedom. Government authorities make it clear to university officials that continued good relations, budgetary allocations, and research funds depend on the appropriate academic and political behavior on the part of the faculty.

The Re-emergence of Academic Freedom
In two quite different parts of the world academic freedom is gaining in strength. One of these is Latin America, which has a strong tradition of academic freedom and autonomy, going back at least to the 1918 Cordoba reform movement. Political turmoil throughout much of the
continent in the 1960s and 1970s led to military coups, social instability, and guerilla struggles. Many in the universities, especially the large public autonomous institutions located in capital cities, were deeply involved in the struggles, always on the side of the leftist dissidents. It is not surprising that the military authorities, who had little use for academic freedom in any case, would move violently against the academic community. Academic freedom and the idea of the autonomy of the university suffered serious setbacks during this period. Professors known for dissenting views were forced into exile, jailed, and even killed. Student movements were violently repressed. Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and others were all affected.

While Latin American universities have been involved in national politics at least since the Cordoba movement, and partisan politics continues to infuse campus elections and, in some universities, academic life generally, it was possible to restore, and perhaps even strengthen academic freedom when democracy was restored. The Latin American experience shows that strong traditions of academic freedom can be restored even in the aftermath of severe repression.

The other region that has seen a resurgence of academic freedom is the Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. These countries have a venerable academic history; some of oldest universities in the world are those in the Czech Republic and Poland. However, academic freedom was basically destroyed, first during the years of Nazi occupation and then during the over four decades or more of Communist rule, during which universities were considered arms of the state. Ideological loyalty was expected, and the sanctions for violating political or academic orthodoxy were often severe, including removal from their posts and prosecution. Academic freedom was seen as a “bourgeois” concept, inappropriate in a socialist society.

With the collapse of communism in the region, the academic situation changed dramatically. Academic freedom was restored as a central value of higher education, and the ideological accoutrements of the communist era were dismantled. Teaching and research are no longer considered to be subservient to ideological and political goals. However, it has not been easy to transform the universities. For example, many professors who were identified as having been overly loyal to the communist regimes were summarily removed from their posts. Yet, patterns of both funding and administration inherited from the previous regime were in many cases largely maintained.
Without question, there is now a considerable degree of academic freedom in the region. Promotions are now more likely to be decided on merit. Most academics do not fear direct sanctions for pursuing any research or teaching. Countries with long academic traditions, stable democratic governments, fairly robust economies, and closer ties to the major Western nations—such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland—quickly reestablished academic norms that valued academic freedom and autonomy for the universities. Academic freedom has only a tenuous hold in Belarus, and is in a precarious state in Ukraine and in several of the Central Asian republics. Serbia, mentioned earlier, is in crisis, and universities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo are slowly rebuilding. Conditions are much better in Russia and in most of Central Europe, with the exception of Slovakia during the Mechiar regime. Weak traditions of academic freedom, university systems dependent on governments with only limited popularity or legitimacy, and decades of severe repression have made it difficult to establish a strong tradition of academic freedom quickly in parts of the region.

The Industrialized Countries
Most recognize the relative strength of academic freedom in the major industrialized nations. Countries, such as Japan and Germany, in which academic freedom was abolished, have reestablished strong traditions after World War II. The American anticommunist restrictions lasted just a few years. All industrialized nations value academic freedom in teaching and research and have accepted freedom of expression for professors within the university and in society. Few, if any, external restrictions are placed on teaching or research in higher education. Despite this generally healthy situation, there are some issues that deserve attention.

In the United States, some have argued that the greatest threat to academic freedom comes from within the academy. Critics claim that the dominant forces in the professoriate, mainly in the social sciences and humanities, seek to enforce “political correctness”—imposing academic orthodoxy, usually from a liberal or radical perspective, on some disciplines and seeking to silence those with opposing viewpoints (Kors and Silverglate 1998). Several of the scholarly associations, such as the Modern Language Association, have experienced fierce ideological battles. There is, in fact, little evidence that academics with divergent views have been restricted or have lost their jobs, but the debate about the politicization of some academic disciplines has raised
questions about tolerance of perspectives within the universities. The politicization or the influence of ideology on academic institutions or disciplines is not limited to the United States. During the 1960s, ideology played a role in academic politics and in the disciplines in Western Europe, in many cases intruding into elections and appointments to academic posts.

Some argue that the increased involvement in academe of corporations and the growth of privately sponsored research have transformed research funding and that this has implications for academic freedom (Slaughter and Leslie 1997). Academe, it is argued, has become “corporatized,” and the interests of firms have become dominant on campus. Basic research is being de-emphasized in favor of applied work that will yield quick results for corporate sponsors—and government support for basic research has either been reduced or has not expanded to keep pace with scientific needs. A growing portion of research funding, especially in the biomedical sciences, is directly provided by corporations, and the results are considered proprietary—leading to patents and other benefits for the sponsor. Research findings are sometimes actually suppressed because of corporate funding arrangements. This is considered by many to be a violation of the freedom of academics to disseminate the results of their research. The future of basic research has been described as jeopardized by these changed funding patterns.

A related issue, not usually discussed in the context of academic freedom, is the growth of what some have called “managerialism” in higher education—the notable increase in the power of administrators and other officials as distinct from the authority of the professoriate in the governance and management of academic institutions. Academic freedom and autonomy are related, and these trends in governance reduce the autonomy and power of the professoriate. The authority of the professors to determine the direction of the university, to develop the curriculum, and ultimately to maintain full control in the classroom and in the selection and implementation of research topics is compromised by this trend. There seems little doubt that the shift in power and authority from the professoriate to professional managers and external governing bodies will dramatically affect the traditional role of the academic profession—with repercussions on academic freedom as well.

In concluding this discussion of contemporary realities, it is useful to report on how the academic profession itself views academic
freedom. In a survey of academics in 14 countries (all middle-income and mostly industrialized nations, on all continents except Africa), found a range of views as to whether the academic profession is strongly protected. More than 75 percent of the respondents responded positively to this question in all of the countries but two—Brazil and Russia—where majorities answered negatively. Yet, in all of the countries included except Israel, about 20 percent of the faculty responded negatively. Similar numbers reported that they felt no restrictions on their research and teaching. However, when asked to respond to the statement “In this country, there are no political or ideological restrictions on what a scholar may publish,” significant numbers expressed disagreement—34 percent in the United States, 25 percent in the United Kingdom, and 27 percent in Mexico (Boyer, Altbach, and Whitelaw 1994, 101). These findings indicate that while academics are reasonably sanguine about the state of academic freedom in these countries, there remains some sense of unease.

Indeed, the challenges to academic freedom in the industrialized countries are more subtle, and perhaps in some ways more harmful than the more overt violations that have been described here and that can be readily grasped and opposed.

What Can Be Done?
History shows that academic freedom is not only a fundamental prerequisite for an effective university, but is a core value for academia. Just as human rights has become an international priority, so academic freedom must be placed at the forefront of concern for the higher education community. Higher education is international in scope—the issues that affect one country have implications in others. A sophisticated understanding of the complex issues relating to academic freedom is also required. The following items may be part of an action agenda for academic freedom.

Academic freedom must be at the top of the agenda for everyone concerned with higher education. At present, it is hardly discussed. Rarely are panels devoted to the topic at international conferences. The major actors in the academic enterprise seem to be concentrating on financial issues, accountability, and institutional survival.

Academic freedom needs a universal definition. Should the scope be limited to the Humboldtian ideal of protection of teaching and research within the confines of the university and in the area of expertise of the scholar? Or should the definition encompass expres-
sion, and perhaps action as well, on a wider range of issues both within and outside the university? At present, the lack of agreement on the nature of academic freedom makes common understanding and unified action difficult.

Violations of academic freedom must be monitored and subjected to publicity worldwide. In the age of the Internet, keeping track of academic freedom issues and promptly disseminating information about crises and trends would be easy to accomplish. An Internet-based “early warning system” would provide information and heighten consciousness.

A more rigorous mechanism for investigating academic freedom violations would increase international attention to severe violations. For many years, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has monitored academic freedom in the United States. Universities found to have violated academic freedom can be censured, and the academic community is thus warned about the situation. When the violation is remedied, censure can be lifted. Other than being placed on a list of censured institutions, there are no sanctions, and in fact censure by the AAUP has little impact. A similar international arrangement would be more problematic, and more expensive to organize but would be a valuable tool for consciousness raising.

A solidarity network for academic freedom, such as “Scholars at Risk,” organized by the Human Rights Program at the University of Chicago in mid-2000 may be a valuable tool for helping individual scholars who are being persecuted. The network seeks to identify individuals in trouble and to place them at universities committed to assisting them, with the broader goal of highlighting academic freedom conditions worldwide.

Conclusion
Academic freedom is a core issue for higher education. It is largely overlooked, when it should be central to every debate about the university. It is as important as managerial accountability, distance education, and the other buzzwords of the new millennium. Indeed, without academic freedom, the central work of teaching and research cannot be truly effective. Moreover, academic freedom at the beginning of the 21st century is facing challenges, as much from the impact of new technologies and the restructuring of traditional universities as from forces that would violate academic freedom by persecuting professors.
The future of the university depends on a healthy climate for academic freedom.

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The Academic Profession in International Perspective: A Selective Bibliography By Regions and Countries

Yoshikazu Ogawa

This bibliography provides a selective listing of books, chapters, and articles concerning the academic profession worldwide. Our effort is to list relatively current research-based material. The bibliography reflects the imbalances in research on the academic profession, and is heavily skewed toward English-language material, although we have attempted to list some material in other languages. It is our hope that it will at least highlight the current state of research on the professoriate.

1. General


2. Africa

General


Kenya


Nigeria

South Africa
Tanzania


Asia

General


China


Hong Kong


*India*


*Indonesia*


*Israel*


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Korea


Malaysia

Myanmar

Singapore

Sri Lanka
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**Denmark**

Finland


France


Germany


Greece

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Italy


Netherlands


Norway


Romania

Russia

Spain


Sweden


Switzerland

United Kingdom


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5. North America

*General*


Canada


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