

## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on faculty who have earned research doctorates and distinguishes among types of part-time and non-tenure track faculty. Relying on unique longitudinal data on the careers of science (including social science) and engineering doctorate holders from U.S. institutions, the paper aims to analyze the kinds of jobs held by academicians to distinguish those who are in tenure-track positions, those who are adjunct faculty, and those who are adjunct faculty but have other professional positions. These findings are particularly relevant at a time when higher education is increasingly relying on adjunct faculty to reduce labor costs.

## MOTIVATION

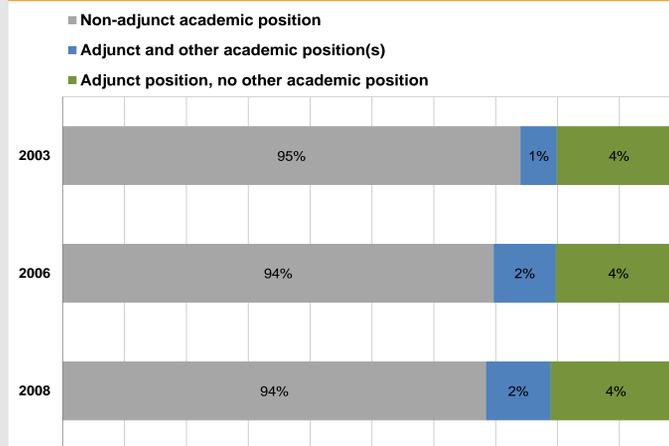
- ✓ Higher education's increasing reliance on part-time and non-tenure track faculty in an attempt to reduce expenses and increase employment flexibility
  - ❑ IPEDS Fall 2005 Survey: 65% of 834,000 faculty members employed at all public institutions (not including graduate employees) were "contingent" faculty—47% were part-time faculty and 18% were full-time non-tenure-track faculty
- ✓ Concerns about the effect of increasing reliance on contingent faculty on the attractiveness of careers in academia and quality of instruction
  - ❑ Critics argue that contingent faculty are less engaged within the department or institution, and they may negatively influence students' choices in terms of majors or student engagement and persistence
  - ❑ Others argue that adjunct faculty often have concurrent professional employment and may bring important perspectives and experience that enrich their teaching
- ✓ Need to clarify key terms of the debate
  - ❑ Different types of contingent employment: adjunct faculty who hold other academic positions at their educational institution and faculty who work exclusively as adjuncts

## DATA

### Survey of Doctorate Recipients (SDR)

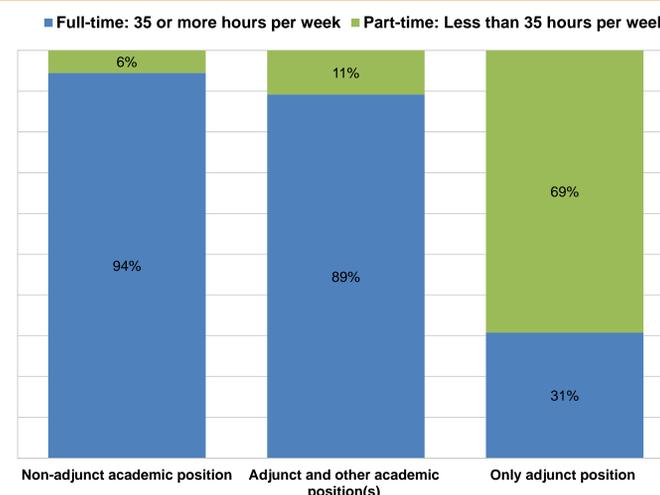
- ❑ Administered every two years to 40,000 science, engineering, and health research (SEH) doctorate recipients who earned their degrees from institutions within the United States
- ❑ Sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health
- ❑ Conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago
- ❑ Key source of data on the education and training, work experience, and career development of SEH doctorate holders
- ❑ Survey rounds: 2003, 2006, and 2008

## INCREASING PREVALENCE OF ADJUNCT FACULTY



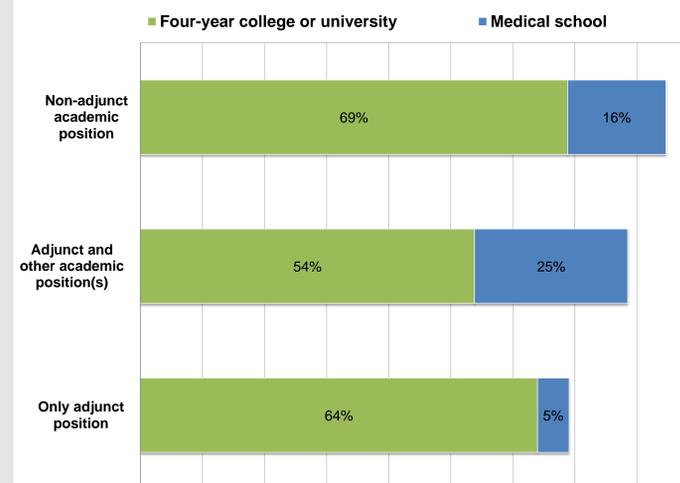
- ❑ Over 93% of SEH doctorate recipients who worked primarily at educational institutions held an academic position other than adjunct faculty
- ❑ In 2008, 17,500 SEH doctorate recipients who worked primarily at educational institutions held adjunct positions
- ❑ In 2008, 67% of adjunct faculty worked exclusively as adjuncts. The remaining 33% of adjuncts held other academic positions, primarily "research faculty"
- ❑ Adjunct faculty who held other academic positions increased from 1.2% in 2003 to 2.0% in 2006 and 2008

## PART-TIME WORK AS A LIMITED PROXY FOR ADJUNCT FACULTY



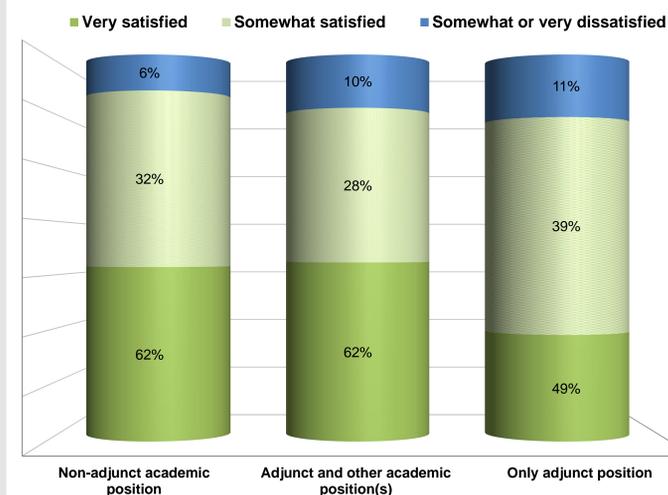
- ❑ Among faculty who exclusively held an adjunct position in 2008, only 31% worked full-time in a typical week on their principal job. In contrast, 89% of adjunct faculty who also held other academic positions worked full-time
- ❑ About a fourth of *all* adjunct faculty worked for pay at a second job, including part-time, evening or weekend work
- ❑ For both types of adjunct faculty who worked part-time, approximately a fourth wanted to work full-time

## AT WHAT TYPE OF INSTITUTIONS DO ADJUNCT FACULTY WORK?



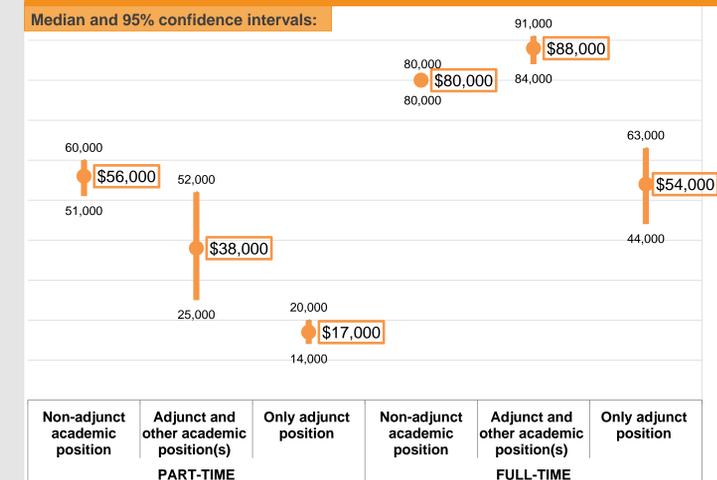
- ❑ Slightly over half of *all* adjunct faculty in 2008 worked at four-year colleges or universities (61%). The remaining adjunct faculty were employed at two-year colleges (15%), medical schools (12%), and university-affiliated research institutes (12%)
- ❑ Adjunct faculty who held other academic position(s) worked more frequently at medical schools than did faculty who only held an adjunct position

## "ADJUNCT ONLY" FACULTY REPORT LOWER JOB SATISFACTION



- ❑ Faculty who worked exclusively as adjuncts were less likely to be very satisfied with their job than either adjunct faculty who held other academic positions or non-adjunct academics (49% vs. 62%)
- ❑ Job satisfaction of non-adjunct faculty and adjuncts who held other academic positions was similar

## "ADJUNCT ONLY" FACULTY HAVE LOWER MEDIAN SALARIES



- ❑ The median annual salary of faculty who exclusively held adjunct positions in 2008 was lower than the salary of adjunct faculty who also held other academic positions. This difference is statistically significant for part-time and full-time employees
- ❑ Part-time faculty: Faculty who only had an adjunct position earned \$21,000 less or about half of the salary of adjunct faculty who held other academic positions
- ❑ Full-time faculty: Faculty who only had an adjunct position earned \$34,000 less or about two-thirds of the salary of adjunct faculty who held other academic positions

## CONCLUSIONS

- The main points from this analysis of recent data on higher education employees with SEH doctorates are:
- ❑ The percentage with adjunct-only appointments did not change from 2003 to 2008, at about 4% each year
  - ❑ There was a small but significant increase in the percentage of adjuncts with other academic position(s) from 2003 to 2006 but no increase from 2006 to 2008
  - ❑ Only 31% of adjunct-only staff worked full time in 2008
  - ❑ Job satisfaction and salary in 2008 were lower among adjunct-only staff than others
- While not indicating an escalating crisis among SEH doctorate recipients, the SDR panel data should be analyzed further to estimate the extent to which the adjunct-only contingent is able to find more stable positions and career advancement after adjunct work.

## CONTACT

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