

Faculty Affairs Briefing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this briefing, we describe several aspects of the OSU *academic* faculty body: overall composition and demographics; advancement (promotion); trends in retention and hiring; and recognition, awards, and endowed positions. In addition, we provide an overview of professional development opportunities available to academic faculty and an update on employee and labor relations. We end the briefing with a discussion of threats and opportunities related to the academic faculty.

In the landscape of academic faculty at OSU, the key take-aways in this briefing are:

- 1) Slowed hiring in the context of federal funding changes and strategic budget realignment
- 2) We have robust faculty development offerings for instructional and research support
- 3) Changes to federal funding and rapid advancements in artificial intelligence are shifting landscapes for faculty, creating both uncertainty and opportunity.

THE OSU ACADEMIC FACULTY BODY

Overall Composition and Demographics

In Fiscal Year 2025, OSU had 2,452 academic faculty members located throughout the state (down 2.3% from last year). Tenured or tenure-track (TTT) faculty comprise 42% of the academic faculty with fixed-term faculty comprising the remainder. Fixed-term academic faculty appointment types, such as modified professorial positions, instructors, research associates, and faculty research assistants, are varied. Combined, these faculty represent the largest portion of the academic faculty.

Across all academic faculty, approximately 47% identify as female, 53% as male, and less than 1% as other gender categories. By academic faculty type, about 41% of TTT faculty and 51% of fixed-term faculty identify as female. Self-reported data from 2024 on race and ethnicity reveal that academic faculty of color¹ represent approximately 22% of TTT faculty and 14% of fixed-term faculty.

Faculty Advancement (promotion)

In Spring 2025, 146 members of the academic faculty were reviewed and promoted effective July 1 (for those on 12-month contracts) or September 1 (for those on 9-month contracts), including: 29 to professor, 27 to associate professor, 3 to associate professor (senior research), 4 to associate professor of practice, 3 to professor of practice, 1 to professor (clinical), 1 to senior instructor I (PAC), 23 to senior instructor I, 22 to senior instructor II, 5 to senior research associate I, 1 to senior research associate II, 19 to senior faculty research assistant I, and 6 to senior faculty research assistant II. Among these, 28 faculty members earned indefinite tenure.

¹ “Faculty of color” includes faculty who self-identify in a race or ethnicity category that falls under American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian; Black/African American; Hispanic; Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; or two or more race categories in the Regulatory Race classification.

Trends in Tenured/Tenure-Track Hiring and Retention

Final data on new tenured and tenure-track (TTT) faculty will be available near the end of October, but preliminary data indicate 41 new TTT hires for FY25, reinforcing a slight hiring decline over FY24 in TTT faculty, which sits within the context of the changing federal funding landscape and strategic budget realignment efforts. OSU has maintained a dual career hiring initiative that provides supplemental funds for a limited duration to colleges and units to support recruitment. These funds are in full use, with projected commitments into FY26.

Between September 2024 and June 2025 we had an academic faculty turnover rate of 8.5%, only slightly higher than the 8.4% rate of the year before.

DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Prosperity Widely Shared and Faculty Excellence

Prosperity Widely Shared places an emphasis on faculty excellence in both teaching and research, for which all colleges are setting specific goals. To leverage college efforts, the Provost's Office will support a coordinated hiring initiative during the current academic year in the area of Robotics and AI. The university will also launch a campaign supporting academic faculty professional development in course design, teaching, and assessment, and increase awards and recognition for distinguished teaching alongside efforts to increase the number of faculty recognized by national scientific and scholarly societies. University leadership is working with college deans to develop more strategic hiring practices that will meet the needs of colleges and the ambitious goals of the strategic plan with respect to research success and student success.

Faculty and Academic Leadership Development

Development opportunities for academic faculty include:

- New Academic Faculty Academy for academic faculty new to OSU in AY26
- Research Advancement Academy for supporting highly inter- and trans-disciplinary research
- Webinars about university promotion and tenure processes
- Various programming and support offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning
 - Faculty learning communities
 - Quality teaching talks
 - Book clubs
 - Center for Teaching and Learning Fellows
 - Teaching mini-grants
- Course design assistance for Ecampus courses
- Mentorship training for faculty advising graduate students
- Supports provided through the National Center for Faculty Diversity and Development

Opportunities for academic leadership development include:

- Academic Leadership series, including series for new leaders
- Webinars for administrators and chairs about university promotion and tenure processes
- Various supervisor programming offered through University Human Resources

Recognition, Awards and Endowed Positions

Faculty excellence is reflected through both internal and external recognition. In the most recent reporting year, *Academic Analytics* shows that four OSU faculty were awarded prestigious awards, and 19 faculty received non-designated awards—still notable awards.

OSU continues to have consistent participation in the Fulbright Visiting Scholars program. In the 2024-25 academic year, OSU host six scholars, with one from each of Hungary, Indonesia, Morocco, and Turkey and two from Ethiopia.

Another form of faculty recognition and financial support comes in the form of endowments from the OSU Foundation. Endowed positions honor and support faculty who are nationally known as scholars, educators, researchers, and leaders in their fields. As of June 2025, OSU had 213 endowed faculty positions, an increase of 23 positions since June of 2024.

OSU named Professor Melissa Cheyney as University Distinguished Professor of Clinical Medical Anthropology in 2025. Dr. Cheyney is an international leader in maternal healthcare and midwifery research. In addition to her outstanding research, scholarship, and teaching, Dr. Cheyney's extraordinarily active public engagement is influencing the reform of maternal care in Oregon and the nation, resulting in improved birth outcomes, especially among underserved populations.

The University recognized 22 individual academic faculty awardees and three academic teams as part of the 2025 University Day Awards Ceremony. Many of these awards focus on teaching and research excellence. In 2025 the University recognized 31 OSU Authors and Editors who published volumes in the last year.

EMPLOYEE AND LABOR RELATIONS

OSU's academic faculty union, United Academics of Oregon State University (UAOSU), represents approximately 2,400 academic faculty. The inaugural contract, ratified in June 2020, expired at the end of June 2024. The university and UAOSU successfully negotiated a new successor agreement effective July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2029. The agreement strikes a balance between offering competitive terms and conditions of employment, that honor the important work of the academic faculty, while also being responsive to the current budgetary climate and evolving federal landscape.

THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

OPPORTUNITY AND THREAT: The goals associated with Prosperity Widely Shared ramp up expectations for faculty engagement and excellence in teaching and research.

Strategies/Actions

- Build the skills of faculty in course design, teaching, and assessment.
- Continually assess faculty workloads and the resources faculty need to ensure their success.
- Deans and unit leaders will need to actively project and monitor the mix of faculty of different types to meet sizable new demands in both teaching and research. These needs can be met through tenured/tenure-track positions as well as an increasing variety of fixed-term academic faculty positions.

OPPORTUNITY: *Integration of generative artificial intelligence tools and technology into the teaching and learning space, into curriculum, and as a resource for research.*

Strategies/Actions

- The Center for Teaching and Learning offers extensive resources to faculty for creating syllabus statements related to AI, for building homework assignments that either take advantage of or explicitly avoid AI, and for general guidance around navigating (and helping students navigate) AI. With this rapidly advancing technology, there remains a lot of support faculty need to effectively harness these tools, and we will continue to bolster resources at the CTL.
- University Information and Technology will continue to offer training for faculty on the use of Copilot, the AI integration with Microsoft products.

OPPORTUNITY AND THREAT: *Shifting federate funding landscape and continued pressure to demonstrate the value of higher education.*

Strategies/Actions

- The goals, actions and tactics of *Prosperity Widely Shared* are well-aligned with task of demonstrating the value of higher education.
- Continuing diversification of research funding.
- Attention to faculty mental health and well-being.