

Report on Tenure-Track Faculty

Introduction

Two major budget downturns over the past fifteen years have taken their toll on the number of tenure track faculty at SDSU and have raised concerns over issues of the burdens placed on current tenure-track faculty relating to workload and service. At its last meeting of Spring 2004, Senate Chair Patrick Papin charged the Faculty Affairs Committee to conduct a study of the tenure track faculty since 1990 in order to analyze the changes that have occurred over that period and to make recommendations, as necessary.

Our main areas of investigation included faculty demographics, number of tenure track faculty in relation to temporary faculty, and changes in FTES and SFR. Our investigation was guided by the Senate resolution that SDSU should maintain a ratio of no less than 75% tenure track faculty to 25% temporary faculty.¹

Our committee wishes to thank the Office of Faculty Affairs for its help in collection of data. We also wish to recognize the contribution of the DEO Committee through its report on African-American faculty diversity and its participation on the original sub-committee that worked on this study.

In response to this charge, the Faculty Affairs Committee presents this report and makes the following recommendations:

To increase the number of tenure-track faculty, FAC recommends:

- an aggressive campaign of hiring , with the goal of 70-75 successful searches per year over the next 10 years;
- continued efforts to ensure and increase faculty diversity, with a particular emphasis on African American faculty;
- implementation of strategies for faculty retention.

To assure a reasonable faculty workload in light of increasing FTES:

- cautiously and judiciously increase the number of very large course sections;
- build graduate enrollments and graduate programs for wider use of teaching associates and graduate assistants
- offer more assigned time for service duties.

Our narrative discussing the patterns that have emerged in the data we analyzed explains how we reached the conclusions.

¹ ACR 73(Strom-Martin) adopted in September 2001 also call for 75% tenure track faculty.

Tenure-Track Faculty 1990-2005

Background

Preliminary steps in our research included looking at system wide data for recruitment for the period 1988-2003 and gathering information on peer institutions. The former helped put our campus situation in context; the latter allowed glimpses outside the system and both helped us determine what type of data we would need to answer our questions. Further, we considered a number of earlier senate reports, including the Report on African-American Faculty Diversity presented to the Senate in May 2005 by the DEO Committee, the reports on large classrooms, submitted by APP in October 2003 and by Faculty Affairs in December 2003 and May 2004, and the Report on Faculty Development and Retention, submitted to the Senate in December 2001.

Snapshots: F'90 and F'05

In Fall 1990, a head count of tenure-track faculty shows 1047 faculty members active on campus; of these 90% (944) were tenured, and of those 62% (653) were full professors. The majority of the faculty was male (75%) and white (87%) with an average age of 48.73 years. Fifteen years later, there are 741 tenure-track faculty members on campus – a decrease of 306. Of those 741, 74% (550), are tenured and of those 47% (345) are full professors. While the average age of the tenure-track faculty has not changed significantly, 49.31 years in 2005 compared to 48.73 in 1990, faculty diversity has. Women now make up 40%, of the tenure-track faculty, as opposed to 25% and persons of color now account for 25% of the group, as opposed to 13%, representing significant gains in faculty diversity in both areas. The number of faculty participating in the FERP program has increased dramatically from 73 in 1990 to 139 in 2005.

A similar comparison of headcounts, including temporary faculty (but not teaching associates) for the same period, reveals that in F'90, of the 1751 total faculty members, 631 (36%) were lecturers. In F'05, of the 1829 total faculty members, 949 (52%) were lecturers. In other words, the percentage of tenure track faculty decreased from 64% to 48%. Headcounts in terms of overall faculty, although significant, do not clearly indicate the significant shift in teaching since 1990. An examination of FTEF rounds out the picture. In F'90, the total FTEF was 1252.45. Of that number, lecturers account for 285.35 FTEF. In F'05, lecturers account for 437.40 of the total 1202.28 FTEF. In terms of percentage, in F'90 lecturers accounted for 22.78% of the FTEF; in F'05, they made up 36.38% of the FTEF. Again, in other words, the percentage of FTEF tenure track faculty decreased from 77% to 64%.

One other shift has occurred over the same time period, an increase in Teaching Associates. In F'90, the Teaching Associates total FTEF was 136.9 and headcount 392; FTEF had increased in F'05 to 217.3, with a headcount of 551.

Over the same period, FTES have increased from 26338 in F'90 to 26949 in F'05. The SFR on the main campus has gone from 19.28 to 20.32. IVC data are similar: 15.51 to 17.14. A few major spikes occurred in SFR, in '91 and '92, and again F'03 and F'04, coinciding primarily with the reduction in lecturers. Variables in SFR relate to total FTEF and FTES.

Patterns That Appear in the Data

Tenure Track Faculty Numbers

After a sharp decline in total faculty headcounts from F'90 to F'92, accounted for by the cutbacks in lecturers and in FERPs, the total number of faculty steadily increased until F'02 when another budget downturn eroded faculty numbers. Most crucial in the overall numbers are the years 2000-2004. Although between F'00 and F'02 the number of probationary faculty went from 187 to 237, the total tenure track faculty, not including FERPs declined, going from 884 to 831. In F'05, that number had tumbled to 741. Numbers including ERP faculty are not much more encouraging. The total number of tenure track faculty has fallen by 69 over the past five years.

Contributing factors were the number of searches and appointments, which fell dramatically from 1991-1998. The low point occurred in 1992 and 1993 when a total of 12 searches were initiated and 10 appointments made. In 2003 and 2004 when economic conditions once again led to a decline in resources to the campus, many searches were cancelled and only 61 appointments were made.² The cuts of '03-'05 appear to have been a short-timed dip and hiring is again back to earlier levels.

Separations also have taken their toll on tenure track faculty numbers. From the period of 1996-2005, of 547 separations, 94 (17%) were faculty resignations, averaging approximately 9 faculty per year. The Golden Handshake offered in 2003 also accounts for a significant drop in tenure track faculty. Some 45 faculty members took advantage of the handshake that year.

As tenure track numbers have declined, the number of lecturers has risen, changing the balance of instruction. With 880 tenure track faculty and 949 lecturers in F'05 compared to 1120 and 631 respectively in F'90; the overall percentage of tenure track faculty has declined from 64% to 48%.³ Lecturer FTEF has risen from 285.35 in F'90 to 437.4. In F'90 those numbers made for a ratio of 77.2% tenure track faculty FTEF compared to 63.62% in F'05. Tenure track faculty FTEF reached a high in F'91 of 87.62% and was at a low of 62.58% in F'01. To achieve the Senate mandated ratio of 75%-25% requires either a dramatic increase in the teaching load of tenure track faculty or an increase in the number of tenure track faculty. Without increasing the number of tenure track faculty, tenure track faculty would need to teach more sections so that we could reduce the number of lecturers we hire. This solution entails a move which is contrary to our role as a research university.

Future Increases in FTES

While the F'05 FTES of 26948 is only 242 FTE S greater than F'90, we are back in a period of growth after the budget downturn, with our FTES projected to reach 30000 within the next five years.

² These trends are similar system wide according an August 2004 report issued by Human Resources.

³ SDSU is not alone. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* (March 4, 2001) reported that nationwide non-tenure track faculty had risen to 61% in 1998 from 41% IN 1987. In a report presented to the UNC Board of Governors in March 2004, it was noted that the percentage of "tenure-stream" faculty in the University of North Carolina system had declined from 66% in 1990 to 57% in 2000.

Recommendations Elaborated

Hiring

The only way to increase the number of tenure track faculty is through an aggressive campaign of hiring. While we recognize the inexact science of our estimate, adding 750 tenure track faculty in the next 10 years *should* offset potential separations and *could* result in a net gain of 250 tenure track faculty, bringing faculty head count to close to 1000.

Our number of 75 successful searches per year over the next 10 years derives from a combination of a) 1020, the base number of tenure track faculty in F'90, as a goal, b) probable numbers of loss in tenure track faculty over the next 10 years due to all types of separations, c) current FERP faculty who will complete their FERP term over the next four years and estimated retirements based on the fact that some 53% of the tenure track faculty are currently 50 (as compared to 46% in 1990) and over, and d) total number of successful searches in the past 10 years.

As a point of reference, since F'96, 761 searches were initiated and 501 appointments were made, resulting in a success rate of approximately 66%. In that same period, total head count of tenure track *decreased* by 77. We are calling for approximately 100 searches per year with an increase in the success rate to 75%.

We recognize that such a program calls for a substantial financial commitment; however, there are no real alternatives available.

Faculty Diversity

As noted faculty diversity has increased since 1990, particularly in the percentage of females to males in the professoriate. Contributing to this increase is the composition of the faculty who have left SDSU and the percentage of appointments who are female. Over the last 9 years (the period for which we have complete data), of the 537 tenure track faculty separations, only 137 have been female. Similarly, all but 97 were white. Thus, a portion of the increase in diversity and gender equity can be attributed to an earlier generation of tenure track faculty leaving the university. Nonetheless, it is clear that hiring patterns have changed considerably over the past fifteen years. Departments have taken the message to increase diversity seriously and the results are impressive. We still lag behind in at least one area, however. The DEO Committee in its report of May 3, 2005 has amply demonstrated the need to more actively recruit faculty of color, especially African Americans. We concur with their assessment and encourage departments to follow their recommendations whenever possible.

Retention

Resignations account for about 17% of faculty separations but the percentage varies greatly, depending on which year one examines. Generally resignations are not a major issue on campus. However, we note that faculty need to feel secure, not subject to the whims of the California budget. Such an environment did not exist during the last budget downturn, resulting in 21 resignations in 2003-04. While various factors can affect resignations, including uncertainty about the California budget, retention must be a priority so that we do not lose the faculty we have recruited. In 2001 the Principles of Faculty Development and Retention suggested ways to facilitate faculty development and retention. These principles are still sound.

Ratio of tenure track FTEF to lecturer FTEF

Tenure track faculty has contributed fewer than 70% of the total FTEF for the last 8 years. The hiring plan we recommend should offer some remediation but we believe it is unrealistic to expect to reach the Senate goal of in the near future. By setting a five year goal of 70%-30% we can evaluate the effectiveness of the hiring plan in terms of the projected increase in FTES.

Another important trend affecting this issue is the increase in grant and contact funding. Faculty brought in over \$129 million dollars in 2004-05, up from \$26 million in 1985-86. While this furthers our efforts in advancing faculty research, it paradoxically lowers the tenure track faculty percentage to the extent that lecturers are hired to cover faculty teaching assignments vacated for their work on funded projects. This dynamic, added to the challenges mentioned above, should be considered when assessing progress toward the 75% goal.

However, we wish to question the 75% tenure track ratio. The absolute number may need to be rethought or at least applied not in a blanket fashion for all departments and programs.

This ratio needs to be rethought. Departments with a great deal of funded research may need a new or different metric. Various headcount ratios may be more accurate for those departments than FTES or standard SFRs. For example, a metric could be implemented where the numerator is the number of students doing research/taking independent study/being mentored by the faculty member; in that environment, you would want tenure track faculty to have high numbers and lecturers to have low because that would mean that tenure track faculty are providing hands on research training. Further, since we offer few Ph.D. programs, many of our lecturers have the same degree as Teaching Associates in doctoral programs. In those institutions (as in our), the ratio does not count teaching associates. Thus, in some disciplines, where advanced teaching associates are not available, lecturers may be a viable alternative.

Large Class Sections

Large class sections and other innovative teaching methods such as technology-based learning offer other ways to deal with increased FTES demands. We stress that they are not the only options and should only be considered when a department or faculty member is willing to undertake them and receives adequate support. In our report to the Senate of April 24, 2004, we recommended TA/GA support for faculty teaching these courses, training in technology, and considerations in assigned time. These factors remain important. APP also made several sound recommendations for use of very large course sections in its report to the Senate in October 2003. In addition to ones we have mentioned, that report also raises the issue continuous feedback for instructors in those sections and monitoring success in meeting learning outcomes. Further, we hold the opinion that large class assignments should not be made randomly. Each department should systematically review its course offerings and identify those courses that could be taught in a larger format and those that, for whatever reason, should or could not be taught in larger sections. This must be a department decision, made a priori, on a rational basis, with clear reasons why X course can be large but Y course should not be, and not in response to situational demands that vary from semester to semester. Faculty preferences and teaching strengths should also be taken into account.

Graduate Students

Strong graduate programs contribute to our status as a research institution. They also offer us teachers in training and assistants. In the former case, some courses now taught by lecturers could be staffed by qualified graduate students or they can teach breakout sessions for large courses. Further, they can serve as graders for faculty who may have larger classes. In addition, they can serve as research assistants for tenure-track faculty. The latter two functions could serve as hiring incentives and aid in retention.

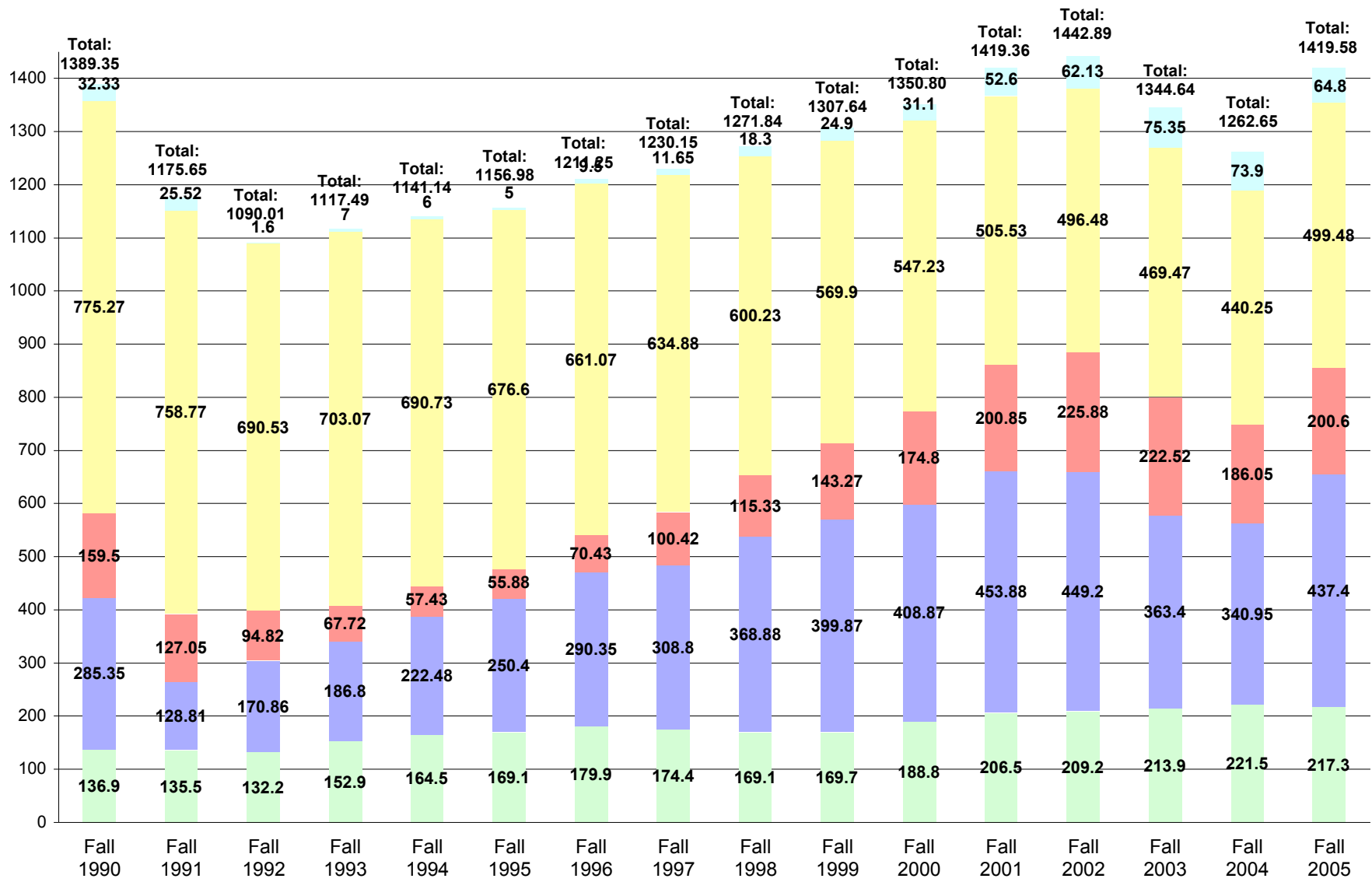
Conclusion

The committee recognizes that the decline in tenure track faculty has resulted from a combination of circumstances including uncertain state funding, the need to meet increasing enrollment demands, and an ageing workforce. While our primary recommendation is hire more tenure track faculty, we also recognize that fiscal realities may intervene. We also hope that this report will serve as a beginning to evaluate and address the role of non-tenure track faculty and graduate students in the make-up of the university's teaching corps and in achieving its academic mission.

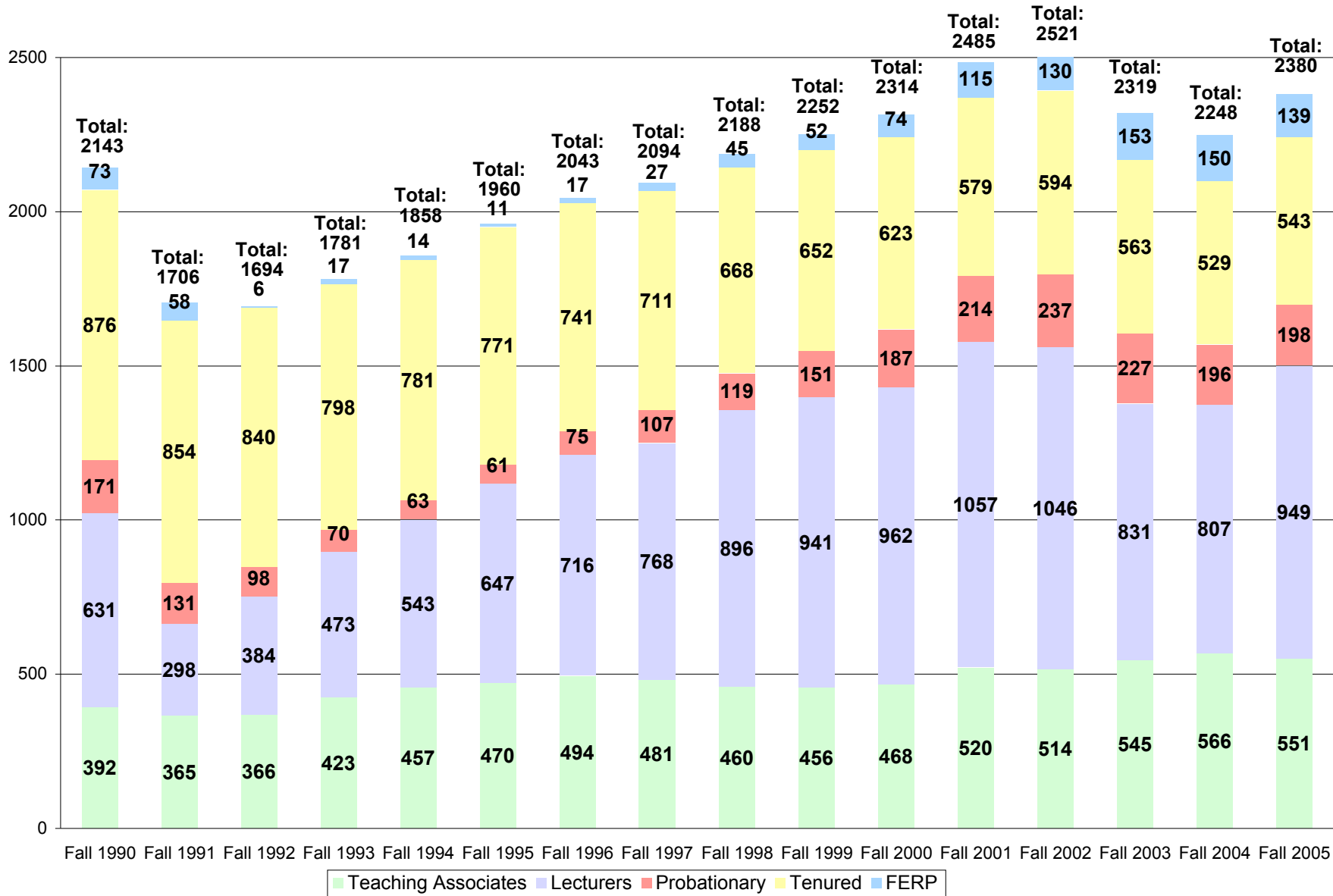
Appendix

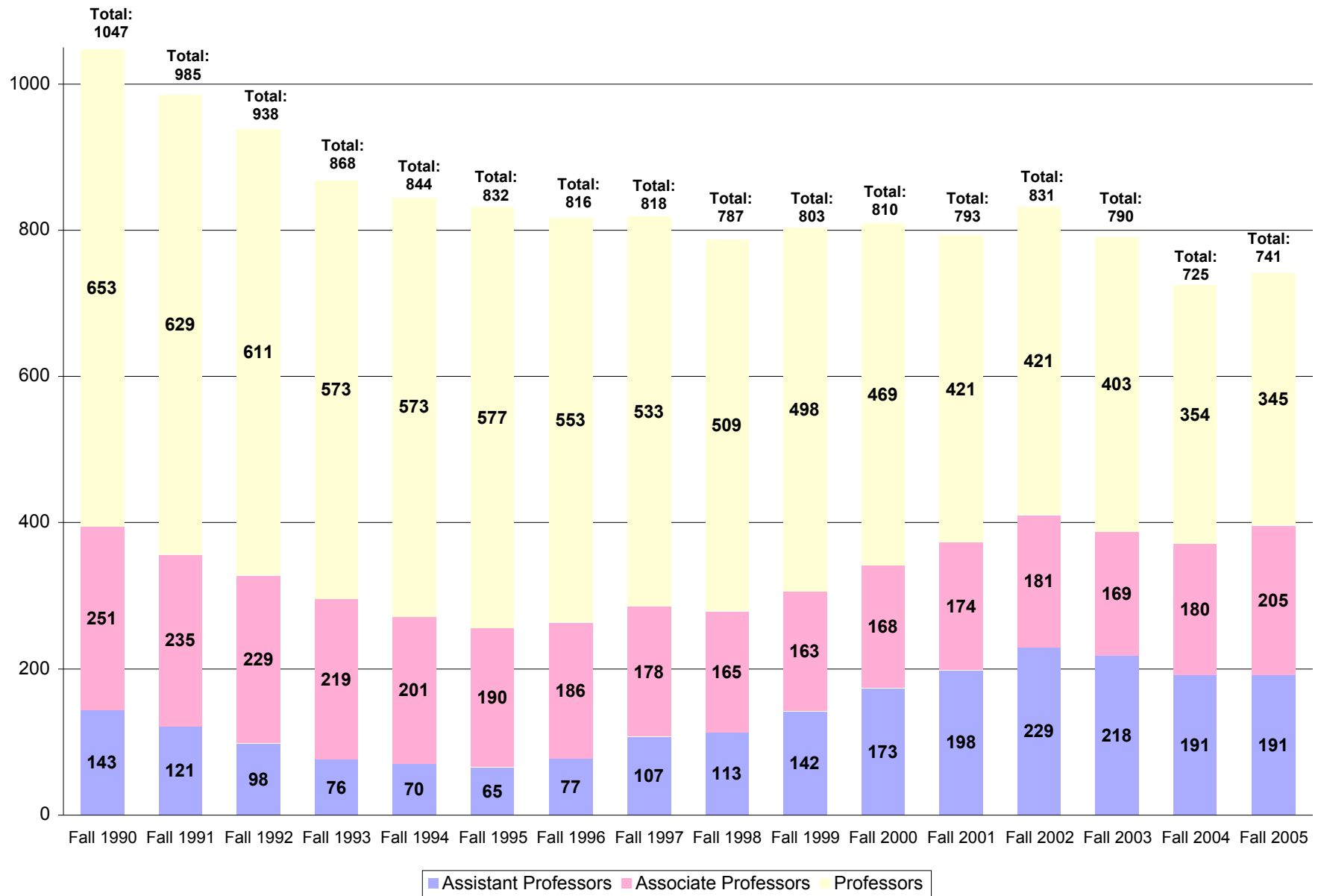
Informational Charts

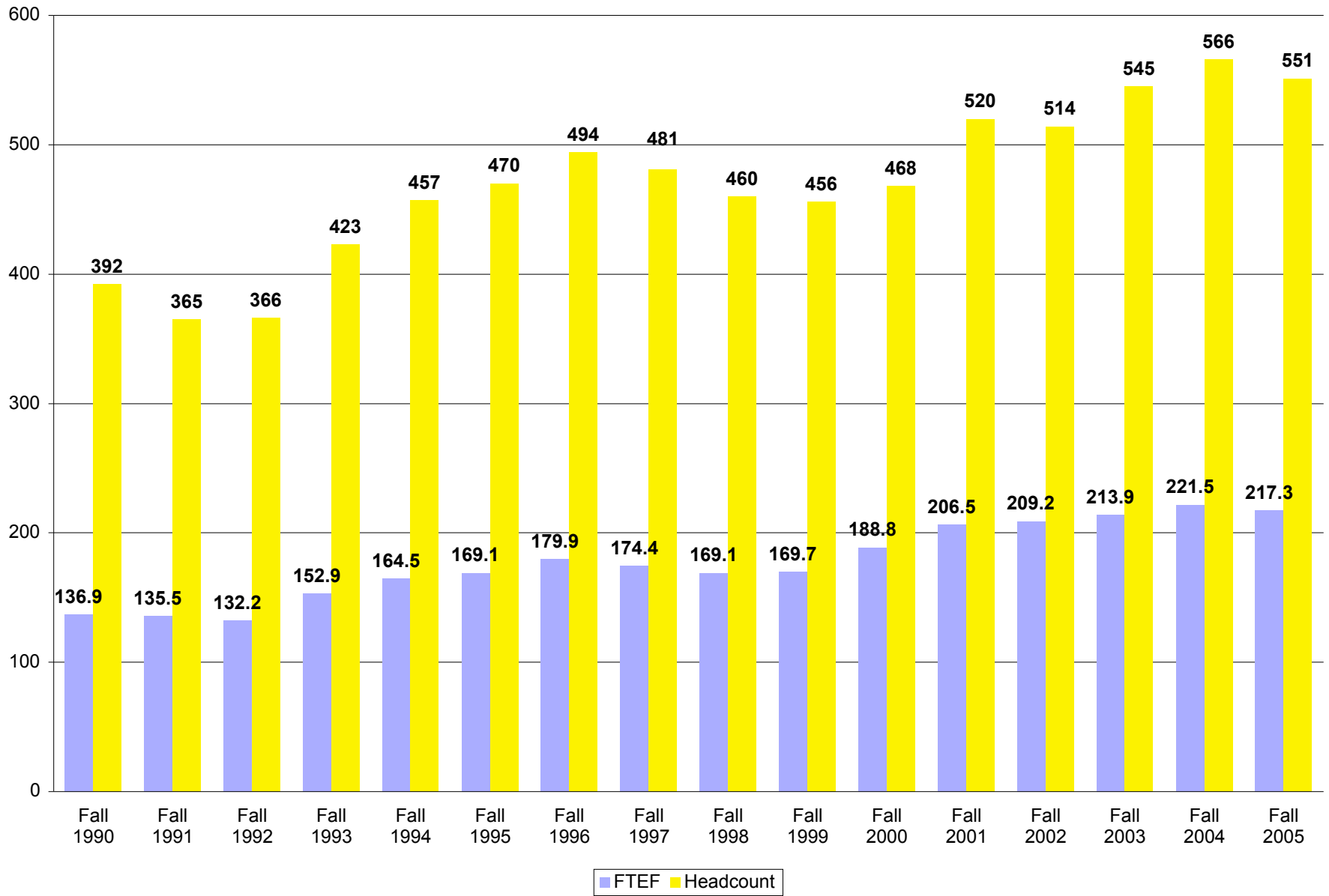
- 1) Full-time Equivalent Faculty 1990-2005
- 2) Total Faculty Head Counts
- 3) Tenure-Track Faculty Headcounts by Rank
- 4) Teaching Associates: Headcount /FTEF
- 5) Tenure-Track Percentage of FTEF
- 6) Total Faculty Gender and Ethnic Diversity
- 7) Selected Ethnicities: Tenure-Track Faculty
- 8) Tenure-Track Faculty Recruitments and Appointments
- 9) Gender and Ethnic Diversity of Appointments
- 10) Faculty Average Age
- 11) Separations
- 12) FERP Retirements and Separations
- 13) Faculty Retirements; Average Age
- 14) Total FTES
- 15) FTES IVC-Main Campus
- 16) SFR

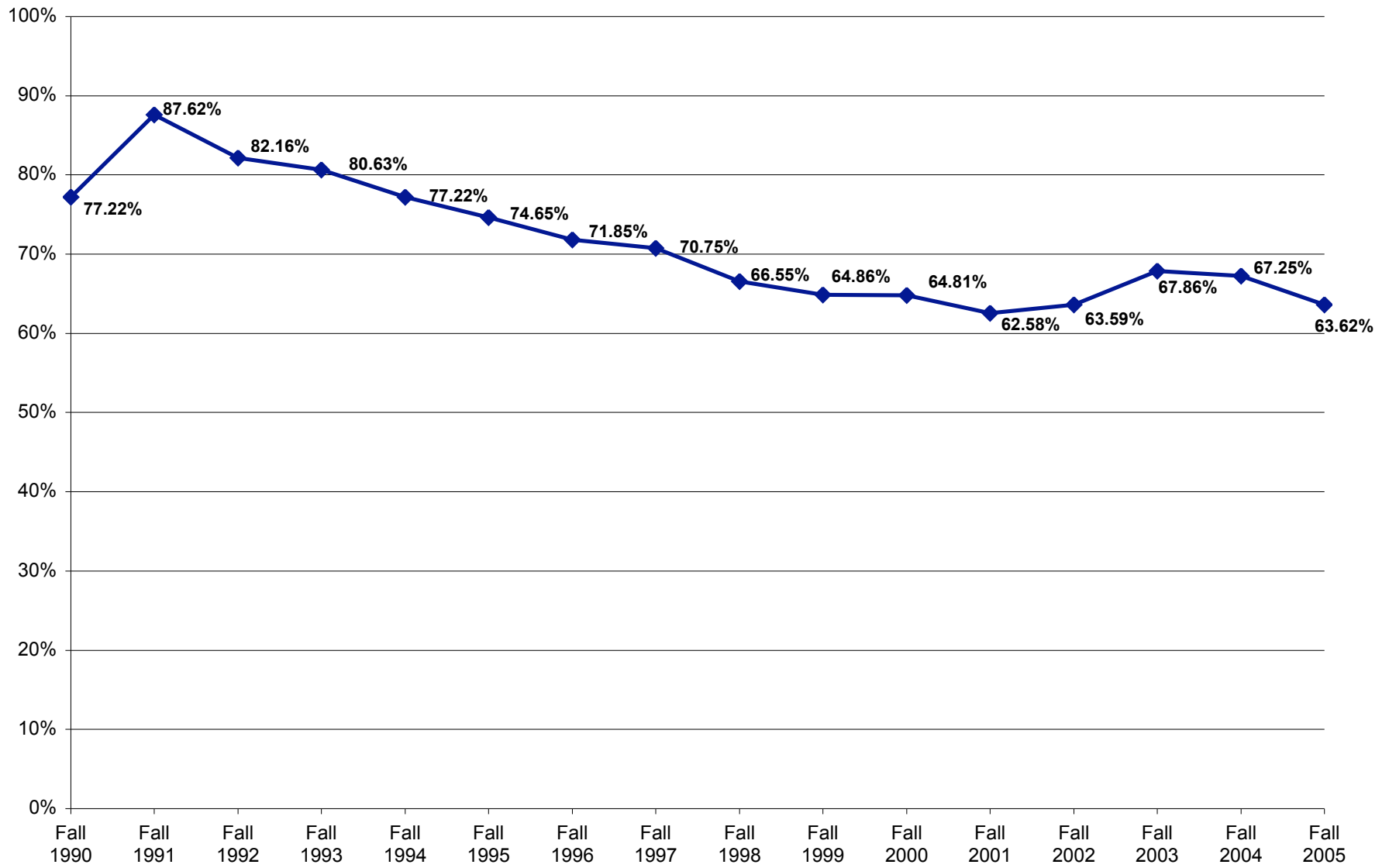


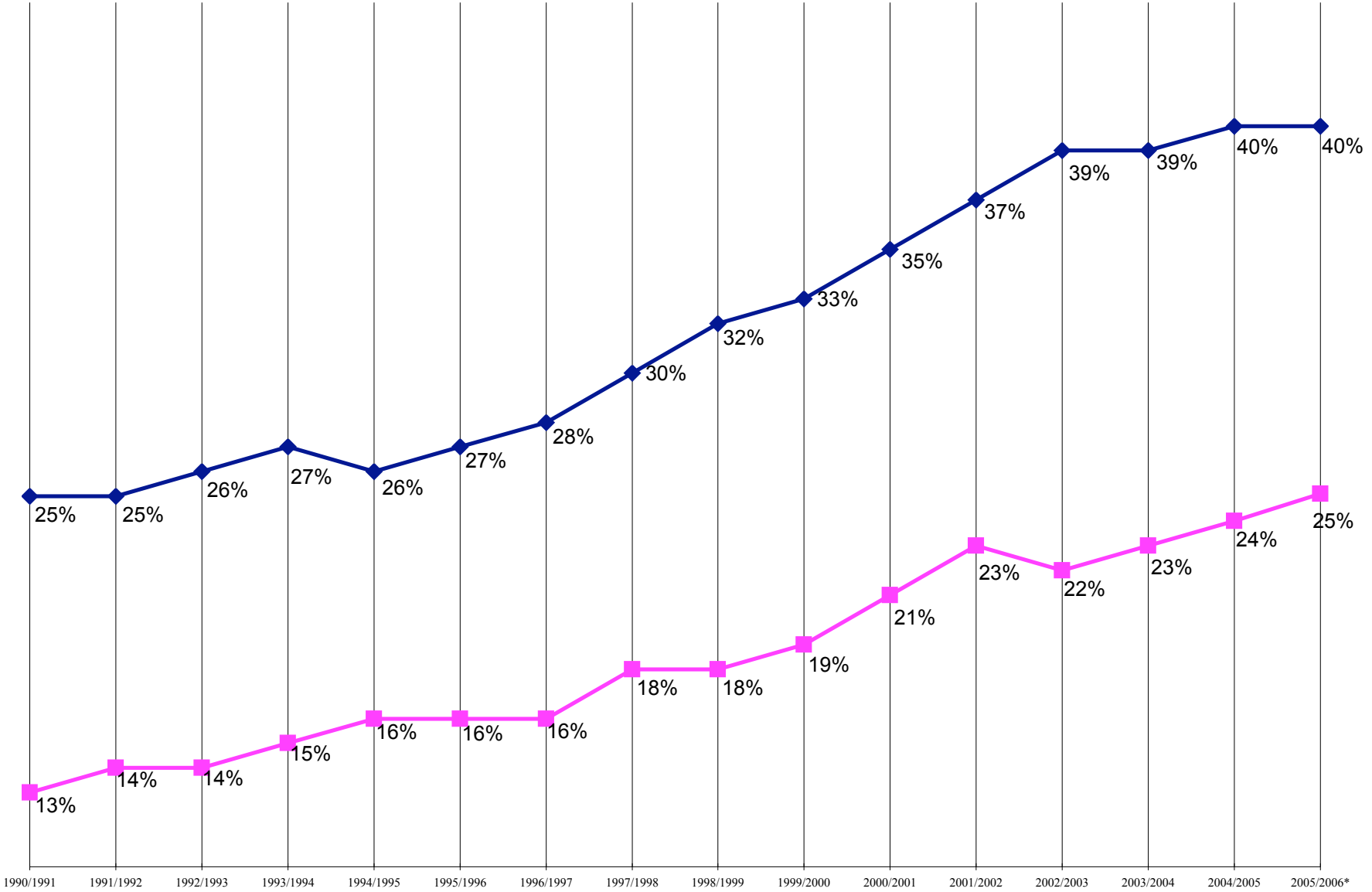
Teaching Associate Lecturer Probationary Tenured FERP

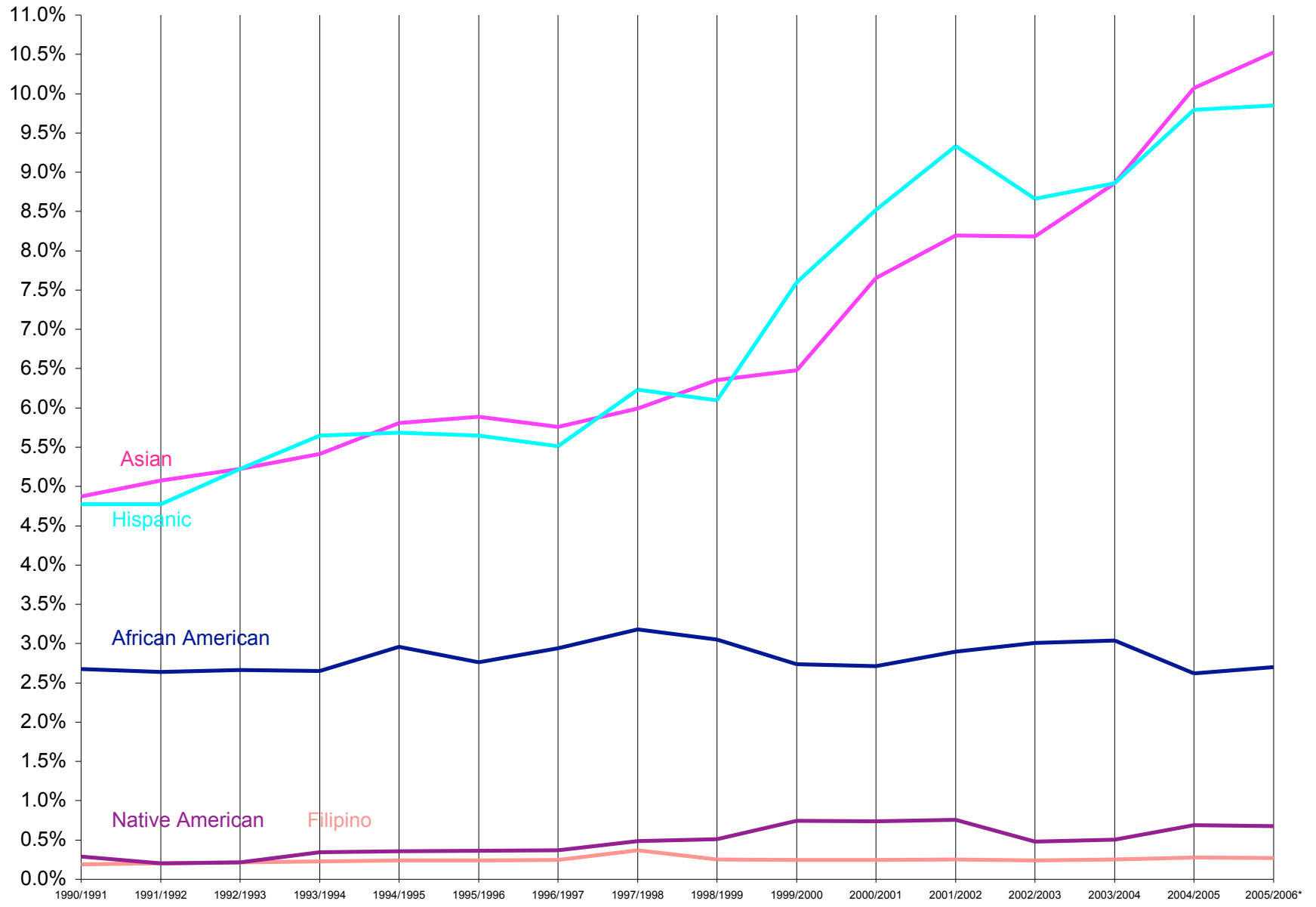


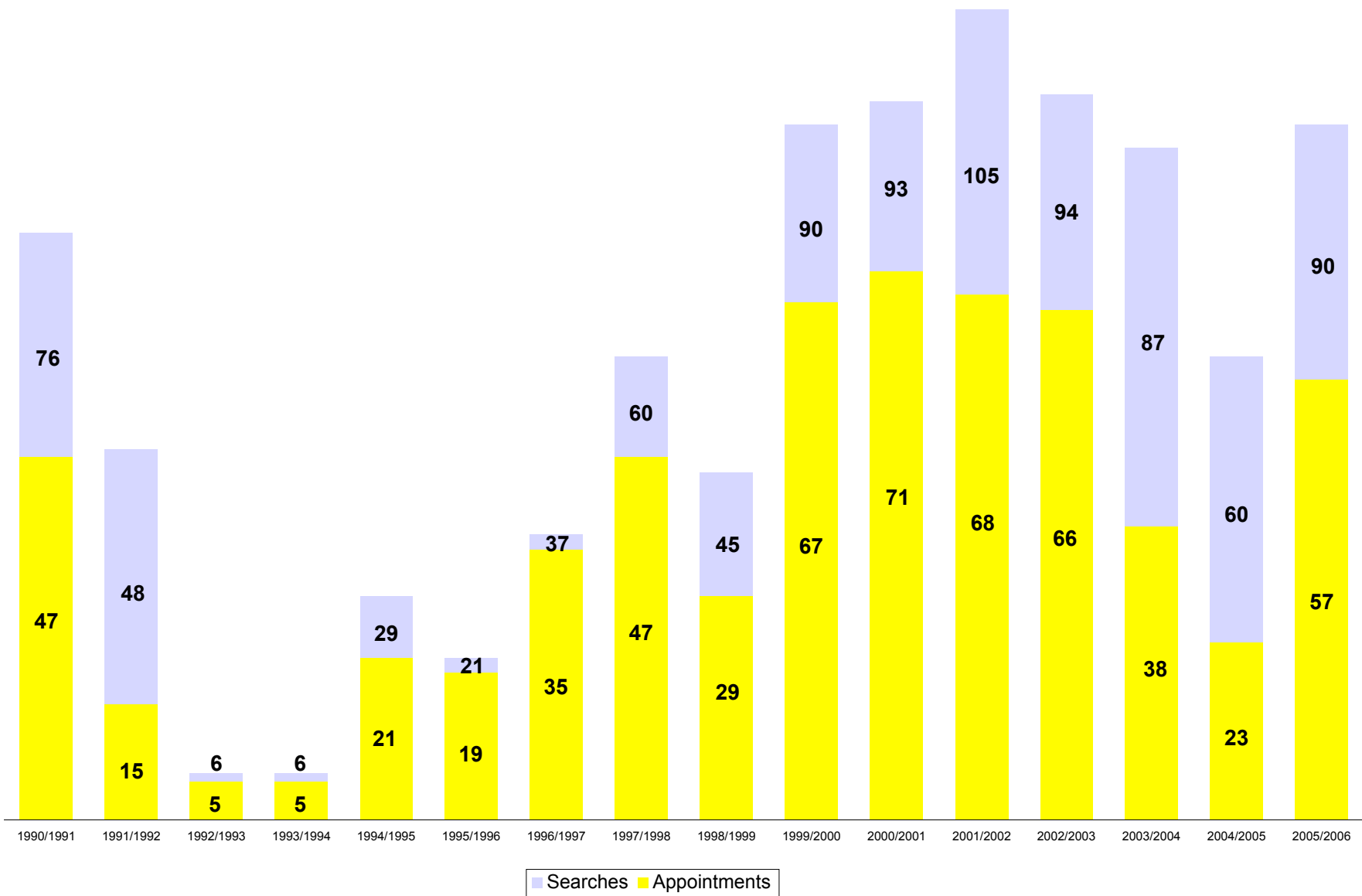


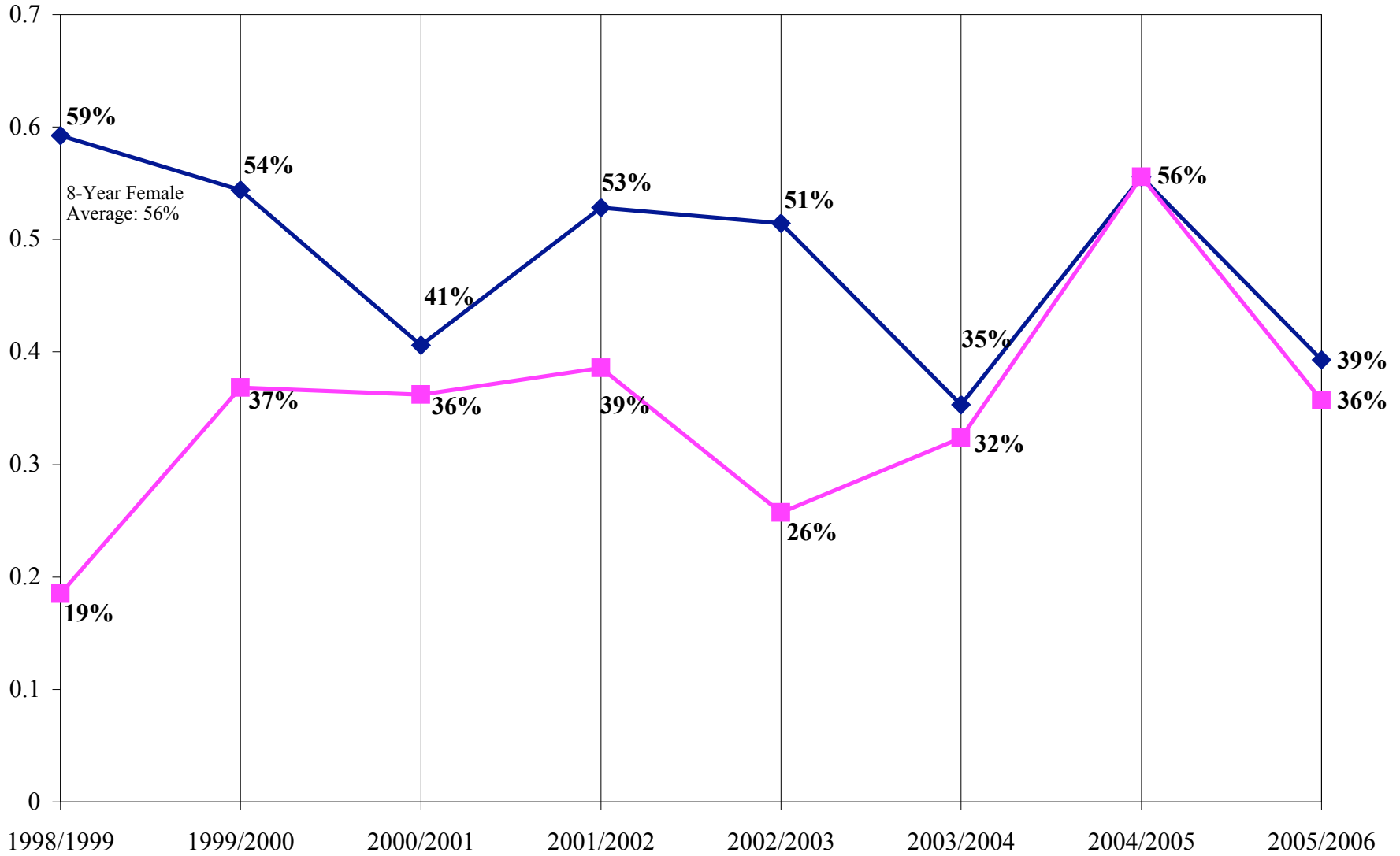




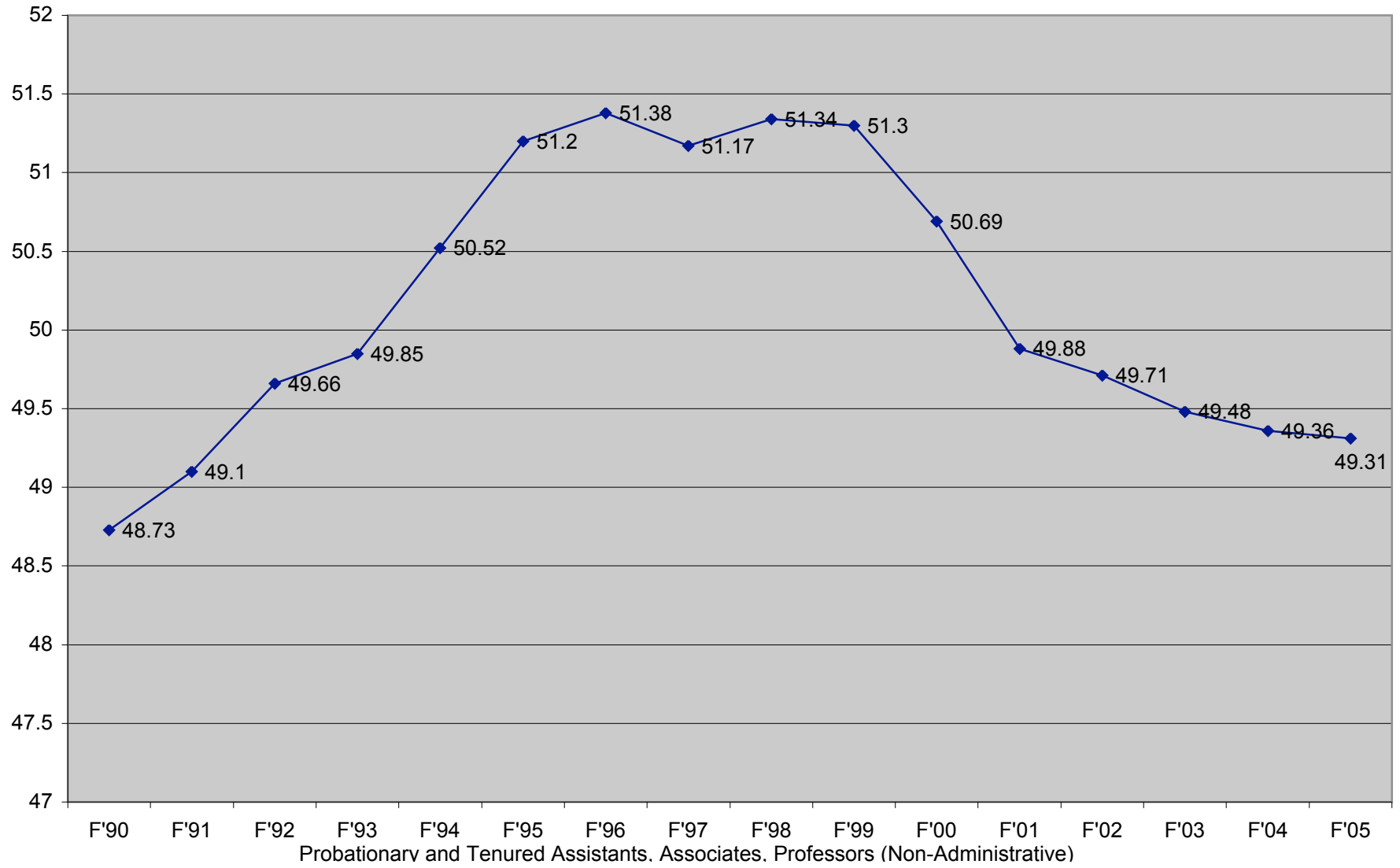




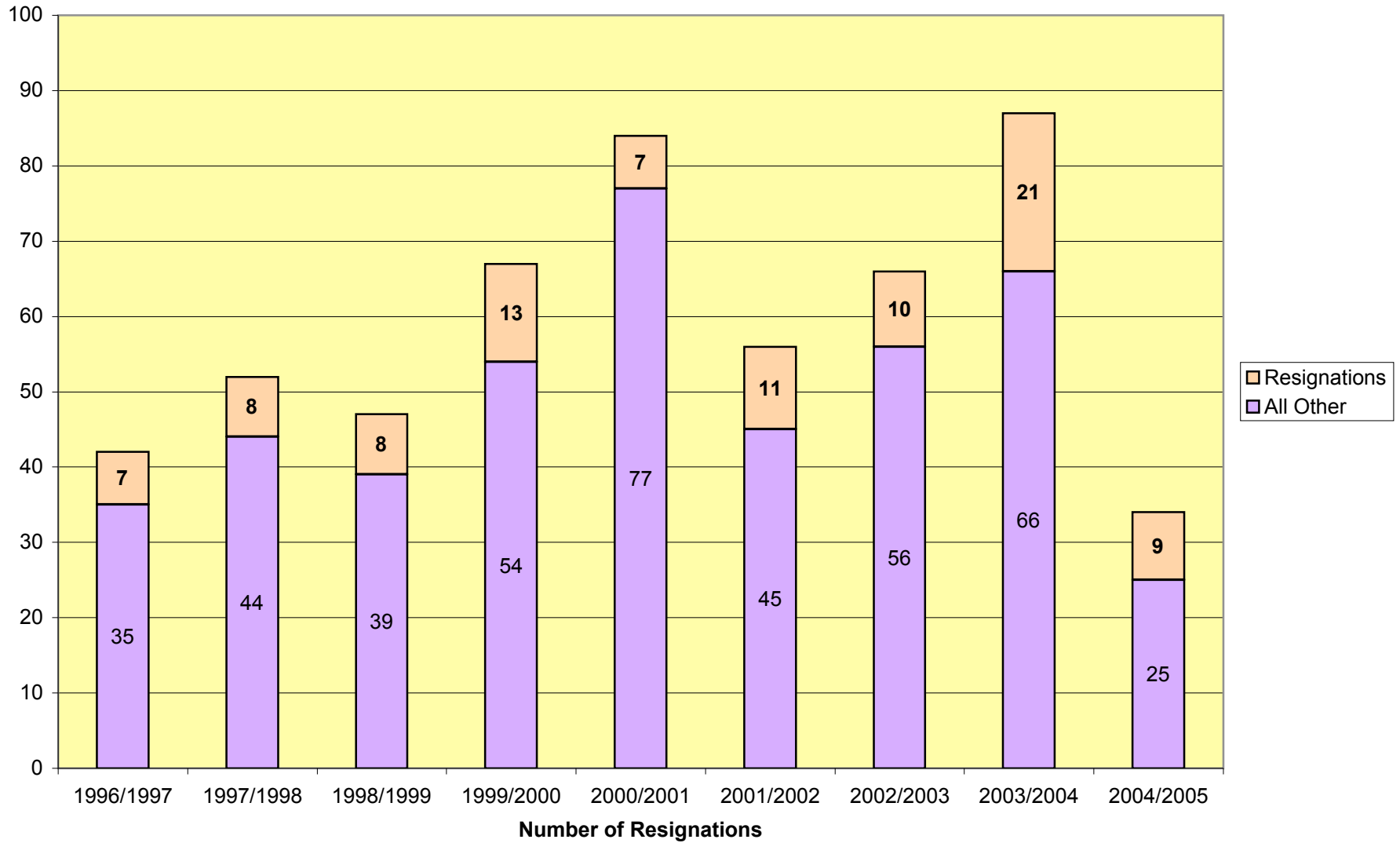


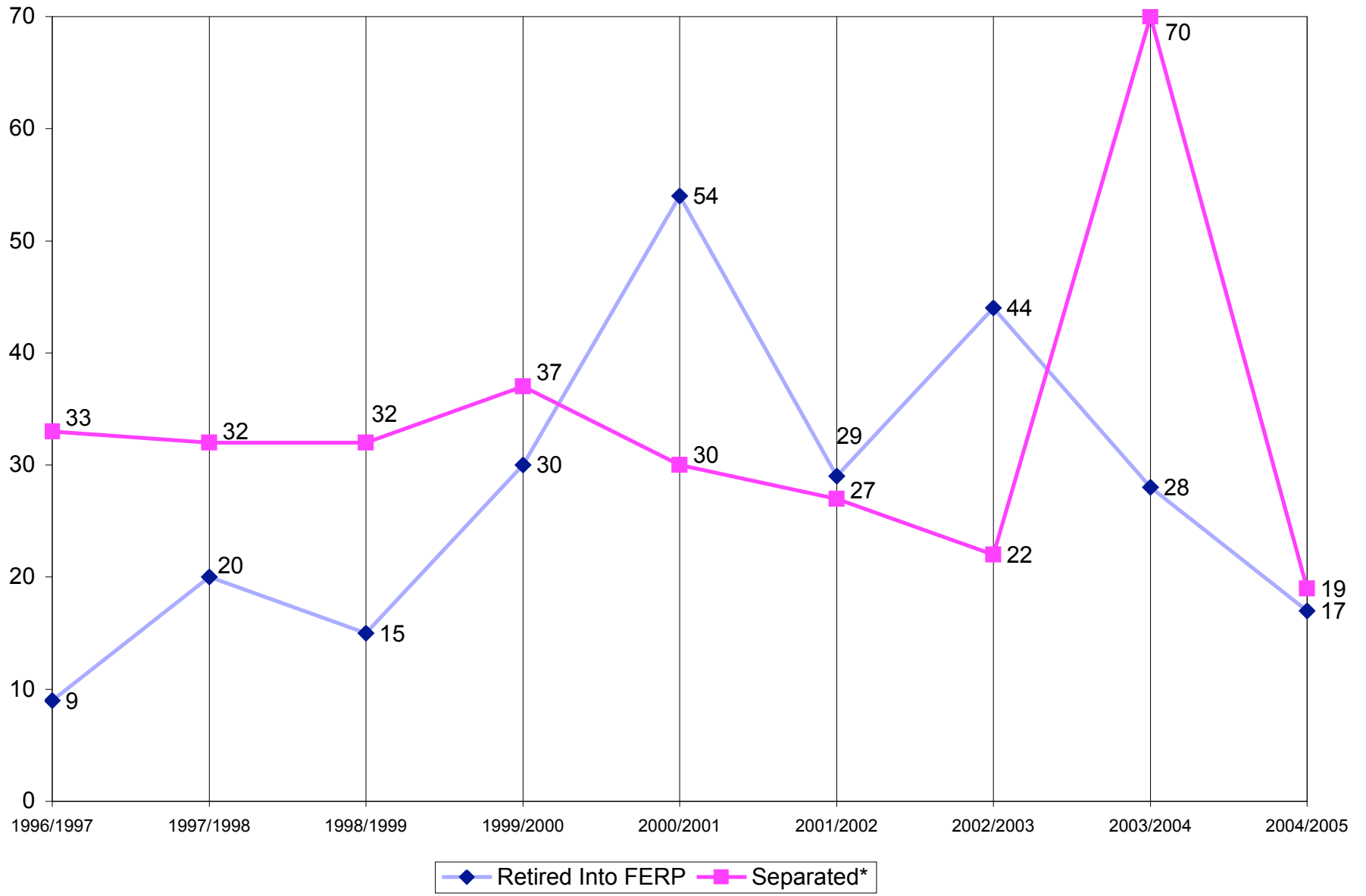


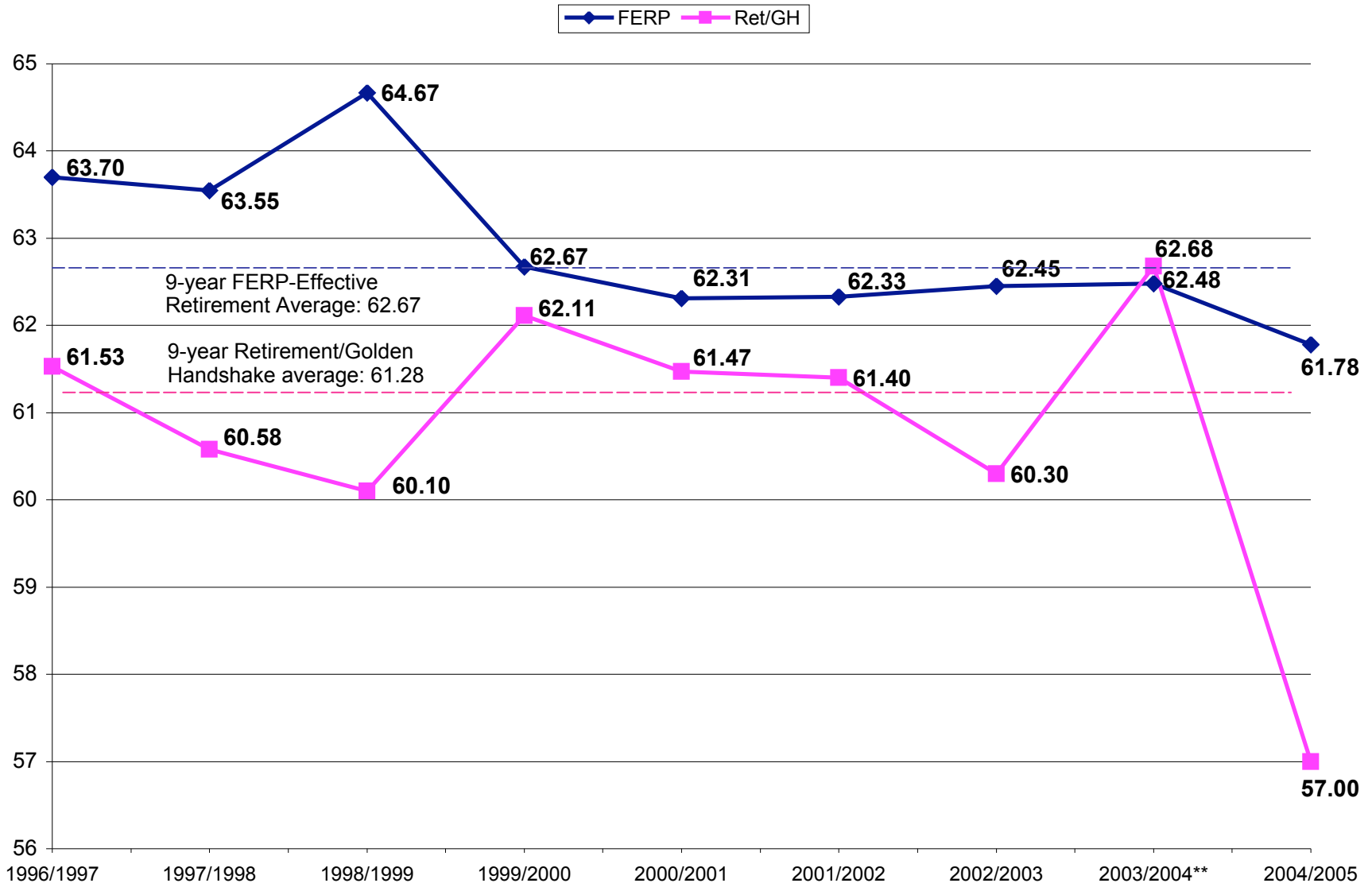
Faculty Age



Separations 1996-2005





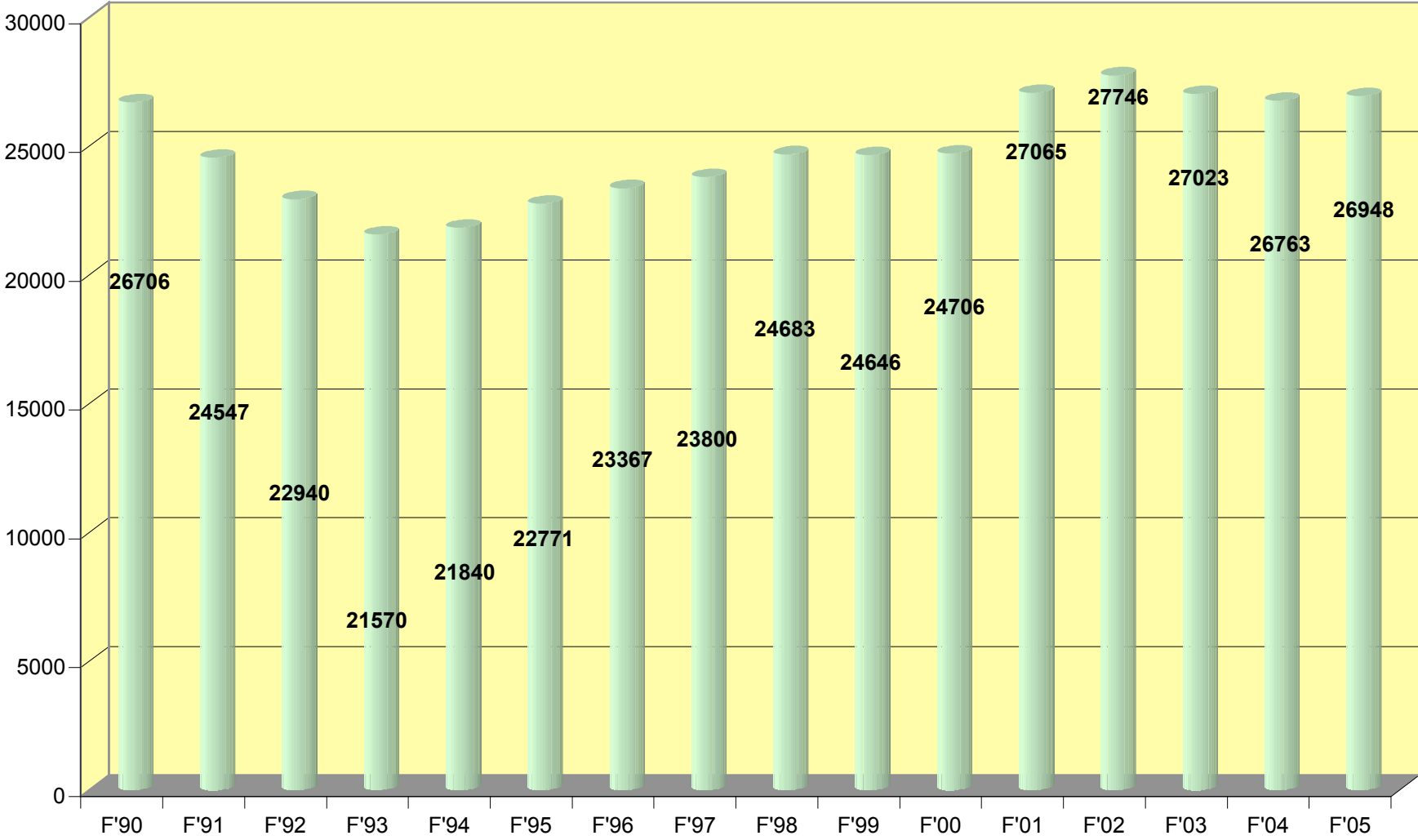


*Average age as of FERP-Effective Retirement Date;
Average age as of Separation date (Retired or Golden Handshake)
**2003/2004: spike due to 23 Golden Handshakes



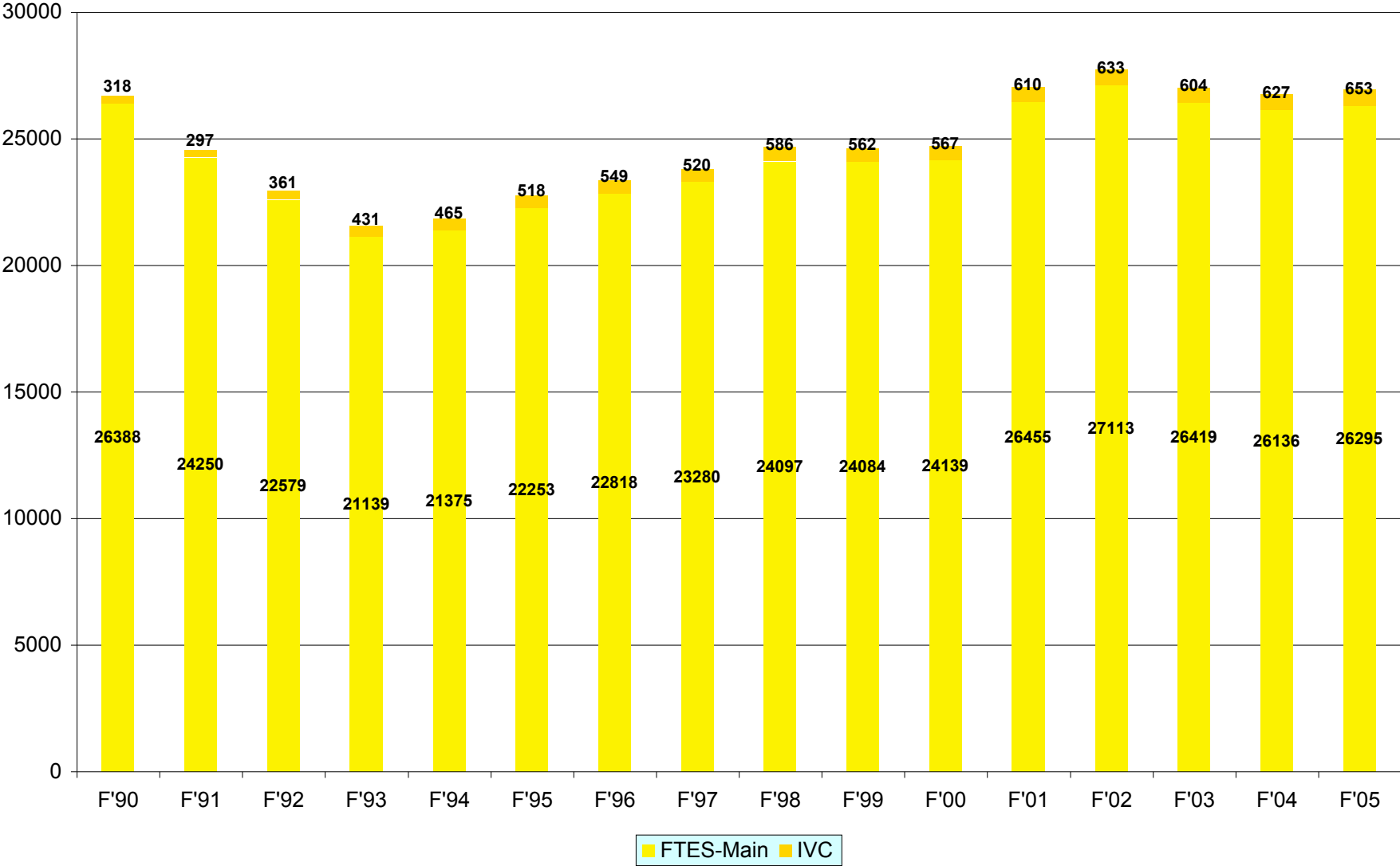
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FTES F'95-F'05



FTES

FTES F'90-F'05



SFR F'90-F'05

