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AUTHOR Lozier, G. Gregory; Dooris, Michael J.
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ABSTRACT

Retirement policies and possible effects on teacher shortages were examined. Information was obtained concerning: a 5-year summary of faculty retirements by age, the age distribution of each institution's full-time faculty by academic area, and changes over the past 5 years in personnel policies and procedures in response to anticipated faculty shortages or as part of an ongoing management system. A total of 12 to 20 institutions provided data on faculty retirement ages and age distributions and fields of full-time faculty. These data were used to make projections of faculty retirements for 1987 through 1994 and 1994 through the year 2000. Twenty-four institutions provided information on recently initiated changes in personnel policies. Three modal years of retirement were found: ages 65, 66, and 70. Across the 5-year period, about two-thirds of the faculty had retired by age 66. The data suggest that factors other than the age of mandatory retirement seem to be more instrumental in determining the average age of retirement. There were substantially younger faculty in several of the growth fields of the 1970s and 1980s, including business, computer science and information science, allied health and health sciences, law, and communications. Nineteen references are cited. (SW)

Is Higher Education Confronting Faculty Shortages?

G. Gregory Lozier
Michael J. Dooris

Office of Planning and Analysis
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802

A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
Association for the Study of Higher Education
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Texas A&M University
Department of Educational
Administration
College Station, TX 77843
(409) 845-0393

This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Sheraton Inner Harbor Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland, November 21-24, 1987. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

Is Higher Education Confronting Faculty Shortages?

G. Gregory Lozier and Michael J. Dooris
Office of Planning and Analysis
The Pennsylvania State University

What will happen when tenured faculty are allowed to continue working beyond age 70? Beginning on January 1, 1994, by virtue of amendments to the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, colleges and universities will no longer be permitted to mandate the retirement of tenured faculty. Discussion of this issue most typically focuses on the need to find alternative incentives to encourage faculty to retire and to promote infusion of new faculty into the profession. The fear is often expressed that higher education will be saddled with an aging, and implicitly less effective, faculty.

While not underestimating the potential significance of such a prospect, it can be shortsighted to anticipate change without examining other pertinent factors. In the words of James Thurber, "It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers." The authors suspect that the answers on how to achieve "new blood" in the faculty ranks without mandatory retirement are in essence answers to, if not the wrong questions, at least another question. It is proposed that the issue is not necessarily one of dealing with a greying faculty hanging on into their dotage, but one of replacing today's faculty with an equally qualified, committed and vital professoriate in the coming decade.

National Academic Personnel Issues and Trends

There are a number of factors that must be considered when assessing the likely patterns of faculty behavior during the period that extends to the end of the current century. Among these are a number that have been well articulated by Bowen and Schuster (1986). Designating the American professoriate as "a national resource imperiled," Bowen and Schuster point out that faculty salary levels are perceived by a significant proportion of faculty as inadequate or non-competitive with salaries in business and industry. In what is basically a post-1950s phenomenon, a growing proportion of doctoral recipients are being attracted to employment outside of academe; over 40 percent of holders of doctorates today are working in business, industry, and government. With career alternatives, many of the brightest doctoral graduates are lost to higher education, and each year significant numbers of current faculty leave academe. Over time these developments may become more severe, with the college freshmen of today expressing more interest in careers in professional and technical fields, and a shrinking interest in college teaching and scientific research. There are even questions about the quality of academic talent pursuing the Ph.D. in recent years, as a result of the "brain drain" to professional fields (Hartnett 1985).

Trends in the production of Ph.D. holders will also have significant bearing upon the availability of prospective college and university faculty. Tripling during the 1960s and reaching a peak in 1973, the number of doctorate degrees awarded in all fields declined slightly during the 1970s before leveling off at about 31,000 in 1978 (Office of Technology Assessment 1985). That figure has remained relatively constant through the 1980s. However, the numbers of white American males earning doctorates have declined substantially. This decline has been offset by modest increases in minorities and females earning the doctorate, and significant increases in foreign nationals earning the Ph.D. Also, these shifts have not occurred evenly across disciplines. Women and minorities continue to focus on the humanities, social sciences, and education, and foreign nationals continue to cluster in engineering, the sciences, and technical fields.

Important considerations are also developing in the area of faculty retirement. Of particular significance is the offering of incentive early retirement programs. As summarized by Chronister and Kepple (1987), national studies reveal that anywhere from 21 percent to 55 percent of the reporting institutions currently provide formal programs encouraging faculty retirements prior to a normally expected age of retirement. A higher proportion of public universities seems to offer such programs, while private liberal arts colleges are resorting to retirement incentives in smaller proportions (Chronister and Trainer 1985; Kepple 1984; and Mortimer, Bagshaw, and Masland 1985). Yet, even as such programs seem to be gaining in popularity, changes in the federal tax code are imposing restrictions on some of the incentives offered (Mangan 1987). For example, "buy-out" programs that deposited a lump-sum payment into a tax-deferred account can no longer receive tax-deferred status under the revised federal tax structure.

Whether because of changes in mandatory retirement policy, in the appeal of an academic career, in the production of Ph.D. holders, in institutional retirement programs, or similar significant trends, higher education will be forced more and more to pay attention to the issue of academic staffing through the turn of the century. The authors posed a number of questions to help better address these concerns. For example, what are the current mandatory retirement ages in a chosen sample of institutions? What was the impact of the 1982 change in mandatory retirement from 65 to 70 (Age Discrimination in Employment Act Amendments of 1978)? What does this experience suggest regarding the possible impact of the elimination of mandatory retirement? Do prospective retirement rates vary by discipline, and, if so, how do these variable rates relate to current student demand? And finally, what are the existing institutional perceptions about prospective faculty retirements in the absence of mandatory retirement? Are institutions initiating changes in personnel policies, faculty monitoring activities, or resource initiatives?

Method

The authors chose to utilize the participation of their home institution in an interinstitutional data exchange of 32 members of the Association of American Universities as an effective means of data collection. This set of institutions was deemed an appropriate group to study because, as suggested by Burke (1987), the research university "is the training ground for new faculty members as well as a principal employer. As such, it establishes the norms for the profession" (p. 200). The authors also suggest that this dual role doubles the stakes of the universities in faculty turnover.

In February 1986 the data exchange representatives of these universities were sent a questionnaire requesting that they provide data on their institutions' retirement policies; a five-year summary of faculty retirements by age (in retrospect, this question should have requested the information by discipline as well); and the age distribution of their full-time faculty by academic area. This questionnaire was followed with a second survey in April 1987 to the chief academic officers of these same institutions requesting that they indicate what changes had been initiated over the previous five years in a variety of personnel policies and procedures (a) as part of their on-going personnel management and (b) in direct response to anticipated faculty shortages. The latter inquiry was based on the authors' speculation that, contrary to concerns that programs need to be initiated to promote faculty turnover, colleges and universities will be increasingly faced with replenishing departing faculties.

Because of the difficulty in generating data for several of the more complex data-oriented survey questions, usable response rates on the first survey varied by item. Twelve to twenty institutions provided data on various aspects of the survey, as summarized in Tables 1 through 4. In order to provide comparable data by discipline, respondents organized institutional data according to the standard definitions established in the federal Classification of Instructional Programs. The data on faculty retirements and faculty age distribution were used to estimate projections of faculty retirements for the periods 1987 through 1994 and 1994 through the year 2000. Twenty-four institutions responded to the second survey regarding recently initiated changes in personnel policies and practices.

Results

A recent report by the AAUP Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure (1987) "notes with regret that...there is very little useful material available on current retirement decisions in higher education" (p. 47). Noting that five years have passed since the change in the mandatory age of retirement from 65 to 70, the report inquires, "What has happened? How many faculty members have postponed retirement beyond the age when their institutions previously required it?"

To help anticipate possible changes in faculty retirement patterns which might follow the elimination of mandatory retirement in 1994, the authors examined the impact of an earlier legislative change -- the amendment in federal policy which raised the permissible mandatory retirement age from 65 to 70 in 1982. As indicated in Table 1, 12 of the 20 reporting institutions had already changed their mandatory retirement age to 70 prior to 1982, two had a mandatory age of 68, five had retained the age of 65, and one had already eliminated mandatory retirement. By 1987, 18 had adopted a mandatory age of 70 as allowed by law, and two had dropped mandatory retirement. The early shift to age 70 mandatory retirement is consistent with the findings cited in the 1982 Annual Report of the TIAA-CREF that the vast majority of institutions (about 85 percent) did not take advantage of the four-year exemption provided to higher education for adopting the 70 mandatory age (Calvin 1984).

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

Table 2 provides information on the average age at retirement for 12 of the responding institutions for the years 1982 through 1986. Institutions which mandated retirement at age 65 in 1981-82 are so designated in the table. As can be seen, the average age of retirement bears no obvious correlation to mandatory retirement age. Of more apparent significance is the stability over the five-year period in the average age by institution and for the aggregate faculty pool of retirees; for nine of the universities and for the overall average over the five-year period, the standard deviation is less than 1.0.

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

Table 3 provides a five-year summary of the number of retirements by age. As seen in this table, there are three modal years of retirement: ages 65, 66, and 70. More significantly, across the five-year period reported, approximately two-thirds of the faculty have retired by the age of 66.

INSERT TABLE 3 HERE

The data in these tables suggest that factors other than the age of mandatory retirement seem to be far more instrumental in determining the average age of retirement. Such factors might include the benefits of a particular institutional retirement program, or, as suggested by the recent AAUP Committee A report (1987), "a revival of high levels of inflation, or of expectations of high levels of inflation" (p. 47). It is probable that such factors will continue to be important contributing variables in faculty decisions regarding the appropriate time to retire, irrespective of the elimination of mandatory retirement. That considerations other than age of mandatory retirement need to be assessed

is consistent with the findings of Bottomley, Linnell, and Marsh (1980), who concluded that such variables as rank distribution have a greater impact upon anticipated faculty retirements than changes in the mandatory retirement age.

In their work on the American professoriate, Bowen and Schuster (1986) argue that in projecting new faculty appointments through the turn of the century, it is not necessary to break down the totals into such factors as geographic regions, types of institutions, or academic disciplines. Bowen and Schuster are more concerned with broader issues of long-run mobility and the normal process of faculty turnover, including the flow of faculty to and from careers outside academe. They point out, however, that in any case the necessary data on turnover by discipline are not readily available (p. 195).

Faculty projections are influenced, of course, by a variety of factors and conditions, including the state of the national economy, technological change, assumptions about enrollment levels, enrollment mix, the use of part-time vs. full-time faculty, and pre-retirement faculty attrition. Nevertheless, the authors believe that changing interest in and demand for different disciplines over the past three decades have greatly affected the age distribution of faculty by discipline. Such differences will have dramatic impact on prospective retirement rates and the demand for replacement faculty in particular fields.

Information on the distribution of faculty in the 14-institution data base of 22,000 faculty indicates that there is a substantially younger faculty in several of the growth fields of the 1970s and 1980s (Table 4). These include business, with 74 percent of the faculty under age 50; computer science and information sciences with 82 percent; allied health and health sciences with 69 percent; law with 66 percent; and communications with 65 percent under age 50. Somewhat surprisingly, 71 percent of the home economics faculty are also under age 50.

INSERT TABLE 4 HERE

Among the older faculties are those in disciplines containing especially large portions of the professoriate, including the languages, area studies, humanities and letters; math, life sciences, physical sciences, and science technology; and engineering and engineering technology. Twenty-seven percent of the faculty members in all three of these broad disciplinary areas are between the ages of 50 and 59. This is a particularly important cohort since faculty in this cluster will be between the age of 57 and 66 in 1994 and between 63 and 72 by the year 2000. Assuming that patterns of faculty retirement will not change dramatically, the size of the age 50 to 59 cohort will lead to significant faculty turnover in these fields. These numbers comprise many of those faculty hired into academe during the strong growth period of the '50s and '60s. The need to replace large numbers of arts and science faculty beginning in the mid-1990s will be especially acute, since it coincides with projected increases in the number of high school

graduates and corresponding increases in college enrollments (McConnell and Kaufman 1984). In addition, the replacement of significant numbers of engineering faculty is compounded by current shortages in Ph.D. trained scholars. There are already many faculty positions in engineering presently available but unfilled (Cordes 1987).

Because several of the larger faculty disciplinary cohorts are also the older faculty, there could be a profound impact on retirement and faculty replacement rates. Utilizing the data on faculty retirement rates by age and the distribution of current faculty by age, it is possible to make some general estimates of projected retirements. From this population of 22,000 university faculty, approximately 20 percent will retire between 1987 and 1994; another 30 percent will retire between 1994 and 2000. In other words, during the second half of the period between now and the year 2000, the rate of retirements will increase one and a half times. The impact of this rate change is greater when considered in terms of actual numbers. For these 14 universities alone, there will be approximately 4350 retirements between 1987 and 1994, and over 6500 retirements between 1994 and 2000.

If one accepts the argument that many of these major universities are unlikely to realize any downturn in enrollment due to demographic declines, then virtually all of these retirements represent positions that will need to be filled. Similarly, unless Ph.D. production or the proportion of Ph.D. graduates pursuing careers in academe can be increased, the prospect of readily replacing these faculty becomes a formidable task. This proposition is supported by Wessell (Higher Education and National Affairs 1987), dean of humanities and sciences at Stanford University, who reports that there soon will be a substantial thinning of the ranks of those faculty who began their careers in the 1950s and 1960s. "The result...is going to mean real difficulty in the coming decades for many universities and colleges to hire enough high-quality faculty to maintain the standards we now enjoy" (p. 4).

The results of the second survey, to chief academic officers, are reported in Table 5. In the broadest terms, the institutions participating in this study are not particularly concerned about prospective faculty shortages in the near future. Two of the respondents stated quite unequivocally that the idea of faculty shortages is a non-issue, since there is no "large bulge in the group nearing retirement." Other respondents commented that their emphasis has been on hiring, but one vice chancellor for academic affairs wrote: "I can't seem to get the attention of the powers that there is an impending critical shortage of new faculty." Commented another: "We currently have a university-wide Future Directions committee which is studying this problem among others."

INSERT TABLE 5 HERE

The results do provide evidence of more general institutional response to academic staffing issues. Two-thirds of the institutions have initiated new activity in the last five years in non-modeling (informal) analytical efforts to monitor projected faculty retirements, with half of them reporting that this activity is related to concerns about anticipated faculty shortages. Whether the remaining third of the respondents had been monitoring faculty retirements all along or had, in fact, not increased their monitoring activities cannot be ascertained from the data.

About a third of the universities have instituted a variety of faculty development programs over the past five years. Most prevalent among these are revisions to the institution's sabbatical program, redesigned faculty evaluation programs, implementation of faculty renewal grants, and career development workshops. The most frequent changes identified in personnel policies over the past five years have been the initiation of phased retirement programs, incentive early retirement programs, and retirement counseling programs. Finally, 19 of the universities have provided additional resources for supporting women, blacks, and other special graduate student groups, and 10 have instituted policies permitting advance hiring of new faculty on the basis of anticipated retirements a year or two later. Only five of the 24 universities have implemented efforts in the last five years to change the workload mix for senior faculty.

Discussion and Recommendations

Mortimer, Bagshaw, and Masland (1985) suggest that "In a complex, nonprofit, goal-ambiguous, professionally oriented, labor-intensive organization, people are the most precious asset" (p. 85). As the title of their monograph implies, "flexibility" in the management of academic personnel policies and procedures must be maintained in order to guide colleges and universities through a period of almost certain uncertainty..

Similarly, Clark, Corcoran, and Lewis (1986) conclude that "the maintenance and enhancement of faculty vitality will be more cost-effective than subsequent remediation" (p. 192). Their support for increased efforts to provide faculty development programs targeted to the particular "contextual, situational variables" that are controlling at a given college or university is, in many ways, in contradistinction to the more visible and extensive efforts to devise incentive early retirement programs.

The data developed for this report are not conclusive enough to affirm or deny the prospect of significant faculty shortages developing during the latter part of the '90s. No one should assume a doomsday mentality similar to the one embraced by some 1970s' prognosticators of student enrollments. Yet, the information is strong enough to suggest that many colleges and universities should anticipate a greater rate of faculty retirements as the 1990s progress, and that there may be considerable difficulty in replacing faculty in some disciplines with an adequate number of Ph.D.-trained graduates. Institutions should be considering a variety of measures in response.

Recruit prospective faculty from mid-career doldrums in business, government, and industry. Approximately 40 percent of the holders of doctoral degrees currently are employed outside of academe. In some disciplines, special opportunities may exist for recruiting faculty from among individuals looking for mid-career changes. In addition to expanding the pool of potential faculty candidates, employing other than newly-minted doctorate graduates also affords an opportunity for leveling the age distribution more evenly across the faculty spectrum.

Alter the perceived notion of the appropriate "age" of retirement. What is normal retirement? Chronister and Kepple (1987) define "normal" retirement as a term "used in retirement planning to designate an age for setting retirement income objectives and contribution rates" (p. 16). It may or may not coincide with the "mandatory" retirement age of 70. For many years, age 65 has been perceived as a normal year for retirement, both because of its designation as the year in which employers could mandate retirement and because it is the year at which an individual can receive full Social Security benefits. At what age is it realistic to consider a faculty member eligible for taking advantage of an incentive early retirement program?

At some institutions, in selected disciplines, it may be necessary to encourage faculty members to continue beyond normal retirement age in order to respond to instructional demand. Accordingly, institutions may want to focus attention more on policies that encourage faculty not to opt for full retirement, rather than programs that promote retirement. Most notable of these may be phased retirement and partial retirement programs. Opportunities for professional travel and other incentives may also encourage faculty to remain longer on the instructional staff. This may be especially true for such disciplines as the arts, social sciences, humanities, and sciences.

Monitor faculty flow more deliberately. Many institutions need to monitor more extensively the academic staffing patterns of their faculties, including age distribution by rank and discipline, the salaries attributable to each position, and the pattern of retirements by age and discipline. This is not a recommendation for all institutions to develop complex computer flow models, nor does it reject sophisticated techniques. However, an increased awareness of faculty flow can guide the development and modification of academic personnel policies and procedures.

Hire new faculty when available on "mortgaged" positions. Assuming adequate knowledge of anticipated retirements, selective hiring in some disciplines should be encouraged on the basis of future retirements. In those disciplines in which shortages are expected, deans and department heads might be provided with temporary funds to hire new faculty as many as two or three years before the expected retirement. This is an especially appealing procedure to recruit a prospective faculty member who may not be on the market a year or two hence.

Develop improved faculty development programs. Faculty development is not offered as a panacea. Nevertheless, all too often it is heard that a faculty development program tried here or there wasn't all that effective, or that no one knew really how to evaluate it. It is probably fair to speculate that most institutions have not given sufficient attention to faculty development and the means to enhance it. As a resource on which a significant percentage of most budgets are expended, faculty should not be allowed to atrophy.

One problem with existing faculty development programs may be a matter of misdirection. Clark, Corcoran, and Lewis (1986) note that the faculty vitality problem often is recognized as a concern for declining research and scholarly productivity, and less so as a concern for the quality of teaching. This is especially true at the research university. On the other hand, they note,

> most institutional development programs...continually tend to target their efforts on teaching, and most administrators continue to hold the belief, often reinforced by student clamor for better teaching, that if faculty malaise is apparent, the appropriate response is a more and better instructional development effort with increased opportunity for voluntary faculty participation. The basic nature of the problem is often misdiagnosed and mistreated (p. 190).

This analysis lends support to the recommendation to provide faculty incentives for professional and scholarly participation and development. It also suggests that many of the senior faculty considering retirement are among the finest instructors and, in fact, get considerable reward from their instructional activities. Opportunities to continue their teaching may be considered quite favorably.

Devise effective means to recruit prospective faculty to academe In a number of disciplines, there is an existing or emerging concern about the pool of graduate students who will supply our colleges and universities with their future faculties. In some cases the concern regards insufficient raw numbers of graduates interested in the field. In others, the issue is one of mix, involving concerns about the distribution of graduates by gender, race, or national origin. In addition to the need to encourage more undergraduates to pursue post-baccalaureate education, increased efforts may be needed in some disciplines to recruit Ph.D.-trained professionals from government, business, and industry to return to the academic setting. Accommodations in appointment, promotion, and tenure policies and procedures may need to be provided in order to attract those individuals away from often lucrative careers in other sectors.

Finally, graduate-research universities need to examine graduate assistant stipends. Although increased levels of remuneration have significant implications on both general and restricted budgets, in disciplines such as engineering more attractive stipends may be necessary to entice baccalaureate and master's degree holders to pursue the

doctorate and a professional career in the university. However, this is an issue that probably requires national leadership to accomplish, as no single institution can effectively change the overall structure and reward system of graduate education.

Table 1
Survey Responses[1] on Mandatory Retirement Policies
Spring 1987

(N=20 Universities)

	Prior to 1982	March 1987
No mandated retirement age	1	2
Mandate retirement at age 65	5	
Mandate retirement at age 68	2	
Mandate retirement at age 70	12	18
Total	20	20

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[1] Survey Respondents:

* Carnegie Mellon
* Florida
* Illinois - Urbana
* Indiana - Bloomington
  Iowa State
* Kansas
  Michigan State
  Minnesota
* Missouri - Columbia
* North Carolina - Chapel Hill
* Northwestern
* Ohio State - Columbus
  Oregon
* Penn State - University Park
  Pittsburgh
* Purdue
* Texas - Austin
* Virginia
* Washington
  Wisconsin - Madison

* indicates that data for these universities are included in distribution of faculty by age and academic area (Table 4).

Table 2
Average Age at Retirement
for Tenured & Tenure-Track Faculty

(N=12 Universities)

University	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	Avge	Std Dev
* A	62.4	62.2	62.0	62.0	61.4	62.0	0.3
B	60.0	62.0	64.0	63.0	61.0	62.0	1.4
C	66.3	64.4	64.1	64.0	58.5	63.5	2.6
D	64.2	64.3	63.9	64.5	65.1	64.4	0.4
* E	64.0	64.0	66.0	65.0	64.0	64.6	0.8
* F	66.0	61.0	65.0	65.0	68.0	65.0	2.3
G	66.2	65.0	65.4	64.4	65.8	65.4	0.6
H	67.0	66.0	67.0	66.0	66.0	66.4	0.5
I	67.0	66.3	67.0	66.6	65.7	66.5	0.5
J	67.0	67.0	66.0	67.0	68.0	67.0	0.6
K	67.0	66.0	68.0	68.0	67.0	67.2	0.7
* L[1]	69.0	67.0	67.0	68.0	67.0	67.6	0.8
Average	65.5	64.6	65.5	65.3	64.8	65.1	0.4
Standard Dev	2.4	1.9	1.7	1.8	2.9	1.8	

* indicates institutions which still mandated retirement at age 65 in 1981-82.

[1] Institution L established a mandatory retirement age of 65 in 1977. Faculty appointed before 1977 were allowed to continue to work until age 70 under a grandfather clause.

Table 3
Number of Faculty Retirements by Age
Five Year Summary

(N=12 Universities)

Age	1981-82		1982-83		1983-84		1984-85		1985-86	
below 55	3	1.6%	3	1.3%	5	1.7%	10	3.3%	8	2.0%
55-59	13	6.8%	17	7.2%	20	6.7%	25	8.3%	33	8.1%
60	3	1.6%	9	3.8%	8	2.7%	7	2.3%	15	3.7%
61	3	1.6%	14	5.9%	12	4.0%	13	4.3%	18	4.4%
62	11	5.8%	15	6.4%	17	5.7%	21	7.0%	22	5.4%
63	12	6.3%	20	8.5%	20	6.7%	26	8.7%	24	5.9%
64	7	3.7%	20	8.5%	22	7.3%	22	7.3%	26	6.4%
65	42	22.1%	34	14.4%	58	19.3%	51	17.0%	85	20.9%
66	24	12.6%	24	10.2%	29	9.7%	31	10.3%	45	11.1%
67	11	5.8%	15	6.4%	24	8.0%	23	7.7%	34	8.4%
68	10	5.3%	10	4.2%	11	3.7%	13	4.3%	24	5.9%
69	16	8.4%	12	5.1%	12	4.0%	17	5.7%	20	4.9%
70	32	16.8%	40	16.9%	54	18.0%	34	11.3%	45	11.1%
71 & over	3	1.6%	3	1.3%	8	2.7%	7	2.3%	7	1.7%
Total	190	100.0%	236	100.0%	300	100.0%	300	100.0%	406	100.0%

Summary Data:

Retirees at 65 or under	49%	56%	54%	58%	57%
Retirees at 66 or under	62%	66%	64%	69%	68%

Table 4
Distribution of Faculty by Age and Academic Area
Fall 1986
(N=14 Universities)

With % Age Cohort in Each Academic Grouping
(e.g., 60% of faculty in the academic area of agriculture are under 50)

Academic Grouping	Under 50		50-54		55-59		60-61		62-64		65-70		71+		All Ages	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Agriculture	870	60%	183	13%	182	13%	55	4%	78	5%	72	5%	1	0%	1,441	100%
Architecture & Environmental Design	211	59%	42	12%	42	12%	18	5%	23	6%	19	5%	1	0%	356	100%
Languages, Area Studies, Humanities & Letters	1,304	60%	304	14%	277	13%	86	4%	104	5%	86	4%	13	1%	2,174	100%
Business	838	74%	100	9%	89	8%	32	3%	40	4%	27	2%	3	0%	1,129	100%
Communications	273	65%	44	10%	50	12%	12	3%	19	5%	21	5%	2	0%	421	100%
Computer & Information Sciences	230	82%	23	8%	16	6%	5	2%	5	2%	2	1%		0%	281	100%
Education	728	54%	218	16%	208	15%	72	5%	67	5%	46	3%	3	0%	1,342	100%
Engineering & Engineering Technology	1,377	59%	342	15%	270	12%	87	4%	142	6%	96	4%	7	0%	2,320	100%
Allied Health & Health Sciences	2,154	69%	387	12%	303	10%	103	3%	102	3%	67	2%	3	0%	3,119	100%
Home Economics	220	71%	27	9%	26	8%	10	3%	12	4%	15	5%	1	0%	311	100%
Law	279	66%	57	13%	37	9%	7	2%	10	2%	30	7%	3	1%	423	100%
Library Science	61	53%	12	10%	24	21%	9	8%	8	7%	2	2%		0%	116	100%
Math, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, & Science Technology	2,047	59%	530	15%	415	12%	131	4%	171	5%	153	4%	10	0%	3,457	100%
Recreation	52	60%	11	13%	15	17%	2	2%	4	5%	2	2%		0%	86	100%
Social Sciences & Psychology	1,640	63%	328	13%	270	10%	99	4%	149	6%	115	4%	5	0%	2,605	100%
Visual & Performing Arts	694	56%	165	13%	184	15%	53	4%	71	6%	54	4%	10	1%	1,231	100%
Other	607	62%	129	13%	101	10%	33	3%	54	6%	56	6%	1	0%	981	100%
Totals	13,584	62%	2,902	13%	2,508	12%	814	4%	1,059	5%	863	4%	63	0%	21,793	100%

Table 5
Institutional Responses to Projected Faculty Shortages
Survey Results: Spring 1987
(N=24 Universities)

	Instituted Primarily in Response to Projected Faculty Shortages		Instituted for Any Other Reason	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Monitoring Activities				
A. Computerized faculty flow model	4	20	5	19
B. Non-modeling analytical efforts	8	16	16	8
2. Faculty Development Programs				
A. Increased sabbatical opportunities	1	23	8	16
B. Redesigned instructional evaluation	1	23	9	15
C. Faculty renewal grants	1	23	8	16
D. Career development workshops	3	21	9	15
E. Professional growth contracts	1	23	2	22
3. Changes in Personnel Policies				
A. Phased retirement [1]	3	21	12	12
B. Partial retirement [2]	3	21	4	20
C. Bridge retirement [3]	1	23	6	18
D. Early retirement	4	20	18	6
E. Retirement counseling program	3	21	12	12
4. Resource Initiatives (New or Changed)				
A. Workload mix for senior faculty	2	22	5	19
B. Special graduate student funding [4]	7	17	19	5
C. Advance hiring [5]	4	20	10	14
D. Higher graduate stipends & fellowships	3	21	4	20
D. Multi-institution graduate recruiting [6]	1	23	2	22

[1] **Phased retirement:** reduced workload, full retirement contribution.
[2] **Partial retirement:** reduced workload, draw on retirement.
[3] **Bridge retirement:** retire at 65 with contributions paid by institution until age 70.
[4] **Special graduate student funding:** new funding for graduate student support of women, blacks, or other special groups.
[5] **Advance hiring:** hiring on the basis of retirements projected two or more years later.
[6] **Multi-institution graduate recruiting:** promote interinstitutional cooperation for recruiting graduate students to disciplines projecting a declining faculty pool.

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ABSTRACT

A profile of master's programs and the relationship of the master's to the doctorate in affiliated programs were studied, based on survey responses from 52 programs, 43 of which were public and 12 private. It was found that the master's degree is a professional, practice-oriented degree for those interested in entry and midlevel positions in higher education institutions. Administration/management and student affairs specialties dominate this degree, providing a balance of theoretical knowledge and practical skills for both predoctoral and terminal degree candidates. Affiliated master's degrees place more emphasis on theory and research than master's only programs, which tend to emphasize methodology, practice, and job-related course content. While the master's degree is not a prerequisite for the doctorate in higher education, there is growing interest in its usefulness as a credential for nonacademic positions and in community colleges. Public universities are more likely to offer the master's degree in higher education and to provide more incentives to students through low tuition, assistantships, and campus employment (SW).

The Master's Degree in Higher Education

Judith S. Glazer, Ph.D.

St. John's University

Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the
Association for the Study of Higher Education

Baltimore, Maryland
November 22, 1987

ASHE

ASSOCIATION
FOR THE
STUDY OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

Texas A&M University
Department of Educational
Administration
College Station, TX 77843
(409) 845-0393

This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Sheraton Inner Harbor Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland, November 21-24, 1987. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

This paper analyzes data on the master's degree in higher education derived from a survey I conducted in Spring 1987 of 80 doctoral degree-granting higher education programs that are members of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), and follow-up telephone interviews conducted this Fall with program directors. It has been supplemented by a companion survey I also conducted of 89 members of the Commission of Professors of Adult Education (AAACE), 31 of whose institutions are also members of ASHE; and data gleaned from the 1987 Directory of Graduate Preparation Programs in College Student Personnel (Graham and Keim 1987).

It was initiated at the request of the ASHE Curriculum Committee for the purpose of developing a profile of master's programs, and determining the relationship of the master's to the doctorate in affiliated programs with particular emphasis on program goals, objectives, and curricula. While some data were collected on faculty and students, this was not its main focus. It is a further attempt to expand on aspects of Crosson and Nelson's 1984 profile of higher education doctoral programs (1986) and my own work on the master's degree (Glazer 1986).

In analyzing higher education master's degrees as a class of degrees separate from the doctorate, I am interested in determining whether a different profile emerges and in answering the following questions:

1. Does higher education as a field of study at the master's level have distinct objectives or is it part of a continuum toward the doctorate in the same or related fields?

2. Are there qualitative differences between master's only and affiliated master's degrees?

3. What are the implications of different models in defining the knowledge base for the master's degree in higher education?

Fifty-two programs (65%) responded to my survey of ASHE members; 43 are public, 12 are private. Only six are organized as autonomous units; the majority are components of larger departments or divisions of educational administration, professional studies,

educational leadership, adult and continuing education, or some combination of these. Five have no master's programs, one is being phased out, six offer a generic M.Ed., and three a master's in educational administration with a concentration in higher education.

Degree Designations

The most commonly used degree designations are the Master of Education (M.Ed.) and the Master of Arts (M.A.), the former more typically part of an Ed.D. and the latter of a Ph.D. Some departments offer more than one degree designation linked to admission and degree requirements. The M.Ed. is offered by 25 ASHE programs, the M.A. by 22, and the M.S. by 10; eight offer both the M.A. and M.Ed., two the M.S. and M.Ed., and one the M.A. and M.S. Such degree designations as the M.S.E., M.S.Ed., M.Couns., M.Adult Ed., and M.A.C.Ed. were reported by individual master's only programs, further increasing the diversity of degree designations.

Many universities define the M.Ed. as a professional degree under the supervision of Schools of Education and the M.A. as an academic, research degree administered by the respective Graduate School and subject to its admission and degree requirements. There are also regional differences. For example, the Ed.S. or Educational Specialist, which Dressel and Mayhew referred to as "subdoctoral" (1974), is a two-year Advanced Master's degree offered by public universities in some southern states, either as a terminal degree leading to state certification in community colleges or as an intermediate degree between the master's and the doctorate.

Program Emphases

Several programs were characterized as "generalist" in both objectives and content; others reported a range of specializations or concentrations. Table 1 gives both the specializations and the frequency with which they are offered by responding programs. The total number of specializations offered was 153; the average was three per program. The two largest were Higher Education Administration and Student Personnel followed

by Adult and Continuing Education, Community College Administration, and Policy and Planning. Finance, Institutional Research, and Curriculum and Teaching are offered by fewer departments. Some specialties are also housed in other departments, particularly Adult Education and Educational Technology.

The new ACPA Directory (Graham and Keim 1987) lists 59 affiliated master's programs offering degrees in Student Personnel with the Ed.D. or Ph.D. as the highest degree; 31 are members of ASHE. There are also 58 master's only programs leading to the M.S., M.Ed., M.S.Ed., and M. Couns. Only eight of the affiliated master's programs are housed in departments of higher education while 19 are in departments of counselor education/student personnel services, and 32 are grouped with educational administration, educational leadership, or professional studies. Master's only programs are more frequently referred to as "College Student Personnel" or "Counseling and Human Development." Affiliated master's are more likely to include "Higher Education" in their title.

Sixty programs (67%) responded to my survey of Adult and Continuing Education master's degrees. Of these, 58 percent said they offer both master's and doctoral degrees in this specialty while 42 percent offer only master's degrees. Eleven programs are in departments of higher and adult education; 18 are distributed across adult, vocational, occupational, community college, and teacher education departments; 12 are grouped with educational administration and educational leadership; six with curriculum and instruction, two in agricultural and extension education, and one in interdisciplinary education, a striking portrait of institutional diversity in the organization of graduate education.

Students

Several program directors observed: "We have a small master's program; most of our students are enrolled for the doctorate." In 1986-87, 51 higher education master's programs reported a total of 1,151 students. Of this total, 17 programs had 10 or

fewer students; only six had more than 60 students; the average enrollment was 22. These programs awarded a total of 391 degrees in 1985-86, the most recent year for which data were available. Of these, 34 programs awarded fewer than 10 degrees; only six programs offered more than 20 degrees. The mean number of degrees awarded was eight.

Program descriptions of higher education master's programs emphasize the preparation of post-baccalaureate students for entry or mid-level positions in higher education administration, adult and continuing education, and student affairs, and to a lesser extent, community college teaching and non-academic business operations. In their study of higher education doctoral programs, Crosson and Nelson (1986) found that the main purpose of Ph.D. and Ed.D. programs in higher education was to prepare administrative leaders, college faculty and researchers, and professionals for leadership positions.

I asked program directors how they would define the objectives of students currently enrolled in their programs in each of five categories. Ninety percent identified their students as "practitioners," 45 percent as "predoctoral," 47 percent as "institutional employees," 24 percent as "researchers," and 14 percent as "seeking professional certification." The enrollment of campus staff members is facilitated by the availability of graduate assistantships as well as the symbiotic relationship between campus functions and higher education program objectives. Several directors observed that in addition to serving the needs of employees in their own universities, they also served local and regional needs of community and four-year colleges. To further illustrate the diversity of the master's degree, 88 percent of adult and continuing education program directors said that their graduates obtain positions in higher education; however, between 90 and 95 percent also reported that students work in business and industry, community services, and public schools; 78 percent cited vocational education as an emloyment option.

Analysis of ACPA data (Graham and Keim 1987) indicates that admission requirements are similar for affiliated and master's only programs. The GRE or MAT and a cumulative GPA ranging from 2.5 to 3.0 are required for both types of programs. Master's only programs in College Student Personnel are more likely to require an interview and related work experience. All ACPA programs report that they arrange graduate assistantships and off-campus placements.

Fifty-five percent of ASHE members said they require a master's degree for admission to the doctoral program, although not necessarily in higher education. Some said they encourage students to obtain a master's in other fields or specialties; most said students obtain master's degrees enroute to the doctorate even though 45 percent of the programs said it is not required.

Faculty

Although data on faculty were not the focus of this report, the Curriculum Committee was interested in learning how many faculty teach both master's and doctoral courses compared to the number teaching only master's level courses. Fifty programs reported a total of 291 faculty teaching master's level courses. In comparing the number of faculty teaching master's level courses, 11 programs included some faculty in both categories. A total of 245 faculty teach both master's and doctoral courses; 46 teach only master's level students. Thirty-eight programs (76%) make no distinction between master's and doctoral faculty while 12 programs have master's level only faculty.

Curriculum

In structure, higher education master's programs are quite similar although they may range from 30 to 60 credit hours in core courses, electives, and integrative experiences. Emphasis on fieldwork correlates closely to the specialization selected and is more common in Student Personnel than in Administration. While one or two courses in research methods are generally required, extensive use is made of coursework in fundamental principles of higher education and in electives that develop desired

competencies in a specific area. At least 50 percent of non-thesis coursework is in core courses (15-18 hours) with a comparable amount in the specialty. The thesis option generally carries 3 to 6 credit hours while the supervised practicum/internship ranges from 3 to 12 credit hours over a period of one semester or one year, the latter more likely in 45 to 60 credit hour master's programs.

Tables 2, 3, and 4 illustrate the range of credit hour and other degree requirements in Higher Education, Student Personnel, and Adult Education respectively. In both Student Personnel and Adult Education (Table 3 and 4), comparative data are provided for affiliated and master's only programs in an effort to determine whether there are substantive differences in degree requirements for these types of degrees. In Higher Education Administration programs (Table 2), comparative data are provided by degree designation.

As shown in Table 2, credit hour and other requirements in Higher Education show minimal differences in structure across degree designations. The average number of credit hours for the master's degree ranges from 32 to 36 credits, while the average number of required credit hours ranges from 16 to 21. The M. Ed. more frequently requires a written comprehensive examination, project or research paper, supervised field experience, and minor concentration; and the M.A. and M.S. a thesis and oral defense. The issue of degree ambiguity is illustrated by the fact that while 11 programs permit students to take undergraduate courses as part of the master's, ranging from three to 18 credits, 45 percent permit master's students to enroll in any of their doctoral courses, 47 percent in most courses, and only eight percent limit their enrollments to introductory courses.

In the ACPA survey (Graham and Keim 1987), 21 of the 58 affiliated Student Development programs indicated they had no "doctoral only" courses, 14 had one or two, and only four restricted enrollments in five or more courses. Affiliated master's programs in Student Personnel (Table 3) place greater emphasis on coursework, a thesis,

and a written comprehensive examination than master's only programs which emphasize the supervised field experience. Both types include more requirements than higher education administration programs, consistent with guidelines and standards of the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) for Student Services/Development Programs. Increased requirements may also be due to the terminal nature of master's programs in this specialty.

By contrast, I found few distinctions between affiliated and master's only programs in Adult Education (Table 4) although program directors indicated that the thesis, internship, and comprehensive examination were more likely to be required for the doctorate than the master's degree. The M.Ed. in Adult Education tends to require more of everything—coursework, comprehensives, internships, practica, and minor concentrations. Table 4 provides a breakdown of degree requirements in Adult Education, comparing 32 affiliated and 21 master's only programs.

To get some idea of the nature of the master's curriculum in ASHE programs in particular, I asked program directors to indicate the courses required of all degree candidates for the master's degree in higher education. Table 5 groups these courses into 11 categories in order of frequency. If core courses in Student Personnel and Adult Education were included, this list would be considerably expanded and diversified. This table parallels Crosson and Nelson's findings for doctoral courses which is not surprising, given the overlap in course offerings between degree levels (1986, p. 341).

Innovative Strategies

I also wanted to get some idea of the nature and extent of innovation and change in higher education master's programs. Twelve of the responding programs offer dual master's degrees, nine with other departments in Schools of Education and three with business and law schools. More than 50 percent utilize flexible scheduling, mainly through weekend and evening courses; 21 offer off-campus courses; two offer degrees at branch campuses; five offer telecourse instruction. The strong experiential learning

component that is built into 28 programs through internships and practica points up the practical orientation of the higher education master's degree. In some cases, the generic degree was described as interdisciplinary in content, with students selecting courses from two or more divisions. Adult education master's degree programs incorporate more flexible approaches than either Student Personnel or Higher Education Administration, reflecting the non-traditional nature of adult learning. Forty-three Adult Education programs offer on-site coursework; 36 incorporate flexible scheduling, e.g., weekend, evening; and short courses; 16 use telecourses; 11 have dual degrees.

Conclusions

The master's degree in higher education is a professional, practice-oriented degree designed for postbaccalaureate students interested in entry and mid-level positions in higher education institutions. Administration/management and student affairs specialties dominate this degree, providing a balance of theoretical knowledge and practical skills for both predoctoral and terminal degree candidates. Affiliated master's degrees place more emphasis on theory and research than master's only programs which tend to emphasize methodology, practice, and job-related course content.

The master's degree is not a prerequisite for the doctorate in higher education, but there is growing interest in the degree as a useful credential for those in non-academic positions and in community colleges. Thirteen universities that were listed by Dressel and Mayhew as offering only the doctorate in higher education in 1974 now offer the master's degree as well. Program directors report external pressure from state boards, alumni, and postsecondary institutions to recast the master's degree in higher education as an advanced degree that meets credentialing needs of community college personnel, career needs of non-traditional adults, and institutional needs for student development and business functions.

Public universities are more likely to offer the master's degree in higher education, and to provide more incentives to students through low tuition, assistantships, and

campus employment. Some programs are under revision while two recently initiated new specialties in Student Personnel with more practical content, less research, and a de-emphasis on predoctoral preparation.

The ambiguity between degree levels is worth noting in this context. The traditional master's is more likely to resemble the baccalaureate than the doctorate in structure and outcomes. However, in higher education, the relationship between the master's and doctorate is strong. The affiliated master's is part of a continuum in which a common core of knowledge and skills is followed by advanced study based on a shared foundation. The more specialized master's only program reverses this continuum since it does not assume theoretical research-based advanced study at the doctoral level.

The function of the M.Ed. in higher education is quite different than the Ed.D. or Ph.D. and this is reflected in the curriculum. In effect, higher education is not a single profession but many variations on one. The proliferation of higher education institutions has engendered greater specialization in programs that train "higher educators." What emerges is an academic model on the one hand in the M.A./Ph.D. continuum juxtaposed to a professional model in the M.Ed. with or without a subsequent Ed.D. These overlapping models reinforce the professional orientation of the master's degree, its diversity, and its ambiguous role in the degree hierarchy. This dichotomy can be attributed to several factors: (1) the nature of the academic organization with its emphasis on the doctorate as the desired credential for both teaching and administration; (2) the proliferation of areas of specialization in complex higher education institutions; (3) the increasingly diverse backgrounds and career objectives of potential students; and (4) the relationship of faculty strengths to program development.

There are now no accreditation guidelines or standards for traditional master's programs in Higher Education Administration analogous to state standards for training school district administrators. Both, the Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs (CAS) and the Commission of Professors of Adult

and Continuing Education (AAACE) recommend standards for these two specialties in Higher Education. it is uncertain whether the development of guidelines or standards would enhance higher education as a field of study at the master's level but it is a topic worthy of further investigation.

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Table 1

Specializations

Area	No. Programs (N=52)	% Programs
Administration/Management	39	75%
Student Personnel (1)	37	71.0
Adult/Continuing Education (2)	20	38.5
Community College Administration	17	32.7
Policy/Planning	9	17.3
Finance	7	13.5
Institutional Research	5	9.6
Curriculum/Teaching	5	9.6
Educational Technology	3	5.7
Institutional Advancement	3	5.7
History/Philosophy	2	3.8
Organizational Development	1	1.9
Facilities Management	1	1.9

(1) Student Personnel programs offer three main specializations in Administration, Student Development, and Counseling.

(2) Adult/Continuing Education programs offer specializations in Human Resource Development, Administration, Gerontology, Extension Services, Vocational/Technical and Community Education.

Table 2

Degree Requirements in Higher Education Administration

Requirement	M.A.	M.S.	M.Ed.
	(N=22)	(N=16)	(N=24)
No. Credit Hrs.	30-60	30-42	30-60
Mean Credit Hrs.	36	32	33
No. Core Courses	0-12	2-12	1-10
Mean Core Courses	6	6	5
No. Required Credit Hrs.	0-36	6-36	3-30
Mean Required Credit Hrs.	18	16	16
No. Undergraduate Credits	3-6	6-9	6-18
Mean Undergraduate Credits	6	3	6
		No. Applicable Programs	
Residency Requirement	5	3	3
Thesis	8	3	5
Practica/Internships	11	6	11
Comprehensives	13	7	18
Computer Literacy	5	2	3
Minor	1	—	7
Project/Paper	—	—	3

Source: Survey of ASHE Programs, 1987.

Table 3

Requirements for Affiliated and Master's Only Degrees In College Student Personnel

Requirement	Affiliated	Master's Only
	(N=58)	(N=59)
No. Credit Hours	30-60	30-60
Mean Credit Hours	44	40
No. Core Courses	0-20	0-20
Mean Core Courses	6	7
	Number of Applicable Programs	
Thesis	32	29
Thesis options		
Research Paper	11	15
Courses	9	3
Either RP or Courses	5	5
Research Courses		
1 course	29	36
2-4 courses	23	15
Internships (3-12 cr.)	32	37
Practica (3-9 cr.)	38	49
Comprehensives	47	33
Written	27	18
Oral	8	3
Both	7	8
In lieu of thesis	5	4

Source: Directory of Graduate Preparation Programs in College Student Personnel (Graham and Keim 1987).

Table 4

Degree Requirements in Adult and Continuing Education Programs

Requirement	Affiliated	Master's Only
	(N=32)	(N=21)
No. Credit Hrs.	30-45	29-48
Mean Credit Hrs.	36	34
No. Core Courses	3-6	2-10
Mean Credit Hrs.	5	5
No. Required Credits	6-18	12-30
Mean Required Credits	14	16
	Number of Applicable Programs	
Residency	11	10
Thesis(1)	10	10
Internship/Practica	10	12
Comprehensives	24	15
Research/Statistics	23	18
Computer Literacy	6	1
Minor Concentration	10	7
Research Paper/Project	2	1

(1) Thesis may be option in lieu of comprehensive examination

Source: Survey of AAACE Programs, 1987.

Table 5

Core Courses in Higher Education Master's Programs

(N=45)

Administration/Management	25
Organization and Administration of Higher Education	
Administrative Principles and Practices	
Governance and Administration in Higher Education	
Foundations (Contextual Studies)	20
History of Higher Education	
Philosophy or Sociology of Higher Education	
Perspectives in Higher Education	
Intellectual and Social History of Education	
Educational Ideas	
History of Universities	
Students	19
The American College Student	
Research on the College Student	
The Student in Higher Education	
Student Development in Higher Education	
Curriculum/Instruction	16
Curriculum and Instruction in Higher Education	
The Academic Department	
Academic Programs: Development and Implementation	
Effective College Teaching	
Principles and Problems of Instruction	
Academic Program Management	
Evaluation of Academic Programs	

Policy/Planning	8
Leadership and Planning	
Educational Leadership	
Planning and Institutional Research	
Planning in Higher Education	
Introduction to Educational Planning	
Current Issues	7
Critical Issues in Higher Education	
Current Issues in Higher Education	
Public Policy in Higher Education	
Trends and Issues in Higher Education	
Recurring Issues in Higher Education	

Source: Survey of ASHE Programs, 1987.