Annotated Bibliography of TIAA Institute Work Pertinent to the 2016 Higher Education Leadership Conference (HELC)

Work supporting the HELC session on Achieving a Winning 21st Century Higher Education Talent Pool

**Taking the measure of faculty diversity**
Valerie Conley, Martin Finkelstein, and Jack Schuster (April 2016)

Conley, Finkelstein and Schuster conducted an exhaustive analysis of IPEDS faculty employment data over a 20-year span, focusing on 1993, 2003 and 2013. They found that between 1993 and 2003, while the number of headcount faculty at all institutions—two- and four-year, public and private, and for-profit—grew by nearly two-thirds (65%), the number of part-time faculty more than doubled (115% growth rate). In glaring contrast, the number of full-time faculty expanded as well, but by merely 31%, less than half of the overall headcount growth rate. Moreover, among those full-time faculty, tenured and tenure-track positions increased by just 11%.

The irony is that just as the doors of academe began to open more widely for women and underrepresented minorities, the opportunity structure for academic careers has been turned on its head. While underrepresented minorities held 13% of all faculty positions in 2013 (up from 9% in 1993), they held just 10% of tenured positions. Similarly, women held 49% of all faculty positions in 2013 (up from 39% in 1993), but they held just 38% of tenured positions.

The authors break down the data by actual numbers, proportions, and appointment categories to present a definitive view of today's academic workforce and how it has changed over the past 20 years. They analyze the progress (or lack thereof) for women and minorities, and examine the complex intersection of gender and race in the faculty ranks. The paper is based on the authors’ book, *The Faculty Factor*, underwritten by the Institute and published by Johns Hopkins University Press in Nov. 2016. See [https://jhupbooks.press.jhu.edu/content/faculty-factor](https://jhupbooks.press.jhu.edu/content/faculty-factor) for more information.

**Rethinking faculty models/roles: An emerging consensus about future directions for the professoriate**
Adrianna Kezar, Elizabeth Holcombe, and Daniel Maxey (April 2016)

Kezar, Holcombe and Maxey undertook a national survey of more than 1,500 higher education stakeholders on their views about potential new faculty models. Stakeholders surveyed include faculty of all ranks and contract types, deans, provosts, board members, accreditors, and policymakers. The authors report that overall, agreement across stakeholder groups was greater than anticipated on many of the proposals in the survey, which laid out potential features of new
faculty roles. The findings reveal substantial areas of common ground on potential new faculty models, and indicate possible ways to move forward with implementation. A major theme that emerged across these areas of agreement was the need to maintain and restore professionalism in the faculty role through strategies such as protecting academic freedom; ensuring equitable pay and inclusion in shared governance for all faculty; and providing opportunities for growth, development and promotion for faculty of all types.

Despite consensus on many of the proposals, the authors report that concerns were registered about the feasibility of making changes. However, Kezar, Holcombe and Maxey suggest that these pessimistic views regarding feasibility are likely due to stereotypes and external pressures that may not reflect campus realities. They do note, though, that a few hot button issues remain controversial, including phasing out tenure and aligning faculty work with departmental and institutional needs.

The authors are hopeful that the areas of agreement identified in their study can serve as starting points for discussion, and provide points of consensus to help move the dialogue about the future of the faculty from the mere exchange of ideas to the creation of new faculty models and roles. This Institute-sponsored work formed the basis of the book, Envisioning the Faculty for the 21st Century, by Kezar and Maxey and published by Rutgers University Press in Sept. 2016. See http://rutgerspress.rutgers.edu/product/Envisioning-the-Faculty-for-the-Twenty-First-Century,6045.aspx for more information.

Flexible workplace agreements: Enabling higher education’s strategic advantage
KerryAnne O’Meara (December 2015)

O’Meara maintains that the ability to offer workplace flexibility is a largely hidden strategic advantage for higher education—and a welcome resource in the midst of the many constraints facing colleges and universities today. Unlike some organizations that have more fixed constraints on what they deliver and how they deliver it, she explains, higher education institutions have leeway to reconsider the structures and mechanisms by which they follow through on their mission. Institutions can consider more ways to engage faculty in work matched to their talents that also support their financial well-being and diverse missions. At the same time, faculty members need more ways to structure their work to meet the changing realities of their lives.

O’Meara provides several examples of colleges and universities that have added flexibility in faculty time to advancement, terms of advancement, workload, and the nature of appointments. She also examines old assumptions that are being rethought in order to craft new possibilities. Although the research on the long-term outcomes of these flexible organizational practices is limited, evidence suggests flexible policies such as those she describes foster improved inclusion and full participation of diverse faculty; efficiency, as institutional needs and individual talents are matched; organizational commitment and productivity; and perceptions of a fair work environment.

When institutions create flexible policies such as O’Meara describes, and enter into shared agreements with faculty, they provide the kinds of resources that motivation research shows are most valued by today’s workers. Such reforms can result in mutual satisfaction for faculty members and their institutions by allowing both to achieve their goals.
The shifting academic workforce: Where are the contingent faculty?
Steven Hurlburt and Michael McGarrah (November 2016)

The shift in the academic workforce to contingent faculty—that is, full- and part-time instructors not on the tenure track—is well documented; what is less understood is the concentration of contingent faculty at different institutional types, the nature of their contracts, and how student outcomes are affected by the shift.

This paper, first in a two-part series commissioned by the TIAA Institute from the Delta Cost Project at the American Institutes for Research, provides a more comprehensive understanding of the landscape surrounding changes to the academic workforce. To that end, co-authors Hurlburt and McGarrah present a profile of the contingent workforce, examining the number and percentage of non-tenure-track faculty at colleges and universities based on a variety of institutional characteristics.

Hurlburt and McGarrah found that between 2003 and 2013, increases in contingent faculty ranged from 2 percentage points for private research institutions to 17 percentage points for public bachelor’s colleges and universities. By 2013, contingent faculty accounted for at least half of all instructional faculty across all types of institutions, ranging from 50% at public research universities to more than 80% at public community colleges. The authors note that part-time positions of one year or less make up the largest share of non-tenure-track positions at all types of institutions, ranging from 19% of all faculty positions at public research institutions to 50% of all faculty positions at community colleges. The authors’ analyses also document that colleges and universities with higher shares of students at risk of noncompletion also have higher shares of contingent faculty, particularly among private four-year institutions.

Cost savings or cost shifting: The relationship between part-time contingent faculty and institutional spending
Steven Hurlburt and Michael McGarrah (November 2016)

The growing reliance on contingent faculty is commonly viewed as a cost-savings measure. Indeed, replacing tenured and tenure-track faculty with contingent faculty could quite reasonably be expected to cut institutional costs: Full-time contingent instructors earn 26% less per hour, and part-time contingent workers earn 64% less per hour than their tenured or tenure-track counterparts. Average salaries of tenure and tenure-track faculty range from $60,000 to $100,000 per year, whereas the average annual salary of full-time contingent faculty is $47,500. Part-time faculty—who frequently are compensated per class or semester—earn an average of only $2,700 per course, typically without benefits.

To promote a better understanding of the mechanics behind these financial trade-offs, the TIAA Institute commissioned this paper, the second in a two-part series by Hurlburt and McGarrah, to investigate how the concentration of part-time contingent faculty relate to various measures of institutional spending. They found that a clear relationship exists between the use of part-time contingent faculty and cost savings in instructional salaries and benefits for faculty, both cross-sectionally and over the 10-year period they analyzed (2003-2013). However, while relying on part-time contingent faculty has helped to constrain compensation costs for faculty, cost savings in total compensation for all employees were more modest. That is, the savings in faculty compensation didn’t translate directly into savings in compensation for all employees. Instead, nonfaculty
employee costs largely served to limit the scope of the savings at institutions with high shares of part-time faculty.

Hurlburt and McGarrah present further analyses, cross-sectionally and over time, related to overall E&R spending, revealing differences in the cost structures of colleges and universities that are shifting most heavily to part-time contingent faculty.

Bridging learning research and teaching practice for the public good: The learning engineer
Candace Thille (November 2016)

Thille notes the pressure on colleges and universities to improve outcomes, reduce costs, and educate a greater number of diverse students. She believes that higher education’s dual missions of research and teaching ideally position the sector to make rapid progress on addressing these challenges by discovering and implementing the most effective processes for teaching and learning. Historically, though, a chasm has existed between learning research and teaching practice in higher education. Thille outlines a new academic role—the Learning Engineer—to bridge that gap. Learning engineers, in collaboration with researchers and practitioners, will design learning environments and data systems that yield predictive and explanatory models of student learning that support course improvement, instructor insight, and student feedback.

Thille describes how in all sectors, advances in machine learning, data science, crowdsourcing and computation are enabling a much larger part of human processes and decision making to be done by machines. Likewise, such machines are becoming a core part of the teaching process in higher education. She points out that currently, adaptive educational systems that facilitate innovation in teaching and learning are being designed and built mostly outside of, and then sold into, the academy. But the systems and algorithms used to model the data are not neutral; any system built using data will reflect the biases and decisions made when collecting that data, as well as the behaviors and judgments of the groups and individuals from whom the data are collected. Without transparency and peer review, Thille asserts, the development process is better described as alchemy, not science.

Learning engineers can design from within academia the analytic research systems that improve knowledge modeling, and support the selection of useful knowledge modeling approaches for specific students, contexts, and learning goals. In short, learning engineers can facilitate rapid progress in the basic science of human learning.

Understanding the faculty retirement (non)decision
Paul Yakoboski (June 2015)

When a significant share of tenured faculty works past what is considered a “normal” retirement age, challenges can arise for campus leaders in terms of keeping the faculty workforce dynamic for purposes of teaching, research and service. Such challenges can result from declining productivity among some faculty, limited advancement opportunities for junior faculty, a lack of openings for new hires, and an inability to reallocate resources across departments and programs.

Yakoboski, senior economist at the TIAA Institute, analyzed data from the Institute’s 2014 Faculty Career and Retirement Survey, which included nearly 800 tenured faculty members age 50 or older from a range of institutions. He found that just 35% of tenured faculty age 50 or older expect to
Nearly half expect to work past age 67 and, in fact, want to do so. Yakoboski calls this group the “reluctant by choice.” The remainder expect to work past age 67, but would prefer to retire before then. These are “reluctantly reluctant.”

Yakoboski’s research helps to address these issues, shedding light on the reluctant retiree phenomenon by delving into both financial and psychosocial factors that influence the retirement decision. Not surprisingly, personal finances are a particular barrier for those who are reluctantly reluctant. Psychosocial factors are the issue for the reluctant by choice group. However, one-half to two-thirds of those who are reluctantly reluctant appear to be assuming a financial barrier given that they have not done a careful evaluation of their retirement finances. A systematic financial review would test such assumptions.

An analogous dynamic exists among the reluctant by choice group—anywhere from 60% to 90% have not seriously considered what they could do with their time in retirement. Better management of retirement patterns requires addressing the psychosocial. Senior faculty should be enabled and encouraged to systemically evaluate how they could use their time if retired. This would allow a fully informed decision by the individual. This approach may or may not result in an accelerated time frame for retirement, but it is a prerequisite for one.

**Reluctant retirees and managing change in higher education**
Herman Berliner, Teresa Hassara, and Hugh Penney (February 2016)

The TIAA Institute research described above, *Understanding the faculty retirement (non)decision*, is commented upon in this paper by campus practitioners, including a provost and senior human resources director. Briefly, the research found that just 35% of tenured faculty age 50 or older expect to retire by age 67. Of the remainder, nearly half reported delaying retirement by choice, not as a result of financial necessity (the “reluctant retiree” group). Of those who cited financial necessity as a reason to not retire (the “reluctantly reluctant”), most appear to assume a financial barrier to retirement, as they reported not having conducted a careful evaluation of their retirement finances.

Ideas gleaned from the campus perspectives offer possibilities as to how best to face the challenge of maintaining a dynamic workforce. For example, Penney, a senior human resources director at Yale, described that institutions’ initiative to offer faculty multiple opportunities to meet with financial advisors—who both assess financial readiness for retirement and help pinpoint specific dates—which could help shift the reluctantly reluctant group toward earlier retirement. The reluctant by choice group could benefit too, given that many in that group also report finances as a factor in their retirement decisions, along with an unclear picture of their own finances. Further, among those reluctant by choice, anywhere from 60% to 90% have not seriously considered what they would do with their time in retirement. Programs that help envision the possibilities of life in retirement—including potential options to advise students and/or teach classes—could help blunt the pull of academia and encourage retirement.

Berliner, long-time provost at Hofstra, noted that tenure was not originally envisioned as a life-long appointment, and indeed was designed when a mandatory retirement age was still in effect. Proposals for new tenure models include limiting tenure to 35 years after it is awarded, followed by short, frequently-renewed contracts (e.g., every one or two years).
The career experience of academics in adjunct faculty positions
Paul Yakoboski (May 2015)

Yakoboski, senior economist at the TIAA Institute, analyzed data from the Institute’s 2014 Faculty Career and Retirement Survey, which included 500 academics in adjunct faculty positions (i.e., faculty who neither hold a full-time position outside of academia nor who work full time at a single institution under a multi-year contract). To generate a deeper understanding of the views and experiences of adjuncts—who comprise more than 50% of today’s academic workforce—Yakoboski examined topics related to their jobs, careers and retirement aspirations.

Yakoboski found that women account for a slight majority (52%) of academics in adjunct positions, and that 79% of adjuncts work for a single college or university. Forty-one percent (41%) of academics in adjunct positions are very satisfied with their academic career, compared to 69% of tenured or tenure-track faculty who report being very satisfied. The top reasons adjunct faculty cite for not being very satisfied with their careers are level of pay (cited by 25%), not having a full-time position (23%), not having a tenure-track position (22%), and a lack of job security (14%). With regard to their financial security, over 50% of adjuncts report household income of $75,000 or more, implying that a significant share have a spouse or other household member who is employed at a relatively good income.

Further, while 23% of academics in adjunct positions are very satisfied with the institutional support provided for professional development and career advancement, one-third are not (21% not too satisfied; 12% not at all satisfied). Finally, Yakoboski reports that what academics in adjunct positions most value is their students: 90% said that the statement “I enjoy teaching and interacting with students” describes them very well. Their next most frequent response as to what they valued most was the intellectual stimulation of an academic career. Forty-two percent (42%) of academics in adjunct positions would very likely recommend pursuing an academic career to a promising student.

2014 Faculty Career and Retirement Survey: Retirement planning and confidence among tenured and tenure-track faculty—data summary
Paul Yakoboski (September 2015)

The TIAA Institute commissioned a survey of more than 1,200 tenured and tenure-track faculty in the Fall of 2014. Yakoboski, TIAA Institute senior economist, analyzed survey results by examining the retirement planning, saving, and investing behavior of college and university faculty, including their self-reported retirement readiness, use of financial advice, and preparedness for medical expenses after retirement. (In related research described above, Understanding the faculty retirement (non)decision, Yakoboski focused on the survey’s results based on just tenured and tenure-track faculty age 50 or older to examine their plans for retirement and the factors driving those decisions.)

In this data summary, Yakoboski briefly highlights and visually displays survey results, which show that faculty are far more confident than all U.S. workers that they will have enough money to live comfortably throughout retirement (83% of faculty versus 58% of U.S. workers reported feeling very or somewhat confident). Older faculty are significantly more confident than their younger counterparts. However, faculty may be underestimating their necessary retirement income, as more than 40% either think that 70% or less of their pre-retirement income will be sufficient in retirement,
or they don’t know what they’ll need. Conventional wisdom holds that at least 70%, or more, is needed.

Fifty percent (50%) and 53% are very or somewhat confident, respectively, that Social Security and Medicare will continue to provide benefits of at least equal value to the benefits received by retirees today. With regard to retiree medical expenses, many faculty are very or somewhat confident that they will have enough money to take care of medical expenses during retirement (75%), although just 41% report having planned or saved specifically for such expenses.

Work supporting the HELC session on Innovation, Transformation and Change Leadership

_Cultivating strategic innovation in higher education_

William Tierney and Michael Lanford (November 2016)

Tierney and Lanford urge that colleges and universities become more strategic in creating a climate for creativity and innovation in their organizations. They reject the notion that individuals are born creative, as if it is an intrinsic quality for some and absent in others. Instead, they argue that an organization’s leaders can strategically enhance creativity and build a culture of innovation. They begin by clarifying the often-confusing concept of innovation by defining it alongside related concepts, including creativity and entrepreneurship. Tierney and Lanford further explain that the theory of “disruptive innovation,” while intriguing for its encapsulation of today’s dynamic business climate, is ultimately of limited utility for a sector as complex as higher education.

The authors cite research demonstrating that a strategic approach to innovation can be more effective in spurring needed changes in the higher education landscape, and outline the conditions necessary to foster it—including positive affective states, a focus on potential gains, and a concentration on distant outcomes. Tierney and Lanford also note that since creativity is dependent upon the development of expertise within a given field, as well as the ability of an individual to both thoroughly understand and build upon the work of others, it may be enhanced through social interaction. Likewise, a diverse range of backgrounds, proficiencies and voices augments the creative impulses of individuals, and the innovative potential of a group. Further, they describe research showing that to create and nurture an innovative work environment, higher education institutions need to stimulate the intrinsic motivations of researchers, administrators, instructors, and other employees. Finally, the individual agency associated with self-determination also is vital for the cultivation of an innovative campus climate.

_Mission-driven innovation: An empirical study of adaptations and change among independent colleges_

James Hearn and Jarrett Warshaw (December 2015)

The TIAA Institute, in collaboration with Lumina Foundation, supports the Council of Independent Colleges’ (CIC) Project on the Future of Independent Higher Education. As part of that multi-year initiative, Hearn and Warshaw undertook a survey of the presidents of the CIC member institutions to more fully understand the challenges independent colleges face, the innovations they are undertaking to adapt and prosper, the factors driving those innovations, and the perceived effects of their innovative efforts.
Hearn and Warshaw begin by noting the range of challenges facing independent institutions, including decreases in family income and government investment in higher education, public skepticism about the value of a liberal arts education, and structural barriers to cutting college operating budgets. They describe the prevailing narrative—which casts a negative outlook on the condition and future of the independent sector—as anecdotally based and refute that view with systematic, representative and empirical data drawn from their research. Their findings indicate that leaders of the nation’s independent colleges are engaged in varied and aggressive change efforts on multiple fronts. Every responding president reported pursuing some form of 1) cost containment and reduction (two-thirds doing so “aggressively”) and 2) revenue enhancement and diversification to improve financial health, with 92% of respondents pursuing both, and one-third pursuing both “aggressively.”

Hearn and Warshaw present detailed accounts of many cost containment and revenue enhancement measures being undertaken, and conclude that their research indicates activism rather than retreat across the independent college sector. The image of the hidebound college steadfastly resisting reform, they say, is nowhere to be found.

**Between collaboration and merger: Expanding strategic alliances in higher education**  
Michael Thomas and Kent Chabotar (November 2015)

Many U.S. higher education institutions face a complex combination of competitive and financial sustainability challenges that demand a more deliberate and strategic orientation toward alliances. Thomas argues that this new breed of alliance must go beyond the valuable, but “mature” innovation of consortia, and be more flexible and multilateral than complicated, two-institution mergers.

Drawing on the strategic alliance literature, Thomas considers the range of alliance arrangements, motivations and benefits, and factors for success. He identifies a “sweet spot” of strategic system alliances and joint ventures to best pursue essential economies of scope and scale and core business model changes—both academic and administrative. He outlines several critical “design principles” for this next frontier of multi-institutional alliances, including, for example, moving beyond the constraints of geographic proximity to expand reach, and pursuing cost savings, efficiencies and integrations via partner institutions’ complementary and/or supplementary “fits.” Chabotar offers deeply-informed commentary throughout the paper from a practitioner’s point of view, having previously served as both a chief financial officer and college president.

The authors note that building necessary alliance capacity will require rigorous institutional self-appraisal, bold vision, and focused efforts by presidents and trustees. Support from higher education-focused philanthropies and industry and sector associations will be critical. Further, these strategic system alliances and joint ventures will likely be aided by the growing ecosystem of technology-fueled and fast-moving start-ups serving the industry space and reconfiguring fundamental processes and activities.
Waves of innovation: Creativity and community at Pepperdine University
Andrew Benton and Lee Kats (September 2015)

Pepperdine’s Waves of Innovation program captured the Institute’s attention for its unique approach to stimulating collaboration and creativity across the university. The TIAA Institute believes that the model developed and refined at Pepperdine—and which is based on the scholarly literature on spurring innovation—is one that can be readily adapted and implemented across a wide range of institutions.

Benton and Kats explain the need for Pepperdine to regain its creative momentum after being slowed by a stagnant economy and having to conserve resources during the financial crash of 2007 and the ensuing recession. An internal study led to creation of a new campus initiative called Waves of Innovation. Working with an interdisciplinary committee of faculty, staff, students and alumni, they issued a call—open to any member of the university community—for innovative ideas that could potentially change the university. Proposals had to address at least one of five criteria, all tightly linked to the university’s strategic plan. During just the first two rounds of funding, the university community submitted over 250 proposals to improve the university, enhance its reputation, or streamline its administrative processes. Proposal finalists give brief Waves of Innovation Talks to explain their idea to a community-wide university audience.

Benton and Kats report that the Waves of Innovation evenings have become significant community-building events. To date, funded proposals reflect issues at the forefront of discussions throughout higher education, including sustainability, accessibility, equity, and technology and learning. Without question, Benton and Kats maintain, the Waves of Innovation initiative has improved Pepperdine and engaged its community in a broad-ranging discussion about getting better and building new bridges throughout the community, while inspiring higher levels of learning and new revenue opportunities.

Barriers to innovation and change in higher education
Lloyd Armstrong (November 2014)

The environment for American higher education is rapidly evolving in ways that present both large challenges to the status quo and growing opportunities for responses to these challenges. Armstrong argues that change in higher education generally has been slow to occur despite pressures to do so. He draws from the literature on institutional obstacles to innovation and change to shed light on some of the reasons why higher education has, in his assessment, moved slowly to meet new challenges. He adopts a business model perspective to identify key aspects of higher education that heighten some of the universal obstacles to innovation and change. These include American higher education’s worldwide reputation for excellence, which serves to reinforce the status quo—particularly among tenure-line faculty who play a dual role by both producing the educational product and participating in institutional governance, thereby exerting unusual control over change at the institutional level.

Armstrong’s business model lens also serves to identify ways in which these obstacles may eventually be lowered. The shifting composition of the faculty workforce to a dominant percentage of full-time non-tenure track faculty focused primarily on teaching, but with a growing voice in governance, is likely to result in less attachment to the status quo, he believes. And intensifying demands for outcomes measurement will shed more light on the surrogate measures for quality that dominate higher education today; should those surrogates be found to be of limited value,
Armstrong predicts that many barriers to change would fall. Armstrong also considers external barriers to change, including the role of the member-organization accreditation system in shaping responses to the changing higher education environment, as well as the role of politics as it influences the actions of the U.S. Department of Education.

Work supporting the HELC session on The Power and Potential of Diversity and Inclusion

*The role of governing boards in enhancing campus diversity*

Peter Eckel and Cathy Trower (November 2016)

Eckel and Trower argue that boards of trustees have a significant leadership role to play when it comes to addressing issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in higher education. They note, however, that rarely are boards seen as contributing to this agenda. And yet diversity touches multiple aspects of the key matters that boards oversee—including mission and values, strategy, finance, and intercollegiate athletics. Advancing diversity and equity is difficult for boards for a host of reasons, including the lack of diversity on boards themselves; challenges in framing the issues for action; racism and the challenges of talking about race; low levels of confidence by key stakeholders in board leadership; and common governance shortcomings—including a lack of sophistication on student and faculty issues, insufficient use of data and dashboards, and the pull of competing issues and priorities.

Clearly, Eckel and Trower acknowledge, the work can be challenging—it takes time, and in many ways the deck is stacked against the board. Nevertheless, they argue that boards can help spur real progress by employing a wide range of tactics. Working collaboratively with administrators as well as with faculty and staff, boards can keep sustained attention on diversity matters over the necessary long-time horizon, well beyond the average president’s tenure in office. The authors offer strategies to help boards overcome the many challenges they face in advancing campus diversity, including taking ownership of the issue; defining success and setting goals; recognizing that conflict is inevitable; holding the president accountable and supporting that individual; and translating their own experiences from outside of higher education to the critically important issues at hand.