



FACULTY AND STAFF DIVERSITY

February 2022

In the following brief, Hanover Research reviews data on racial and ethnic diversity among full-time instructional staff and highlights related best practices in hiring, community building, and retention.



INTRODUCTION



Diversity is an ongoing concern in higher education across student, faculty, and staff populations. Studies indicate that faculty diversity lingers behind the diversity of the student population, which represents both a concern and an opportunity given that instructional representation can impact student performance.

Here, Hanover reviews recent data on racial and ethnic diversity among full-time instructional staff. Best practice highlights include hiring strategies, community building efforts, and faculty/staff retention.

KEY FINDINGS

Instructor diversity continues to lag the undergraduate student and broader U.S. populations. Across all institutional sectors, the share of nonwhite full-time instructional staff is notably lower than the percentage of nonwhite undergraduate students. Black or African-American and Hispanic/Latinx staff are significantly underrepresented; while still a minority, Asian instructional staff are overrepresented in comparison to the overall U.S. population.

Nonwhite instructional staff are more common in positions without faculty status. Black or African-American instructional staff are most highly concentrated in this category, while Asians are slightly better represented in tenured and tenure-track roles. With the destabilization in employment related to COVID-19, institutions should monitor whether near-future hiring improves or worsens faculty diversity.

Fostering diverse candidate pools, addressing unconscious bias on search committees, and carefully structuring job postings can help improve faculty diversity. Best practices stipulate that institutions should build and expand graduate student and faculty networks outside of immediate hiring needs and implement policies to address bias in the search process. The wording of job postings can also have a notable impact on whether diverse candidates apply.

Institutions should tailor their engagement and retention efforts with respect to diverse staff. Ongoing policies are important to ensure diverse staff wish to remain at the institution and will encourage others to join the faculty ranks; institutions must tailor professional development opportunities, promotion and tenure policies, and efforts to build campus climate specifically with the needs and priorities of diverse staff in mind.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF DIVERSITY



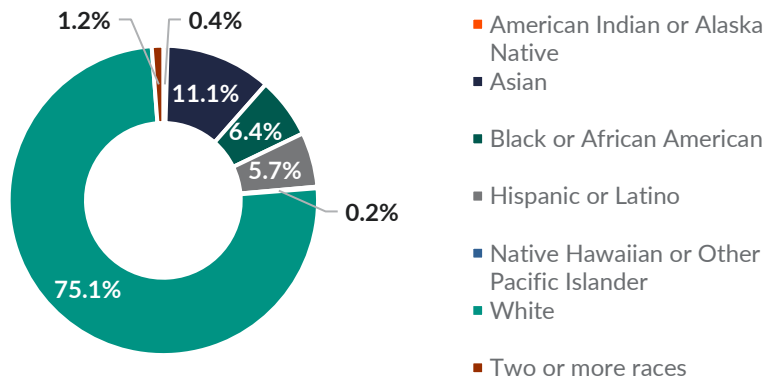
CURRENT DIVERSITY TRENDS

Faculty diversity lags significantly behind students and the general population.

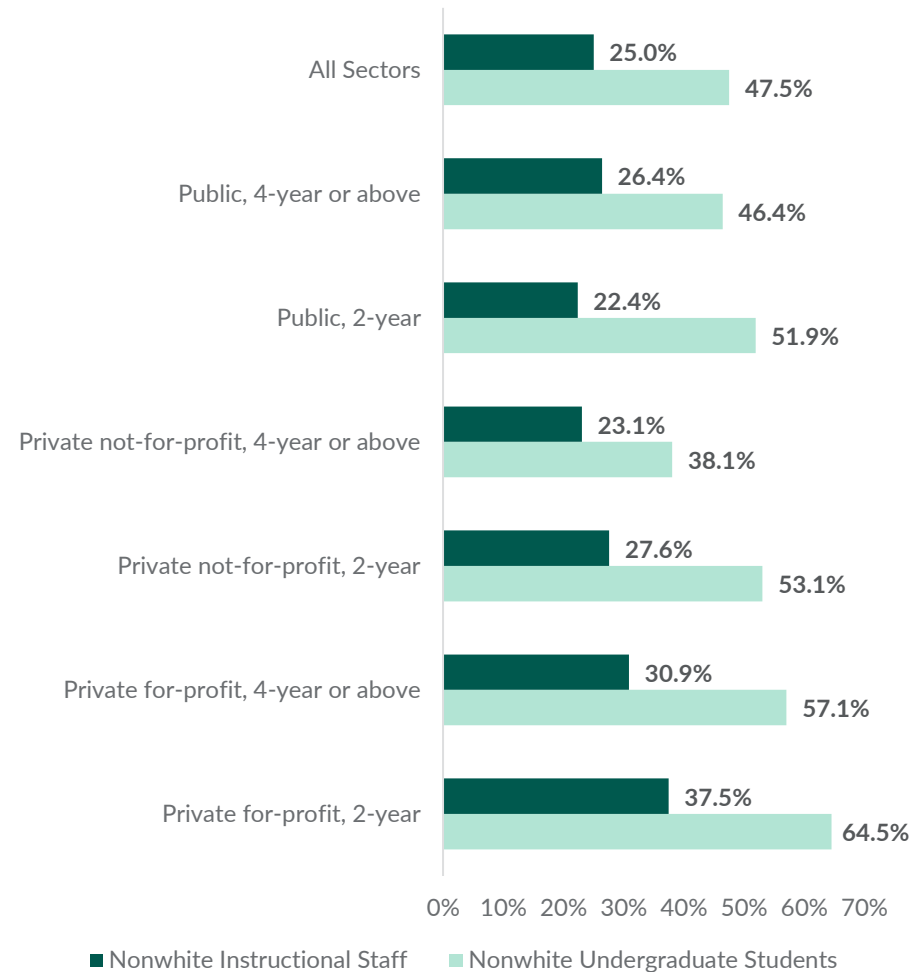
According to a recent analysis from [FiveThirtyEight](#), white faculty remain significantly overrepresented (76 percent) compared to the shares of the undergraduate student population (53 percent) and the overall US population (59 percent). Based on the most recent data from the National Center for Education Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System ([IPEDS](#)), instructional staff diversity lags across all sectors.

Fall 2020 staffing data indicates that among nonwhite staff, Asians represent the largest group at 11.1 percent, which [FiveThirtyEight](#) indicates is overrepresented compared to the overall population (six percent). Black or African-American and Hispanic/Latinx are the most underrepresented groups.

FALL 2020 INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF BY RACE/ETHNICITY

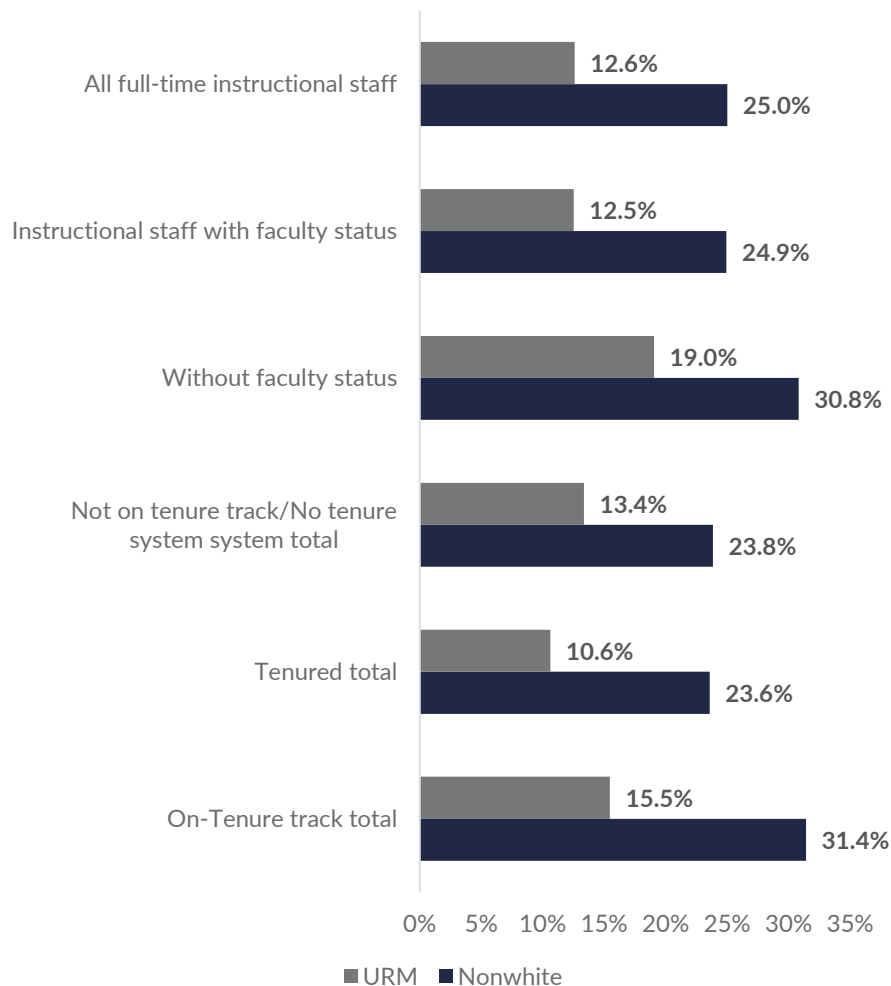


FALL 2020 SHARE OF NONWHITE STUDENTS AND FULL-TIME INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF BY SECTOR



DIVERSITY AMONG FACULTY AND NON-FACULTY

FALL 2020 SHARE OF NONWHITE AND URM INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF BY CATEGORY



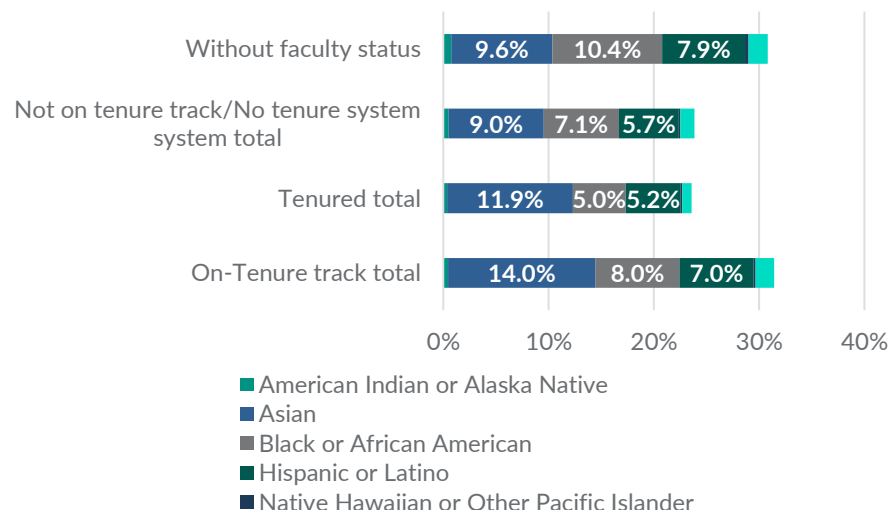
DIVERSITY BY STAFF CATEGORY

Instructors without faculty status are more likely to be nonwhite.

IPEDS data for 2020 shows that non-faculty instructional staff are more likely to be diverse—30.8 percent of instructors without faculty status are nonwhite and 19.0 percent are black, Hispanic/Latinx, or Native American. By comparison, slightly less than 25 percent of instructors with faculty status are nonwhite.

Non-Asian minorities are more heavily concentrated in non-faculty roles.

This category reports the largest percentage of black or African-American and Hispanic/Latinx instructors. Asians are more well-represented in tenured and tenure-track roles, with higher percentages as well as bigger disparities between Asian staff and other groups. Tenured faculty report the lowest share of black or African-American and Hispanic/Latinx staff.



DIVERSITY TRENDS



DIVERSITY TRENDS OVER TIME

Instructional diversity has improved over time but increases appear to vary by rank and by racial/ethnic group.

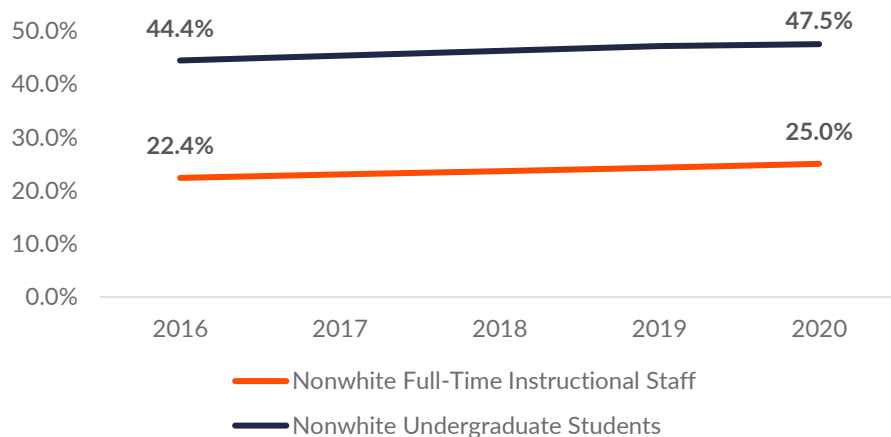
Between 2016 and 2020, data from IPEDS show an increase of 3.1 percent in the share of nonwhite undergraduates, with a corresponding 2.6 percent increase in the share of nonwhite full-time instructional staff. Excluding Asians, growth was smaller—the share of black, native American, and Hispanic/Latinx full-time instructional staff only increased from 11.5 to 12.6 percent. Diversity increased across all instructional ranks.

[Pew Research](#) indicates that growth in student diversity since 1997 was driven significantly by the increase in Hispanic/Latinx students, but during the same period there was limited growth in Hispanic/Latinx faculty. FiveThirtyEight's [analysis](#) reports that between 2013 and 2019, the share of tenure-track and tenured faculty across most racial and ethnic groups increased by less than one percentage point—Asian tenured faculty saw the highest growth followed by Hispanic/Latinx tenure-track faculty.

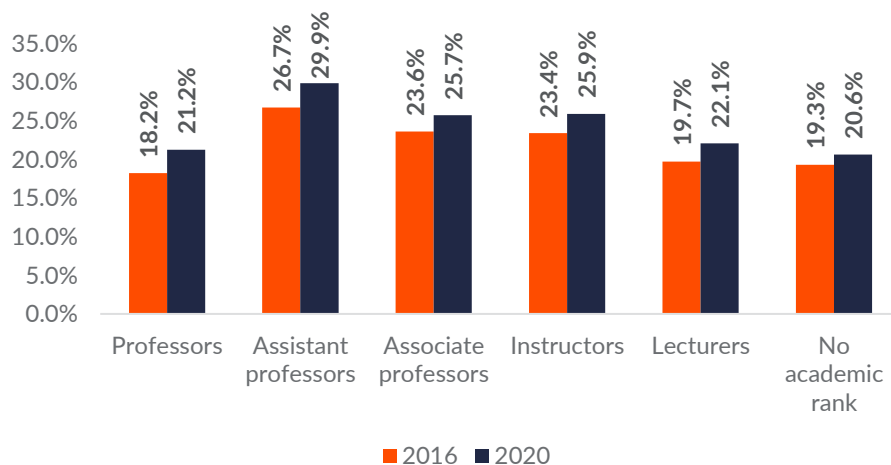
Prior trends suggest institutions may need to provide extra attention to faculty diversity around COVID-19.

A recent paper in [Sociological Science](#) noted that during the financial crisis, between 2007 and 2009, hiring of tenure-track faculty at four-year institutions declined by approximately a quarter, and nonwhite faculty hiring was disproportionately affected. With the destabilization in employment related to COVID-19, institutions should examine whether near-future hiring improves or worsens faculty diversity.

SHARE OF NONWHITE UNDERGRADUATES AND FULL-TIME INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF, 2016-2020



SHARE OF NONWHITE INSTRUCTORS BY RANK, 2016-2020



HIRING MORE DIVERSE CANDIDATES



IMPROVING RECRUITMENT

Institutions seeking to hire more diverse faculty should focus on expanding the candidate pool and improving search committees.

Given existing diversity challenges across institutions, standard sources for candidates and traditional search committees are more likely to reinforce a less diverse faculty makeup. When hiring, institutions should consider candidates from [outside the most prominent institutions](#)—as these can be less diverse—and review candidates' records [beyond research](#), considering contributions in areas such as teaching and mentoring. Institutions should also focus on building internal graduate student pools and can consider hiring ABD (“all but dissertation”) candidates.

According to [AACSB](#), institutions should also review search committee procedures for risks of unconscious bias and revise policies accordingly.

Focus on building relationships with diverse candidates outside of the immediate hiring process.

Research from the [University of Pennsylvania](#) indicates that “personal networks [are] critically important...the most successful searches were those in which a senior member of the search committee was well connected in faculty of color circles.” The Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) [INCLUDES](#) project recommends ongoing efforts to connect with diverse graduate students, fellows, and faculty; informal talks and visits and lecture series featuring promising scholars from underrepresented groups are potential ways to build these connections.

STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS ON SEARCH COMMITTEES

- ✓ Review research on biases and strive to minimize their influence on recruiting and screening candidates.
- ✓ Create the role of “search advocate” to help the committee reduce the effects of unconscious bias (see [Oregon State University's search advocate program](#)).
- ✓ Establish a specific set of evaluation criteria—a refined, shared understanding of the minimum and preferred qualifications—and create a matrix for evaluating candidates.
- ✓ Suspend judgments about candidates based on their educational pedigree or current institution.
- ✓ Allow adequate time for the committee to review and evaluate each candidate's application materials.
- ✓ Provide a structured interview process by asking all candidates a set of core questions.
- ✓ Encourage open airing of ideas and opinions and pay attention to every perspective, especially when there are differences of opinion about the strengths and weaknesses of a candidate.
- ✓ Be able to defend every decision to reject or advance a candidate. For a search to be compliant the search committee must be able articulate, at each stage of the search process, why a candidate is advancing or not based upon the agreed upon evaluation of skills, experiences, and qualifications.
- ✓ Consider whether unconscious biases and assumptions are influencing the committee's decisions regarding qualified women and members of underrepresented groups.

Source: Reproduced nearly verbatim from [AACSB](#)

HIRING MORE DIVERSE CANDIDATES



JOB POSTINGS

Institutions should carefully construct job postings and place them in diversity-focused sites or publications.

The [American Association of University Professors \(AAUP\)](#) notes that publication of openings “should include advertisements in journals and periodicals that make special efforts to reach minority faculty and graduate students.” In addition, the wording of job postings can have a significant impact on a candidate’s decision to apply ([INSIGHT](#)).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR JOB POSTINGS

Include mandated EEO statements and include clear statements about the importance of diversity to the institution and the institution’s commitment to diversity issues

Define positions as broadly as reasonable

Decide when a qualification is “preferred” rather than “required” and limit use of the terms “must” and “required” to characteristics that are truly essential

Avoid posting “replacement” ads for a specific existing faculty member

Phrase qualifications and requirements “without inadvertently limiting access to persons whose culture, income, experience, or references may be atypical” (e.g., include phrases such as “or related degree/experience”)

Omit or be flexible with numeric measures (e.g., instead of requesting 4-5 years of teaching experience use language such as “candidates must demonstrate teaching scholarship relevant to the position”)



SPECIAL INTERVENTIONS

Recommendations for increasing the number of underrepresented faculty highlight cluster hiring and other special interventions.

[Colorado State’s](#) extensive literature review on building faculty diversity recommends special hiring interventions, particularly cluster and dual-career hiring as well as “exceptional hires, search waivers...special-hire intervention, expanded job descriptions, modification of usual search requirements to meet program needs, shortened search process (truncated process)...or out-of-cycle hiring.”



Cluster Hiring

Pioneered by University of Wisconsin-Madison, cluster hiring adds “faculty into multiple departments or schools around interdisciplinary research topics.” It has been successful at increasing diversity and may help mitigate potential isolation issues for new diverse hires.

Dual-Career Hiring

Full-time faculty typically have employed partners, and often (particularly for women) have academic partners. Addressing questions of spouse/partner employment increases the likelihood of taking an offer seriously and strongly influences faculty career decisions.



COMMUNITY FOR DIVERSE FACULTY



BUILDING COMMUNITY

Institutions should engage in focused efforts to connect underrepresented faculty into the campus and wider community starting in the transition period.

The [Institutional Model for Increasing Faculty Diversity](#) describes the transition phase as the time between hiring and the new faculty member beginning their new position, and notes that it represents “an opportunity to build connections, [and] begin introducing the person into the campus culture and community.” As part of this approach, institutions should engage campus affinity groups and consider developing new ones if needed. Institutions should also be prepared to assist minority faculty with community beyond the campus; faculty of color in majority white areas may “[have trouble](#) finding churches, hair salons, and friendships and romantic partnerships.”

Establish mentorships for underrepresented faculty and staff.

[Colorado State's](#) review of diversity hiring literature notes multiple recommendations related to mentorship for URM faculty and [APLU](#) findings indicate that “formal and informal mentoring enhance community and a sense of support on campus, and facilitate the sharing of information about faculty life.” Mentorships with senior scholars can be especially helpful for ongoing professional development, but mentors from shared backgrounds may be most important based on women and URM's [negative experiences](#); white and/or male mentors may need unconscious bias interventions.



PARTNERSHIPS

Institutions seeking to improve diversity can benefit from partnering with other colleges and universities as well as non-academic organizations. Resources and examples include:

- The [Higher Education Recruitment Consortium \(HERC\)](#) provides resources for job seekers and employers, as well as helping to connect institutions with nonprofit organizations. Institutions also form [regional](#) alliances.
- [HERC members in Northeastern Ohio](#), which has a very small Latinx population, formed the **Latino Alliance of Northeastern Ohio (LANO)** in 2015
- As part of the Aspire effort, public four-year and two-year institutions formed the [Iowa Regional Collaborative](#) and the [Texas Regional Collaborative](#) to transition diverse STEM graduate students into teaching positions
- **Wright State University** recommends, and provides [resources](#) for, connecting with local or regional chambers of commerce and other groups focused on specific underrepresented groups (e.g., American Council of the Blind of Ohio, Ohio Asian American Pacific Islander Advisory Council, Ohio Latin Affairs Commission)

RETENTION SUPPORT

Best practices for building diverse faculty emphasize the importance of ongoing retention and support efforts. This page summarizes some of the main focus areas.



Diverse Staff Professional Development

- Communicate 'common knowledge' items underrepresented faculty may not have equivalent exposure to
- Leadership training
- Workshops (e.g., grant writing)
- Mentoring



Promotion/Tenure

- Formal promotion support for new faculty
- Clear guidelines
- Equally value research, teaching, and service in importance
- Reconsider use of student evaluations
- Examine faculty evals for hidden bias



Faculty and Staff Diversity Training

- Education on topics such as hidden bias, microaggressions
- Formal guidance and training for search committee members
- Training and support to address and improve diversity in the curriculum



Campus Climate

- Establish unambiguous policies and procedures
- Maintain open and non-penalized avenues for communication and reporting
- Conduct campus cultural audits and collect faculty data annually
- Review programs for representation
- Treat faculty as more than 'just' a diversity category



Administration/Leadership

- Create and maintain formal diversity roles and committees
- Make proceedings and decisions transparent
- Prioritize work-life balance
- Encourage collaborative research within and between departments
- Monitor service requirements and engagement to avoid overloading underrepresented faculty

Source: [Griffin](#); [Colorado State](#); [Aspire Alliance](#); [Chronicle of Higher Education](#)

