

**THE FACULTY SHORTAGE
AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST**

Report Issued by the Hearing Panel:

**State Representative Ellen Story, 3rd Hampshire District
Professor Michael Denning, The William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of American
Studies, Yale University
Eduardo Bustamante, President, Student Government Association,
University of Massachusetts Amherst**

FEBRUARY 16, 2005



February 16, 2005

To the reader:

On December 1, 2004, a public hearing at the University of Massachusetts Amherst investigated the impact of the decline in the number of tenure-track faculty. Our panel convened the hearing and accepted testimony from students and faculty at the university before a large audience. We announced that the record would remain open until December 15, 2004, and after the hearing we received additional written testimony from faculty, students, and staff. These witnesses represent a wide range of departments, ranks, and status at the university, providing a revealing picture of the situation and its consequences.

The hearing was convened at the request of the Massachusetts Society of Professors (MSP), but a number of organizations including the Faculty Senate, the Student Government Association, and the campus administration all had cited the shortage of tenure-track faculty as a major problem in recent years. This hearing and report is the first serious effort to document the severity of the problem.

The report that follows demonstrates that the impact of the faculty's decline can hardly be underestimated. Students, staff, and faculty testify to the far-reaching consequences to their academic progress and to the university itself. The challenge to policy makers and administrators is clear.

We are releasing this report to university officials, Massachusetts legislators, and other interested parties, in the hope that it can reverse the trend of recent years. Based on the evidence contained in the following pages, we believe that restoring the number of tenure-track faculty must be among the most urgent priorities for the university and the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

State Representative **Ellen Story** (D-3rd Hampshire)

Yale University Professor **Michael Denning**

Student Government President **Eduardo Bustamante**

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Executive Summary

At the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the number of permanent, full-time faculty declined precipitously in the past decade. In 1990 there were 1,133 tenure-track faculty. Today, with almost exactly the same number of students, there are only 865 – a 24 percent decline in faculty. Since 2001, the drop has been particularly severe – UMass has lost 140 core faculty in just four years. Twenty years ago, nearly all students were taught by permanent, full-time faculty, assisted by graduate teaching assistants. Today, over 40 percent of all teaching at UMass is done by contingent workers. The number of contingent teachers has risen 68 percent since 1994, while the number of tenure-track faculty has fallen sharply.

UMass Amherst is a great research university, where Massachusetts students can get a first-rate education from faculty who are leaders in their fields. Core faculty bring in over \$100 million per year in research funding. No one is more dedicated to the university than the faculty, whose day-to-day engagement, student connections, and long-term perspective make them guardians of the university. Students also care deeply about their future alma mater. All those who offered testimony did so because of their fierce dedication to UMass. They recognize that the future of UMass will only be as great as its past if there is an ambitious plan to restore the faculty, the university's human capital.

This report demonstrates the radical transformation of UMass as a result of the decline in the number of faculty. The professor shortage has a serious detrimental effect on the educational experience of students, the faculty's ability to teach and mentor students, perform research, and serve the Commonwealth, as well as the university's ability to compete among top-ranked institutions.

Some of the central findings of this report include:

- The decline in the numbers of tenure-track faculty has hurt students. They are shut out of courses, and often take longer to graduate. They have difficulty finding advisors and recommendations essential to graduate education and future careers.
- Tenure-track faculty are proven teachers and researchers and have made a long-term commitment to the university. Without enough permanent faculty, the university cannot succeed at its central goals: teaching, research, and outreach.
- The faculty shortage threatens the university's competitiveness on the national stage. It is impossible to generate research, and to compete for grants without a concentration of faculty in individual programs and departments.

This crisis demands an immediate response. Chancellor John V. Lombardi said in November 2004 that UMass Amherst cannot become a top-ranked research university unless it sustains a research faculty of at least 1,100 – which would mean a faculty-student ratio of approximately 1:20. Yet the University administration appears to have no definite plans to reach that goal. This report demonstrates the serious consequences of disinvesting in the university's core teachers and researchers.

UMass can do better. Faculty, students, and staff all testify to their commitment to the mission of the university. With a renewed commitment to devote the necessary resources to the university's educational mission, UMass can become a national model of excellence.

The Impact of the Faculty Shortage: Evidence from Student and Faculty Testimony

1. Diminished quality of education

Students testified about many ways that their education is hurt by the shortage of tenure-track faculty. A large number of students reported that nearly all of their classes have been taught by graduate students or adjunct professors, and they rarely came in contact with more well-known scholars in their field.

Many students stated that they had very rarely taken courses with full-time permanent faculty. In some departments, all required courses for the major are taught by teaching assistants or adjunct faculty. UMass senior Seth Nelson blames “huge classes, shrinking departmental resources, and scarcity of required courses...With less opportunity for interaction with professors and less emphasis on small-group discussion, it is impossible to achieve the same quality of education.”

In the English Department, for example, the faculty was cut in half during the 12 years between 1992 and 2004 – from 70 professors down to 35. During that time, the number of majors and pre-majors increased. English majors find fewer courses offered and have far less contact with senior faculty. The classes that are offered are increasingly large lecture classes, allowing less interaction with professors, hardly any student participation, and no individualized learning. In some classes, students sit on the floor and in the aisles.

Professor Kirby Farrell of the English Department testifies: “As the world becomes more complex and knowledge increasingly fragmented, we need more mature and experienced teachers in the classroom to help students grasp deep principles. This is a vision I see threatened by recent cutbacks and hope to see restored.” Megan Voorhis, a UMass senior agrees: “Throughout my time at UMass, I have experienced enormous class sizes that have inescapably restricted the presentation of material.” In the Communications Department, she reports, her average class has been between 150 to 200 students, making meaningful discussion impossible.

UMass student Mishy Leiblum testifies that “the vast majority of my teachers at UMass have been overworked graduate students, not professors. Because of their transient nature, inexperience, heavy course load, and lack of accountability to the university, it is no wonder they do not have the time or impetus to truly evaluate my work.” Other students described the tendency toward grade inflation that results when it is easier to give a student an “A” than to seriously engage with their work. One student said her adjunct teacher did not have time to grade her work but instead put “smiley faces” on each paper. Tests are more likely to be “multiple-choice” and not substantive.

Psychology Professor Emeritus John W. Donahoe observes that “departments are revamping their requirements and courses in an effort to accommodate the same number (or more) students with reduced resources.” Budgets are determining educational priorities rather than vice versa. Educational excellence suffers.

2. Students cannot choose their course of study or finish degrees on time

Students' academic choices have been severely limited by the decline in the number of faculty. Students are often shut out of popular courses. Students cannot choose the major or minor of their choice because the classes are full. Many students now take five years or even longer to finish their undergraduate degree. Seth Nelson, a UMass senior, is in his fifth year because he could not get into the required courses for his major and minor – and he is not alone.

Manuela Pacheco-Littlefield, the Coordinator of Advising Services, testifies that “students get penalized twice” because they are shut out of certain majors, and then shut out of courses within their major. Advisors struggle to shove students into courses that fulfill requirements, whether or not the courses are pedagogically appropriate or meet their individual interests. Pacheco-Littlefield says, “many times we have to tell students to take courses elsewhere and transfer them here, so they can complete their degrees on time.”

Professor Emeritus of Psychology John Donahoe reports that “the reduction in tenured and tenure-track faculty in my field has caused honors courses and seminars in the field to largely or completely disappear.” Entire disciplines are no longer taught on a regular basis because faculty in that sub-field have left and have not been replaced.

Student after student testified that in many majors, nearly all classes have been oversubscribed, requiring students to beg and plead with professors. Political Science major Sarah Towsley says, “This shows both the shortage of faculty and how wonderful the tenured professors at UMass are: people want to be around them, and people want to learn from them.” Towsley voiced terrible frustration many students feel with the paucity of course offerings: “I spend probably four or five hours minimum working on my schedule for the next semester. It is very hard... I have looked through the course catalogue and wanted to take so many classes that sound so interesting, yet they haven't been offered... Why deny the hunger for knowledge?”

Professor Paul Lahti says that even in science departments, there are not enough faculty to teach the required courses. “Students are being told that they have to come back for another semester at a rate that I consider to be unreasonable. This probably is good for the university's balance of payments, but it is not good for the students... and does not generate good memories of our campus among present alumni, who will remember that they got locked out of courses that were required, but not offered.”

3. Student advising, mentoring, and pedagogy suffer

Many students testified that the faculty shortage threatened their future plans. With very few chances to form relationships with tenured faculty, students cannot get recommendations for graduate school or future careers. Senior Megan Voorhis, an English major, says “I was not able to obtain three letters of recommendation from tenured faculty in the English Department, due to the lack of tenured faculty that still teach at this institution.”

Michael Sheridan could not apply to a program at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government because he could not get a recommendation letter from a member of the UMass faculty. He wonders whether he will ever get into Law School without any permanent faculty

familiar with his work. And Mishy Leiblum talked about being unable to get recommendations because the graduate students or adjuncts who had taught the classes had since left UMass and could not be tracked down.

Professor Julie Hemment compared two students, one whose honors thesis committee she chaired, getting to know him and his work well – and the other a student in her large introductory course. The latter student asked for a recommendation, but Professor Hemment did not know the student and was unable to write it – so the student received her recommendation from the teaching assistant instead.

Moreover, permanent faculty are responsible for advising and mentoring students, and with fewer faculty, advising suffers. College students need constant guidance on what courses to take, whether to choose a minor or certificate program, join honors programs, and other opportunities. Faculty are increasingly unable to shepherd students through the choices. Professor Hemment says “we see our students twice a year before they register for classes. I’m very conscious that because I am pressed for time, I do a poor job. I see students who’ve never been encouraged to excel, students who drop out and don’t compete.” One academic advisor says “more and more students are lost in the shuffle.” On our campus the overall numbers of faculty of color are conspicuously small, and the lack of diversity is particularly stressful for under-represented minorities including African American, Latino and Native American students.

For UMass graduate students, the problem can be even more serious. Jill Oglie came to UMass to study modern U.S. History, but within three years, the entire core of faculty in that field had left the university, and were not replaced. Six of her twelve graduate courses have been “independent study” because the classes she needed were no longer offered. She does not have the mentors or dissertation advisors that graduate students absolutely require.

Professor Naomi Gerstel teaches a large sociology class on the family, and says that she knows almost none of her students. “I am alien to them – a professor who performs for them a few times a week.” In striking contrast, when she taught the same class to a much smaller group of students: “I talked to many of them extensively, both in and outside the classroom. They found themselves in intense discussions with me...At the end of the semester, a large number of the students asked me for letters of recommendation for either a job or graduate school.” Students agreed that “larger classes with fewer permanent faculty result in greater strain on the educational process...it is impossible to achieve the same quality of education to be found in smaller classes.”

Gerstel argues that students at UMass are at a serious disadvantage compared to their peers at small private colleges where they get to know permanent faculty well, and receive personal recommendations from senior scholars in their field. “This is a form of inequality that can haunt our students.”

4. The burden falls on contingent faculty

Most academic departments are relying on temporary teachers with short-term contracts to provide an increasing part of the curriculum. Many of these are excellent teachers, and they teach everything from large introductory classes to advanced honors seminars. According to Provost Charlena Seymour, contingent teachers teach 40 percent of all courses, and the

university could not function without them. Nevertheless, there are real costs to the shift from a full-time permanent faculty to an army of temps.

Professor Dan Clawson points out that tenure-track faculty are recruited from across the country, in well-publicized national searches, and the university typically receives hundreds of applicants for a single position. But contract teachers are often hired in a rush, at the last minute, sometimes at the whim of a department chair. These teachers are not likely to stay at UMass for the long term, and have little incentive to work on long-term program improvements. Many of them are also teaching courses at other universities and busy commuting between campuses. Comparative Literature Professor David Lenson argues: “While these teacher-scholars are often excellent, if the university is not willing to commit to them, why should they be willing to commit to it?”

Permanent faculty, on the other hand, have a personal stake in the future of the university. Students come and go, administrators serve their terms, but faculty make their careers and reputations within the university. Professor Paul Lahti warns that “revolving-door temp faculty will NOT enhance the long-term productivity and progress of the campus.” And the full-time permanent faculty are increasingly demoralized and overwhelmed. According to Lahti, “faculty morale is pretty low on the science end of campus...I can only imagine how bad it must be in the vital arts, fine arts, sociology, and other parts of campus that have not gotten even the partial support that we have gotten.” He concludes: “When people see their work loads climb but still cannot provide enough courses in a decent lecture environment, they either become calloused (older faculty) or very demoralized (younger faculty).”

Faculty without tenure are the most vulnerable. In budget crises, they are the first to be laid off. Their academic freedom is not protected; they can be hired and fired at the whim of a department chair or administrator. Sociology Professor Dan Clawson says “non-tenure-track faculty are more reluctant to take unpopular positions or to speak out about problems on campus.”

Graduate students, acting as teaching assistants, have also taken on an increasing burden of teaching. This extends the time it takes them to complete their degrees and often requires them to teach in fields outside their area of expertise. Professor Lenson testifies that because of the erosion of core faculty, the university is “abusing our graduate students by making them play the role of junior faculty.”

5. Faculty have less time for research and scholarship

Permanent full-time faculty are research scholars as well as teachers. Many students testified to the importance of learning from professors who are active researchers and experts in their fields, as one of the primary reasons for attending this major research university.

Research is also vital to the Commonwealth. UMass Amherst brings in over \$100 million a year from state, federal and private sources in support of research. While the university’s state budget has decreased, there has been a 45 percent increase in grant money during the last 5 years. This investment advances scientific knowledge, enhances educational opportunities, and produces technological innovations that invigorate the economy and benefit society. On the Amherst campus, 12 Institutes and 69 Centers focus on a diverse array of areas, ranging from energy efficiency to environmental waste prevention, from immigrant and refugee empowerment to

computer-based instructional technology. Very recent grants include funding for an anti-obesity project for “tweens,” a tool to search handwritten historical documents, and new methods to treat polluted water.

As the core faculty shrinks – and as professors are called upon to serve on more committees, advise more students, administer more programs, and teach larger classes – they cannot sustain such ambitious or innovative research agendas.

Anthropology Professor Julie Hemment says “Tenure means time for research and hence better teaching. Good teaching is nurtured by research...my classes are most effective when I am communicating a topic I am passionately engaged in. This means that I need to keep up with my research – to have release time for fieldwork in Russia, for writing, for engaging with international colleagues. The tenure system is uniquely able to guarantee this.” Resource Economics Professor Sylvia Brandt says: “Learning from excellent researchers benefits students. It exposes students to challenging ideas and concepts and ensures that they will be competitive with students from other universities.” Professor Ray Pfeiffer says “the act of engaging continually in scholarship causes one to have perspectives on the discipline that cannot be matched by those who do not engage in scholarship.” And Professor Ralph Faulkingham says “The university has made the argument that the best teaching comes from faculty at the cutting edge of their disciplines.”

Some faculty are busy trying to provide basic necessities for their students. Professor Sylvia Brandt described finding her lecture hall in such disarray that half of the desks were missing their writing surfaces. Brandt went out and spent her own money to purchase clipboards for her class so that the students could take notes during lectures. As Brandt observes, “I have been impressed with the heroic effort faculty make to do so much with so little.”

The Chair of the Anthropology department testified that “curriculum continuity is a problem, and I spend a whole lot of time just lining up teachers. Virtually all the problems we have experienced in sustaining teaching quality come from part-time faculty who are not evaluated for their scholarship.”

Tenure-system faculty are also the only ones responsible for all the work required to ensure the functioning of their department and their discipline. As Professor Ray Pfeiffer attests, “[permanent faculty] do all of the student advising; they chair and serve on committees that help to run the Department, School and University; they chair our Departments, they engage in scholarly research, including the mentoring, teaching, and supervision of Ph.D. students.” When the full-time faculty shrinks, the remaining faculty have less time to perform more responsibilities, and quality necessarily suffers.

Academic advisor Susan Perschetz Machala says, “Fewer faculty teaching more large classes means that those who remain have more grading, course-related and administrative work, which leaves less time for the research on which individual careers and institutional reputation are built. This ultimately affects the caliber of faculty which we can attract and the level of outside grants/support which we can count on.”

6. Alumni are less connected to the university and fundraising is challenged

For most alumni, the strongest memories of their time at UMass are focused around faculty they admired and mentors with whom they formed close academic relationships. The erosion of core faculty has made alumni connections to UMass more tenuous.

Eric Wirth, an alumnus from the class of 2001, recently listed the courses he took as a Spanish major. He was shocked to realize that “the majority of the undergraduate courses [were] given by Graduate Teaching Assistants...I was not prepared for the reality that 99% of my undergraduate classes within the department would be given by TAs.” Wirth found it “outrageous” that even senior seminars were taught by graduate students.

Other students described being told by part-time teachers that they were being “shortchanged” by the university and disadvantaged compared to students at other colleges. They know that at the same time as their tuition increased by 50 percent, their education suffered. As one future alumnus said, “How is it that I am paying so much more, and getting so much less?” Many students echoed the testimony of Political Science major Michael Sheridan, “Due to the lack of faculty, the strength of our degrees and the prestige of this University are being crippled.”

Karen Lederer, an undergraduate advisor at UMass for 19 years, says that she can see the impact of the faculty shortage on alumni. “Alumni are very grateful when they call a program they graduated from years before, and they can reconnect with a faculty member who inspired them.” Other students remain connected with their undergraduate or graduate mentors and continue to support their colleges and departments. As Lederer testifies, in order to strengthen our alumni relations and to do fundraising for excellent programs: “We need more tenure track faculty. Permanent faculty strengthen programs, provide institutional memory and continuity. Tenure track faculty serve students, and then the alumni that students become.”

7. University stature is threatened

The reputation of any research university depends not only on its teaching, but on the quality of research produced by its core faculty. In this sense, only full-time, permanent faculty contribute to the prestige of UMass, and the dramatic reduction in their numbers must damage the university’s reputation in the national arena. Building national prominence in research requires a critical mass of active faculty. Investing in tenure-track faculty is the surest way for the university to enhance the future of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Despite the Commonwealth’s renowned private universities, more Massachusetts residents attend public colleges and universities than private ones. And yet these public institutions are sorely under-funded. Between 2001 and 2005, according to the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, public higher education was cut by \$271 million. Massachusetts has slashed its higher education budgets by more than any other state in the United States, and our funding for higher education (as a percentage of personal income) is now only 55 percent of the national average. To make matters worse, previous UMass administrators have stated that infrastructure is more important than people, thus threatening the heart of the university.

As the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation has reported:

Over the last decade, an education at UMass has provided our residents the opportunity to participate in cutting edge research and help develop new technologies in fields as diverse as photovoltaics, marine science and therapeutic cloning. Most of those who benefit from a UMass education are from – and remain in – the Commonwealth, forming the core of the knowledge-based workforce on which our future economic success depends.

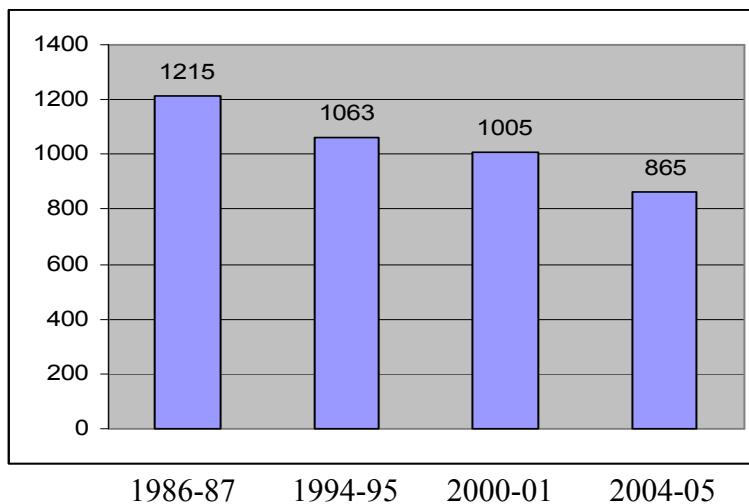
Between 1960 and 1970, when John Lederle served as President of the University of Massachusetts, the faculty grew from 366 to 1,157. By 1986, there were 1,215 tenure-track faculty. But only two decades later, we have only 865 permanent full-time professors. We have lost 30 percent of the faculty. Nearly fifty years later, far fewer faculty comprise the university than when John Lederle first launched UMass Amherst as a Research I university.

Professor David Lenson joined the UMass faculty when he was 25 years old. He says: “In 1971, when I met my first class here, I was the youngest member of my department. At the end of the spring term of 2004, I still was.” He demonstrates the “terrible gap” between the aging core faculty and too few new hires: “The intellectual damage of such policies is hard to calculate.”

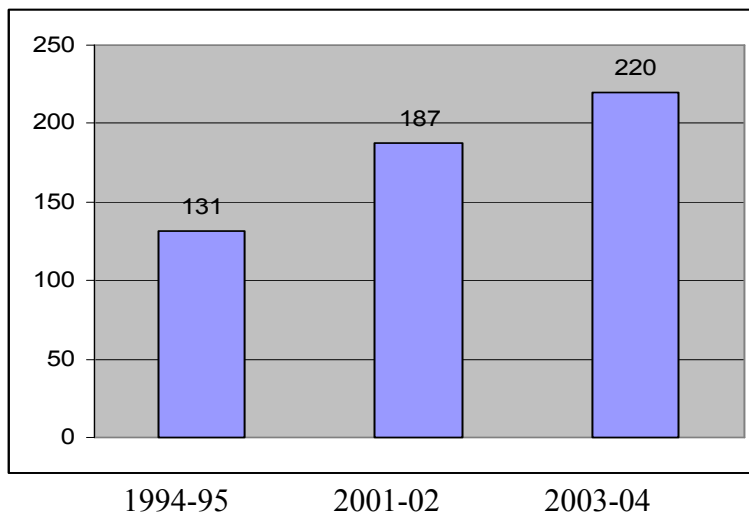
Despite these challenges, faculty repeatedly expressed their love for UMass and their dedication to their mission as teachers and scholars. As Professor Lenson says, “We need to conjure once again the vision of John Lederle, and begin to rebuild UMass – not just the bricks and blocks of it, but its human center. UMass has always been about people, not infrastructure... Poor in ceiling tiles, we are rich in ideas. All colleges are about the future, and how heart and determination can move past every impediment to do great things.”

Statistics and Graphs:
Changes in Faculty, Students, and Appropriations over Time

DECREASE IN UMASS AMHERST TENURE SYSTEM FACULTY



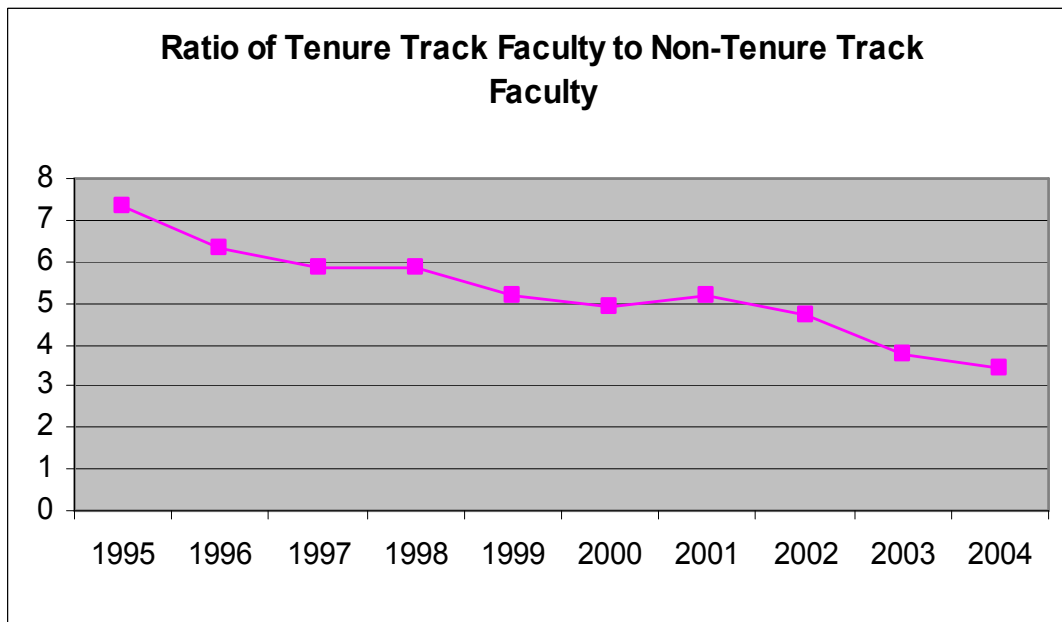
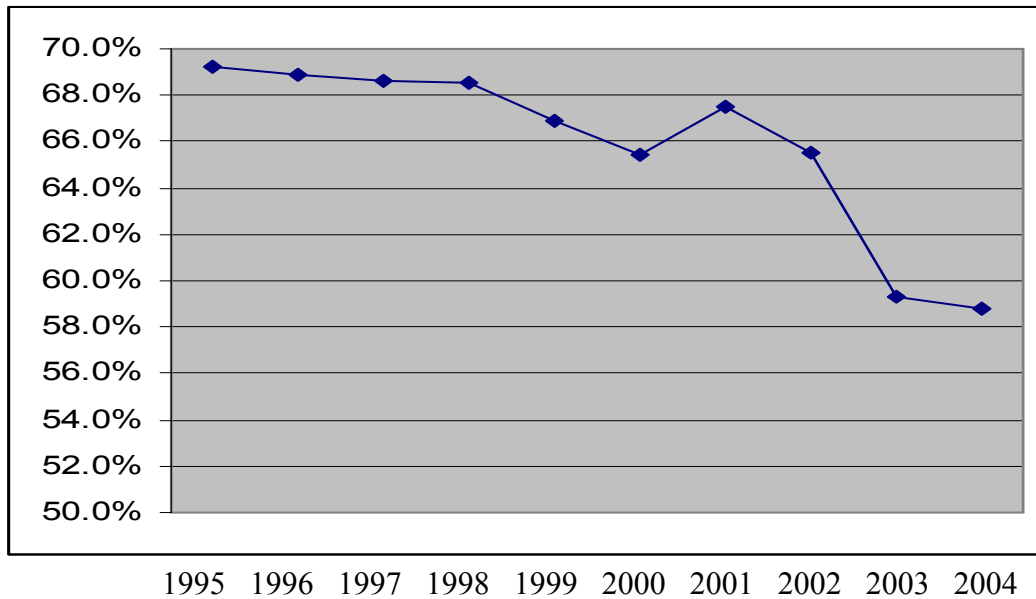
INCREASE IN UMASS AMHERST NON-TENURE SYSTEM FACULTY



All numbers come from the UMass Amherst campus' annual Factbooks, campus web sites, and high-ranking administrators. The numbers vary fractionally from one source to another, but the variations are insignificant, and no matter what source is used the basic story is the same.

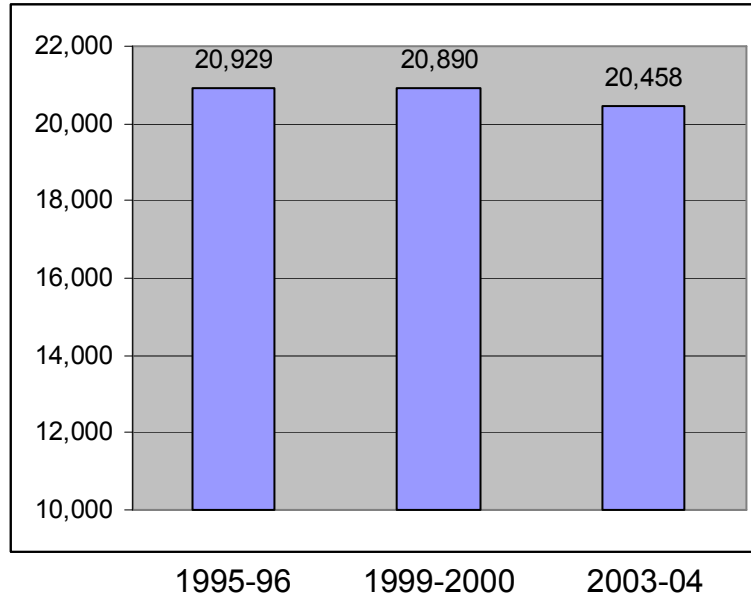
See University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP), Factbook 1986-1987, p. 88 and http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/department_profiles/dp/sf/ratios.pdf. Information for Fall 2004 (a net decrease of 9 tenure-track faculty) comes from a verbal report by Associate Provost Susan Pearson, confirmed by a report made to Ernest May, Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Percent of Students Taught by Tenure Track Faculty



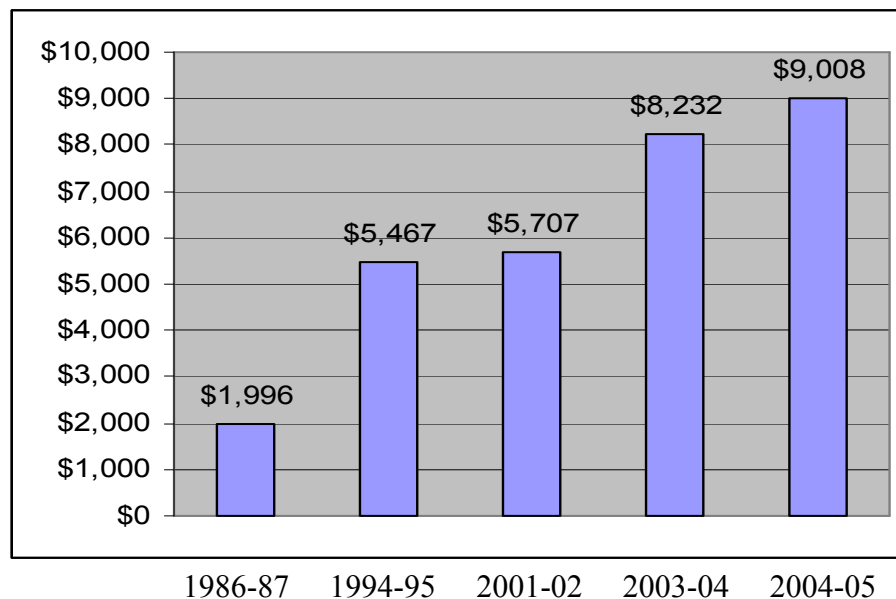
Source: *Student/Faculty Ratios Campus Summary* prepared by Office of Institutional Research 10/18/04.
http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/department_profiles/dp/sf/ratios.pdf

SIZE OF STUDENT BODY (FTE) HAS STAYED THE SAME



Sources: http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/department_profiles/dp/sf/ratios.pdf and http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/factsheets/student_charges/FS_chg_01_f04.pdf

UNDERGRADUATE TUITION AND MANDATORY FEES HAVE RISEN



STATE APPROPRIATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

FY 1995	\$744,803,000
FY 2000	\$1,040,083,000
FY 2003	\$970,780,000
FY 2004	\$828,405,000
FY 2005	\$880,555,000

-9.3% since FY 2003

-15.3% since FY 2000

+18.2% since FY 1995

Per Capita Appropriation for Higher Education

2000	\$162
2002	\$185
2004	\$122

From: The National Report Card on Education
http://measuringup.highereducation.org/s_r_c_add.cfm?state=Massachusetts&yearscomp=2000%2C2002%2C2004&gsp97=on&pca1000=on&pcaca=on&pca=on

and

http://www.coe.ilstu.edu/grapevine/table3_05.htm

Prisons vs. Higher Education

FISCAL YEAR	RATIO OF STATE SPENDING ON HIGHER EDUCATION TO STATE SPENDING ON PRISONS
1985	2.14
1995	1.38
1999	1.30
2001	1.39
2004	0.98

Massachusetts now spends more on prisons than on higher education.

Sources:

Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Center for Education Statistics, National Association of State Budget Officers, U.S. Census Bureau as reported at http://www.motherjones.com/news/special_reports/prisons/data_MA_spend.html

Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation Bulletin November 24, 2003 found at <http://www.masstaxpayers.org/data/pdf/bulletins/11-24-03%20Corrections%20Bulletin.PDF>

In the hard copy of this report, the first page of the pdf file (link below) appears on this page.

http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/department_profiles/dp/sf/ratios.pdf

Faculty Testimony

**Submitted to Panel on the Shortage of
Tenure-Track Faculty at the University of
Massachusetts Amherst**

December 2004

Naomi Gerstel
Professor, Sociology Department

I now teach a class on The Family that has about 225 students in it. A couple of years ago, I had the good fortune of teaching the same class to only 40 students. Contrasting these two teaching and learning experiences can capture, I think, some of the cost of our dwindling faculty who must increasingly teach large classes rather than small ones.

In the class with only 40 students, I learned the names of all the students. I talked to many of them extensively, both in and outside of the classroom. They got to know one another and found themselves in

intense discussions with me as well as the other students. They wrote weekly statements that I could read, comment on, and use to guide my lectures. At the end of the semester, a large number of the students asked me for letters of recommendation for either a job or graduate school. When asking for those letters, many expressed gratitude, saying how hard it was to get letters of recommendation because they didn't get to know any of their other professors. Why? Their classes are too big.

In the class with only 40 students, I learned the names of all the students. I talked to many of them extensively, both in and outside of the classroom.

They are right. I know the names of very few students in the large family class. An encounter I had outside of the classroom highlights the students' experience. I went to the movie, and upon hearing my voice, the young woman who sold me a ticket suddenly looked up and said:

"I am in your family class; I recognize your voice. I sit in the back of the class and can't really see you but that voice, I'd know it any place."

I know the names of very few students in the large [225 person] family class.

In the large class, I don't know their names. I don't know their voices. And I only recognize the faces of the small number who can claim seats in the front rows. A few . come to see me. But very few. I am alien to them — a professor who

performs for them a few times a week. Almost none ask me for a letter of recommendation. And if they did, what would I say? About all I could write is "*Susan got an A in the class, so clearly she is a very good student.*"

Let me conclude by citing the last paragraph of a letter of recommendation I wrote for one of the students in the small class.

"I should note that I almost never get to know undergraduates so well. The University of Massachusetts is a large public school which means that many of my undergraduate courses are large lectures with 200-300 students in them. Such public education often entails a serious cost for those undergraduates aspiring to enter graduate or professional programs. It is much harder for them to obtain the kind of recommendations that their counterparts at smaller, private schools have easy access to. This is a form of inequality that can haunt our students."

Our students deserve more.

Paul M. Lahti
Professor
Department of Chemistry

I have striven in my heart to decide what is best, and I think that I cannot just be silent about the negative impact of faculty loss any longer.

I have been a department head, so I know what it is like to try to run courses during what has to be the biggest "die-off" (both figuratively and literally) of faculty numbers in the history of this university. One of my children goes to school here, so I know the

Students are being told that they have to come back for another semester at a rate that I consider to be unreasonable.

impact of fewer course offerings on graduation rates. My other child was very tempted to come to this campus for its justified high reputation in music, but I recommended for her not to do so, since half of the music department was slated to disappear in the year that she would arrive,

so I know the impact of fewer faculty on our campus' reputation. Overall, I think I have a pretty big picture view of the impact of our lost faculty numbers.

(1) We do NOT have a very impressive rate of four-year graduation. When the numbers of course requirements on campus in many of the colleges are taken into account, and the number of faculty to offer those courses, students are being told that they have to come back for another semester at a rate that I consider to be unreasonable. This probably is good for the university's balance of payments, but is not good for the students' career/job timelines, and does not generate good memories of our campus among present alumni, who will remember that they got locked out of courses that were required, but not offered.

(2) Faculty productivity per faculty member must be quite high right now. This shows that the retirements removed significant numbers of lower-producing faculty. Now is a great time to replace them with younger faculty of higher productivity, rather than imposing temporary measures (such as depending on permanent revolving door temp faculty who will NOT enhance the long term productivity and progress of the campus). There are certainly enough positions available. How about filling more of them faster? The present levels of productivity will not be sustained, if people feel that there is no hope of ameliorating the present overload situation. People have striven for the sake of the campus. Now is the time for the campus to strive on behalf of the people.

(3) Faculty morale is pretty low on the science end of campus, save for the most favored departments. I can only imagine how bad it must be in the vital arts, fine arts, sociology, and other parts of campus that have not gotten even the partial support that we have gotten. Universities are not created to make money, although we should not waste money wantonly. Science and other research helps to balance the books, but almost no research universities make money on their research. Our most useful product is and always will be educated minds. Massachusetts needs those minds, even if some do not always remember that. When people see their work loads climb but

still cannot provide enough courses in a decent lecture environment, they either become calloused (older faculty) or very demoralized (younger faculty). The influx of young minds who have a reason to hope for the future, and even hope to be part of making that future, can help a lot with this problem. We need that energy now.

(4) Other universities have problems, too. The administration has striven hard under extremely difficult circumstances to patch up things enough for us to carry on. One hears a lot about a better state economy, and better relationships with the state legislature. Now is a good time to make it clear that there is not just a hope, but a commitment to do whatever it takes to replace a significant number of the lost faculty numbers with high quality permanent faculty who will have a stake in the long term prosperity of the campus, and to point out the good things that can be done for the good of our customers (our students) if faculty are not so harried in trying to cover the work of 1.5 faculty each. The administration now has to put its efforts to repairing the damage of the past few years, and move beyond a survival mode.

Now is a good time to make it clear that there is not just a hope, but a commitment to do whatever it takes to replace a significant number of the lost faculty numbers...

(5) Blame games or ancient bad history serve no useful purpose in figuring out what to do. Everyone had problems in this last recession. But, if time is the enemy, then I think that this is the time for the upper administration to speak very clearly about a firm commitment to the replacement of a specific number of faculty on a specific timeframe. I have seen a few, small reports that suggest that the Chancellor is already trying to do this. Let's hear more of that, more firmly, I hope. Failure is not an option for this, if our campus is to recover and prosper.

(6) I know for clear fact that every service course listed by our department is full past capacity (to the point that if everyone actually showed up, we could not legally put them into the lecture theaters), with waiting lists for these courses (we try to be sure that seniors get what they need to graduate, where possible), and a constant clamor for more courses of the same sort, that are being staffed by temporary people who seem to be threatened every single year, despite the need for the courses and the people to teach them. If the temps disappear, the courses are likely to disappear, and things will be even worse.

**John W. Donahoe, Professor Emeritus
Department of Psychology
Program in Neuroscience & Behavior**

The reduction in tenured and tenure-track faculty in my field -- teaching and research in basic learning processes --has caused honors courses and seminars in the field

Because of the reduction in tenure-track faculty, departments are revamping their requirements and courses in an effort to accommodate the same number (or more) students with reduced resources.

to largely or completely disappear. All three of the faculty in the field have now retired and there has been only one replacement. This is in spite of the fact that the undergraduate course in learning is the second-most frequently required course for psychology majors as determined in the most

recent national survey published in the *Journal of Teaching Psychology* (1999).

Let me be more specific. Because of the reduction in tenure-track faculty, departments are revamping their requirements and courses in an effort to accommodate the same number (or more) students with reduced resources. This is a repetition of the failed strategy that was implemented twenty years ago when the state began to reduce its commitment to the University during the Dukakis administration. Then, we continued to admit the same number of students even though our resources were being reduced. (Previously, the state was committed to maintaining a 15/1 student/faculty ratio!) Class size rose while, simultaneously, the number of Teaching Assistants declined. By continuing to admit students in the face of reduced resources, we were tacitly endorsing the view held by many outside the university that we were receiving more support than we needed.

Sylvia Brandt
Assistant Professor
Department of Resource Economics and
Center for Public Policy and Administration.

I joined the faculty the fall of 2001, and I'd like to share my perspective on the issue of the tenure-track faculty on campus.

Since coming to UMass I have observed the effects of dwindling campus resources. For example, in the spring of 2004 I was shocked to find that half of the chairs in our assigned lecture room were missing writing surfaces. These desks had been damaged and never replaced or repaired. To provide a place for students to take my exams, I resorted to purchasing clipboards. It is unfortunate that at a major university, an individual faculty member had to provide this most basic supply.

Each spring I teach an undergraduate course in statistics with an enrollment of over 200 students. The large class size is necessitated by the shortage of faculty. Overcoming students' sense of isolation is the largest challenge I face in the lecture course. In an attempt to facilitate interaction with

students, I utilize several technological teaching aids. Technology, however, is no substitute for the individualized interaction, attention and mentoring which a faculty member can provide. If there were

If there were additional faculty, we could have smaller classes in which students can work directly with faculty to develop critical thinking and communication skills.

additional faculty, we could have smaller classes in which students can work directly with faculty to develop critical thinking and communication skills.

Learning from excellent researchers benefits students. It exposes students to challenging ideas and concepts and ensures that they will be competitive with students from other universities. Building and maintaining national prominence in research requires a critical mass of active faculty. Exchange of ideas, dialogue on methodologies and theories, and faculty collaboration are crucial ingredients to productive research. These resources are essential to junior faculty who are building their research portfolios, and they can make a critical difference in the success of a research project. As the number of tenure-track faculty declines, so too does the environment for research. To recruit and retain emerging leaders in research the university must address the decline in tenure-track faculty.

In closing, I'd like to say that I came to UMass because of the strong dedication of the faculty to excellence in teaching and research. I have been impressed with the heroic effort faculty make to do so much with so little. Investing in tenure-track faculty ensures a university that enhances the future of the state of Massachusetts.

Dan Clawson
Professor
Sociology Department

I'm speaking here today both as a professor of sociology and as the president of the faculty union, the Massachusetts Society of Professors (MSP). We are incredibly proud of the University of Massachusetts Amherst and dedicated to it. As faculty we believe that uncovering the facts and presenting the truth is the first step in addressing any problem. We believe this has been, and is now, a great university and we are fiercely committed to keeping it so.

MULTIPLE ISSUES

The decline in the number of tenure-track faculty is the number one priority of our members, but the MSP is also working on three other main issues:

1. Increasing salaries so we can keep the terrific faculty we already have
2. Improving physical conditions on campus
3. Improving conditions, and job stability, for contract (or non-tenure-track) faculty. We hope to do a forum on that sometime next semester.

BASIC NUMBERS

In 1986 there were 1,220 tenure track faculty; today there are 880. From 1994 to today the decrease has been 178 tenure-track faculty even though the number of students has stayed the same. There are 120 fewer tenure-track faculty here than there were in 2001.

In the mid 1980s, 85 percent of our students were in courses taught by tenure-track faculty; today only 60 percent are. This year there are 135 new faculty on campus, 69 tenure-track, 66 contract (or non-tenure-track). Because of early retirement, despite the large number of hires that represents a loss of 9 tenure-track faculty. These figures come from the administration; they are not in dispute.

Because their jobs are insecure, non-tenure-track faculty are more reluctant to take unpopular positions or to speak out about problems on campus.

By next fall the administration is hoping to achieve a net increase of about 30 tenure-track faculty. That would be a significant step in the right direction, but it would still be a long ways from getting us back to 2001, never mind 1986.

We want the administration and the legislature to make it one of the university's top priorities to restore the number of tenure-track faculty to at least the number we had in 2001, and to do so within two years.

WHY TENURE-TRACK MATTERS

Today both students and faculty will talk about a number of reasons we need more faculty. I'd like to briefly explain why our emphasis here today is on tenure-track faculty. The reasons for this are obvious to most faculty, but others may not understand it, and we don't always do a good job of explaining to others why it matters.

First, consider what happens in recruiting faculty. **“Tenure-track” means faculty recruited through open national searches.** In my department, if we have a tenure-track line:

- We advertise the position nationally.
- We receive about 200 applications from the leading candidates around the country.
- A committee of five faculty and two graduate students goes through every application and reads all the materials.
- The three or four top candidates are invited to campus, and each spends two days here: presenting a paper, answering questions about it, and meeting with faculty and students.
- The whole department considers which is the best candidate and we make an offer.
- We usually are competing for the person with two to four other nationally-ranked universities.
- The people we hire are excellent teachers and top scholars with national reputations. They are the reason students come to UMass rather than a community college.

On the other hand, when we recruit contract, or non-tenure-track, faculty there is almost never a national job search. We do it in a rush at the last minute. We get a handful of applications. The person may be hired by the department chair acting alone. We get some surprisingly good candidates, but most of them would not be competitive for a tenure-track position at a school the caliber of UMass.

Many of our contract faculty are outstanding, and UMass has mostly used people on full-time one or two year positions, rather than paid-per-course faculty with no benefits. But even if they are just as good as our tenure-track faculty:

- Contract faculty can't be sure they will be here in a year or two or three.
- That means that they have less incentive to address a long-run problem such as re-designing our course offerings or advising system.
- If a student comes back a year later and wants a letter of recommendation the faculty member may no longer be here.
- Because their jobs are insecure non-tenure-track faculty are more reluctant to take unpopular positions or to speak out about problems on campus.

Paula Chakravarty
Assistant Professor
Communication Department

Sangeeta Kamat
Associate Professor
School of Education

The decline in the numbers of tenure track faculty has meant a decline overall in recruitment and retention of faculty of color, going against the objectives of improving diversity on campus and thereby improving the overall quality of education. Comparable public research institutions have explicit policies for improving faculty diversity ratios on campus and have the funds to reach out and hire both at both the junior and senior levels.

On our campus the overall numbers of faculty of color are conspicuously small, and the lack of diversity is particularly stressful for under-represented minorities including African American, Latino and Native American students. The stagnant and in some cases shrinking number

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of minority faculty in departments serves as a disincentive for junior minority faculty who often find themselves in isolating circumstances and are therefore more likely to look for jobs on campuses that offer more resources in terms of recruitment and retention of minority faculty. While the crisis at UMass Amherst revolves around the larger issue of increasing the number of tenure track faculty, we feel that special attention should be paid to significantly improving the numbers of minority tenure track faculty on campus in the very near future.

Kirby Farrell
Professor
English Department

Once upon a time the English Dept at UMass had a very popular Shakespeare course (EN 221) with enrollment of 25 students and always taught by an expert in the field, usually a published renaissance scholar. Today I just met with a student who I've known from the Shakespeare class I taught six years ago--I'm close enough to his career to be able to write him recommendations.

This kind of personal encounter in the classroom is in jeopardy. Last semester, in desperation because of retirements, the English Dept asked me to teach a Shakespeare lecture course with 120 students. A third were exceptional, a larger group were responsive, but the remainder were anonymous and unreachable. The whole experience struck me as intellectually dishonest. I couldn't tell what assumptions and vocabulary the marginal students brought to the course, so I could easily see how their motivation would short-circuit.

The whole experience struck me as intellectually dishonest.

We tried to run a Shakespeare on film lab in conjunction with the course and could find **no** auditorium on campus properly equipped to screen films. Speakers in Thompson were so primitive none of us could distinguish dialogue. The room was so overheated in spring we had to cancel one session. The old solution, which worked, was a smaller class and a TV set, and a discussion led by a tenure-track professor.

As the world becomes more complex and knowledge increasingly fragmented, I believe we need more mature and experienced teachers in the classroom to help students grasp deep principles and integrate the array of skills available to them across the campus. This is a vision I see threatened by recent cutbacks and hope to see restored.

**Julie Hemment
Assistant Professor
Anthropology Department**

I was hired in 2000 and joined UMass from Cornell, I am now assistant professor in the anthropology department. I teach a number of undergraduate and graduate classes, including our large lecture class – Intro to Anthropology, a Gen Ed course that serves the campus. I typically have between 220-290 students in it.

What is tenure and why does it matter?

On one level, tenure means job security - that's how it's usually represented, and sure, that matters – knowing I'm here to stay changes the way I approach my job, means I can commit to it. But it means a number of other things too –

It means that we have to maintain high standards [58 people applied for my job]

It means we have to keep ourselves up to date – abreast of contemporary debates in our field. And this doesn't just mean we have to engage in remote, ivory tower discussions with other scholars. In many cases, it means engagement in public debates, policy issues, events happening outside in the world. As a whole, UMass faculty are very much engaged in issues that concern the public interest. [My research takes place in Russia, where I have looked at non-governmental politics and women's activism – obviously, an area of rapid flux and change...I have to keep track of shifting policy objectives.]

***The push to increase class size
... prevents us from connecting
with our students in the way
we'd like.***

And tenure means something to our students too. Tenure means time for research and hence better teaching. Good teaching is nurtured by research. I know, and my students' evaluations confirm, that my classes are most

effective when I am communicating material/a topic I am passionately engaged in. This means that I need to keep up with my research – to have release time for fieldwork in Russia, for writing, for engaging with international colleagues. The tenure system is uniquely able to guarantee this.

Increased class size

One of the symptoms of the decline in tenure track faculty is the push to increase class size – this prevents us from connecting with our students in the way we'd like.

I have a tale of 2 students to share with you. One was an honors student. I chaired his honors thesis committee. He did a fabulous ethnographic project on the experience of Muslim students on campus. We worked closely – I must have met with him bi-weekly for two semesters. When he wrote to me a year later to ask for a recommendation letter, I was able to write a rich, textured account of the interviews he'd done, his involvement in the Muslim student association, his Arabic language competence. Around the same time I received a request from another student who had taken my large introductory course. In fact, it was forwarded to me by her graduate student TA, to whom she'd originally appealed since she wasn't sure who to approach and how. I

knew nothing about her other than what I had on file – numbers and a grade. I was unable to write the kind of letter that I'm sure she deserved and so the TA (who did know her) wrote for her instead (on other occasions, I've written letters for students that have been rather boiler plate – lack of connection = little to go on). The first student received the attention that all our students should receive – individualized, personalized attention. I see students who've never been encouraged to excel, students who drop out and don't complete.

Large classes prevent us from connecting with our students - I know from my own education that the most memorable teachers are the ones you have a personal connection to. A changing faculty body mitigates against this, too.

Second, I know that to make my teaching effective, I need to engage my students, and to do this, **I need to know where they are** – by this I mean I need to get a sense of the knowledge they come in with, of their misconceptions, and because I'm teaching anthropology, I need to know their values and lens (how else can I address them? How can I teach them about the Cold War if they don't know what it refers to?) I've found that the best means of achieving this is by asking them to engage in free writing exercises, low stakes assignments where they feel safe to communicate and voice both difficulties with material and their assumptions on a particular topic – can't do this in a large lecture hall!

Third, at the level of advising - - advising is undertaken by faculty. Which courses should a student take? Which minor or certificate program might they best engage in? Have they considered joining the honors program? We see our students twice a year before they register for classes – I'm very conscious that because I am pressed for time, I do a poor job. I see students who've never been encouraged to excel, students who drop out and don't complete.

Ray Pfeiffer
Associate Professor
Department of Accounting and Information Systems
Isenberg School of Management

In my view, it is short-sighted to view non-tenure-system faculty as substitutes for tenure-system faculty.

While I readily admit that my non-tenure-system colleagues are excellent teachers and contribute mightily to the teaching mission of the University, their job descriptions (at least in my School) do not require them to do the other things that are important to the functioning of the Department, the School, and the discipline. For example, our tenure-system faculty do all of the student advising; they chair and serve on committees that help to run the Department, School and University; they chair our Departments, they engage in scholarly research, including the mentoring, teaching, and supervision of Ph.D. students; and other responsibilities that are appropriately delegated to the 'permanent' faculty. When the number of tenure-system faculty declines, these activities are spread more thinly and quality suffers.

... the act of engaging continually in scholarship causes one to have perspectives on the discipline that cannot be matched by those who do not engage in scholarship.

A more subtle but equally important issue concerns teaching: I contend that the act of engaging continually in scholarship causes one to have perspectives on the discipline that cannot be matched by those who do not engage in scholarship. When these enhanced perspectives are brought to the classroom, it enables

students to learn at a deeper level than would otherwise be possible. In this regard, tenure-system people (who tend to be terminally-qualified and active in the scholarship of their fields) cannot be replaced by non-tenure-system people, even in the teaching domain, without some loss of quality.

Thus, when an administrator makes a decision to hire a non-tenure-system person instead of a tenure-system person, the teaching mission may be relatively less affected, but the other two of the three missions of the University (scholarship and outreach) are diminished.

For these reasons, I think it is imperative that the Commonwealth and the University commit to a goal of preserving and re-building the base of 'permanent' faculty members on our campus.

Ron Welburn
Professor
English Department

I wish to contribute by submitting this statement from beneath two hats: as a professor in the English department and as Director of the Certificate Program in Native American Indian Studies which is administered by the Anthropology department with assistance from English.

As a member of the English department I have witnessed one half of my seventy colleagues retire since my arrival in spring 1992 and despite new hires, our numbers are 35. Our net is an obvious 50% reduction in size while the number of our Majors and Pre-Majors has risen somewhat and our ability to

We cannot meet course needs for many of our majors.

accommodate the pedagogical and mentoring needs of our seniors and graduate students has been compromised. We are a very busy department. English departments customarily teach the majority of undergraduates searching for Gen Ed courses. Our senior colleagues engage in one extra department committee; our desire to mentor our new members is rendered ineffectual by resulting time constraints; and we cannot meet course needs for many of our Majors. We all struggle to maintain our levels of scholarly research and creativity in order to remain productive in our discipline. We prefer a flexibility in prospective appointments that will honor the literary canon while expanding a curriculum that reflects recent scholarship; e.g. seventeenth-century British literature and Modern Global literatures, African American, Asian American, and Women's literature and critical discourses.

From under my second hat do I advocate for the recruitment and hiring of Native American faculty. The University offers undergraduates who enroll in the program a certificate in Native Studies, and will officially participate in the Five College certificate Program in this discipline approved in 2003 by Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, and Smith Colleges. This is a growing discipline and our efforts at UMass have gained respect for us among Native Studies scholars around the country and have attracted inquiries nationally and internationally. We prepare our graduates to be interactive with Native communities, not consider them objects of study. Faculty retirements in 2002 in Anthropology, Legal Studies, and Linguistics lessened our curriculum offerings by five courses and a sixth course, in one of the sciences, has been at the mercy of funding for a very good adjunct teacher. In addition to recouping these losses for Native Studies, which I need not remind you are losses for University departments, I urge support for appointments in departments such as Art History, Education, Environmental Sciences, Plant and Soil Sciences, Comparative Literature, Political Science, and Sociology.

I hope that the powers that be will respect our circumstances and our needs.

Ralph Faulkingham
Chair
Anthropology Department

I can speak to the problem from my perspective as an administrator in dealing with part-time faculty. My own experience has been that quality assurance is a lot harder to sustain; curriculum continuity is a problem; and I spend a whole lot of time just lining up teachers. Virtually all of the problems we have experienced in sustaining teaching quality come from part-time faculty who are not evaluated for their scholarship. Part-time faculty do no advising and do not serve on committees. That leaves the administrative and advising burden to fewer faculty. My primary problem comes from the explicit separation of research from teaching that hiring part-time faculty entails.

With part-time faculty ... quality assurance is a lot harder to sustain; curriculum continuity is a problem and I spend a whole lot of time just lining up teachers.

The university has made the argument that the best teaching comes from faculty at the cutting edge of their disciplines. In a field as rapidly changing as anthropology, it is crucial that those we put into the classroom ought to be at that leading edge. I can see that for fields that are more stable

(language learning, calculus, etc) this linkage may not apply. But I believe that the best teaching comes from people who are active learners.

David Lenson
Professor
Comparative Literature

It is now forty years since a visionary named John Lederle imagined a Research I university rising from the pastures of a cow college in western Massachusetts. I think of him as a kind of Johnny Appleseed, sowing the seeds of his vision in the unploughed corridors of Beacon Hill. He was a political scientist, and seldom has that discipline been so ardently turned into an applied science.

Lederle served as President of the University from 1960 to 1970. The UMass website remembers that during that time “student enrollment more than tripled and faculty salaries nearly doubled. Lederle won freedom from state hiring regulations, and the number of faculty grew from 366 to 1157.” The faculty and librarians hired during the later years of his tenure and shortly thereafter provided the instructional and research core of the university for the next thirty years. It is the attrition of this original faculty that has precipitated the crisis we are facing today.

The years of Lederle’s tenure -- 1960 to 1970 -- remind us that UMass is a pure product of the 1960s, and the political and culture upheavals of that era. Most of the original faculty came from Ivy League, Big Ten, or California graduate schools, the best in the nation. Why did they choose to come to UMass? Because it offered an opportunity that comes in few professional lifetimes: a chance to create a university from the ground up, from muddy pastures into the sky.

In 1971, when I met my first class here, I was the youngest member of my department. At the end of the spring term of 2004, I still was.

Many of this original faculty came of intellectual age in the cauldron of activism brought to white heat by opposition to the Vietnam War. With prestigious graduate degrees supported by scholarships and fellowships, we came here to “give back to the people” the outstanding educations we had received. Although some geezers in their forties and fifties were hired to keep us from running completely amok, it was a very young faculty indeed. I, for example, was twenty-five when I was hired. We were young for so long that we got old doing it.

Of course we could not have anticipated how difficult the task would be. Beginning with the economic slowdown that followed the American defeat in Vietnam, UMass in the years following John Lederle’s retirement in 1970 proved remarkably vulnerable to legislative and gubernatorial whim. Ed King loved us; Michael Dukakis did not. Budgets rose and fell like the EKG on a trauma patient. Hiring and salary freezes were imposed; the MSP was born. During the 1980s some significant hiring took place again, and local faculty numbers rose to almost 1400.

We stand now, five years into the new millennium, in the high 800s -- far less than the size of the faculty John Lederle put in place to launch the enterprise! In 1971, when I met my first class here, I was the youngest member of my department. At the end of the spring term of 2004, I still was. To be sure, one assistant professor was hired in the late 1980s, but he fled in horror and disbelief during the budget crisis of 1990-92. What followed was a terrible gap between the aging core faculty and the insufficient number of later hires.

This is not a narrow question of “manpower” and “womanpower.” When senior faculty are deprived of younger colleagues, fresh from graduate school and full of new ideas, the air gets stale. Students suffer from losing out on the energy of young teachers -- the very thing we were able to provide in the earlier years. One can only impersonate junior faculty for so long. Now most UMass departments suffer from a missing center, often made up only of the brand-new and the almost-done. The intellectual damage of such policies is hard to calculate.

We have often felt as if we have no heirs. Some of us are staying on mainly because we want to make sure there is somebody to be given the keys when we close the door for the last time. Some of this predicament comes from our own past administrations, one of which had as its candid but withering motto, “Infrastructure, not people.” And so now we live in a place where even if a building is crumbling, its every urinal is wired for Ethernet.

To make up for the steady and heartbreaking erosion of core faculty, we are -- and I write this word knowing fully what its connotation is -- abusing our graduate students by making them play the role of junior faculty. We are constantly required to hire contract faculty simply to cover the basic courses our students need. And while these teacher-scholars are often excellent, if the university is not willing to commit to them, why should they be willing to commit to it?

We need to conjure once again the vision of John Lederle, and begin to rebuild UMass - not just the bricks and blocks of it, but its human center. UMass has always been about people, not infrastructure. Why else have we been willing to go on teaching in unsafe, unhealthy, depressing buildings and rooms? Because to do so has dramatized the triumph of the spirit over the material. Poor in ceiling tiles, we are rich in ideas. All colleges are about the future, and how heart and determination can move past every impediment to do great things. This future, however, must be assured now -- right now.

Student Testimony

**Submitted to Panel on the Shortage of
Tenure-Track Faculty at the University of
Massachusetts Amherst**

December 2004

Sarah Towsley
Undergraduate Student
Political Science

I am a third year student with a major in Political Science. I cannot remember one Political Science course I have taken where people were not trying to get the professor's permission to add the class, even though the class was already full. The classes are so in demand that even grad students try to get into some of them. This shows both the shortage of faculty and how wonderful the tenured professors at UMass are: people want to be around them, and people want to learn from them. It has been these professors that have made me want to stay at UMass for another six years to get my doctorate. I would really like the chance to work more closely with them.

I have also had a couple of professors outside of the Political Science department who have had a huge impact on me. I am always amazed at how much they know and how devoted they are to their work and to students. I am taking an astronomy class that I absolutely love, and if I wasn't so bad at math, I would consider double majoring in

"I cannot remember one Political Science course I have taken where people were not trying to get the professor's permission to add the class, even though the class was already full."

Astronomy and Political Science. The professor I've had is one of those "geeky" professors who goes to great lengths to teach and to help people learn the things she loves. That is one of the most honorable and positive characteristics of all the tenured professors I've encountered: they care. They care about their students, they care about their jobs,

they care about the school, they care about other people learning the things they know, and none of them is above admitting they always have more to learn, either.

Although I understand the reasoning for using graduate students in place of full-time, tenured faculty, I feel that for many reasons it does not work well. Comparing my experiences, I really enjoy having tenured professors much more, as I can develop a relationship with them where I know I could come to them for help or support over the next four years and they would still be there. I am also considering pursuing my doctorate at UMass, and that professor-student relationship will be even more important then. If I decide to go elsewhere, however, I do not know who I would ask to write a recommendation for me. Even my higher-level classes boast between 40 and 80 people, and I don't honestly know that any one professor would be able to claim they know enough about me and my education to write a recommendation.

Another important aspect of UMass employing more tenured faculty is choice of classes. I spend probably four or five hours minimum working on my schedule for the next semester. It is very hard for me to be able to fit in all of my required classes, and this has become increasingly harder as I get into higher-level classes. I have looked through the school's course catalogue and wanted to take so many classes that sound so interesting, yet they haven't been offered, or they were offered once when I was completely unable to fit them in my schedule. Why deny the hunger for knowledge and replace it with a dry, ambiguous attitude towards education as a whole?

Fewer tenured faculty members also means less experienced advisors. I have to admit that my advisor, who is not a tenured professor, really isn't much of an advisor. I have asked for help a few times, and have sheepishly been referred to a full-time faculty member for help instead. I can approach tenured professors with the confidence that they not only have experience teaching people, but they also have broad knowledge and are exciting to have conversations with. Furthermore, they also provide invaluable links to other scholars and institutes that can help further my own knowledge, and possibly my career.

I wish that there were more tenured professors on this campus, both for my own sake, the sake of those who are to come, and for the professors' and universities' sake, as well. Everyone can benefit.

Seth Nelson
Undergraduate Student
Social Thought and Political Economy

I'm a senior Social Thought and Political Economy major here at UMass, and I'm also working towards a French minor. Over the course of my undergraduate career, I've seen and experienced firsthand many of the negative effects of budget cuts: huge classes, shrinking departmental resources, and scarcity of required courses, to name just a few. While just about every department in the arts and humanities has had to make painful concessions of one kind or another, my greatest concern is for the future of

Imagine a large class of several dozen students simultaneously struggling to pronounce words and conjugate verbs!

foreign language studies at UMass Amherst. Generally speaking, there is little doubt that larger classes with fewer permanent faculty result in greater strain on the educational process. With less opportunity for interaction with professors and less emphasis on small-group discussion, it is impossible to achieve the same quality of education to be found in smaller classes. I find this to be personally relevant in French courses, where the ability to engage directly with the instructor is of the utmost importance. Imagine a large class of several dozen students simultaneously struggling to pronounce words and conjugate verbs! In such a setting, the chance for individualized attention on pronunciation and grammar is painfully limited. Learning a foreign language can be hard, frustrating work, and the difficulties inherent to this process are only compounded by larger classes with fewer professors.

For the sake of continued excellence at UMass Amherst, and to make sure that the doors of cross-cultural exploration and understanding remain open to UMass students, let's be certain to increase our rosters of permanent faculty. There is no substitute for the quality of education made possible by smaller classes with greater emphasis on individual learning.

Megan Voorhis
Senior
English and Communications

I am a senior here at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and I am double majoring in English and Communications, and minoring in Philosophy. I have come before you today to tell you that the shortage of tenure-track faculty here at the

I have experienced enormous class sizes that have inescapably restricted the presentation of material into the format of lectures...

University has had an effect on both my educational experience and my preparation for the future. Throughout my time at UMass, I have experienced enormous class sizes that have inescapably restricted the presentation of material into the format of lectures that rely heavily on a formal

presentation of concrete fact from a single, "objective" professorial source and are less motivated by the harvesting of a plethora of diverse and subjective opinions of the students involved. Higher education should not only revolve regurgitation of facts, but also around an exploration into the nature of what these facts mean in relation to our selves. It is imperative that people constantly question their world.

In a rough estimate of class size, teaching style, and types of educators that I have come in contact with at this institution, I would say that 75% of all of my classes, since I arrived, have been solely lecture based. In Communications, my average lecture-based class ranged from around 150 to 200 students. In English and Philosophy, my classes were typically made up of about 25 to 45 students. I truly find that it is difficult to mediate meaningful discussions and entirely incorporate a group with an overwhelming number of bodies occupying a single space. With the exception of one class, a lecture of over 200 people, all of my Philosophy classes have been taught by teaching assistants (TA's). I am not here to discredit the overall value of the education that I have received. Nor am I here to question the ability of members of our faculty that do not yet have tenure, or have not received a PhD in their respective fields of study. Most TA's and untenured professors that I have come in contact with over the years are extremely knowledgeable, interesting individuals who strive to produce the highest degree of academic excellence both in and out of their classrooms. However, the fact that these individuals are not tenured may have an adverse effect on my future. As a senior, I am now applying to graduate school for English Language and Literature. Graduate schools require three professional letters of recommendation among other things. However, I was not able to obtain three letters of recommendation from tenured faculty in the English Department, due to the lack of tenured faculty that I had taken classes with that still teach at this institution. Because of this restriction, my letters are being written by an associate professor, a teacher associated with the writing program, and a professional at the Commonwealth College. I am one of many who understand the value of education, and hope that the highest standards of academic excellence can and will be preserved.

Eric A. Wirth

**MA Candidate, Applied Hispanic Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition
Spanish and Portuguese Program**

I am a 2001 Bachelors of Arts graduate in Spanish from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and now a newly returned graduate student in the Masters program of Applied Hispanic Linguists and Second Language Acquisition in the Spanish and Portuguese program.

I want to present my experiences as a past student in the Spanish and Portuguese program during my time as an undergraduate from September 1997 to May of 2001, as well as the impression which I am forming of the program as a returning graduate student 3 years later.

I entered the University of Massachusetts, Amherst already a declared major of Spanish. Having spent time abroad in Spain before entering the university, I placed directly into the 300 levels of courses in the Spanish program, and begin working directly on my major requirements. Below please find a list of courses that were taken at the University of Massachusetts Amherst campus during my undergraduate career:

I spent one semester abroad at the University of Oviedo, and a summer study abroad in Salamanca in order to gain additional academic exposure to faculty-taught courses.

SPANISH 242 Intrmd Sp II-Lng Spc
SPANISH 285 Lang Suite Convrsatn
SPANISH 285 Lang Suite Convrsatn
SPANISH 323 Span Amer Lit II
SPANISH 285 Lang Suite Convrsatn
SPANISH 470 Gen View Hisp Ling
SPANISH 497A ST-Spanish Cinema
SPANISH 498Y Practicum
SPANISH 498Y Practicum

During my first semester as a Spanish major, it quickly came to my attention that the majority of the undergraduate courses would be given by Graduate Teaching Assistants in the department. As a work-study in the Spanish and Portuguese Department, I understood the need for Graduate TA's in the language program, given the high demand for Introductory and Intermediate Spanish classes at the University; however, I was not prepared for the reality that 99% of my undergraduate classes within the department would be given by TAs.

The only class from the above list that was taught by a faculty member of the Spanish and Portuguese Department was Spanish 497A, Spanish Cinema. I found this to be outrageous that, even a class such as Spanish 470, General Overview of Hispanic Linguistics, was also given by a TA. That is not to say that these graduate student TAs

were incapable of giving these classes, however given that I was obtaining a degree and also was a paying student, it was very disconcerting to me. In order to take advantage of my Spanish study experience, I spent one semester abroad at the University of Oviedo, and a summer study abroad in Salamanca in order to gain additional academic exposure to faculty-taught courses. Following please find the list of courses taken during these programs:

University of Massachusetts Spanish and Portuguese Department
University of Oviedo Program - spring 1997

SPAN 497D	St-Adv Grammar li
SPAN 497G	St-Sp Lt,1700-Pr li
SPAN 497H	St-Intr Litr Anl li
SPAN 497I	St-Hst Spain/Civl li
SPAN 497J	St-Span Art/Adv Civl

University of Massachusetts Spanish and Portuguese Department
Colegio Hispano Continental - Summer 2000

SPANISH 697B ST-Chronicles Amer
SPANISH 697C ST-Golden Age Theatr

I was fortunate enough to be able to afford the time and money to enhance/supplement my undergraduate experience with these programs abroad in order to gain academic exposure to faculty taught courses, however it should be recognized that not all students who passed through the Spanish program during these years were equally as fortunate.

Since having returned to the UMass, Amherst and the Spanish and Portuguese Department to begin my graduate studies, I have seen some improvement in the department, with the arrival of a few new faculty, however there is still a long way to go in order to remedy the type of situation that I describe above. Please consider the importance of hiring and retaining new faculty members, not only in the Spanish and Portuguese Program, but as I am sure in other areas of the university as well.

Mishy Leiblum
Undergraduate Student
Social Thought and Political Economy Program

Last semester, a graduate student, who was solo-teaching a course at UMass for the first time, told me in disbelief that I was being "shortchanged" at this University, and he advised that I should get "the heck out of UMass as soon as possible."

A week earlier, this graduate student had returned my class' first term papers. These papers were not only graded, but they were accompanied by a typed page of comments which actually engaged and challenged the arguments put forth in our papers!

I had approached this graduate student to sincerely thank him for going above his "call of duty" and for actually evaluating - rather than just grading - our papers. I told him this was the first time in my entire career at UMass that one of my teachers had truly engaged with the content of my work. However, rather than accept my thanks, my teacher was shocked by the weak standard of evaluation that I was reporting. He shook his head, and said it was bitterly ironic that as a graduate student solo-teaching for the first time, he had given me more feedback than anyone else ever had at this University. He said, "Every professor should give you this amount of feedback for every paper you write."

I had to remind him that the vast majority of my teachers at UMass have been overworked graduate students, not professors. Because of their transient nature, inexperience, heavy course load, and lack of accountability to the University, it is no wonder they do not have the time or impetus to truly evaluate my work. Further, how can any teacher at UMass be expected to offer quality evaluation while teaching chronically overenrolled courses?

At the end of last semester, my teacher completed his degree, and he took his own advice and got "the heck out of UMass." However, what if I needed a recommendation from him?

For better or for worse, I did not need to tell tales of the insane competition for upper-level courses to this particular graduate student instructor, for he had witnessed it himself. On the first day of our class, all the available seats in the classroom were taken long before the class even began, and immediately after the class ended, approximately a dozen students gathered around my teacher's desk, waving override

exemption forms and pleading their cases. My teacher was unwilling to turn down students if it would cause them to extend their graduation date, so eventually his department gave him special permission to expand the class size. However, once expanded, the class exceeded the occupancy limit of the original classroom, so we had to literally change the class location to a dingy windowless room on the other side of campus.

Not surprisingly, at the end of last semester, my teacher completed his degree, and he took his own advice and got "the heck out of UMass." However, what if I needed a recommendation from him? How would I track him down? If

my teacher had anticipated the opening of a tenure-track position at UMass, or had a less chaotic experience teaching his first course here, would this have changed his attitude or commitment to UMass?

While this particular teacher was unusually accommodating and hard working, the conditions under which instructional faculty are forced to teach have clearly infringed on the quality of my education at UMass. Whether or not the increase in tenure-track positions would have transformed this graduate student's relationship to the University is hard to say. However, in order for the sort of evaluation I received from this teacher to become the expected norm (and not a brief anomaly), and in order to reduce course sizes to a manageable level, we need more faculty, and most importantly, we need more tenure-track faculty who have a vested and sustained interest in our University.

While figures alone cannot directly speak to the quality of my education at UMass, the statistics are bitterly ironic: while the number of tenure-track faculty on this campus has declined by 340 since 1986, the cost of attendance at this University has increased nearly a hundred and fifty percent in the past four years alone!

How is it that I am paying so much more, and getting so much less? If this equation does not improve, I will be taking my one-time teacher's advice to "get the heck out of here" sooner rather than later.

**Jill Oglie
Graduate Student
History Department**

When I began graduate school at UMass in the fall of 2001, the History Department had a solid core of faculty specializing in modern U.S. history. There were three or four professors with whom those of us interested in twentieth century America could work. Three years later, this group of faculty has all but disappeared. One individual left in 2002 and another will be taking a new position at the end of the semester. There have been so few new hires in the department that the gap left by those departing has not been filled. Visiting faculty members and advanced graduate students have been tapped to teach undergraduate level courses and a few graduate courses, but without permanent appointments, have been largely unable to become mentors or advisors, sit on dissertation committees or lead graduate students through the comprehensive exam process.

I have taken twelve graduate courses here at UMass. Of these twelve, six have been independent studies – not because I preferred them but rather because the courses I have needed in African American History and modern U.S. history have not been offered because of the shortage of faculty to teach them. Three of these independent studies were done with a professor in African American Studies who generously agreed to take me on as a student due to the situation in the History Department. Two of my six classroom courses have likewise been outside of my home department. While the opportunity to take advantage of the Five College Program and inter-disciplinary course offerings has been valuable in many ways, these programs were created to enhance UMass course offerings, not to substitute for them.

The process of assembling my dissertation committee has also been profoundly affected by this trend. Three of the four professors on my committee do not hold their

I have taken twelve graduate courses ... Six have been independent studies ... because the courses I have needed ... have not been offered because of the shortage of faculty to teach them.

primary appointment in the History Department. The one that does will be leaving UMass at the end of this semester, and although he will remain on my committee, when he goes, there will be no one remaining in the department with whom other students can study race in the twentieth century. One other individual I studied

with for a year and who might have served on my dissertation committee could not continue to work with me because her visiting appointment ran out and she had to seek employment elsewhere.

The classes I have taken here at UMass have been excellent. The faculty members with whom I have worked have been exceptional. Rather than see me flounder due to dwindling faculty in my field, already overcommitted professors, many outside my department, have taken me on as a student. Taking on students from other departments because of faculty decline within the students' home departments should be an academic exception. But I fear it is fast becoming the rule on this campus.

Michael Sheridan
Undergraduate Student
Political Science

I am a sophomore political science major at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. I am writing to address the issue of lack of tenure faculty at the University of Massachusetts flagship campus. As a proud citizen of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, it is an honor for me to attend the flagship campus of the University of Massachusetts system. The University embodies and promotes all of the amazing qualities of the state such as education, state of the art technology, leading scientific research, and a beautiful setting. However, in the state's economic downturn in the fiscal years between 2001 and 2004 public higher education has been on the State House's chopping block. The University has suffered massive budget cuts during these fiscal years and as a result the University has lost many members of the faculty. According to a November 19th article in the Springfield Republican entitled "UMass establishes goals through 2008" Chancellor Lombardi of the Amherst campus noted by the end of 2004 the faculty will number fewer than 1,000 members. My undergraduate peers have noticed the lack of faculty. We have no advisors to help us succeed in the University and prepare us for graduate school, medical school, and law school. Due to the lack of faculty, the strength of our degrees and the prestige of this University are being crippled.

I was forced to give up my hopes of attending Harvard's program because...I have no relationships with any faculty member at the University who would know me well enough to write a sufficient letter of recommendation.

This past semester, I considered applying to a program run by Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. This was a program designed for undergraduate freshman and sophomores who are interested in public service on the local, state, or federal level. I was forced to give up my hopes of attending Harvard's program because one of the requirements of the application was to have a letter of recommendation from a member of the faculty at the University. This requirement was somewhat impossible to fulfill because I have no relationships with any faculty member at the University who would know me well enough to write a sufficient letter of recommendation. What if this situation was to happen again when I apply to law school? I feel that with all these losses of faculty members, doors of opportunity and prominent futures are being slammed shut in the faces of the undergraduates of this University. According to a news release published by University officials in 2002, the number of graduate students was 5,800 while the number of undergraduate students was just under 18,000. All of these students are fighting for the attention of the members of the faculty. The Amherst campus has less than 1,000 faculty members teaching almost 24,000 students. Unfortunately undergraduates seem to fall by the wayside which subsequently damages their possibilities to achieve success while at the University.

The following is an excerpt from a report published by the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation in June of 2004 entitled “The University of Massachusetts: Removing Barriers to Educational Excellence at the State’s Public Research University”

For many residents of our state, the University of Massachusetts (UMass) offers the only affordable and practical means to achieve such an education. Over the last decade, an education at UMass has provided our residents the opportunity to participate in cutting edge research and help develop new technologies in fields as diverse as photovoltaics, marine science, and therapeutic cloning. Most of those who benefit from a UMass education are from — and remain in — the Commonwealth, forming the core of the knowledge-based workforce on which our future economic success depends.

According to the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, our state’s economy benefits from the University of Massachusetts. I believe it is time for the state to make an investment in the University and provide the undergraduate students who attend the University with an ample amount of faculty who can work to ensure the success of students who attend the University. Current members of the faculty have endured years of decreasing benefits and a freeze in salary increases, yet they endured this harsh treatment from the state government because they love the University and they work for students. It is time for the state to support the faculty of the University because it is the students and the taxpayers of the Commonwealth who benefit from a proper tenured faculty enlightening the minds of the students.

Comments from various students in one section of Assistant Professor Millie Thayer's class in the Sociology Department

One person said that she was not able to get into a required junior writing class until she was a senior.

Senior still not able to get into the required junior writing class. Told to take the writing class required by her other major.

Took a class taught by someone who taught at three universities, including UMass, and lived in another state. Always exhausted. Class was easy—didn't have to do a lot because she didn't have time to grade it. Just put smiley faces on their papers—no comments. Let them out early.

One student commented that she always over-registers for classes so that she can see on the first day who is actually going to teach them. If it is a grad student, she withdraws.

Taking a 4 credit class where the teacher neglects the one credit supposedly for lab. He has no time for responding to student emails, holding office hours. Might as well be a 3 credit class.

Resent the fact that they pay the same for classes taught by professors and grad students.

Had never taken a language class from a professor until the 4th semester.

Even the advanced language class being taught by a grad student.

One student is taking a class from a grad student who is using the course outline and syllabus of a professor; she seems to feel like she has to push through the material even if the students are not getting it. When this same student took a class from the professor whose notes were being used, he was much more flexible and sensitive to where the students were.

One student wanted to take Arabic as a minor. She was given a list of requirements but told that there is no one who teaches these classes. Instead she had to resort to taking a translation class from a retired professor. In this class, students faced a set of overzealous TAs who had no sense of how to work with students who were struggling.

One student commented that popular classes are often only taught once a year. In one of these, a psych course taught in Mahar, the room is filled to capacity and students sit on the floor in the aisles. A similar story was told about a large sociology course which was being taught by a grad student. When the student had to withdraw from teaching, several weeks went by as efforts were made to find a replacement.

Though big classes are not inherently bad for learning, they do mean fewer opportunities for extra credit and help from the professor. They also mean more reliance on multiple choice tests. In one class, a student reported that so many people did poorly on this type of test (in the 60s range), that the professor had to grade on a curve.

One student commented that she always over-registers for classes so that she can see on the first day who is actually going to teach them. If it is a grad student, she withdraws. "This is a good school. We shouldn't have to wonder who is going to teach our classes. We shouldn't have to withdraw."

Staff Testimony

**Submitted to Panel on the Shortage of
Tenure-Track Faculty at the University of
Massachusetts Amherst**

December 2004

Karen Lederer
Chief Undergraduate Advisor
Women's Studies

I have been an undergraduate advisor at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst for nearly 19 years. I have had the good fortune to work with wonderful students and dedicated faculty members. In the lean times our program, as well as others, have patched together our curriculum by using graduate students and temporary instructors. Sometimes these guest scholars have been great teachers. Nevertheless, having fewer tenure track faculty is detrimental to students, faculty and the University as a whole.

Our program is small and has a strong emphasis on faculty sponsorship of students. We encourage internships, independent studies and honors work. Guest instructors generally can not fill these sponsoring and advising roles for students. The temporary

Alumni are very grateful when they call a program they graduated from years before, and they can reconnect with a faculty member who inspired them.

teachers are not familiar with the University system, they are not compensated for the extra work, or they have moved on by the time the students know

them well enough to make this request. Because temporary instructors can rarely fill roles as honors committee members, or advisors, or faculty sponsors, this puts enormous pressure on the tenure track faculty that are here to agree to all these requests. As we have fewer permanent faculty, more and more service is requested of them. This is on top of committee service, program development, and more duties that only permanent faculty can do.

In addition, students often take a semester or year to get to know a faculty member. They take one course with an instructor, then perhaps another, then approach them to work on a special project or an honors thesis. When there is a revolving door at the institution, the students suffer. In addition, when students have circumstances such as illness, or a family crisis, and they falter in their academic work, by the time they return to work on incompletes or apply for retroactive drops, the instructor may be gone. In addition, students often need letters of recommendation for graduate school or employment years after they have completed work at the University. Alumni are very grateful when they call a program they graduated from years before, and they can reconnect with a faculty member who inspired them. Students whose educations were interrupted are even more impressed if they can continue where they left off with some of the same professors they worked with before. I have worked with many students over the years who have returned to finish school sometimes after over a decade away. Permanent faculty have often played key roles in helping these students complete their degrees.

We need more tenure track faculty. Permanent faculty strengthen programs, provide institutional memory and continuity. Tenure track faculty serve students, and then the alumni that students become.

**Maxine Greenblatt
Contract Accounts Supervisor
Controller's Office**

Uncertainty about continuity makes it less likely for sponsors to fund multi-year projects.

From the perspective of a University grant accountant: Stability and continuity among faculty is important for a number of reasons:

1. The prospect of a change of Principal Investigators may discourage sponsors from continuing funding for University projects.
2. With the higher turnover of non-tenure track faculty, graduate students are more likely to be left in the middle of their research, with no faculty member available to help them finish.
3. Uncertainty about continuity makes it less likely for sponsors to fund multi-year projects.

Susan Perschetz Machala
Academic Advisor
Pre-Major Advising Services

What follows is my sense of the impact which the significant decline of tenured faculty at UMass/Amherst has on the quality of undergraduate education:

First and foremost, larger course size, both in general education-heavy departments and in upper level courses within majors, especially in the social sciences, has meant that more and more students are lost in the shuffle. Freshmen who come from much smaller classes in their high schools are faced with a course load which includes mainly classes with enrollments of a few hundred students; upperclassmen who would benefit most from seminar-type courses in their major find that, even at the upper levels, courses are too large to foster discussion.

In addition to the obvious negative impact of such large classes, fewer faculty teaching more large classes means that those who remain have more grading, course-related and administrative work, which leaves less time left for the research on which individual careers and institutional reputation are built. This ultimately affects the caliber of faculty which we can attract and the level of outside grants/support which we can count on.

First and foremost, larger course size...has meant that more and more students are lost in the shuffle.

Manuela Pacheco Littlefield
Coordinator
Advising Services

During my tenure at the University (20+ years), I have seen a declining pattern in our tenured faculty in almost all departments across campus. From my perspective as an academic advisor I have seen this decline in departments such as Spanish, Communication, English and many others. Students get penalized twice due to the lack of tenured faculty, since academic departments have to manage their enrollment thus limiting students from applying into majors and enrolling in courses.

In Pre-Majors Advising Services (PAS) which is the largest academic unit, supporting over 4,000 undeclared students, we receive complaints from students on a regular basis. This problem is significantly noticeable during the Pre-Registration period since

Many times we have to tell students to take courses elsewhere and transfer them here, so they can complete their degree on time.

we struggle to find appropriate courses for students so they do not get too far behind in their academic plan. Even when advisors in our unit try their best to cope with the issue many

times we have to tell students to take courses elsewhere and transfer them here, so they can complete their degree on time. This issue has been going on for a long time and affects all aspects of the institution from admission to graduation.