

FAS Senate

AN ELECTED BODY OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
YALE UNIVERSITY

FAS Senate Research and Scholarly Excellence Report

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FAS Senate Research and Scholarly Excellence Report

Overview and major findings (summarized from full report)

For more than 250 years, up to at least the middle of the 20th century, Yale was arguably the number two university and the number one college in America. But the landscape has become more competitive since World War II. The number of serious rivals has risen with the recovery of European universities, the rise of Asian universities, and the steady progress of American public universities like UC Berkeley and the University of Michigan. And almost every university – small or large, public or private – has sharply increased its expenditures. No world-class Faculty of Arts and Sciences can be sustained nowadays without an extraordinary investment of resources.

A number of factors have emerged over the past 50 years that put Yale at a competitive disadvantage. The two-career family, the agglomeration of talent in super-cities, and the slowdown of transportation to New York have made it more difficult to recruit scholars to New Haven. And the shift in national attention from the Humanities to the Sciences has played against one of Yale's historical strengths.

Yale claims a special place among American institutions of higher learning owing to the extraordinary quality of its Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences, professional schools, and arts; the commitment to a stellar college amidst a research university; and the magnitude of its endowment. Maintaining that position, however, will take the wise allocation of capital, the intelligent leveraging of human resources across departments and schools, and a frank recognition that this is a crucial moment for faculty excellence.

Our report is based on a large-scale survey of the faculty that was administered during January 2018, on publicly available statistics, and on interviews with the chairs of 12 of the biggest FAS departments, spanning all three divisions. The full report was distributed to the Yale administration and the faculty of the FAS in the fall of 2018. The present version summarizes some of the key findings and all of the recommendations.

The survey found that many faculty were concerned that Yale reduced rather than increased the competitiveness of its salaries, reduced rather than increased the size of its faculty relative to its peers, and reduced many sources of central support for scholarship. Over the past twenty years, the Yale endowment has steadily outperformed its rivals, making these trends all the more difficult to understand. This report highlights the challenges and makes recommendations for moving forward in the years ahead.

The findings below summarize part of the results of the full report adopted by the FAS Senate, November 15, 2018. The data on salary and service are also covered in the report of the Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty, dated October 18, 2018. Issues involving the instructional faculty were discussed in the *Report on the Status, Pay, and Conditions of Non-Ladder Faculty in FAS*, available at <https://fassenate.yale.edu>.

Results of the survey conducted in January 2018

The survey of the faculty found many disturbing trends. Among these are the following:

- 1) Many faculty expressed concern that their departments are not in the top ranks of major universities.
- 2) Many faculty report they think the university is too cautious in its spending, despite the size and growth of the endowment and compared to peer institutions.

Resources

A key issue facing Yale FAS is the budgetary austerity imposed in recent years.

- 3) Specifically, faculty responded that salaries are falling behind the competition. Figure 1 gives the history of salaries of Yale full professors from 1970 to 2017 relative to our peers according to data from the AAUP. In 1970 Yale was 11% above its peers, and in 2017 it was 13% below, having lost 8% in the last nine years. Similar trends are seen for non-tenured faculty.
- 4) Additionally, faculty say that the size of the faculty is too small. As can be seen from Figure 2, the size of the Yale FAS ladder faculty has declined dramatically relative to its peers. From 2010-2011 to 2017-18, the size of the Yale FAS ladder faculty declined from 688 to 658, or 5%. Our peers all grew their FAS. Over the last seven years, the size of Yale's faculty declined 7% relative to Harvard, 10% relative to Princeton, and 16% relative to Stanford.
- 5) To attract and maintain the best scholars requires increased research support in areas that have received large budget cuts: library, research funds for departments and faculty, the graduate program, as important examples.

Time, Administrative Duties, Administrative Staff

Additionally, faculty have faced increased service burdens along with staff cuts.

- 6) Faculty report that the number one impediment to research is lack of time. All faculty feel that their teaching and service workloads are not supportive of their research. Women faculty feel especially burdened by administrative work. Faculty believe they are forced to take on clerical duties because of cuts in administrative staff.

Moving Forward

The Committee has identified important financial shortfalls that hamper the excellence of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. In order to redress these shortfalls, the Committee has calculated the "FAS faculty compensation deficit," which is determined by the gap between the target and actual faculty size and the shortfall of faculty compensation. Combining these two factors, the estimated compensation deficit is approximately \$40 million per year. The recommendations below are aimed to remedy the structural budgetary and staffing shortfalls as well as other impediments to promoting excellence in the FAS.

Major Recommendations (complete list from full report)

- 1) The President and Provost should affirm, with resources and attention, that the excellence of the FAS and Yale College are central priorities, on which there will be no compromise. The President or Provost's annual address to the Faculty Senate should be very explicit about how much progress has been made each year in improving FAS excellence.
- 2) Departments should set goals for themselves and accurately assess their own progress. They should be subject to periodic external reviews, and regular internal self-assessments.
- 3) Yale should set budget targets for the FAS that are sufficient to permit the excellence for which we strive, and should commit to allocating and raising resources accordingly. We suggest a target of an additional \$40 million per year to cover the Yale faculty compensation deficit.
- 4) Yale should increase the number of untenured ladder faculty and high profile senior faculty in the FAS. This is necessary for improving the scholarly excellence of the faculty. It would also help address the faculty's concerns over rising administrative burdens.
- 5) In order to recruit and retain an improving faculty, Yale should offer competitive salaries and provide faculty support that permits faculty to focus on research and teaching. Yale must beat the market to attract the best scholars.
- 6) We recommend that the FAS appoint a committee to evaluate why service is becoming more burdensome. The committee should be charged with finding a way of quantifying service. The committee should determine how Yale can prevent disproportionately high service loads from impeding scholarly careers. This is essential to fulfilling Yale's commitment to excellence and equity. The committee should evaluate the effects of the reduced administrative support for faculty.

Secondary Recommendations

- 7) As at our peer institutions, Yale must face the problem that if the promotion to tenure of untenured ladder faculty is more frequent, and if there is no countervailing shortening of the time tenured faculty remain at Yale, then the fraction of untenured ladder faculty will go down. Given that young scholars are essential to the vitality of the faculty, the university should think of creative strategies to maintain generational balance (perhaps by giving incentives for senior faculty to retire, or by bringing more young scholars to Yale, for example as post-docs).

- 8) New Haven's small number of employers and the deteriorating transportation to New York means that Yale will often have to find employment for spouses. We recommend that the university think systematically about how best to accommodate this additional cost in its budget models, keeping in mind the incentives of both spouses' departments (in cases of academic couples).
- 9) We recommend that the university simplify the hiring process and move more aggressively in initial offers. These changes would increase our success rate in recruiting faculty, and it would reduce the administrative burden on existing staff. The university should also invest more resources in increasing the staff reviewing and approving offers, for example by empowering the divisional deans to share some of the burdens of the FAS dean's office.
- 10) We recommend that the university redouble its efforts to hire and retain faculty that improve diversity and excellence.
- 11) While acknowledging with gratitude the generosity of donors and the creativity of donors in galvanizing new activities, we recommend that donors and administrators remain aware that new activities that are not fully funded can sometimes diminish resources for core priorities. We also suggest that by promoting the visibility of faculty achievements, fundraising opportunities may occasionally be created.
- 12) We recommend that the Senate invite the dean of undergraduate admissions and the dean of the college to come and discuss evolving undergraduate admissions.

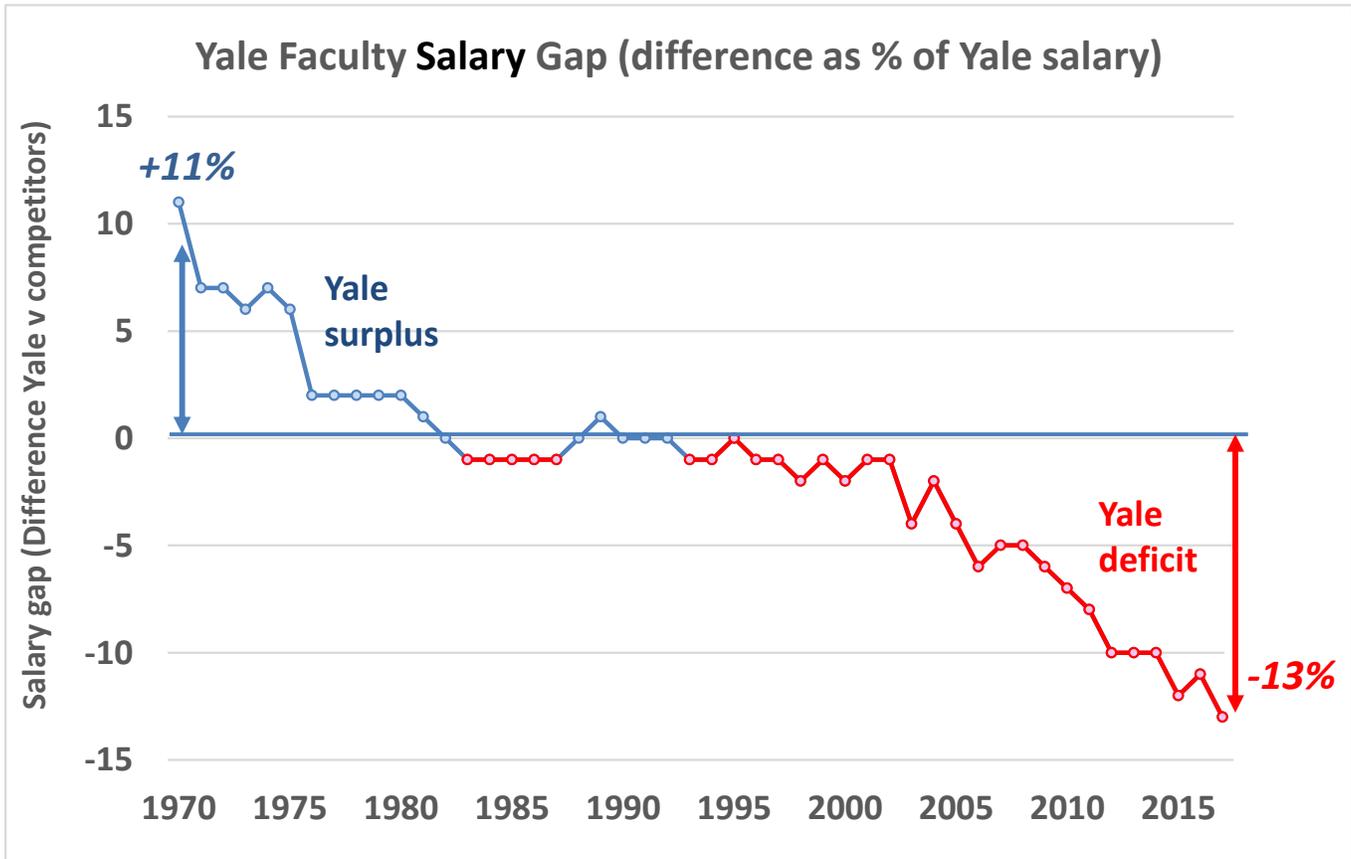


Figure 1. Salary Gap at Yale Relative to Other Major Universities

The gap equals the difference between the average salary at Yale and that of its major competitors as a percent of Yale salary. From 1970 to 2017, Yale salaries declined dramatically relative to other major universities. The data refer to full professors for non-medical faculty, for which there is the best comparability across schools. Comparison group is Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Chicago, and Columbia. (Data are from the AAUP and are non-medical faculty. These differ from results presented in the 2018 CESOF report.)

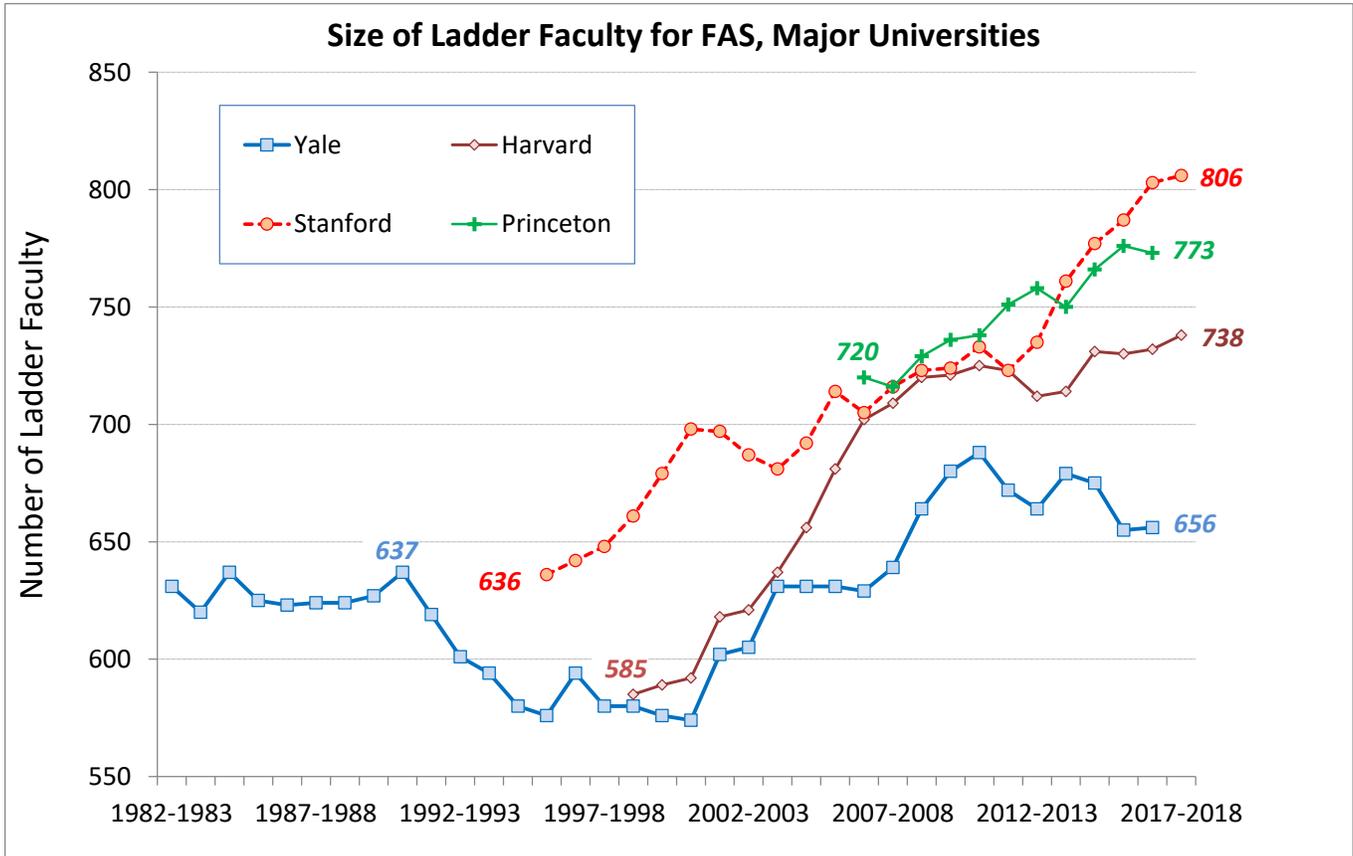


Figure 2. Ladder Faculty in Arts and Sciences at Major Universities, 1982-2017

Yale ladder faculty in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences have declined sharply relative to other major private universities. (Data were taken from the websites of the four universities. Data include arts, sciences, and engineering. No data were available from Columbia.)