

# Sociology Faculty Salaries, AY 2007-08

## Still not above inflation and not above the other social sciences

BY ROBERTA SPALTER-ROTH AND JANENE SCENZA

During Academic Year (AY) 2007-2008 average faculty salaries increased, but were less than the rate of inflation (4.1 percent), according to two widely used surveys of faculty salaries conducted by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR). The annual survey conducted by the AAUP found a 3.8 percent salary increase for all faculty (Jaschik 2008). This survey collects data by faculty rank and type of institution, but contains no comparative information for disciplines.

In order to learn how sociology faculty's salary increases compare to other social science disciplines we use data from the CUPA-HR (which finds a 4.0 salary increase). The National Faculty Salary Survey, conducted by CUPA-HR, gathers data by discipline, rank, and type of institution. In 2007, the survey results were presented in an unweighted format for the first time. Dr. Ray Sizemore of CUPA-HR graciously provided us with weighted salary data for sociology and selected social science disciplines (see Spalter-Roth and Erskine 2007). He did so again this year.

### Sociology Faculty Salaries

On average, sociology faculty salaries increased by 4.0 percent in current dollars, from \$66,207 in AY 2006-2007 to \$68,857 in AY 2007-2008 (see Table 1). This increase is .10 percent less than the rate of inflation (as measured by the Consumer Price Index) meaning that faculty members could purchase the same market basket of goods and services as in 2006/07.

Table 1. Average Sociology Faculty Salaries

A. Current Dollars <sup>a</sup>				
Academic Year	Full Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	All Ranked Faculty
2000/01	\$70,071	\$52,336	\$43,081	\$56,650
2001/02	\$72,472	\$54,233	\$44,285	\$58,255
2002/03	\$74,027	\$55,296	\$45,565	\$59,510
2003/04	\$76,200	\$56,212	\$46,409	\$60,489
2004/05	\$77,598	\$57,721	\$47,971	\$61,687
2005/06	\$80,487	\$59,903	\$49,519	\$63,844
2006/07	\$83,708	\$61,838	\$51,337	\$66,207
2007/08	\$87,938	\$64,788	\$53,844	\$68,857
B. Constant Dollars				
Academic Year	Full Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	All Ranked Faculty
2000/01	\$84,371	\$60,167	\$51,873	\$68,211
2001/02	\$84,847	\$63,494	\$52,935	\$68,203
2002/03	\$85,319	\$63,731	\$52,516	\$68,588
2003/04	\$85,867	\$63,343	\$52,296	\$68,163
2004/05	\$85,174	\$63,356	\$52,654	\$67,709
2005/06	\$85,470	\$63,597	\$52,572	\$67,781
2006/07	\$86,092	\$63,599	\$52,799	\$68,093
2007/08	\$87,938	\$64,788	\$53,844	\$68,857
C. Change Above Inflation <sup>b</sup>				
Academic Year	Full Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	All Ranked Faculty
2000/01	+0.66	+0.29	+0.76	+0.11
2001/02	+1.83	+2.02	+1.20	+1.23
2002/03	-0.25	-0.44	+0.49	-0.25
2003/04	+1.04	-0.24	-0.05	-0.26
2004/05	-1.47	-0.61	+0.07	-1.32
2005/06	+0.32	+0.38	-0.17	+0.10
2006/07	+1.50	+0.73	+1.17	+1.20
2007/08	+0.95	+0.67	+0.78	-0.10
Average Annual Percentage	+0.57	+0.35	+0.53	+0.10

<sup>a</sup> Salaries for New Assistant Professors and Instructors are omitted from these estimates.

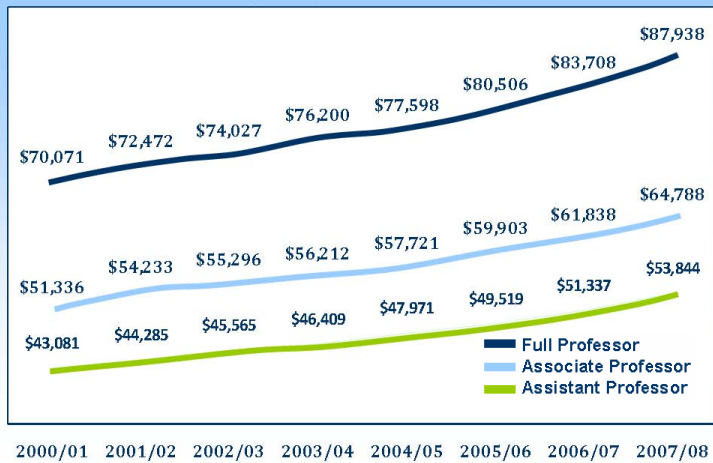
<sup>b</sup> Based on December 2007 inflation rate from the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Consumer Price Index* (Washington, DC 2008), retrieved April 1, 2008 ([www.bls.gov/CPI/](http://www.bls.gov/CPI/))

Source: ASA tabulation from CUPA-HR, *National Faculty Salary Survey*, 2000/01-2007/08

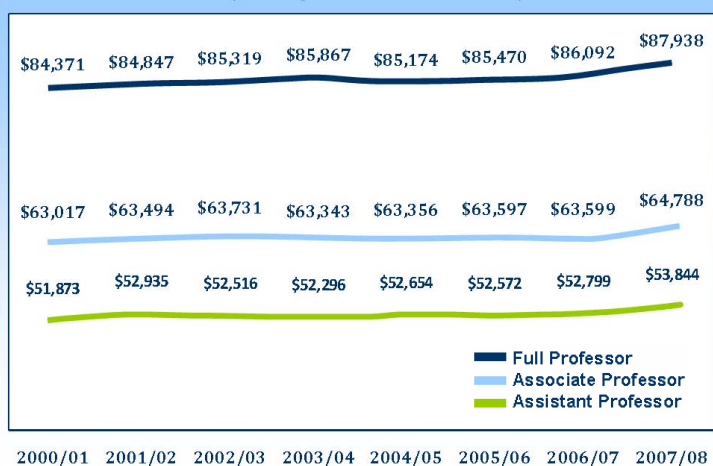
**Figure 1. Growth in Sociology Faculty Salaries, AY 2000/01 to 2007/08  
(All Ranked Faculty in Current and 2007 Constant Dollars)**



**Figure 2. Growth in Sociology Faculty Salaries, AY 2000/01 to 2007/08  
(Faculty in Current Dollars)**



**Figure 3. Growth in Sociology Faculty Salaries, AY 2000/01 to 2007/08  
(Faculty in Constant Dollars)**



Source: ASA Tabulation from CUPA-HR, *National Faculty Salary Survey, 2000/01 – 2007/08*.

Some common items in their market baskets such as gasoline, health care, and college tuition outpaced inflation, so that the result is probably a decline in living standards. Table 1 presents the average increase for all faculty members in current and constant dollars since AY 2000-2001 and the change above or below inflation in each year. When adjusted for inflation, the table shows a .09 increase above the rate of inflation since AY 2000-2001. The average sociology faculty salary increased by \$12,207 or 22 percent (in current dollars) since AY 2000-2001. When salaries were controlled for inflation, the increase was \$646.

Sociology professors lost buying power in four out of the last seven academic years. Overall sociology salaries have been flat in terms of purchasing power for the last seven years. Figure 1 illustrates this point. The trend line for salaries in current dollars shows a slow but steady upward increase, while the trend line for constant dollars illustrates no growth. When we examine faculty by rank, those in positions from assistant through full professors did better than faculty overall. In AY 2007-2008, full professors earned an average of \$87,938, associate professors earned an average of \$64,788, and assistant professors earn an average of \$53,844 (see Table 1A, 1B, and 1C). For those in full, associate, and assistant faculty positions, the increase between AY 2006-2007 and AY 2007-2008 in constant dollars was slightly above the rate of inflation at 5.0 percent, 4.7 percent, and 4.8 percent (see Table 1C).

Since AY 2000-2001, these salaries were slightly greater than the rate of inflation with full professors earning an additional \$3,567, associate professors earning an additional \$1,771, and assistant professors earning an additional \$1,971 in constant dollars. As can be seen, associate professors saw the smallest salary increase over the eight-year period and experienced three straight years of salary declines between AY 2002-2003 and AY 2004-2005. The salaries for new assistant professors increased from \$49,735 in AY 2006-2007 to \$52,446 for a 5.4 percent increase—the highest increase of all ranks of sociology faculty. It is those with positions as instructors whose salaries in constant dollars have continued to decrease. Their salaries in current dollars increased from \$40,015 in AY 2006-2007 to \$40,522 in AY 2007-2008, for a 1.3 percent

increase substantially below the rate of inflation. Figure 2 shows the consistent uptick in salaries in current dollars for all three professorial ranks (with full professors having a steeper trend line) during this period. In contrast, Figure 3 shows the flat lines when the salaries of these three ranks of faculty are calculated in constant dollars.

According to AAUP data, the salary gap between public and private institutions has grown over the last two years (Jaschik 2008). We find similar results for sociology faculty in these types of institutions. Across types, there is probably the most diversity within private institutions; they include the richest universities in the country along with small church-related schools. When averaged, however, private universities saw larger sociology salary increases than public universities. In this case, the findings are based on unweighted data since weighted data were not available. Between AY 2006-2007 and AY 2007-2008, the average faculty salary in private institutions increased 4.6 percent or 0.5 percent above inflation. In contrast, average salaries for public institutions increased by 3.3 percent or 0.8 percent less than the rate of inflation.

## Sociology Compared to Other Disciplines

How does sociology compare with its sister social sciences? Over the last academic year it did not fare as well as political science and economics. Sociology and anthropology salaries did not keep up with inflation. As Table 2 shows, political scientists received the largest raise and 1.27 percentage points over inflation. Economics the discipline whose pay level is substantially higher than the other social science disciplines received a raise that was 0.27 percentage points above inflation. Some of the differences in average salaries among the social sciences, and especially the relatively low salaries of sociologists can be explained, by variation in the structural composition of the four disciplines. Economics, the discipline with the highest average salary had the greatest share of high-paid full professors (43.5 percent) and the smallest share of lower-paid assistant professors (26.5 percent). In contrast, only 35.4 percent of sociology faculty was full professors and almost an equal share (32.1 percent) were assistant professors. Anthropology and

Table 2. Comparative Social Science Faculty Salaries				
A. Current Dollars <sup>a</sup>				
Academic Year	Sociology	Anthropology	Economics	Political Science
2000/01	\$56,650	\$57,945	\$71,382	\$60,303
2001/02	\$58,255	\$61,187	\$73,699	\$59,374
2002/03	\$59,510	\$62,534	\$76,312	\$62,597
2003/04	\$60,489	\$62,435	\$78,075	\$63,640
2004/05	\$61,687	\$64,456	\$79,928	\$65,070
2005/06	\$63,844	\$65,840	\$83,078	\$66,530
2006/07	\$66,207	\$69,605	\$86,294	\$69,386
2007/08	\$68,857	\$72,410	\$90,064	\$73,102
B. Constant Dollars				
Academic Year	Sociology	Anthropology	Economics	Political Science
2000/01	\$68,211	\$69,770	\$85,949	\$72,609
2001/02	\$68,203	\$71,635	\$86,248	\$69,513
2002/03	\$58,588	\$72,073	\$87,953	\$72,146
2003/04	\$68,163	\$70,355	\$87,979	\$71,713
2004/05	\$67,709	\$70,049	\$89,731	\$71,423
2005/06	\$67,781	\$69,900	\$88,201	\$70,632
2006/07	\$68,093	\$71,588	\$88,752	\$71,362
2007/08	\$68,857	\$72,410	\$90,064	\$73,102
C. Change Above Inflation <sup>b</sup>				
Academic Year	Sociology	Anthropology	Economics	Political Science
2000/01	+0.11	-3.59	+2.19	+1.97
2001/02	+1.23	+3.99	+1.65	-3.14
2002/03	-0.25	-0.20	+1.15	+2.98
2003/04	-0.26	-2.06	+0.41	-0.19
2004/05	-1.32	-0.06	-0.93	-1.05
2005/06	+0.10	-1.25	+0.54	-1.16
2006/07	+1.20	+3.22	+1.37	+1.79
2007/08	-0.10	-0.07	+0.27	+1.27
Average Annual Percentage	+0.10	0.00	+0.83	+0.31

<sup>a</sup> Salaries for New Assistant Professors and Instructors are omitted from these estimates.

<sup>b</sup> Based on December 2007 inflation rate from the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Consumer Price Index* (Washington, DC 2008), retrieved April 1, 2008 ([www.bls.gov/CPI/](http://www.bls.gov/CPI/))

Source: ASA tabulation from CUPA-HR, *National Faculty Salary Survey, 2000/01-2007/08*

political science have rank structures that fell between the two extremes.

Disciplinary structure probably does not account for all of the salary differences among social and behavioral sciences. The higher salaries in



economics may be the result of the demand for economists outside the academy, with about 45 percent of PhD economists holding non-academic jobs (compared to 17 percent of sociologists) and/or the location of many economics departments in higher-paying schools of business rather than colleges of arts and sciences.

## The Future

What does the future hold for sociology faculty? The AY 2000-2001 through AY 2007-2008 data suggest that purchasing power of sociology faculty will remain flat unless there are major salary increases in the next few years. These increases will be more likely for public institutions if state budget outlays grow rather than decline. During the current fiscal year, many states faced dramatic increases in budget deficits, although some attempted to protect higher education from cutbacks (Hebel 2008). Deficits often result in flat salaries for faculty. The gap between public and

private institutions may continue to grow unless state budgets continue to shrink. If state budget deficits remain, current and future sociology graduate students may experience growing financial pressures and greater numbers may seek employment outside the academy, in government, non-profit, and for-profit settings. Sociology as a discipline could follow economics and encourage PhDs to look for jobs beyond the ivory tower. These non-academic positions tend to be higher paid than faculty positions. In 2003, the last year for which data is published, sociologists earned an average of \$83,000 in the non-profit sector, \$86,000 in the for-profit sector, and \$99,000 in the federal government. (National Science Foundation, Division of Science Resource Statistics, Survey of Doctoral Recipients. Retrieved April 20, 2008 <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/nsf06320/pdf/tab54.pdf>). Future salaries for sociology PhDs might increase as a result of greater competition for sociology PhDs by government or firms in the for-profit or non-profit sector, especially in the health sector—the largest employer of non-faculty sociology PhDs.

## References




























- CUPA-HR. 2008. 2007-2008 National Faculty Salary Survey by Discipline and Rank in four Year Colleges and Universities. Knoxville, TN: College and University Professional Association for Human Resources.
- Jaschik, Scott. 2008. "Faculty Salaries and Priorities." Inside Higher Education. April 14. Retrieved April 14, 2008 <http://insidehighered.com/news/2008/04/14/aaup>.
- Hebel, Sara. 2008. "State Revenues Are Near a 5-Year Low, Report Says Report." Chronicle of Higher Education. April 11. Retrieved April 15, 2008. <http://chronicle.com/weekly/v54/i31/31a02303.htm>.
- Spalter-Roth, Roberta and William Erskine. 2007. Sociology and Other Social Science Salary Increases: Past, Present, and Future. Washington, DC: American Sociological Society. Retrieved April 20, 2008. <http://www.asanet.org/galleries/Research/SalaryRsSchBrief51807.pdf>

# ASA Research Briefs

The following are links to research briefs and reports produced by the ASA's Department of Research and Development for dissemination in a variety of venues and concerning topics of interest to the discipline and profession. These briefs can be located at [http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/leftnav/research\\_and\\_stats/briefs\\_and\\_articles/briefs\\_and\\_articles](http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/leftnav/research_and_stats/briefs_and_articles/briefs_and_articles)

*You will need the Adobe Reader to view our PDF versions.*



TITLE	YEAR	FORMAT
How Does Our Membership Grow? Indicators of Change by Gender, Race and Ethnicity by Degree Type, 2001-2007	2008	PDF 
What are they Doing With a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology?	2008	PDF 
The Health of Sociology: Statistical Fact Sheets, 2007	2007	PDF 
Sociology and Other Social Science Salary Increases: Past, Present, and Future	2007	PDF 
Race and Ethnicity in the Sociology Pipeline	2007	PDF 
Beyond the Ivory Tower: Professionalism, Skills Match, and Job Satisfaction in Sociology (PowerPoint™ slide show)	2007	PPT 
What Sociologists Know About the Acceptance and Diffusion of Innovation: The Case of Engineering Education	2007	PDF 
Resources or Rewards? The Distribution of Work-Family Policies	2006	PDF 
Profile of 2005 ASA Membership	2006	PDF 
"What Can I Do with a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology?" A National Survey of Seniors Majoring in Sociology—First Glances: What Do They Know and Where Are They Going?	2006	PDF 
Race, Ethnicity & American Labor Market	2005	PDF 
Race, Ethnicity & Health of Americans	2005	PDF 
The Best Time to Have a Baby: Institutional Resources and Family Strategies Among Early Career Sociologists	2004	PDF 
Academic Relations: The Use of Supplementary Faculty	2004	PDF 
Have Faculty Salaries Peaked? Sociology Wage Growth Flat in Constant Dollars	2004	PDF 
Are Sociology Departments Downsizing?	2004	PDF 
Sociology Salary Trends	2002	PDF 
How Does Your Department Compare? A Peer Analysis from the AY 2000-2001 Survey of Baccalaureate and Graduate Programs in Sociology	2003	PDF 
Graduate Department Vitality: Changes Continue in the Right Direction	2001	PDF 
Minorities at Three Stages in the Sociology Pipeline	2001	PDF 
The Pipeline for Faculty of Color in Sociology	2001	PDF 
Profile of the 2001 ASA Membership	2001	PDF 
Use of Adjunct and Part-time Faculty in Sociology	2001	PDF 
Gender in the Early Stages of the Sociological Career	2000	PDF 
New Doctorates in Sociology: Professions Inside and Outside the Academy	2000	PDF 
After the Fall: The Growth Rate of Sociology BAs Outstrips Other Disciplines		
Indicating an Improved Market for Sociologists	1998	PDF 
Update 1: After the Fall: Growth Trends Continue		PDF 
Update 2: BA Growth Trend: Sociology Overtakes Economics		PDF 