

# The Medical School Faculty Workforce: Full-Time, Part-Time, and Volunteer Faculty

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Accurately characterizing the academic medicine faculty workforce requires understanding the role of part-time and volunteer faculty across U.S. medical schools. To date, most reports on the number of faculty working at U.S. medical schools focus solely on full-time faculty, overlooking a substantial segment of the academic medicine faculty workforce. Part-time and volunteer faculty, who are often practicing clinicians or specialists, play a critical role in delivering instruction and mentoring to future physicians, yet their contributions have historically been underreported. By quantifying these faculty nationally and examining longitudinal trends, this data snapshot provides a more complete picture of how medical education is sustained. Without these data, our notion of the footprint of academic medicine remains incomplete, limiting our ability to understand and plan for the evolving demands of medical education.

## Methods

This data snapshot examines data from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME®) Annual Medical School Questionnaire Part II to present the numbers of full-time, part-time, and volunteer faculty across LCME-accredited medical schools. The questionnaire is distributed annually each spring and asks schools to provide the number of full-time, part-time, and volunteer faculty in basic science, clinical, and other departments as of Dec. 31 of the prior calendar year. Appendix A includes the definitions provided to schools to guide their reporting of faculty in each category. Survey data from academic year (AY) 2010-11 through AY 2024-25 were included in analyses. The number of schools included in the analysis of each academic year increased over time as additional medical schools earned LCME accreditation. Data from AY 2024-25 represent 157 U.S. medical schools.

Note that the data included in this snapshot may differ slightly from other reports that use data on full-time faculty from the AAMC Faculty Roster due to differing methodologies for collecting the data. The LCME Annual Medical School Questionnaire Part II collects aggregate data from medical schools once a year, while the AAMC Faculty Roster collects individual faculty data from medical schools on a rolling basis. These two different methodologies can lead to discrepancies.

## Key Findings

In AY 2024-25, there were 436,521 faculty appointed at U.S. medical schools (Figure 1). Of these, 223,815 (51.3%) were full-time, 42,398 (9.7%) were part-time, and 170,308 (39.0%) were volunteer faculty. The total number of faculty at U.S. medical schools has increased by over 100,000 since AY 2010-11, with the number of full-time faculty increasing the most during this period and surpassing the number of volunteer faculty (Table 1). Until AY 2017-18, there were more volunteer faculty than full-time faculty (Table 1). The number of part-time faculty has steadily increased from 23,408 in AY 2010-11 to 42,398 in AY 2024-25; part-time faculty now represent almost 10% of all faculty.

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## Key Findings

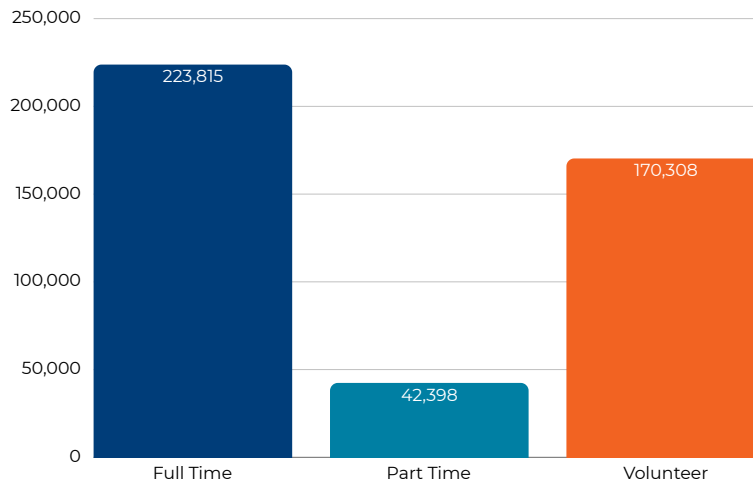


Figure 1. Number of faculty by appointment type, academic year 2024-25.

Table 1. Count and Percentage of Faculty by Appointment Type: Academic Year 2010-11 Through 2024-25

Academic Year	Number of Schools	FULL TIME		PART TIME		VOLUNTEER		TOTAL
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
2010-2011	134	140,722	43.1%	23,408	7.2%	162,233	49.7%	326,413
2011-2012	136	145,062	43.9%	24,938	7.6%	160,119	48.5%	330,119
2012-2013	140	150,145	44.2%	26,430	7.8%	162,980	48.0%	339,555
2013-2014	141	154,107	43.3%	29,395	8.3%	172,157	48.4%	355,659
2014-2015	141	161,361	45.2%	27,345	7.7%	168,623	47.2%	357,329
2015-2016	143	165,474	45.4%	27,726	7.6%	171,198	47.0%	364,398
2016-2017	146	169,232	45.4%	32,362	8.7%	171,087	45.9%	372,681
2017-2018	149	173,767	46.2%	31,130	8.3%	171,508	45.6%	376,405
2018-2019	151	174,819	45.9%	37,475	9.8%	168,979	44.3%	381,273
2019-2020	153	179,501	45.5%	38,313	9.7%	176,270	44.7%	394,084
2020-2021	155	188,828	47.5%	37,026	9.3%	172,015	43.2%	397,869
2021-2022	155	193,912	47.8%	38,498	9.5%	173,404	42.7%	405,814
2022-2023	155	201,943	48.6%	42,319	10.2%	171,336	41.2%	415,598
2023-2024	157	210,599	49.6%	42,400	10.0%	171,691	40.4%	424,690
2024-2025	157	223,815	51.3%	42,398	9.7%	170,308	39.0%	436,521

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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Volunteer faculty represent a higher proportion of the faculty at public schools, community-based schools, schools with regional medical campuses, and schools that are less research-intensive (Table 2). At community-based medical schools, volunteer faculty make up more than half (55.8%) of all faculty. The vast majority (115,944) of volunteer faculty have appointments in clinical departments; however, there are nearly 10,000 volunteer faculty in basic science departments (Table 2).

**Table 2. Faculty Counts and Turnover Rates by Department Type, Academic Years 2010-2011 to 2023-2024**

School Characteristics	Full-Time Faculty		Part-Time Faculty		Volunteer Faculty		Total Faculty
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
<b>OWNERSHIP</b>							
Private (n = 64)	106,762	56.5%	23,205	12.3%	58,858	31.2%	188,825
Public (n = 93)	117,053	47.3%	19,193	7.7%	111,450	45.0%	247,696
<b>COMMUNITY-BASED</b>							
Not Community - Based (n = 122)	203,495	53.6%	37,613	9.9%	138,613	36.5%	379,721
Community -Based (n = 35)	20,320	35.8%	19,193	8.4%	31,695	55.8%	56,800
<b>REGIONAL MEDICAL CAMPUS</b>							
Schools Without an RMC (n = 106)	143,853	55.3%	29,320	11.3%	87,001	33.4%	260,174
Schools With an RMC (n = 51)	79,962	45.3%	13,078	7.4%	83,307	47.2%	176,347
<b>RESEARCH-INTENSIVE</b>							
Not Top 50 (n = 107)	93,737	44.3%	16,870	8.0%	101,122	47.8%	211,729
Top 50 (n = 50)	130,078	57.9%	25,528	11.4%	69,186	30.8%	224,792
<b>DEPARTMENT TYPE</b>							
Clinical	200,633	50.7%	38,846	9.8%	155,944	39.4%	395,423
Basic Science	21,971	64.0%	2,862	8.3%	9,511	27.7%	34,344
Other	1,211	17.9%	690	10.2%	4,853	71.9%	6,754
All Schools (n = 157)	223,815	51.3%	42,398	9.7%	170,308	39.0%	436,521

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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## Conclusions

The data presented in this data snapshot show that together, part-time and volunteer faculty make up almost half of all faculty working at U.S. medical schools. Because detailed data are available for full-time faculty through the AAMC Faculty Roster, these data are often used for national reporting. These detailed data on full-time faculty provide important information on trends in faculty demographics, promotions, tenure, retention, and more. However, when describing the national academic medicine faculty workforce, it is important to include part-time and volunteer faculty. Not doing so reduces the total faculty count by almost half and overlooks the many contributions of part-time and volunteer faculty to the missions of academic medicine.

## Contact

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## Appendix

**The LCME Part II manual provides the following verbatim definitions regarding faculty.**

**Full-time faculty**—Enter the total number of paid individuals in basic science, clinical, and other departments (whether paid by the medical school or some other source, such as the health system) who are defined as full-time medical school faculty. Include faculty defined as full-time who are located at all campuses.

**Part-time faculty**—Enter the total number of paid individuals in basic science, clinical, and other departments who are considered by the medical school to be part-time medical school faculty. Include part-time faculty at all campuses.

**Volunteer faculty**—Enter the total number of individuals in basic science, clinical, and other departments who are defined by the medical school as volunteer faculty (even if the school uses another term, such as “gratis” or adjunct faculty and if they may be given financial or other compensation for their time). Include volunteer faculty at all campuses/affiliated clinical sites.

Whether to consider a department to be basic science, clinical, or other (e.g., public health) is at the discretion of the medical school but count each faculty member only once. Note that individuals from a basic science discipline may be based in a clinical department and should be counted there. Pathology faculty should be included only once under either basic science or clinical.