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Vincent J. Webb  
*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

Timothy S. Bynum  
*Michigan State University*

Jack R. Greene  
*Michigan State University*

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THE GRAYING OF THE PROFESSORiate RECONSIDERED:  
THE IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHICS ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE EDUCATION

by Vincent J. Webb\*  
Timothy S. Bynum\*\*  
Jack R. Greene\*\*

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\*Associate Professor of Criminal Justice, the University of  
Nebraska at Omaha

\*\*Associate Professor of Criminal Justice, Michigan State  
University

THE GRAYING OF THE PROFESSORiate RECONSIDERED:  
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Introduction

The demographic composition, especially the age structure of criminal justice faculty, is of interest to students in criminal justice education for a number of reasons. First, an overall assessment provides some gauge of the relative age of the faculty in the field. Second, observations of changes in the composition of the age structure over time provide insight into the aging process and attendant developmental process of the field itself. Third, age composition has a major impact on the job market for criminal justice faculty. This of course, in turn, partially determines career possibilities for neophytes in the field. It also serves as a major factor in setting the limits of both vertical and horizontal faculty career mobility. Fourth, age composition has a direct bearing on potential for improving the quality of criminal justice education.

This paper presents National Faculty Survey<sup>1</sup> data that describe some of the demographic characteristics of full-time criminal justice faculty. While the paper describes some demographic characteristics, the primary focus is on the impact on the faculty job market and on the possibilities for improving the quality of criminal justice education. In

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<sup>1</sup>A detailed description of the National Faculty Survey sampling methodology is contained in Appendix A.

considering the impact of some demographic characteristics of the faculty on the job market, the present effort draws heavily on ideas presented in John C. Lane's (1982) article, "The Slow Graying of Our Professoriate," in which he was concerned with the job market for political science faculty.

#### The Size and Age Distribution of Criminal Justice Faculty

The total number of criminal justice faculty is unknown. Estimates were made using data from the National Faculty Survey sponsored by the Joint Commission on Criminology and Criminal Justice Education and Standards. These estimates are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE FACULTY BY  
FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME FACULTY BY LEVEL OF PROGRAM

Faculty Status	Graduate		Undergraduate		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Full-time	975	16.8	2,042	35.3	3,017	52.1
Part-time	<u>599</u>	10.3	<u>2,176</u>	37.6	<u>2,775</u>	<u>47.5</u>
Total	1,574		4,218		5,792	100.0

Of the estimated total number of criminal justice faculty 3,017 (52.1 percent) full-time faculty and 2,775 (47.9 percent) part-time faculty were employed in graduate and undergraduate programs.

Table 2 provides the age distribution for a sample of full-time faculty. Nearly half (46 percent) were less than 50 years of age; only 8 percent were 60 years or older.

TABLE 2

## ESTIMATED AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE FACULTY

Age	Number	Percent
60 and above	70	8.0
50 - 59	174	19.0
40 - 49	249	27.0
30 - 39	364	39.0
29 and below	<u>63</u>	<u>7.0</u>
Total	920	100.0

Drawing conclusions about the relative youth or age of criminal justice faculty requires a comparison group for perspective. Table 3 provides a comparison of the age distribution of criminal justice faculty with that for a more traditional discipline--political science.

TABLE 3

## ESTIMATED AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND POLITICAL SCIENCE FACULTY

Age	Criminal Justice Percent	Political Science* Percent
60 and above	8.0	6.5
50 - 59	19.0	18.0
40 - 49	27.0	37.5
30 - 39	39.0	38.0
29 and below	<u>7.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	100.0	100.0

\*Political science faculty data are taken from John C. Lane, "The Slow Graying of Our Professoriate," PS, Winter, 1982, pp. 50-54.

- a. Data from Lane have been placed into new categories for purposes of comparison.
- b. Lane does not report estimates for less than 30 years.

The similarity in the age distributions for criminal justice and political science faculty was striking. With the exception of the 40 - 49-year-old category, the other categories for which comparability exists were within one and one-half percentage points of each other. Given these findings what can be concluded about the relative age of the criminal justice faculty? Some of the features similar to those identified by Lane (1982) are worth mentioning. These are:

- Nearly three-fourths of the criminal justice professoriate are under 50 years of age.
- Nearly half or 46 percent are less than 40 years of age.
- Less than 10 percent are age 60 or over.

These data lead to the same conclusion reached by Lane, i.e., "Clearly, we are a remarkably young profession (p. 51)."

#### The Impact of Faculty Age on the Job Market

Perhaps the simplest way to assess the job market for criminal justice faculty is to consider supply and demand against the social backdrop of crime, public opinion, and political decisions. Attrition rates and employer demands as well as educational outputs in the form of graduates are the chief ingredients in forecasting models based upon a supply-demand ratio (Hoffman, Webb, and Walker, 1974).

The demand for criminal justice faculty is determined by the net increase or decrease in the growth of criminal

justice education programs and by attrition due to death, retirement, and voluntary or involuntary removal. The past growth of criminal justice education has been typically described as follows:

...has been the fastest growing area in the academic world...This may well be the most rapid growth ever experienced in any substantive academic area in the history of higher education in the United States... There seems to be little doubt...that more crime related programs are being developed at educational institutions in the United States every year... (Myren, 1979, pp. 23-29).

This growth and the configuration of political and social factors it set into motion has been summarized by Simpson:

The phenomenal growth of educational programs in criminal justice that has occurred over the last decade is very well documented. The number of programs grew from an estimated 64 in 1965 to almost 700 in 1973 and more than 1,200 in 1978... The impetus for this growth is universally described as stemming from the emergence of crime as a major domestic issue in the United States, widespread public dissatisfaction with the performance of the criminal justice agencies, and the commitment of the federal government to the not inconsiderable goal of eliminating crime as a social problem (Simpson, 1979, p. 52).

To date, the growth in criminal justice education has been the major determinant of demand for criminal justice faculty. Demand based upon growth rather than attrition has characterized most of the history of the field.

The growth of criminal justice education, i.e. growth in the number of programs, is probably over.<sup>2</sup> Whether criminal justice education is in a period of stability or decline is a

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<sup>2</sup>The evidence on such things as the decline in criminal justice enrollment and the elimination of criminal justice programs is admittedly anecdotal rather than systematic. Nevertheless, a sufficient number of such anecdotes seem to be passed around at meetings and conventions to warrant such a conclusion.

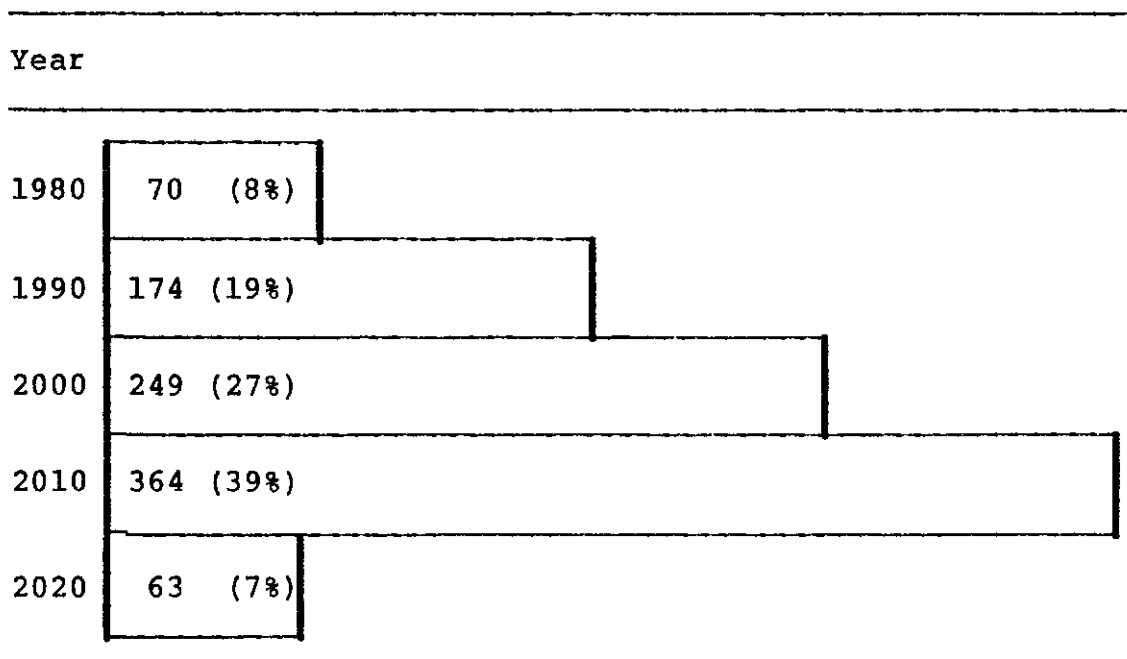
matter of debate. Nevertheless, the elimination of the Law Enforcement Education Program and the general economic hard times in higher education seem to rule out any continued expansion in the near future.

If criminal justice education is assumed to be in a period of stability, then the demand component of the faculty job market is no longer the result of growth or expansion. Rather, present and future demand for criminal justice faculty will be determined by attrition. Specifically, the major source of attrition is likely to be retirement.

Figures 1 and 2 give the estimated retirement year for the faculty sample from Table 1. In both figures the mandatory retirement age of 70 was assumed. In Figure 1, all faculty within an age category were assumed to be at the

FIGURE 1

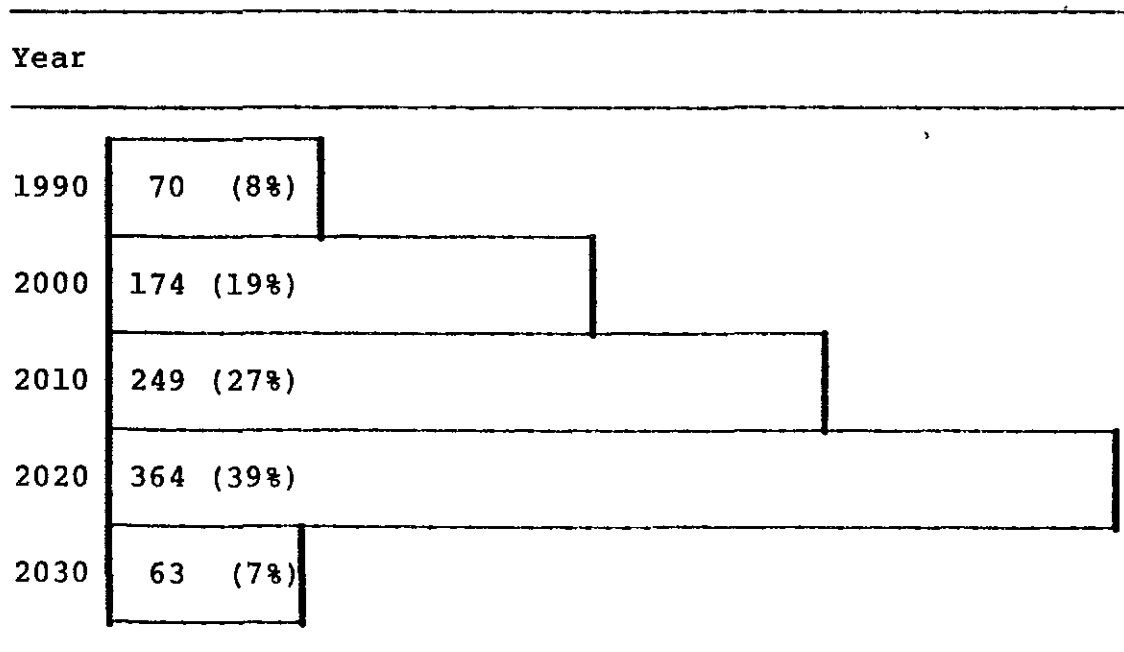
ESTIMATED RETIREMENT YEARS FOR  
A SAMPLE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE FACULTY  
(HIGH ESTIMATE)





upper limit of that category. For example, the estimate of 174 faculty members retiring in 1990 was based on the assumption that all 174 in the 50 - 59 category (see Table 1) were at age 59 when the data were collected in 1979. In Figure 2 all faculty were assumed to be at the lower limit of the age category in which they fell. Therefore, in Figure 2 the 174 faculty that fell into the 50 - 59 category were assumed to be at age 50 in 1980.

FIGURE 2  
ESTIMATED RETIREMENT YEARS FOR  
A SAMPLE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE FACULTY  
(LOW ESTIMATE)



Taken together, Figures 1 and 2 provide both a low and a high estimate of criminal justice faculty retirement. The implications of these estimates for the job market are described below:

## Low Estimate

Only about 25 percent of full-time criminal justice faculty will have retired by the year 2000.

Just under 250 full-time faculty in the sample will have retired by the year 2000.

Therefore the average number of retirement created vacancies will be 13.5 per year for the remainder of the century.

## High Estimate

Just under one-half of the full-time criminal justice faculty will have retired by the year 2000.

About 500 faculty in the sample will have retired by the year 2000.

Therefore the average number of retirement created vacancies will be 27 per year for the remainder of the century.

These estimates of retirement created vacancies rely on the "...fragile assumption that each academic position vacated by a retirement will be actually be filled by a new appointment" (Lane, 1982, p. 52). Table 4 provides another set of estimates for the actual number of retirements. These data are based upon the previously reported estimate of 3,017 full-time faculty in criminal justice.

TABLE 4

ADJUSTED ESTIMATES OF FACULTY RETIREMENT  
AND RETIREMENT CREATED VACANCIES\*

Retirement Years	Number of Faculty
1990	241
2000	573
2010	815
2020	1,177
2030	211

\*These estimates are based upon the estimated 3,017 full-time faculty (see Table 1) and use the percentage derived from the National Survey sample of full-time faculty (N-920).

In terms of actual estimated numbers, the following assessment is made:

- About 800 criminal justice faculty will have retired by the year 2000.
- About 45 vacancies per year will be created as a result of these retirements.

These projections, along with the low and high estimates based upon the sample data, paint a rather gloomy picture of the future criminal justice faculty job market. Faculty demand, based upon attrition through retirement, will be minimal for the next several years. Opportunities for those who are entering the criminal justice faculty labor force for the first time will be very limited. These estimates, of course, have only dealt with demand and not with supply. Very little is known about the number of new graduates (Ph.D.'s, master's degree holders, and J.D.'s) who are and will be attempting to enter the faculty labor force. Perhaps one bright spot can be found in the small number of criminal justice doctoral programs that have developed. The supply of new doctoral degree holders produced by these programs is extremely limited in comparison to those produced by programs in such areas as the social sciences and education. Nevertheless, the supply of new criminal justice doctoral degree holders appears to be increasing and may exceed demand in the near future.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>These estimates have not taken into consideration the possibility of some unforeseen event that gives rise to a future period of expansion in criminal justice education and an increase in the demand for faculty. For example, the 1960's could repeat themselves, and the "fight against crime" could become number one on this nation's political agenda.

Implications for Improving the  
Quality of Criminal Justice Education

The significance of the age structure of the criminal justice faculty and faculty attrition exceeds concerns about employment opportunities. This factor is central to the debate surrounding the quality of criminal justice education. Concerns about the quality of criminal justice education are well documented and have been reviewed in some detail in a number of publications (e.g., Greene, Bynum, and Webb, 1982). These concerns cover the gamut of issues in criminal justice education, but a central concern has been the quality of the criminal justice faculty. Consider the following summary statements:

Related to the issue of academic program focus is a concern for the type and quality of teaching in criminal justice...the suggestion has been made that a substantial difference in faculty quality exists particularly in the community college and to some extent in four-year programs...Another suggestion is that a lack of scholarship is associated with agency experienced faculty...A major criticism of the field in this regard concerns faculty credentials. In this vein, the National Advisory Commission on Higher Education for Police Officers severely criticized the field as being dominated by individuals with little academic training (Greene, Bynum, and Webb, 1982, p. 2).

Or consider the major criticism directed at faculty by the National Advisory Commission on Higher Education for Police Officers:

The most glaring defect of the present faculty is their lack of training at the graduate level...The Commission's research strongly suggests that the level of education of the faculty is directly related to the conceptual level of the curriculum...As long as the intellectual biases of the present ex-police faculty dominate police education, the

valuation of research and scholarship will remain at its currently low level (Sherman, 1978, pp. 134-135).

As Greene et al., conclude, "Faculty, as depicted by the National Advisory Commission, were generally dominated by ex-police officers pursuing second careers in education" (p. 6).

The connection between the quality of criminal justice faculty and its age structure is painfully obvious. Improving the quality of the faculty in any expanding field of study can take place one of two ways. One is through the creation and implementation of professional development programs designed to enhance the academic competencies of the faculty. The other is faculty replacement through the removal of under-qualified faculty by the usual processes that lead to non-reappointment and/or the denial of tenure. No one really knows the extent to which this takes place nor its impact on creating positions for qualified faculty. Replacement through this process does not seem to be happening with sufficient frequency to have a major impact on the overall quality of criminal justice faculty. This may be further complicated by the inability of many criminal education programs to use selection criteria that result in the employment of better qualified replacement faculty.

The major opportunity for replacing faculty with persons having better academic credentials lies in attrition due to retirement. Yet, as the data from the National Faculty Survey suggest, the criminal justice faculty is young, and very few openings resulting from retirement will occur over the next several years. Consequently, any improvement in the

overall quality of the criminal justice professoriate resulting from retirement replacements will be minimal.

### Conclusion

Data from the National Faculty Survey indicate that the criminal justice professoriate will be slow to gray. The implications of the youthful faculty for the quality of criminal justice education seem quite clear:

It seems likely that much of the vitality in the academic part of the criminal justice curriculum depends on the teaching faculty and their own recent graduate school experience...If teaching faculties are relatively youthful, then there is some threat that their vitality will diminish as they grow older and are not succeeded by an equal number of recently trained teachers (Pearson et al., 1980, p. 146).

Succession of young criminal justice faculty through retirement and replacement in criminal justice education will be a very slow process. The threat to the vitality of the faculty and therefore to criminal justice education itself appears to be very real. Applying Lane's conclusion concerning political science faculty to criminal justice is tempting:

...we need to recognize that the slow turnover in the...professoriate will be a significant factor in limiting employment opportunities in the coming decades. The costs--human, collegial, institutional--of the slow graying of our professoriate loom as considerable and painful ones (Lane, 1980, p. 53).

The costs for criminal justice education are also likely to be both painful and considerable as well as unavoidable. Part of these costs, those that involve the quality of criminal justice education, can be reduced though not eliminated. Careful recruitment and faculty selection, when those rare opportunities for faculty replacement present

themselves, must be exercised with extreme caution. The rigorous academic preparation of a relatively small number of doctoral level students and an insistence on the continued development of the present faculty are other essential ingredients necessary for reducing costs involved in the slow graying of the criminal justice professoriate.

APPENDIX



## APPENDIX

TECHNICAL NOTE ON THE SAMPLING DESIGN  
FOR THE NATIONAL FACULTY SURVEY

To form the sampling frame, three major lists of institutions offering crime related educational programs were identified: 1) the Department of Justice list of institutions whose students were eligible to receive funding under the Law Enforcement Education Assistance Program (LEEP), 2) the Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Education directory published by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and 3) the Criminology/Criminal Justice Case Directory from the Higher Education General Information Service (HEGIS) of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. While some degree of overlap occurs between these lists, each was prepared for a different purpose and thus represents a particular view of the field. To avoid the biases inherent in adopting one or the other of these lists, an institution was considered eligible for inclusion if it appeared on at least one of these lists. However, satisfaction of this criterion was not sufficient for sample eligibility. The listing of a program or institution by these organizations tells little about the crime related curriculum of that institution. For example, although its students may be eligible for LEEP funding, an institution may only offer a few courses within a traditional sociology or political science curriculum that may be considered crime related. In a similar manner, a department may appear on a list of law

enforcement programs but only offer several police academy type courses. Thus, a second criterion for sample eligibility was that the institution offer at least four courses that comprise a crime related curriculum.

A questionnaire concerning crime related course offerings was sent to each institution or program identified on the three lists of criminal justice and criminology programs, and a follow-up phone call was made to non-respondents. Through this process institutions were identified that satisfied the two criteria for sample inclusion.

Since the number of criminal justice and criminology programs offering graduate degrees was relatively small, questionnaires were sent to all full- and part-time faculty teaching in these programs. A cluster sampling technique was employed in selecting the undergraduate program sample. A 50% random sample of undergraduate programs was selected, and all individuals teaching full or part time in these programs were included in the sample. Tables 1 and 2 present data concerning the survey distribution and return. Overall, 3,720 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty of 567 criminal justice and/or criminology programs, and 1,358 were returned for a response rate of 37%. However, as is apparent from Table 2, the response rate varied by the type of program. The response rate among the graduate programs was 43% (672 out of 1,573 surveys were returned) while among the undergraduate programs, the response rate was 31%. Twenty-four surveys were returned with no indication of the type

of program in which the respondent was teaching, but the inclusion of this number of surveys in either category would make little difference in the rate of response from that group.

TABLE 1  
QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED AND RETURNED  
BY TYPE OF PROGRAM

Type of Program	Number of Institutions	Surveys Distributed	Surveys Returned
Graduate	165	1,573	672 (43%)
Undergraduate	402	2,147	662 (31%)
Unknown	-	-	24 -
Total	567	3,720	1,358 (37%)

Table 2 presents a further breakdown of the distribution and return of questionnaires by full- and part-time faculty in each of the program categories. Clearly, the response rate was much greater for full-time faculty. Although a large number of part-time faculty were discovered in the process of sample identification, the main concern in this project was with those individuals who had a full-time commitment to teaching criminal justice and criminology. Thus, although the overall response rate was lower than perhaps desirable, the rate of survey return from the groups of primary interest was substantially higher. As Table 2 reveals, surveys were returned by 495 of the full-time faculty in graduate programs and 40% of the full-time faculty of undergraduate programs. These return rates should be viewed as a minimum rate of response, since the surveys

returned with missing data were randomly distributed and since these surveys were divided between full- and part-time categories according to the proportion of known returns in each. The response rate for full-time faculty in graduate programs thus becomes 52% while the rate of return from full-time faculty in undergraduate programs becomes 43%.

TABLE 2  
QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED TO AND RETURNED BY  
FULL- AND PART-TIME FACULTY  
BY TYPE OF PROGRAM

	Graduate Programs		Undergraduate Programs	
	Distributed	Returned	Distributed	Returned
Full-time	975	481 (49%)	1,021	413 (40%)
Part-time	599	158 (27%)	1,088	206 (19%)
Unknown	21 <sup>a</sup> /	33 <sup>b</sup> /	38 <sup>a</sup> /	43 <sup>b</sup> /

<sup>a</sup>/One graduate program and five undergraduate programs did not provide information as to full- or part-time status of their faculty.

<sup>b</sup>/Surveys from these individuals did not indicate if the respondent was teaching full or part time.

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