

Hiring trends in US higher ed

An analysis of federal data on full-time instructional faculty hiring, 2016-2021

Scott Sederstrom

Department of Research and Public Policy

ssederstrom@aaup.org

November 9, 2023

Hiring trends in US higher ed

1. Introduction
2. AAUP and contingency
3. Data sources
4. Definitions
5. Employment landscape
6. New hire trends
7. Further research

Full-time instructional staff new hires, by appointment type, 2016-2021

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Tenured/tenure track	21,516	20,574	21,345	20,490	16,869	14,802
Contingent	26,803	27,306	28,730	29,043	22,639	26,643
Total	48,319	47,880	50,075	49,533	39,508	41,445

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) New Hires tables 2016-2021

1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*

- After the expiration of a probationary period, teachers or investigators should have permanent or continuous tenure
- Beginning with appointment to the rank of full-time instructor or a higher rank, the probationary period should not exceed seven years
- Under AAUP policy, there are no full-time, non-tenure-track faculty members; after seven years, we consider full-time faculty to have de facto tenure
- Recognizing the gap between this policy recommendation and practices at many institutions, the AAUP also makes recommendations to improve conditions for contingent appointments

Tenure and Teaching-Intensive Appointments (2014)

The best practice for institutions of all types is to convert the status of contingent appointments to appointments eligible for tenure with only minor changes in job description.

Data source

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

- System of interrelated surveys conducted annually by the US Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) for Title IV eligible schools
- Human Resources survey collects data on academic workforce
- Published annually as a set of data tables: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>
- IPEDS offers a variety of tools for online analysis or download

Data definitions

- Degree-granting nonprofit institutions participating in Title IV federal financial aid programs in the United States (50 states and DC), consistent with the Digest of Educational Statistics
- “With faculty status, tenured” and “With faculty status, on tenure track” categories combined into one “Tenured/tenure track” category
- “With faculty status not on tenure track/annual contract,” “With faculty status not on tenure track/multi-year contract,” and the “With faculty status not on tenure track/indefinite contract” categories combined into one “Contingent” category
- Historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minorities (Black/African American, Hispanic, Native American/Alaskan Native, and Hawaiian Native/Other Pacific Islander) were combined into one under-represented minority category
- IPEDS collects gender as a binary construct, and it’s so reported here

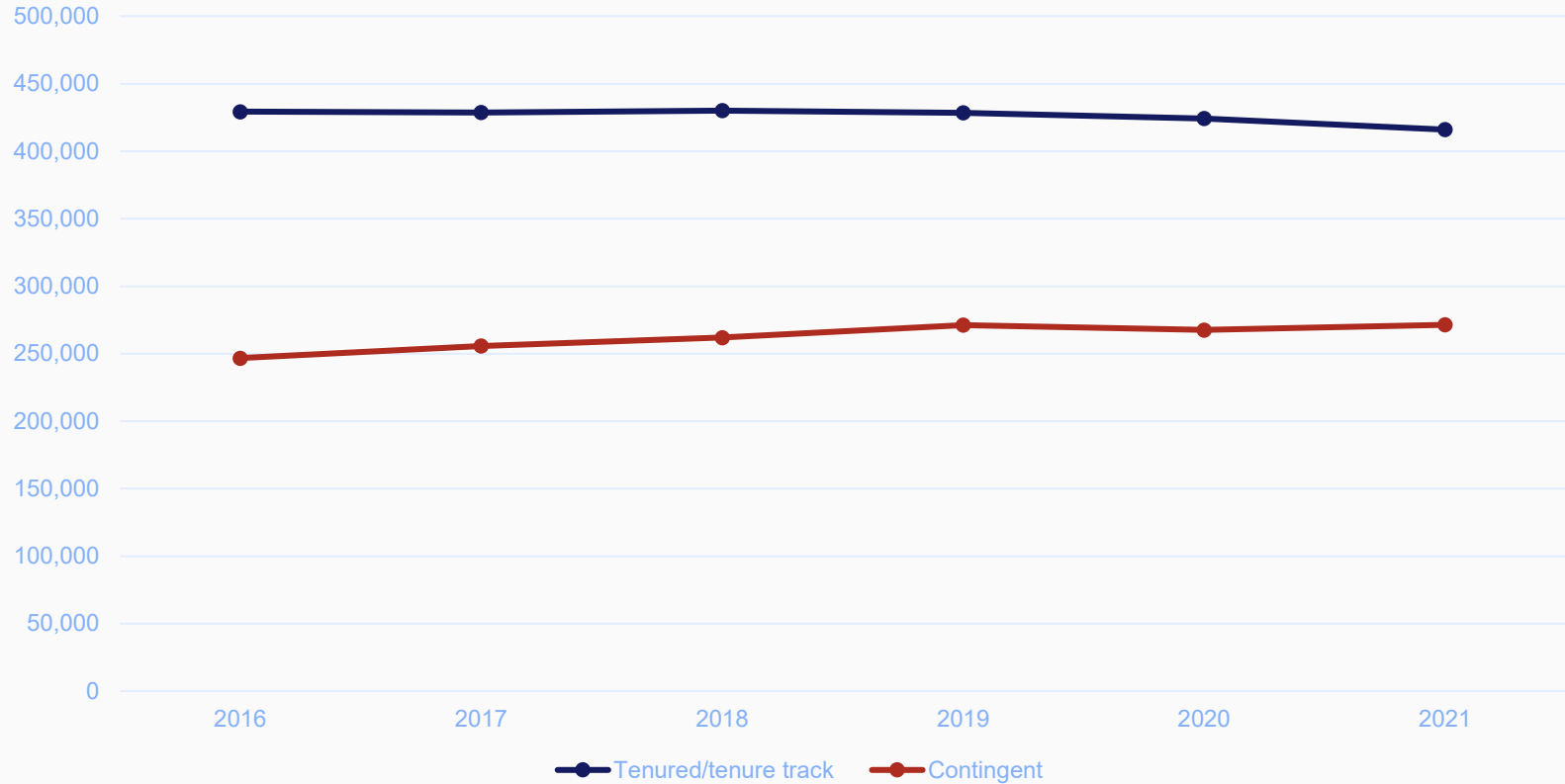
IPEDS instructional staff table

More about this data source

The IPEDS Instructional Staff table

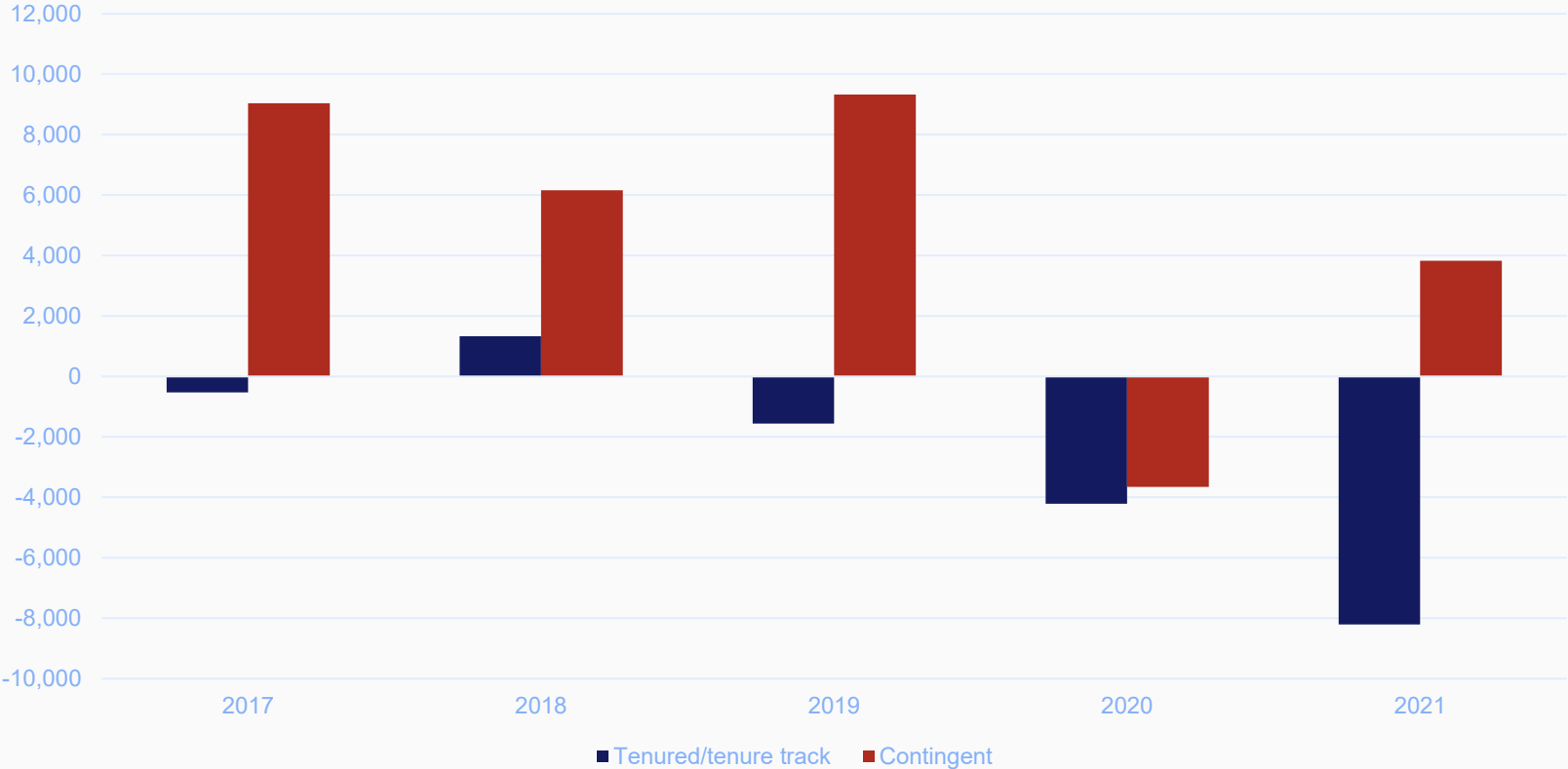
- Full-time instructional staff on payroll as of November 1
- Degree-granting institutions with 15 or more full-time employees and related administrative offices
- Includes both medical school instructional staff, non-medical school instructional staff
- Does not include part-time instructional staff or graduate students

FT instructional staff by appointment type, 2016-2021



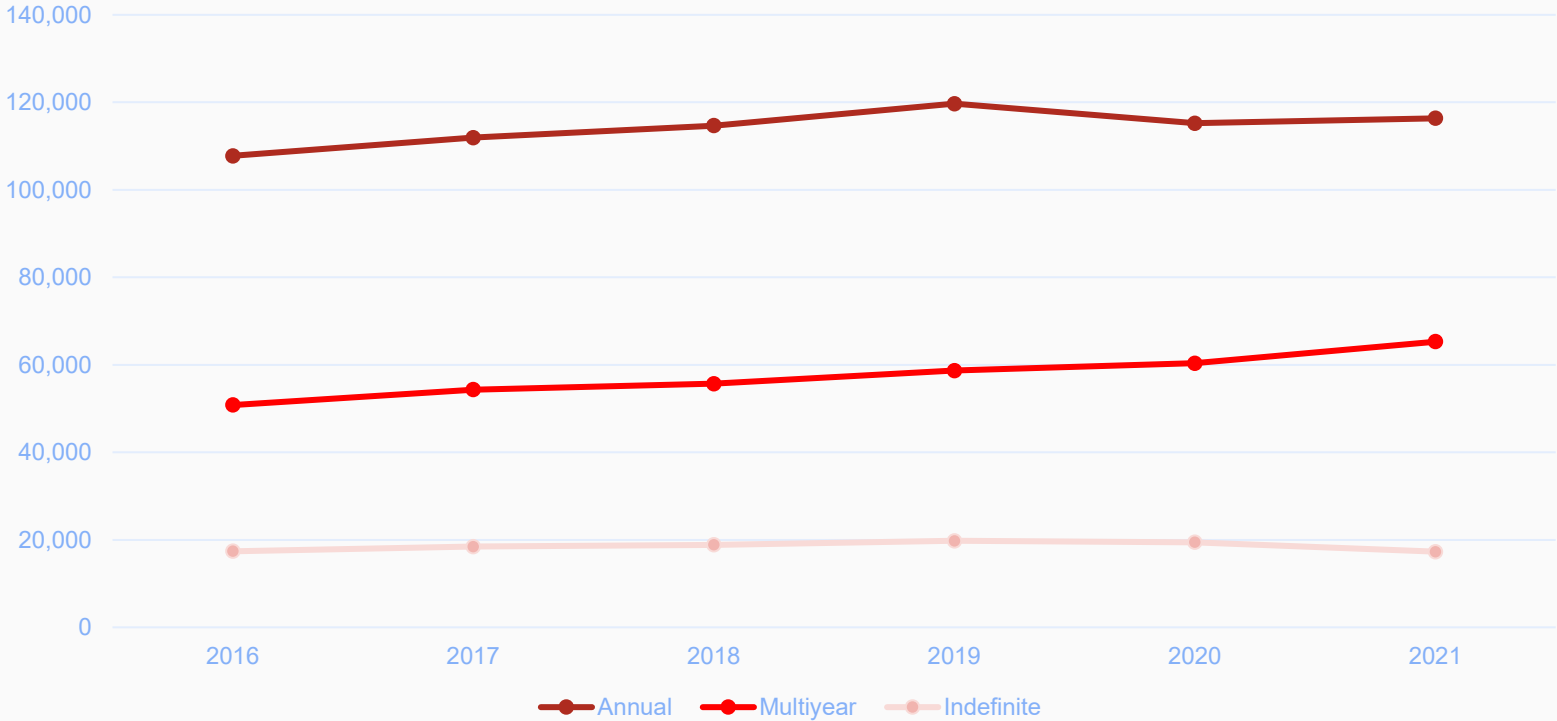
The environment: from a distance the trend lines seem fairly consistent and gradual

Annual change in the number of FT instructional staff, by appointment type, 2017-2021



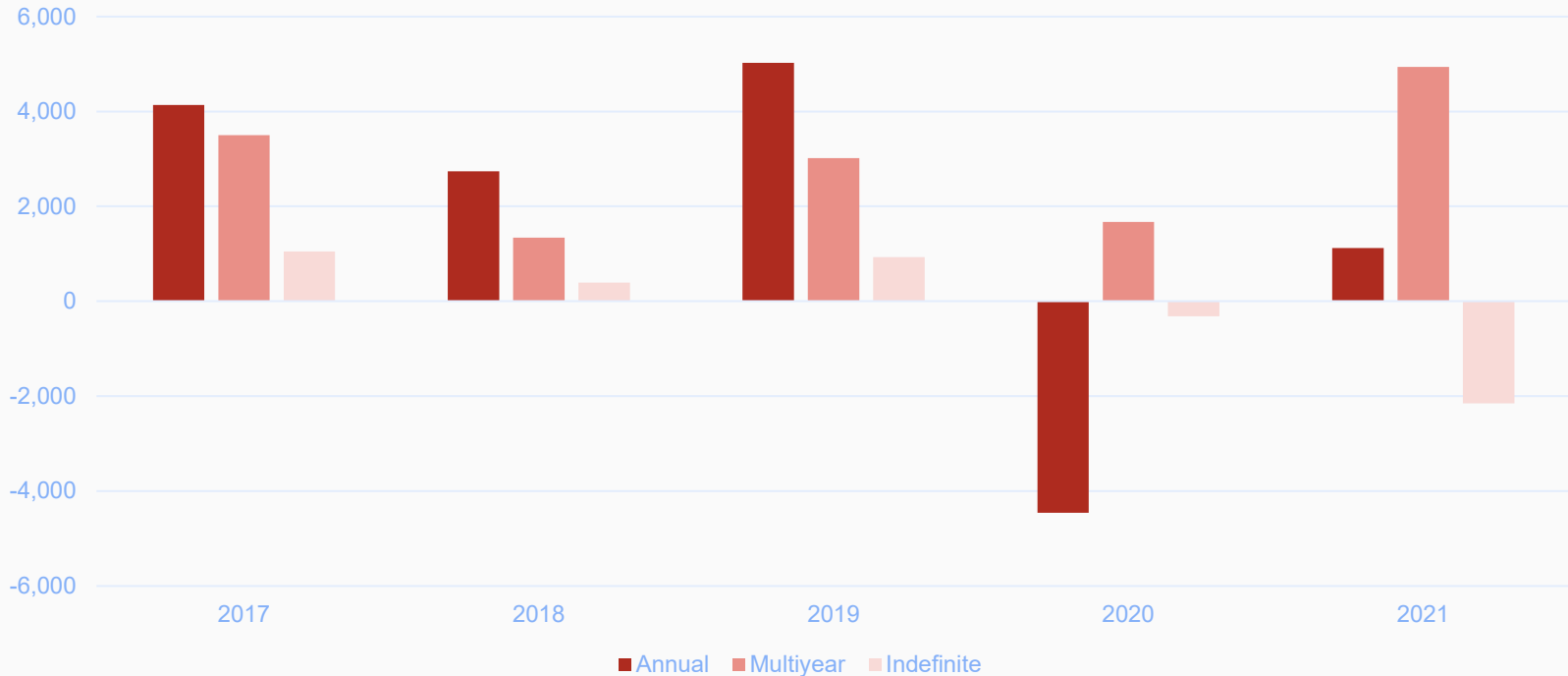
Graphing the annual change gives us significantly greater detail: big drops in the number of tenured/tenure track positions

FT instructional staff on contingent appointments at institutions with tenure systems, by contract duration, 2016-2021



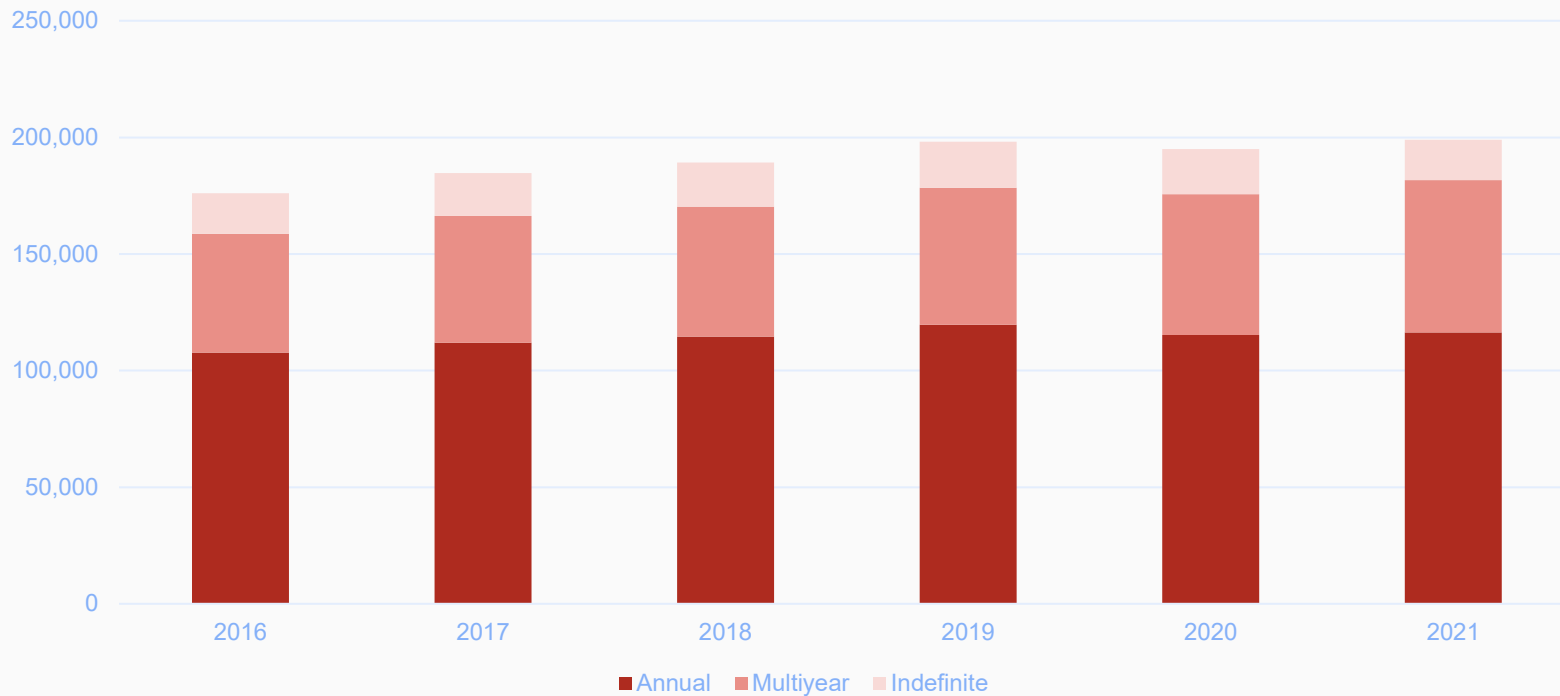
Among institutions with tenure systems, there's a noticeable shift from annual to multiyear contracts

Annual change in the number of FT instructional staff on contingent appointments at institutions with tenure systems, by contract duration, 2017-2021



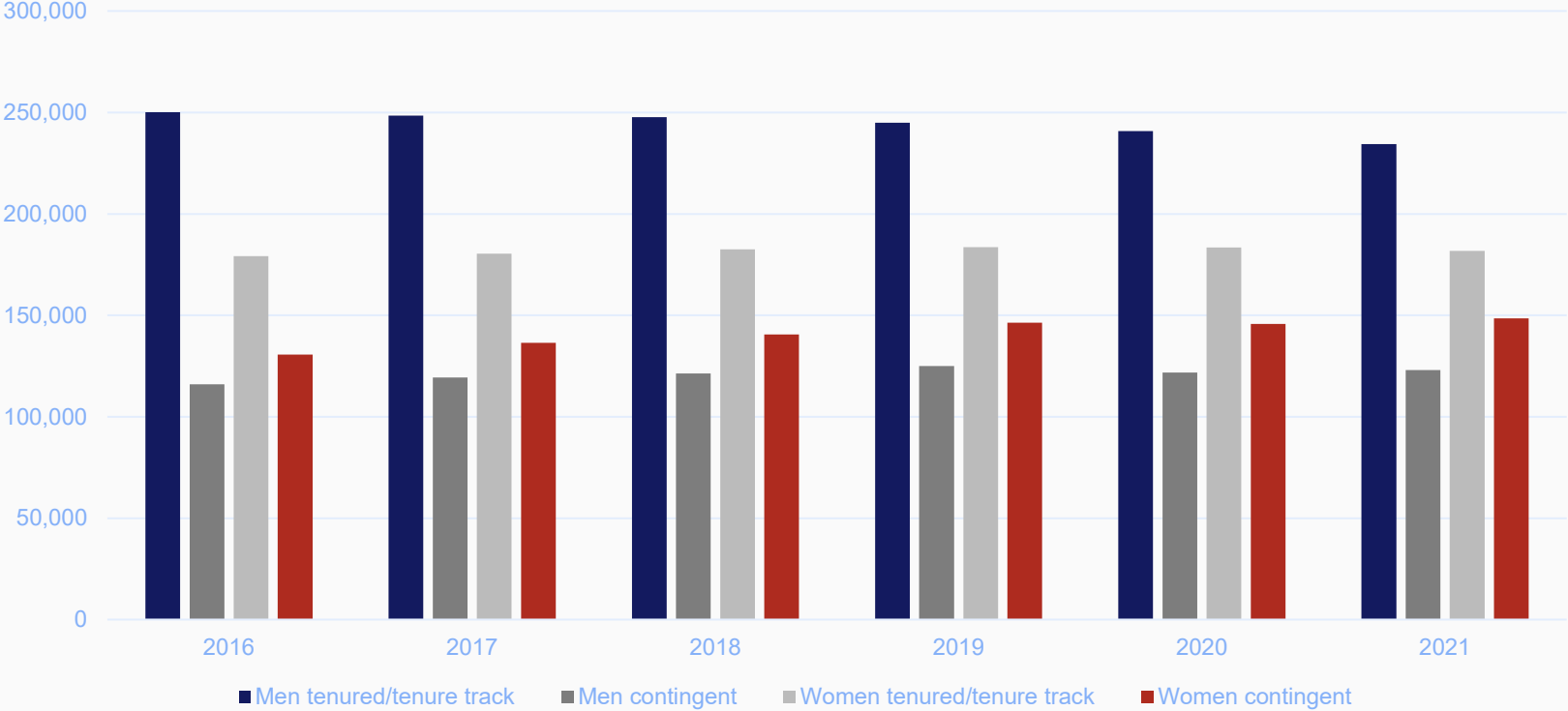
While other types of contracts experienced a decline in 2020, multiyear contracts continued to increase in number

FT instructional staff on contingent appointments at institutions with tenure systems, by contract duration, 2016-2021



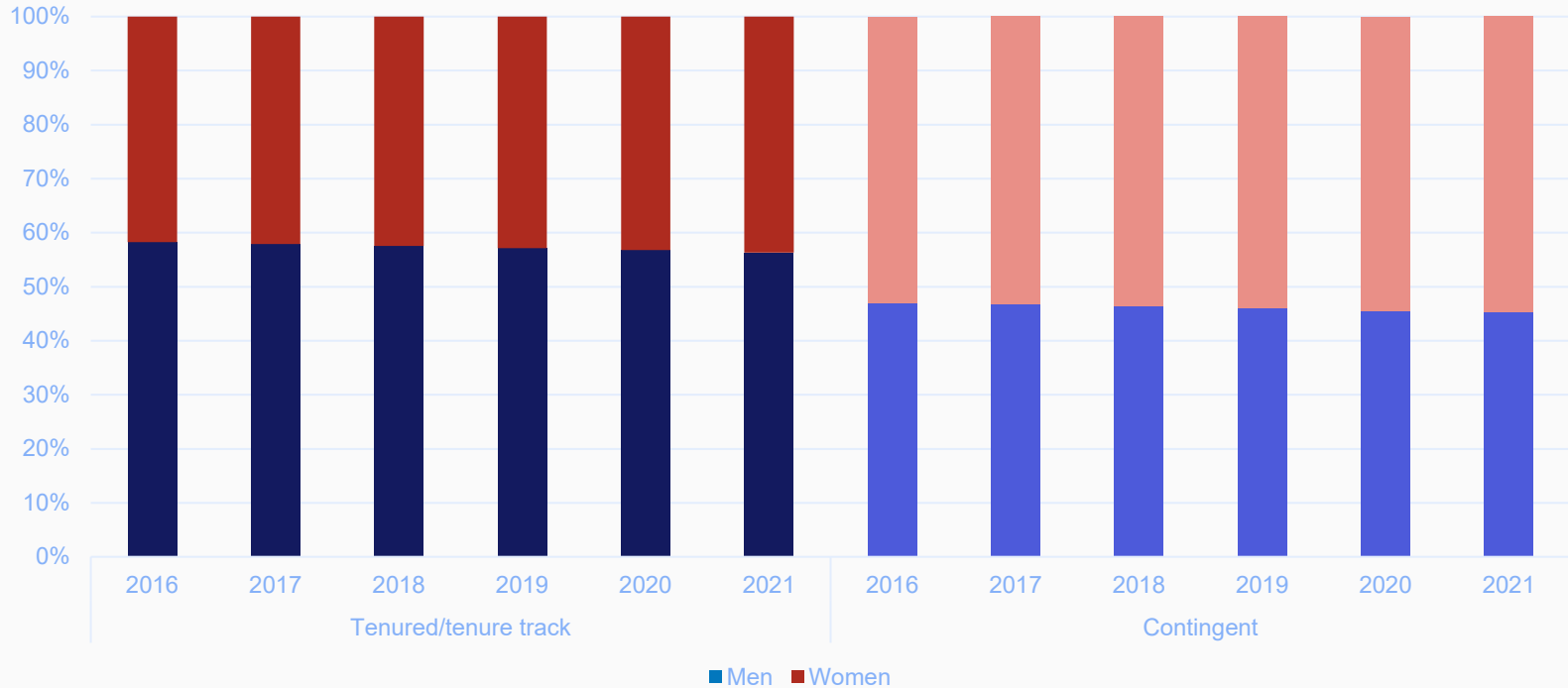
Annual increases in contingent appointments until 2020, a slight decline and a recovery in 2021

FT instructional staff by gender and appointment type, 2016-2021



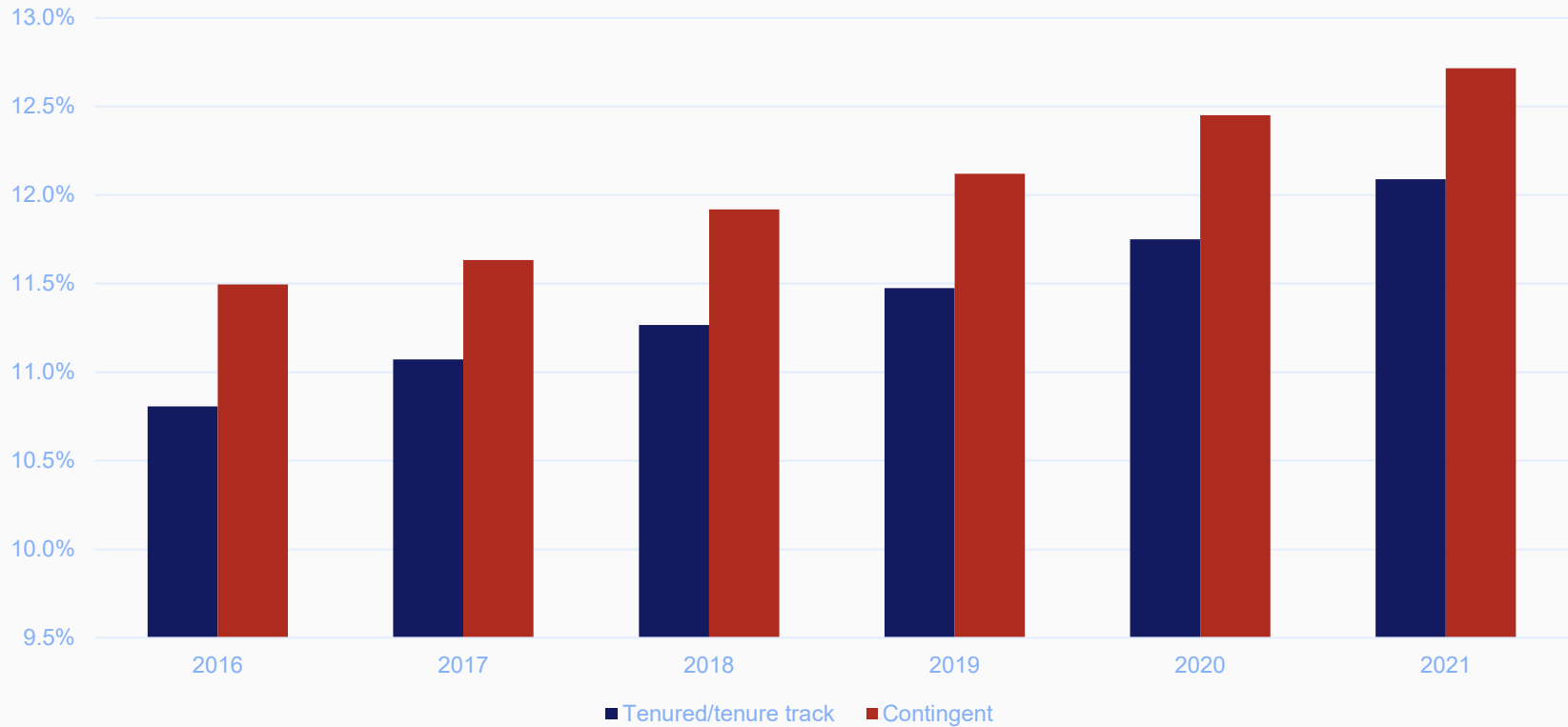
Note the decline in the number of men in tenured/tenure track positions and increase in the number of contingent appointments for women

Percent composition of FT instructional staff, by appointment type and gender, 2016-2021



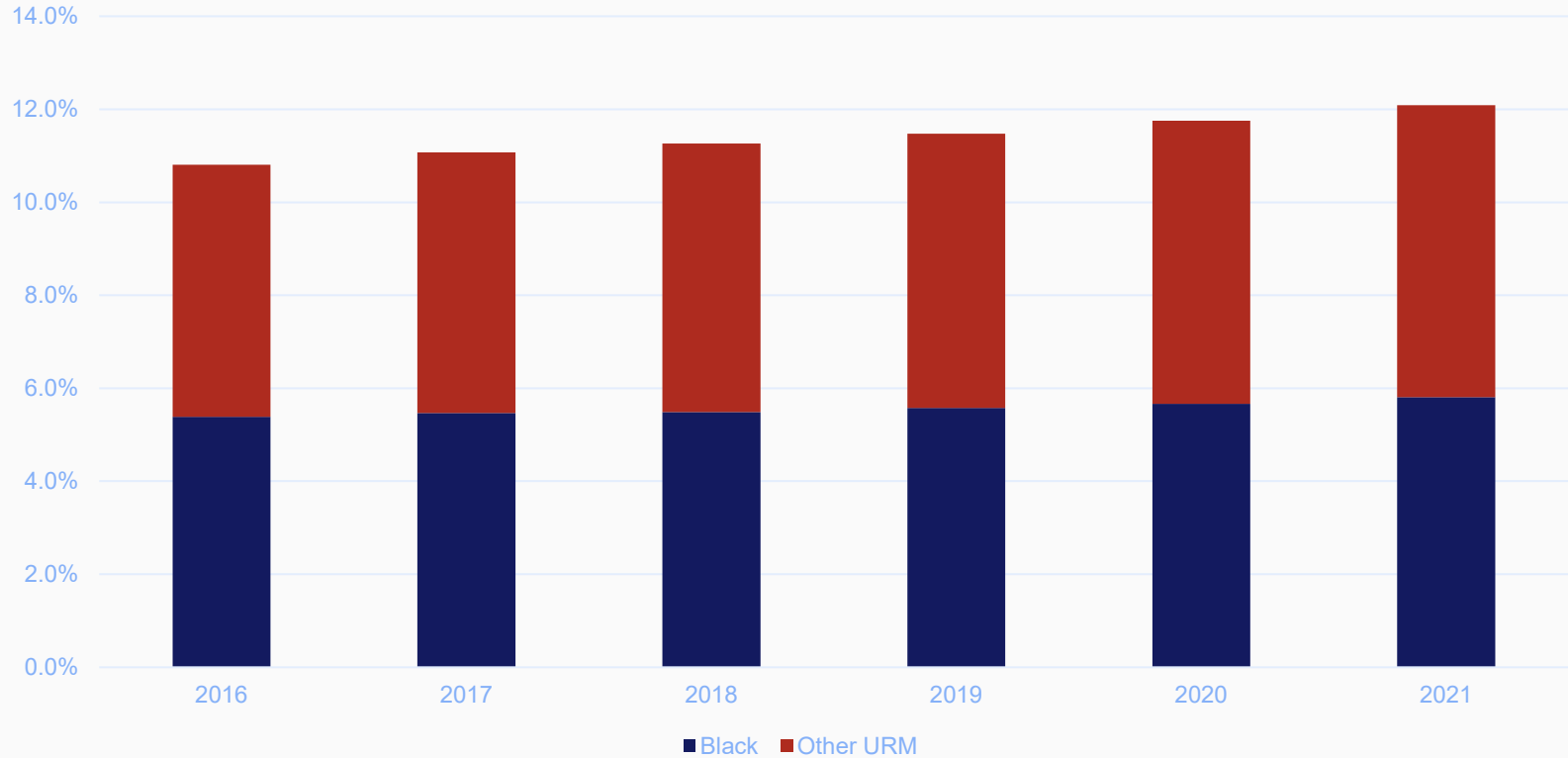
Women increase their tenured/tenure track proportion by 2% to 43.7%, and contingent proportion to 54.7% from 53.0%

URM percentage of FT instructional staff, by appointment type, 2016-2021



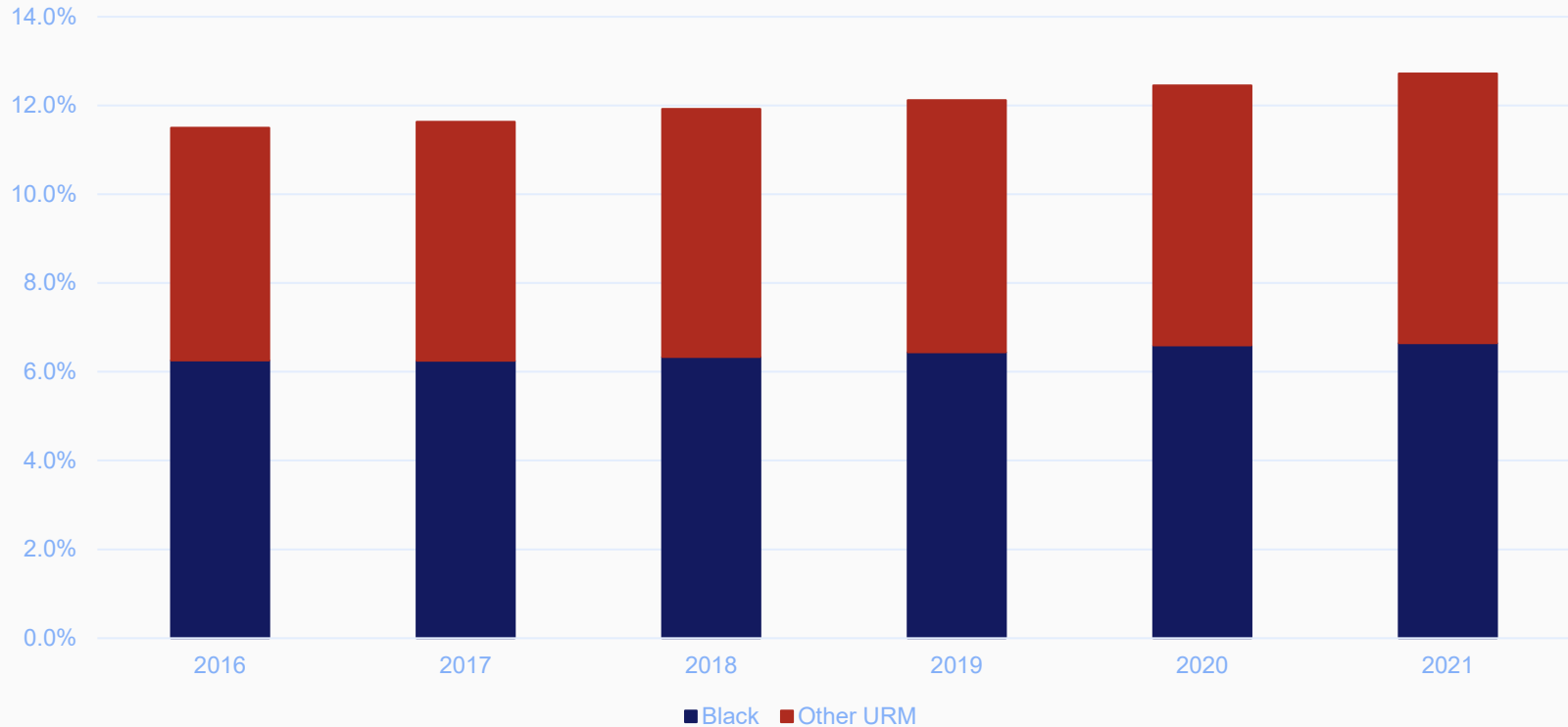
Overall, we see an increase in the underrepresented minority percentage among US citizens and permanent residents

URM percentage of FT tenured/tenure track instructional staff, 2016-2021



URM percentage increased 1.3% for tenured/tenure track faculty

URM percentage of FT instructional staff on contingent appointments, 2016-2021



URM percentage increased 1.2% for contingent appointments

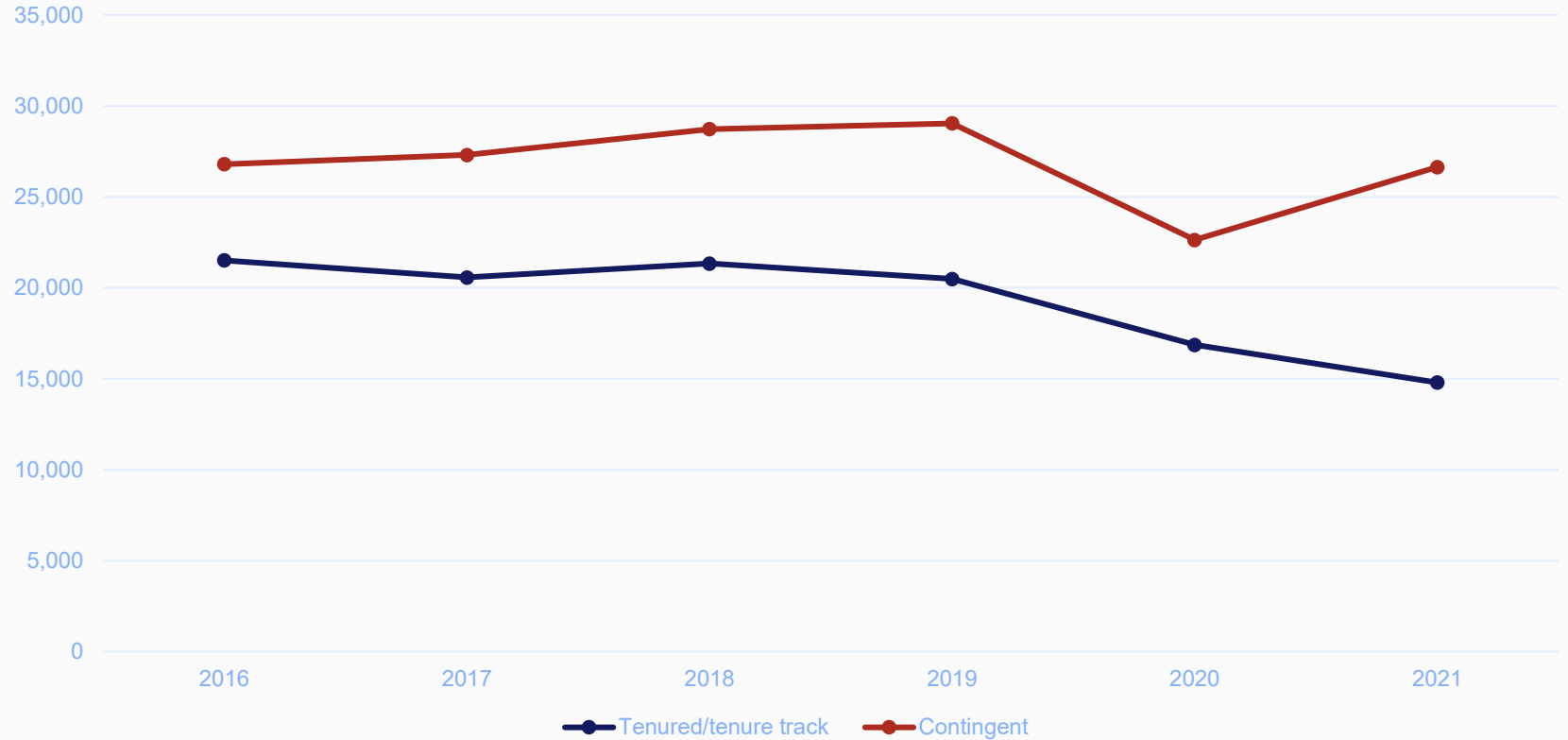
IPEDS new hires table

More about this data source

The IPEDS New Hires table

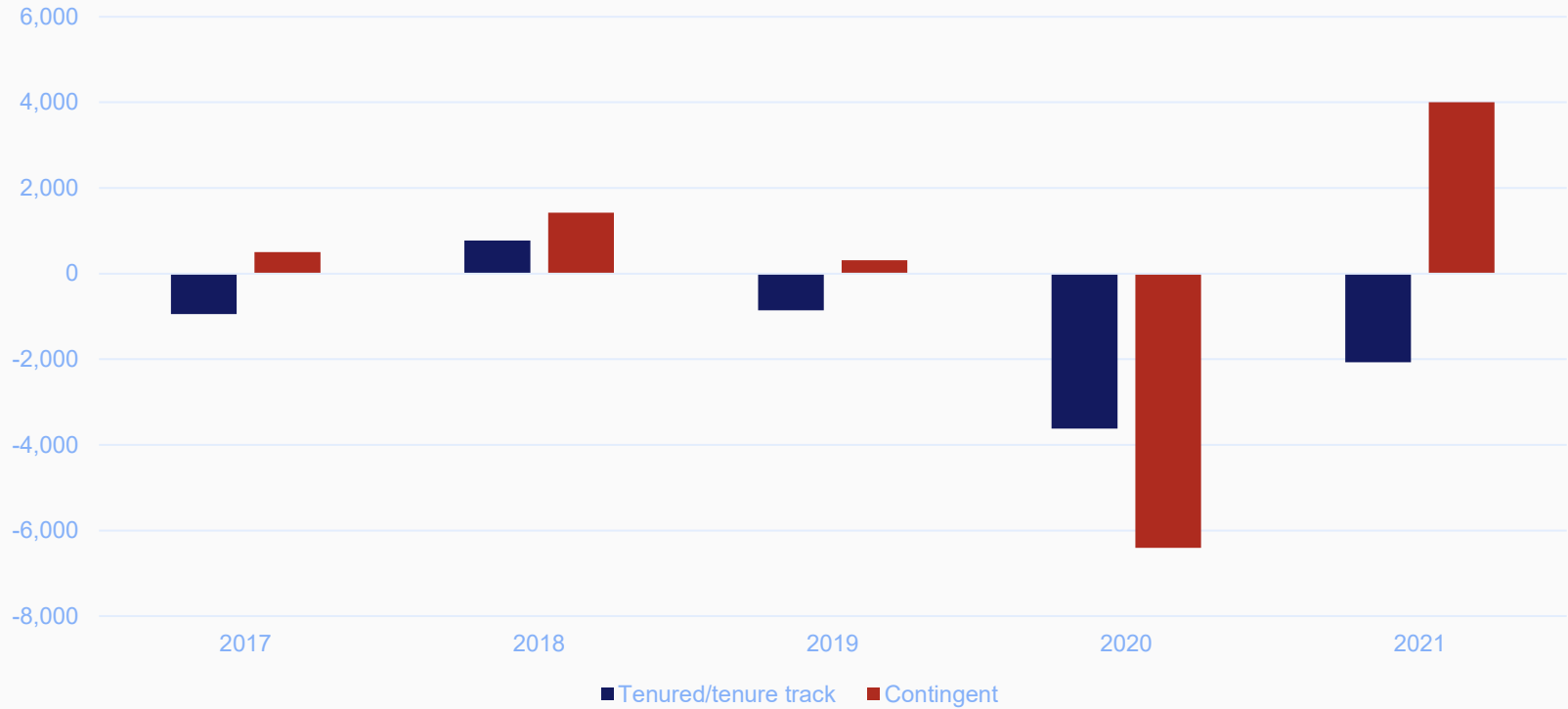
- Full-time new hires Oct 31-Nov 1
- Hired for the first time or rehired after a break in service
- Degree-granting institutions with 15 or more full-time employees and related administrative offices
- Includes medical school instructional staff, non-medical school instructional staff
- Does not include part-time instructional staff or graduate students

FT instructional new hires, 2016-2021



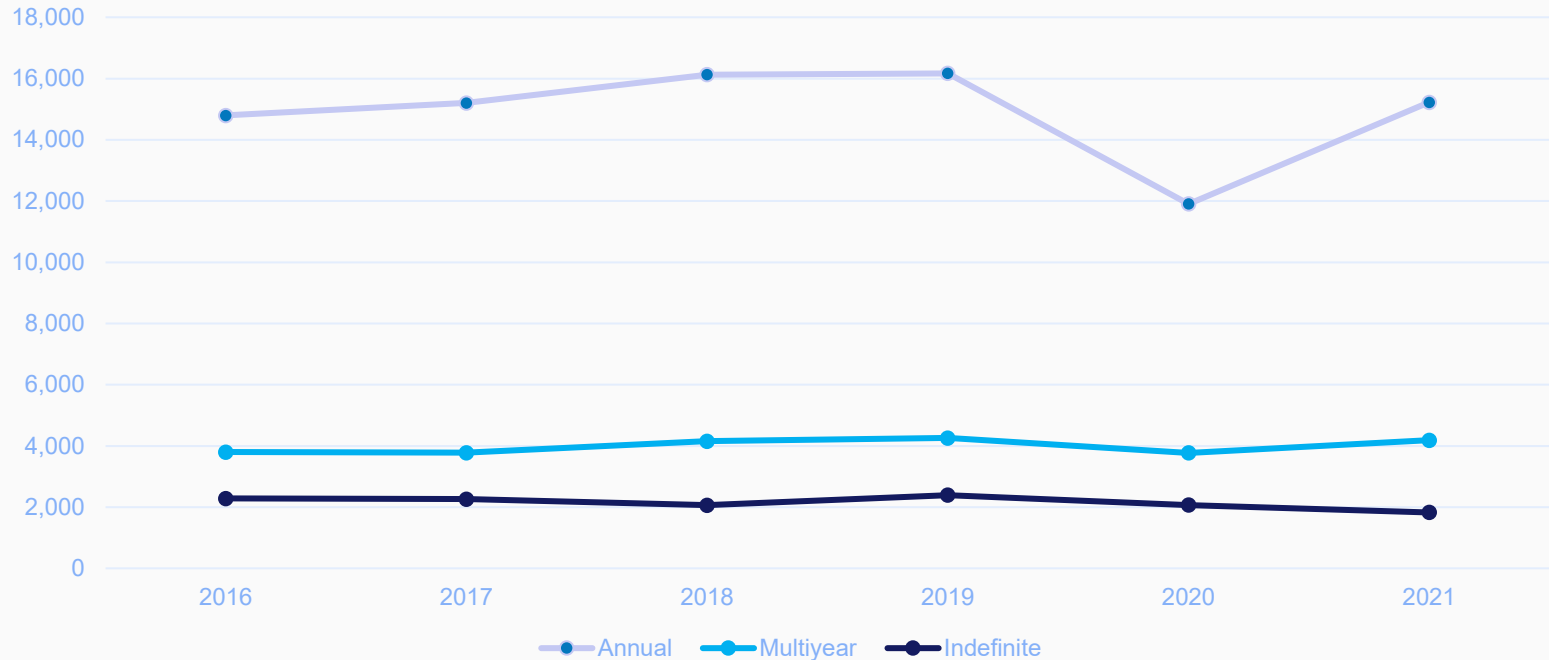
The overall trend is clear: the hiring recovery is concentrated among contingent faculty and remains incomplete

Annual change in the number of FT instructional new hires, by appointment type, 2017-2021



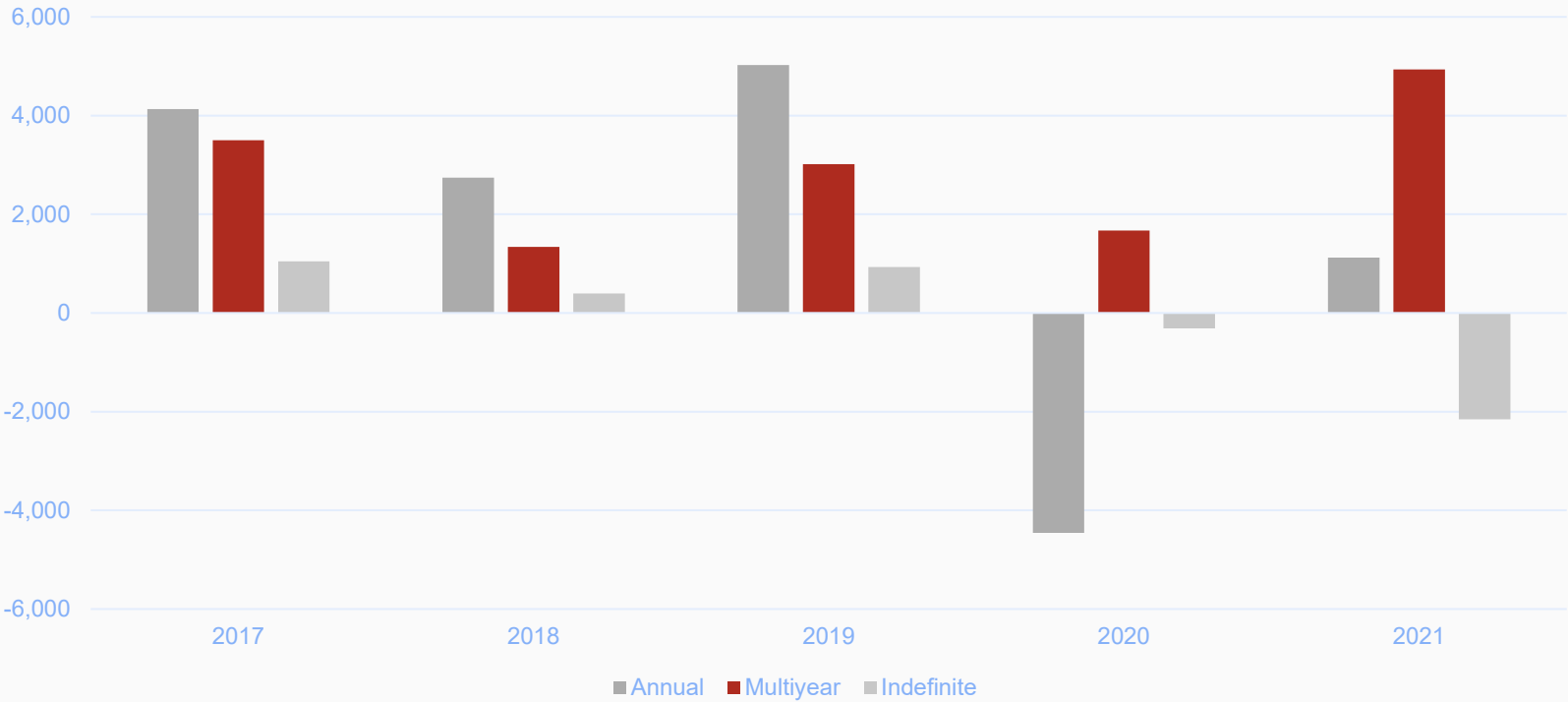
Contingent faculty hiring has recovered to an extent, but not so tenured/tenure track

FT instructional new hires on contingent appointments at institutions with tenure systems, by contract duration, 2016-2021



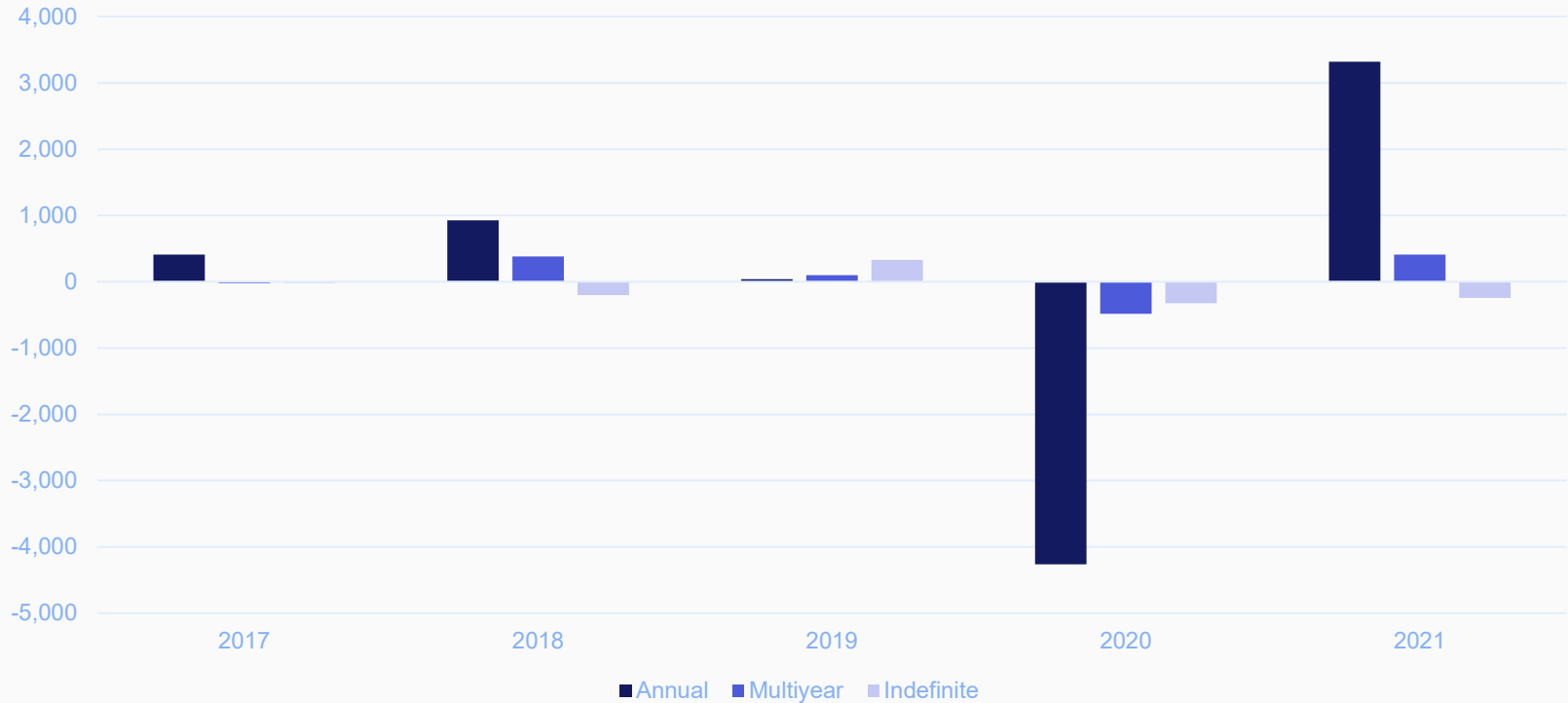
There's a slight uptick in multiyear contracts offered to new hires

Annual change in the number of FT instructional staff on contingent appointments at institutions with tenure systems, by contract duration, 2017-2021



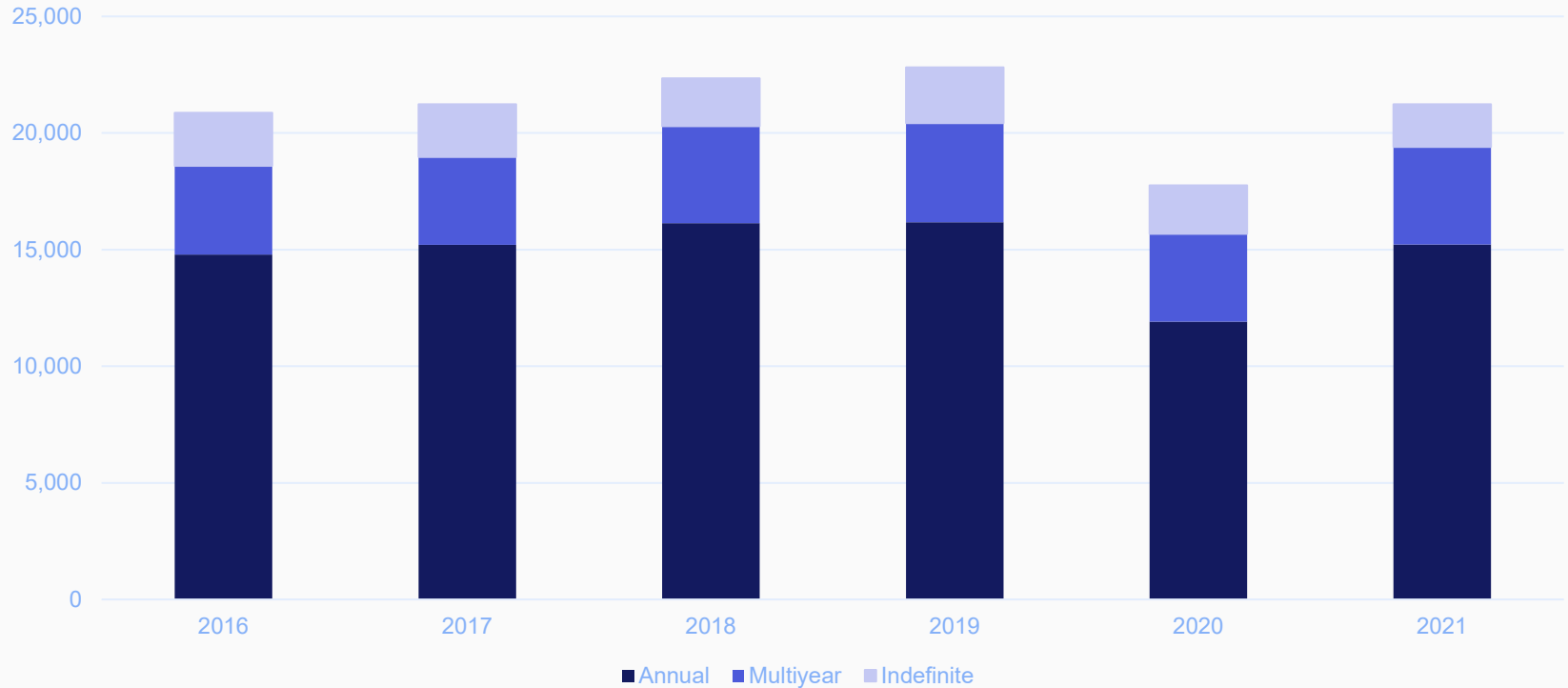
Here again the IS chart showing the annual change, with the multiyear change highlighted.

Annual change in the number of FT instructional new hires at institutions with tenure systems, by contract duration, 2017-2021



The 2020 declines are not yet matched by the increased hiring in 2021.

FT new hires on contingent appointments at institutions with tenure systems, by contract duration, 2016-2021

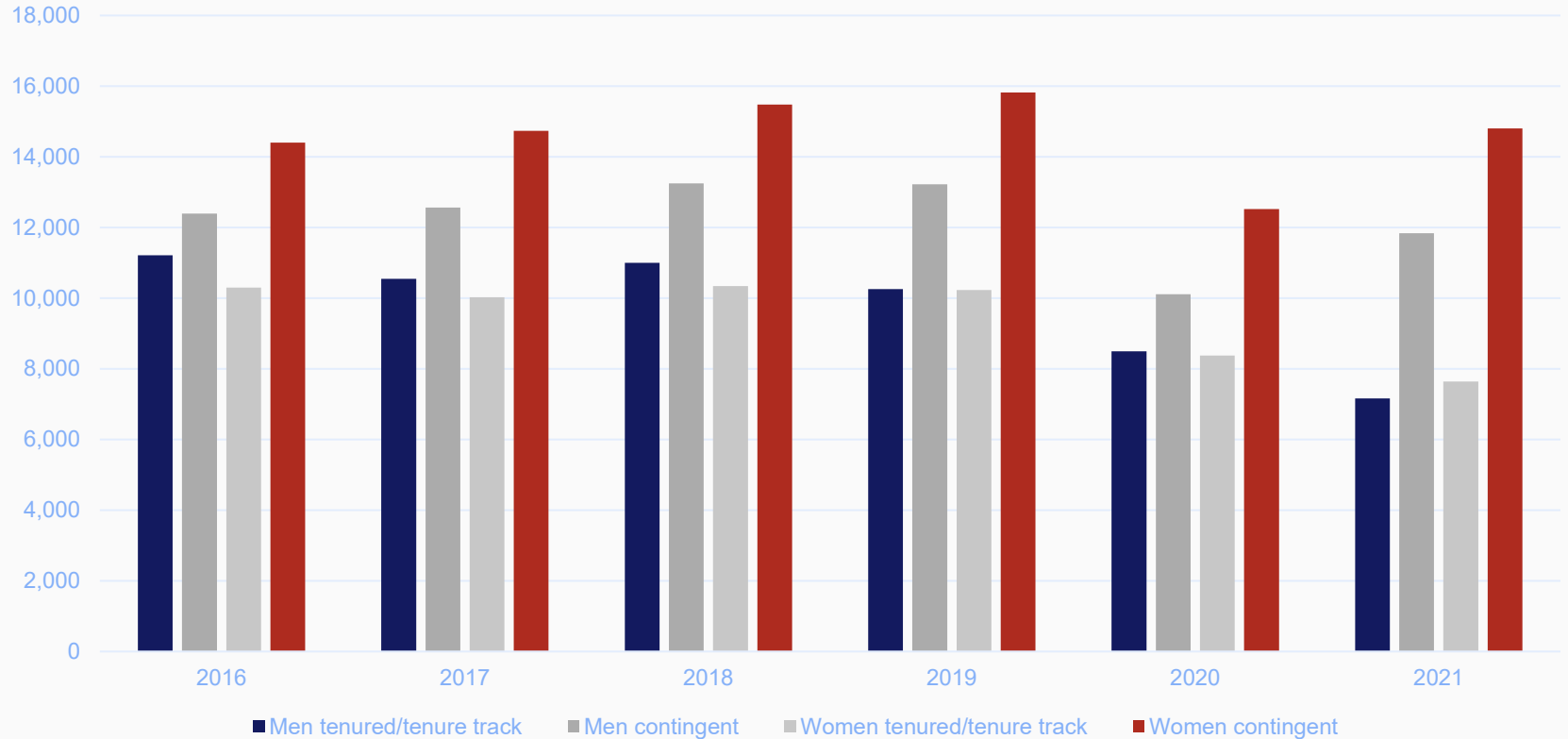


Hiring recovery at schools with tenure systems remains incomplete

Top 10 employers of contingent new hires, 2021

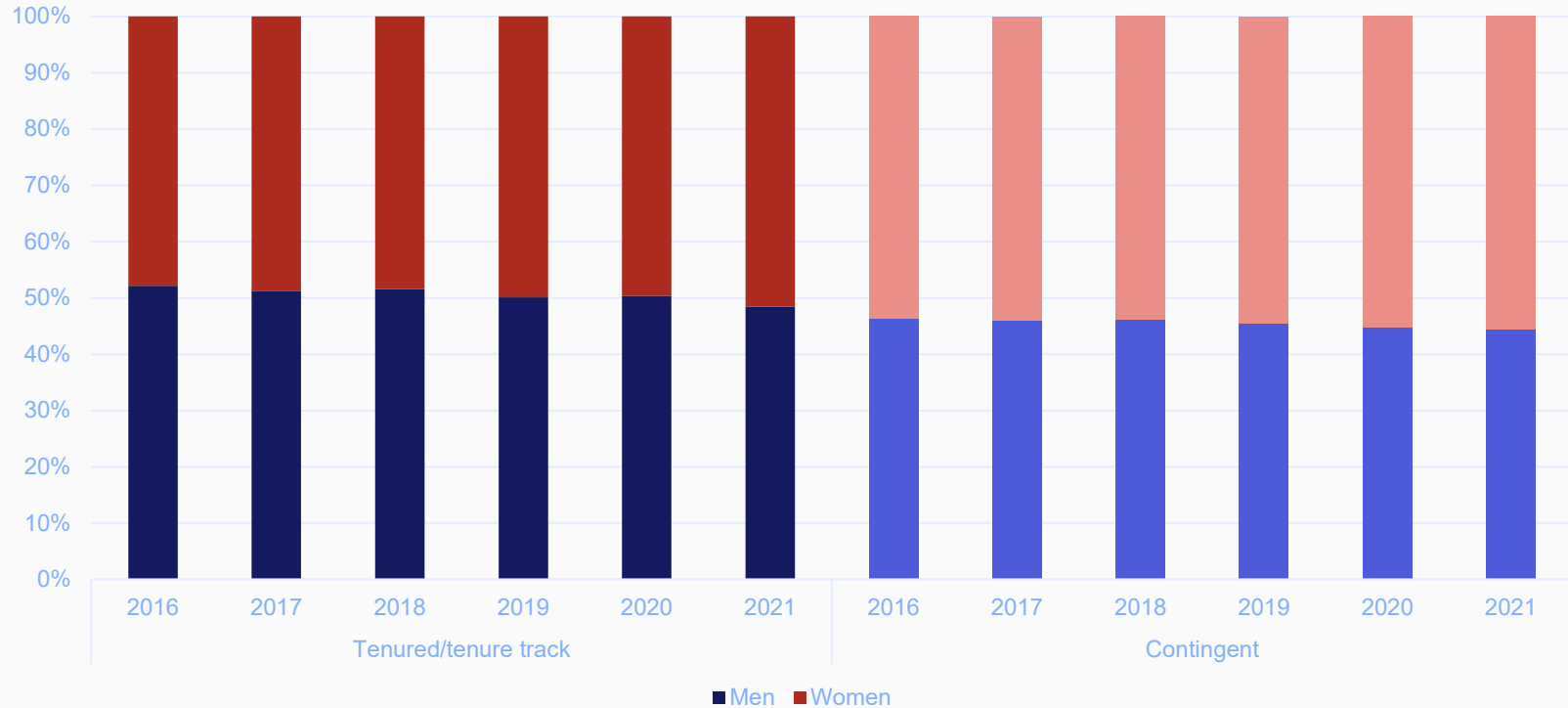
<u>Institution Name</u>	<u>Contingent new hires count</u>	<u>Contingent new hires percentage</u>
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	587	93.0
New York University	439	92.6
University of California-Los Angeles	321	83.8
University of Washington-Seattle Campus	248	70.5
University of Colorado Denver/Anschutz Medical Campus	238	67.4
Baylor College of Medicine	233	79.5
Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis	221	89.5
Oregon Health & Science University	220	100.0
University of California-San Francisco	216	99.5
Boston University	201	87.4

FT new hires by gender and appointment type, 2016-2021



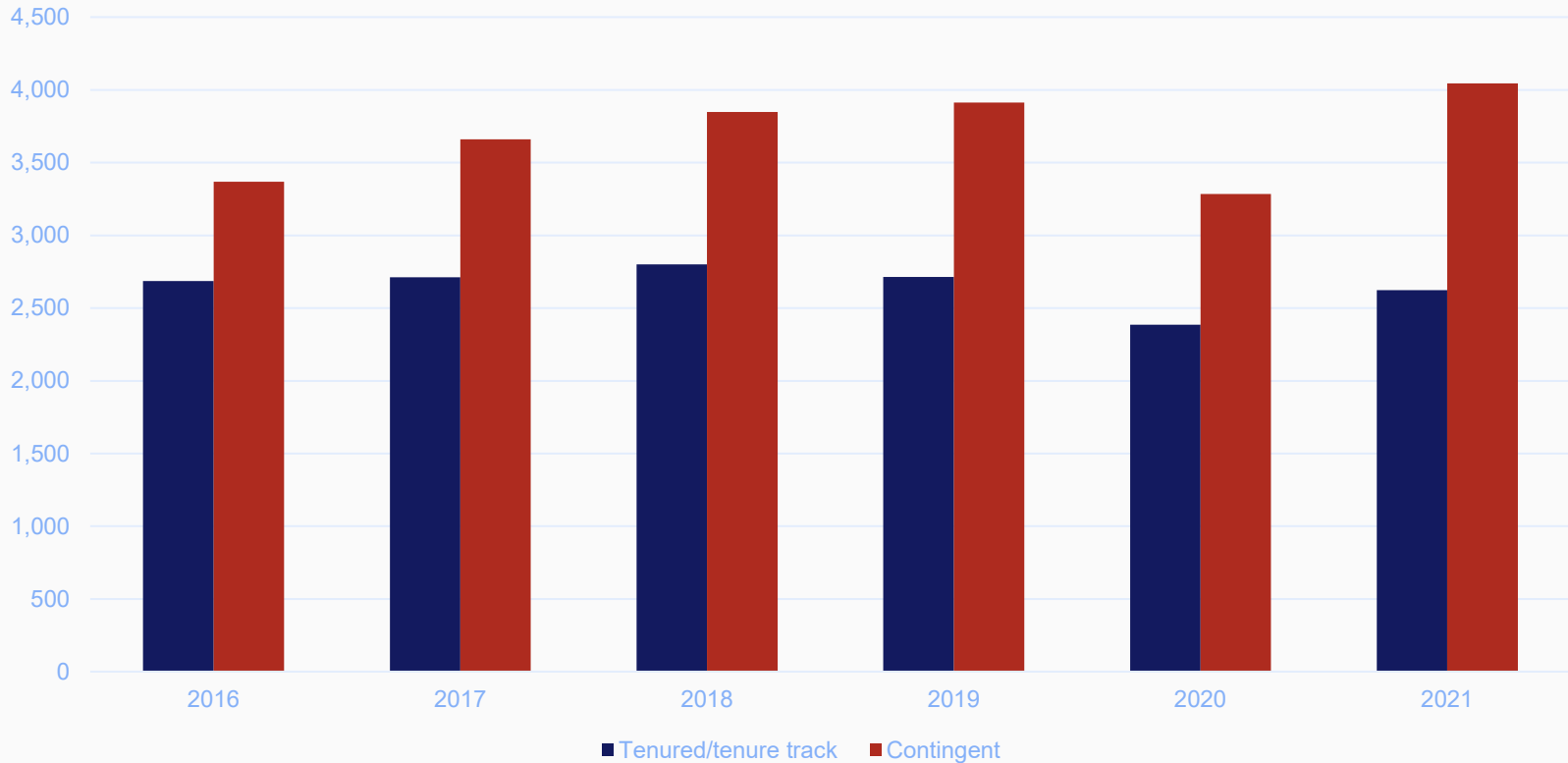
Overall, there are more women new hires than men

Percent composition of FT instructional new hires, by appointment type and gender, 2016-2021



Women comprised a majority of all new hires in 2021, both tenured/tenure track (51.6%) and contingent (55.6%)

FT URM instructional new hires, by appointment type 2016-2021



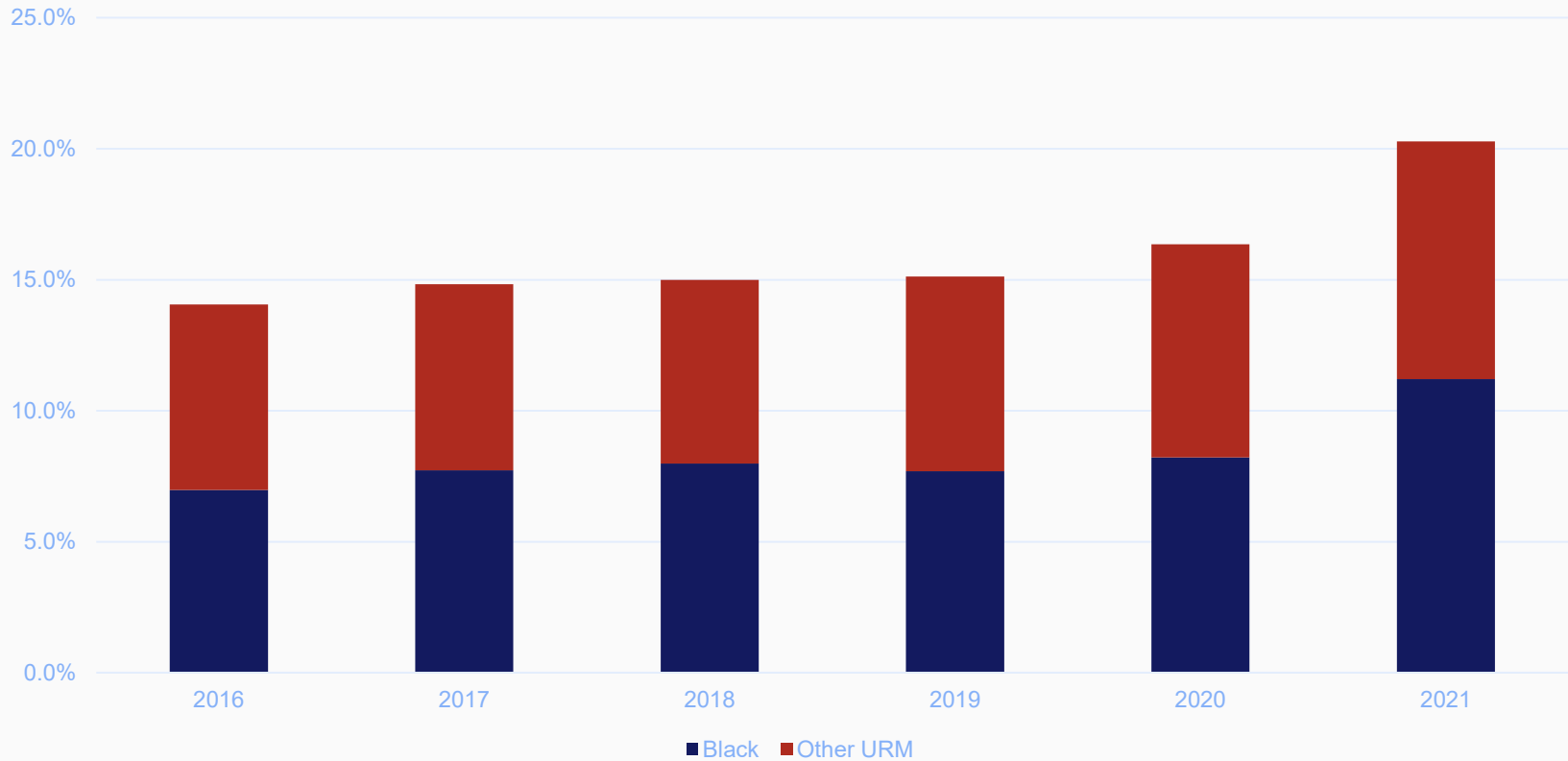
New hires on contingent appointments exceeded the 2019 count in 2021; only partial recovery among tenured/tenure track new hires

Percentage of URM FT instructional new hires, by appointment type, 2016-2021



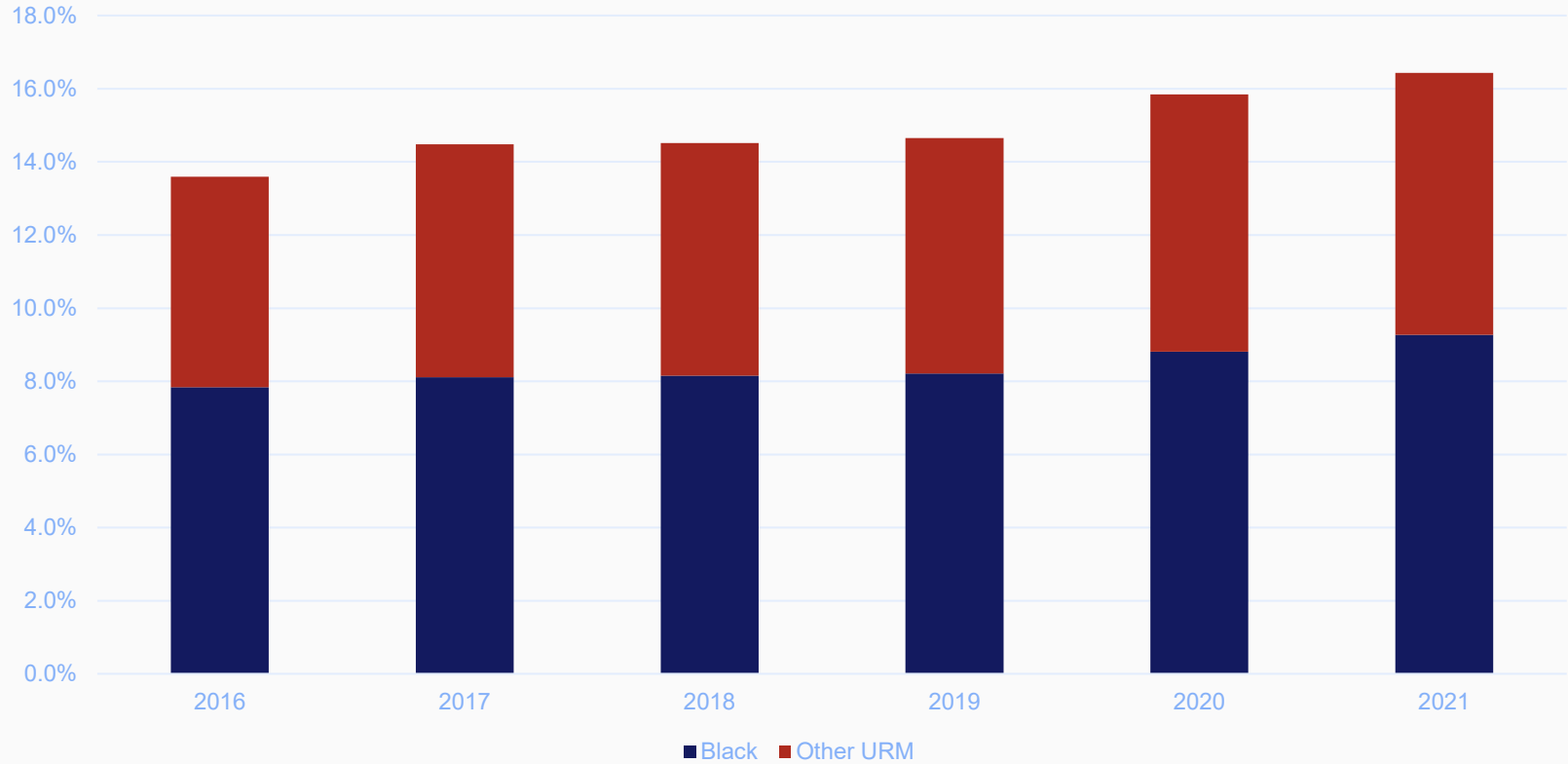
While the number of new hires declined, the proportion that are under-represented minorities increased.

URM percentage of tenured/tenure track FT new hires, 2016-2021



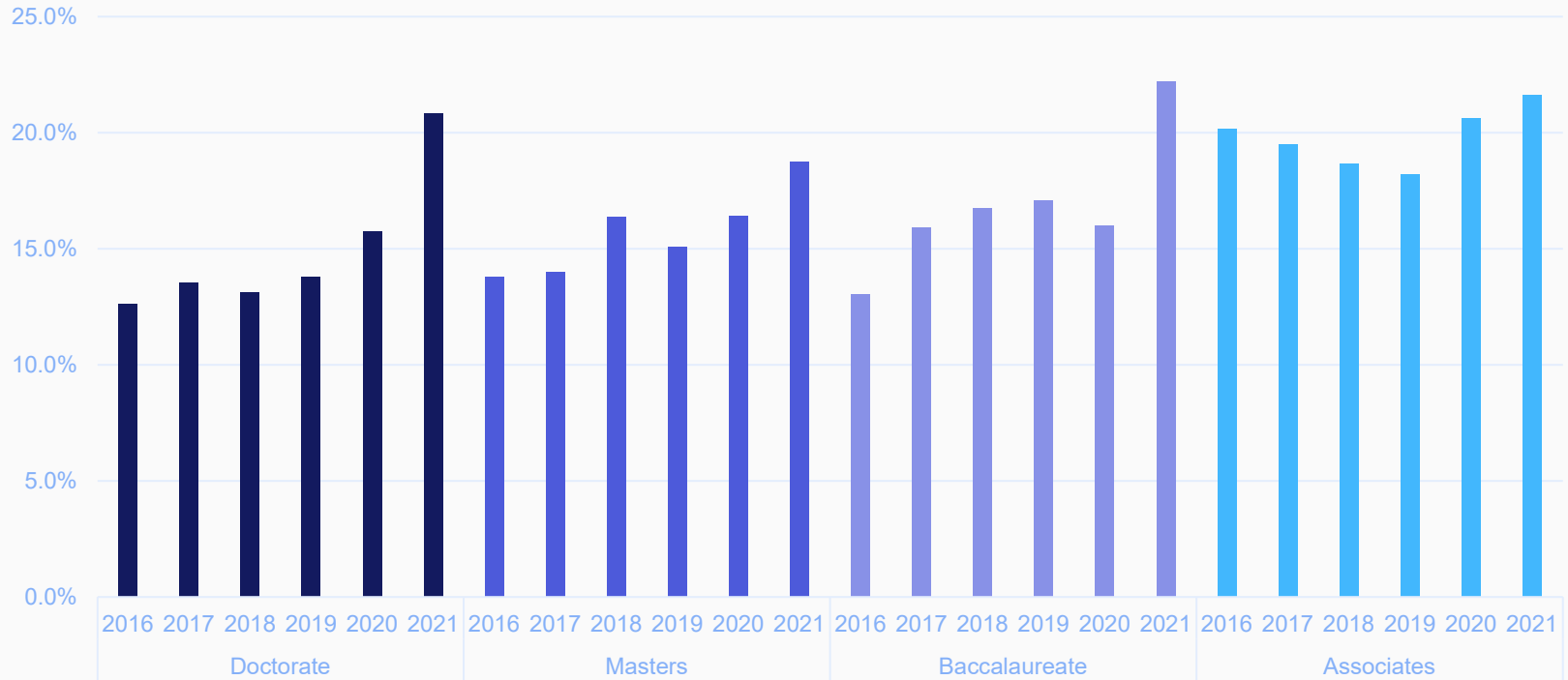
This is particularly true of tenured/tenure track new hires

URM percentage of FT new hires on contingent appointments, 2016-2021



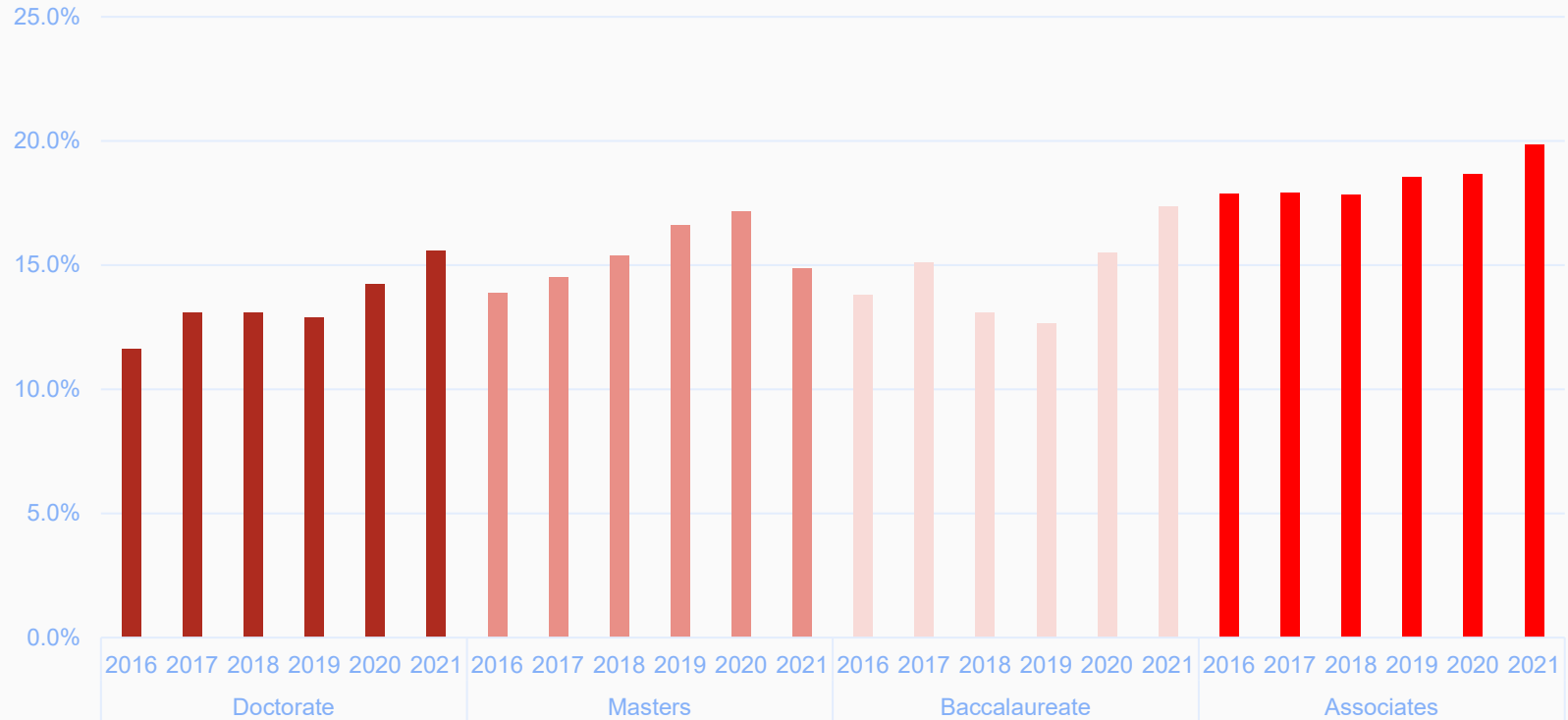
And holds true to a lesser degree for contingent new hires

URM percentage of FT tenured/tenure track new hires, by Carnegie basic classification, 2016-2021



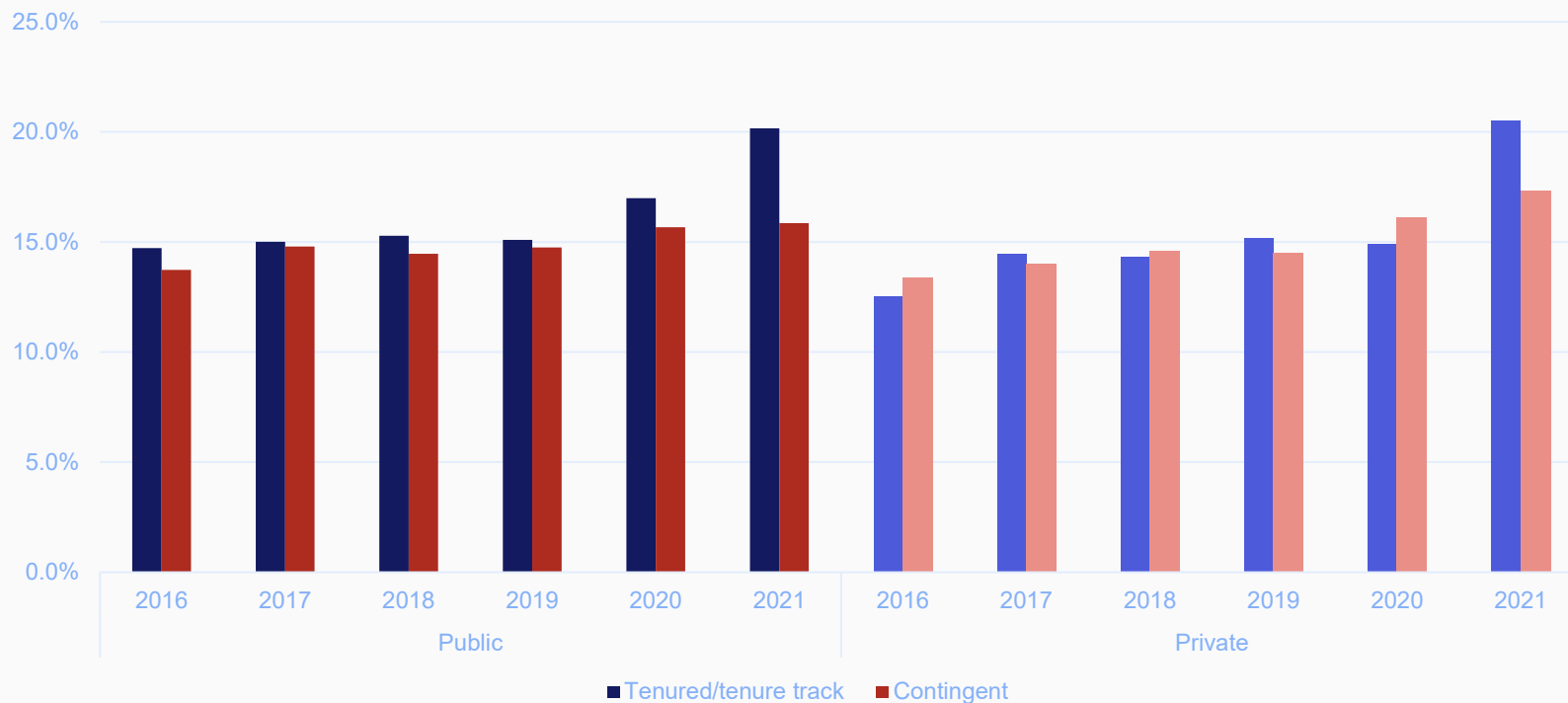
This proportional increase among tenured/tenure track new hires crosses Carnegie basic classifications.

URM percentage of FT new hires on contingent appointments, by Carnegie basic classification, 2016-2021



The increase in the URM proportion holds true to a lesser degree among contingent new hires

URM percentage of FT new hires, by institutional control and appointment type, 2016-2021



Greater increases are seen in private as opposed to public institutions.

Hiring trends in US higher ed: further research

- What is driving the surge in underrepresented minority hiring percentages?
- Will the trend against FT tenured/tenure track positions continue to accelerate?
- Whither the hiring recovery among FT contingent faculty? Will the proportion of multiyear contingent contracts increase in the next few years?
- Will the proportion of women new hires remain in the majority?
- Can we spot similar or complementary trends taking place among part-time instructional staff?
- Leverage the relationship between the new hires and instructional staff tables for additional insight

Questions?

Thank you!