

the other large source of revenue (17 percent).

Before the dinner and speeches, faculty members chaired panels of alumni who explored themes of importance to the school and the campaign: F. Warren McFarlan and William A. Sahlman led two sessions on society and technological in-

novation; Debora L. Spar and Richard H.K. Vietor led discussions on globalization; and Thomas J. DeLong and Linda A. Hill covered leadership. At lunch, Lawrence University Professor Michael E. Porter gave a keynote address on strategy. He noted that the Internet

conferred new business advantages and eliminated old ones: as competitors scour the world to find lower costs and better sources of supply, your edge evaporates, so the strengths you build locally, in your "cluster" of skilled colleagues and collab-

A Slightly Grayer Faculty

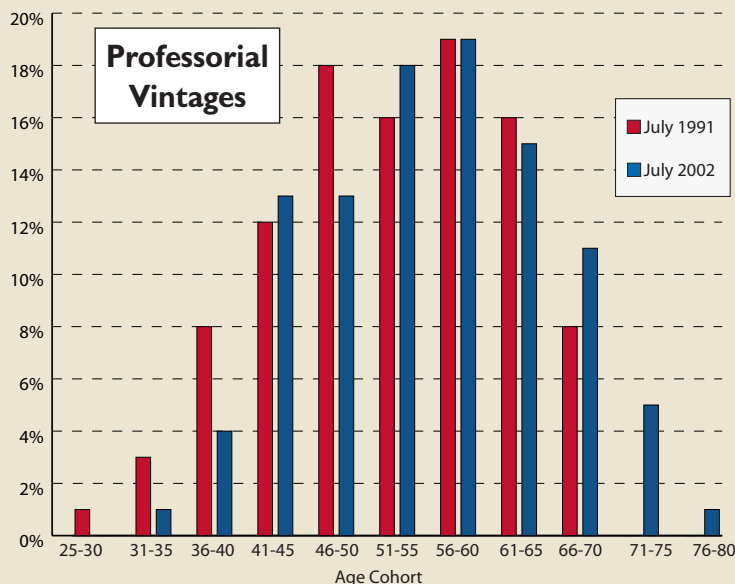
The unique institution of tenure gave higher education a loophole when the 1970 Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) was amended in 1986 to make mandatory retirement illegal. Colleges and universities were still allowed to set mandatory retirement ages because they were dealing with tenured employees. But that exemption expired in 1994; since then, faculty members choose when they will retire, if at all.

Some observers conjectured that the change in the law would clog up the employment pipeline with elderly professors who refused to retire, and lead to a "graying" of faculties nationally—especially at large research universities, where professors tend to be passionately involved in their work. Eight years after the change, Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) does seem to be graying slightly, but the dire impact that some predicted has not yet arrived in Cambridge (see "Scholarly Senescence?" November-December 1996, page 62).

Compare data from 1991 and 2002 on the age breakdown of tenured FAS members, currently 440 strong (see graph). In 1991 there was no tenured professor older than 70; in 2002, those aged 71 to 75 made up 5 percent of the faculty, and another 1 percent were between 76 and 80. Eleven percent of the current professorate are between 66 and 70, compared with 8 percent in that range in 1991. Meanwhile, the youngest group, aged 40 and under, shrank from 11 percent in 1991 to 5 percent today.

The average age at retirement from 1994 to 2001 was 69. Of those faculty members who have turned 70 since 1994, 27 percent have remained active. One's area of scholarship seems to affect the decision to retire. "In the humanities, most retire at 70 or close to 70. More tend to stay on after 70 in the natural sciences, with the social sciences in the middle," says the FAS's associate dean for academic affairs, Vincent Tompkins, Ph.D. '91. "At that point in their careers, what the humanists seem to want most is time. Scientists want continued access to space and grant support, without which they cannot do research."

Some scholars—especially scientists—worried that a grant's chances for approval diminish if the principal investigator is listed as "emeritus." Hence, in 1997 the University created the title "research professor," carrying the same rights and privileges as professor emeritus. Appointments as research professor, which exist in all disciplines, can be renewed annually for up to five years after retirement. Today, "The vast majority of science fac-



ulty who retire use the research-professor title," Tompkins says.

Space, in short supply throughout the sciences, is closely linked to retirement issues. "We want to be sure that lab space, for example, is being used as intensively as possible," Tompkins says, "and if faculty research is tailing off, it's a problem." All departments allocate offices for emeritus professors, but not necessarily the same ones they had while teaching; in some cases, the retired teachers may have to double up. Space could become a greater concern in departments—like some of the life sciences—where the shortage might prevent hiring additional faculty members to fill all of the allocated positions.

Thus far, FAS has not experienced dramatic enough change in its faculty retirement patterns to warrant any systematic early-retirement program. Such policies can be expensive, and "the results [elsewhere] have been mixed," Tompkins says. Harvard does offer professors the option of taking their last two years before retirement at half-time, to create a more gradual transition, and "a healthy number make that choice," he says. He adds that "FAS has not felt the pinch so much because we've been in a growth mode. Two years ago [former FAS dean] Jeremy [R. Knowles] said that he wanted FAS to grow by 60 positions in the next 10 years. That means adding six positions a year on average, and we've done that." Furthermore, "Age is not necessarily or consistently a good indicator of scholarly productivity, University citizenship, or effectiveness in the classroom," Tompkins says. "So as an institution, we've got to be careful to approach issues like faculty retirement in a careful and nuanced way."