These discussions will take place against the backdrop of increasing faculty retirements. As older faculty are leaving academia, hiring of young scientists and engineers can be expected to pick up further. However, the longer-term structure of this hiring is uncertain. Current trends suggest slower growth of the faculty segment than of other types of academic employment. Will universities and colleges shift the focus of their replacement hiring from tenure-track faculty positions into other, more flexible types of appointments?

The nature and goals of both undergraduate and graduate education are being debated. Are the current models appropriate, or should undergraduate education and graduate training allow for broader and more varied application of skills in the marketplace? Should graduate students be given more autonomy from their professors, perhaps by way of restructuring their modes of support? What is the appropriate role for the Federal Government in this support? Continued increases in the number of foreign students, vital for many graduate programs, cannot be taken for granted. Issues about the nature of graduate education join with questions of university missions and program organization.

The research universities are valued as a national resource: they educate and train large proportions of the Nation's scientists and engineers, embody the model of integrated graduate training and research, and conduct much of the nation's basic research. Yet questions abound. Is their graduate training developing a high-quality yet flexible workforce of scientists and engineers? Is it driven too much by research? Is their research enterprise too insular? Too driven by external demands from the Federal Government or industry? Does it cost too much? How can research be better connected to undergraduate education? With growing research involvement, smaller academic research performers face these same questions.

Answers to these and other questions will emerge gradually, as individual institutions respond to the challenges and opportunities they perceive. The Nation's universities and colleges have shown great ability to adapt to changed realities. In time, it will become possible to take stock of the changes and assess their extent. Many issues underlying these changes will persist, as higher education institutions try to find the appropriate balance among their many evolving functions.

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