



THE COUNCIL OF
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

A Study of
Chief Academic Officers of
Independent Colleges and Universities



Harold V. Hartley III
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Who Are They? Where Do They Come From?

What Are They Doing? Where Do They Want to Go?

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The Council of Independent Colleges is an association of more than 600 independent liberal arts colleges and universities and 70 higher education affiliates and organizations that work together to strengthen college and university leadership, sustain high-quality education, and enhance private higher education's contributions to society. To fulfill this mission, CIC provides its members with skills, tools, and knowledge that address aspects of leadership, financial management and performance, academic quality, and institutional visibility. The Council is headquartered at One Dupont Circle in Washington, DC.

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CIC also expresses appreciation to the American Council on Education for providing access to data from the CAO Census:

A National Profile of Chief Academic Officers.

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Executive Summary

Chief academic officers (CAOs) of independent colleges and universities are the principal leaders and managers of the academic programs of the institutions they serve. The core functions of higher education—teaching students, conducting scholarly research, and service to the academic community—usually fall under their purview. In many cases, CAOs serve as the second executive leader of the institution, behind the president, often with oversight of institutional operations beyond the academic program. Despite these important responsibilities, few comprehensive studies have been conducted to examine the characteristics and duties of CAOs, and of these studies, none has focused on the CAOs of the nation’s small and mid-sized private colleges and universities.

Since 2008, the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) has pursued a research agenda to support professional development for leaders of small and mid-sized private colleges and universities. An initial report, *A Study of Career Patterns of the Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities* (Hartley and Godin, 2009), examined the various career routes and characteristics of first-time presidents. Given the earlier finding that presidents of CIC colleges and universities are less likely to have been CAOs than their presidential colleagues serving in other types of institutions and the concern among trustees and search consultants about an inadequate pool of qualified candidates for presidential vacancies, CIC became particularly interested in the aspirations of CAOs to the college presidency. The Council of Independent Colleges is grateful to the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI) for support of this research project and to the American Council on Education (ACE) for providing access to data from ACE’s census of chief academic officers (Eckel, Cook, and King, 2009).

The purpose of this study is to understand the characteristics, roles, and career aspirations of chief academic officers of CIC member colleges and universities. Who are these chief academic leaders? What career paths did they follow to reach their senior leadership positions? What are their duties and responsibilities? What further professional aspirations do they have? And, do substantive differences exist between the CAOs of independent colleges and those serving in other higher education settings? Responses from 1,140 chief academic officers to the ACE survey conducted in 2008 were analyzed, including 358 CIC CAOs. Specifically, comparisons were made between CAOs of CIC member colleges and universities and CAOs of four major sub-sector groups: (1) public baccalaureate and master’s (BA/MA) level institutions, (2) private doctoral universities, (3) public doctoral universities, and (4) public two-year colleges.

The key findings of this study are:

Demographic Characteristics—When compared with CAOs in other institutional settings, the chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities are:

- Slightly younger, with an average age of 57, than CAOs of other four-year institutions, as likely to be female (38 percent), less likely to be a person of color (9 percent), and as likely to be married (84 percent);
- Serving on average 4.3 years in their CAO positions, representing the shortest term among their counterparts in other settings;
- As likely to possess a terminal degree (96 percent), though more likely than CAOs of other four-year institutions to have an EdD (10 percent) rather than a PhD;

- More likely to have their highest earned degrees in the humanities and fine arts (31 percent), as likely to have degrees in the social sciences (25 percent), and more likely to have degrees in education and higher education (17 percent); and
- Less likely to have tenure in their current positions (51 percent).

Pathways to the CAO Position—When compared with CAOs in other institutional settings, in their most immediate prior position chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities are:

- Less likely to have most recently served as an academic officer other than the CAO (50 percent), though this remains the most common route to the CIC CAO position;
- More likely to have been appointed directly from the faculty (21 percent);
- More likely to have previously served as the CAO of a different institution (19 percent);
- More likely to have been appointed to their present roles from a different institution (53 percent), as well as more likely to have remained at the same institution throughout their academic careers (40 percent), except for CAOs of private research universities;
- Less likely to have participated in formal off-campus leadership development programs prior to assuming their present CAO position (30 percent—except for CAOs of private research universities);

Satisfaction—Similar to CAOs in other settings, nearly two-thirds of CIC CAOs are very satisfied in their positions, with nearly another one-third saying they are somewhat satisfied; satisfaction, however, varies widely by the CAO's place in the senior leadership structure.

Duties and Responsibilities—CIC CAOs indicate that:

- They spend most of their time on the curriculum and academic programs, followed by supervising and managing personnel, and hiring, promoting, and facilitating the retirement of faculty members; time-consuming duties vary widely by type of institution;
- They engage most frequently in the following external activities: working with the governing board, with other colleges and universities, and with community relations and outreach, though they are less likely than their colleagues in other four-year institutions to engage in fundraising;
- They are more likely than CAOs in other institutional settings to teach a course and nearly as likely to conduct research or engage in scholarly publication in their disciplines;
- Promoting academic quality and setting the academic vision of the institution are their most important duties, which they say are viewed as priorities also by their presidents;
- Their greatest frustrations are insufficient funds and the difficulty of cultivating leadership in others;
- They are less likely than CAOs in other four-year institutional settings to serve as the number two institutional executive behind the president (66 percent) and more likely than other CAOs to serve as one of several vice presidents of equal authority (24 percent);
- They have their best relationship with the president and their most challenging relationship with the faculty, though taken together, difficulties with the chief financial officer and other vice presidents pose greater relationship challenges.

Presidential Aspirations—Fewer than one in four CIC CAOs say that they plan to seek a college presidency, lowest among the institutional groupings of CAOs studied for this report. Younger CIC CAOs and those who most recently served as administrators outside of academic affairs, however, are more likely to indicate interest in the presidency. CIC CAOs who seek a presidency say they need greater proficiency in fundraising (69 percent), governing board relations (42 percent), and budget and financial management (32 percent). Three of four CAOs who either are not considering or are undecided about seeking a presidency say that the nature of the work is unappealing.

Several conclusions are suggested by these findings. First, although chief academic officers indicate relatively high levels of satisfaction with their roles, suggesting a high degree of compatibility with the leadership responsibilities and demands of these senior academic positions, this finding seems to be at odds with their relatively short periods of service (4.3 years on average for CIC CAOs). If they enjoy the work, why don't CAOs stay in their positions longer? The data available for this study do not provide a sufficient explanation for the relatively short terms of service of chief academic officers, indicating a possible avenue for future research.

Second, although largely satisfied with their work, CAOs indicate that they have challenging relationships with key campus constituents. Aside from frustrations in working with the faculty, CIC CAOs say they have the greatest difficulty working with their chief financial officers and with the other vice presidents. Good relationships among the senior leadership team are essential for effective institutional management. Programs that foster better relations among the CAO, CFO, and other vice presidents could be beneficial.

Third, despite their high levels of satisfaction, chief academic officers receive little formal professional development for their leadership roles. This is particularly true for CAOs of CIC colleges and universities, with fewer than 30 percent having participated in a formal leadership development program prior to assuming their CAO role.

Fourth, the small proportion of chief academic officers who aspire to the college presidency appear to have a fairly accurate assessment of the skills needed to be a successful president, such as fundraising, governing board relations, budget and financial management, and risk management and legal issues. Additionally, since prior research indicates that the use of mentors is effective in cultivating future collegiate leadership, programs to develop potential college presidents would do well to include strong mentoring components. (Three of five CIC CAOs who say they plan to seek a presidency indicate that they have worked with mentors.) Taken together, these findings provide guidance for leadership development programs that seek to prepare CAOs for college presidencies.

Fifth, chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities show a mixed pattern of diversity when compared with CAOs of other types of four-year institutions. CIC CAOs are as likely to be women (38 percent) but less likely to be persons of color (9 percent) than their peers in other four-year settings. Although this is not a longitudinal study, there is evidence to suggest that CAOs of CIC institutions are becoming more diverse. Forty-six percent of CAOs who were appointed within a year prior to the survey administration are women compared with 35 percent of those who were appointed ten or more years previously. A similar pattern of increasing numbers of persons of color appointed as CAOs in more recent years exists.

Sixth, while slightly younger than their peers in other types of institutions, CAOs of CIC colleges and universities are typically within a decade or so of usual retirement age (mean of 56.5 years old). This suggests that continued attention to the leadership pipeline for senior administrators of colleges and universities will be necessary. Younger CAOs, however, are more likely to be interested in pursuing a college presidency, suggesting that leadership development efforts may more likely meet with success if targeting CAOs earlier in their careers.

In light of these conclusions, several recommendations follow:

1. Further research to understand better the reasons for the relatively short tenure of chief academic officers is warranted, both from the perspective of chief academic officers and the institutions they serve. In what ways is a pattern of shorter terms of service problematic—or desirable?
2. Opportunities to foster better relations among CAOs, CFOs, and other vice presidents are warranted, as are programs to help presidents manage their senior teams.
3. Continued emphasis should be placed on formal leadership development programs for campus administrators and faculty leaders who seek to become chief academic officers and for CAOs who seek to become college presidents.¹

4. Programs to prepare CAOs for the college presidency should focus on developing relevant presidential skills, such as fundraising, governing board relations, budget and financial management, risk management and legal issues, and capital project and entrepreneurial ventures. Additionally, such programs should include a mentoring component.
5. Women and persons of color should be encouraged to participate in programs that prepare prospective senior campus leaders.²
6. Younger CAOs should be targeted for programs to prepare college presidents, given their greater interest in the presidency and potential for long-term service as presidents.
7. Although not as old, on average, as college presidents, the mean age of chief academic officers suggests that programs that prepare potential CAOs and orient new CAOs will continue to be of importance to the vitality of college leadership for some time to come. ♦

¹ In partnership with AALI and American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), CIC now offers a formal program, Academic Leadership for the 21st Century, to prepare CAOs for college presidencies. For more information, see www.cic.edu/projects_services/academic_leadership_21st_century.asp. CIC and AALI also recently announced a new leadership development program, a year-long Senior Leadership Academy, for mid-level administrators. For additional information, see www.cic.edu/projects_services/coops/senior_leadership.asp. In addition, thanks to generous support from Lilly Endowment Inc., CIC has since 2005 offered the Presidential Vocation and Institutional Mission program, a year-long series of seminars for prospective presidents—with parallel offerings for current presidents—to consider how the alignment between personal vocation and institutional mission can strengthen their leadership.

² In 2009, CIC became a cosponsor along with AASCU of the Millennium Leadership Institute, a leadership development program that provides individuals from underrepresented groups with opportunities to advance to the college presidency.

1. Introduction

Chief academic officers (CAOs) of independent colleges and universities are the principal leaders and managers of the academic programs of the institutions they serve. The core functions of higher education—teaching students, conducting scholarly research, and service to the academic community—usually fall under their purview. In many cases, CAOs serve as the second executive leader of the institution, behind the president, often with oversight of institutional operations beyond the academic program. Despite these important responsibilities, few comprehensive studies have been conducted to examine the characteristics and duties of CAOs, and of these studies, none has focused on the CAOs of the nation’s small and mid-sized private colleges and universities. Who are these chief academic leaders? What career paths did they follow to reach their senior leadership positions? What are their duties and responsibilities? What further professional aspirations do they have? And, do substantive differences exist between the CAOs of independent colleges and those serving in other higher education settings?

Since 2008, the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) has pursued a research agenda to support professional development for leaders of small and mid-sized private colleges and universities. An initial report, *A Study of Career Patterns of the Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities* (Hartley and Godin, 2009), examined the various career routes and characteristics of first-time presidents. Using data from the American Council on Education’s (ACE) American College President Study, CIC analyzed the career pathways; demographic characteristics such as gender, race/ethnicity, and age; major field of study; and sense of readiness for various presidential responsibilities of first-time American college and university presidents from 1986 to 2006.³

The purpose of this study is to understand the characteristics, roles, and career aspirations of chief academic officers of CIC member colleges and universities. Given the earlier finding that presidents of CIC colleges and universities are less likely to have been CAOs than their presidential colleagues serving in other types of institutions (except for presidents of private research universities) and the concern among trustees and search consultants about an adequate pool of qualified candidates for presidential vacancies (see Hartley and Godin, 2009), CIC is particularly interested in the aspirations of CAOs to the college presidency. Thanks to generous financial support from the American Academic Leadership Institute, CIC analyzed data from ACE’s census of chief academic officers conducted in 2008 (Eckel et al, 2009).

Responses from 1,140 chief academic officers to the ACE survey conducted in 2008 were analyzed, including 358 CIC CAOs. To determine whether important differences exist between the academic leaders of different types of institutions, comparisons were made between CAOs of CIC member colleges and universities and CAOs of four major sub-sector groups: (1) public baccalaureate and master’s (BA/MA) level institutions, (2) private doctoral—or research—universities, (3) public doctoral universities, and (4) public two-year or community colleges. Based on the membership of CIC at the time of the release of the ACE census, CAOs serving CIC member colleges and universities were identified and responses to questions of interest were examined. Because the ACE census is the first comprehensive study of chief academic officers, no prior datasets exist allowing comparisons of changes over time. In a few instances where differences between CAOs more recently appointed and those hired more than

³ The CIC report, *A Study of Career Patterns of the Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities*, is available at [/www.cic.edu/projects_services/infoservices/CICPresSurvey.pdf](http://www.cic.edu/projects_services/infoservices/CICPresSurvey.pdf).

a decade ago provide a proxy for trend analysis, inferences are drawn. This report, then, presents the first comprehensive snapshot of chief academic officers of small and mid-sized independent colleges and universities.

Chapter two of this report examines the demographic characteristics of chief academic officers, including age, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, and major field of study. Chapter three describes the career routes to the chief academic officer position. Chapter four addresses the responsibilities and duties of CAOs, including an analysis of important tasks as viewed by the CAO, the president, and the faculty, as well as the relationships that are satisfying and challenging. Chapter five considers CAO career aspirations with particular attention to the reasons for or against seeking the presidency of a college or university. An appendix provides background information from previous studies and a description of the data analyzed and methodology employed in this study. ♦

2. Who Are They?

The Demographic Characteristics of Chief Academic Officers

Who are the chief academic officers of small and mid-sized independent colleges and universities and how do they differ from their counterparts in other institutional settings? This chapter examines the demographic characteristics of chief academic officers and looks at their age, gender, ethnicity, and marital status. It also reviews their educational backgrounds, including highest earned degrees and major fields of study. Finally, the length of time in their CAO position and status of tenure are evaluated. Comparisons are made between CAOs of CIC member institutions and CAOs of other institutional types. In addition, data on CIC CAOs are further analyzed to explore the relationships, if any, among demographic characteristics.

Age

The chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities are somewhat younger on average (57 years old) than CAOs in other four-year institutions (*see Figure 2.1*). While the average age reported of all CAOs in the ACE study (Eckel et al., 2009) was also 57 (a figure heavily weighted by the number of CAOs of two-years colleges), CAOs of both public and private doctoral universities report an average age of 60 years old. Twenty-three percent of CIC CAOs are 50 or younger, almost double the percentage of CAOs of public baccalaureate and master's level institutions and well above CAOs of research universities (*see Figure 2.2*). In addition, only 31 percent of CIC CAOs are over 60 years old, compared with more than 45 percent of CAOs of other four-year institutions.

Within CIC, male and female CIC CAOs report similar mean ages, 56 and 57 years old, respectively. CAOs of color, on average, are older than white CAOs (58 years old versus 56 years old). Not surprisingly, CIC CAOs with prior CAO experience are on average older (58 years) than CAOs whose

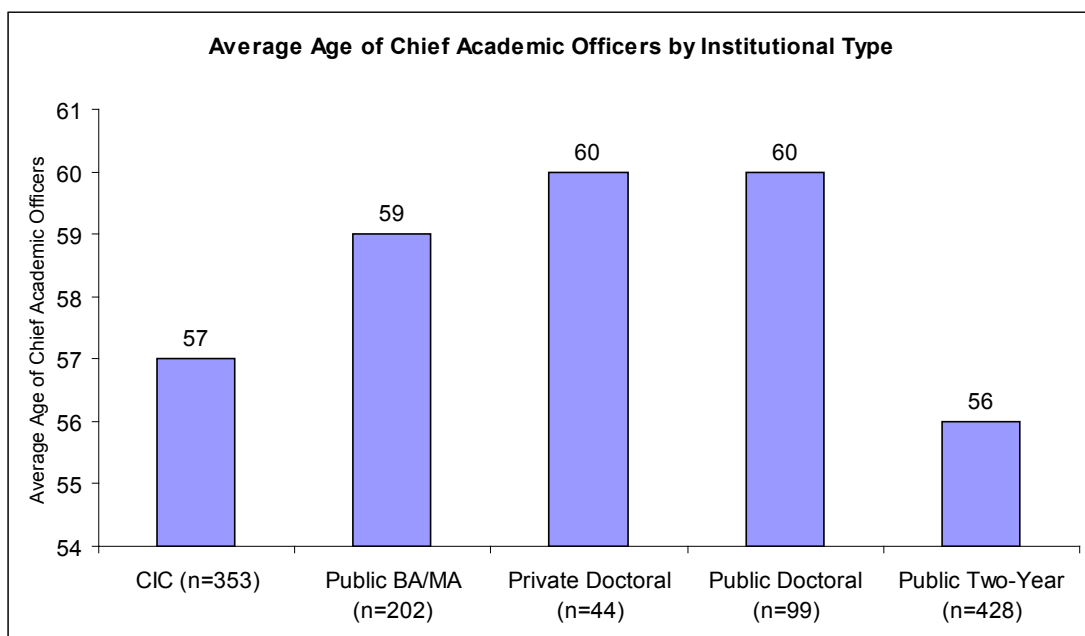


Figure 2.1

previous positions were as other academic officers, non-academic officers, or department chairs and faculty members (56 years).

Gender

The majority of chief academic officers are men, but the proportion of women varies by type of institution served. More than one-third of CIC CAOs are female (38 percent), the second highest group among four-year institutions (see Figure 2.3) and similar to the overall ACE study's 39 percent (Eckel et al., 2009). Doctoral universities present both extremes among four-year institutions, with the highest percentage of female CAOs serving public research universities (40 percent) and the lowest percentage at private research universities (16 percent). Among public two-year institutions there is an equal distribution of men and women.

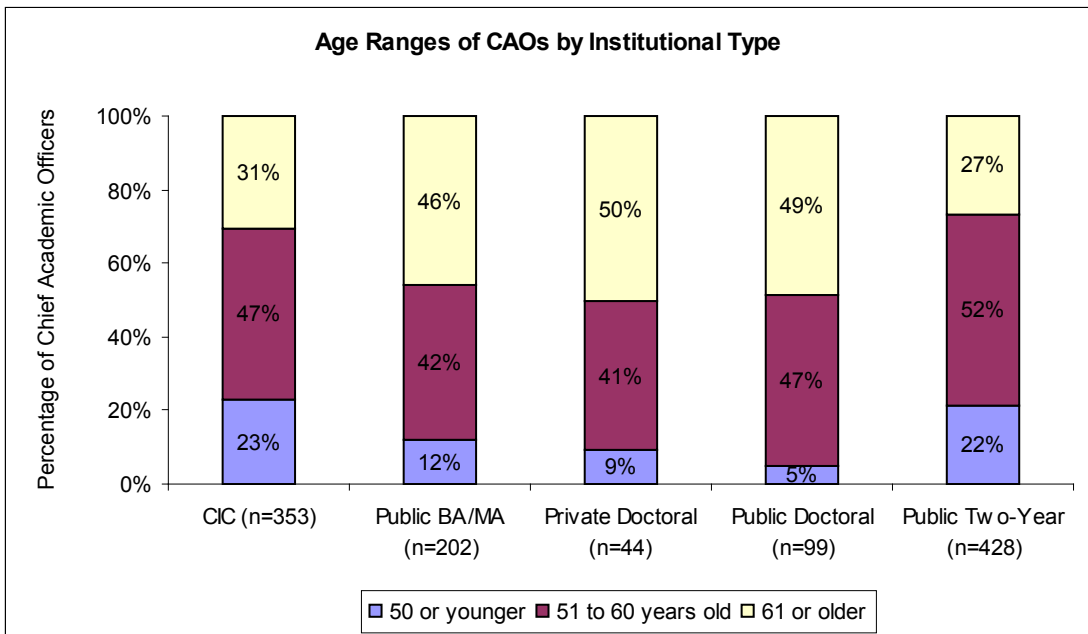


Figure 2.2

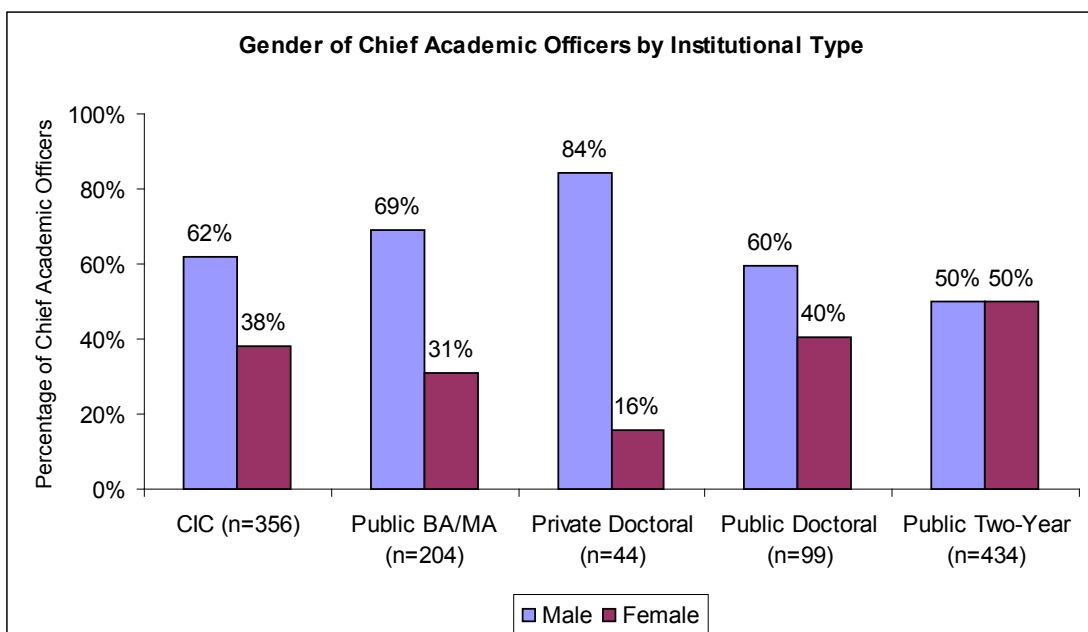


Figure 2.3

Within CIC, the largest percentage of female CAOs is found among those with previous positions as department chairs and faculty members (43 percent), followed by previous positions as other academic officers (40 percent), non-academic officers (33 percent), and finally CAOs and provosts (29 percent). Forty-four percent of CAOs of color are female, compared with 38 percent of white CAOs. First-time CAOs who are in their first year of service are more likely to be women (46 percent) than CAOs who have been in their current position for over ten years (35 percent). Looking across the four ranges of time in position reveals a consistent increase in the proportion of females among most recently appointed CAOs (see Figure 2.4). Although not a longitudinal trend, these data suggest that the number of women CAOs may be increasing in CIC colleges and universities.

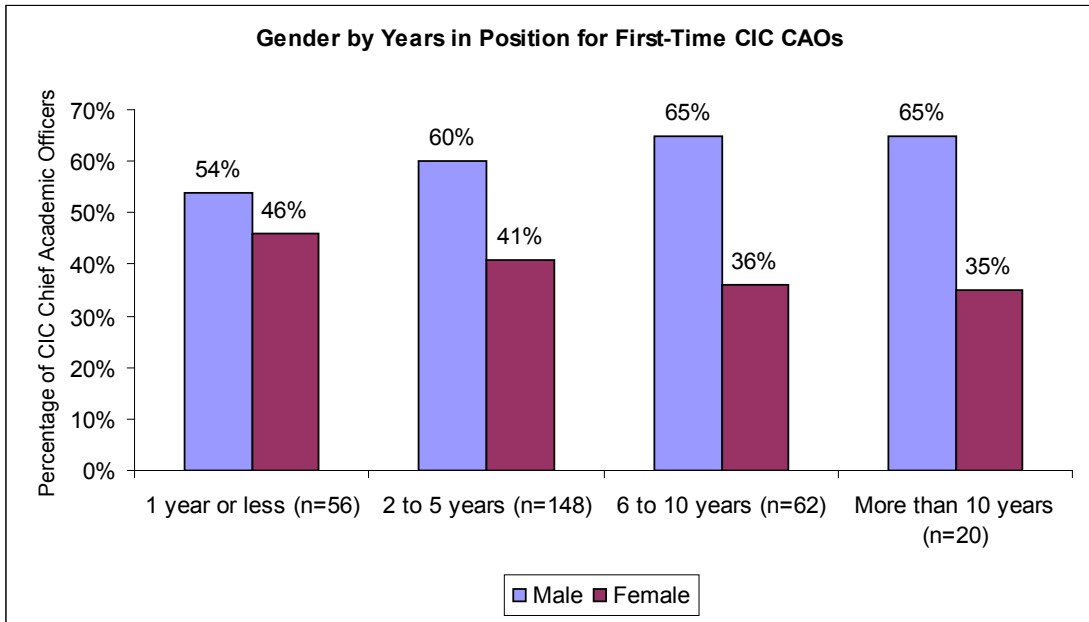


Figure 2.4

Race and Ethnicity

Chief academic officers were asked to indicate their race and ethnicity with more than one response to multiple categories permitted. The ACE survey offered the following choices: White, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and an opportunity to specify other options. In addition, respondents could indicate whether they are Hispanic or Latino(a) (Eckel et al., 2009). Because of the low proportion of non-white CAOs, comparisons are made only between white, non-Hispanic CAOs and CAOs of color, an aggregation of the other racial and ethnic categories. Nine percent of CIC CAOs are persons of color (5 percent African American, 2 percent Hispanic, 1 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and fewer than 1 percent American Indian/Alaskan Native or Other), the lowest among all institutional groupings and below the ACE national average (15 percent) (Eckel et al., 2009) (see Figure 2.5). The largest proportion of CAOs of color serve at public baccalaureate and master’s level institutions (20 percent), followed by private doctoral universities and public two-year institutions (both 14 percent) and public doctoral universities (11 percent).

Within CIC colleges and universities, more recently appointed CAOs in their first CAO position are more likely to be persons of color than CAOs who assumed their positions a decade ago. Thirteen percent of CIC CAOs who have served for one year or less are persons of color, more than double the proportion of first-time CAOs who have served for more than ten years (see Figure 2.6). A steady decrease in the proportion of non-white CAOs can be observed as the length of service increases. Among CIC CAOs who have served in two or more CAO positions, the proportion of persons of color is 5 percent. As with gender, these data suggest that the racial/ethnic diversity of CAOs of CIC colleges and universities may be on the increase.

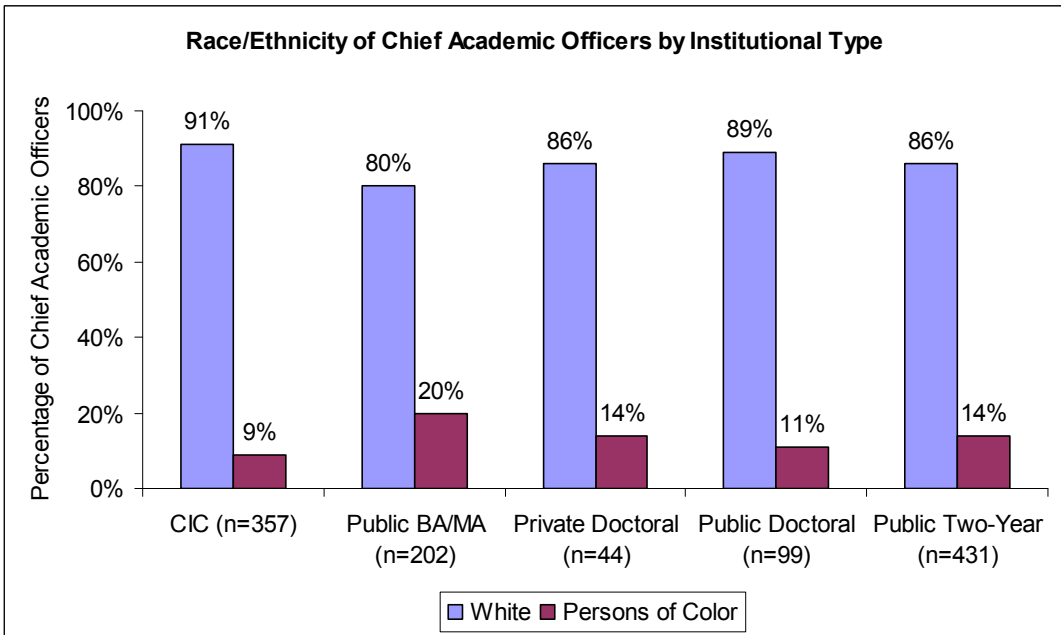


Figure 2.5

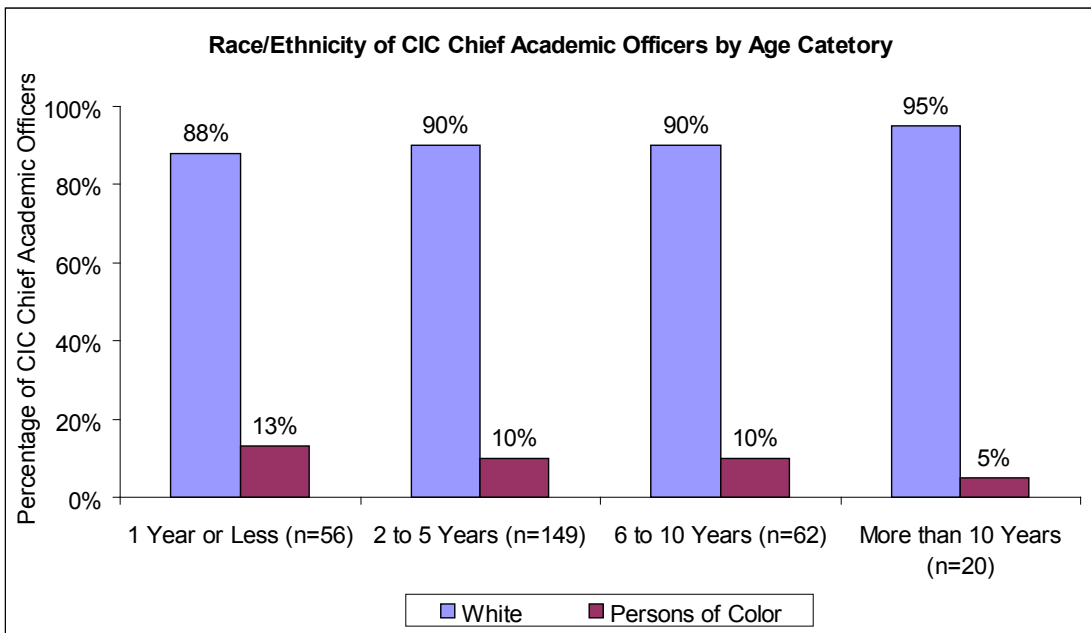


Figure 2.6

Marital Status

A comparison of chief academic officers across institutional groupings shows almost all reporting between 82 and 85 percent currently married, with only public doctoral universities registering above this range at 90 percent (see Figure 2.7). Eighty-four percent of the CAOs of CIC colleges and universities are married. Among CIC CAOs, men are far more likely to be married than women, 93 and 68 percent respectively. The analysis excludes members of religious orders who have chosen not to marry.

Length of Service in Current Position

CIC CAOs and public baccalaureate and master's level CAOs share the shortest average length of service in their current position, 4.3 years, among the institutional groupings (see Figure 2.8). Private doctoral CAOs report the longest tenure at 5.3 years, followed by public two-year CAOs at 4.9 years

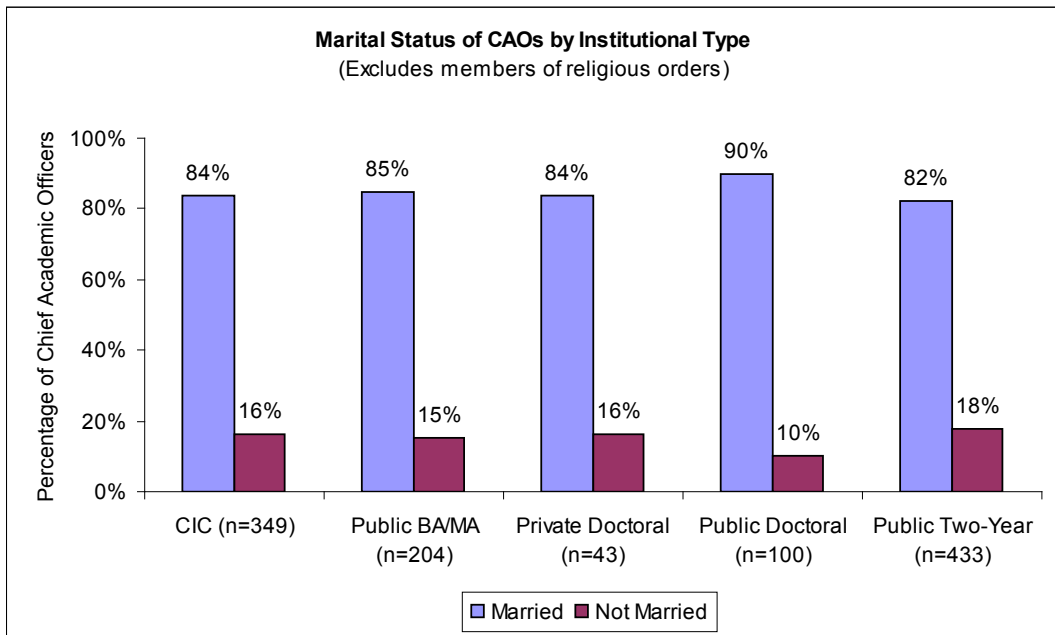


Figure 2.7

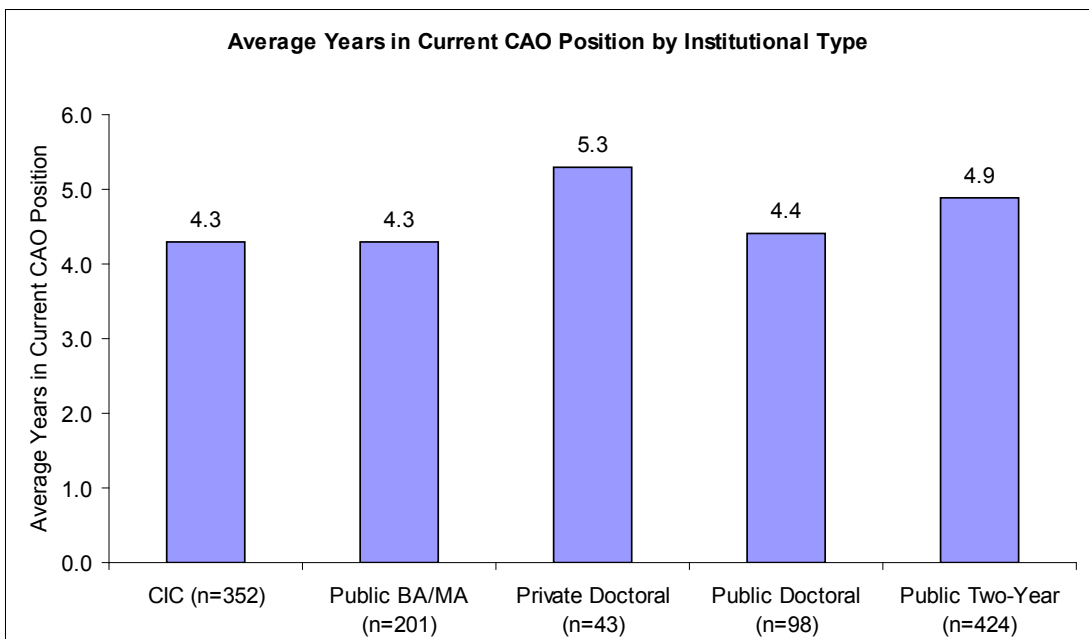


Figure 2.8

and public doctoral CAOs at 4.4 years. Nearly three-fourths (74 percent) of CAOs of CIC member college and universities have served under one president in their current position. Eighteen percent have served under two presidents and only 7 percent have served under three or more presidents in their current position.

Within CIC, male CAOs have been in their current positions slightly longer than women (4.5 years compared with 4.2 years). White CAOs have been in their positions for longer than CAOs of color, 4.4 years compared with 3.5 years. Not surprisingly, older CAOs hold a longer tenure as well, 5.8 years for CAOs 61 or older, 4.1 years for CAOs 51 to 60 years old, and 3.1 years for CAOs under 50 or younger. Among CIC CAOs, the longest term in their current positions is reported by individuals who were previously department chairs and faculty members (5.2 years), then other academic officers (4.2 years), non-academic officers (4.0 years), and CAOs and provosts (3.9 years).

Highest Earned Degrees

Among chief academic officers serving four-year colleges and universities, at least 90 percent indicate that they have a terminal degree, most commonly the PhD (see Figure 2.9). Eighty-six percent of CAOs of CIC colleges and universities earned a PhD and another 10 percent earned an EdD. Additionally, 4 percent of CIC CAOs have degrees in theology. Other degrees reported include the JD and MD. A few CAOs reported more than one terminal degree or more than one degree. At public doctoral universities, 93 percent of CAOs reported having earned a PhD and 3 percent an EdD. Eighty-nine percent of CAOs of private research institutions reported earning a PhD and 2 percent an EdD. Eighty-two percent of CAOs of public baccalaureate and master's level institutions earned a PhD and 12 percent an EdD. Finally, 42 percent of CAOs of public associate degree colleges reported earning a PhD and 30 percent an EdD.

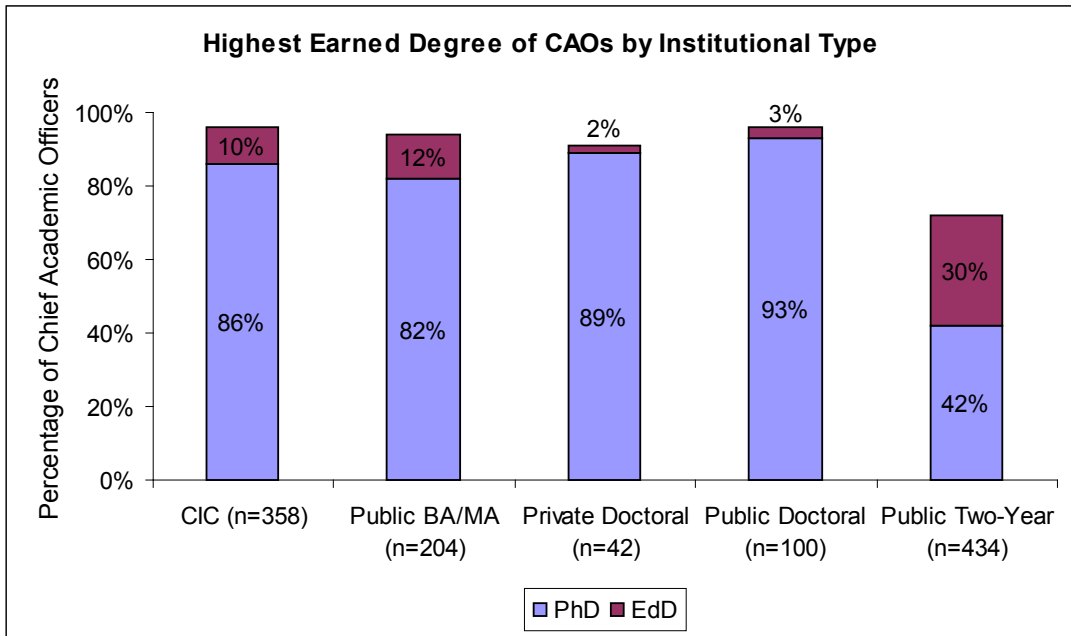


Figure 2.9

Within CIC colleges and universities, differences were observed when chief academic officers were analyzed by their previous positions: CAOs and provosts (93 percent with a PhD and 6 percent with an EdD), chairs and faculty members (91 percent with a PhD and 5 percent with an EdD), other academic officers (84 percent with a PhD and 12 percent with an EdD), and non-academic officers (67 percent with a PhD and 19 percent with an EdD). Male CIC CAOs were more likely to have earned a PhD than female CAOs (89 percent versus 82 percent) and were less likely to have earned an EdD (7 percent versus 15 percent). Older CAOs (61 years or older) are more likely to have an EdD (14 percent) and less likely to have a PhD (82 percent) than younger CAOs (3 percent of CAOs 50 years old or younger reported earning an EdD and 90 percent earning a PhD). The analysis of highest earned degrees by length of service does not suggest a consistent pattern of changes over time in the types of doctoral degrees held by CIC CAOs.

Major Fields of Study

The most common major fields of study for chief academic officers vary widely by the type of institution served. CIC CAOs report their highest earned degree in the following fields: humanities and the fine arts (31 percent), social sciences (25 percent), education or higher education (17 percent), science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) (16 percent), religion and theology (5 percent), and business (3 percent) (see Figure 2.10). Given the emphasis on the liberal arts in the undergraduate curriculum of CIC member colleges and universities, it is not surprising that the humanities and the fine arts, followed by social sciences, are the principal fields of study of more than

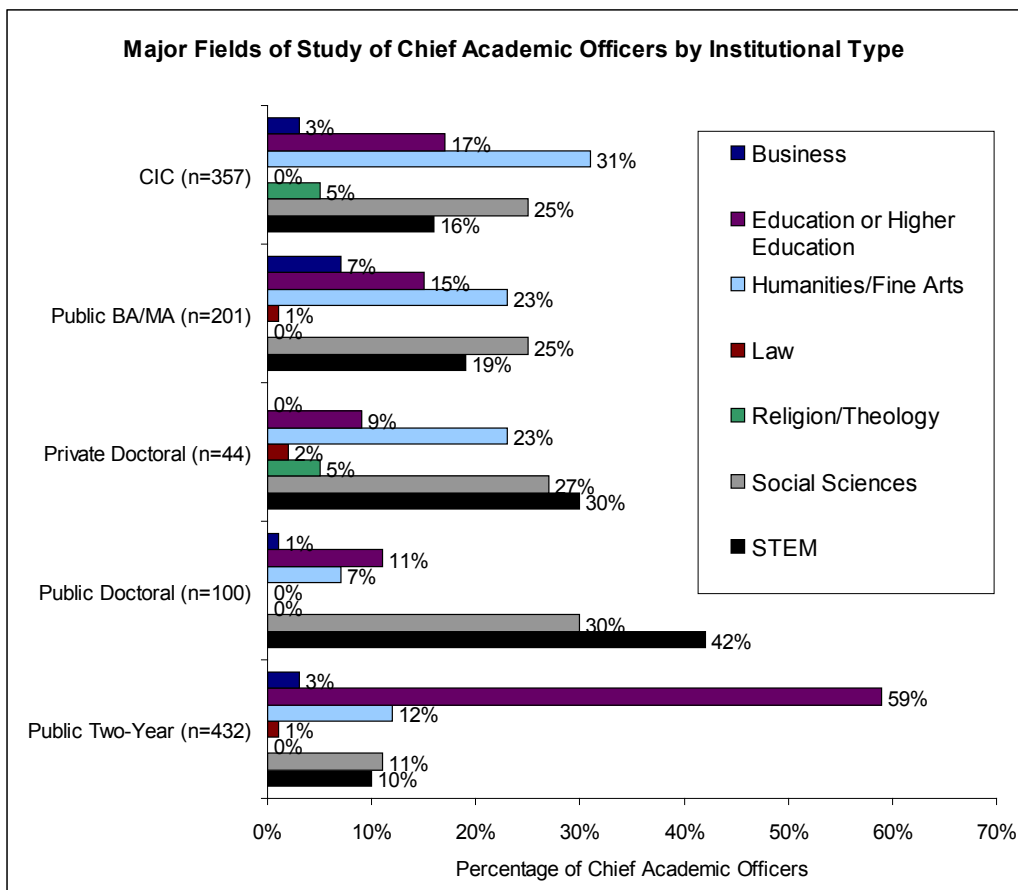


Figure 2.10

half of these CAOs. After CIC institutions, public baccalaureate and master’s level institutions and private research universities have the next highest proportion of CAOs with terminal degrees in the humanities and fine arts (23 percent). Fewer than one-quarter of CAOs of community colleges have degrees in the humanities and the fine arts (12 percent) and the social sciences (11 percent). CAOs of research universities are much more likely to have degrees in STEM fields (42 percent for publics and 30 percent for privates). Public two-year college CAOs have the highest proportion of CAOs with education or higher education as their highest field of study (59 percent). CAOs serving private institutions are the only ones to report degrees in religion and theology, with CIC and doctoral university CAOs both reporting 5 percent.

A further examination of CIC CAOs by Carnegie Classification suggests even more that major fields of study are even more closely aligned with educational mission. Among CAOs of BA–Arts and Sciences institutions (the colleges more focused on undergraduate liberal arts education), two of five (41 percent) have terminal degrees in the humanities and fine arts (see Figure 2.11). At BA–Diverse Fields and Master’s level institutions, the proportion is one in four (26 percent each). CAOs of BA–Diverse Fields and Master’s level colleges and universities are nearly as likely to have degrees in education or higher education (23 percent and 20 percent respectively) compared with their colleagues in BA–Arts and Sciences colleges (8 percent). Roughly one in four CAOs in each setting have degrees in the social sciences.

Within CIC, CAOs who previously served as chief academic officers or provosts have terminal degrees in the humanities and fine arts (33 percent), followed by social sciences (28 percent), and STEM fields (16 percent) (see Figure 2.12). CAOs who most recently were academic officers other than the CAO have earned degrees in the humanities and fine arts (29 percent), followed by social sciences (26 percent), and education or higher education (19 percent). The most common fields of study for CAOs who had been non-academic officers are education or higher education (37 percent), the social sciences (26 percent), and the humanities and fine arts (19 percent). Finally, CAOs who most recently

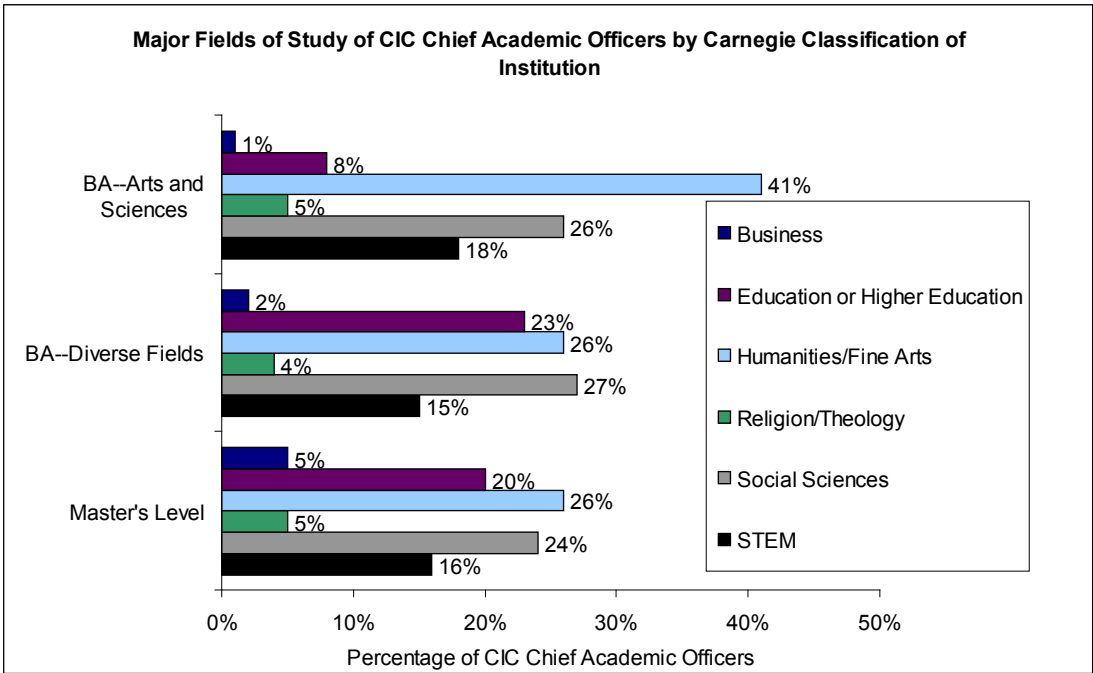


Figure 2.11

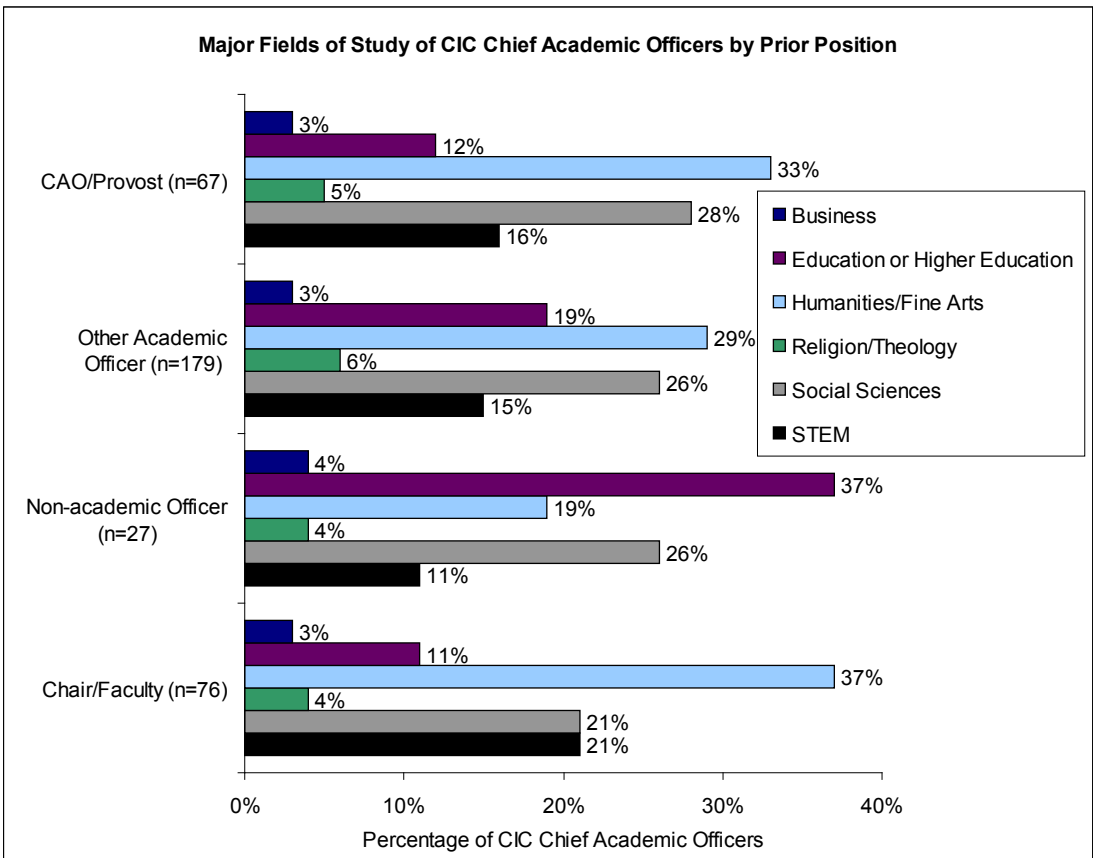


Figure 2.12

served as department chairs and faculty members earned their degrees in the humanities and fine arts (37 percent), social sciences (21 percent), and STEM fields (21 percent).

Furthermore, among chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities, women are slightly more likely to have earned their highest degree in the humanities and fine arts than men (32 percent versus 30 percent). Male CIC CAOs, however, are more likely to have degrees in the social sciences (27 percent versus 22 percent of females), and STEM fields (18 percent versus 13 percent of females). Women CAOs are more likely to hold degrees in education or higher education (22 percent) than men (15 percent). The most common highest earned degrees for white CIC CAOs are the humanities and fine arts (32 percent), social sciences (26 percent), and education or higher education (17 percent). For CAOs of color, the percentages are STEM fields (29 percent), education or higher education (23 percent), and social sciences (16 percent).

Tenure Status

CIC CAOs are the least likely among CAOs of four-year institutions to report having tenured faculty status in their positions (51 percent) (see Figure 2.13). CAOs of public research universities report the highest incidence of tenure (89 percent) followed by those at private research universities (79 percent) and at public baccalaureate and master’s level institutions (78 percent). CAOs of public two-year colleges report the lowest percentage with tenure at 15 percent.

Within CIC colleges and universities, those who most recently served as chairs and faculty members are the most likely to have tenure (69 percent), followed by those who had previously been academic officers other than the CAO (54 percent), non-academic officers (37 percent), and CAOs and provosts (33 percent). Male CIC CAOs are more likely than females to have tenure—58 compared with 47 percent. CAOs 61 or older are less likely (44 percent) to have tenure than their younger peers (55 percent for CAOs 51 to 60 years old and 53 percent for CAOs under 51 years old). CAOs who were appointed from within the same institution are more likely to have tenured status in their current CAO position (64 percent versus 41 percent). Finally, a much higher proportion of chief academic officers of BA–Arts and Sciences institutions reported having tenure (73 percent) than BA–Diverse Fields institutions (36 percent) and Master’s level colleges and universities (46 percent). ♦

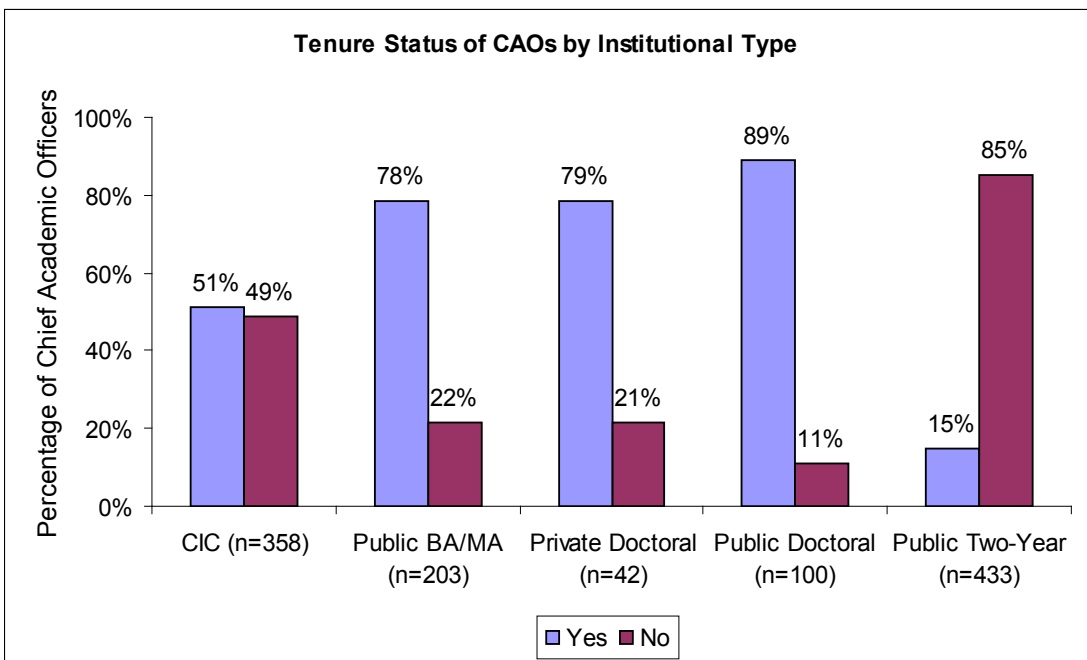


Figure 2.13

3. Where Do They Come From?

Pathways to Chief Academic Officer Positions

Chief academic officers bring a variety of prior professional experiences to their current positions. CAOs come from all areas of the institution, including non-academic administrative roles. A small number come from outside the academy. Some have extensive formal leadership development experience while others have little. Chief academic officers also exhibit institutional mobility, with some having moved between two or three institutions before assuming their current positions. This chapter examines the career paths of chief academic officers. What were their prior positions? Are they more likely to be appointed from within the institution? What percentage of CAOs participated in formal off-campus leadership development programs before assuming their current roles?

Prior Positions of Chief Academic Officers

An examination of positions previously held illuminates the prior experience and pathways to the CAO position. Following a pattern used in CIC's study of the college presidency (Hartley and Godin, 2009), prior positions were grouped by five major response categories: (1) chief academic officer (CAO) or provost, (2) other academic administrator, such as associate or assistant vice president or dean, (3) non-academic officer, such as advancement, finance, or student affairs administrator, (4) faculty member or department chair, and (5) those with positions outside of higher education, such as a public official, corporate executive, or other nonprofit leader.

Other Academic Officer. Half of all CIC chief academic officers came to their positions through service as an "other academic officer." The other academic officer category includes three types of positions: dean of an academic college (e.g., arts and sciences, engineering, business, etc.), senior academic officer with campus-wide responsibility (e.g., dean of graduate school, vice president of research, dean of undergraduate studies, etc.), and other campus executive in academic affairs (e.g., associate or assistant provost, associate dean, institute head/director). While this route is the most common for CIC CAOs, it is an even more likely path for CAOs of the other institutional types (see *Figure 3.1*). CAOs of public research universities report the highest proportion (79 percent), followed by public baccalaureate and master's level institutions (72 percent), private research universities (64 percent), and public associate's institutions (58 percent).

Department Chair or Faculty Member. The second most common previous role is department chair or faculty member. One in five (21 percent) CIC CAOs report this path to their current position. Compared with CAOs in other institutional groupings, CIC and private doctoral institutions report the highest frequency for this career pathway. CAOs of public two-year institutions report 16 percent; public baccalaureate and master's level CAOs report 11 percent; and public research universities CAOs report 6 percent. Among CAOs of CIC colleges and universities, women are slightly more likely to have most recently served as professor or department chair (24 percent), compared with men (20 percent).

Chief Academic Officer. The third most common pathway to the CAO position is as a chief academic officer of another institution. Nineteen percent of CIC CAOs served most recently in a previous CAO position. With nearly one-fifth of CIC CAOs in their second (or more) CAO position (the ACE dataset only tracks the most immediate prior position), CIC member institutions have the highest proportion of repeat CAOs. Public baccalaureate and master's level and public two-year institutions both have 12 percent of CAOs coming from a prior CAO position. Doctoral institutions

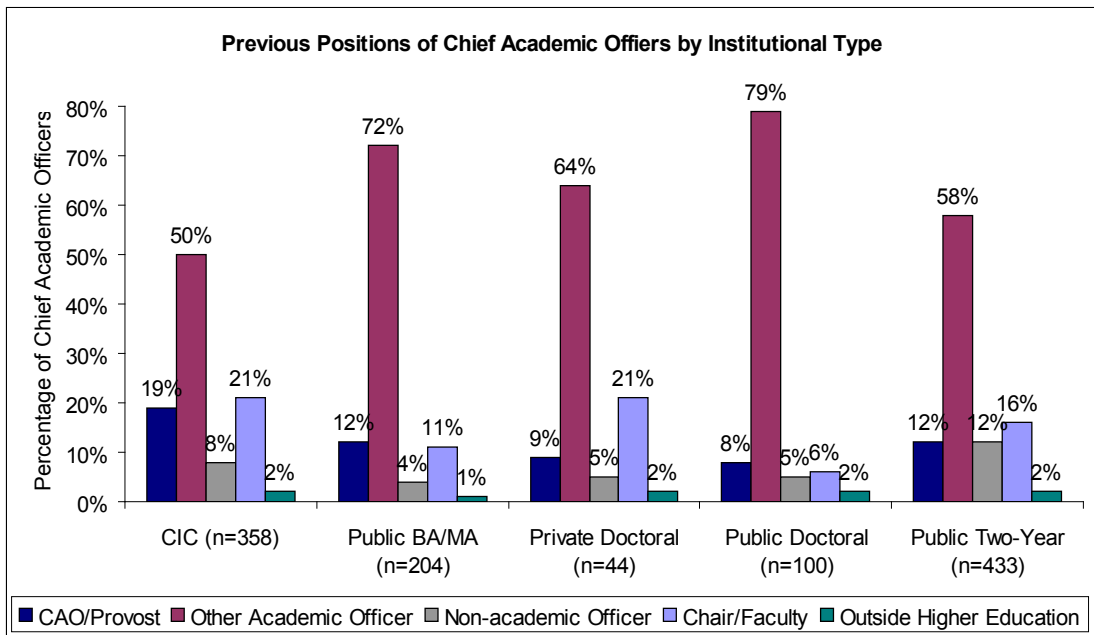


Figure 3.1

have the lowest percentages for this pathway—9 percent for private universities and 8 percent for public universities. Among CAOs of CIC institutions, men are more likely to have served previously as CAOs (21 percent) than women (14 percent).

Non-academic Officer. Another route to the CAO role is through a non-academic position, defined as “other senior campus executive outside academic affairs,” including roles in development, finance and administration, student affairs, and external affairs. Eight percent of CIC CAOs most recently served in a non-academic officer position, the highest proportion among all four-year institutional groupings. Only public two-year institutions reported a higher level of CAOs coming from a non-academic officer position (12 percent). CAOs of public and private doctoral institutions both report 5 percent for this category and public baccalaureate and master’s level CAOs report 4 percent.

Outside Higher Education. Very few chief academic officers come into their present role from positions outside higher education. These include a wide array of posts such as elementary or secondary education administrator, nonprofit leader, business executive, governmental official, religious leader, legal or medical professional, and military officer. CIC CAOs as well as CAOs of research universities—private and public—report similar levels coming from outside higher education (2 percent). Just 1 percent of CAOs of public baccalaureate and master’s level institutions indicate that their prior position was not at a college or university.

These data reveal that as a group chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities have more diverse backgrounds. They are more likely to come directly to their positions through service as department heads or professors, as senior campus executives outside of academic affairs, or from positions outside of higher education. They are also more likely to have served most recently as the CAO of another institution. A likely explanation for the greater variety of previous roles is the small size of CIC institutions, which limits the number of other senior academic officer positions. At some CIC institutions, the dean of the college may be the chief—and sole—full-time administrator in academic affairs.

Examining the career pathways of CAOs of CIC colleges and universities by their length of service in their current position reveals two distinct findings. First, CAOs who have served fewer years are more likely to have been selected from a position as an academic officer: 71 percent for CAOs serving one year or less; 61 percent for those serving from two to ten years; and 55 percent for CAOs with ten years or more experience. Second, CAOs who have served fewer years are less likely to come directly from positions as chairs or faculty members: 14 percent for CAOs who have served fewer than two years; between 26 and 29 percent for CAOs with two to ten years experience; and 40 percent for those serving

in their present positions for ten or more years. Although the dataset does not afford a longitudinal analysis of trends over time, these patterns by length of service suggest that more recently appointed CAOs are more likely to have experience as a college dean or other academic administrator and less likely to be appointed directly from the faculty than they were ten years ago.

Career Professional Roles

Chief academic officers report how many years over the course of their careers they spent time: (1) primarily in the classroom/lab, (2) primarily as a full-time administrator, (3) had duties split between academic and administrative responsibilities, and (4) were employed full-time outside higher education. Because the lengths of CAOs’ careers vary by institutional type, evaluating the percentage of time spent across CAOs’ careers in these four professions provides a better comparative form of analysis. CAOs of CIC member colleges and universities have spent most of their time primarily in the classroom/lab (13.9 years or 41 percent of their careers), followed by time primarily as full-time administrators (10.3 years or 33 percent of their careers), with their duties split between academics and administration (4.7 years or 15 percent of their careers), and employed outside higher education (3.4 years or 11 percent of their career) (see Figure 3.2). CIC CAOs have spent the second largest proportion of time in the classroom or lab and the second lowest proportion of time as full-time administrators, compared with CAOs of other types of institutions. Finally, compared with CAOs serving other four-year institutions, CAOs at CIC colleges and universities have spent the largest proportion of time employed outside of higher education.

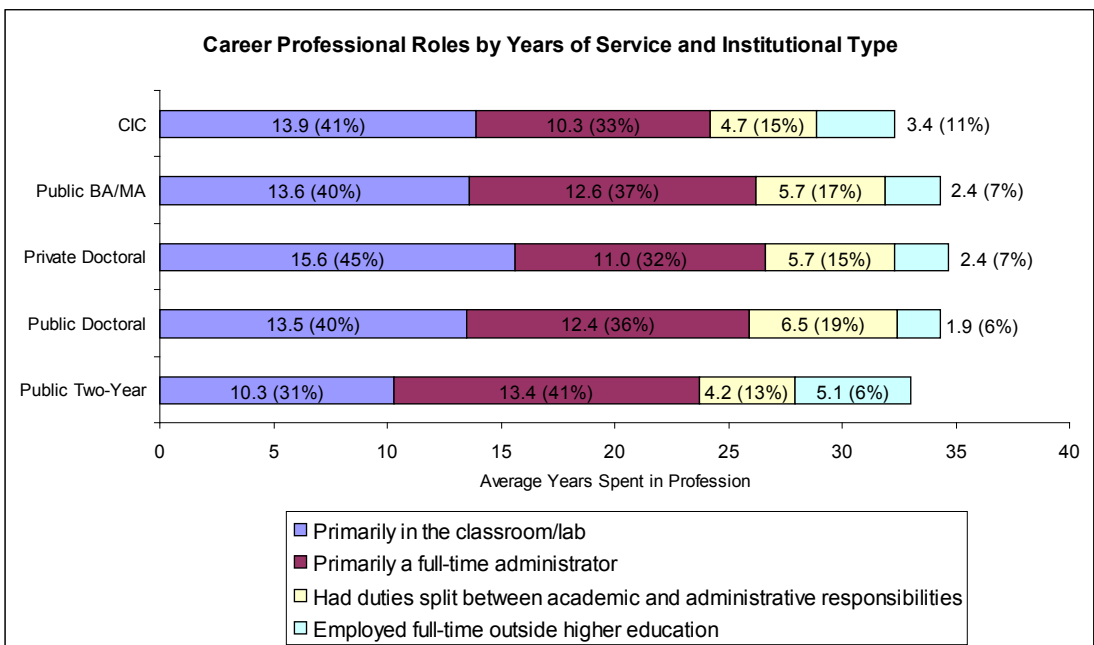


Figure 3.2

Movement between Institutions

Chief academic officers were asked if they were employed at the same institution in their prior position. Excluding the small number of CAOs who previously served outside of higher education, 48 percent of CIC CAOs were appointed from within the same institution, the lowest proportion of all institutional groupings (see Figure 3.3). CAOs of private research universities report the highest proportion of internal promotion (70 percent). More than half of CAOs of public two-year institutions were promoted from the same institution (57 percent), followed by public doctoral CAOs (51 percent) and public baccalaureate and master’s level CAOs (50 percent).

Within CIC, CAOs who most recently had served as a department head or professor are more likely to be promoted from within the same institution (75 percent), followed by non-academic officers

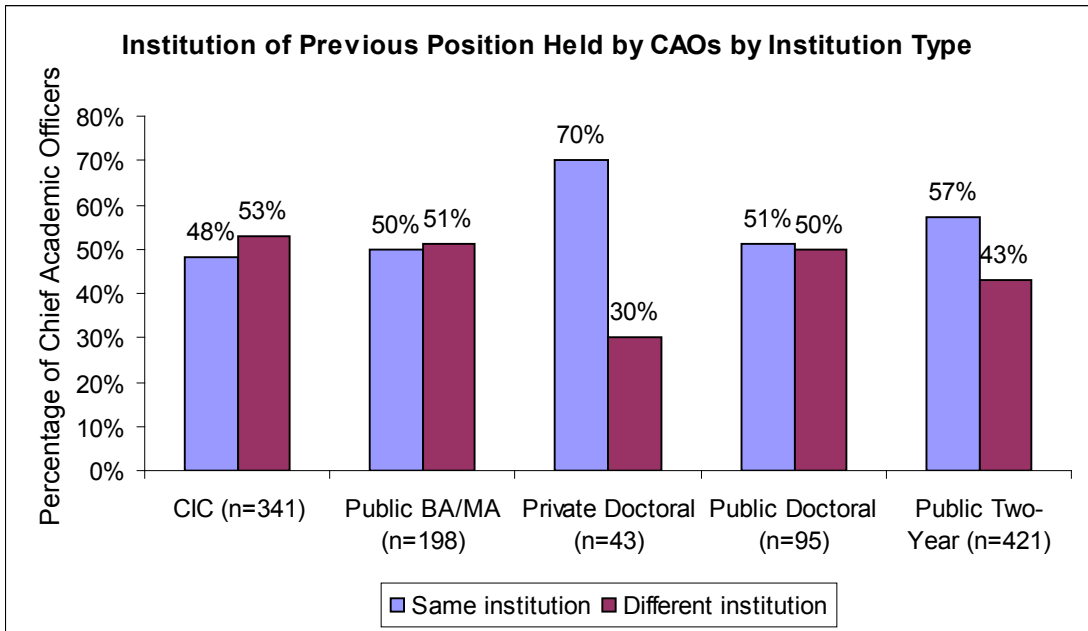


Figure 3.3

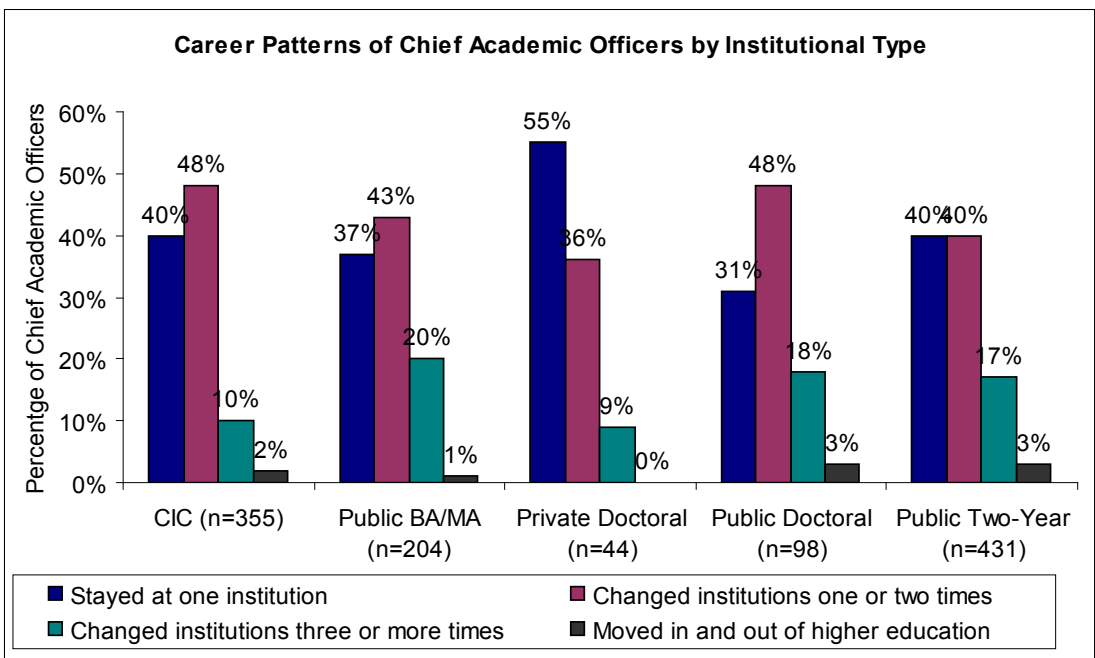


Figure 3.4

(59 percent) and other academic officers (50 percent). Again, the smaller size of many CIC member colleges and universities with fewer levels of academic administrative positions limits the opportunities for selecting well-qualified candidates from within. Women are more likely than men to be appointed from the same institution, 51 percent compared with 46 percent. Younger CAOs were somewhat less likely to be selected from the same institution (48 percent for CAOs under 51, 46 percent for CAOs between 51 and 60 years old, and 50 percent for CAOs 61 years or older).

Chief academic officers also were asked whether their career trajectories were entirely through the same institution or involved changing institutions. CAOs of private institutions are less likely to have changed institutions three or more times as they moved through the ranks to their present positions (see Figure 3.4). Despite being more likely to be appointed from outside the institution, only 10 percent of CIC CAOs report that they changed institutions three or more times during their career. Twenty

percent of CAOs of public comprehensive institutions indicate at least three institution changes, compared with 18 percent of CAOs of public research institutions, 17 percent of CAOs of public community colleges, and 9 percent of CAOs of private doctoral universities. Viewed another way, two of five (40 percent) of CIC CAOs have remained at the same institution throughout their academic careers, a level of continuity exceeded only by CAOs of private research universities (55 percent).

Participation in Formal Off-campus Leadership Training

One way to gauge the preparation of chief academic officers and their leadership responsibilities is to assess their participation in leadership training opportunities. Formal leadership development programs include the American Council on Education’s Fellows Program, the American Association of State College and Universities’ Millennium Leadership Institute, Harvard’s Institute for Education Management, Higher Education Resource Services’ Bryn Mawr Summer Institute, and the Kellogg Fellows Program. Similar CIC programs include the New CAO Workshop and Institute for Chief Academic Officers.⁴ Chief academic officers were asked if they participated in one or more of these types of programs before assuming their current positions. Thirty percent of CIC CAOs report having participated in formal, off-campus leadership development programs prior to their current positions (see Figure 3.5). CAOs of private research universities report the lowest level of participation (18 percent) while CAOs of public institutions indicate between 37 and 39 percent participation.

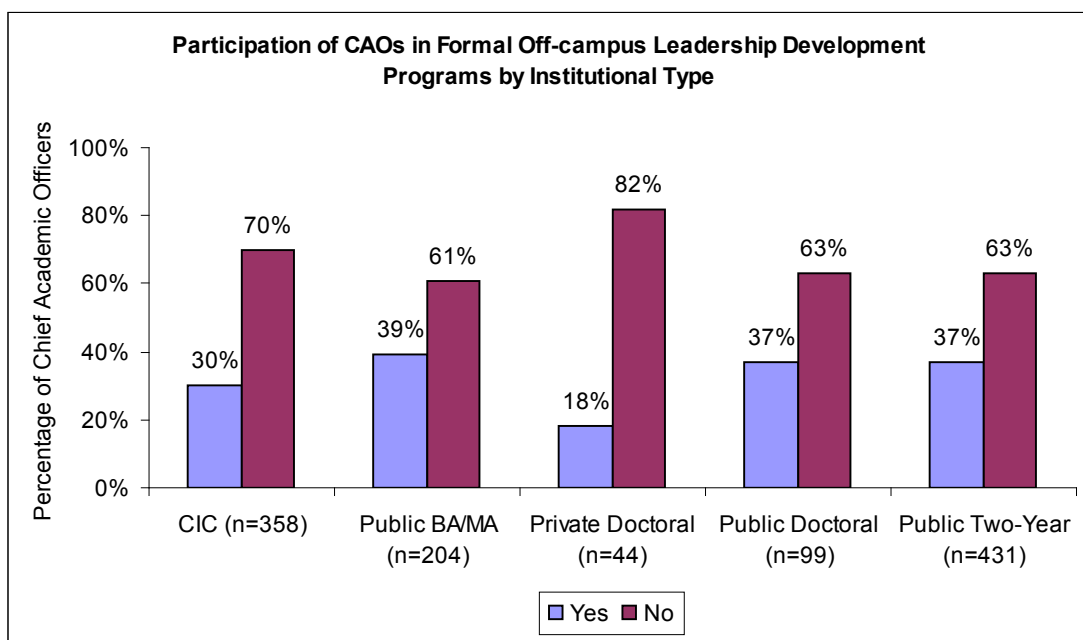


Figure 3.5

Within CIC institutions, chief academic officers who had previously served as non-academic officers (41 percent) and those who had been a CAO or provost (40 percent) are more likely to have participated in a formal leadership development program followed by an academic officer of a lower rank (33 percent). Only 9 percent of CIC CAOs who came directly from a faculty position indicate taking part in an off-campus leadership development program. Women CAOs of CIC colleges and universities are more likely than men to have participated in formal training (34 percent compared with 28 percent)

⁴ In partnership with AALI and AASCU, CIC now offers a formal program, Academic Leadership for the 21st Century, to prepare CAOs for college presidencies. For additional information see www.cic.edu/projects_services/academic_leadership_21st_century.asp. CIC and AALI recently announced a new leadership development program, a year-long Senior Leadership Academy, for mid-level administrators. For additional information, see www.cic.edu/projects_services/coops/senior_leadership.asp. In addition, thanks to generous support from Lilly Endowment Inc., CIC has since 2005 offered the Presidential Vocation and Institutional Mission program, a series of seminars for prospective presidents—with parallel offerings for current presidents—to consider the ways in which the alignment between personal vocation and institutional mission can strengthen their presidential leadership.

as are CAOs of color (41 percent compared with 29 percent of white CAOs). CIC CAOs appointed from a different institution are twice as likely to have taken part in a leadership development program (40 percent) as those selected from the same institution (19 percent).

For CIC chief academic officers in at least their second position, two out of five (40 percent) had participated in a formal leadership development program before assuming their current positions. Among CIC academic leaders in their first CAO position, those recently appointed are more likely to have participated in a leadership development program than longer serving CAOs. Thirty-two percent of CAOs in their positions for one year or less participated in a program, compared with 30 percent of CAOs serving two to five years, 27 percent of CAOs serving six to ten years, and 10 percent of CAOs having served ten or more years. These data suggest that participation in formal off-campus leadership development programs may be a growing trend for chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities.

On-Campus Leadership Development Programs

Chief academic officers also were asked if their institutions offer leadership development programs to identify and develop future campus leaders. CAOs were not asked, however, about their involvement in these programs as either a participant or facilitator. When compared with CAOs in other institutional settings, only 26 percent of CAOs of CIC colleges and universities report that their institutions offer leadership development programs, the lowest rate among the institutional groupings (see Figure 3.6). CAOs of public research institutions report the highest level of program offerings (65 percent), followed by CAOs of public two-year institutions (51 percent), public comprehensive institutions (47 percent), and private research universities (40 percent).

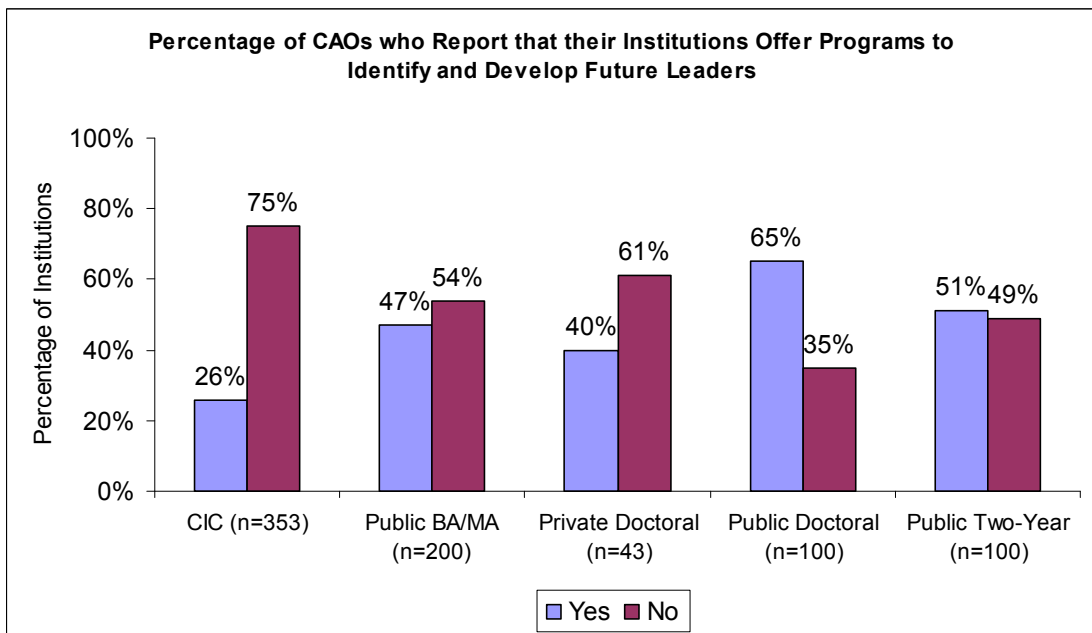


Figure 3.6

Chief academic officers who indicated that their institutions provide leadership development programs were further asked whether any of these programs were specially developed for women or persons of color. CAOs of CIC institutions indicate that 23 percent of these programs are designed for women and 15 percent are intended for people of color (see Figure 3.7). CAOs of all other four-year institutions report greater frequency of these specialized programs. At private doctoral institutions, 59 percent are developed for women and 47 percent for people of color. At public doctoral universities, 53 percent are developed for women and 29 percent for minorities. Finally, at public comprehensive

institutions 41 percent are developed for women and 34 percent for people of color. A likely explanation for the lower occurrence of leadership development programs for women and persons of color at CIC colleges and universities is the smaller size of the faculty and staff in these institutions, resulting in fewer candidates for leadership programs.⁵ ♦

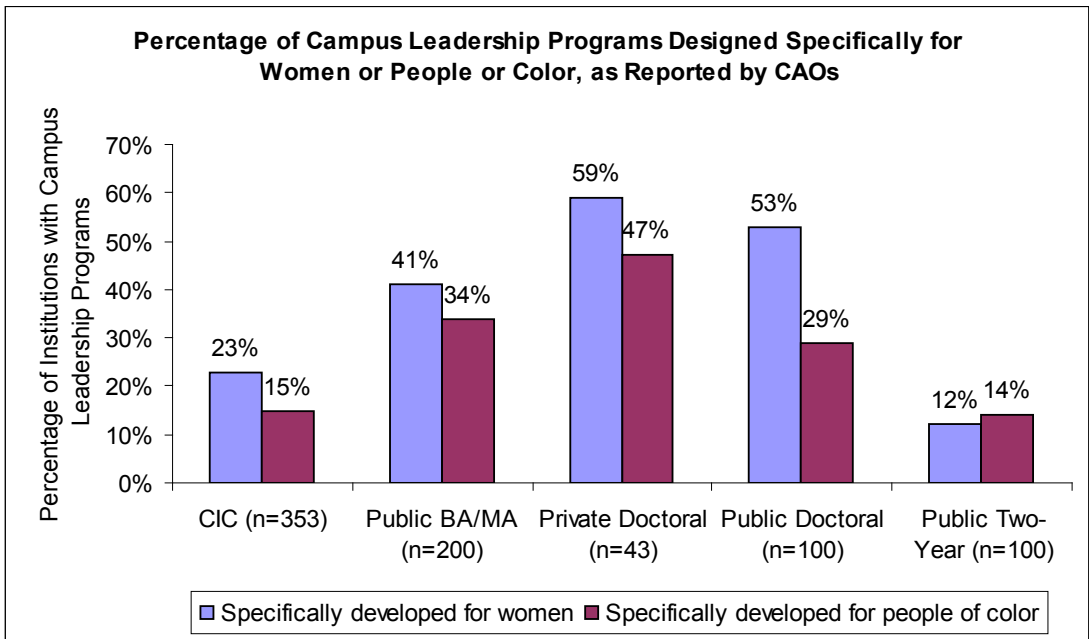


Figure 3.7

⁵ In 2009, CIC became a cosponsor along with AASCU, of the Millennium Leadership Institute, a leadership development program that provides individuals from underrepresented groups with opportunities to advance to the college presidency.

4. What Are They Doing?

Duties and Responsibilities of Chief Academic Officers

Chief academic officers have wide-ranging responsibilities that include guiding the academic program of the institution and overseeing the faculty as well as fulfilling leadership tasks that encompass the entire institution, such as strategic planning and campus budgeting. In addition, CAOs play a variety of roles, at times serving as the leader (e.g., of the academic program), at times as an advocate (e.g., for the faculty), and at times as a mediator (e.g., between the administration and the faculty). Relations with various campus personnel can at times be tense and challenging. This chapter examines how CAOs spend their time, as well as the degree of their involvement in other campus functions and external activities. Which duties are more important and which are more frustrating? The position of the CAO within the campus leadership constellation is also considered. Finally, relationships with other campus leaders (specifically, best and most challenging relationships) are explored.

Satisfaction of Chief Academic Officers

Overall, two-thirds of chief academic officers are “very satisfied” in their positions, with nearly another third being “somewhat satisfied” (less than 4 percent are either “not very satisfied” or “dissatisfied”). CAOs of CIC member colleges and universities indicate levels of contentment in their roles comparable to their peers in other institutional settings, with 96 percent saying they are “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” (see Figure 4.1). Only CAOs of private research universities and community colleges indicate higher levels of being “very satisfied” (76 percent and 67 percent respectively). This high degree of satisfaction suggests great compatibility between CAOs and their leadership responsibilities and demands.

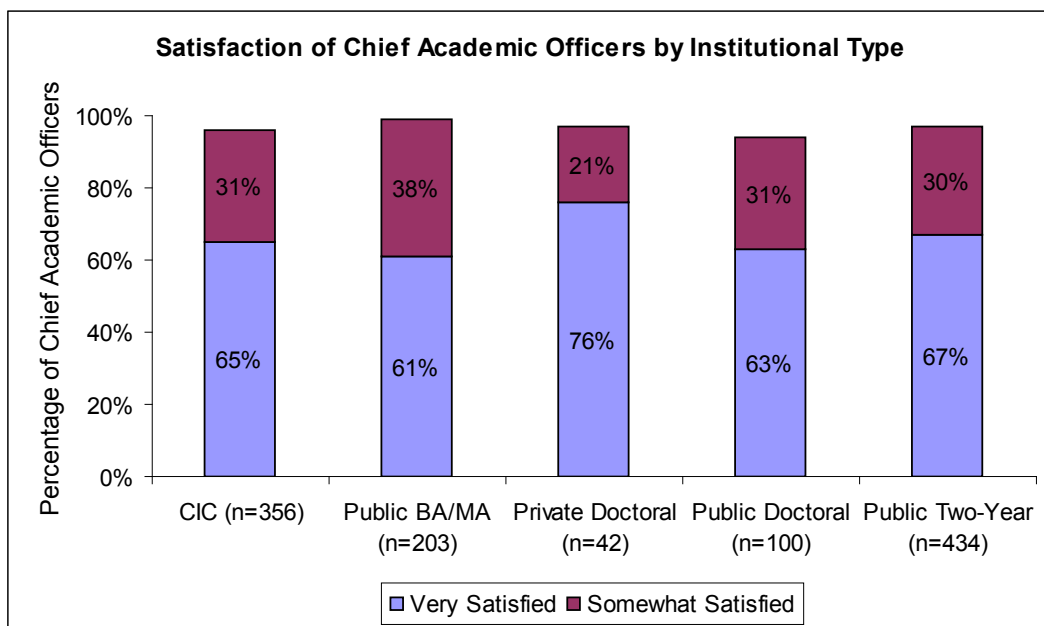


Figure 4.1

How Chief Academic Officers Spend Their Time

Among the myriad duties of chief academic officers, which occupy most of their time and energies? For all CAOs, supervising and managing personnel is the most time-consuming task, but a comparison across institutional types reveals some significant differences (see Table 4.1). CAOs of CIC colleges and universities spend the most time on academic programs and curriculum (63 percent), followed by personnel matters (50 percent), and hiring, promoting, and facilitating the retirement of members of the faculty (46 percent). In the larger, more complex setting of research universities, both public and private, managing personnel occupies the top spot, followed by strategic planning and financial management. At public two-year and four-year comprehensive institutions, the three most time-consuming responsibilities are personnel management, academic programs, and accreditation and assessment issues.

Differences among types of institutions also are evident among CIC colleges and universities. In undergraduate institutions, faculty issues are second (67 percent at BA–Arts and Sciences and 41 percent at BA–Diverse Fields) to the curriculum (71 percent at BA–Arts and Sciences and 68 percent at BA–Diverse Fields) followed by managing personnel (42 percent at BA–Arts and Sciences and 38 percent at BA–Diverse Fields) (see Table 4.2). Personnel issues, however, are most time-consuming for

Time-consuming Duties	CIC (n=358)	Public BA/MA (n=204)	Private Doctoral (n=44)	Public Doctoral (n=100)	Public Two-Year (n=434)
Curriculum and academic programs	63%	49%	36%	31%	75%
Supervising and managing personnel	50%	59%	61%	66%	66%
Hiring, promoting, and retiring faculty	46%	28%	39%	22%	15%
Accounting, accreditation, assessment	35%	50%	27%	21%	54%
Campus/faculty governance	30%	24%	11%	17%	20%
Strategic planning	28%	29%	55%	56%	20%
Budgeting/financial management	27%	33%	45%	58%	14%
Entrepreneurial activities	6%	2%	2%	5%	4%
Enrollment management	6%	14%	9%	6%	13%
Student issues/student development	5%	4%	0%	1%	8%
Facilities, space allocation, and capital projects	2%	3%	9%	9%	5%

Table 4.1. Time-consuming duties of chief academic officers by institutional type (top three highlighted).

Time-consuming Duties	BA—Arts and Sciences	BA—Diverse Fields	Master’s
Curriculum and academic programs	71%	68%	56%
Hiring, promoting, and retiring faculty	67%	41%	36%
Supervising and managing personnel	42%	38%	62%
Campus/faculty governance	38%	35%	19%
Budgeting/financial management	25%	26%	26%
Accounting, accreditation, assessment	22%	49%	36%
Strategic planning	19%	24%	37%
Student issues/student development	5%	5%	5%
Entrepreneurial activities	4%	5%	9%
Facilities, space allocation, and capital projects	2%	2%	1%
Enrollment management	1%	6%	8%

Table 4.2. Time-consuming duties of CIC chief academic officers by Carnegie classification (top three highlighted).

CAOs of master’s level universities (62 percent), followed by academic issues (56 percent) and strategic planning (37 percent).

Younger CIC CAOs, those aged 50 and under, indicate that they spend less time supervising and managing personnel than their older colleagues, though it still ranks third among their top time demands. Those who previously served as chief academic officers in other institutions rank academic programs as their second most demanding task (54 percent), close behind personnel management (55 percent), whereas colleagues in their first CAO position indicate that the academic program is most time-consuming (66 percent). A similar pattern is found when looking at length of service in the present position, with 75 percent of those in their first year indicating that they spend the most time on the academic program while this responsibility falls to third place (45 percent) among CAOs who have served more than ten years. These data suggest that with experience the need to tend to curricular and programmatic issues requires less time.

Involvement in External Activities

The chief academic officer or provost is typically focused on responsibilities internal to the institution, with the president paying closer attention to external matters. Yet, when CAOs are asked to indicate the level of their involvement in seven external activities, several areas demand moderate to significant attention. Among all CAOs, working with the college’s governing board and with other colleges and universities are top areas of involvement, while fundraising and alumni relations are at the bottom (see Figure 4.2). Again, differences by type of institution are evident. CIC CAOs are more likely to interact with members of the board of trustees than their counterparts in public institutions, reflecting different forms of institutional governance of each sector. Conversely, CAOs of CIC colleges and universities are less likely to be involved in government relations and economic development or corporate relations.

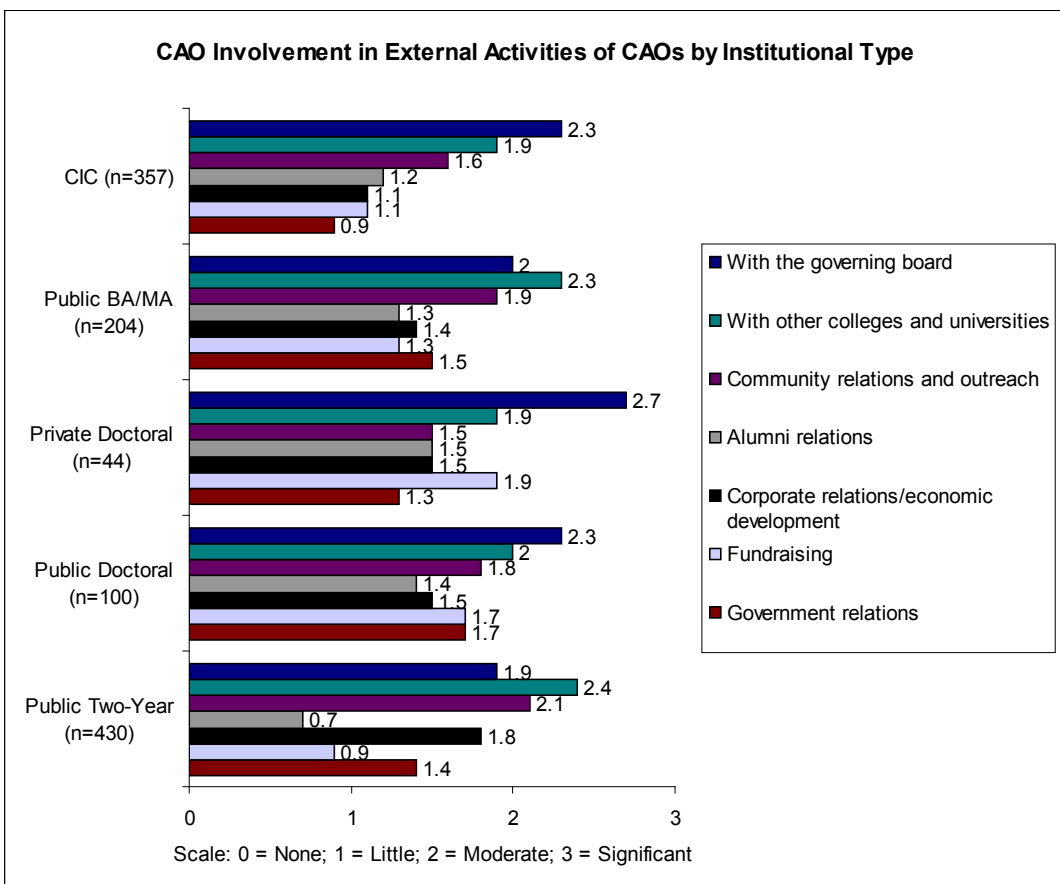


Figure 4.2

Other Frequent Functions

In addition to the various duties and responsibilities of chief academic officers, these campus leaders frequently perform other functions related to the traditional faculty domains of teaching and scholarship. Survey respondents were asked to indicate any of five functions they regularly perform: conducting research, teaching a course (both by themselves and as part of a team), writing for scholarly publication, and writing about higher education issues. Chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities are far more likely to teach a course by themselves—42 percent, with 23 percent for community college CAOs, the next highest level (see Figure 4.3). This higher involvement in classroom instruction of CIC CAOs is befitting the teaching emphasis of the institutions they serve. Among CIC CAOs, those who came into their roles directly from the faculty not surprisingly are more likely to teach courses on their own (55 percent), as are CAOs 50 years of age and younger (51 percent) and males (48 percent). CAOs of CIC colleges and universities are about as likely as their peers in other institutional settings to conduct research (21 percent) or author scholarly publications in their disciplines (17 percent), except for those in research universities. Taken together, the involvement in teaching and moderate levels of scholarly research and writing suggest that many CIC CAOs remain active in their academic pursuits despite the administrative demands of their roles.

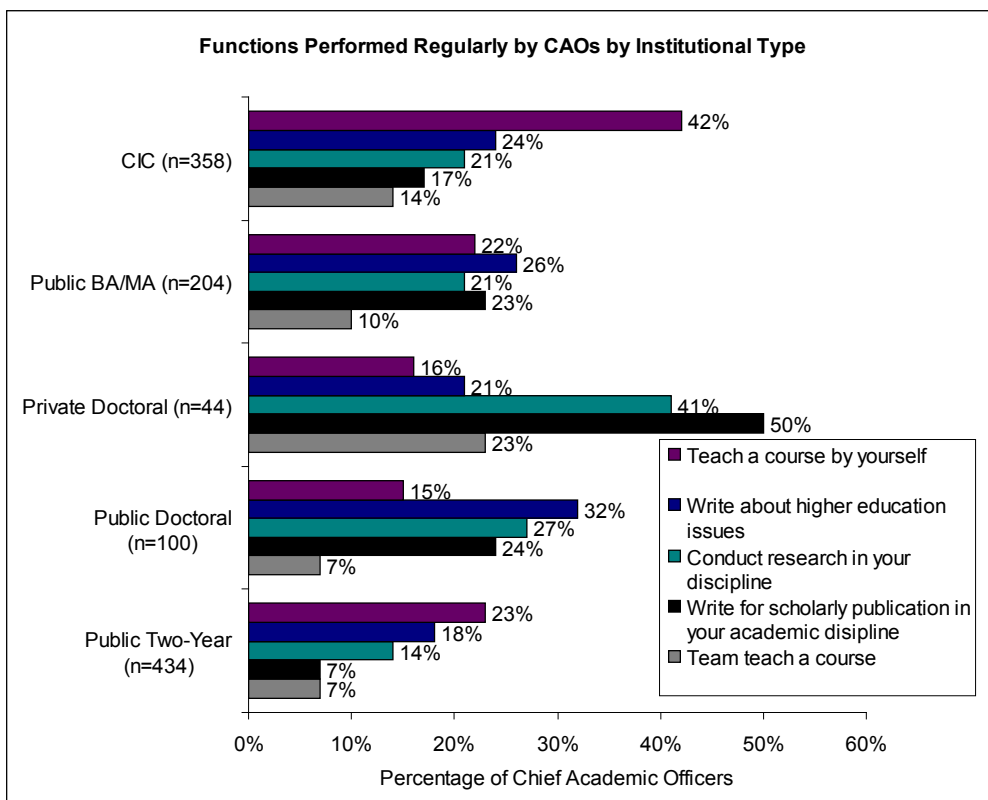


Figure 4.3

What Is Most Important?

Survey respondents were asked to identify which two duties in their view are the most important, choosing from a list of ten options that included managing faculty issues, ensuring student success, and helping to advance knowledge and scholarship. Among all chief academic officers, “promoting academic quality” and “setting the academic vision of the institution” are ranked one and two (see Table 4.3). “Leading change and fostering innovation” follows third in all institutional settings, except community colleges, where “ensuring student success” ranks third. Among CIC CAOs, there is uniform agreement about the two most important duties, though younger CAOs are somewhat more likely to indicate that focusing on academic vision is more important than promoting quality.

Most Important Duties	CIC (n=358)	Public BA/MA (n=204)	Private Doctoral (n=44)	Public Doctoral (n=100)	Public Two-Year (n=434)
Promoting academic quality	56%	48%	64%	53%	52%
Setting the academic vision of the institution	52%	48%	59%	51%	42%
Leading change and fostering innovation	32%	31%	27%	33%	33%
Managing faculty hiring, retention, and retirement	18%	9%	11%	6%	5%
Ensuring student success	13%	25%	5%	18%	41%
Advocating on behalf of faculty	10%	8%	9%	5%	9%
Making important decisions even when unpopular	8%	9%	0%	7%	5%
Supporting the president and managing up	5%	10%	11%	5%	8%
Fixing financial problems and spending money wisely	3%	6%	9%	15%	1%
Helping advance knowledge and scholarship	2%	2%	5%	4%	1%

Table 4.3. Most important duties as viewed by chief academic officers by institutional type (top three highlighted).

Chief academic officers were also asked to indicate their sense of the priorities in their work as viewed by the president and by the faculty. Although with less unanimity, most CAOs of CIC colleges and universities believe that their presidents hold similar priorities, indicating that presidents view academic quality and academic vision as the top two duties of the CAO (see Table 4.4). Not surprisingly, CAOs believe the faculty have a different view of the CAO's top responsibilities, with "advocating on behalf of the faculty" as the top duty (ranked sixth by CAOs and ninth for views of presidents). This stark contrast in views of important duties between the faculty, on one hand, and the CAO and president, on the other, no doubt contributes to the ubiquitous tension on campus between the faculty and the administration. The CAO is the principal mediator of this tension.

Most Important Duties	Chief Academic Officers	Presidents	The Faculty
Promoting academic quality	56% (1)	44% (1)	53% (2)
Setting the academic vision of the institution	52% (2)	43% (2)	25% (3)
Leading change and fostering innovation	32% (3)	29% (3)	5% (7)
Managing faculty hiring, retention, and retirement	18%	20%	14%
Ensuring student success	13%	14%	5%
Advocating on behalf of faculty	10% (6)	4% (9)	78% (1)
Making important decisions even when unpopular	8%	12%	5%
Supporting the president and managing up	5%	17%	2%
Fixing financial problems and spending money wisely	3%	13%	8%
Helping advance knowledge and scholarship	2%	1%	6%

Table 4.4. Most important duties as viewed by CIC chief academic officers, presidents, and the faculty (top three highlighted).

What is Most Frustrating?

When asked to indicate which aspects of their work are most frustrating, chief academic officers indicate the lack of sufficient funding. In nearly all institutional settings, at least half of the CAOs chose this response (only 39 percent in public two-year institutions) (*see Table 4.5*). The second greatest frustration is “the difficulty of cultivating leadership in others” followed by “the belief by others that you are infinitely accessible.” Among CAOs of CIC colleges and universities, there is strong agreement about the top frustrations, regardless of demographic differences. The expectation that academic programs produce revenue and that CAOs be sensitive to the influence of market pressures ranked far down the list. Given the present economic challenges facing higher education, perhaps the responses would be different had the survey been conducted in 2010.

Most Frustrating Aspects of the CAO's Work	CIC (n=358)	Public BA/MA (n=204)	Private Doctoral (n=44)	Public Doctoral (n=100)	Public Two-Year (n=434)
Never enough money	51%	53%	50%	61%	39%
The difficulty of cultivating leadership in others	33%	42%	32%	32%	32%
The belief by others that you are infinitely accessible	29%	26%	36%	23%	34%
Unresponsive campus governance structures	16%	13%	9%	18%	12%
Curmudgeonly faculty	16%	16%	11%	4%	21%
Campus infighting	14%	17%	5%	13%	19%
Unclear expectations and metrics of success for you in this position	12%	6%	2%	13%	15%
The expectation for revenue and influence of the market	8%	6%	18%	10%	9%
Relationships with other administrators	7%	7%	14%	9%	7%
Meddlesome board members	3%	5%	7%	8%	4%

Table 4.5. Most frustrating aspects of the chief academic officer's work by institutional type (top three highlighted).

Place within the Campus Administration

Chief academic officers were asked to identify their place within the senior leadership of the campus. Respondents were given three choices: (1) “number two for all practical purposes (behind the president/chancellor),” (2) “someone else is the clear number two (e.g., CFO, executive vice president, etc.),” and (3) “one of many/a few VPs of fairly equal status.” The vast majority of CAOs are in the number two position, though important differences are evident by type of institution served (*see Figure 4.4*). While in many college and university settings at least four out of five CAOs (over 82 percent at non-CIC four-year institutions) are clearly number two in the campus leadership lineup, at community colleges only three of five (60 percent) hold similar spots; nearly a third (29 percent) serve in a more egalitarian leadership structure. Overall, only about one in ten says that someone else is number two behind the president. At CIC colleges and universities, two out of three are second in command (66 percent) with nearly a quarter (24 percent) sharing leadership responsibilities more equally with other vice presidents.

Among CIC CAOs, those having served previously as a chief academic officer are more likely to be number two—nearly three-fourths (72 percent)—while those not coming from an academic officer or faculty role are less likely (59 percent) to be the second in command. Correspondingly, those coming from the non-academic officer route are more likely to be one among many vice presidents of equal status (37 percent). Also more likely to be second behind the president within CIC institutions are older CAOs (69 percent of those 61 or older), those with longer terms of service (80 percent of those serving more than ten years), and men (68 percent versus 63 percent of women).

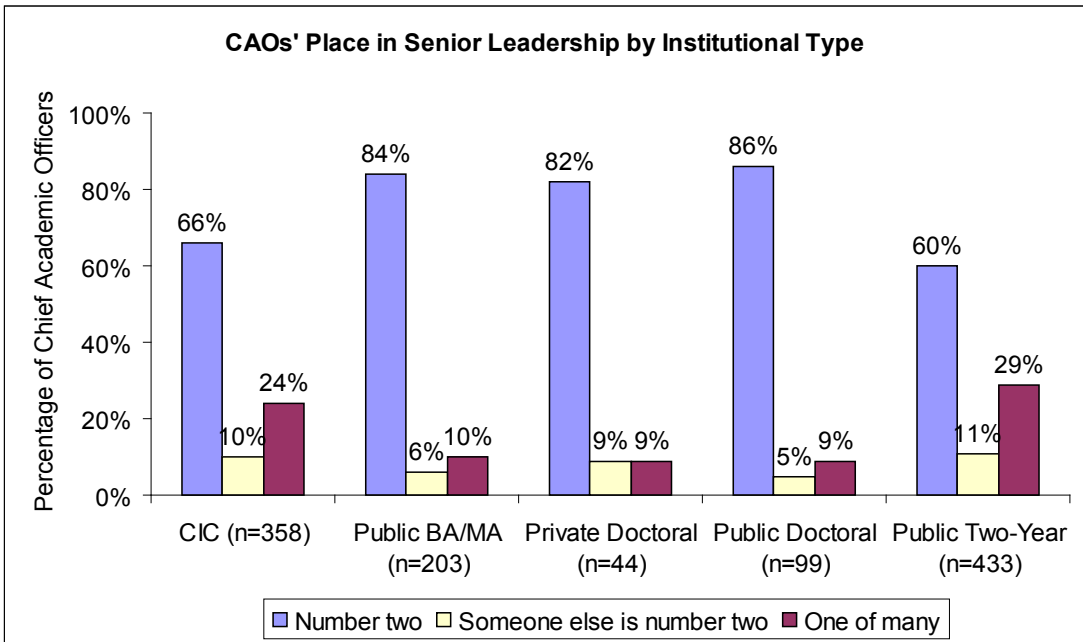


Figure 4.4

The CAO's place in the configuration of the senior campus leadership team influences some aspects of the CAO's work, such as their relationship with other campus leaders. The CAO's place among the senior leadership also affects their levels of satisfaction. As previously noted, overall CAOs of CIC colleges and universities are "very satisfied" (65 percent) in their positions; yet those who serve as number two to the president are much more likely to be "very satisfied" (73 percent), compared with CAOs in more egalitarian structures (52 percent) and CAOs in configurations where one of the other vice presidents is second to the president (42 percent) (see Figure 4.5).

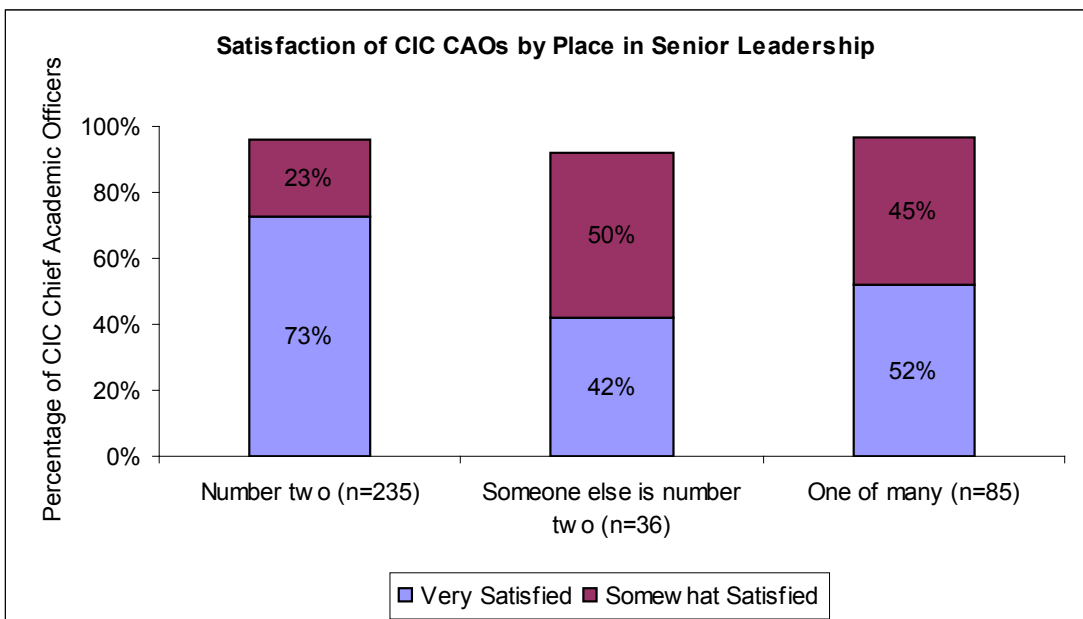


Figure 4.5

Relationships with Others

CAOs were asked to assess five different types of relationships and indicate which relationships are the best and which are the most challenging. The relationship choices were with (1) the president, (2) the chief financial officer (CFO), (3) other vice presidents (beyond the CFO), (4) the deans, and (5) the faculty. Overall, CAOs said they have the best relationship with their presidents, though no more than half selected this option, with the deans being the second choice (see Figure 4.6). The strength of the relationship with the president, however, varies by the leadership dynamics within the senior team. Among CIC CAOs, those who are clearly identified as the number two leader behind the president are far more likely to say their best relationship is with the president (55 percent) versus models in which the CAO is one of many fairly equal vice presidents (31 percent) or where someone else serves as number two (19 percent). Length of service also seems to play a role. CIC CAOs who have served in their position for six to ten years are less likely to indicate that they have their best relationship with the president (34 percent), versus those in their first year (55 percent). Instead, the more seasoned CAOs are more likely to say they have better relationships with the deans (26 percent) than first-year CAOs (13 percent).

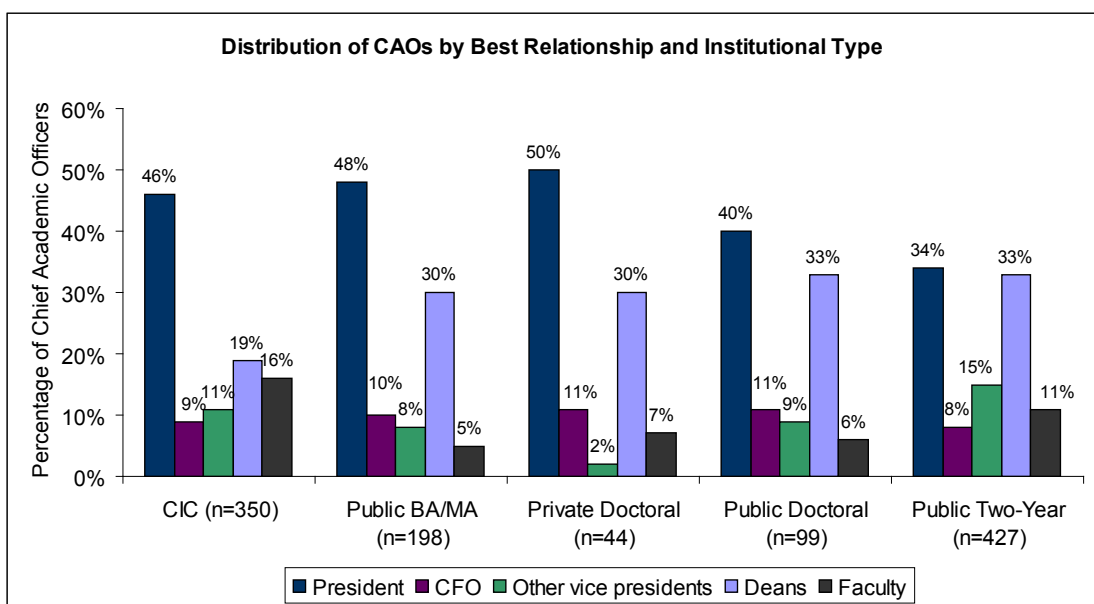


Figure 4.6

Another way to examine the relational dynamics of chief academic officers is to ask with whom they have the most challenging relationships. When given the same five relationship choices, CAOs most commonly indicate that they have the greatest challenge in relations with the faculty (34 percent on average). Only CAOs serving in public research universities are more likely to select another relationship, their vice presidential counterparts (28 percent) (see Figure 4.7). Among CIC CAOs, most challenging following the faculty are relations with other vice presidents (24 percent), the chief financial officer (CFO) (21 percent), and the president (15 percent), while being least likely to have strained relationships with the deans (6 percent). Taken together, challenges with the CFO and the other vice presidents are more likely to be cited (45 percent) than relations with the faculty (34 percent). Again, the relationship with the president varies by the leadership structure of the senior cabinet, with one in four CIC CAOs (25 percent) in egalitarian settings saying that their most challenging relationship is with the president, compared with one in five (19 percent) of those where another vice president is second in command, and one in ten (11 percent) who clearly serves as number two behind the president. ♦

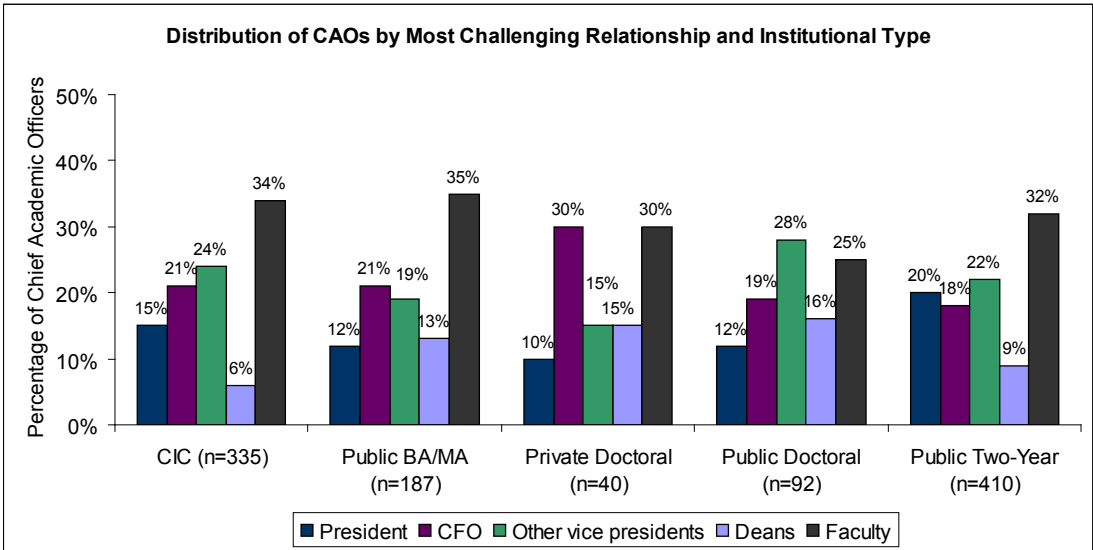


Figure 4.7

5. Where Do They Want to Go?

Career Aspirations of Chief Academic Officers

Because the Council of Independent Colleges seeks to support college and university leadership and is especially concerned about the future of the college presidency, the career aspirations of chief academic officers are of particular interest. Findings from ACE's 2008 CAO survey have been widely reported, noting the frequent lack of interest among CAOs in seeking a college presidency.⁶ This chapter examines the extent to which CIC CAOs plan to seek a presidency and mirror the intentions of CAOs overall. Also considered are CAOs' plans and preparation for the chief executive officer role or reasons for lack of interest in the presidency.

Presidential Aspirations

Fewer than one-fourth (24 percent) of chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities plan to seek a presidency, lower than the ACE census national average of 30 percent (Eckel et al., 2009) and lower than three of the other groupings by institutional type (only CAOs of private doctoral universities had a lower response at 23 percent) (*see Figure 5.1*). A higher proportion of CIC CAOs, however, is undecided (30 percent) when compared with other respondents. Nearly half (47 percent) of CAOs of CIC institutions indicate that they are not planning to seek a presidency, a response rate exceeded only by CAOs of private research universities (50 percent).

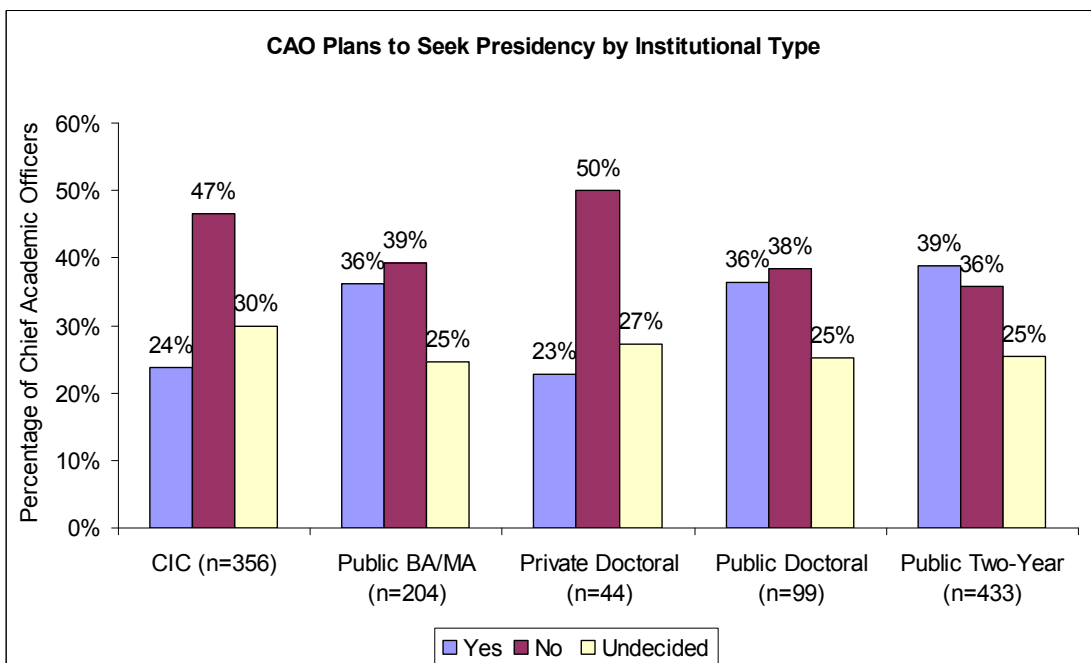


Figure 5.1

⁶ See for example, Schmidt, P. (2009). "Survey of Chief Academic Officers Raises Concerns About Diversity and Longevity." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, available online at: <http://chronicle.com/article/Survey-of-Chief-Academic-Of/11518/>.

Among chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities, persons of color (45 percent versus 22 percent white) and to some extent men (26 percent versus 20 percent women) are more likely to plan to seek a presidency. Also, CAOs of CIC institutions whose immediate prior position was as an administrator outside academic affairs are more interested in the presidency (33 percent), while those who had most recently served as faculty members are least interested (14 percent) (see Figure 5.2). Those who had previously served as CAOs are somewhat more likely to seek a presidency (27 percent versus 23 percent in their first CAO positions). In addition, those who serve as second in command are somewhat more likely to seek a presidency (26 percent) than those serving in a more egalitarian leadership structure (21 percent) or who are not the clear number two in the administrative hierarchy (19 percent).

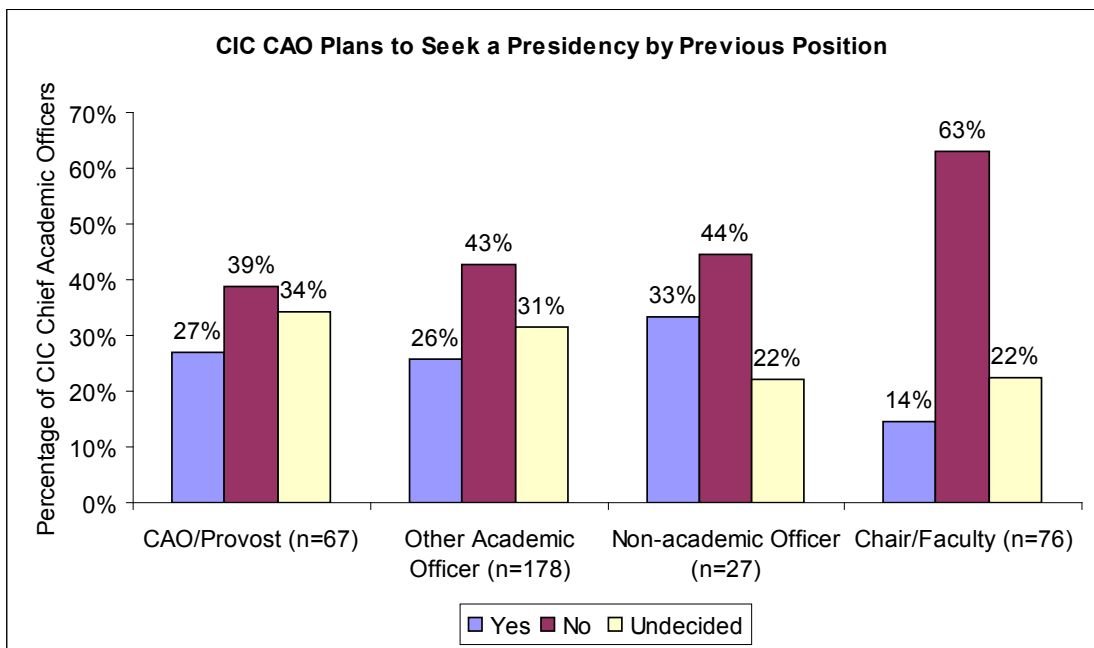


Figure 5.2

Younger CIC CAOs—those 50 and under—are more likely (37 percent) than their older colleagues to plan to seek a presidency, although they are less likely to be certain that a presidency would be their next career move, suggesting that their professional aspirations have yet to be tested by experience (see Figure 5.3). Conversely, older CAOs—those 61 or older—are far more likely not to be interested in the presidency (75 percent). That younger CAOs are more interested in serving as presidents is a promising indicator, in light of the “graying” of the presidency.

Details about Plans to Seek a Presidency

Not surprisingly, among chief academic officers who indicate that they plan to seek a presidency, the overwhelming majority see the president’s office as their next career move. These CAOs of CIC colleges and universities, when compared with their counterparts in other settings, however, are least likely to indicate that their next step would be a presidency (74 percent), most likely to plan to make the next move outside higher education (13 percent), and most likely to be undecided about their next move (9 percent) (see Table 5.1). Among CIC CAOs planning to seek the presidency, this pattern varies somewhat by other characteristics. Middle-aged CAOs—51 to 60 years old—are more likely to see a presidency as the next step in their careers (86 percent), while those younger are more likely to be undecided (21 percent). Similarly, CIC CAOs who came into their present roles from a different institution are much more likely to plan their next move to the presidency (84 percent versus 56 percent of those serving at the same institution) as are those who are not in their first CAO position (89 percent versus 71 percent for first-time CAOs).

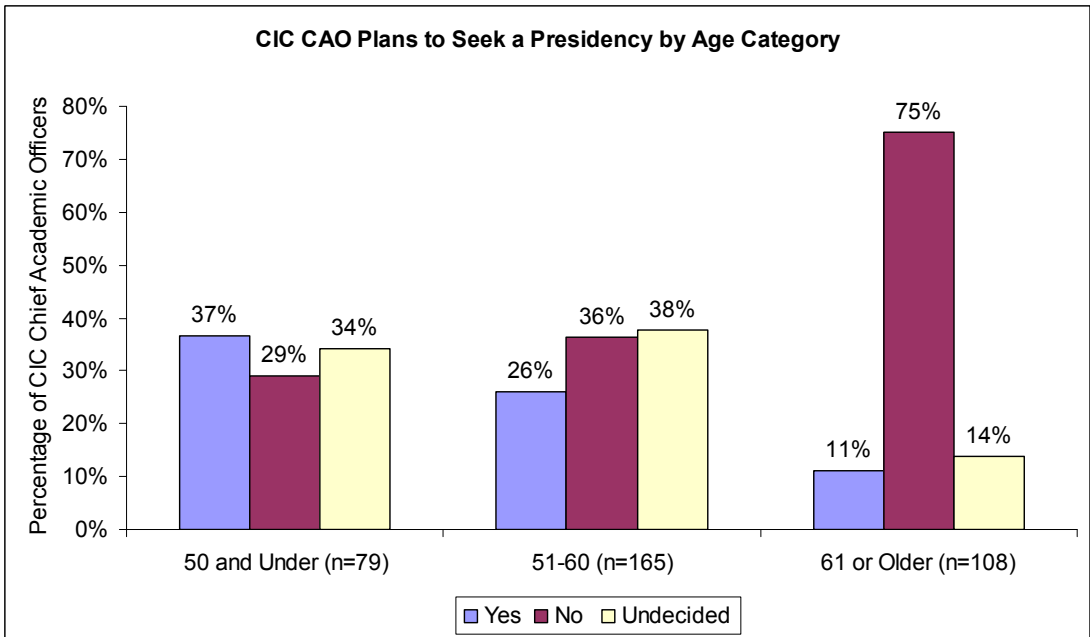


Figure 5.3

Next Career Step	CIC (n=85)	Public BA/MA (n=74)	Private Doctoral (n=10)	Public Doctoral (n=36)	Public Two-Year (n=168)
Seek a presidency	74%	82%	100%	83%	85%
Seek work outside of higher education	13%	8%	0%	8%	7%
Don't know/undecided	9%	5%	0%	3%	6%
Seek another CAO position	2%	0%	0%	3%	1%
Seek a different administrative position within a college	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%

Table 5.1. Next step in the careers of chief academic officers seeking a presidency by institutional type.

Those CAOs who intend to seek a presidency indicate that they have taken a number of steps to prepare for their next career move. Most common among the strategies for CIC CAOs are having sought diverse professional responsibilities (73 percent) and having discussed the career move with family members (71 percent), with similar patterns evident across CAOs in other types of institutional settings (see Table 5.2). CIC CAOs are more likely to have intentionally sought responsibilities and duties outside their portfolio (67 percent), while those in most other types of institutions are more likely to have spoken with mentors or search consultants. CAOs of public baccalaureate and master's level institutions are much more likely to have participated in structured leadership development programs than their peers in other settings.

Despite their interest, chief academic officers who signaled their desire to seek a presidency also indicate areas in which they believe they need further preparation for presidential duties. The most common area of need is fundraising, marked the highest by CIC CAOs (69 percent), nearly identical to CAOs of community colleges (68 percent) and far more frequently than CAOs of doctoral-granting institutions (30 percent at privates and 28 percent at publics) (see Table 5.3). Other areas of needed development frequently cited by CIC CAOs include relations with governing boards (42 percent), budget and financial management (32 percent), risk management and legal issues (31 percent), government relations (29 percent), economic development (27 percent), management of capital projects (26 percent), and community relations (22 percent). The ranking of these items, however, varies widely by institutional type, suggesting that the perceived role of the presidency varies greatly by level and control of the institution.

Steps Taken to Prepare for a Presidency	CIC (n=85)	Public BA/MA (n=74)	Private Doctoral (n=10)	Public Doctoral (n=36)	Public Two-Year (n=168)
Sought diverse professional responsibilities	73%	70%	80%	72%	74%
Discussed with family	71%	72%	80%	78%	72%
Intentionally sought duties and responsibilities not in portfolio	67%	54%	50%	56%	57%
Spoken with mentors	60%	57%	50%	72%	65%
Spoken with search consultants	54%	47%	70%	75%	39%
Participated in a structured leadership development program	51%	62%	10%	39%	52%
Hired an executive coach	0%	1%	0%	6%	2%

Table 5.2. Steps chief academic officers have taken to prepare for a presidency by institutional type (top three highlighted).

Areas Where Further Proficiency is Needed	CIC (n=85)	Public BA/MA (n=74)	Private Doctoral (n=10)	Public Doctoral (n=36)	Public Two-Year (n=168)
Fundraising	69%	54%	30%	28%	68%
Governing board relations	42%	32%	10%	42%	40%
Budget/financial management	32%	26%	10%	22%	38%
Risk management/legal issues	31%	39%	20%	25%	34%
Government relations	29%	35%	30%	36%	33%
Economic development	27%	35%	10%	44%	23%
Capital projects management	26%	36%	20%	31%	38%
Community relations	22%	26%	30%	19%	19%
Media relations	21%	26%	20%	17%	20%
Change management	16%	11%	10%	8%	14%
Alumni relations	15%	23%	10%	11%	22%
Crisis management	12%	18%	10%	11%	13%
Strategic planning	9%	8%	0%	3%	14%
Conflict management	8%	5%	0%	8%	7%
Enrollment management	5%	7%	0%	0%	5%
Personnel management	2%	3%	0%	0%	2%
None	2%	3%	10%	8%	2%

Table 5.3. Areas chief academic officers seeking a presidency say they need to develop further proficiency to be a successful president by institutional type (top three highlighted).

Among CIC CAOs, the areas where the development of further proficiency is needed also vary by certain background characteristics. For example, older CAOs cite change management (92 percent) and conflict management (58 percent) as their top two areas of need, with fundraising coming in third (50 percent). Yet those who previously served as a CAO are far more likely to indicate the need to develop their fundraising skills (89 percent) than those who are in their first CAO position, suggesting that experience in the CAO role is not the sole determinant of areas of needed development. Both men and women indicate that fundraising is the greatest need, though males more frequently (78 percent) than females (52 percent); second on the list among women is risk management and legal issues (44 percent), though this item is cited seventh by males (24 percent).

Reasons for Not Seeking a Presidency

Three-quarters of chief academic officers at CIC colleges and universities either do not plan to seek a presidency (47 percent) or are undecided (30 percent) (*see Table 5.4*). By far the most common reason given for not seeking a presidency is the unappealing nature of the work. CIC CAOs cited this explanation more frequently (74 percent) than their peers in other institutional settings, with the exception of CAOs of public research universities (76 percent). Other less frequently selected responses are not wanting to live “in a fishbowl” (26 percent), nearing retirement (26 percent), the burdensome time demands of the presidency (e.g., “too much time away from family”; 25 percent), and the desire to return to academic work (24 percent).

Reasons for Not Considering a Presidency	CIC (n=162)	Public BA/MA (n=80)	Private Doctoral (n=22)	Public Doctoral (n=38)	Public Two-Year (n=153)
Nature of work is unappealing	74%	60%	68%	76%	63%
Do not want to live in a fishbowl	26%	34%	50%	29%	28%
Ready to retire	26%	45%	9%	16%	46%
Time demands of the position	25%	23%	36%	24%	33%
Want to return to academic work	24%	15%	59%	13%	11%
Too old to be considered a viable candidate	20%	33%	18%	18%	21%
Do not feel prepared to succeed in the position	18%	11%	23%	3%	9%
Don't know if I am ready	12%	3%	5%	0%	2%
Not comfortable with the search process	3%	6%	5%	11%	5%
Considering a position outside of academe	2%	0%	0%	5%	3%
Insufficient compensation	0%	3%	0%	5%	3%

Table 5.4. Reasons for not considering a presidency for chief academic officers without presidential aspirations by institutional type (top three highlighted).

Among those who indicate that they do not plan to seek a presidency, older CIC CAOs and those who had previously served as a CAO in another institution not surprisingly are far more likely to indicate that they are either ready to retire (47 and 38 percent, respectively) or are too old to be considered viable candidates (35 percent for both groups) than are CAOs aged 60 or younger or in their first CAO positions. Women CAOs are more likely than their male colleagues to say that the nature of presidential responsibilities is unappealing (79 percent vs. 70 percent). The place of CAOs in the leadership hierarchy also appears to influence their views of presidential work. Those in structures where another vice president is clearly second in command are most likely to say that the work of the presidency is unappealing (89 percent), closely followed by those who have fairly equal status with the other vice presidents (82 percent), compared with those who serve in the number two spot behind the president (68 percent).

For chief academic officers who are undecided about whether to seek a presidency, the lack of appeal of presidential duties is also the most common reason cited. Nearly four of five CAOs of CIC member colleges and universities and CAOs of public two-year institutions indicate that they are uncertain if they would like the work of the presidency, while slightly more than half of the CAOs of public baccalaureate and master’s level institutions indicate similar views (*see Table 5.5*). Other reasons for being undecided, as cited by CIC CAOs, are “concerns about balancing family and job demands” (36 percent), “do not know if I have the skills to succeed in the position” (25 percent), “might want to return to the classroom/lab” (21 percent), and “concerns about the search process” (20 percent).

Reasons for Being Undecided About Seeking a Presidency	CIC (n=85)	Public BA/MA (n=39)	Private Doctoral (n=6)	Public Doctoral (n=36)	Public Two-Year (n=92)
Uncertain if I will like the nature of the work	74%	69%	67%	56%	72%
Concerns about balancing family and job demands	36%	31%	33%	25%	37%
Do not know if I have the skills to succeed	25%	28%	17%	25%	18%
Might want to return to classroom/lab	21%	33%	0%	13%	16%
Concerns about the search process	20%	18%	33%	44%	21%
Considering possibly working outside academe	11%	8%	17%	19%	18%
Do not know enough about the position	1%	3%	0%	0%	3%

Table 5.5. Reasons for being undecided about seeking a presidency for chief academic officers uncertain about presidential aspirations by institutional type (top three highlighted).

Career Moves of Predecessor

Yet another gauge of the future career trajectories of chief academic officers is to examine the career moves of the persons previously serving in the CAO role. Survey respondents were asked “What happened to the person previously serving in your CAO position?” Although not an aspirational indicator, this reporting of the career pathways taken by predecessors provides a pattern of professional progression. Overall, the most common routes taken by predecessor CAOs were moving on to a presidency or retiring (each 23 percent), followed by returning to the faculty (17 percent) and moving to a different CAO position (15 percent) (see Table 5.6). The pattern for CIC CAO predecessors is, however, much different. Nearly one in four (24 percent) returned to teaching posts and one in five (20 percent) took another position as a CAO, while fewer than one in six (16 percent) either retired or advanced to a college presidency. The predecessor CAOs of CIC colleges and universities were more likely than their peers in other institutional settings to move into a CAO position at a different institution and considerably less likely to assume a presidency. ♦

Career Moves of Predecessor CAOs	CIC (n=349)	Public BA/MA (n=201)	Private Doctoral (n=44)	Public Doctoral (n=98)	Public Two-Year (n=429)	Total (n=1,121)
Returned to the faculty	24%	26%	41%	20%	5%	17%
Moved to a different CAO position	20%	13%	0%	7%	14%	15%
Retired	16%	26%	14%	20%	28%	23%
Moved to a presidency	15%	23%	27%	35%	26%	23%
Took another administrative position not CAO or president	12%	7%	7%	9%	14%	12%
Other	7%	2%	9%	3%	10%	7%
Took position outside academe	5%	1%	2%	5%	2%	3%

Table 5.6. The career moves of predecessor chief academic officers by institutional type (top three highlighted).

6. Conclusion

Several conclusions are suggested by the findings of this study. First, chief academic officers indicate relatively high levels of satisfaction with their roles, indicating a high degree of compatibility with the leadership responsibilities and demands of these senior academic positions. This finding, however, seems to be at odds with their relatively short periods of service (4.3 years on average for CIC CAOs)—nearly half the average tenure of presidents (8.5 years for CIC presidents). If they enjoy the work, why do CAOs not stay in their positions longer? One hypothesis for this seeming contradiction is that CAOs are eager to move up to a college presidency, yet the findings here clearly indicate that the overwhelming majority—three-fourths—are not interested in pursuing this career path. Another hypothesis is that CAOs are older and ready to retire, yet they are on average younger than college presidents (the average age of CIC CAOs is 56.5 years old compared with CIC presidents at 59.7 years old). A third hypothesis, advanced by Eckel, Cook, and King (2009), suggests that CAOs are caught between competing expectations of their presidents and the faculty, frustrating their own professional objectives. Further study is needed to provide a sufficient explanation for the relatively short terms of service of chief academic officers.

Second, although largely satisfied with their work, CAOs indicate that they have challenging relationships with key campus constituents. Aside from frustrations in working with the faculty, CIC CAOs say they have the greatest difficulty working with their chief financial officers and with the other vice presidents. Good relationships among the senior leadership team are essential for effective institutional management, especially in challenging times such as the present economic recession. The successful management of senior leadership teams ultimately falls to the president. Programs that foster better relations among the CAO, CFO, and other vice presidents could be beneficial, as could programs that help presidents better manage their senior teams.⁷

Third, despite their high levels of satisfaction, chief academic officers receive little formal professional development for their leadership roles. This is particularly true for CAOs of CIC colleges and universities, with fewer than 30 percent having participated in a formal leadership development program prior to assuming their CAO role. Some preparation for the duties and responsibilities likely comes on the job for many, with nearly seven of ten CIC CAOs having served previously as a CAO (19 percent) or in another academic officer role (50 percent). Perhaps after they start their positions, CAOs are more likely to take advantage of leadership development opportunities, such as CIC's New Chief Academic Officers Workshop or Workshop for CAOs in Their Third or Fourth Year of Service.⁸ Again, the data analyzed for this study are limited in that they do not address experiences of formal leadership training after reaching the CAO position.

Fourth, the small proportion of chief academic officers who aspire to the college presidency appear to have an accurate assessment of the skills needed to be a successful president. For CAOs of CIC colleges and universities, top among the areas where further proficiency is needed is fundraising, followed by governing board relations, budget and financial management, and risk management and legal issues. CIC presidents who had previously served as chief academic officers indicated that they felt underprepared

⁷ Periodically, CIC's annual Institute for Chief Academic Officers focuses on the relationship of the CAO with other key vice presidents. The 2010 Institute includes chief financial officers and the 2011 Institute will include chief advancement officers. For additional information, see www.cic.edu/conferences_events/caos/index.asp.

⁸ For information on these leadership development programs, see www.cic.edu/conferences_events/caos/index.asp.

upon entering the presidency for capital project management, fundraising, risk management and legal issues, and entrepreneurial ventures (Hartley and Godin, 2009). Professional development programs preparing CAOs for the presidency need to focus on these presidential skills. Additionally, since prior research indicates that the use of mentors is effective in cultivating future collegiate leadership (Berliner, Palm, Yakobosku, Lorder, and Smyer, 2009), programs to develop potential college presidents would do well to include strong mentoring components. Three of five CIC CAOs who plan to seek a presidency indicate that they have worked with mentors. More should be encouraged to do so. Taken together, these findings provide guidance for leadership development programs that seek to prepare CAOs for college presidencies.

Fifth, chief academic officers of CIC colleges and universities show a mixed pattern of diversity when compared with CAOs of other types of four-year institutions. CIC CAOs are as likely to be women (38 percent) but less likely to be persons of color (9 percent) than their peers in other four-year settings. As a group, however, CIC CAOs are more diverse than the presidents of CIC institutions, with 25 percent of presidents being women and 8 percent persons of color. Although this is not a longitudinal study, there is evidence to suggest that CAOs of CIC institutions are becoming more diverse. Forty-six percent of CAOs who were appointed within a year prior to the survey administration are women compared with 35 percent of those who were appointed ten or more years previously. There is a similar pattern of increasing numbers of persons of color appointed as CAOs in more recent years.

Sixth, while slightly younger than their peers in other types of institutions, CAOs of CIC colleges and universities are typically within a decade or so of normal retirement age (mean of 56.5 years old). As noted above, they are on average just three years younger than CIC presidents. This suggests that continued attention to the leadership pipeline for senior administrators of colleges and universities will be necessary. Younger CAOs, however, are more likely to be interested in pursuing a college presidency, suggesting that leadership development efforts may more likely meet with success if targeting CAOs earlier in their careers. If effective, this strategy could result in younger presidents of CIC colleges who have the potential for longer terms of service (or would be more likely to assume multiple presidencies).

In light of these conclusions, several recommendations follow:

1. Further research to understand better the reasons for the relatively short tenure of chief academic officers is warranted, both from the perspective of chief academic officers and the institutions they serve. In what ways is a pattern of shorter terms of service problematic—or desirable?
2. Opportunities to foster better relations among CAOs, CFOs, and other vice presidents are warranted, as are programs to help presidents manage their senior teams.
3. Continued emphasis should be placed on formal leadership development programs for campus administrators and faculty leaders who seek to become chief academic officers and for CAOs who seek to become college presidents.⁹
4. Programs to prepare CAOs for the college presidency should focus on developing relevant presidential skills, such as fundraising, governing board relations, budget and financial management, risk management and legal issues, and capital project and entrepreneurial ventures. Additionally, such programs should include a mentoring component.

⁹ In partnership with AALI and AASCU, CIC now offers a formal program, Academic Leadership for the 21st Century, to prepare CAOs for college presidencies. For additional information see www.cic.edu/projects_services/academic_leadership_21st_century.asp. CIC and AALI recently announced a new leadership development program, a year-long Senior Leadership Academy, for mid-level administrators. For additional information, see www.cic.edu/projects_services/coops/senior_leadership.asp. In addition, thanks to generous support from Lilly Endowment Inc., CIC has since 2005 offered the Presidential Vocation and Institutional Mission program, a year-long series of seminars for prospective presidents—with parallel offerings for current presidents, to consider the ways in which the alignment between personal vocation and institutional mission can strengthen their presidential leadership.

5. Women and persons of color should be encouraged to participate in programs that prepare prospective senior campus leaders.¹⁰
6. Younger CAOs should be targeted for programs to prepare college presidents, given their greater interest in the presidency and potential of long-term service as a president.
7. Although not as old, on average, as college presidents, the mean age of chief academic officers suggests that programs that prepare potential CAOs and orient new CAOs will continue to be of importance to the vitality of college leadership for some time to come. ♦

¹⁰ In 2009, CIC became a cosponsor along with AASCU, of the Millennium Leadership Institute, a leadership development program that provides individuals from underrepresented groups with opportunities to advance to the college presidency.

Appendix

Background

The provost or chief academic officer (CAO) position has not received the same level of attention in the research literature as college and university presidents (for a brief literature review on studies of college and university presidents, see CIC's report, *A Study of Career Patterns of the Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities*, Hartley and Godin, 2009). The American Council on Education's (ACE) *The CAO Census: A National Profile of Chief Academic Officers* (Eckel, Cook, and King, 2009) is the first comprehensive survey of chief academic officers. Previous studies on CAOs of colleges and universities have provided descriptive information on demographic characteristics, career paths, and responsibilities (Cedja and Rewy, 2001; Moden, Miller, and Williford, 1987; Moore, 1983), but none has done so in a comprehensive manner. In addition, although numerous recent articles provide information on the career paths and responsibilities of chief academic officers, few are supported by survey data. Nevertheless, these sources provide insight into the CAO position and career patterns of senior level administrators not captured in surveys (Berliner, Palm, Yakoboski, Lord, and Smyer, 2009; Ferren and Stanton, 2004; Land, 2003).

Moore's (1983) study of line administrators in four-year institutions, focusing on presidents, provosts, and academic deans, was one of the earliest inquiries to provide CAO-specific information. Using a stratified random sample, the study included data from 154 provosts and CAOs, 156 presidents, and 1,293 deans. Eighty-six percent of provosts sampled were male and 96 percent were white. Half the sample was between the ages of 45 and 55, and 59 percent had held their position for six years or less. Moore developed an "ideal" career path for CAOs that included transitions from faculty member to department chair to dean and finally to provost. While no provosts were a perfect match for this model, 40 percent were missing only the academic dean position and another 48 percent were missing the academic dean and chair positions. Only 11 percent of provosts had never held a faculty position. Fifty-six percent of provosts had had at least one mentor and Moore writes, "perhaps the mentor relationship is the most visible of the informal factors which are believed to influence the decisions made about an individual's career choice" (Moore, 1983, p. 19). Of the provosts surveyed, 20 percent said they were definitely searching for a new position and 24 percent said "maybe." The most common choice for a new position was at another institution—"presumably many of these are aspirants for presidencies," (Moore, 1983, p. 23); second was another CAO position at a different institution; and third was to leave higher education.

Moden et al.'s (1987) study created a stratified random sample by separating colleges and universities into seven size categories based on student FTE. This study included data on CAOs of 331 institutions. CAOs on average were 49 years old and held the position for an average of 5.3 years. Eighty-one percent were male. Forty-two percent of CAOs were involved in teaching and 26 percent were involved in research. The two highest reported areas of satisfaction were initiating or facilitating change and helping others to achieve goals, while the greatest area of dissatisfaction was the uncertainty of the length of term in office. Living in a "fish bowl" was also reported as a negative aspect of the job. CAOs listed relationships with faculty members as the most difficult, followed by relationships with the president and vice president for business. When asked about their futures, 37 percent wanted to pursue a presidency, 20 percent reported retiring, 15 percent wanted to seek another CAO position, and 14 percent wanted to return to teaching.

Cedjar and Rewy's (2001) study included data from 971 chief academic officers at four-year colleges and universities and sought to create a profile of CAOs across eight institutional groups by 1994 Carnegie Classifications (but not control). The survey was patterned after ACE's American College President Study. The authors found that 75 percent of CAOs were men and 92 percent were white. In addition, the median age was 54 years old and 87 percent had held their current position for five or fewer years. The most common prior position for the CAO was dean (36 percent), followed by CAO at another institution (17 percent), faculty member (14 percent), and university administrator (12 percent). The three most common fields of study were humanities/fine arts (30 percent), social sciences (28 percent), and education (15 percent). All CAOs had some form of teaching experience, though not all had held full-time faculty positions. Finally, 53 percent of CAOs were hired from within the institution they served.

ACE's *CAO Census* (Eckel et al., 2009), conducted in the spring of 2008, contains data from 1,715 chief academic officers in all sectors of higher education throughout the United States. Of these respondents, 358 (21 percent) were CAOs of CIC institutions. As the first comprehensive survey of provosts and CAOs, it examined the demographic characteristics, current duties and responsibilities, previous positions and career progression, and career aspirations of CAOs and provides a foundation for subsequent longitudinal analysis. Developed as a companion survey to ACE's *American College President Study*, it has allowed higher education researchers to compare responses from the two survey measures. The analysis by Eckel et al. includes level and control, but their "private" category combines two very different sectors, independent nonprofit and private-for-profit.

Two consistent and related themes in recent literature on provosts are: (1) the general lack of formal training for chief academic officers and (2) the appointment to the position of CAO occurring more from an institutional need than an individual career objective (Berliner et al., 2009; Feren and Stanton, 2002; Land, 2003). According to Land (2003), "the lack of preparation, combined with adaptability requirements and other demands, has caused the pool of potential academic leaders to decline in recent years" (p. 13). Feren and Stanton (2004) agree, arguing that "higher education deserves more than just trial-and-error academic administration" (p. vii). The movement into a chief academic officer position is often a function of events outside the control of the individual, and "many people in positions of authority are accidental administrators due to a lack of succession planning on campuses and a lack of leadership training" (Berliner et al., 2009, p. 2).

To prepare future administrators adequately for the CAO position, colleges, universities, and higher education associations need to understand better the duties and responsibilities of CAOs. As the responsibilities of CAOs move away from strictly internal affairs to include external activities, Land (2003) provides three areas for colleges and universities to address: "alternative career paths to academic affairs, how to identify future leaders from other administrative areas, and what strategies to implement to foster diversity in academic leadership" (p. 14). In addition, the role of mentors has been well documented as a critical aspect for career development in higher education. Berliner (2009) writes, "confidence and desire to pursue a presidency can depend heavily on a CAOs relationship with his or her president" (p. 3). Together, survey data and expert opinion suggest a need for both formal preparation and informal mentoring to prepare higher education's future leaders.

Methods and Data

The purpose of this study is to understand the demographic characteristics, duties and responsibilities, career pathways, and presidential aspirations of chief academic officers (CAOs) of colleges and universities that are members of the Council of Independent Colleges. To determine whether important differences exist between CAOs of different types of institutions, comparisons were made with CAOs of four other types of colleges and universities based on a combination of Carnegie Classification and control: public baccalaureate and master's (BA/MA) level institutions, private doctoral—or research—universities, public doctoral universities, and public two-year or community colleges.

Data for the study came from ACE's CAO Census (Eckel et al., 2009). Responses from 1,140 chief academic officers to the ACE survey conducted in 2008 were analyzed. Table 7.1 displays the numbers of respondents for each institutional grouping. CIC membership was based on the institutions that were members at the time of the release of the report in February 2009 (N= 588), with 358 respondents for a response rate of 60.9 percent (the overall response rate of the ACE census was 54.6 percent).

Data analysis is descriptive and bivariate, consisting of frequencies and cross-tabulations for comparative purposes. In addition to comparisons by type of institution, CIC also made comparisons by previous position, based on an approach developed by King and Gomez (2008). The five major response categories are (1) chief academic officers (CAO) or provosts, (2) other academic administrators, such as associate or assistant vice presidents or deans, (3) nonacademic officers, such as advancement, finance, or student affairs administrators, (4) faculty members or department chairs, and (5) those in positions outside of higher education, such as public officials, corporate executives, or other nonprofit leaders. ♦

Sub-Sector	Population	Respondents	Response Rate
CIC	588	358	60.9
Public BA/MA	378	204	54.0
Private Doctoral	<i>*This figure is not available.</i>	44	—
Public Doctoral	152	100	65.8
Public Two-Year	875	434	49.6
Total	—	1140	—

Table 7.1. Distribution of chief academic officers, survey respondents, and response rate by institution type.

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