

Errata:

the American College President 2012



In Tables 2, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20, and 23, showing career history of presidents, the percentages for presidents in 2011 with prior position "Outside Higher Education" are incorrect. In these tables, "Other" experiences were mistakenly omitted from the total for "Outside Higher Education."

These errata include corrected tables, as well as revised text for Chapters 2, 5, 8, and 10, with corrected text highlighted in boldface and corrected data shaded in each table.

Chapter 2 Summary Profile of the American College President: 2011, Compared with 2006

Table 2
Characteristics of Presidents: 2011 and 2006

	2011 Percent	2006 Percent
Demographics		
Women	26.4	23.0
Minority	12.6	13.6
Currently married	85.0	83.2
Has children	85.3	85.7
Education		
Has PhD or EdD	76.8	75.0
Has formal religious training	*	31.3
Presidents' top three fields of study:		
Education or higher education	37.7	43.0
Social sciences	11.9	13.8
Humanities	14.2	13.7
Career History		
Prior position		
President/CEO	19.5	21.4
Chief academic officer	34.0	31.4
Senior executive	22.5	29.6
Outside higher education	20.3	13.1
Never been a faculty member	30.4	31.1
Ever worked outside higher education	47.8	63.0
	Average	Average
Age (in years)	60.7	59.9
Years in present job	7.0	8.5
Years in prior position	*	6.7
Years as full-time faculty	*	8.2

* Data were not collected, or were collected in a non-comparable format, in the 2011 survey.

Education and Career Path

Seventy percent of presidents had experience as faculty members. Presidents spent an average of seven years in a faculty role, and one in five (19.5 percent) served as a president prior to accepting his or her current position (see Figure 2). **Twenty** percent of presidents' immediate prior positions were outside higher education.

Thirty-eight percent of college and university presidents received their highest earned degree in the field of education (see Figure 3). Presidents were approximately three times more likely to have their highest degree in education than in humanities (14 percent) or social sciences (12 percent), the next two most-common fields. Religion/theology represented 7 percent of the group, with 15 percent of presidents earning a professional degree in law, medicine and health fields, or business. Eleven percent of presidents earned their highest degree in STEM fields.

Table 5
Characteristics of Presidents, by Gender: 2011

	Men Percent	Women Percent
Demographics		
Minority	12.8	20.4
Currently married	90.1	71.6
Has children	90.2	72.1
Altered career for family	18.8	26.5
Education		
Has PhD or EdD	74.6	82.7
Presidents' top three fields of study:		
Education or higher education	34.6	46.4
Humanities/fine arts	13.4	16.0
Social sciences	12.2	10.9
Career History		
Prior position		
President/CEO	20.8	16.0
CAO/provost or other senior executive in academic affairs*	42.1	51.9
Other senior campus executive**	12.5	10.1
Outside higher education	20.9	18.4
Never been a faculty member	32.3	25.2
Ever worked outside higher education	47.5	48.2
	Average	Average
Age (in years)	60.9	60.2
Years in present job	7.2	6.5
Years primarily in the classroom/lab	6.4	7.4

* Excludes department chairs and faculty.

** Reflects sum of all senior executive and administrative positions outside academic affairs.

Chapter 5 College Presidents and the Institutions They Serve

Doctorate-Granting Universities

Presidents of doctorate-granting universities are responsible for large, complex organizations. As a group, they enroll more than 5.8 million students, and their average head count enrollment is more than 19,000 students. Almost 60 percent of these doctorate-granting universities are public institutions.

Presidents of doctorate-granting institutions constituted 9 percent of survey respondents. The response rate for presidents of doctorate-granting institutions was 59 percent.

With the exception of special focus institutions, the demographic characteristics of presidents in this sector changed most of all sectors between 2006 and 2011. By 2011, 22 percent of the presidents of doctorate-granting institutions were women (compared with 14 percent in 2006), and 13 percent were members of a racial or ethnic minority group (compared with 11 percent in 2006) (see Table 10). When doctorate-granting universities that are also minority-serving institutions (MSIs) are excluded, the share of these institutions led by minorities drops to 9 percent (see Figure 10).

Presidents of public doctorate-granting universities were more likely than presidents of private doctorate-granting universities to be a member of a racial or ethnic minority group. Eighteen percent of the presidents of public doctorate-granting institutions identified themselves as an ethnic or racial minority. Only 5 percent of private doctorate-granting institution presidents identified themselves as a minority. Private doctorate-granting institutions reported the lowest proportion of minority presidents (see Table 10).

Similarly, women were more likely to be presidents of public—versus private—doctorate-granting universities. Women were presidents of 24 percent of public doctorate-granting universities and 21 percent of private doctorate-granting universities.

Eighty-seven percent of all presidents of doctorate-granting universities were married in 2011—an increase from 2006 when 86 percent of these presidents were married. Presidents at private doctorate-granting institutions were less likely to be married than those at public doctorate-granting institutions (78 percent compared with 92 percent, respectively).

The discrepancy in marital status between presidents of public and private doctorate-granting institutions can be explained in part by the number of presidents in the private sector whose religious vows preclude them from marriage. Fourteen percent of presidents at private doctorate-granting institutions described their marital status as unmarried because they were members of a religious order.

Older, experienced chief executives were most likely to be hired by doctorate-granting institutions. Presidents of doctorate-granting universities were slightly older than presidents in other sectors—the average age was 63 years, and 70 percent were over age 60, up from 61 percent in 2006. In both 2011 and 2006, 3 percent of the presidents in this sector were under 51 years of age (see Appendix E). These data suggest that while the share of younger presidents has stag-

Table 7

Characteristics of Presidents, by Race/Ethnicity: 2011

	African-American Percent	Hispanic Percent	White Percent
Demographics			
Women	34.0	38.7	25.1
Currently married	76.0	76.0	85.9
Has children	87.6	82.0	85.2
Education			
Has PhD or EdD	85.6	74.2	76.3
Presidents' top three fields of study:			
Education or higher education	41.2	32.3	37.7
Social sciences	16.5	9.7	12.2
Humanities	12.4	17.7	14.2
Career History			
Prior position			
President/CEO	17.2	16.4	19.7
CAO/provost or other senior executive in academic affairs*	48.4	44.3	44.6
Other senior campus executive**	11.9	16.4	22.5
Outside higher education	16.3	18.0	20.7
	Average	Average	Average
Age (in years)	61.8	59.4	60.8
Years in present job	7.3	7.3	6.9

* Excludes department chairs and faculty.

** Reflects sum of all senior executive and administrative positions outside academic affairs.

nated, while retirements could still have a significant impact on the leadership of doctorate-granting universities in the near future.

The proportion of presidents at doctorate-granting institutions serving in a subsequent presidency continues to decline. In 2006 and 2001, 28 percent of presidents at doctorate-granting institutions had been a president or CEO in their previous job, compared with just 21 percent in 2011. This suggests that after years of hiring sitting presidents, doctorate-granting institutions increasingly are recruiting from outside the current presidency ranks. In 2011, 42 percent of presidents from doctorate-granting institutions had served as provost or CAO in their immediate prior position. Few doctorate-granting institutions look outside higher education for their leadership, as just 15 percent of these institutions hired presidents from outside education. However, in 2006 the share of presidents from outside higher education at doctorate-granting institutions was only 7 percent, indicating that increasingly schools are willing to search beyond the academy.

Presidents of doctorate-granting universities in 2011 were somewhat more likely than those in 2006 to have been employed by the same institution in their prior position. In 2011, 30 percent of the presidents of doctorate-granting institutions had been employed by the same institution in their previous job, compared with 26 percent in 2006 (see Appendix D).

The fields in which most presidents of doctorate-granting institutions held their highest degree differed from those of other presidents. Presidents of doctorate-granting institutions were more likely than presidents of other institutions to hold degrees in mathematics, science, engineering, or medicine (20 percent, compared with 13 percent of all presidents). Twenty-eight percent of presidents at doctorate-granting institutions held degrees in the social sciences; only 16 percent had earned their highest degree in education, compared with 38 percent of all presidents.

Table 10
Characteristics of Presidents at Doctorate-Granting Universities: 2011 and 2006

	Public 2011 Percent	Private 2011 Percent	Total 2011 Percent	Total 2006 Percent
Demographics				
Women	23.9	20.7	22.3	13.8
Minority	18.0	5.2	12.8	11.4
Currently married	91.5	78.4	86.7	85.5
Has children	87.6	81.0	85.2	87.6
Education				
Has PhD or EdD	89.9	84.5	87.9	77.7
Has formal religious training	NA	NA	NA	10.3
Presidents' top three fields of study:				
Social sciences	27.3	Social sciences 29.3	Social sciences 27.7	Social sciences 25.5
Education or higher education	12.5	Education or higher education 17.2	Education or higher education 15.5	Humanities/fine arts 12.8
Humanities/fine arts	9.1	Humanities/fine arts 12.1	Humanities/fine arts 10.1	Education or higher education 11.2
Career History				
Prior position				
President/CEO	18.2	24.1	20.9	27.5
CAO/provost or other senior executive in academic affairs*	61.4	56.9	59.5	54.5
Other senior campus executive**	4.6	3.4	4.0	6.5
Outside higher education	14.6	15.5	15.0	7.0
Never been a faculty member	NA	NA	NA	12.1
Ever worked outside higher education	30.0	54.9	38.8	50.0
	Average	Average	Average	Average
Age (in years)	63.3	61.7	62.7	61.8
Years in present job	5.8	6.8	6.2	7.6
Years in prior position	NA	NA	NA	6.6
Years as full-time faculty	NA	NA	NA	16.3

* Excludes department chairs and faculty.

** Reflects sum of all senior executive positions outside academic affairs.

NA: Data were not collected, or were collected in a non-comparable format, in the 2011 survey.

Eighty-two percent of the presidents of doctorate-granting institutions also spent a number of years primarily in the classroom—a larger proportion than for presidents of other types of institutions.

Finally, presidents of private doctorate-granting institutions had served in their positions longer than their public counterparts. Nearly one-quarter of private doctorate-granting university presidents had served in their current positions for more than 10 years, compared with 14 percent of public doctorate-granting university presidents.

Master's Colleges and Universities

Master's colleges and universities are evenly divided between the public and private sectors. More than 4.5 million students are enrolled at these institutions, and the average head count enrollment is more than 6,600 students. Master's institutions in the private sector typically have smaller enrollment than public sector institutions.

Presidents of master's colleges and universities represented 23.2 percent of all respondents. The response rate from these presidents was 69 percent.

In 2011, 23 percent of the presidents in this sector were women, compared with 22 percent in 2006. The 2011 proportion of minority presidents held steady from the 2006 level of 13 percent (see Table 9).

Only six percent of the presidents of private master's institutions identified themselves as a minority, compared with 21 percent of presidents of public master's institutions. The comparatively large proportion of public master's institutions headed by minorities is due in part to the concentration of HBCUs in this sector. When MSIs are excluded, 14 percent of public master's institutions, and 12 percent of all master's institutions, are headed by minorities (see Figure 10). Women held similar proportions of presidencies at public and private master's colleges and universities. Twenty-three percent of the presidents of public institutions were women, as were 23 percent of those at private institutions.

Table 11
Characteristics of Presidents at Master's Colleges and Universities: 2011 and 2006

	Public 2011 Percent	Private 2011 Percent	Total 2011 Percent	Total 2006 Percent
Women	22.9	22.5	22.8	21.5
Minority	20.9	5.6	12.4	12.9
Currently married	90.1	77.5	83.2	78.5
Has children	84.6	78.7	81.2	79.2
Education				
Has PhD or EdD	89.0	81.7	85.0	86.8
Has formal religious training	NA	NA	NA	23.5
Presidents' top three fields of study:				
Education or higher education	28.1	Education or higher education 27.6	Education or higher education 28.1	Education or higher education 36.8
Humanities/fine arts	21.6	Humanities/fine arts 21.9	Humanities/fine arts 21.6	Social sciences 19.0
Social sciences	18.7	Social sciences 17.1	Social sciences 17.7	Humanities/fine arts 18.7
Career History				
Prior position				
President/CEO	24.0	18.1	20.5	21.6
CAO/provost or other senior executive in academic affairs*	55.1	41.9	47.7	44.6
Other senior campus executive**	10.8	15.2	13.7	18.3
Outside higher education	9.0	21.0	15.5	11.1
Never been a faculty member	NA	NA	NA	26.3
Ever worked outside higher education	44.4	50.3	47.5	54.6
	Average	Average	Average	Average
Age (in years)	62.6	61.6	62.0	61.1
Years in present job	6.8	8.2	7.5	9.0
Years in prior position	NA	NA	NA	6.4
Years as full-time faculty	NA	NA	NA	8.8

* Excludes department chairs and faculty.

** Reflects sum of all senior executive and administrative positions outside academic affairs.

NA: Data were not collected, or were collected in a non-comparable format, in the 2011 survey.

Presidents in this sector in 2011 were older than presidents at bachelor's and associate institutions. They also were older than presidents in this sector had been previously, with 65 percent in 2011 over 60 years of age, compared with 56 percent in 2006. However presidents in this sector were also slightly younger. In 2006, 4 percent of presidents in this sector were age 50 or younger. In 2011, the share increased to 6 percent. These findings indicate that the middle age range of presidents in this sector (ages 51 to 60 years old) are disappearing. As at doctorate-granting universities, retirements may soon have a significant impact on the leadership of master's institutions.

Presidents of public and private master's institutions differed on marital status, in part because of the larger proportion of private colleges with religious affiliations. Eight percent of presidents at private master's institutions were trained as religious professionals, compared with only 2 percent of presidents at public master's colleges and universities. This finding helps explain why 78 percent of presidents at private master's colleges and universities were married, compared with 90 percent of those at public institutions (see Table 11). Three percent of public master's colleges and university presidents had never been married, compared with 18 percent of presidents of private master's institutions.

Twenty-four percent of public and 18 percent of private master's institution presidents had previously served as a president. For those who had not been presidents previously, the path that public and private master's institution leaders took to the presidency differed. More than half of public master's institution had come from the provost or another senior academic affairs position; only 20 percent came from a different senior executive role in higher education or from outside higher education. At private master's institutions, the path to the presidency was more diverse. Forty-two percent of these presidents had held a senior executive position in academic affairs, 15 percent had held another senior position at a college or university (most typically in business or administration), and 21 percent worked outside higher education. Private master's institution presidents were also more likely than their public-institution counterparts to have never been a faculty member (41 percent and 21 percent, respectively) and to have worked outside higher education at some point in their careers (50 percent and 44 percent, respectively).

Bachelor's Colleges

Bachelor's colleges enroll just over 1.5 million students, with an average head count enrollment of about 1,800 students. Approximately 17 percent of bachelor's colleges are public, so the following results primarily reflect the characteristics of presidents of private colleges. Many public bachelor's colleges also are special-mission institutions such as historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Sixty-one percent of bachelor's college presidents responded to the survey.

In the first presidents' survey in 1986, the proportion of women presidents in this sector was relatively high at 16 percent. After increasing to 20 percent in 1998, the proportion remained steady with 19 percent in 2001, but then increased to 23 percent in 2006. The share of women presidents remains at 23 percent in 2011.

In 2011, the percentage of minority presidents leading bachelor's colleges was similar to the proportion at master's institutions, but less than at doctorate-granting institutions. The proportion of minority presidents in the bachelor's sector decreased from 13 percent in 2006 to 12 percent in 2011 (see Table 12). When MSIs are excluded, 7 percent of bachelor's colleges are headed by members of racial or ethnic minority groups in 2011.

The small number of public bachelor's institutions had the largest representation of minority presidents compared to other sectors. Twenty-two percent of the presidents of public bachelor's colleges were members of a minority group, compared with 12 percent overall. Public bachelor's colleges also had a higher proportion of women presidents than private bachelor's institutions, (28 and 22 percent, respectively). While the percentage of private bachelor's colleges led by women increased slightly from 21 percent in 2006, the share of female-led public bachelor's colleges declined from 34 percent.

Like presidents of other types of institutions, most presidents of bachelor's colleges were married. Eighty-nine percent of presidents of public institutions were married or had been married at some time, compared with 87 percent of presidents of private bachelor's colleges. As at master's institutions, the difference is explained in part by the greater presence in the private sector of presidents whose religious vows preclude them from marrying.

Following the trend seen in other sectors, presidents in 2011 were both younger and older than their counterparts in 2006. Twelve percent of bachelor's college presidents were under 51 years of age, compared with 9 percent in 2006. Conversely, 55 percent were age 61 or older, up from 48 percent in 2006.

The trend of more presidents having previous CEO experience is not present among presidents of bachelor's colleges. Fourteen percent of these presidents in 2011 had been a president in their immediate prior position, compared with 18 percent in 2006. Presidents of private bachelor's institutions were more likely to have previous CEO experience (14 percent) than those of public institutions (8 percent). As such, the path to the presidency in this sector, as at master's institutions, is more diverse at public institutions than at private institutions. Almost one-fifth of public bachelor's college presidents came from executive positions outside academic affairs (primarily administration or finance), and 20

percent came from outside higher education.

More public and private bachelor's college presidents received their highest earned degree in education than in any other field. Presidents with humanities degrees were the second most common.

Associate Colleges

Nationally, total enrollment at associate colleges is more than 8.4 million students; the average head-count enrollment in credit-bearing courses is more than 4,400 students. Fifty-seven percent of associate college presidents responded to the survey.

Because of the large number of public community colleges, data on these presidents dominate the statistics that describe associate college presidents. They account for 61 percent of all public college and university presidents in this survey and nearly one-third of all presidents. In contrast, private associate colleges constitute a small, diverse sector that includes institutions with both academic and vocational missions.

The most striking change in this sector since 2006 has been the continued increase in the number of women presidents. In 1986, 6 percent of public com-

Table 12

Characteristics of Presidents at Bachelor's Colleges: 2011 and 2006

	Public 2011 Percent	Private 2011 Percent	Total 2011 Percent	Total 2006 Percent
Women	27.5	22.3	22.9	23.2
Minority	21.6	10.1	12.2	13.1
Currently married	88.6	86.7	87.0	86.7
Has children	88.2	88.4	88.1	86.4
Education				
Has PhD or EdD	84.3	76.0	76.3	78.4
Has formal religious training	NA	NA	NA	20.4
Presidents' top three fields of study:				
Education or higher education	32.0	Education or higher education 30.8	Education or higher education 31.5	Education or higher education 30.8
Humanities/fine arts	16.0	Humanities/fine arts 20.3	Humanities/fine arts 19.0	Humanities/fine arts 22.6
Social sciences	14.0	Religion/theology 11.3	Social sciences 11.3	Social sciences 15.8
Career History				
Prior position				
President/CEO	7.8	14.4	13.5	17.7
CAO/provost or other senior executive in academic affairs*	52.9	42.4	44.2	44.5
Other senior campus executive**	15.7	11.8	12.3	21.9
Outside higher education	19.7	27.0	25.7	11.5
Never been a faculty member	NA	NA	NA	32.2
Ever worked outside higher education	40.9	42.5	42.0	58.1
	Average	Average	Average	Average
Age (in years)	62.8	59.6	60.1	59.7
Years in present job	6.4	6.5	6.7	8.1
Years in prior position	NA	NA	NA	6.8
Years as full-time faculty	NA	NA	NA	8.5

* Excludes department chairs and faculty.

** Reflects sum of all senior executive positions outside academic affairs.

NA: Data were not collected, or were collected in a non-comparable format, in the 2011 survey.

munity college presidents were women. By 2006, the share of women heading these colleges had increased to 29 percent. In 2011, women comprise 33 percent of associate college presidents, the highest of any sector (see Table 13).

Similar to other sectors, the proportion of minority presidents in the associate college sector declined, dropping from 14 percent to 13 percent between 2006 and 2011 (see Table 13). Because many minority-serving institutions are associate colleges—and many of these institutions are headed by minorities—they raise the overall percentage of minority leaders in this sector. When minority-serving institutions are excluded, 10 percent of associate colleges are led by minority presidents. Considering the size of this sector, changes in the numbers of women presidents significantly affected the national “portrait” of the American college president in 2011.

Presidents of associate colleges are younger than their peers in other sectors, but these presidents also are slightly older than they were in 2006. The average age of associate college presidents in 2011 is 60, up from 59 in 2006. However, 13 percent of associate college presidents are age 50 or younger, up from 10 percent in 2006.

Perhaps surprisingly, associate college presidents are more likely than presidents of doctorate-granting universities to have previously led another institution (23 percent and 21 percent, respectively). Unlike the other institutions described, where about half of presidents come from senior positions in academic affairs, community college presidents have a somewhat more diverse route to the presidency. Many (44 percent) still come from academic affairs, but 13 percent come from other executive positions (primarily in finance or administration or student affairs) and 17 percent come from outside higher education.

Table 13
Characteristics of Presidents at Associate Colleges: 2011 and 2006

	Public 2011 Percent	Private 2011 Percent	Total 2011 Percent	Total 2006 Percent
Women	32.3	40.7	33.0	28.8
Minority	12.9	7.4	12.9	13.9
Currently married	87.2	84.6	86.8	83.2
Has children	85.6	92.3	85.5	86.8
Education				
Has PhD or EdD	85.5	55.6	81.1	78.7
Has formal religious training	NA	NA	NA	5.7
Presidents' top three fields of study:				
Education or higher education	66.5	Education or higher education 40.7	Education or higher education 63.4	Education or higher education 70.0
Computer science	7.8	Humanities/fine arts 18.5	Computer science 7.9	Humanities/fine arts 9.5
Humanities/fine arts	7.0	Business 14.8	Humanities/fine arts 7.7	Social sciences 5.9
Career History				
Prior position				
President/CEO	24.2	7.7	23.2	26.3
CAO/provost or other senior executive in academic affairs*	45.9	30.8	44.4	43.4
Other senior campus executive**	13.6	15.4	13.3	18.9
Outside higher education	14.5	38.4	16.8	9.4
Never been a faculty member	NA	NA	NA	37.7
Ever worked outside higher education	43.9	61.5	45.6	67.0
	Average	Average	Average	Average
Age (in years)	60.0	55.3	59.6	59.1
Years in present job	6.9	5.4	6.9	8.5
Years in prior position	NA	NA	NA	6.5
Years as full-time faculty	NA	NA	NA	5.1

* Excludes department chairs and faculty.

** Reflects sum of all senior executive and administrative positions outside academic affairs.

NA: Data were not collected, or were collected in a non-comparable format, in the 2011 survey.

A diverse path to the presidency certainly exists at the associate level, but there are some traditional aspects to their CEOs. Between 2006 and 2011, the proportion of presidents who spent time in the classroom as faculty members increased. In 2006, 38 percent of presidents had not had classroom experience, compared with 30 percent in 2011.

Special Focus Institutions

Special focus institutions are difficult to analyze as a group because they represent diverse missions. Examples of these free-standing (i.e., independently non-affiliated) institutions included in this category are military academies, medical/dental colleges, seminaries and religious institutions, professional schools, other graduate schools, and tribally controlled colleges and universities. These institutions together serve approximately 600,000 students, with an average head count of just under 800 students.

Their survey response rate was 40 percent.

Because special focus institutions may select presidents based on reasons related to their institutional missions, it is difficult to interpret the averages. For example, the most typical training for presidents of public special focus institutions was either medicine, health professions, or humanities. Yet presidents of private special focus institutions were most likely to have been trained in religion or theology.

A significant proportion of the presidents at private special focus institutions—**38** percent—reported having worked outside higher education immediately prior to their current presidency. This proportion was higher than those in any other sector.

Data describing presidents of special focus institutions are included in the appendices, but because of the unique characteristics of special focus institutions and the relatively low response rate of presidents of such institutions, these appendices do not make comparisons with the overall survey population.

Chapter 8 Presidential Career Paths and Recently Hired Presidents

Prior Positions

In 2011, just less than one in five presidents had served as a president immediately prior to his or her current position, while **20** percent had held a position outside higher education immediately prior to becoming president. These figures represent a moderate growth since 1986, when 17 percent of presidents had previously served in that role and 10 percent came from outside higher education (see Table 20). Most presidents come from senior leadership positions in academic affairs, primarily the provost or CAO position; 34 percent of all presidents had most recently served as a provost, up from 31 percent in 2006. More than half of all 2011 presidents were either presidents or provosts in their most recent prior position, similar to findings in the 2006 study. These data suggest that—as the presidency has become more challenging and complex—institutions may have become more conservative in their hiring decisions, preferring to tap proven leaders with top-level administrative experience.

Public community colleges, public master’s institutions, and private doctorate-granting universities were most likely to hire presidents whose immediate prior position was president (24 percent) (see Table 21). The private sector, overall, was more likely to hire presidents from outside higher education. In 2011, 28 percent of private college and university presidents came from outside higher education, compared with 14 percent of all presidents in the public sector. Further, as noted in Chapter 5, private institutions are more likely to choose individuals from higher education executive positions outside academic affairs.

Presidents at public institutions were just as likely to have been promoted from within the same institution as their private institution counterparts. For example, one-third of presidents at public doctorate-granting universities had held a position at the same institution prior to becoming president, the same share as presidents at private doctorate-granting institutions (see Figure 14). Special focus institutions were most likely to hire from within the institution (32 percent). Overall, master’s and bachelor’s institutions were least likely to hire from within the institution (28 and 25 percent, respectively) (see Appendix D).

Table 20

Presidents' Immediate Prior Position: Selected Years, 1986 to 2011

Prior Position	1986 ⁺ Percent	2001 Percent	2006 Percent	2011 Percent
Higher Education (total)	75.8	85.3	86.9	79.6
President/CEO	17.3	20.4	21.4	19.5
Chief academic officer	22.5	27.8	31.4	34.0
Senior executive	18.4	32.7	29.6	22.6
Executive/administrative	*	*	*	*
Dean	15.6	*	*	*
Chair/faculty	*	4.4	4.1	3.5
Other**	2.0	*	0.5	0.0
Outside Higher Education (total)	10.1	14.7	13.1	20.3
Elected or appointed government official	*	*	*	2.0
K-12 administrator	0.0	0.9	1.6	1.8
Private business	2.0	2.0	2.3	1.9
Religious***	3.3	1.7	1.9	1.8
Legal	*	*	0.7	1.0
Local/state/federal government	1.2	1.8	1.6	*
Medical professional	*	*	0.4	0.8
Military	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2
Nonprofit organizations	*	*	1.5	1.9
Other****	3.1	7.9	2.8	8.9

* Data not available based on question wording. Prior iterations of the American College Presidents Study have used varying categories for campus administrative positions.

** Reflects the sum of assistants to the president and mid-level campus administrators.

*** Combined categories Member of Religious Order and Religious Counselor.

**** Reflects the sum of Retired and Other.

+ In 1986, 14.1 percent of respondents chose “other.” It is not possible to determine whether these positions were in or out of higher education.

Chapter 10 Summary and Conclusions

As with the 2006 study, the most sobering conclusion to be drawn from the data continues to be little to no change in the diversity of top leadership positions at America's colleges and universities. Women continue to increase their representation within the ranks of college and university presidents, but at a slow rate. However, racial minorities actually saw a slight decline in 2011. This decrease was consistent across all types of institutions. Despite some shifts, the 2011 profile of the typical college president remains similar to that of presidents in 2006: a white, married male who had earned a doctorate and had served as president at his institution for an average of seven years. Nearly 80 percent identified themselves as either Protestant or Catholic. Most had served as faculty members, and many had served as a president or senior executive in higher education prior to accepting their current position.

Another persistent demographic trend is the aging of the presidency. In 1986, 42 percent of presidents were 50 years old or younger and 14 percent were 61 or older. In 2006, these proportions were almost reversed; only 8 percent were 50

or younger and 49 percent are 61 or older. In 2011, the share of presidents who are 50 or younger has increased slightly from 2006 to 10 percent, but the percentage of those who are 61 or older increased to 58 percent. This shift suggests that there will be significant turnover in presidential leadership due to retirements in the near term, presenting an opportunity to further diversify the academic presidency.

The most common road to the presidency continues to be the traditional route of academic affairs; 41 percent of recently hired presidents had been a chief academic officer or other senior executive in academic affairs in their most recent prior position. Despite several high-profile examples to the contrary, the share of college and university presidents who have come to the presidency directly from outside higher education is only 19 percent. Presidents continue to come from the ranks of their own or similar institutions at significant rates, but nearly half reported some past employment outside higher education.

Table 23

Characteristics of Recently Hired Presidents: 2011, 2006, 2001, and 1998

	2011 Percent	2006 Percent	2001 Percent	1998 Percent
Demographics				
Women	29.4	24.6	23.9	24.5
Minority	11.5	12.9	14.4	13.2
Currently married	85.6	85.9	82.3	82.9
Has children	85.1	85.4	85.1	NA
Education				
Has PhD or EdD	75.7	72.2	74.8	81.2
Has formal religious religious training	NA	11.3	14.3	15.3
Presidents' top three fields of study:				
Education or higher education	42.1	Education or higher education 42.3	Education or higher education 41.4	Education 36.8
Social sciences	14.9	Social sciences 16.8	Social sciences 16.0	Other 15.7
Humanities/fine arts	12.7	Humanities/fine arts 12.3	Humanities/fine arts 13.4	Social sciences 13.9
Career History				
Prior position				
President/CEO	20.7	21.3	18.5	28.6
CAO/provost	32.3	37.1	32.9	17.4
Senior executive in academic affairs	9.1	12.6	8.7	NA
Outside higher education	18.9	10.2	19.5	5.8
Never been a faculty member	NA	30.1	30.6	28.8
Ever worked outside higher education	50.4	67.2	63.9	51.0
		Average	Average	Average
Age (in years)	57.2	56.7	54.7	55.1
Years in prior position	NA	7.1	6.5	6
Years as full-time faculty	NA	9.8	8.3	8.9

NA: Data was not collected in the 1998 survey

The perspectives of long-serving presidents captured in the survey illustrate how complex and challenging the academic presidency has become in the last 20 years. Presidents manage myriad tasks while leading and answering to a diverse set of both internal and, increasingly, external constituencies. Presidents consistently cite relations with faculty, legislators, and policy makers as their greatest challenges. In addition, fund raising and budgeting continue to occupy a significant portion of presidential time. Fortunately, some of the activities that take up the largest shares of a president's time—such as fund raising and community relations—are also among the activities they enjoy the most. Further, some of the groups that they find the most challenging, such as faculty, are also among those they find the most rewarding.